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JEAN PIERRE BLANCHARD'S BALLOON

From a woodcut in the *Providence Gazette* of April 9, 1796

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(see inside front cover)

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JEAN PIERRE BLANCHARD'S BALLOON

(reproduced on front cover)

The Providence GAZETTE of April 9, 1796, carries an advertisement which reads as follows: "Mr. BLANCHARD respectfully informs the Ladies and Gentlemen of Providence &c. that he proposes to exhibit to public View, provided a sufficient Subscription can be obtained to defray the Expence, a splendid BALLOON, to which will be attached an immense PARACHUTE, and a Basket with live Animals. The Parachute and Basket will, at a certain Distance in the Air, be detached from the Balloon, and descending, will land the Animals in Safety. The Balloon will overset, and, discharging its fluid, return to the earth. Subscription papers will be opened at Mr. Sabin's, at the Post-Office, and at Mr. Wheeler's Book-Store, this Afternoon, and continue open until Tuesday next."

Jean Pierre Blanchard, who inserted this advertisement in the GAZETTE was one of the most celebrated among early aeronauts. In 1785 he made the first balloon crossing of the English Channel. On January 9, 1793, at Philadelphia, he made the first balloon ascent in America.

It would be interesting to know whether or not the ascent was actually made in Providence, for subsequent issues of the GAZETTE reveal no record of the event.

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THE DORR REBELLION AND THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

by CHARLES O. LERCHE, JR.*

IMPLICIT in the entire course of the Dorr Rebellion is a series of questions both philosophical and legal. The Dorr movement, as has been clearly shown in the pages of this journal, was a broad popular cause which exemplified the literal interpretation of natural rights and popular sovereignty; opposed to it was a group which sought the sanction of legitimacy as justification for its actions. Beyond the local area of controversy these matters were brought into the sphere of constitutional interpretation through their connection with the "guarantee clause" of the Constitution of the United States, which provides that: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government."¹ Both parties to the 1842 controversy sought Federal support and in the course of the dispute much light was thrown upon this relatively obscure portion of our federal charter. Although the matter failed to elicit any specific action from Washington as a result of the application of the guarantee, it provided the pretext for a thorough examination of the alternative courses of action and for a definite interpretation of this part of the Constitution that was to endure substantially unchanged to the present day.

Although the guarantee had figured prominently in several important constitutional crises prior to 1842, they had all been aspects of the broad issue of slavery. Anti-slavery Congressmen called slavery un-republican and asked the invocation of the guarantee against those

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¹Article IV, section 4, clause 1.

states which protected it;² the Southern forces defended the republicanism of the institution.³ The abolitionists saw in Congress the right to define a republican form and to reshape state governments to conform to that standard;⁴ opposed to that position was the contention that the established government in a state was republican and that the power of the Federal government was limited to a preservation of that government against violent overthrow.⁵ The Dorr crisis was the first time that a consideration of the philosophic question of a republican form and the legal question of the amount of power conferred by the guarantee was free of the highly emotional overtones of the slavery issue. Thus the clause received a greater degree of dispassionate analysis and a fuller consideration than had heretofore been the case. Added to this was the fact that all three branches of the Federal government were brought into the matter, and each thus consciously set precedents that were to endure.

From the point of view of constitutional interpretation, the points at issue in the Dorr Rebellion were three: first, the nature of the republican form of government guaranteed by the Constitution; second, the determination of which branch of the national government was to execute the guarantee; and third, the form and scope which that execution was to take. To each of these a definite answer was furnished by the course of events between 1842 and 1848.

The Rhode Island Suffrage Association listed in 1840 as one of its principles "that by every right, human and divine, the majority in the State should govern"⁶ and went on to condemn as un-republican any government which did not provide for such an arrangement. This simple identification of republican government with majority

²See remarks of Representative Fuller of Massachusetts, February 15, 1818: "The existence of slavery in any State is . . . a departure from republican principles." *Annals of Congress*, 15th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 1180.

³See remarks of Territorial Delegate Scott of Missouri, *ibid.*, p. 1182.

⁴Representative Hard of New York found in 1836 that Congress had "a right to dictate the form of its [Arkansas] fundamental code or constitution, with a view to rendering it consistent with such a form of government . . ." *Debates in Congress*, 24th Congress, 1st Session, p. 4269.

⁵Pinkney of Maryland felt that the guarantee was "a protecting mandate to Congress to interpose with the force and authority of the Union against that violence and usurpation by which a member of it might otherwise be oppressed by profligate and powerful individuals, or ambitious and unprincipled factions." February 15, 1819, *Annals of Congress*, 16th Congress, 1st Session, p. 413.

⁶*House Reports*, 28th Congress, 1st Session, no. 546, p. 109 (hereafter referred to as *Burke's Report*).

rule had the virtue of easy comprehensibility, and as early as this date it is clear that the "suffragists" were planning to ignore the charter government and to proceed extra-legally. Appeals to the guarantee clause, and hence for Federal support, were clearly foreshadowed. Not so simple was the position of the charter government. As the crisis deepened after the adoption of the Dorr constitution, Governor King's appeals to Washington were based upon the legitimacy of his regime. The identification of legitimacy with republicanism was founded upon the Madisonian doctrine that the governments under which the states had entered the Union were *per se* republican;⁷ since Rhode Island had not changed its government since entering the Union, King had ample authority for insisting upon the republicanism of his government. Such being the case, King maintained that the protection of the national power should be thrown over it instead of the Dorr group. From these conflicting views of the nature of a republican form stemmed the whole train of events. The President, Congress, and the Supreme Court were all called upon to pronounce upon the matter.

President Tyler was the first to speak. His reply to Governor King's request for assistance, although refusing aid, went on to stipulate that the President's duty required him to recognize the charter government as legitimate, and that he had no right to examine into "real or supposed" defects in the government of any state.⁸ Tyler was to retain this position throughout the affair; he looked upon his position in the matter as being determined by law and as leaving him virtually no discretion. As long as Congress chose to recognize one of the competing governments as republican, he was bound to support that faction. It is true that events never necessitated the active military support of the Federal government, but Tyler stood ready to furnish it if necessary.

⁷In number XLIII of *The Federalist*, Madison had written: "In a confederacy founded on republican principles, and composed of republican members, the superintending government ought clearly to possess authority to defend the system against aristocratic or monarchical innovations. The more intimate the nature of such a union may be, the greater interest have the members in the political institutions of each other; and the greater right to insist that the forms of government under which the compact was entered into should be *substantially* maintained . . . As long, therefore, as the existing republican forms are continued by the States, they are guaranteed by the federal Constitution." Henry Cabot Lodge, editor, *The Federalist* (New York and London: 1888), pp. 270-271.

⁸*Burke's Report*, pp. 658-659.

Despite the frantic attempts of Senator Allen of Ohio to get the matter considered in Congress,⁹ there was no action and only a little debate in that body¹⁰ during the active controversy in Rhode Island. Allen had wholeheartedly subscribed to the political principles of the "People's" government, and the resolutions he introduced bore their stamp, stressing popular sovereignty and the republicanism of majority rule, and denying the right of the Federal government to intervene in any way in the controversy.¹¹ The Tallmadge resolutions of May 23, 1842, directly contravened those of Allen and urged the active use of Federal force to put down the Dorr government, since it was "disorderly and revolutionary, tending to anarchy and bloodshed."¹² These received no more consideration than had Allen's; Congress chose instead to allow the Rhode Island affair to run its course without interruption.

It was only with the memorial of the Democratic minority of the Rhode Island legislature more than a year and a half later that Congress took any particular notice of the Dorr crisis. The purport of this memorial was startling: it requested Congressional action in execution of the guarantee to displace the current government of the state in favor of the "People's" government.¹³ The appointment of the Burke committee followed, and the only official investigation of the Dorr affair was initiated. In the course of the committee's examination, President Tyler, when called upon to justify his ignoring of the Dorr party, reiterated his legal inability to look beyond the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the state government requesting his aid; he insisted that only in Congress lay the power to decide which of the governments was republican and hence entitled to the guarantee.¹⁴

⁹*Congressional Globe*, 27th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 431, 438, 449, 459, 462, 506.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 510.

¹¹*Resolved*, That it is the right of the people of Rhode Island to establish for themselves a constitutional republican form of State government and in any particular to alter or modify it, provided its form be left republican.

