



Rhode Island History

Volume 43, Number 4 November 1984





Published by The Rhode Island Historical Society, 110 Benevolent Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02906, and printed by a grant from the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, J. Joseph Garrahy, Governor; Susan L. Farmer, Secretary of State.

Issued Quarterly at Providence, Rhode Island, February, May, August, and November. Second class postage paid at Providence, Rhode Island.

Sen. Robert J. McKenna, *president*
Alden M. Anderson, *vice president*
Mrs. Edwin G. Fischer, *vice president*
Park Palmer, *secretary*
M. Rachel Cunha, *assistant secretary*
Stephen C. Williams, *treasurer*
Albert Carlotti, *assistant treasurer*

FELLOWS OF THE SOCIETY

Carl Bridenbaugh
Sydney V. James
Antoinette F. Downing
Richard K. Showman

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, *chairman*
Gordon Allen
Henry L. P. Beckwith, Jr.
Dr. Francis H. Chafee
Prof. Howard P. Chudacoff
Robert Allen Greene
Pamela A. Kennedy
Leonard I. Levin
Alan Simpson
Wm. McKenzie Woodward

STAFF

Glenn Warren LaFantasie, *editor*
Maureen Taylor, *picture editor*
Leonard I. Levin, *copy editor*
Jean LeGwin, *designer*
Ellen O'Reilly, *editorial assistant*
Glenn D. Horton, *editorial assistant*

The Rhode Island Historical Society assumes no responsibility for the opinions of contributors.

©1984 by The Rhode Island Historical Society

Rhode Island History

Volume 43, Number 4 November 1984

Contents

Rhode Island: From Classical Democracy to British Province SYDNEY V. JAMES	119
Rhode Island Renegade: The Enigma of Joshua Tefft COLIN G. CALLOWAY	136
Index	146



Southern New England in the late seventeenth century. Detail from A Map of New England, New Yorke, New Jersey, Maryland & Virginia (1690). Courtesy of John Carter Brown Library.

Rhode Island: From Classical Democracy to British Province

Sydney V. James

The colonial government in Rhode Island, as in most other English colonies in North America, underwent several transformations, some duplicated nowhere else. It proceeded from a unique experiment in democracy to a form of British province shared only with Connecticut. By colonial government is meant the central government above the towns rather than the towns themselves. The record has elements of continuity or evolution as well as profound change from the earliest organization to the one that became stabilized in the first decade of the eighteenth century. The elements of continuity included secular foundations, annual elections, representation of the towns in various ways, and a corps of officials elected at large to act in executive and legislative and judicial capacities. The change was from a species of direct democracy, through a mixture of direct democracy and representative responsibility, to an often modified representative system, which finally in 1696 adopted a bicameral General Assembly as its central organ and later still was adjusted to the status of a provincial government within the British empire. In another light, the change was from daring to compromise, from ideology to reasonableness, from failure to success.

The following sketch of this process will stress two of the many possible themes: the meaning of institutional forms and the long search for a successful relation of the government to the expectations and loyalties of its citizens. The dramatic alterations of forms call for a simple chronological treatment, beginning with the Aquidneck government founded in 1639, going on to the government under the Providence Plantations charter of 1644, then the Rhode Island charter of 1663, and finally the revision of the government under the charter beginning in 1696.

I

The first government set up to embrace more than one Rhode Island town was on Aquidneck, and it embraced only two. It was founded in 1639 and lasted in most respects only until 1643, although its judicial functions continued a couple of years longer. It proclaimed subordination to the English monarchy but never won a charter or any other sign

Mr. James is a member of the Department of History, University of Iowa. An earlier version of this essay was presented at the Ninth Annual forum on Rhode Island History, sponsored by the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Providence Preservation Society, Jan. 18, 1983.

1. Clarence S. Brigham, ed., *Early Records of the Town of Portsmouth Providence, 1901*, 1-4, hereafter cited as *Early Recs. of Portsmouth*.

2. This concept of democracy was a product of ancient Greece. Aristotle gave the standard exposition in the *Politics*. Democracy was government by the many, while aristocracy was government by the few, and monarchy by one. Many, as in ancient Athens, could be no more than a distinct minority of the adult males, those who had rights of citizenship.

3. John Russell Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, 7 vols. (Providence, 1856-1862), I, 87-90, 93, 95, hereafter cited as *Recs. of R.I.*

4. Dennis A. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues: The Quest for Civil Order in the Towns and Colony of Providence Plantations, 1636-1654" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1973), 142-146, 170-171, 195-196, 223, 226-228.

5. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 100, 101, 103, 106.

6. For example, *ibid.*, I, 102-106, 109, 114.

7. *Ibid.*, I, 112.

of attention from officials at Whitehall. It kept revising itself, often to improve its local backing, but with discouraging results. It faded away as its leaders lost hope for its effectiveness and as government slowly came into being under the charter of 1644 for a larger jurisdiction. The Aquidneck commonwealth, ephemeral though it was, needs attention because of its influence on what came next.

It was launched by William Coddington and those who sided with him in the squabbles in early Portsmouth. While Coddington and others were planning Newport as a future town, their opponents took power in Portsmouth.¹ The Newport pioneers, joined by a few friends at the other end of the island, presently proclaimed themselves the body politic for the whole of Aquidneck. These men were those who had political rights in the towns—a minority of the adult males. They intended to exercise the power to legislate and make policy in their general meetings. Thus they planned a classical democracy as Aristotle understood it, a government based on decisions as to laws and policy in the assembly of citizens, although they did not call it one.² They adopted English law in a vague way but continued the quasi- or pseudo-Hebraic officials of judge and elders, chosen earlier in Portsmouth, in addition to a secretary, treasurer, constable, and militia commanders.³ All these officials were elected for one-year terms or until a successor was chosen. The new government began making decisions. At the outset nobody could take for granted their implementation, but adjustments of old contentions in Portsmouth led to the new authority's holding some sway.

A series of changes recast the island commonwealth. The original freemen kept admitting more, thus beginning a process that transformed the body politic from a small and wealthy minority of the men to something close to a majority.⁴ They revised the slate of officials. The judge became the governor, the first elder became the deputy governor, the other two became four assistants. All of these became magistrates in a three-layer hierarchy of tribunals. And in addition the slate included a secretary, two treasurers, two constables, and two sergeants.⁵ Apart from the secretary, these officers came in pairs, so each town might have one. The freemen adopted laws on town government and militia training, and ruled on the allocation of land and many other topics.⁶

By March 1641 they announced a meaning for what they had done. While still giving a gesture to King Charles I, they said they constituted "a DEMOCRACIE, or Popular Government." They explained this in the Aristotelian way by adding, "It is in the Powre of the Body of Freemen orderly assembled, or the major part of them, to make or constitute Just Lawes, by which they will be regulated, and to depute from among themselves such Ministers as shall see them faithfully executed between Man and Man."⁷ Somebody understood the classical conception of democracy, with its emphasis on legislation by the citizens, and persuaded a majority of the assemblage to say they were operating such a form of government. Behind the declaration also lurked an endorse-



ment of a more modern ideal of democracy: widespread diffusion of political rights.

Either way, the declaration was remarkable. Democracy had a bad name in the early seventeenth century. At best it implied giving authority to ordinary men when only the high born were fit to rule. At worst it conjured up control by the mob. In any case it thumbed a nose at monarchy. Leaders of Massachusetts, finding that their resort to elected officials was being called democracy, took pains to interpret the allegations away. Eminent men argued that they had a "mixt Aristocracie" because of the power of the magistrates, or a theocracy because the officials were thought to be among God's elect and, though put into office by the votes of the ordinary freemen, derived their authority from God and ruled according to divine laws, not according to human will.⁸

Why not such sugar-coating in Portsmouth and Newport? This was not yet the strictly secular government of Rhode Island. The voters still invoked God in the equivalent to an oath of office.⁹ Portsmouth, however, had tried and given up theocracy. The first settlers there had tried virtually every conception of governmental authority known to the human mind—social contract, English law, Biblical law, Hebraic judges and elders as well as English justices of the peace; authority by status and authority by election; even appeals for inward direction by God. In none had they found a sure foundation. Conceivably they were willing to try anything. Yet subsequent events showed that a dedication to classical democracy was far more than an expedient or a passing whim. A substantial number of men stayed with the ideal.

All the same, their declaration was a trifle misleading. The Aquidneck state surely did give the freemen a voice in all sorts of legislation and decisions on policy, but they used it to give effect to elements of English law, create magistrates along English lines, and put a founda-

The Landing of Roger Williams, 1636. Steel engraving by T. F. Hoppin (1884). Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 2036).

8. John Cotton, "Certain Proposals made by Lord Say, Lord Brooke, and other Persons of quality, as conditions of their removing to New-England, with the answers thereto," and "Copy of a Letter from Mr. COTTON to Lord SAY and SEAL in the Year 1636," in Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay*, ed. L. S. Mayo, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), I, 410-417; Massachusetts Historical Society, *Winthrop Papers*, 5 vols. (Boston, 1929-1947), IV, 382-383, 386-387, 469, 476, 480, 482.

9. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 111.



Sir Henry Vane the Younger
(1612–1662). Courtesy of Rhode
Island Historical Society Library
(RHi x3 4089).

10. *Ibid.*, I, 105–106, 113–114.

11. *Ibid.*, I, 93, 115, 117. The state asserted the power to choose militia officers in 1642 (*ibid.*, I, 120–121) but showed no evidence of having chosen any.

12. *Ibid.*, I, 126, 127.

13. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 236–238.

tion under popular military obligations on a pattern derived from what the English system was intended to be. And at the same time the system made many concessions to town autonomy. Mere consent of the voters would not give strength to the island government. It needed the force of English tradition as though from above and the acquiescence of the towns from below. And it needed still more that it did not get.

Further, the annual elections warrant attention. They show the influence of Massachusetts, not the English monarchy, where from justices of the peace to the Houses of Parliament and the king himself, men gained power by a variety of routes—appointment, election, heredity—and held it for unpredictable lengths of time. Annual elections were common in local government in its myriad forms as well as in chartered corporations of all kinds. Introduction of annual elections into American colonial practice at the highest levels has been attributed to the trading company sponsorship, particularly of Massachusetts, where the company's central management converted itself into a territorial government. Some Rhode Island settlers had watched this process. They declined to follow the lead to a representative legislature, but they adopted the Massachusetts titles of officials in 1641 and made the judicial system copy the Massachusetts model in broad terms. The most striking departure from the older colony's ways came in the respect shown to the towns, such as choosing a separate colonial treasurer for each one. Thus the Aquidneck commonwealth, called a democracy under Charles I, was also an adaptation of English laws and judicial practices, as well as the forms of the Massachusetts Bay government.

For all this abundance of ingredients, it lacked strength. The founders could not restrict political rights to the wealthy few; social tranquility could be had only at the price of admitting nearly half of the men to the vote. The state had to give its towns more autonomy than it planned. They ignored its laws when they saw fit. It gave them equal shares of its meager treasury rather than keep sole discretion itself.¹⁰ Perhaps the trouble lay in the lack of a representative system. The assembly of freemen was only the combined town meetings. The towns as such had no identity in it. They discovered ways to assert themselves. The state never found a satisfactory way to choose militia officers except by letting the train bands choose their own.¹¹ The assembly of freemen held its last recorded meeting at which much was done in September 1642. Thereafter the existing officers were continued in place in 1643 and 1644, while they went on performing their judicial functions.¹²

The island commonwealth, even if it could have exerted control over the towns, still would have been too weak to maintain independence against the designs of Massachusetts and Plymouth. Both those neighbors wished to embrace Aquidneck in their jurisdictions but for the time being failed to agree on which should do it. Still, their power seemed irresistible. Anne Hutchinson, fearing the worst, fled to New Netherland.¹³ Governor William Coddington, without resigning office

or informing his constituents, began exploring the possibility of an alliance with Massachusetts.¹⁴ So did others, but the neighboring colonies would consider only Aquidneck's absorption into one of them.¹⁵ The Puritan colony's extension of jurisdiction over southern Providence in 1642, followed by its actual invasion of Warwick in September 1643, inspired some of the Newport men—not freemen—to invite Providence into their union, but they could offer little in tangible benefit except a refuge to the Gortonians.¹⁶ The island state could scarcely act. Some of its citizens wanted nothing to do with the Warwick Gortonians or their contest with Massachusetts. Others saw hope in enlargement and welcomed the English patent for a colony to be called Providence Plantations, brought by Roger Williams in 1644, which meant union with both Providence and Warwick as well as with the Narragansett country. The Aquidneck government withered away. Pending organization of a successor, only the island magistrates went about their duties.

II

Government under the Providence Plantations charter lasted longer than the Aquidneck state but went through more changes in form and fortune. It began as a magnification of the island commonwealth and ended with a representational form. When finally started, it remained in an unstable condition for over six years, during which it broke in two for a lengthy interval.

The freemen had to start the government by deciding on how to form it. The patent of 1644 let them do as they pleased. Although unknown men managed to hold meetings and elect a few officers, who accomplished practically nothing, the bulk of the Aquidneck freemen would not join in creating the government until 1647.¹⁷ Then further menacing gestures from Plymouth and Massachusetts, plus a reaffirmation of the patent from London stimulated collective action.¹⁸

The island men largely dictated the terms at the organizational meeting at Portsmouth.¹⁹ There the freemen formed themselves into a body politic, pledged "to mainteyne each other . . . [each] in his lawfull right and Libertie," and declared in the Aquidneck fashion "that the forme of Government established in *Providence Plantations* is DEMOCRATICALL; that is to say, a Government by y^e free and voluntarie consent of all, or the greater parte of the free Inhabitants."²⁰ Voting rights being thrown open to all men who would promise to support the government, the prospect was for a wider extension of the franchise than before, a possibility that came to pass.²¹ Even the elected officials had their power by an explicit reciprocal agreement with the freemen. The assembly adopted a practice, used years earlier in Portsmouth,²² of requiring both an engagement from men chosen to office and a reciprocal engagement from the freemen—both from now on being ruthlessly non-religious. The prospective officer promised, when installed, "to do neither more nor less . . . than the Colonie" authorized him to do. The

14. *Winthrop Papers*, IV, 490.

15. Nathaniel Shurtleff and David Pulsifer, eds. *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth*, 12 vols. (Boston, 1855–1861), IX, 23, hereafter cited as *Recs. of New Plymouth*.

16. Howard M. Chapin, ed., *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, 2 vols. (Providence, 1916, 1919), I, 164–165 (hereafter cited as Chapin, ed., *Doc. Hist.*); O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 245–247.

17. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 362, 367–370, 375–376; Chapin, ed., *Doc. Hist.*, I, 227–230.

18. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 374–378.

19. Horatio Rogers et al., eds., *Early Records of the Town of Providence*, 21 vols. (Providence, 1892–1951), XV, 10, hereafter cited as *Early Recs. of Providence*. The phrase cited contains only a hint of the island's importance; the form of government soon adopted makes the Aquidneck influence clear.

20. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 156–157.

21. *Ibid.*, I, 156.

22. *Ibid.*, I, 52–53.

23. *Ibid.*, I, 150–151.

24. *Ibid.*, I, 147–148, 157–208. The code as published bears the date of 1647. In the manuscripts in the State Archives in Providence, it appears after the transactions of the General Assembly in 1665. The citations of English authorities probably were added later still. Other evidence refers to the code as having been amended in 1658, however, so it had existed in some form well before 1665. See G. B. Warden, "The Rhode Island Civil Code of 1647," in David D. Hall et al., eds., *Saints or Revolutionaries: Essays on Early American History* (New York, 1984), 144, 144n. Warden neglected the passage in the first petition for the second charter, saying that after formation of the government under the first charter, the citizens had "with excessive travail and charge compiled a briefe body of lawes, for the maintaining of civill society. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 487.

25. *Ibid.*, I, 147.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*, I, 148–149.

28. *Ibid.*, I, 209.

29. *Ibid.*, I, 228–229.

30. *Ibid.*, I, 277, 401–402, 429.

31. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 538, 545 (note 5).

32. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 157; John T. Farrell, "The Early History of Rhode Island's Court System," *Rhode Island History*, IX, (1950), 107–108. G. B. Warden questions an underlying devotion to an English framework of law, in "The Rhode Island Civil Code of 1647," 143–145, 149–150.

33. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 151, 191–192, 195–206.

freemen then promised "to the utmost of . . . [their] power to suport and vphold" him in carrying out his duties.²³ Except for calling the chief officer the president, the roster of officials was almost exactly like the Aquidneck state's, minus the twinning. The four assistants were now chosen from as many different towns. The assemblage soon adopted a draft of a law code, probably prepared on the island.²⁴

Democracy had to be tempered by practicality, however, and the first victim was exclusive power in legislation by the freemen assembled. The assembly, known as the General Court, tried to make an equivalent while bowing to the need for a representative system. It adopted the first of a series of compromises that ultimately proved futile. The freemen would be expected to vote in elections, whether in person or by written ballot.²⁵ (The written ballot was as radical as democracy then.) In other transactions they ordinarily would be represented at the General Court by town committees, later known as commissioners.²⁶ But the freemen adopted a cumbersome device for legislative initiative and referendum.²⁷ They scrapped this system a year later.²⁸ Then in 1650 the commissioners gave the freemen power to nullify legislation by majority vote in town meetings.²⁹ Four years later the colony returned to a simple representational scheme, only to restore the limited referendum in 1658 and see it die of disuse.³⁰

Behind these changes lay an argument over principles and a pursuit of political advantage carried on against a widening of the franchise that gave the vote to a large majority of the men. On the whole the island men favored direct democracy. They had chosen it earlier, and, besides, they outnumbered the mainland. The mainland men generally preferred representative government with each town sending the same size of delegation. Their theoretical justifications for this stand have vanished, but the political value is unmistakable. Yet life in the towns was advancing democracy in the sense of giving political rights to more people, which probably made direct legislation by the citizens all the more inconvenient. By 1655 about seventy percent of the men were freemen.³¹

As in the Aquidneck predecessor, Providence Plantations proclaimed democracy as a prelude to adopting a predominantly English slate of laws. To be sure, this was required by the charter. The English derivation is obvious in the Code of 1647, which starts with an echo of the Magna Carta and includes many citations of English statutes.³² And the conception of the magistrate followed English inspiration in broad outlines; the president and four assistants all had powers as justices of the peace and together sat as the bench of the colony's all-purpose court of record, which presumably followed English procedure at least approximately.³³

The new government, like its predecessor, tried vainly to solve the riddle of maintaining unity against the towns' penchant for going their own ways. The representational scheme—equal votes for each town—ended the anomaly of the Aquidneck system at the price of compromising the ideal of democracy. The town train bands once again had to

be left to themselves.³⁴ The Providence Plantations government tried to regulate town governments only to meet the same frustration as the Aquidneck state.³⁵ Then it tried to placate them by granting charters of incorporation to three. These documents, nearly identical, stipulated nothing about the mechanism of town government. They merely gave the men in each town permission "to Incorporate themselves into a boddy politicke" and by majority vote to set up "such a form of civill government, as . . . shall be found most suitable unto their estate and condition."³⁶ The towns scarcely modified their existing institutions—town meeting, various standing officers, and assorted special committees—but rather used their new authority to create town courts, which began competing for jurisdiction with the colonial court.³⁷ In a broader sense, the charters gave the towns privileges to guard, which they guarded primarily against the colonial government. And the privileges were elastic, letting the towns grasp what power they could.

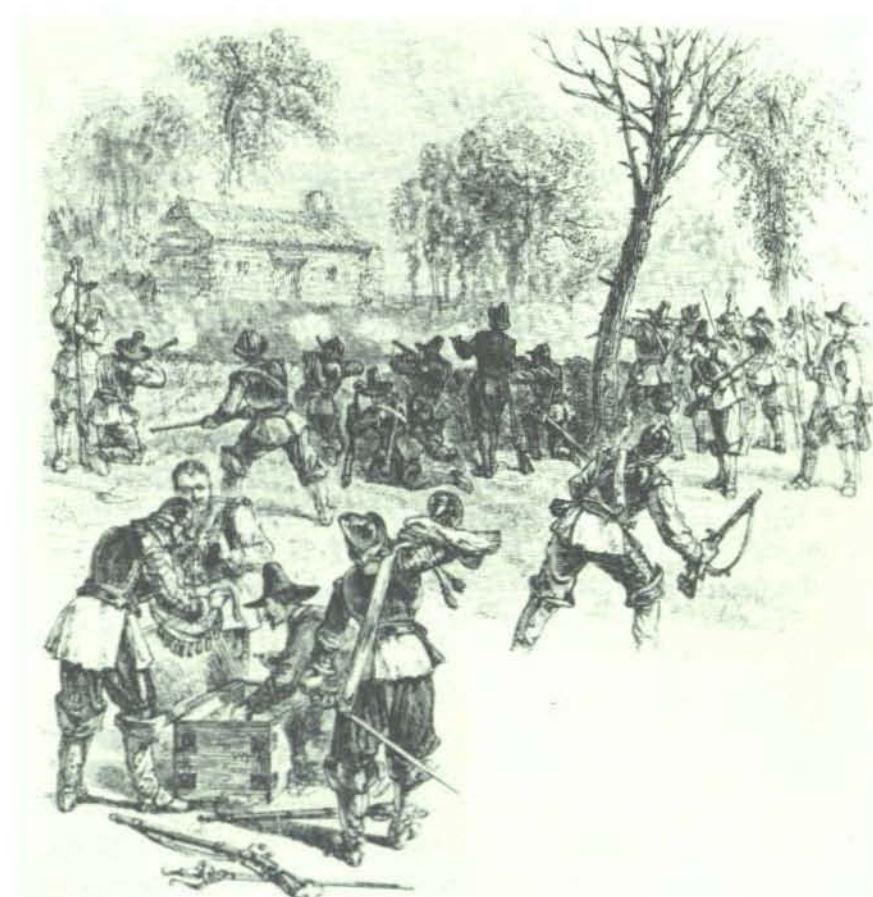
The charter to the colony created no automatic disposition in the freemen to join in support of the new government, nor did anything else. Town cohesiveness, which was only moderate itself, proved stronger. England, being in a condition of political turmoil, ignored the young colony. The closest thing to a solidifying influence was the league formed by the neighboring jurisdictions, the United Colonies of New England, which meditated plans to absorb Providence Plantations

34. *Ibid.*, I, 153, 218, 226, 381.

35. For example, *ibid.* I, 151–152; *Early Recs. of Providence*, XV, 15.

36. Howard M. Chapin, ed., *Early Records of the Town of Warwick* (Providence, 1926), 253 (hereafter cited as *Early Recs. of Warwick*); *Early Recs. of Portsmouth*, 41; *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 215–216; *Early Recs. of Providence*, II, 113–114, 151–153; William R. Staples, *Annals of the Town of Providence* (Providence, 1843), 73–74.

37. For example, *Early Recs. of Providence*, XV, 58; *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 251–255; *Early Recs. of Warwick*, 79.



Attack by Massachusetts soldiers on the Gortonists at Shawomet, 1643. From Scribner's Popular History of the United States (1897). Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4916).

38. *Recs. of New Plymouth*, IX, 110.

39. The fragments of information that may bear on this point are easy to construe otherwise. See *Early Recs. of Portsmouth*, 37; Reuben A. Guild *et al.*, eds., *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams*, 7 vols. (New York, 1963), VI, 150.

40. *Rec. of R.I.*, I, 208, 210–211.

41. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 440–448, 451–452. The principal requirement was to govern with a council of up to six men nominated by the freeholders of the towns.

42. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 233.

43. O'Toole, "Exiles, Refugees, and Rogues," 466–467.

44. *Ibid.*, 474–475; *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 265. Coddington got an offer of military aid from New Netherland, which was intercepted by his opponents on Aquidneck, an event that may have given them enhanced enthusiasm for war against the Dutch a short time later. He also sought help from John Winthrop, Jr., and the Plymouth magistrates. See *Mass. Hist. Soc., Colls.*, 4th Ser., VII (1863), 284–285.

45. For example, *Providence Town Papers*, 2d Ser., V, 01284, *R.I. Hist. Soc., Early Recs. of Providence*, II, 70–71; *Early Recs. of Warwick*, 74.

46. Copy of Robard [i.e., Robert] Williams to the Inhabitants of Providence Plantations in assembly at Portsmouth, Mar. 14, 1652/53, Rhode Island Manuscripts, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, R.I.

47. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 285–286, 290–291.

48. *Ibid.*, I, 276–280.

and overawe the Narragansett Indians. This threat inspired a search for accommodation. William Coddington looked for a plan under which Aquidneck by itself could join the United Colonies, only to hear that it would have to become a part of Plymouth.³⁸ He probably had some backing in these explorations.³⁹ He wanted to leave the Gortonians on their own in contests with Massachusetts, while they thought he should back them when he was elected president of Providence Plantations in 1648. Because of his views on these topics and other dissatisfactions with him the General Court prevented him from taking office and chose another man.⁴⁰

When Coddington went to England in search of a charter for Aquidneck alone, the colony of Providence Plantations went through an uneasy interlude, ended by his return with a patent making him governor of the island for life with a few stipulations on how he should govern, notably requiring him to act with the advice of a council of six nominated by the freeholders of the towns.⁴¹ He did what he could, which was to assemble a council and hold court. These events in 1651 split the older government. The mainland towns thought Coddington's patent removed Aquidneck from the colony of Providence Plantations, so they carried on government in what they thought was left.⁴² Most of the men in the island towns resisted Coddington and set out to continue what they thought was the government under the charter, while sending an agent, Dr. John Clarke, to London to seek a reconfirmation of that document.⁴³ The three-way quarrel shrank to two-way as Coddington's slight backing melted away even before official revocation of his patent.⁴⁴

Still, the remaining dispute gained complexity. Seemingly unrelated disagreements, whether over private property or public policies, could be attached to the issue of which government was correct. Among other things, the controversy over direct democracy as against representative government returned to impede reunion.⁴⁵ Now democracy had its ardent advocates on the mainland, too, including Robert Williams, brother of Roger, who denounced any representative scheme as creating "an aristocorye . . . or howse of lordes."⁴⁶ Quarrels over what would make acceptable terms of reunion helped split both Providence and Warwick. Even exhortations to harmony from English officials failed to achieve much until 1654. Then a plea from Sir Henry Vane, an old hero of the Hutchinsonians on Aquidneck, coupled with an official order to Massachusetts to respect the Providence Plantations patent brought a new turn of events.⁴⁷ Careful negotiations reached a shaky compromise that let the colonial governments join again with a representative assembly.⁴⁸

Making a durable result required time, patience, tact, and luck. Old quarrels could be resolved or left to die out. Nothing stirred up trouble over the uneasy relations between town and colonial authority, and the drift to representative government gradually put to rest the old dreams of direct democracy. Yet the colony needed unifying sentiments, preferably shared loyalties and not just shared fears of outsiders. One serious

threat from outside, Massachusetts' assertion of jurisdiction over parts of Providence and Warwick, fortuitously was revealed as hollow.⁴⁹ Still, the mainland towns appreciated the need for a firm union with the island as the best hope for safety from the United Colonies. The mainlanders, but even more the islanders, began to see in their charter the promise of a substantial territory into which they might expand—and the promise would have to be made effective by upholding the government under the charter. All, furthermore, received a new lesson in what their colony meant when Plymouth and Massachusetts began prosecuting Baptists and Quakers.⁵⁰ There could be no delusion any longer that old Puritan crustiness had softened. Religious liberty would be safe nowhere but under the Providence Plantations flag. In land lust and dedication to religious freedom the colony at last had both a motivation for collective action and a distinctive purpose to serve.