Resolved, That it is not the right of the Federal government to interfere in any manner with the people, to prevent or discourage their so doing; but that, on the contrary, it is the duty of the Federal Government to guaranty to them, as a State, such republican form of State government, when so established, altered, or modified." Quoted in *Burke's Report*, p. 1063.

¹²*Senate Documents*, 27th Congress, 2nd Session, IV, 304.

¹³*Burke's Report*, p. 4.

¹⁴*Congressional Globe*, 28th Congress, 1st Session, p. 504.

In contradiction to the original memorial which had launched the investigation, the majority of the Rhode Island legislature filed a counter protest. This summed up the anti-Dorr position. It asserted the republican character of the charter government (since it was the form of government under which Rhode Island had entered the Union) and the inability of Congress to inquire into the republicanism of the "People's" constitution, because of the illegitimacy of its formation. It further condemned the entire investigation as fruitless, since the question had been settled by the adoption of the constitution of November, 1842, in Rhode Island.¹⁵

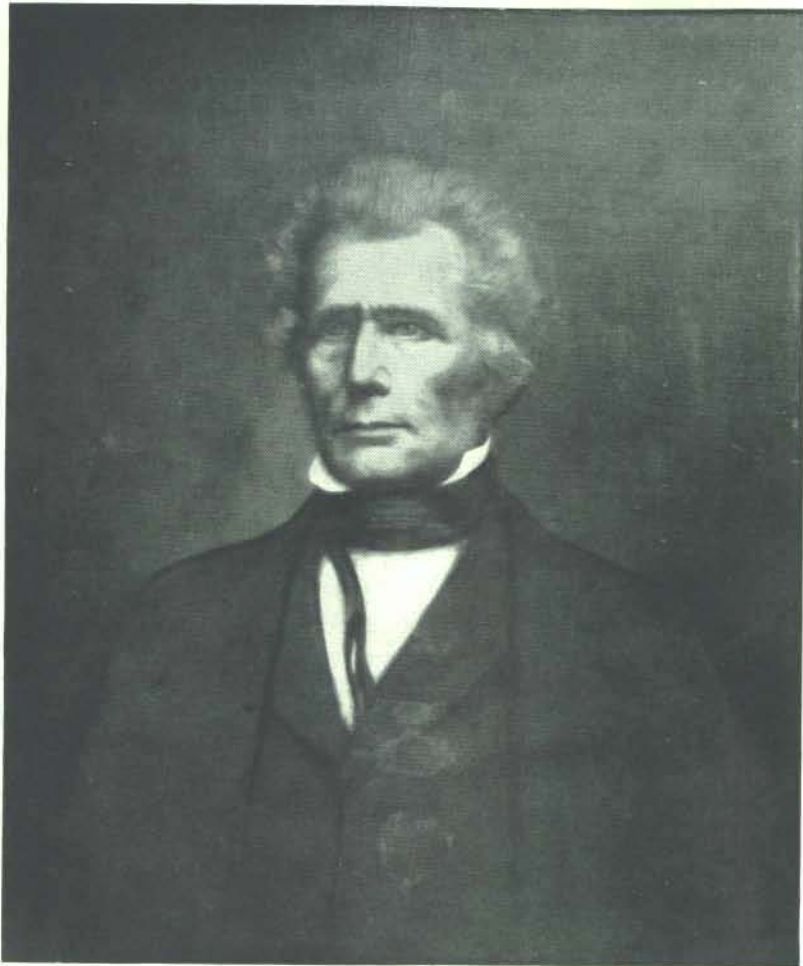
Burke proceeded; his committee amassed an amazing amount of data and prepared the famous report. Seeking partisan advantage and hampered by the refusal of the Rhode Island government to present its side of the dispute, the document was a ringing affirmation of popular sovereignty,¹⁶ a savage attack on the conduct of the President,¹⁷ and an insistence that the Dorr government had been in fact the republican one which the President had been required by the Constitution to support. The committee was solicitous not to call for any Congressional action under the guarantee (although Burke was certain that ample power resided in Congress to take action should that body have felt it necessary).¹⁸ The sum and substance of the report was contained in the committee's fifth recommended resolution, which condemned the President for his "unauthorized" interference in the whole matter.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 522; *House Reports*, 28th Congress, 1st Session, no. 581, p. 170 (hereafter referred to as *Causin's Report*).

¹⁶"The republican theory . . . holds that sovereignty is vested . . . in the people themselves . . . They can, therefore, at all times, and in any manner they think proper, alter, reform, or abolish existing forms of government, and institute other forms . . ." *Burke's Report*, p. 26. In support of this contention the report quoted the Declaration of Independence, *The Federalist*, Washington, Paine, Jay, Marshall, and Patterson.

¹⁷It denied that Tyler was correct in assuming he had no choice but to support the established government. Instead the report claimed that the President "must deliberate" and determine whether the government he was called upon to support was in fact republican. Tyler's contention was asserted to be actually a gesture of support for the charter government, which the report had previously "proved" to be un-republican. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁸*Ibid.* "And when those constitutions do not provide for a republican form of government—which, in addition to an outward popular organization, the committee understand to be one which exists in the consent of the people, and over which they have control—it is the duty of Congress to set it aside, and to recognize and enforce one which possesses this republican character."



Portrait in oil by John N. Arnold

Rhode Island Historical Society

SAMUEL WARD KING

1765-1851

of Johnston, Rhode Island. Governor during the Dorr War, 1840-1843.

The difficulty into which the majority of the Burke committee had fallen was that no action was possible to implement its strong theory of the guarantee clause. If a republican government was one set up by majority rule, proving the republicanism of the Dorr government proved nothing; for Rhode Island was enjoying at the moment of the submission of the report a government equally republican by the same test! The committee vaguely recommended the passage of a law "to meet emergencies like that which occurred in the State of Rhode Island," but its heart was obviously not in it.

Although the matter was dropped by the House of Representatives, Burke had succeeded in using the Rhode Island memorial as a springboard from which to project the extreme interpretation of the guarantee. It was not to be expected that this version, with its all-too-embarrassing application to the slave states, would go unchallenged; Preston and Causin of Maryland, the two Southern members of Burke's committee, were almost required by their positions to object violently. Their minority report was not even accorded formal consideration on the floor of the House, yet it contains as admirable an exposition of the pro-slavery interpretation of the guarantee as is found anywhere during the *ante-bellum* period. In substance a restatement of the official Rhode Island position, it stands out because of the completeness of its case, the logic of its arguments, and the perfect consistency of its position with Southern constitutional interpretation since the days of the Missouri debate.

The Causin report accepted as authoritative the analysis of the guarantee clause made by Madison in *The Federalist*. Thus the charter government had been republican, since Rhode Island had entered the Union under it; Dorr was the "enterprising leader" against whose "ambition" the guarantee was designed to protect the state; the constitution of 1842 was the "other republican form" which the people of Rhode Island were authorized by the Federal Constitution to substitute.¹⁹ Implicit throughout is the basic point that only through call of the state government can the guarantee be called into play, and then only upon action by the legitimate regularly constituted authorities.²⁰ Thus the guarantees became, to Causin, a

¹⁹*Causin's Report*, p. 4.

²⁰"No popular call, however multitudinous, can constitutionally reach the executive ear. The States alone, through their authorities, can invoke the powers of the confederacy." *Ibid.*, p. 3.

simple matter of protecting established governments. No position better suited to the slavocracy could be imagined.

Thus far in the affair, the President had taken a firm stand on the interpretation of the guarantee, while two diametrically opposed points of view had been expressed in Congress. No concrete action had been taken, nor could any; but neither had any settlement of the basic constitutional issue been attempted. This was the function of the United States Supreme Court which, in *Luther v. Borden*,²¹ was forced to consider some of the more controversial points involved in the Dorr matter and handed down a decision that remains yet a landmark in its history.

With the specific points of the case there is no need to deal. Suffice it to say that the conflicting points of view as expressed in the Burke and Causin reports were argued by counsel, with Daniel Webster doing yeoman service on behalf of the charter government.²² The court, speaking through Chief Justice Taney, refused to assume jurisdiction over the case, since the questions involved were "political" and not suited to judicial determination. The opinion justified this position by examining the guarantee and holding that the determination of the criteria of republicanism and the measures to guarantee such a form of government were matters for the political branches of the government, especially Congress.²³ A method of executing the guarantee was suggested, however: in the event of two sets of congressional representatives being chosen by the two competing governments, Congress could seat those who represented the government it deemed republican and refuse the others. It is clear that in this opinion Taney was lending his support to Burke's point of view; the theory of the court was that Congress not only had the

²¹ Howard 1 (1848).

²²"But the law and the Constitution, the whole system of American institutions, do not contemplate a case in which a resort will be necessary to proceedings *aliunde*, or outside of the law and the Constitution, for the purpose of amending the frame of government. They go on the idea that the States are all republican, that they are all representative in their forms, and that these popular governments in each State, the annually created creatures of the people, will give all proper facilities and necessary aids to bring about changes which the people may judge necessary in their constitutions." J. H. McIntire, editor, *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*, 18 vols (Boston: 1903), VI, 231.

²³"Congress must necessarily decide what government is established in a State before it can determine whether it is republican or not . . . And its decision is binding on every other department of the government, and could not be questioned in a judicial tribunal." 7 Howard 1, p. 43.

right to choose between competing governments, but also was obliged to do so by the very nature of the case. Legitimacy was one of the factors to be considered by Congress in making its decision, but it was far from being controlling.

Taney also noted Tyler's protest that his duty required him to support the established government. Far from agreeing with him, the court felt that, in the words of the Burke report, the President "must deliberate;"²⁴ although the President had been within his rights in supporting the charter government, he had not been required by law to do so. The choice was his to make. The power to execute the clause of guarantee was plainly divided between President and Congress.

Equally clear were the potentialities of conflict inherent in this division of authority. It was not sufficient for the court merely to announce the fact of the sharing of power; it felt itself required to pass judgment upon the relative positions of President and Congress. There was little doubt in Taney's mind that the final authority lay with the legislative branch²⁵ and that any action by the President was temporary and provisional.²⁶

The analysis of the guarantee by the court provided the interpretation of that clause which was to endure permanently. Its denoting of questions arising under the guarantee as political and non-justiciable has been honored in an unbroken line of decisions,²⁷ thus forever removing the question from the courts. Its placing of the power of execution of the guarantee jointly in the hands of the President and Congress has been upheld by continuous practice. Finally, the superior power of Congress in all questions involving both the defini-

²⁴ ". . . he must determine what body of men constitute the legislature, and who is the governor, before he can act. The fact that both parties claim the right to the government, cannot alter the case, for both cannot be entitled to it . . . And the President must, of necessity, decide which is the government, and which party is unlawfully arrayed against it, before he can perform the duty imposed upon him . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 44.

²⁵ "The power to carry into effect the clause of guarantee is primarily a legislative power and resides in Congress. Under the fourth article of the Constitution, it resides with Congress to decide what government is the established one in a State . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁶ "Undoubtedly, if the President in exercising this power, should fall into error, or invade the rights of the people of the States, it would be within the power of Congress to apply the proper remedy." *Ibid.*

²⁷See especially *Pacific States Telephone and Telegraph Company v. Oregon*, 223 U. S. 110 (1913).

tion of a republican form of government and the measures to be taken in enforcement was proved beyond doubt by the use of the guarantee during Reconstruction. Few of the rules of the Constitution have been given so clear and lasting an interpretation as that furnished the guarantee as an outcome of the Dorr Rebellion. The popular movement of 1842 was significant not only to Rhode Island but to all the people of the United States.

ACCESSIONS

From Mrs. Walter Hidden, portrait of Thomas Cranston, by John Singleton Copley.

From Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Jackson, 67 miscellaneous books and a crystal chandelier now installed in the dining room of John Brown House.

From John Wells, photostat of the first telephone book of the Western Union Telephone Exchange in Providence.

From Mrs. Byron S. Watson, miscellaneous books and pamphlets.

From Vose Galleries, Boston, architectural drawings and elevations by Thomas Tefft.

From Mrs. Henry C. Hart, *History of Petersham*, by Mabel C. Coolidge.

From Mary L. Mason, Col. Christopher Lippitt's spurs.

From Donald S. Babcock, ms. account books of Joseph Tillinghast, Benjamin T. Chandler, and John Gladding.

From Franklin R. Cushman, commonplace book of Avis Lockwood.

From Mrs. Alonzo Williams, a sea medicine chest.

From David Davidson, bills, receipts, etc. from the Union Congregational Church.

From Mrs. Augustus Lord, combs made in Whitaker's Factory at Clayville, R. I.

From Franklin R. Cushman, a copy of Moses Brown's will, Jason Williams's fire bucket and flip iron.

From the estate of Lucy D. C. Cushman and Emma C. Bullock, miscellaneous material including diaries of Charles Carpenter and record books of the First Universalist Church.

From William King Covell, *History of Steam Navigation*, by John H. Morrison.

From Mrs. Oliver G. Cormier, silver spoon from the sloop *Providence*.

From Mrs. John O. Ames, 3 eighteenth century mirrors for John Brown House.

From Malcolm G. Chace, oil painting of Mrs. Malcolm G. Chace and her three daughters, by Wilfred Gabriel de Glehn, A.R.A.

THE PATROL OF NARRAGANSETT BAY (1774-76)

by H.M.S. *Rose*, Captain James Wallace

Extracted and transcribed by WILLIAM G. ROELKER

Written and annotated by CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3RD

[continued from July, 1949, v. 8, no. 3, p. 83]

THE REPORTS of Admiral Graves to the Admiralty give few details of Captain Wallace's activities during July and the first weeks of August, 1775. One is able, however, to follow his daily comings and goings in the columns of the Newport *Mercury*, through which the Patriot printer, Solomon Southwick, kept the public fully informed of every move made by the "ministerial pirates."

On July 18 Wallace again threatened Newport with destruction, and this time it appeared to the populace that he was in earnest. The ensuing panic was never to die down completely while the British captain and his ships remained stationed in the harbor. According to the *Mercury* there was not "*even the shadow of a just reason*" for Wallace's action, though it was supposed that his pretext was the alleged but "absolutely disproved" kidnapping of two seamen from the *Swan* by a Newport mob. Whatever the cause of his "inhuman conduct," it seems probable from the following account that it had the desired effect of impressing the subversive elements in Newport with the menace of the ships' guns, which would be ruthlessly used should the necessity ever arise.

From last Tuesday about 2 o'clock, till near the same hour on the next day, this town was threatened to be fired upon by the three ships of war in this harbour, viz. the *Rose*, Capt. Wallace, the *Swan*, Capt. Ayscough, and *Kingfisher*, Capt. Montagu, and also a Tender:—For which purpose these ships were brought close in with the northwest part of the town, on Tuesday toward night; their tampions were immediately taken out, and all the apparent preparations made for cannonading the town, which greatly terrified the women and children, especially those women who were with child. In the evening lanterns and men were placed at the guns, and the most hostile appearance kept up, which twas possible for them to exhibit, and many women and children were running about, wringing their hands and crying, in the greatest distress:—About half past 9 at night, a cannon was discharged from the *Rose*, when the women really thought the firing on the town was begun, many of whom fainted away, and went into fits, and a number, we are told, absolutely miscarried by the fright.—However, this gun was loaded with powder only, and the men of war gave out to a number

of persons, whom they had stopped coming down the river, that they should not beat the town down till next morning, when they would certainly do it.—In the morning the like terrific scene was opened by firing another cannon, and siezing on 4 ferry boats, a passage boat, with a number of passengers, and two wood sloops; the Swan moved down toward the south part of the town, where she anchored, with her guns pointing diagonally across the wharves, so as to rake from thence up to the parade and Court house; here again all the tamplings were out, quantities of tar and other inflammatory and combustible matter were put into the ferry boats, in order, as was said with horrid cursing and damning, to set on fire, and send into the town to burn it, as a more expeditious way of destroying the town, than by cannon only.

At the same time that these boats were to be sent into the town, a number of men were to be landed at the south end, to set fire to that part. Thus the most warlike and hostile parade was kept up to the highest degree, till near 2 o'clock on Wednesday; when, all at once, the boats were discharged, the ships weighed anchor and stood up the river.—The same evening the Rose got ashore on the north part of this island; but by taking out her guns, &c. she was got off, and the next day they all came down again to their old station.¹

The only known casualty of this show of force was a Mrs. Dawley, who "was so frightened . . . that she went into strong convulsions, and continued in violent fits, and very delirious, till she died."² A more important result to the population of the town in general was the beginning of an emigration to safer areas, a movement that was to be greatly accelerated later in the year.