As things turned out, nobody interfered with soul liberty, but the Providence Plantations government remained too feeble to control its territory. It could neither prevent outsiders from buying land in the Narragansett country nor enforce its own law requiring its citizens to get its approval of their plans to purchase.⁵¹ It bent to political pressure in deciding which of the purchases merited approval after the fact. It was quite ineffectual in efforts to bring order to the land titles already generated by settlement of the original towns, whether through public records or adjudication.

Besides, the restoration of the monarchy in England in 1660 gave the Providence Plantations government the embarrassment of relying on a charter from the erstwhile revolutionaries. The best remedy, a royal charter, could also change the form of government.

III

The advisers of Charles II in 1662 were willing to apply the corrective, with the result in the royal charter of the next year. That document changed the colony's name to Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, no doubt to the pleasure of the island people. It also differed from the first charter in at least five other ways. It specified a form of government, it stipulated several key features of the relations of Rhode Island and its citizens to neighboring colonies, it laid down basic rights of the citizens, including freedom of religion specifically and the rights of Englishmen generally, it recognized the advancing pre-eminence of Newport, and it sketched or implied a place for the colony in the English empire.⁵² For all these differences, the new charter could barely enlarge the practical power of the colonial government. And for many years the imperial connection remained a tie that did little more than let stubborn men appeal to the throne when the colonial government refused to give them what they wanted. Unfortunately, no surviving evidence reveals how the new charter was planned, so there is no telling who wanted what and where compromises were struck.



King Charles II (1630–1685), who granted a royal charter to the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in 1663. Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4458).

49. Roger Williams to John Endecott, Dec. 1, 1656, John Carter Brown Library, Providence; *Early Recs. of Providence*, XV, 72; Providence Town Papers, 2d Ser., V, 01302; Bradford F. Swan, *Gregory Dexter of London and New England, 1610–1700* (Rochester, N.Y., 1949), 81; Roger Williams to Arthur Fenner, Feb. 24, 1656/57, John Carter Brown Lib.; *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 367–369, 369n–373n, 405–406.

50. William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630–1833*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), I, 16–21; Arthur J. Worrall, *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (Hanover, N.H., 1980), 9–18; *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 374–380.

51. *Recs. of R.I.*, I, 236, 403–404, 418, 424, 429–430, 451–466, 498. The records of the colonial government, to be sure, fail to reveal the extent to which it responded to the citizens' initiatives rather than encourage the citizens to act first and get official approval later.

52. *Ibid.*, II, 4–21.



Sir Edmund Andros (1637–1714),
Governor of the Dominion of
New England, 1686–1689.
Courtesy of Rhode Island
Historical Society Library
(RHi x3 4975).

53. *Ibid.*, II, 7, 11, 14.

54. *Ibid.*, II, 8–14.

55. Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts, X, 140, R.I. Hist. Soc.; *Early Recs. of Warwick* 145–146; *Early Recs. of Portsmouth* 127; Rhode Island Colony Records, I, part 1, 191, State Archives, Providence [hereafter cited as Colony Recs.]; *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 472–473.

56. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 313.

57. *Ibid.*, II, 33.

58. *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 25–26, 171; Colony Recs., I, part 1, 180.

59. *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 31; *Early Recs. of Providence*, VIII, 46–47.

The Rhode Island charter called for a basic governmental structure, clearly derived from that of Massachusetts, to which the freemen might make additions as they pleased within certain limits. The design prescribed a core of twelve officials with loosely defined capacities—the governor, deputy governor, and ten assistants—all elected at large each May by the citizens. By themselves, these officials had responsibilities to govern in many routine ways.⁵³ They became known as the magistrates. In addition, the charter called for deputies to be elected by the freemen in each town at least twice a year. The deputies would join the magistrates for the business of legislation and loosely designated other functions. In joint meetings these officials constituted the General Assembly.⁵⁴ In their actions, any measure required a majority of the magistrates to pass. The charter allowed the General Assembly to make laws but also to exercise administrative powers explicitly and judicial powers by implication. It gave the assembly power to appoint other officers—or create offices to be filled by election by the freemen—to create a judiciary, regulate elections, prescribe the forms of local government, set town boundaries, and generally control relations with the natives.

On a few subjects the charter's meaning was murky. One was the organization of the General Assembly itself. The requirement of a favorable majority of the magistrates for any measure inspired thoughts of a bicameral organization or other means of requiring a favorable majority of the deputies. The assembly soon argued over such possibilities and in 1672 ruled that a majority of the deputies must favor any weighty measures or tax bill.⁵⁵ But the assembly kept deciding against bicameral organization until 1696.⁵⁶ The charter prescribed an apportionment of deputies among the towns that gave Newport six, the other original towns four apiece, and any new ones two each. This formula recognized the concentration of wealth and population on Aquidneck, though less than proportionally. Together the island towns held at least two-thirds of the inhabitants. Thus the island voters, if they agreed on candidates, could choose all the magistrates from among themselves. To prevent that, the assembly in 1664 decided that five should be from Newport, three from Providence, and two each from Portsmouth and Warwick.⁵⁷ Customarily the governor was a Newport man. By this arrangement the governor lived in the capital, and each town had at least two resident justices of the peace. In such ways the colony adapted the charter to its local needs.

It did so in other ways as well. The assembly carried forward most of the laws enacted under the preceding regime and continued the executive officers previously decided upon. It modified the judiciary, notably to give the assembly as a whole a judicial role and to provide for justices' courts in the various towns to replace the old town courts.⁵⁸ It gave the mainland towns regular sessions of the high court on their soil, but they kept asking for sessions of the assembly too.⁵⁹

Implicit in the record lay a nearly total independence from England. The colonial officials wanted this autonomy; the English ones rarely

could be roused to trouble it. Official correspondence seldom passed between London and Newport. No imperial officers were stationed by Narragansett Bay. The connection to the parent country was manifest only intermittently in appeals from the colonial courts to the crown and in the appearance of royal commissions for various purposes. The colony responded to these special agents of royal power according to its interests as determined by its own politics rather than in a formally consistent manner. The commission of 1664 received a cordial welcome and gave orders on the whole quite gratifying to the colonial officers. So they accepted its authority and ostentatiously complied with most of its commands.⁶⁰ By contrast, they greeted the commission of 1683 with hostility and denials of its authority when it came as the tool of land interests adverse to the colony's.⁶¹ The examples might be multiplied. The point at hand, however, is the persistence until 1686 of a state of virtual autonomy for the colonial government.

On the whole, Rhode Island suffered from lack of solid connections to Whitehall and a firm and pervasive sense of loyalty from its own freemen. A few instances will be enough. Rhode Island could not depend on revenue beyond its excise on alcohol. The tax on property was resisted quite often, beginning in 1664. At that time Warwick refused to pay its share of the levy to reimburse Dr. John Clarke for his expenses in procuring the new charter on the grounds that he had been the agent of the island and had supported himself by preaching, so he thus deserved less than he claimed.⁶² Warwick next attached a number of its other grievances to its obstinacy, ranging from its desires for a revision of the town boundary to its objections to procedures by the assembly.⁶³ Some men in Providence joined the opposition to taxes, to Roger Williams's dismay.⁶⁴ Warwick relented after six years, when the assembly.⁶⁵ Some men in Providence joined the opposition to taxes, to Roger Williams's dismay.⁶⁴ Warwick relented after six years, when the assembly took vigorous measures to resist Connecticut's claims stretching all the way to Narragansett Bay.⁶⁵ But the change was fleeting; Warwick promptly resisted the next tax on the grounds that it was for unnecessary expenditures.⁶⁶ Then the town reversed itself again, when it saw need for the tax.⁶⁷ Clearly, no colonial government could conduct business normally under such conditions.

The whole subject of the colonial boundaries—north and east as well as west—further illustrates the government's weakness arising from near autonomy. Whatever the charter might stipulate or imply—and Rhode Island men, of course, made imaginative use of the implications—the neighboring colonies could ignore the document and interpret their own grants to push their limits inside what Rhode Island thought was its own. Negotiations, threats, complaints, and ceremonial assertions of jurisdiction remained ineffectual or indecisive until the end of the seventeenth century. Royal commissions had as little capacity to settle matters as the contending governments. There was no framework in which to make a resolution permanent, not even force and surely not good will.

60. *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 59–138, *passim*.

61. *Ibid.*, III, 127–137.

62. *Ibid.*, II, 63–64, 78n–79n; *Early Recs. of Warwick*, 146.

63. *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 79n–80n, 106–107, 143–144; *Warwick Town Records*, Book A–2, 31–33, 36, 66–67 (original could not be found in Warwick Town Hall at last search; see microfilm or photostat at R.I. Hist. Soc.), hereafter cited as *Warwick Recs.*, A–2.

64. R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, X, 25.

65. *Warwick Recs.*, A–2, 50–51; *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 337–338.

66. *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 338, 358–360; R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, X, 143; *Warwick Recs.*, A–2, 72.

67. *Warwick Recs.*, A–2, 79.

68. Harris Papers, #8, R.I. Hist. Soc.; R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, X, 136; *Early Recs. of Providence*, II, 72-75, III, 102-106, 118, 136, XV, 117-118, 121-124, 147-150; *Recs. of R.I.*, II, 200-204, 208-209, 287-293; R.I. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, X [1902], 91-93; Swan, *Gregory Dexter*, 89-90.

69. Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York, 1966), 40-42, 47, 54, 61-65, 107, 117-144, 166, 171-172, 188, 210-212; R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, X, 152.

70. Providence Town Papers, 1st Ser., I, 20; *Early Recs. of Providence*, VIII, 124, 126, 127.

Two other illustrations of the colonial government's weakness may sketch the dimensions of the phenomenon. The town government of Providence broke into rival claimants to authority. The two town meetings sent two sets of deputies and appealed to the assembly against each other. The assembly solemnly made rulings, as it had a sure right to do, but the town went on quarreling.⁶⁸ The onset of war in 1675 between the Wampanoag Indians and the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts left the Rhode Island government unable to act vigorously. It straddled the fence between neutrality and aiding the English neighbors. The officials exerted no control over their citizens' participation in the conflict or the use of Aquidneck as a base for operations against Mount Hope. They could not stop an invasion of the Narragansett country by a joint army of the neighboring colonies—Rhode Island even provided transport—against a largely neutral Indian population with which Rhode Island had tried for very good reasons to remain on amicable terms. When that campaign succeeded in driving away many of these Indians and making enemies of most of the rest, Rhode Island could neither stop Connecticut forces (white or red) from conducting punitive and plundering expeditions west of Narragansett Bay nor take any serious action against Indian attackers on Providence and Warwick. The colonial government could not even get Warwick's compliance with its measures to concert defense.⁶⁹

This picture of impotence must be shaded, to be sure. Most of the examples adduced here were ones concerning the mainland. The colonial government had its greatest effect on Aquidneck, where most of the white population and wealth were. Besides, if towns often disregarded the colony's statutes and rulings, cases can be found of their obeying its laws and submitting to its court.⁷⁰ And somehow on the heels of King Philip's War the colony managed to play a deft game of thwarting one of the royal commissions on the conflicting land claims and to launch the town of East Greenwich.

Still, the colonial government hardly could be considered effective if its local governmental units and even individual citizens accepted or brushed aside its laws as suited to their wishes, rejected the authority of its high court when it ruled against them, regarded its boundaries as moveable to advance private land claims, and withheld taxes to influence basic policy. Of course, governments exist to serve individual as well as collective interests of their citizens, but the citizens ordinarily must accept the government's decisions as final.

The prospects of the colonial government may have appeared on the ascendant after King Philip's War, but at last English policy bore down on Rhode Island, and with traumatic effect. Under Charles II, the monarchy decided on a radical change in its relations to the American colonies and began to implement it by establishing a vast viceregal government, called the Dominion of New England, over the seaboard north of the Delaware River. Rhode Island for various reasons made no resistance to being included. For two years it was a county in the new jurisdiction, but the exercise of authority never settled into a system. The confusion raised all manner of hopes and fears.

Rhode Island and Narragansett Bay, showing the Post Road. Detail from a map of New England in Cotton Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana (1702). Courtesy of John Carter Brown Library.



None of the possibilities came to full effect before the Dominion disintegrated in 1689 as a result of a little revolution in its capital at Boston, which threw Rhode Island into something close to anarchy. The last officers of the charter government tried to resume it but had far less ability to rule than before.⁷¹ Nobody knew what England's response might be to the revolution. The Rhode Island government met frustration everywhere except Newport. Jamestown, Westerly, and Kingstown in effect withdrew for several years. Block Island threatened to do so unless Newport could send help against French privateers.⁷² Other forms of resistance appeared in the remaining towns. Even in Newport a few prominent men sought a complete change in government.