Throughout the fall and winter of 1775-76 procuring supplies for the British troops and naval vessels assumed an ever increasing importance. On August 19 Graves reported, "This Contract has been sometime without Beef and Peas—Yesterday Rum could not be furnished And as the other Species of Provisions will also very soon be exhausted, Our entire dependence for Supplies in future must be on Great Britain."³ A month later he wrote, "At Rhode Island the Contract has totally failed . . ."⁴ An examination of the accounts

¹Newport *Mercury*, July 24, 1775.

²*Ibid.*, August 7, 1775.

³Graves to Secretary Philip Stephens, August 19, 1775.

⁴Graves to the Admiralty, Sept. 22, 1775. The Admiral continued: Being on the Subject of Provisions it indispensably becomes My Duty to represent to their Lordships that the Custom of Supplying New England Rum to His Majesty's Ships is in my humble opinion, highly prejudicial to the State, The use of it destroys the health and faculties of the People and debilitates them surprizingly, The Seamen always continue healthy and Active by drinking

of the agent victualler at Newport, Christopher Champlin, bears Graves out, showing only meager deliveries during July, August, and September.⁵ Wallace's efforts to obtain provisions from the rich grazing lands of Narragansett Bay and the Patriots' attempts to forestall him gave birth to almost all of the bloody clashes that marked his last six months in Rhode Island waters. As far as we know, however, no casualties resulted from the first encounter of the sort.

Early in August a number of transports sailed from Boston to take on cattle and sheep at Fisher's Island and Gardiner's Island. Wallace learned that the Connecticut authorities intended to remove the stock before the British ships could arrive. He therefore set sail not only to prevent them but also to afford protection to the transports. He arrived just in time to disperse the Connecticut men, who had already removed some fifteen head of cattle from Fisher's Island. Owing to his prompt action, Wallace procured a two weeks' supply of meat for Gage's forces in Boston.⁶

Shortly after his return from this expedition Wallace received the reinforcement which he had needed so badly on many previous occasions. It came in the form of the twenty-gun ship *Glasgow*, a vessel of the same class as the *Rose*, commanded by Captain Tyringham Howe. Solomon Southwick in ironic vein remarked to the readers of the *Mercury*, ". . . we are now *protected* by two ships of 20 guns, and one of 16, which is very lucky, as a Spanish war seems so very near, we having never before had any ship stationed here, for our protection, in time of war."⁷ A few weeks later Graves

Spruce Beer, but in a few days after New England Rum is served altho' mixed with four or five Waters the Hospital is crowded with Sick and those onboard are pallid, Weak and incapable of doing half their duty, I appeal to the Captains of the Squadron that this is always the consequence of their Crews having New England Rum. It is indeed beyond contradiction.—At present the want of fuel will in some Measure prevent distilling, But it is a melancholy Consideration that the Seamen in his Majesty's Fleet must use the most pernicious of all Liquors and too often in its very worst State.

Upon enquiry I find that the Current Price of Rum at Boston from the Windward Islands has been from 22d to two Shillings Sterling pr Gallon by the single Cask—And that good Jamaica Rum never exceeds half a Crown a Gallon but has been generally Sold at Two Shillings and three pence, I therefore earnestly hope their Lordships will be pleased to take this Matter into consideration, and that in all future Contracts good Merchantable Rum from the West India Islands, may be furnished to the Squadron, and not less than Six Months old.

⁵Champlin Papers, v. 3, R. I. H. S.

⁶Graves to Secretary Stephens, August 19, 1775; Newport *Mercury*, August 14, 1775.

⁷Newport *Mercury*, August 14, 1775.

sent Wallace the bomb brig *Bolton*, commanded at the time by Lieutenant Thomas Graves. In informing his superiors of this addition to Wallace's little force, Admiral Graves added: "I cannot sufficiently express my satisfaction with his alertness and zeal for the cause of his Country against the rebels."⁸

Matters between Wallace and the Rhode Island authorities came to a head in August, 1775, when the General Assembly passed acts providing for the removal from the islands of all livestock except that necessary for the subsistence of the inhabitants. The Island of Rhode Island was specifically excepted, probably in an attempt to save the town of Newport from retaliation by the British captain. Wallace's wrath, however, was by no means mitigated by the exception, and he immediately wrote to Governor Joseph Wanton demanding an explanation of the attitude of Newport toward the acts.

His Majesty's Ship *Rose* at
Newport Rhode Island the 28th
August 1775

Sir

I am informed the Assembly of your Colony among many extraordinary Treasonable Acts have passed one for Stripping the Islands of their Stock with intent to destroy the Kings Service and his faithful Subjects. —If in their Madness and Infatuation they should attempt this, it will become my duty to destroy every Vessel and Craft we can meet upon the Water of which I beg you will inform the Town, that it may appear how far they are concerned in this Matter . . .

Before he had time to receive a reply to this communication, Wallace learned of an expedition being fitted out at Stonington, Connecticut, to remove the cattle and sheep from Block Island. Immediately on receipt of this news Wallace weighed anchor and set sail. His report on subsequent events and on the result of his letter to Wanton is contained in a letter written to Graves on September 9.

Rose Rhode Island Sepr 9th 1775.

Sir

Intelligence behind given me that the Assembly of Rhode Island had passed an Act for taking the Stock off the Islands with intent to prevent the King's Forces from being Supplied I wrote the inclosed

⁸Graves to the Admiralty, Sept. 26, 1775.



Courtesy of Mrs. Clarkson A. Collins, Jr.

ESEK HOPKINS

1718-1802

First commander-in-chief of the American navy

A crayon drawing made, according to tradition, by a British prisoner during the Revolution. This is the original from which the engraving in *An impartial History of the War in America* (London, 1780) was made.

Letter to the Town of Newport to prevent (if possible) their giving any Assistance. And as I was informed at the same time 250 Men were at Stonytown [Stonington] ready to embark to Block Island for that purpose.—I got under way the 29th Ulto with His Majesty's Ship Rose, Tender and two Sloops whom I manned in Order to prevent them (leaving the Glasgow at Rhode Island).—About 7 o'Clock I saw a Sloop and Schooner off Block Island, gave Chace, lost them in the dark, Next Morning the 30th the Tender Chaced these Vessels into Stonytown, the Tenders returned and acquainted me, the Town fired upon them. We stood in, the Tender going ahead. One of the Tenders Attempting to board a Vessel, a firing begun from the Town, the Tenders returned it, about this time we came to an Anchor off the South end of the Town—the Tender and the Town continuing the fire, About 10 Minutes after we were at an Anchor we received three or four Musket Shot from the Windmill, right abreast the Ship about 2 Cables and half distant, upon which I ordered one of our Guns to be fired into the Town, and waited some time expecting that would put a stop to it.—They took no Notice but continued firing from all parts of the Town.—Then we begun and fired about 120 Shot during which time they sent off to me two Letters (which I send inclosed with my Answers)⁹ we took every

⁹This correspondence between Wallace and Major Oliver Smith of the militia at Stonington follows:

[Major Oliver Smith to Capt. Wallace]

Wednesday 11 o'Clock forenoon.

Captain Wallace
Sir

The Tenders under your Command before your coming in fired on the Town without any Provocation from the people here when some few Musket shot was unadvertently returned.—We know not how Matters are represented to you, we mean to do what is consistent with Honour. We are a Naked Town with a distress'd parcel of Women and Children and at the Mercy of the Fire from the Ship and Tenders.—We trust were matters rightly represented you would desist firing on the Town.—

I am
Sir
Your humble Servant
Oliver Smith Major

[Capt. Wallace to Major Oliver Smith]

His Majesty's Ship Rose
Stonington August 30th 1775.

Sir

I have received your Letter of this Instant wherein you say the Tenders under my Command have fired upon the Town without any provocation. *Firing upon them and Wounding them* is not this provocation they are all ready to make Oath you fired upon them first. I saw firing from several parts of the Town, they even foolishly fired upon the King's Ship. The Honour of Great Britain, Duty to my King and country, make the part I have taken absolutely Necessary, it depends upon yourselves whether it is to continue; God grant you a due Sense

Vessel that was afloat from the Warves, Consisting of a Schooner from Surinam loaded with Molasses and Sugar, a Schooner that was employed carrying the Rebels over to Block Island to take the Stock, in this Vessel they left a Drum, two Firelocks and some Haversacks—a Schooner with Hay and two Sloops, they ceasing fire about an hour after we Weighed and came further out in Company with the Vessels. At the beginning of this Action there was about 300 Rebels in the Town, at the latter end more than 3,000 Skulking behind Hills and Rocks and fences. All the Country about came in, We had three Men Wounded, can't learn what damage, is done the Town.—New London and all the Coast is greatly alarmed and 500 Rebels were Stop'd, that were under Orders for the Camp. On the 4th instant Arrived at Newport the Governor returned me the inclosed Answer from the Town to mine of the 28th of August.—it appears by this Town Meeting the late transactions have

of your duty to your King and Country and Obedience to the Laws which cannot fail to make you Great and happy.