The importance of the imperial connection suddenly grew. Those in favor of replacing the charter government tirelessly used what influence they could muster in the imperial capital—in the end unsuccessfully, but for long with tantalizing prospects of gratification.⁷³ The officials trying to restore the charter government also sent their appeals to London.⁷⁴ The responses were contradictory. On the one hand, the crown gave commissions to governors of New York and Massachusetts to command the Rhode Island militia or some part of it (to serve the monarchs in the international war touched off by the Glorious Revolution in England) and to hear all complaints against the charter regime, quite likely to find grounds for replacing it.⁷⁵ On the other hand, the crown accepted the colony's arguments that its charter never had been vacated by due process of law and continued to give the colonial government full control over its internal affairs, including command of the militia and exemption from royal review of its statutes.⁷⁶

The Rhode Island officials made the best of three of these responses, ones received in 1694. These reaffirmed the charter but required the colony to provide a small quota of its militia to aid neighboring colonies.⁷⁷ On the strength of these documents, plus assorted political maneuvers to satisfy local interests, the charter government came into undubitable life in May 1696. All the towns sent deputies to the General Assembly that year and did so thereafter.⁷⁸

At that May Assembly the members imitated the English Parliament by dividing into two houses, letting the deputies prepare the tax bill, and giving them power to choose their own speaker and clerk.⁷⁹ If the journals of the lower house survived, they probably would show the adoption of rules of procedure modeled on those of the House of Commons. Possibly the shift to bicameralism was one of the political deals to pull the colony back together. In the long run, however, the change had greater significance as an early step in realigning Rhode Island into a British province.

IV

The rest of the steps followed within fifteen years. Obviously they preserved the charter—and soon doing that became the first virtue in Rhode Island political morality. They also accompanied and facilitated

71. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 257n, 258, 259, 266, 267–268; R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, V, 29; Proceedings of the General Assembly, V, 2, 3, State Archives.

72. New Shoreham Town Book No. 1, typescript, 121–122, R.I. Hist. Soc.

73. For example, Rhode Island Historical Society Miscellaneous Manuscripts, B-772; R.I. Hist. Soc. Manuscripts, X, 147.

74. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 258, 288–292.

75. *Ibid.*, III, 295–298, 303–305, 315–316, 321–322, 363–377, 460–463, 543–549.

76. *Ibid.*, 293–294, 298–300.

77. *Ibid.*, III, 293–300.

78. *Ibid.*, III, 310–311.

79. *Ibid.*, III, 313.

80. *Ibid.*, III, 329–331.

81. *Ibid.*, III, 329, 331.

82. Cranston Papers, R.I. Hist. Soc.;

Recs. of R.I., III, 462, 509; Dorothy S. Towle, ed., *Records of the Vice-Admiralty Court of Rhode Island, 1716–1752*, (Washington, D.C., 1936), 14n, 83–84.

a wide range of internal changes that benefited the colony, especially the commerce of Newport. After a few preliminaries under his predecessors, Governor Samuel Cranston presided over the main improvements. Perhaps it is fair to surmise that he knew what he was doing.

Cranston's immediate predecessors resisted English requirements as often as not, fearing to surrender the colony's autonomy, but after copying their intransigence a few times he learned to bow to London often enough to safeguard local control over essentials. Governor Walter Clarke, for instance, refused to take an oath to uphold the English trade laws.⁸⁰ Cranston took it. Clarke refused to install an admiralty court judge commissioned by the English high court of admiralty.⁸¹ Cranston, after several years of maneuvering over the colony's claim to have full admiralty jurisdiction within its borders and in some respects beyond—culminating in a sweeping assertion by the General Assembly—accepted the officers commissioned by English authority and administered the oath himself.⁸² The assembly raised no objection when Queen Anne vetoed a law creating a colonial admiralty court. Unlike Connecticut, Rhode Island put up no avowed opposition to the English trade laws and the royally appointed customs officers, especially after a Newport man, Jahleel Brenton, got the collectorship for New England.⁸³ The colony, in response to allegations that it allowed pirates to frequent its harbors, made a show of severity.⁸⁴ Soon the colonial officials were sending messages to imperial officials with words like these: "we do hould ourselves (as we allwayes have done) accountable to the Imperiall Crown of England for all our actions and proceedings."⁸⁵

The Cranston administration had to face the two last inquiries conducted by governors of Massachusetts and found ways to cope with them, especially by manipulating the imperial connection. Both men brought long lists of accusations inspired by Rhode Island men who favored abolition of the charter. These charges ranged from trifling points on the use of a shortened form of the colony's official name to fundamental matters, such as incompetence of officials, bias in the courts, incomplete and incomprehensible and unpublished laws, and the infliction of capital punishment.⁸⁶ The last was based on a strict reading of the charter and the theory, often embraced in England, that corporate colonies were like English municipalities.

The colonial officials replied to specific accusations as best they could but had to meet several. The General Assembly began to overhaul the laws and hired an agent in London to speak for it to the English commission in charge of policy on colonial affairs, known as the Board of Trade.⁸⁷ The first agent was a lawyer and a protégé of the dominant figure on the board and was able to reduce most of the controversy to legalistic quibbles. He successfully argued the main point: Rhode Island was not to be equated to an English municipality.⁸⁸ Between his skill and a political change that sapped the board's zeal, the antagonism between Whitehall and Newport subsided. The Board of Trade settled down to sending questionnaires to Governor Cranston.

By then Rhode Island had begun compliance with the demands of royal officials in other ways. In 1699 the imperial postmaster complained of lack of roads through the colony, so the General Assembly enacted a law enabling the town councils to appoint juries to lay out suitable highways.⁸⁰ In a few years the post road was pieced together. In Sarah Kemble Knight's journal, we can read a traveler's account of it in 1704. The road was unremarkable—even the absence of bridges seemed ordinary to her—but she found fault with the accommodations.⁸⁰

With greater effect in London, Governor Cranston undertook to make his colony a willing backer of Queen Anne's War in 1702. The assembly had a fort built at Newport that year and paid for a small garrison.⁸¹ It soon planned a scout system for the mainland and a guard for Block Island.⁸² Cranston and the assembly stopped resisting the requirement to send a quota of the militia to imperial forces and instead enacted regulations on its service and sent an armed vessel to accompany the men.⁸³ Then in the campaigns of 1709–1711 the colony sent more men and a small fleet, far beyond the imperial requisition.⁸⁴

Furthermore, Rhode Island made possible routine appeals from its high court to the Queen—or later, King—in Council. Indeed, Rhode Island litigants became especially apt to appeal. Revision of the laws made proceedings in the colony's courts comprehensible in the imperial capital.

These steps may be regarded as retreats from the virtual independence before 1686, but encouraged the profound changes that brought the colonial government to a degree of control anticipated in the charter. It could end most of the long-standing controversies over land and boundaries. It could pass laws on town government with hope that they would be obeyed. While imperial officials hectored Rhode Island, Governor Cranston entered negotiations with Connecticut (which was under even severer pressure from London) to settle the old conflict over jurisdiction in the Narragansett country. They reached an agreement in 1703, each surrendering part of what it claimed.⁸⁵ By ending their dispute both colonies could avoid exasperating imperial officials. Connecticut repudiated the deal soon, but had to honor it after a ruling by the King-in-Council in 1726.⁸⁶ In the process, Rhode Island subtly scuttled the hostile claims to the Narragansett land rights and solidified its authority there. Simultaneously, the colony's point of view on the controversies over land near Providence came to a combination of triumph and compromise. Rhode Island's agents in London managed to end the claims to a huge Pawtuxet generated by William Harris; the assembly managed to settle other disputes; yet the colony had to accept a provisional compromise with Massachusetts on the northern boundary of Providence and postpone action on the eastern boundary until another ruling by the Privy Council gave Rhode Island the benefit of another compromise.⁸⁷

Under cover of imperial demands to back the royal wars, Governor Cranston began to bring the militia into a describable system.⁸⁸ The

83. Thomas C. Barrows, *Trade and Empire: The British Customs Service in Colonial America, 1666–1775* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 40, 47.

84. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 333–337.

85. *Ibid.*, III, 509.

86. *Ibid.*, III, 385–388, 543–546.

87. *Ibid.*, III, 397–399, 416, 421ff.,

546–549, 559n–561n.

88. *Mass. Hist. Soc., Colls.*, 6th Ser., III (1889), 286, V (1892), 218.

89. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 384–385.

90. Sarah Kemble Knight, *The Journal of Madam Knight*, ed. George Parker Winship (New York, 1935), 8–26.

91. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 450, 506–507,

524–525, 557–558, IV, 175.

92. *Ibid.*, III, 491, 506, 526, 590.

93. *Ibid.*, III, 517–517, 566, IV, 5–6.

94. *Ibid.*, IV, 59, 70, 71, 74, 75, 81–83,

93–96, 99–101, 103, 107.

95. *Ibid.*, III, 354–356, 379–384,

396–398, 442, 474–475.

96. *Ibid.*, IV, 303–308, 369–373,

399–400, 405, 411–414, and *passim*.

97. *Ibid.*, III, 528–529, IV, 4–5, 30–33,

63, 83, 85–86, 94, 104, 110–111, 206,

218, 235–236, 243, 251–252, 335–336;

Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the*

State of Rhode Island and Providence

Plantations, 2 vols. (New York,

1859–1860), II, 27n, 29–30, 130–134,

157–158. For a series of documents and

comments on the Pawtuxet claims see

R.I. Hist. Soc., Colls., X (1902); see pp.

20–21, 45, 366–367, 369–370, for the

basic facts on the end of the controversy.

98. *Recs. of R.I.*, III, 430–435, 442,

453–454, 534.

99. *Ibid.*, IV, 119, 154–156, 178–179, 211, 377–379; Proceedings of the General Assembly, VIII, 212–216, State Arch.; Colony Recs., IV, 185, 215–216, 423–424, 494, V, 14, 279, 334–335, 422–423.

100. Barrows, *Trade and Empire*, 47, 70.

101. Richard Pares, *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights* (Oxford, 1938), *passim*.

General Assembly kept wavering in the face of political demands, so he never lived to see a final and full implementation of the charter's provisions giving the assembly authority to choose the officers.⁹⁹ Yet he assumed the title of colonel—as did his successors, including those who were Quakers—to signify creation of a centralized chain of command.

And beyond these measures to fit Rhode Island into the British empire, the colony managed to put its internal affairs into a tolerable state of order. The assembly was still stymied on taxing property but it gained the ability to create its own currency and to regulate town government and establish roads and ferries. Also, its courts gained respect. Yet the chief benefit of the imperial connection—and the goal of much of the internal reorganization—was in the commerce flowing through Newport. From the start Rhode Island founders had hoped for wealth through trade. Year by year European government sought to restrict international exchanges to their own advantage. By the time of the major wars around 1700, Rhode Island needed the benefits of being inside the English system. The need grew more acute thereafter. British successes in commerce and war added value to participation in the British empire. Newport's business predominantly harmonized with the trade laws. For many years the chronic exception was importing manufactures on a small scale from foreign flag ports in the Caribbean rather than from British. Suspicious royal officials imagined worse, to be sure.¹⁰⁰ Then after 1733 Newport engaged on a major scale in shady evasions of the tax on foreign molasses—a business that British policy commonly condoned.¹⁰¹

So if Rhode Island gave up some of its freedom from imperial control, it gained more valuable rewards. Broadly speaking, cooperation with Whitehall and concessions to royal authority gave the colonial government strength in its own territory. The change in the early eighteenth century was less formal than political. It scarcely altered the institutions of government. Rather, the colony gained a complex of relationships that served to hold all the connections, old and new, more tightly together. With appeals of judicial decisions made into a standard judicial procedure, the judgments of the colonial courts gained respect because they were less vulnerable than before to political maneuvers. The appeals, like the presence of the admiralty court, led to better-written, more respect-worthy law and more careful procedure in the colonial courts. So the new imperial tie toned up the colony's judicial muscle. Likewise, calls for help in the royal wars led both to internal revision—a spruced up militia and the beginning of coastal fortification—and creation of an expeditionary force, with all the novel organization required, which actually went to battle for the queen. Laying out the post road led to creating procedures used for many other highways. In short, acceptance of a hierarchical relation with London led to working hierarchical relations within the colony.

Accomplishing all this required skill, which Governor Cranston and his associates possessed, but it also required a fundamental political decision by the aspiring Newport merchants. They expanded their

business rapidly and took advantage of English success. They learned to make use of the admiralty courts and accept the British trade laws formally while evading such confinements as they could not endure. They backed the colonial government, which served their interests in many ways. In effect, they became more than ever a ruling elite and at last could rule effectively, as they never could before 1686. The charter remained vital for them. It put government into their control—in contrast to the rule from an autocratic governor and a poorly organized county oligarchy in the time of the Dominion of New England. And the new state of affairs let them use the colonial government as a means of adjusting the subordination to the imperial for the purpose of screening out unacceptable effects. Thus the Newport leadership gained mastery in its own jurisdiction.

This is a version of what happened in many colonies around the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. Nobody can ever accuse Rhode Island of being typical, but in this era it followed a course roughly parallel to several others. It arrived at its destination quite successfully, keeping the benefits of its self-government under the charter of 1663 in spite of strenuous attacks on those privileges, while the colony thrived. Accordingly, the Rhode Island government finally got the pervasive endorsement of its authority that had been lacking, while imperial officials guarded it against the designs of its larger neighbors. Establishing the boundaries ceased being an endless series of competitive assertions ignored by the opposition. The charter became an object of veneration in a way that foreshadowed respect for constitutions after the American Revolution, because Rhode Island saw in the charter what Americans later would see in their constitutions—that is, a form of higher law above the expediency of the day. Nothing was more reflexive in colonial politics than arguing for policy as an implication of the charter or accusing opponents of advocating measures that would imperil the charter. In this way the colony got a common sense of the foundations of its society that had failed to appear earlier and that endorsement of direct democracy had not provided.



*The Great Swamp Fight
Monument in South Kingston,
Rhode Island. Photography by
Denise Bastien. Courtesy of
Rhode Island Historical Society.*

Rhode Island Renegade: The Enigma of Joshua Tefft

Colin G. Calloway

In December 1675, in the winter of King Philip's War, troops from the United Colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Connecticut launched a campaign against the powerful Narragansett Indians of southern Rhode Island. The action was intended as a pre-emptive strike, to cripple Narragansett power before the tribe threw in its lot with King Philip. Braving freezing temperatures and deep snow drifts, the army—under the command of Governor Josiah Winslow of Plymouth—marched into the heart of the enemy's territory. Six days before Christmas, the troops attacked the main Narragansett village and burned it to the ground in what became known as the "Great Swamp Fight." The campaign resulted in the deaths of upwards of a thousand Indians, but it proved to be a pyrrhic victory for the colonists. The surviving Narragansetts were driven into the arms of Philip's Wampanoags and Nipmucks, making common cause with them against the hated English. The colonial army itself experienced a nightmare retreat back to its base at Smith's Garrison (Wickford), and suffered final casualties of about 80 dead, 150 wounded.¹ As the Narragansetts evacuated their country in the aftermath of the Swamp Fight, they left behind bands of warriors to act as a rearguard and to drive off cattle to feed their starving tribe. On January 14, 1676, a force of men from Providence clashed with one of these groups. In the ensuing skirmish, a white renegade by the name of Joshua Tefft was wounded in the knee, overpowered, and taken prisoner. He was marched to Wickford under guard and interrogated. His captors were satisfied that Tefft had not only "turned Indian" but had actually fought for the Narragansetts in the recent battle. A military court sentenced him to a traitor's death and, on January 18, Tefft was hanged, drawn and quartered.²

Joshua Tefft's background, the reasons for his defection to the Indians, the exact nature of his relations with them, and the extent of his participation in the Swamp Fight have remained shrouded in mystery from that day to this. It is doubtful that Tefft was actually as black a traitor as his captors assumed, but examination of the available evidence produces more questions than answers about this intriguing individual. However, one thing is clear: Tefft's experience was not unique. Time and again on the American frontier, people who chose to live among the Indians found themselves labeled "renegades." Invari-

Mr. Calloway, a native of West Yorkshire, England, has written a number of articles on Indian history. He lives and teaches in Vermont.

1. Most estimates of Narragansett strength at the time range between 2,000 and 5,000 men. They were perhaps the most powerful tribe in New England, but had already been reduced by disease and the defection of tributary bands, which may account for the variations in estimates of their numbers. See Rhode Island Historical Society, *Collections*, III (1835), 6. On the tribe's history and culture see William S. Simmons, "Narragansett," in Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. XV: Northeast (Washington, D.C., 1978), 190–197. For differing views of the campaign against the Narragansetts see Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York, 1966), chap. 7; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), 302–312. For contemporary accounts see Alan and Mary Simpson, eds., *Diary of King Philip's War 1675–76 by Colonel Benjamin Church* (Chester, Conn., 1975), 94–102; Nathaniel Morton, *New England's Memorial*, ed. John Davis, 5th ed. (Boston, 1826), 432–433; Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New-England* (London, 1676), 20.

2. Tefft's name is sometimes given as Tift, Tiftt, or Tefte. I wish to express my gratitude to Neal Salisbury of Smith College for drawing my attention to Tefft. Until he did so, my research on renegades had been focused primarily on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

3. In 1794, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, a young Canadian named Charles Smith, who was an adopted chief among the Shawnee and who fought with the Indians, was shot through the knees, fell into the hands of the Americans, and was quartered alive. See: E. A. Cruikshank, ed., *The Correspondence of Lieut. Governor James Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents*, 5 vols. (Toronto, 1923-1931), III, 29-30.

4. Everett V. Stonequist, *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict* (New York, 1961), introduction; William Barrows, "The Half-Breed Indians of North America," *Andover Review*, XII (1889), 15-36; James Axtell, "The White Indians of Colonial America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., XXXII (1975), 55-88; Alden T. Vaughan and Daniel K. Richter, "Crossing the Cultural Divide: Indians and New Englanders, 1605-1763," *American Antiquarian Society, Proceedings*, XC (1980), part 1, 23-99.

5. For examples of renegades who displayed a strong identification, and in some instances actually fought, for the Indians see Richard Drinnon, *White Savage: The Case of John Dunn Hunter* (New York, 1972); Edwin James, ed., *A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner during thirty years residence among the Indians in the interior of North America* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1965); Thomas Boyd, *Simon Girty: The White Savage* (New York, 1928); Consul W. Butterfield, *History of the Girtys* (Cincinnati, 1890); Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., *Chronicles of Border Warfare . . . by Alexander Scott Withers* (Cincinnati, 1903), 340-343; Bert Anson, *The Miami Indians* (Norman, Okla., 1970), 126; Dan L. Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria* (Norman, Okla., 1975), 279-280.

6. William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, ed. Harvey Wish (New York, 1962), 140-145; J. Hammond Trumbull, ed., *Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, 15 vols. (Hartford, 1850-1890), I, 78 (hereafter cited as *Public Recs. of Conn.*); Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 4th Ser., VI (1863), 215, 221-223, 245; James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York, 1981), 279.

7. Cf. Paul Beers, "Simon Girty: beast in human form," *American History Illustrated*, III (Dec. 1968), 20-24; Noel L. Loomis, "Introduction," in James, ed., *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*; Drinnon, *White Savage*, introduction and *passim*.

8. James N. Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narragansett Historical Register*, III (1884), 164.

ably they incurred the hatred and contempt of their white countrymen; occasionally they suffered a fate similar to Tefft's.¹

The meeting of Indian and white cultures in North America produced many "marginal" people who belonged to both societies and yet to neither. Frontiersmen and fur traders operating in the wilderness often lived more like Indians than like white men. Whites who took Indian wives found themselves ostracized from "civilized" society. Their mixed-blood children lived in a kind of cultural no-man's land or, more often, grew up in Indian societies where they were accorded a toleration denied them by whites. White captives sometimes refused to return from the Indian country, either because they had developed attachments and produced families among the Indians, or because they feared the stigma to which their experience would expose them once they returned to white society.² A few of these "white Indians" came to identify so closely with their adopted Indian families and friends that they fought alongside, or at least aided, them in their wars against invading white men. Joshua Tefft was one of the first of these renegades but he was by no means the last.³

The evidence which survives about individual renegades is both fragmentary and questionable. Reports about them tend to offer a fleeting glimpse rather than a composite picture, and renegades themselves left few or no records. Those people who did put pen to paper were invariably hostile. From the beginning, English colonizers regarded the Indian and his wilderness as a threat to the kind of civilization they were striving to create in the New World; and Englishmen who mingled with the "savages" incurred the distaste of their neighbors and the distrust of the authorities. In 1628, Thomas Morton's settlement at Merry Mount was suppressed and Morton himself shipped back to England on charges of consorting with and selling guns to the local Indians. In 1642, the General Court of Connecticut imposed fines, imprisonment and whipping as penalties for anyone caught living with the Indians. In English eyes, those people who ran away to join the Indians were traitors to their king, their church, their country, and their race.⁴ Those writers who paid attention to these outcasts produced diatribes rather than objective assessments, and the historical image of characters like Joshua Tefft, Simon Girty, and John Tanner is one blackened by legend and the hatred of their contemporaries. At this distance in time we may not be able to reconstruct the true life-stories of these individuals, but we can, at least, recognize the prejudices of those who helped to create the stereotype of the cruel and heartless renegade.⁵

Tefft seems to have been a native of Providence or Pettaquamscutt and first appears, doing military service, about 1662.⁶ What motivated him to abandon his countrymen and join the Indians is unclear. One version maintains that he turned Indian following some disagreement with his neighbors; another, that he deserted the colonial army in resentment after having received "a deserved Punishment" for some misdemeanor.⁷ One thing is certain: when Tefft left his own people for the Indians he went, not to the Narragansetts among whom he was even-

tually captured, but to the Wampanoags, the tribe of Metacom (King Philip). In fact, he married a Wampanoag woman. She may or may not have been the cause of his apostasy, but, so long as he remained married to her, his course was set: white society had no place for "squaw men" or for families of mixed blood. For the next fourteen years he lived among or near the Wampanoag Indians. Only at the end of this time, as a result of circumstances created by King Philip's War, did Tefft join the Narragansetts.¹⁰

Later rumor and legend said that Tefft actually killed his own mother and father. This seemed a fitting crime for a renegade devoid of humanity, but there is no evidence to support the story. However, a letter from Captain James Oliver, describing Tefft after his capture, ends with the enigmatic statement: "A sad wretch, he never heard a sermon but once these fourteen years. His father, going to recall him lost his head and lies unburied."¹¹ Tradition holds that Tefft's father, disgusted by Joshua's abandonment of "civilized" ways and his marriage to a "savage," excluded him from his will. Writing a century ago, James N. Arnold challenged this tradition and suggested that the father died before Joshua turned Indian and therefore could not have punished his son for a crime not yet committed. Douglas E. Leach, however, finds convincing evidence that in the father's will, dated November 30, 1674, Joshua was cut off with only a shilling, while his brother-in-law was bequeathed the father's house.¹² Clearly, Tefft's preference for the Indian way of life and for his adopted Indian family was the cause of much distress to his natural family, who had to bear the pain of rejection and live with the fact that their neighbors considered their son to

9. William Hubbard, *The Present State of New-England* (London, 1677), 59; Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699, Original Narratives of Early American History* (New York, 1913), 67.

10. George Madison Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 3d ed. (Boston, 1906), 175; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 164. Edgar Mayhew Bacon claims that Tefft fled from Massachusetts after committing a crime and took refuge with the Narragansetts. See Bacon, *Narragansett Bay: Its Historic and Romantic Associations* (New York, 1904), 352.

11. Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 165. Thomas Hutchinson attributed this letter to Major William Bradford (son of the Plymouth governor), who was wounded in the fight, but the author was Oliver. Bradford did write a letter in which he referred to Tefft, but he did not mention the renegade by name. Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay*, ed. L. S. Mayo, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), I, 255n; cf. Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 173-175. Bradford's letter is in Morton, *New England's Memorial*, 434-435. Tefft was not the only renegade to be wrongfully suspected of murder. See James, ed., *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, xiv-xvi.

12. Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 168; Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 139.

A nineteenth-century chromolithograph of King Philip (Metacom), chief sachem of the Wampanoag Indians. Gift of Philip Simonds. Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4915).



The attack on the Great Swamp fort. Engraving from Jacob Abbott, History of King Philip (1901). Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4921).



13. *A farther Brief and True Narration of the Great Swamp Fight in the Narragansett Country, December 19, 1675* [orig. publ. 1676] Providence, 1912, n.p.

14. R.I. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, III (1835), 81–82. Technically, the commissioners did not issue a declaration of war. Rather, they proclaimed their intention of sending a force against the Narragansetts but left the door open for peaceful settlement in the unlikely event that the Narragansetts should decide to comply with the English demands. For evidence that the declaration was issued ten days later than commonly believed see Douglas Edward Leach, "A New View of the Declaration of War against the Narragansetts, November 1675," *R.I. History*, XV (1956), 33–41. See also Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (New York, 1982), 212–215.

be a degenerate outcast. Attitudes against Tefft obviously hardened when war broke out with the Wampanoags in 1675.