[Major Oliver Smith to Capt. Wallace]

Stonington Long Point August 30th 1775
3 o'Clock afternoon

Captain Wallace
Sir

I have received yours in Answer to mine And do assure you upon Honour that what I wrote you relative to your Tenders firing on us was a real fact to be attested by all the people then present.—When they came in the Second time and you had got into the Harbour the Tenders came and took two Vessels within Pistol shot of the Wharf. My positive Orders were not to fire, We expected the Men from the Tenders would not persist in carrying the Vessels away which they promised they would not.—The Lives of your Men then on board the Schooner were all at our Mercy—We had assurance from the people then aboard that no Guns should be fired by them, but your three Tenders, Nevertheless begun a fire of all their Guns on us, when some returned the fire. You say it depends on our pleasure whether the fire should Cease. We have not begun any fire, We are free and determined to desist from firing and we now assure you that no person shall be permitted to fire at the King's Ship or any of His peaceable Subjects. We profess ourselves Dutiful Subjects to His Majesty George the third, and are disposed as such, to keep the peace, and prevent any disturbance, and shall take no part but such as His Majesty's Subjects have a right to do in their own defence.

I am
Sir
Your most Obedient
humble Servant
Oliver Smith Major

[Capt. Wallace to Major Oliver Smith]

⁹'Tis impossible I can give any other answer to yours, while you are firing upon our people, but that of returning it.

Yours
Jas Wallace.
Rose Augt 30th 1775.

had such an effect as to almost destroy the Rebel faction, they passed a Vote to have nothing to do with the Continental Congress, and not to be concerned in taking away the Stock from the Islands in consequence of which upwards of 40 Rebel families have left the Town.

The 8th Arrived here the Swan from Convoying a Brigg clear of the Islands. We have just got an Account that one of the Schooners loaded with Hay we took at Stonytown and who parted from us in a gale of Wind off Fishers Island is seized at New London and the people made Prisoners. . . .

Governor Wanton's reply to Wallace's letter of August 28 was delivered the day after the *Rose* and her accompanying vessels returned to Newport. As Wallace wrote to Graves, when he enclosed it with his report of September 9, Wanton's letter appeared to carry news of an outstanding victory for the Loyalist cause.

Newport September 5th 1775.

Sir

The Town Council communicated your Letter to the Inhabitants at a Town Meeting held on the 29th of last Month and as the President of the Council has since informed me, took the same into consideration and as they had no knowledge of the Acts of the last Assembly declared they would not take any part in the Matter; And I have the satisfaction to inform you that from the best information I am able to obtain they have not directly nor indirectly been aiding or Assisting in the removal of any of the Stock from the Islands in the Bay; And the Town this day at a very full Meeting by a large Majority have resolved not to send a Memorial to the Congress which at a former Meeting had been Ordered.

I am with Respect

Sir

Your most humble Servant

J. Wanton

Though the action of the Newport town meeting seemed favorable, the race to gain possession of the Rhode Island meat supply appears to have been going against Wallace. At the very moment when his guns were thundering in Stonington harbor the colonists were removing 444 sheep and 87 cattle from Conanicut to the mainland. A few days later nearly 2000 sheep were transferred from Block Island to points beyond the range of British foraging parties.¹⁰ Early in October Wallace was again partially forestalled by prompt action

¹⁰John R. Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island . . .* (Providence, 1856-1865) v. 7, pp. 379-81.

on the part of the Patriot forces. Graves had sent down two transports from Boston with orders for Wallace to "fill them with Live Cattle, Hay, Wood, Vegetables &c for the fleet; to take these things by force from the Rebels, but to pay for them to friends of Government."¹¹ As soon as the news of the arrival of these vessels reached Providence the General Assembly made provision for stationing companies of minute men on the islands.¹² The descent of these forces upon Newport led to renewed threats to destroy that town and to the actual bombardment of the town of Bristol.

The *Mercury* of October 9, 1775 states:

By the motions of some of the men of war and transports, in this harbour, last Monday, it was suspected they intended to take off live stock from the farms on the south part of this island, called Brenton's Neck, the ensuing night; whereupon a number of persons went down in the evening and brought off about 1000 sheep and between 40 and 50 head of horned cattle from several farms: But there still remained a considerable number of cattle, sheep and hogs, on two farms belonging to Jahleel and Benjamin Brenton, great part of which 'tis supposed were by them there collected for and sold to the men of war, to be sent to Boston, for the express purpose of supplying our inveterate enemies.—The next day the ships took off, from said Brentons farms, about 25 head of cattle and 150 sheep; on Wednesday they took 5 or 6 more cattle. There being still left on the farms of James, Jahleel and Benjamin Brenton between 60 and 70 head of cattle. On Wednesday, and Thursday morning, about 300 *Minute-men* arrived here from the county of Providence, Tiverton and Little Compton, under the command of Cols. Eseck Hopkins and William Richmond Esqrs. and as soon as they had refreshed themselves, they marched into the Neck, and brought off 66 horned cattle, some sheep, hogs, and poultry, the ships the same time lying within gun shot, and discharged several cannon at them, but without any effect.

This town having been threatened to be fired on from the men of war, on account of the armed force which made its appearance here, a great many of the inhabitants moved part of all their effects out; and many families have left the town. The carts, chaises, riding chairs, and trucks, were so numerous that the streets and roads were almost blocked up with them. Thursday and Friday being rainy and muddy, the poor women and children were much exposed in looking out for some place of safety; the people continued moving out very fast all Saturday, and yesterday, with their effects.

¹¹Graves to the Admiralty, Nov. 2, 1775.

¹²Bartlett, *op. cit.*, v. 7, p. 426.

It is almost impossible to conceive what infamous, rascally tricks have been made use of, to distress this town, by the abandoned set of ministerial tools here.

Naturally enough, Wallace, in his report dealing with the same incidents and with the subsequent bombardment of Bristol adopted an attitude somewhat different from that of the printer of the *Mercury*.

Rose, Rhode Island 14th Octor 1775.

Sir,

I am honor'd with yours of the 12th 17th Ulto &ca by the Viper and Bolton who arrived here the 4th Inst with Two Transports, a small Schooner for Virginia, and a Packet for York—The Viper, Schooner and Packet Sailed immediately for New York. I engaged the quantity of Stock necessary for the Transports and began taking it on board when intelligence flew thro' the Country.—Expresses sent off for the Rebel Camp.—The Rebel Governor Cooke of Providence raised the Country sent down 1500 Men to Newport to prevent us, However I got all that could be got notwithstanding their utmost efforts, And shall send the Transports loaded.—The Rebels stole into the Town in the Night and next Morning sent a party down to Brenton's Neck where we had been taking off Stock, and what we left such as Milch Cows for the use of the Family, they took all away, not leaving a Chicken for the Women.

I sent to the Town and acquainted them they must get the Rebels away, or otherwise it would become my Duty to destroy them and the Town, they gave me the strongest Assurance they should leave the Town and actually did leave it after staying one Night and part of the next day, And quartered themselves two Miles distant, in this Instance it would have been hard upon the Town to have destroyed it, because it seemed that many of them could not help the Irruption of such a Banditti. Such numbers being sent from Camp and Country round about, and talking of making Newport a place of Arms by Fortifying it, and pretending to have brought 17 Pieces of Cannon from Camp, for that purpose, in Order to divert their attention, I got under Weigh with His Majesty's Ships, and stood up towards Bristol, came to an Anchor against it a little after 6 sent an Officer to Summon it to know if they would send any body to treat, gave them an hour to consider, and if they sent no answer in that time to Commence Hostilities, they Slighted our Summons, they returned no answer! this, together with their behaviour about a Month before (Bargaining for a quantity of Cattle of a Farmer opposite the Town, the people of the Town rose and

drove off all my Cattle,) ¹³ determined me to fire upon them.—At 8 oClock we begun, at 10 a Mr Potter ¹⁴ came on board to Treat, he did not seem to have full powers, so desired some may be sent off that had, I asked them why they did not answer my Summons, that my intentions was friendly, that I only came to purchase Stock for the King's forces.—Had they given me fair Answers not a Gun would have been fired, however, since it was as it was, I demanded a quantity of Stock for the use of His Majesty, which I would pay for,—They hesitated and prevaricated much, said the Country people had drove it all off.—I told them that would not do.—they then told me they could get about 50 Sheep.—the Country being at this time greatly alarmed, Rebels flocking in from all quarters.—My intent being answered diverting them from making a place of Arms of Newport,—Accepted of the 50 Sheep and got them onboard. During this transaction the Rebels fired several Shot at us.—In the Evening weighed and came to Sail, Anchored off Hogg Island, Next morning Ordered the Swan and two Tenders in to destroy Bristol Ferries, they made a Signal for a large Body of Rebels being there, stood in and fired a few Shot at them, One of our Tenders got aground, continued plying off and on, as we Tack'd being close in upon the Shore, the Swan ran aboard of us carried away our Jibboom and hurt the knee of the head we let go the Anchor, parted the Cable and run ashore, while we were in this situation we exchanged several Shot with the Rebels, The Water rising we got off after being two hours ashore, without any damage, (we have now only three Cables in the Ship,) Weighed and Stood to some of the other Islands, Completed the Transports and returned to Newport. Upon my Arrival several Gentlemen of the Town waited upon me, from the Town, acquainting me if I would spare the Town, and suffer the Ferry Boats and Markets to come to Town, they would engaged to get the Rebels off the Island and Supply His Majesty's Ships with what they wanted, I answered it would be impossible to be at Peace while such a Body of Rebels hung over the Town if they would remove them off the Island

¹³Newport *Mercury*, August 28, 1775, gives the following account of this incident:

Last Wednesday the ship *Rose*, Glasgow, Swan, and their tenders, went into Bristol harbour, and applied to a gentleman of Popoquash for live stock, who refused to let him have it; but Capt. Wallace, of the *Rose*, insisting on having it, the gentleman applied to the town, upon which the people collected together, and drove the flock from Popoquash; whereupon Capt. Wallace threatened to fire on the town if they did not supply them, but he left it without putting his threats into execution, and went to Hog Island, where he took off 6 fat cattle and about 20 sheep, without paying for them. The ships returned into this harbour on Thursday evening.—We hear Capt. Wallace has since given an order for the pay for the above stock.

¹⁴Simeon Potter, a leading sea captain and merchant of Bristol. He is said to have been a member of the group who burned the *Gaspee* in 1772. Wilfred H. Munro devotes chapters to his career in *The History of Bristol, R. I. . . .* (Providence, 1880) and *Tales of an Old Sea Port* (Princeton University Press, 1917).

and Supply the King's Ships, I would consent to what they proposed 'till further Orders—This appears to me to be for the King's Service and I am yet of Opinion it may be made a Post for the King.

Most of the Wood used here comes from Long Island we take Vessels loaded, that's precarious; two or three Companies of Men as guards while others cut, may get much. Rebel Vessels broke up will make more.—In regard to Provisions, there's plenty to be got but it requires some force to protect while others get it, there's not an Island about here that has not 2 or 300 Men under Arms to defend the Stock, and they are very vigilant, some of them have Marched 50 Miles upon an Alarm. A Deputation from the Town informs me the Officer commanding the Rebel Party that is about two Miles from the Town, demurs upon leaving the Island but promises not to come near the Town.—I still insist upon their leaving the Island,—in consequence they have sent off to the Rebel Head Quarters to insist upon their being removed, and I am flattered if that should be refused, there's a number of them will take Arms to join any force may be sent to drive them off. They seem to think it hard they should be drove to draw the resentment of the whole Continent upon them, when there is none to give them Assistance.—however there is so much deceit in this Country and of which you are well acquainted that I need say no more upon that Subject.

You will see by the State and Condition of His Majesty's Ships the situation we are in for Provisions, We have had no regular supply from the Contractor these four Months past, and he has declined having any thing to do with it, so if we don't settle some terms with the Town, we must depend upon ravaging the Country for Supplies. I have the honor to be etc James Wallace.

Though Wallace's despatches to Graves written during November and most of December, 1775, appear to have been lost, it is possible to follow his more important movements in the *Mercury* and in the Acts of the General Assembly. The first move in his campaign to "settle some terms with the Town" in order to obtain regular supplies for his vessels was to cut off all imports of food and fuel to the town of Newport. Faced with starvation, the inhabitants appealed to the General Assembly for relief, and at the November session an act was passed which permitted the town to sell beef, beer, and other food-stuff to the British ships as long as Wallace permitted provision boats and ferries to pass unmolested.¹⁵ Other legislation enacted by the same session shows, however, that the Patriot party had suffered no let-up in its determination to rid Rhode Island of the British force. With the exception of the town council of Newport any person found

¹⁵Bartlett, *op. cit.*, v. 7, pp. 381-82.

guilty of supplying the enemy was to "suffer the pains of death, as in cases of felony; and . . . forfeit his lands, goods and chattels, to the colony . . ."¹⁶ Provision was made for raising a regiment of 500 men enlisted for a term of one year. This regiment and the militia regiments of Newport County were placed under the command of Esek Hopkins, who was given the rank of brigadier general.¹⁷

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 389.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 384-86.

[to be concluded]

HEN TROUBLE

ARE you having trouble with your neighbors? If you are, be consoled with the knowledge that such trouble is not alone with you, for unhappy incidents occurred in Providence even as far back as the eighteenth century. Directly below the picture of the balloon, which is used as the cover of this issue, and the famous Mr. Blanchard's advertisement (see inside front cover) is the following drastic insertion:

This is to give due Notice to all Owners of HENS in my Neighbourhood that I have this Day bought Half a Pound of POWDER, and SHOT in Proportion; and having fixed a new FLINT in my old Militia GUN, am determined to fire upon, and endeavour to kill, all FOWLS that may appear in my Garden, from and after Three o'Clock in the Afternoon of Monday next, until the first Day of October; and deeming this Determination not inconsistent with the Principles of good Neighbourhood, if any Person should look *cross* at me on this Account, I am likewise determined not to care for that.

AN UP-TOWN MAN,
who owns
a small Garden.

N. B. Colonel WHIPPLE has more Powder to sell.
Providence, April 8, 1796.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO RHODE ISLAND

Among recent publications of interest to students of Rhode Island history are two written by Carl Bridenbaugh, formerly Associate Professor of American History at Brown University and at present the Director of the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Virginia. *Gentleman's Progress, The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1774* is a lively and interesting travel journal kept by Dr. Hamilton during a journey from Maryland to Maine and back. He twice visited Newport, which he found "as remarkable for pritty women as Albany is for ugly ones." In company with his friend Dr. Moffat he visited the artist, Feke, whom he declared "the most extraordinary genius ever I knew." And he spent an unphilosophical evening with the "Philosophical Club." By itself the *Itinerarium* would make instructive and entertaining reading; with Dr. Bridenbaugh's introduction and notes it is of unusual value to those who wish to become familiar with the persons and places of mid-seventeenth century Rhode Island.

In *Peter Harrison, First American Architect* Bridenbaugh presents the biography of a man who played a prominent role in the life of colonial Newport, and who left as a permanent memorial to his ability such structures as the Touro Synagogue, the Redwood Library, and the Newport Market House, as well as outstanding buildings in other colonial cities. This interestingly written life history of an important, but previously little known, designer will be of use not only to the student of early American architecture but also to anyone investigating the colonial history of Rhode Island or of the colonies in general.

The January, 1949, issue of *Old-Time New England* contains an illustrated article by John Hutchins Cady on Cocomuscussoc, the historic estate of the Smith and Updike families near Wickford.

In *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* of September, 1949, are published the letters of Charles McCarthy to J. Franklin Jameson. They mention a number of members of the faculty and students at Brown during the period (1891-96) when McCarthy was a student in Jameson's history courses. The letters are edited by Elizabeth Donnan and L. F. Stock.

Under the title "Rhode Island's Little Firecracker" the *Saturday Evening Post* of November 12, 1949, printed an interesting article on the life and political career of Governor John O. Pastore.