With the beginning of King Philip's War, the Wampanoags sent their women, children, and wounded to take refuge with the Narragansetts who were still at peace. There was little love lost between the two tribes, but native custom demanded that, in time of war, the Narragansetts should provide asylum for the non-combatants of a neighboring tribe, if requested. Unfortunately, the Narragansetts had earlier made conflicting commitments to the English, undertaking to deliver up any hostile warriors who fell into their hands. A number of Wampanoag heads were brought in to the colonial authorities but, on the whole, the Narragansetts refused to hand over those who sought refuge with them, particularly since to do so would have condemned the Wampanoag women and children to be sold into slavery.¹³ The Narragansett stand does credit to their humanity but it brought Puritan retribution down on their heads. The Commissioners of the United Colonies, meeting in Boston in November 1675, determined that an army of 1,000 soldiers should be raised and sent into the Narragansett country to punish the tribe: "For as much as the Narragansett Indians are deeply accessory in the present outrages of the barbarous natives that are in open hostility with the English; this appearing by their harboring the actors thereof,—relieving and succouring their women and children and wounded men, and detaining them in their custody, notwithstanding the covenant made by their Sachems to deliver them to the English." For the second time in less than forty years, the Narragansetts were about to be embroiled against their better judgment in a war not of their making.¹⁴

According to Arnold, Tefft went to the Narragansetts as a member of an embassy sent by King Philip to urge united action against the English. It is more likely that Tefft went as a non-combatant. When racial war erupted on the frontier, so-called renegades often tried to avoid having to fight against their own people, and it made sense for Tefft to

abstain from the conflict by accompanying the Wampanoag women and children to a supposed refuge among the Narragansetts. This Narragansett contingent went to seek a haven from war, not to incite further bloodshed.¹⁵ The Narragansetts, however, were unwilling to accept an English renegade at face value, particularly one who came to them from the Wampanoag, and they apparently put Tefft's apostasy to the test by requiring him to kill a white man who had wronged a member of the tribe. Tefft seems to have carried out the deed and brought in the victim's scalp as proof. At any rate, the Narragansetts' suspicions were allayed to the extent that Tefft was allowed to remain among them.¹⁶

The main Narragansett village was located in the area of present-day South Kingstown and the inhabitants relied for their safety upon the protection afforded by a large swamp. However, they also erected palisades and other defensive structures around their wigwams; the attacking soldiers described the village as a fortress. The fortifications were well-planned and effectively constructed, and the colonists assumed that Tefft was responsible for building them, or at least for overseeing their construction. In fact, the fortress probably was built by an Indian blacksmith, known to the English as "Stone-Wall John," possibly with Tefft's help. That Tefft contributed in some capacity is certain: he himself admitted to having worked on the fortifications, albeit under threat of death from the Indians.¹⁷

When the English attack came, the Narragansett's protection failed them, just as their neutrality had failed to keep them out of the war. An Indian captive guided Winslow's army through the swamp, which, having frozen over in the severe cold, allowed the English troops to advance across it without impediment. In the heat of the battle, the English put the Indian wigwams to the torch, turning the fortified village into a death trap. William Hubbard, the Puritan historian, later recorded that "our Soldiers came upon them when they were ready to dress their Dinner; but our sudden and unexpected assault put them besides that work, making their Cookrooms too hot for them at that time, when they and their Mitchen fryed together."¹⁸ Between 700 and 1000 Indians, of whom the majority were women and children, perished in the conflagration. Suffering dreadfully from cold and hunger, the survivors fled to King Philip for sustenance and revenge. The colonial army retreated through the night to Wickford, dragging their wounded with them. The destruction of the village had deprived the soldiers of any shelter, but their decision to withdraw was prompted by the prospect of strong Indian reinforcements arriving on the scene, "to whom if God had so pleased, we had been but a morsel, after so much disablement."¹⁹

Tefft was certainly present in the Narragansett village during the Great Swamp Fight. The exact nature of his involvement and participation in the conflict is less certain, since our only information comes from statements made about him after his capture, almost a month later. It is possible that the Narragansetts forced Tefft to take up arms

15. Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 165. For examples of other renegades who refused to fight against their own people see Carl F. Klinck and James Talman, eds., *The Journal of Major John Norton, 1816* (Toronto, 1970), 181; Charles McKnight, *Our Western Border* . . . (Philadelphia, 1875), 347.

16. Arnold "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 164-165; *Public Recs. of Conn.*, II, 401n.

17. Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 186; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 166; Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars*, 58-59.

18. Hubbard, *Present State of New-England*, 53.

19. Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 131-133. Benjamin Church had apparently argued against destroying the village because it could have provided the troops with much-needed food and shelter. Simpson and Simpson, eds., *Diary of King Philip's War*, 100-101. See also Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 193-194.

20. Almost 20 years later, an Indian army compelled resident traders and white sympathizers to bear arms against American troops at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. See Cruikshank, ed., *Correspondence of Lieut. Governor John Graves Simcoe*, V, 90–91.

21. *Public Recs. of Conn.*, II, 401, 401n; Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 175; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III [1884], 166.

against the English: in the life and death struggle that developed, his non-combatant status was a luxury that the Indians could neither afford nor tolerate. Once the attack started, however, Tefft would have needed little prompting: he could expect no mercy if captured by his former countrymen and was fighting for his life as surely as if he had been a full-blood Narragansett warrior.²⁰ Tefft himself denied having participated in the fighting and maintained that he was there under duress. Nevertheless, the weight of the evidence suggests that he espoused the Narragansett cause from the start and that he took a willing and active part in the defense of the Indian village. According to a report made by Indian spies sent out by Massachusetts the following month, the Narragansetts said that Tefft "did them good service & kild & wounded 5 or 6 English, in that fight." Another account credits him with keeping up a steady stream of gunfire during the engagement and holds him responsible for wounding Captain Seeley of the colonial army.²¹

Realizing that the battle was lost, Tefft and the surviving warriors withdrew to fight another day. The fate of Tefft's Indian wife is unknown. Some sixty Wampanoags died in the fight and, if she was in the Narragansett stronghold at the time of the attack, it is possible that she was one of the victims. If so, her death would have completed Tefft's alienation from the people of his birth. White renegades on subsequent frontiers were frequently denounced as surpassing the Indians in cruelty and ferocity. Some may have displayed a kind of conversion zeal in fighting against their own kind; more often they were driven to an intense hatred of the white race by the atrocities they saw perpetrated against their Indian friends and relatives. Tefft's wife may have escaped the massacre, but it would have been unusual if Tefft had not

"Portrait of Philip." Engraving from S. G. Goodrich, *Pictorial History of America* (1851). Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4919).



been revolted by the Puritan soldiers' butchery of the Indians who had granted refuge to the Wampanoag women and children.²²

The most complete account of Tefft's part in the battle was given by Tefft himself after his capture. This testimony offers a far more sympathetic picture of the renegade than that left by his enemies, but it cannot be taken as an accurate record. A number of his statements appear to be untrue, and his captors certainly dismissed most of what he said as a desperate attempt to save his own skin. Tefft was captured near Providence when Captain Fenner and a party of fifteen or sixteen men encountered a group of Indians stealing cattle. Among the group was Tefft, dressed like an Indian warrior. The renegade was wounded and seized before he had chance to discharge his musket, which was fully loaded. That night, Fenner and other officers interrogated the prisoner, and Roger Williams of Providence was called upon to take down a record of Tefft's examination and confession. Williams then sent a report to Governor John Leverett at Boston "to present you with an extract of the pith & substance of all he answered to us."²³

Tefft said that he had been with the Narragansetts about twenty-seven days. He claimed he had been abducted from his farm a mile and a half from Pettaquamscutt by a Narragansett raiding party who killed his cattle and threatened him with death. His life was spared on condition that he become a slave of one of the Narragansett sachems. The Narragansetts took him to their stronghold and put him to work. When the English attack came, Tefft "wayted on his master the Sachim there" until the Indian was wounded. Tefft denied that he himself bore arms in the fight. After the soldiers withdrew from the village, some Narragansetts returned to count their losses and salvage any food and supplies that had escaped the fire. He said they found ninety-seven dead and forty-eight wounded Indians, besides those who had been shot or burned to death in the wigwams, and half a dozen English bodies. The Indians were almost completely out of powder at this point, which explained why they had allowed the enemy to march back to Wickford unmolested. This situation was now changed, however, for Metacom had sent word that the French had promised to supply the Indians with all the ammunition and powder they needed in the war, and had sent the first shipment (along with a brass gun and bandoleer for Metacom himself, who was now at his headquarters near Quaboag). Tefft reported that the Narragansett sachems were in a swamp about ten miles northwest of Wickford. He said that only Canonicus (called Pessacus by the English) was in favor of peace; Canonchet (also known as Miantonomi) and the younger sachems were resolved to continue the fight. Indeed, Canonchet and the majority of the Narragansetts had already left for a rendezvous with Metacom. They began the evacuation on January 11, leaving some 400 warriors behind to protect their rear, while another small group was to drive off cattle.²⁴

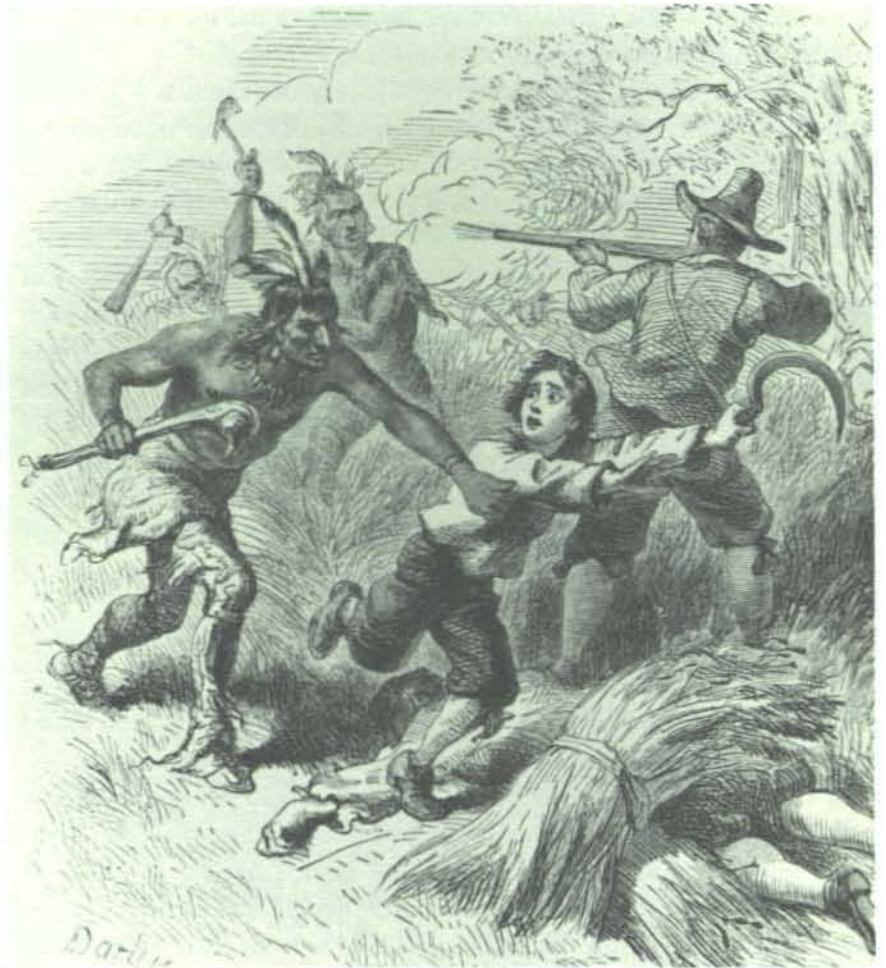
In addition, Tefft offered information that the Mohegan and Pequot warriors who marched with the colonial army as allies had proved false in the battle, parleying with the Narragansetts at the beginning of the

22. Morton, *New England's Memorial*, 434; J. Norman Heard, *White into Red: A Study of the Assimilation of White Persons Captured by Indians* (Metuchen, N.J., 1973), 41; George E. Hyde, *Life of George Bent* (Norman, Okla., 1968), xviii.

23. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars*, 67; Roger Williams to John Leverett, Jan. 14, 1675/76, Mass. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, 4th Ser., VI (1863), 307.

24. Williams to Leverett, Jan. 14, 1675/76, Mass. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, 4th Ser., VI (1863), 308-311.

"The King Philip War—A Raid on the Settlers." From *Welcome Arnold Greene, Providence Plantations for 250 Years (1886)*. Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4246).



25. *Ibid.*, 308. The Swamp Fight thus saw an ironic reversal of roles: thirty-eight years earlier the Narragansetts had been present as allies of the Puritan army that destroyed the Pequot fort on the Mystic River in Connecticut, and had displayed a similar distaste in their involvement. See Jennings, *Invasion of America*, 222–223.

action and deliberately shooting high during the fight.²⁵ Moreover, he implicated Ninigret, sachem of the Eastern Niantics. This tribe had close cultural and political connections with the Narragansetts, but Ninigret consistently worked to preserve his people's autonomy by keeping them neutral in the war. According to Tefft, however, Niantic warriors fought against the English in the fort and Ninigret sent mats and other provisions to help the Narragansetts after the battle. Tefft's information conflicted with Ninigret's professions of friendship for the English and, not surprisingly, it was not decided that an army should be sent to Ninigret's village "to see if he be such a friend as he pretends." The records make no mention of torture being employed to extract this information from Tefft and it was possibly not needed. Tefft was fully aware of what his fate was likely to be, and his charges against the Pequot, Mohegan, and Niantic were probably no more than a last-ditch effort to curry favor with his captors by volunteering valuable information. James Arnold, attempting to set the record straight with regard to Tefft, apparently found the "betrayal" of Ninigret difficult to justify. Instead, he declared: "It is a well-established historical fact that Ninecraft was a coward and a traitor, and that the little tribe over which

he was sachem was saved through their cowardice and perfidy," which does nothing to exonerate Tefft and does little credit to Ninigret's diplomatic efforts on behalf of his people.²⁶

Tefft's predicament was hopeless. King Philip's War was the costliest Indian conflict in New England's history and the colonists were on their knees by the winter of 1675–1676. The colonial army was still smarting from the heavy casualties incurred in the Great Swamp Fight and the commanders were in no mood to show mercy to a white renegade caught running with the Indians. Within four days of his capture, Tefft had been tried, sentenced to death, and executed, his head stuck upon a gatepost in the time-honored method of proclaiming the fate that awaited all traitors. Hubbard, in his history of the war, offered a final comment on the unfortunate Tefft: "As to his Religion he was found as ignorant as an Heathen, which no doubt caused the fewer tears to be shed at his Funeral, standers by being unwilling to lavish pity upon him that had divested himself of Nature itself, as well as Religion, in a time when so much pity was needed elsewhere, and nothing left besides wherewith to relieve the sufferers."²⁷ In the midst of a bloody and brutal war, men had little time or inclination to concern themselves with one who had turned against his own people and forsaken his God. It was left for later historians to speculate as to whether Tefft was as black a rogue as he was painted by contemporaries or whether he was a victim of circumstance.²⁸

Wounded and powerless in the hands of his former countrymen, volunteering information in a futile attempt to save his life, Tefft presents a wretched and tragic figure. He personifies the wider tragedy of people caught in a bitter racial war that allowed for no neutrals. For "mixed bloods" and "Indianized" white people, Indian society offered the only possible refuge from the intolerance of the white man's world. Unfortunately, the advance of white "civilization" across North America ensured that there was no hiding place for these persons. Sooner or later they had to take sides. Their dilemma was whether to fight alongside the Indians who accepted them but were doomed to defeat, or to side with a victorious white society that regarded them with suspicion and loathing. For one reason or another, Joshua Tefft found himself identifying with the Wampanoags and fighting with the Narragansetts and he shared in the tragedy of those peoples at the hands of their Puritan conquerors.²⁹



The death of King Philip as imagined by a nineteenth-century artist. Engraving from S. G. Goodrich, Pictorial History of America (1851). Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society Library (RHi x3 4918).