NEWS NOTES

A critical analysis of the life, influence, and works of George Pierce Baker is being written by Mr. Wisner P. Kinne, 8 Craigie Circle, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Baker was born in Providence, April 4, 1866, and was a graduate of the Providence High School. He became well known as the director of The 47 Workshop at Harvard and from 1925 was director of the University Theatre at Yale. Readers of *Rhode Island History* who have correspondence or any data on Baker will no doubt be willing to communicate with the author.

* * *

In addition to the regular meetings of the Roger Williams Family Association and the Society's program of lectures the following organizations have met at John Brown House: on September 26, Bristol Historical Society (Mr. Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd., speaker); October 25, the Beacon Pole Hill Chapter, D. A. R. (Mr. Clifford P. Monahan, speaker); October 27, Rhode Island Library Association; October 30, International Federation of Catholic Alumnae (Mrs. Anna Whalen of Milton, Massachusetts, speaker); November 14, Calvary Young Men's Business Club (Mr. William G. Roelker, speaker); November 15, Rhode Island Wellesley Club (Mrs. Frank Taylor Mansfield, speaker); November 16, Pottery and Porcelain Club (Mrs. Annie Reese, speaker); November 17, Colonial Dames (Mrs. Thomas W. Streeter, speaker); November 21, Primrose Garden Club (Mrs. William F. Church, speaker); December 7, Pottery and Porcelain Club (Mrs. George E. Downing, speaker); December 15, Rhode Island Society, S. A. R., (Bill of Rights Day); and December 21, Society of Mayflowers Descendants (Christmas party).

* * *

The Kentish Guards, founded in 1774, celebrated their 175th anniversary on October 29. Following a religious service conducted by the Rt. Rev. Granville Gaylord Bennett, D.D., Episcopal Bishop of Rhode Island, at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Colonel Thomas Casey Greene accompanied by Governor Pastore and his staff and Brigadier General Frank A. Hancock, Commander of the Centennial Legion, took a review on the same field where the Guards

drilled before participating in the Revolutionary War.

At the evening banquet Mr. William Greene Roelker, an honorary member, delivered an address on the history of the Kentish Guards. Other speakers were Governor Pastore and General Hancock.

* * *

The First Congregational Society at its last annual meeting turned over to the Rhode Island Historical Society to be placed with the First Congregational Church (Unitarian) archives, three books of the inscriptions of the grave stones in the church's five acre plot at Swan Point Cemetery. The extensive research and work of compiling these books was done by Mrs. Howard K. Hilton and her committee. The present committee consisting of Mrs. Henry C. Hart, Mrs. Walter S. Ball and Clifford P. Monahan are compiling an index to the records which should be an aid to genealogists.

* * *

A recent find in our library was a collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century almanacs, which contain in the margin notations of births, marriages, deaths, etc. of the North Kingstown area. Since fire destroyed the North Kingstown town records, these notations, as soon as they have been transcribed and indexed, should be valuable.

* * *

The Society's library has just received the *History of Jamestown* . . . by Walter Leon Watson, which will be reviewed in a later issue of *Rhode Island History*. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of such publications. This attractive volume is a valuable addition to the growing list of Rhode Island town histories. The Rhode Island Historical Society will be glad to assist and encourage any local historian who wishes to follow Mr. Watson's example and write a history of his town.

THE 128th ANNUAL MEETING

THE ONE-HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHTH annual meeting of Rhode Island Historical Society was held September 21, 1949, at 8:15 P.M. at John Brown House. President Richard LeBaron Bowen presided.

The secretary read the call of the meeting and declared a quorum present. He then read the minutes of the one-hundred-twenty-seventh annual meeting as well as the minutes of two stated meetings held since the last annual meeting. All were accepted as read.

Mr. Howard W. Wilson, treasurer, presented his report, which showed an operating deficit of \$1,230.17 for the year ending June 30, 1949. However, because of certain non-operating income there was an over-all surplus of \$2,329.61. The balance sheet as of June 30, 1949, showed total assets of \$267,151.66 of which John Brown House and "books and manuscripts" were each carried at \$50,000.00.

Mr. Clifford P. Monahan, librarian, presented his report which was also the report of the Library Committee. Mr. Monahan spoke particularly of the fine condition of our library and of the cataloging and arranging going on to make it even better. He also mentioned the almost daily additions of new library and museum items.

Mr. Charles B. McGowan, chairman of the Membership Committee, reported a net gain of 48 members for the year ending June 30, 1949, which brought the total membership to 1,362. The guest book was signed by 1,065 persons during the year.

Mr. Frederick Lippitt, assistant secretary, read the report of the Lecture Committee in the absence of Mr. Henry D. Sharpe, chairman. This report showed that 12 meetings of the Society were held during the past year with a total attendance of 1,302. Thirty-three organizations held meetings in John Brown House. Mr. Roelker addressed eight organizations and Mr. Monahan two.

The Publication Committee, Mr. Paul C. Nicholson, chairman, reported that four issues of the Society's quarterly, *Rhode Island History*, had been published. These issues were each 32 pages in length and in total were composed of twelve articles, three book reviews, nine charts and maps, one report and twenty-nine notes. The articles were illustrated by eight cuts.

The Committee on Grounds and Buildings, Frederick P. Austin, Jr., chairman, reported on the refinishing of all the downstairs

floors. Also reported was the acquisition of 75 chairs, a new gas range and a crystal chandelier for the dining room, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Jackson.

As the members stood in respect Mr. Joseph G. Henshaw, chairman of the Committee on Necrology, read the list of 28 members who had died since the last annual meeting.

Mr. Bayard Ewing reported for the Finance Committee in the absence of Mr. Albert H. Poland, chairman. The report showed all securities to have a market value of \$141,779.51 as of June 30, 1949. Income from securities is approximately \$6,500.00 annually. The portfolio is divided as follows: Bonds 27%, Preferred Stocks 44%, Common Stocks 29%. The investment account was increased by two bequests in the past year: one from the estate of Victor Wilbour of \$8,115.51 and one from the E. K. Aldrich, Jr., estate of \$20,500.00. . . .

The Auditing Committee, Mr. J. Cunliffe Bullock, chairman, reported that Mr. Robert M. Wood, auditor, found the books and accounts of the Society in good condition.

Mr. Roelker presented his tenth annual report as director. He pointed out the Society's need for funds and expressed the hope that gifts, either testamentary or otherwise would be received. He also stressed the need for an addition to the house which would provide a lecture hall. . . .

President Bowen pointed out in his report "that in these days when most historical societies are operating in deep red figures, some to the extent of as much as \$12,000 per annum, our Society, much to the amazement of other societies, was able to operate this year on practically a break-even basis with a loss of only \$1,230.17, which included a lawn item of \$1,039.27 for evergreens, seeding, etc.

"The Society's financial strength lies in the fact that its income is derived, not from one, but from four sources: Dues, 32.3%; Securities, 23.2%; State of Rhode Island, 28.3%; and Gifts, Sales, etc., 16.2%. At the beginning of each year the estimated expenses are budgeted against the estimated income.

"Our excellent financial condition is not accidental, but is the result of the careful business management of our Director, who has not only increased the income of the Society by the solicitation of new funds, but has operated scrupulously within his budget."

The secretary reported no unfinished business.

Mrs. Charles H. Weeden presented the report of the Nominating Committee for officers and committee members. There being no counter nominations the secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the slate as presented. This was accordingly done and those members were declared elected to serve until the next annual meeting or until their successors are chosen.

Mr. Addison P. Munroe presented the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

In Memoriam

WHEREAS — The Rhode Island Historical Society has suffered a great loss in the death of Mrs. Sarah Tucker Cook, for many years chairman of the Entertainment Committee of this Society, and

WHEREAS — As chairman of that committee she served with great efficiency, always being present, regardless of the weather, for the refreshment period following the lectures, her genial personality lending success on every occasion, and

WHEREAS — Her interest in the Society itself was long standing and not of a transient nature, and her ability to make every member and guest feel at home was a valuable asset to the Society, now therefore be it

RESOLVED — That the Rhode Island Historical Society, in annual meeting assembled, hereby expresses its great loss and deep regret at her passing and extends sincere sympathy to her family. Her gracious memory will endure in the hearts of her friends, and "to live in the hearts of those we leave behind, is not to die." And be it further

RESOLVED — That this resolution be spread upon the records of this meeting and a copy of the same be forwarded to the family of Mrs. Cook.

Mr. Roelker announced that Mrs. Howard Johnson Greene had accepted the chairmanship of the Entertainment Committee.

There being no further business to be transacted the meeting adjourned at 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

M. RANDOLPH FLATHER
Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

JULY 1, 1948—JUNE 30, 1949

RECEIPTS

OPERATING

Dues	\$ 7,404.00
Corporate Memberships	895.00
State Appropriation	6,500.00
Interest and Dividends	5,324.05
Contributions	1,870.00
John Brown House Fund, Income	164.00
Sale of Publications, Books, etc.	471.62
Sundry Receipts	303.38

\$ 22,932.05

NON-OPERATING

Aldrich Estate Bequest	\$20,500.00
Wilbour Estate Bequest	8,115.51
Securities sold	4,358.47
Contributions	
Ward Papers	500.00
John Brown House Fund	185.00
State of R. I. for Purchase of Newspapers etc.	908.26
Sundry Receipts	387.95

\$ 34,955.19

Total Receipts \$ 57,887.24

EXPENDITURES

OPERATING

Salaries (Including \$1,108.60 Tax)	\$14,086.24
Directors Discretionary Fund	752.46
Telephone and Office Supplies	614.27
Maintenance of Grounds and Building	2,407.03
Heat and Light	1,389.18
Committees	
Lecture	707.12
Library	927.86
Membership	288.05
Publication (R. I. History)	2,183.64
Insurance	636.92
Audit (6 months audit)	35.00
Sundry Expenditures	134.45

\$ 24,162.22

NON-OPERATING

Securities Purchased	\$27,090.02
Newspapers, Microfilm and Binding	600.00
Expended for Ward Papers	68.97
Expended from Paine Estate	1,282.22
Expended from Aldrich Estate	2,014.33
Sundry Expenditures	339.87

\$ 31,395.21

Total Disbursements \$ 55,557.63

ASSETS

CASH ACCOUNT

R. I. Hospital National Bank and Cash	\$12,943.56
Providence Institution for Savings	318.92
U. S. Treasury Bonds "G"	10,000.00

\$ 23,262.48

INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

Securities	\$135,796.15
R. I. Hospital Trust Co.	541.50

\$136,337.65

JOHN BROWN HOUSE FUND

R. I. Hospital Trust Co., Agent	7,520.00
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PROPERTY

John Brown House	\$50,000.00
Books and Manuscripts	50,000.00
Furniture and Museum Materials	2.00
Four Parcels of Land	4.00

100,006.00

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE 25.52

\$267,151.66

RESERVES

General Endowment Funds	\$182,266.04
John Brown House Fund Reserve	7,705.00
Life Membership Fund Reserve	5,750.00
Sustaining Membership Fund Reserve	1,000.00
Revolving Publication Fund	277.45
Ward Papers Reserve Fund	1,391.76
Wilbour Fund Reserve	41,102.41
Calder Fund Reserve	13,909.11
Aldrich Fund Reserve	18,485.67
Index to Publication Fund Reserve	25.00
Securities Fund Profit	418.94
Surplus (Deficit)	5,179.72

\$267,151.66

HOWARD W. WILSON, Treasurer

Examined and found correct.

J. CUNLIFFE BULLOCK, Chairman Auditing Committee

BOOK REVIEW

One Hundred Fifty Years of Providence Washington Insurance Company, 1799-1949, by William Greene Roelker and Clarkson A. Collins, III. Providence, 1949, XII, 153p.

The compounding of a business history is a hazardous undertaking nowadays. At one time the audience was small and largely uncritical—just friends of the institution that was celebrating an anniversary. Now the interested group is more varied and runs even to men who wish to apply social science analysis to individual chronicles. A family story may be temporarily satisfying to its sponsors but will lack permanent value. An analytical study is likely to be very poor reading. Now Messrs. Roelker and Collins have struck a happy medium—and relative to a type of business institution which externally would appear to inspire little romance. Their volume is warm with the play of individual men in the founding and continuance, the up-building, of the enterprise. It sits always firmly in the background of the growth of its home city. And it exploits well the drama of competition, business crises, and the catastrophes of fire and storm. It is a well-seasoned compote of rich materials.

At the same time the authors have provided many data for the students of entrepreneurial or business life. Here the data are better for the earlier years of the company's career, before the Providence Washington became big business with the latter's peculiar problems: when insurance and banking were closely intertwined, when stockholder control was obviously slowly losing ground to managerial domination, even as late as when the Chicago fire stamped its lessons upon the policies of management. Without ostentation the authors work in much material which will be of real value to their scholarly brethren.

One with sympathy for the latter may perhaps be pardoned a plea that the Providence Washington now sponsor a study more specialized than the present history, a study which would be more particularly concerned with the question "Why": *Why* was it possible for the company to shift so simply from marine to fire writing? *Why* did its business grow so splendidly despite the competition of larger units? *Why* did it adopt the dividend policy of payments only out of investment income? These—and others like them—were not essential to the Roelker-Collins story, but they are the type of question in which, I can imagine, the officers of the company sometimes to be interested. Business histories should, at least in part, serve the function of guiding executives away from past errors.

The current volume offers a good foundation for the more intensive, professional study. It establishes the genealogy—so to speak; it traces the chief lines of growth; and it chronicles most of the external facts pertinent to a sound analysis. To accomplish so much and yet to keep the story interesting to the general reader—yes, quite engaging—is a feat in which the authors may take legitimate pride. The academic world, no less than that encompassed by the boundaries of Rhode Island, will offer them felicitations.

ARTHUR H. COLE

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Harvard University

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Except holidays

Monday through Friday 9:00 to 5:00

Sunday afternoon 3:00 to 5:00

Library only

Tuesday evening 7:00 to 9:00

*Closed Sundays and Tuesday evenings,
June, July, and August*

LECTURES

January 11, 1950 8:15 p.m.

STATED MEETING

Smuggling in Colonial Newport

BRUCE M. BIGELOW, Vice-President, Brown University

* * *

February 8 8:15 p.m.

A History of Square Dancing

S. FOSTER DAMON, Professor of English, Brown University

* * *

March 8 8:15 p.m.

The Early Days of Brown & Sharpe

HENRY DEXTER SHARPE, President of Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Co.

* * *

March 29 2:30 p.m.

Great-Grandmother's Kitchen

(Illustrated with early kitchen utensils)

ALBERT E. LOWES, Lecturer in the History of Science, Brown University

IN THE MUSEUM

January-March

Pictures of Providence in the Past
and
Early Rhode Island Silver.

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEW MEMBERS

September 1, 1949 — November 30, 1949

- | | |
|---|---|
| Mr. Earl H. Ashley | Mr. Leo F. Krussman |
| Mr. George A. Benker | Hon. Edward L. Leahy
Bristol, R. I. |
| Miss Ethel F. Blaisdell
Bristol, R. I. | Mr. Arthur E. Leach |
| Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen | Mr. Charles R. Makepeace, Jr. |
| Mr. Benjamin Brier | Mr. Frederick Mason, Jr.
Barrington, R. I. |
| Mr. Fred M. Burton | Mr. Edward B. McAlpine |
| Mrs. Malcolm G. Chace, Jr. | Mr. Frank A. McCabe
Valley Falls, R. I. |
| Mr. H. D. S. Chafee
West Barrington, R. I. | Mr. Max E. Meller |
| Mr. Ben C. Clough | Mr. Houghton P. Metcalf, Jr. |
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Woonsocket, R. I. |
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North Providence, R. I. | Mr. Arthur N. Sheldon |
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| Mr. Russell Grinnell, Jr.
Gloucester, Mass. | Mrs. Newman T. Sleeper |
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| Mr. Samuel A. Hamin | Mr. E. Sheldon Spicer, Jr.
Barrington, R. I. |
| Mr. and Mrs. Townes M. Harris
Warwick, R. I. | Mr. Walbridge S. Taft
New York, N. Y. |
| Mr. Townes M. Harris, Jr. | Mr. Lester Ralston Thomas, Jr. |
| Mr. Adolf Jaeger | Miss Maude K. Wetmore
Newport |
| Mr. George W. Jenckes
Cranston, R. I. | Mrs. Cyrus M. Wheaton
Riverside, R. I. |
| Mr. Leslie Allen Jones | Mr. W. Irving Wolf |
| Mr. Arthur Kaplan | |