26. Mass. Hist. Soc., Colls., 4th Ser., VI (1863), 311; Public Recs. of Conn., II, 401; Morton, *New England's Memorial*, 434–435; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 169. On Ninigret's constant, and ultimately unsuccessful, diplomatic efforts to preserve the autonomy of the Eastern Niantic see Timothy J. Sehr, "Ninigret's Tactics of Accommodation—Indian Diplomacy in New England, 1637–1675," *R.I. History*, XXXVI (1977), 43–53; and Glenn W. LaFantasie and Paul R. Campbell, "Covenants of Grace, Covenants of Wrath: Niantic-Puritan Relations in New-England," *R.I. History*, XXXVII (1978), 15–23.

27. Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War*, 175; Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 140; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), 173; Hubbard, *Present State of New England*, 59.

28. For example, Samuel G. Drake, ed., *The History of the Indian Wars in New England* (Roxbury, Mass., 1865), 162n–163n; Arnold, "Joshua Tefft," *Narr. Hist. Reg.*, III (1884), *passim*; Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 139–140.

29. On subsequent Narragansett fortunes see Paul R. Campbell and Glenn W. LaFantasie, "Scattered to the Winds of Heaven—Narragansett Indians, 1676–1880," *R.I. History*, XXXVII (1978), 67–83.

Volume 43 Index

- African Union Meeting House, 73, 76
Afro-Americans, *The Afro-Yankees: Providence's Black Community in the Antebellum Era*, reviewed, 73-76
Albro, Lawrence, 98-100, 102, 105
Aldrich, Rev., 99
Allen, Abby, 42
Allen, Benjamin, 80, 89-90, 96-99, 101
Allen, Caleb, 100-101, 110-111
Allen, Clifford, 57, 59-60, 62, 64-65, 67
Allen, Crawford, 42-43, 46, 48-49; brick store, *illus.*, 43
Allen, Eliza Harriet Arnold, 21-23, 25, 27, 30, 32
Allen, Hannah, 103
Allen, Zachariah, 21, 24-25, 42
Anne, Queen of England, 132-133
Anthony, Daniel, 46
Antiques, magazine, 39
Aquidneck and formation of colonial government, 119-135
Archaeology, "Another View of Providence: Archaeological Investigation of the Old Stone Square Site," 50-68
Arnold, Edward, 104
Arnold, James N., 139-140, 144
Arnold, Louisa, 33
Arnold, Louisa Caroline (Gindrat), 20, 22-23, 33; *illus.*, 24
Arnold, Mary Cornelia, 33
Arnold, Richard James, "North by South: The Two Lives of Richard James Arnold," 18-33; *illus.*, 18, 23-24, 29
Arnold, Samuel, 19-20, 26
Arnold, Samuel Green, 32
Arnold, Thomas Clay, 23, 32-33
Arnold, Welcome, 19
Arnold, William Eliot, 32
Art, "A View of Providence: The Explication of a Landscape Painting," front, No. 2, 38-49, 60
The Atlantic Frontier, 6
Babcock, Hezekiah, 103
Babcock, William, 90
Baker, Edwin G., 66
Baptists, religious liberty, 127
Bartlett, John Russell, 39
Bates, Louise Prosser, 86
Battey, Major, 109
Baylies, Francis, 16
Benevolent Congregational Society, Providence, 40-41
Bicknell, Thomas W., 16
Black history: *See* Afro-Americans
Block Island, formation of colonial government, 131
Bond, Emily, 20
Bond, Samuel, 20
Boston Neck, map, 82
Bourne, Jared, 12
Bowen, Obadiah, Sr., 9, 11
Braddock, Edward, 110
Bradford, William, 3
Branch, Sanford, 46-49, 59-61
Braudel, Fernand, 54
Brenton, Ebenezer, 98
Brenton, Jahleel, 132
Brenton, William, 12
Brown, Benjamin, 104-105
Brown, Daniel, 105
Brown, Elisha, 85, 102-104
Brown, James, 3, 5, 8, 11-12
Brown, James (Captain), 105
Brown, Jere, 95
Brown, John, 8-11, 14, 56, 60
Brown, Joseph, 47-49
Brown, Obadiah, 47
Brown, Robert, 97, 105, 115
Brown, Sam, 95
Brown, Thomas, 104-105, 108
Brown, William J., 75
Brown & Sharpe Co., 60, 64-65, 73; *illus.*, 63
Brown University, 19
Bullock, Sarah, 48
Butterworth, John, 10, 12
Cahoon, Rev., 101
Cahoon, William, 11
Calloway, Colin G., "Rhode Island Renegade: The Enigma of Joshua Tefft," 137-145
Canonchet, 143
Canonicus, 143
Carpenter, Daniel, 109
Carpenter, Solomon, 91
Carpenter, Thomas, 108

- Carr, Rev., 99, 101, 104
 Case, Immanuel, 106, 111
 Case, John, 98, 106
 Case, Jonathan, 108
 Case, Sanford, 100
 Champlin, Elizabeth, 99
 Champlin, Jeffry, 99, 106-107, 113
 Champlin, Rev., 105
 Champlin, Stephen, Jr., 106
 Champlin, Stephen, Jr., 106
 Chandler, Alfred D., 72, 73
 Charles I, King of England, 120, 122
 Charles II, King of England, 3, 127, 130
 Child, Jeremiah, 9, 11
 Clark, Simeon, 114
 Clarke, John, 126, 129
 Clarke, Walter, 132
 Clay, Thomas Savage, 23-24, 32
 Clifford, Benjamin, family of, 39
 Cobb, Gersom, 12
 Cobleich, John, 12
 Coddington, William, 88, 92, 120, 122-123, 126
 Coggeshall, Daniel, 81, 83, 85, 87-88, 90-91, 93-97, 99-100, 102, 107
 Coggeshall, Mrs., 99
 Cole, Hugh, Sr., 14
 Cole, Hugh, Jr., 14
 Cole, James, 14
 Cole, John, 93
 Congdon, John, 94
 Congdon, William, 93, 104, 108, 114
 Congregationalism, Plymouth Colony, 3
 Connecticut, formation of colonial government, 119, 129-130, 132-133; King Philip's War, 137
 Cook, Edward M., Jr., "Jeffry Watson's Diary, 1740-1784: Family, Community, Religion, and Politics in Colonial Rhode Island," 79-116
 Cook, John, 87-88
 Cooke, Benoni, 61
 Cottrol, Robert J., *The Afro-Yankees: Providence's Black Community in the Antebellum Era*, reviewed, 73-76
 Coughtry, Jay, book reviewed by, 73-76
 Cowell, Benjamin, 47
 Crabtree, John, 14
 Cranston, Samuel, 132-134
 Cranston (Scranton), Thomas, 87-88
 Crawford, Gideon, 42
 Crawford, Joseph, 42, 45, 57, 60, 64, 66
 Crawford, William, (1), 42, 44
 Crawford, William (2), 42
 Curry, Leonard, 73
 Davis, Peter, 107
 Dawley, Daniel, 82
 Dawley, Michael, 95
 Dawley, Sam, 92
 Dikse, John, 5, 12, 14
 Dimeo Construction Company, 55
 Dominion of New England, formation of colonial government, 130-131, 135
 Dorr, Thomas Wilson, 21
 Douglass, Mr. [blacksmith], 88-90, 94-97
 Downing, Antoinette F., 39n
 Earle, Caleb, 41, 46-49, 59-61, 64-67
 East Greenwich, formation of colonial government, 130
 Easton, James, 94
 Eddy, Caleb, 11
 Eddy, Samuel, 11-12
 Eddy, Zechariah, 11
 Edmand, Joseph, 100
 Eldredge, Thomas, 103, 113
 Emlen, Robert P., 55; "A View of Providence: The Explication of a Landscape Painting," front, No. 2, 38-49, 60
 English settlements, William Hubbard map of New England, front, No. 1
 Fenner, Captain, 143
 Ferguson, Charles F., 26-28
 Field, Charles, 47
 First Baptist Church, Swansea, Mass., illus., 2
 First Congregational Church, Providence, 39-40, 47-48
 Fisher, Alvan, 39, 51-52, 59
 Fitch, John, 43, 51, 53, 59
 Fothergill, Samuel, 84, 98
 Franklin, Abel, 108
 Fuller Iron Works, 63
 Gardner, Benoni, 102
 Gardner, Desire, 114
 Gardner, Ephraim, 80, 88, 103, 107
 Gardner, Ezekiel, 80, 87-92, 94, 96-98, 109
 Gardner, Gideon, 84, 100
 Gardner, Hannah (Hannah Gardner Watson), 100-101, 112
 Gardner, Hannah (d. William and Sarah), 114
 Gardner, Henry, 80, 91, 97, 99, 107, 110-111
 Gardner, John, 82-83, 87, 89-90, 92-96, 99-100, 105-106
 Gardner, Nathan, 106
 Gardner, Nicholas, 94, 111, 116

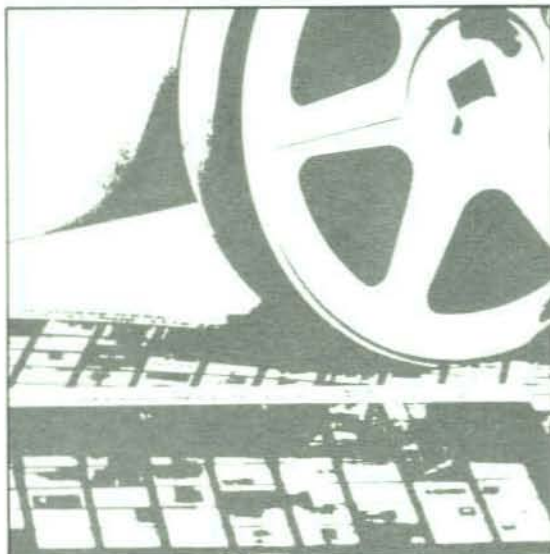
- Gardner, Samuel, 102
 Gardner, Thomas, 110
 Gardner, William, 80, 89-90, 100, 103, 110, 114
 Gardner, William, Jr., 94-95
 Garrison, William Lloyd, 21
 Gindrat, Louis Caroline, 20, 22-23, 33; *illus.*, 24
 Girty, Simon, 138
 Gladdings, Kingsley C., 41
 Goodacre, William, 41
 Gortonians, 123, 126
 Government, formation of colonial government, 119-135
 Great Awakening, 84
 "Great September Gale of 1815," 39
 Great Swamp Fight, Joshua Tefft, Rhode Island renegade, 137-145
 Green, David, 97, 111
 Green, Patience, 100
 Green, Rev., 101
 Greene, John Holden, 39-40
 Greene, William, 85-86, 101
- Hall, Benoni, 92, 94, 101
 Hall, Edward B., 22
 Hall, Elisha, 115
 Hall, John Raymond, "The Three Rank System of Land Distribution in Colonial Swansea, Massachusetts," 2-17; *illus.*, 2, 5, 8, 10-11, 15
 Hamlin, J. & H., 41
 Harris, Neil, 72-73
 Harris, Toleration, 47
 Harris, William, 133
 Hassard, Carder, 110
 Hassard, Enoch, 110
 Hassard, Godfrey, 108
 Hassard, John, 106, 108
 Hassard, Robert, 106, 110
 Hassard, Stephen, 106
 Hassard, Thomas, 105
 Hazard family, 86
 Hazard, George, 97, 102
 Hazard, Jeremiah, 103
 Hazard, Richard, 105
 Hazard, Robert, 97, 105
 Hazard, Samuel, 89
 Hazard, Stephen, 96
 Helme family, 86
 Helme, James, 86, 94, 96, 98, 108
 Helme, Rouse, 95-96, 98, 100
 Hill, Rev., 110-111
 Hodges, A. D., 41
 Hoffmann, Charles and Tess Hoffmann, "North by South: The Two Lives of Richard James Arnold," 18-33; *illus.*, 18, 23-24, 29
 Hopkins, Stephen, 85-86, 102
 Horton, James Oliver, 73
 Horton, Lois E., 73
 Hubbard, William, 141, 145; map of New England with dispersal of English settlements, front, No. 1
 Hutchinson, Anne, 122
- Infantry Hall, Providence, 1886, photo, 66
 Ingraham, Jarrett, 9, 14-15
 Ingraham, William, 14
- Jack, slave, 92
 James, Sydney V., "Rhode Island: From Classical Democracy to British Province," 119-135
 Jamestown, formation of colonial government, 131
 Jenckes, Edwin T., 42
 Jenkins, Jona, 47
 Jordan, Winthrop, 75
- Kellner, George H. and J. Stanley Lemons, *Rhode Island: The Independent State*, reviewed, 34-35
 Kelsey, Charles, 64
 Kidder, James, 39, 59-60
 King Philip's War, 130; Joshua Tefft, Rhode Island renegade, 137-145
 King, Thomas Butler, 24
 Kingstown, formation of colonial government, 131
 Knight, Sarah Kemble, 133
 Knowles, Robert, 100, 107
- Larkin, slave, 24
 Leach, Douglas E., 139
 Leary, Thomas E., book reviewed by, 69-73
 Lemons, J. Stanley: *See* Kellner, George H.
 Leverett, John, 143
 Levin, Linda Loteridge, "Partners in Progress," in *Rhode Island: The Independent State*, reviewed, 34-35
 Lillibridge, John, 80, 87-90, 95, 105
 Luther, Hezekiah, 9
 Luther, Samuel, 9, 14
- McAllister, Joseph, 32
 McLoughlin, William, 35
 MacSparren, James, 81, 90, 101
 Manufacturing, *Yankee Enterprise: The Rise of the American System of Manufactures*, reviewed, 69-73
 Marchant, Henry, 110
 Martin, John, 11; home of, *illus.*, 11
 Massachusetts Bay Colony: formation of colonial government, 121-123, 127-128, 130-133; King Philip's War, 137

- Mayr, Otto and Robert C. Post (eds.), *Yankee Enterprise: The Rise of the American System of Manufactures*, reviewed, 69–73
- Metz, William D., book reviewed by, 34–35
- Morel, Amos, 26–28
- Morel, Lewis, 30
- Morey, Roger, 104
- Morton, Thomas, 138
- Mumford, John, Rhode Island map, 15
- "Mum Phoebe," servant, 21
- Myles Garrison House, *illus.*, 10
- Myles, John, 3, 14–15
- Narragansett Bay, chart of 1777, 79
- Narragansett Indians; King Philip's War, 137, 139–144
- Narragansett Village, South Ferry, South Kingstown, lithograph, 81
- Nelson, Daniel, 72
- New England, Dominion of and formation of colonial government, 130–131, 135
- New England Anti-Slavery Society, 21
- Newport, formation of colonial government, 120–121, 123, 127–129, 131–132
- New-York Daily Times*, 27
- Nichols, Deputy Governor, 100
- Nichols, Jonathan, 94
- Niles, Jeremiah, 98
- Ninigret, 144–145
- Nipmuck Indians, 137
- Northrup, Benjamin, 89–91, 94–95, 100
- Northrup, Robert, 95, 99, 111
- Northrup, Stephen, 91, 96
- Northrup, Thomas, 96
- Northrup, William, 110
- Old Stone Square, "Another View of Providence: Archaeological Investigation of the Old Stone Square Site," 51–68
- Old Stone Square Associates, 55
- Oliver, James, 139
- Olmsted, Frederick Law, 19–21, 26–28, 30–32
- Paddock, John, 11, 14
- Palmer & Capron jewelry shop, 63, 65
- Palmer, Simeon, 91
- Partridge, Joseph, 39
- Payne, Nathaniel, 5, 14
- Payne, R. I., 66
- Payne, Stephen, Jr., 5
- Pearce, Jonathan, 90
- Peckham, Benjamin, 91, 93, 98, 106
- Peckham, Benjamin, Jr., 96
- Peckham, Edward L., 51–52, 59
- Pembleton, Rev., 109
- Perry, James, 96, 107
- Pettaquamscutt River lands, map of, 95
- Pettis, Robert, 66
- Phetteplace & Company Oil Manufactory, 66
- Philip, Wampanoag Sachem, 4, 7, 14; *See also* King Philip's War
- Plymouth Colony, formation of colonial government, 122–123, 126–127, 130; King Philip's War, 137; map after King Philip's War, 5; "The Three Rank System of Land Distribution in Colonial Swansea, Massachusetts," 2–17; *illus.*, 2, 5, 8, 10–11, 15
- Porter, John, 80
- Portsmouth, formation of colonial government, 120–121, 123, 128
- Post, Robert C.: *See* Mayr, Otto
- Potter, Ichabod, 97
- Potter, John, 91, 96, 98, 106, 111, 115
- Potter, Robert, 100, 106
- Potter, Thomas, 102
- Pray, Anne, 30
- Prince Bent, slave, 20
- Providence: *The Afro-Yankees: Providence's Black Community in the Antebellum Era*, reviewed, 73–76; "Another View of Providence: Archaeological Investigation of the Old Stone Square Site," 51–68; 1824 map, 46; North Main Street, sketch of, 53; 1790 map, 43, 53; South Main and South Water Streets, 1983 photo, 50; "A View of Providence: The Explication of a Landscape Painting," front, No. 2, 38–49; waterfront, 1868 photo, 42; *illus.*, 49
- Providence African Union Society, 75
- Providence First Light Infantry Brigade, 66
- "Providence from Across the Cove," 39, 51 *illus.*, 52
- Providence Harbor, 1840 watercolor, 52
- Providence Oil & Chemical Company, 65
- Providence Plantations and formation of colonial government, 119, 123–130
- Providence Steam Engine Company, 63
- "Providence Theater Drop Scene," 39
- Providence Tool Company, 73
- Quakers, 83–84, 127

- Quit, John, 90
- Rammelkamp, Julian, 73
- Rea, William, 42-43
- Remington, Benedict, 89
- "A Representation of the Great Storm in Providence, September 23, 1815," *illus.*, 60
- Reynolds, Colonel, 98, 102-103
- Rhode Island charter of 1663 and the formation of colonial government, 119, 127-130
- Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, 21
- Rhode Island Historical Society, 34
- Richardson, Thomas, 98
- Richmond, Stephen, 107, 111
- Robinson, Caroline E., 86
- Rodgers, James, 84
- Rogers, Rev., 99-100
- Rogers, Samuel, 103
- Rollins, E. H., 58
- Rose, John, 111
- Rose, Samuel, 103
- Rumford Chemical Works, 65
- Salisbury, William, 14-15
- Sanderson, Edward F., 39n
- Scranton (Cranston), Thomas, 87-88
- Scriven, James, 99-100
- Sharp, Richard, 14
- Shaw and Earle oil factory, 62, 64
- Shearman, Abial, 97, 108
- Shearman, James, 104
- Shearman, Samuel, 102
- Sheldon, Isaac, 97
- Simon, slave, 23
- Slavery, "North by South: The Two Lives of Richard James Arnold," 18-33; *illus.*, 18, 23-24, 29
- Smith, Abigail, 97
- Smith, Ebenezer, 80, 82-83, 87-88, 90-94, 96-97
- Smith, Ebenezer, Jr., 87-89, 95
- Smith, Ephraim, 80, 82-83, 87-92, 95
- Smith, Ephraim, Jr., 93
- Smith, Jeremiah, 80, 83, 87-88, 96, 98-101, 106
- Smith, John (Prudence Island), 80
- Smith, Margaret, 84, 97, 101
- Smith, Susannah, 96
- Smith, Waite, 47, 49
- Smith, William, 80, 93, 96
- Smith's Garrison (Wickford), 137
- Sonnenblick, Charlotte, 39n
- South Kingstown: births, marriages and deaths in diary of Jeffry Watson, 103-106; "Jeffry Watson's Diary, 1740-1784: Family, Community, Religion, and Politics in Colonial Rhode Island," 79-116; 1758 election ballot, *illus.*, 90; South Ferry and Narragansett Village, lithograph, front, No. 3
- Sprague, David, 84, 108
- Sprague, Solomon, 84, 94, 99-101, 106-107, 109-110
- Stachiw, Myron O., "Another View of Providence: Archaeological Investigation of the Old Stone Square Site," 50-68
- Stiles, Ezra, 83-84
- Stuyvesant, Peter, 6
- Sumner, T. M., 51, 53, 57
- Swansea, Mass., "The Three Rank System of Land Distribution in Colonial Swansea, Massachusetts," 2-17; *illus.*, 2, 5, 8, 10-11, 15
- Swanston, J., 25, 29
- Sweet, John, 80-81, 83, 87, 89-92
- Talbot, Mary Cornelia Arnold, 19n, 33
- Talbot, William, 33
- Tanner, John, 138
- Tanner, Nicholas, 14
- Taylor, Mr., 100
- Tefft, Joshua, "Rhode Island Renegade: The Enigma of Joshua Tefft," 137-145
- Thurber, John, Jr., 15
- Thurston, Gardner, 84, 98-102
- Tingley Steam Marble Works, 62-63, 65
- Tisdale, James, 12
- Tolman, William, 23
- Torrey, Doctor, 99-100
- Torrey, Rev., 109
- Tripp, Job, 91
- Tyler, Amey, 46
- Tyler, Anne, 45
- Tyler, Ebenezer, 44-46, 48-49, 56-57, 59-60, 62, 64, 66-67; house of, *illus.*, 44-45
- Tyler, Hannah, 45, 47, 59
- "Unitarian Church at Providence," 49; engraving, 41
- U.S. Customs House, Providence, 45-46, 49, 56-59, 62, 64-67; *illus.*, 46
- Updike, Daniel, 82-83, 88-89, 101
- Vane, Henry, 126
- "View of President Street," 39
- "A View of Providence," painting, front, No. 2, 38-49, 60
- Wait, Doctor, 109
- Wait, Rev., 110-111

- Wampanoag Indians, Joshua Tefft,
Rhode Island renegade, 137-145
- Ward, Gov. Samuel, 85-86, 91-92;
portrait, 83
- Ward, Thomas, 82, 89
- Warwick and formation of colonial
government, 123, 126-130
- Washington, George, 110
- Watson, Abigail Eldredge, 113
- Watson, Dorcas (1), 80, 102, 112
- Watson, Dorcas (2), 112
- Watson, Dorcas (3), 113
- Watson, Dorcas (4), 113
- Watson, Dorcas Gardner, 80
- Watson, Elisha, 96, 99, 102, 112
- Watson, Freeloove ("filly"), 80, 89, 95,
98
- Watson, Gideon, 85-86
- Watson, Hannah (1), 79, 112
- Watson, Hannah (2), 112
- Watson, Hannah (3), 100-103
- Watson, Hannah (4), 83
- Watson, Hannah (5), 113
- Watson, Hannah Champlin, 113
- Watson, Jeffry: family memorandum,
112-116; "Jeffry Watson's Diary,
1740-1784: Family, Community,
Religion, and Politics in Colonial
Rhode Island," 79-116
- Watson, Jeffry (2), 103, 111
- Watson, Jeffry (3), 112
- Watson, Jeffry (4), 112
- Watson, Jeffry, Jr., 80, 83, 98, 100, 112
- Watson, Job, 109
- Watson, John (1), 113
- Watson, John (2), 79-80, 88-92, 94,
96, 102, 104, 107, 113
- Watson, John (3), 112-113
- Watson, John, Jr., 80, 83, 88, 92, 98
- Watson, Marcy, 100
- Watson, William, 105, 111-112
- Weeden, William B., 16
- Wells, James, 104, 108
- Wertenbaker, Thomas Jefferson, 16
- Westerly, formation of colonial gov-
ernment, 131
- Whitman, Rev., 106-107, 109
- Wickford (Smith's Garrison), 137
- Willett, Francis, 82-83, 88, 90, 94,
107
- Willett, Thomas, 3-6, 8-9, 11-12,
14-15; "Thomas Willett Memo-
rial, *illus.*, 8
- Williams, Robert, 126
- Williams, Roger, 3, 34, 143; forma-
tion of colonial government, 123,
126, 129
- Wilson, Jeremiah, 87
- Winslow, Josiah, 137, 141
- Wood, Thomas, 12
- Worrall, John, 39
- Wright, Louis B., 6
- Yale College, 83
- Young, Ammi Burnham, 62
- Young, Archibald, 47, 49, 57; house
of, *illus.*, 47
- Zannieri, Nina, 39n

This Publication is available in Microform.



University Microfilms International

Please send additional information

for _____
(name of publication)

Name _____

Institution _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

300 North Zeeb Road
Dept. P.R.
Ann Arbor, Mi. 48106

A Gift for the Future

The Board of Trustees of the Rhode Island Historical Society would like you to consider making the Society a beneficiary when you are preparing your will. Such a bequest would help insure the Society's continuing efforts to collect, preserve, and interpret Rhode Island's rich heritage. A bequest to the Society is truly a gift to future generations of Rhode Islanders so that they may share in the Society's services and programs.

Should you desire to include the Society as a beneficiary of an unrestricted bequest when preparing your will, the following wording is suggested:

I give and bequeath to The Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations _____dollars (\$) for its general uses and purposes.

The Director of the Society will be happy to discuss this matter with you. Gifts to the Society via bequest are deductible from federal estate taxation.



The Rhode Island Historical Society

110 Benevolent Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906
(401) 331-8575

"At first glance, the Westminster Account™ may seem similar to services offered elsewhere. However, it's a bigger, far bigger idea."

The Westminster Account™ is a way to gain complete control of your personal finances. For instance, you'll have a monthly picture of your cash flow, capital gains or losses, your financial net worth, in fact every aspect of your personal financial picture.

For those with substantial holdings The Westminster Account can be invaluable. To inquire further call Fredrick H. Sandstrom, Senior Vice President, at (401) 278-6677. Or write 100 Westminster St., Providence, R.I. 02903.

