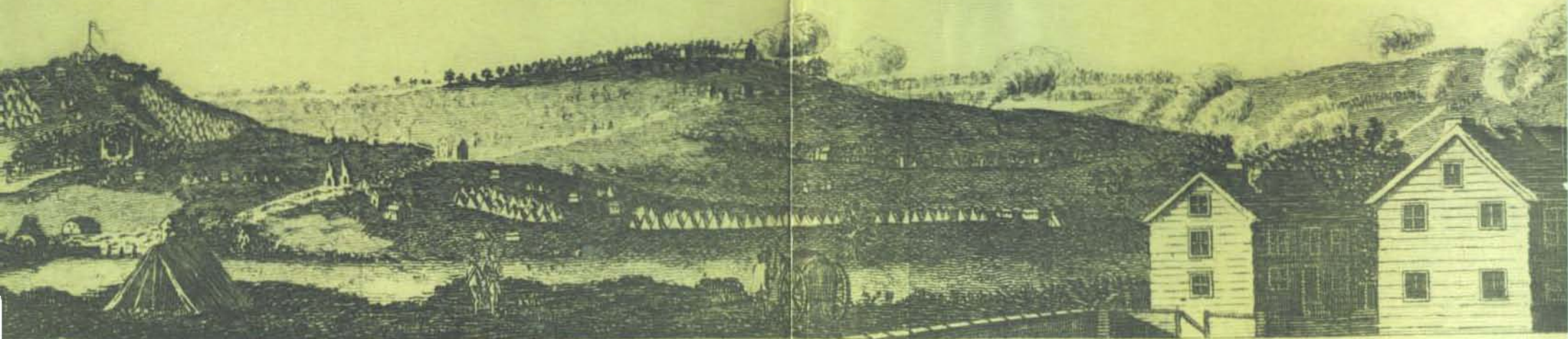


RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 18, NO. 2

APRIL, 1959



*The SIEGE OF RHODE ISLAND, taken from Mr. Brindley's House,
on the 25th of August, 1778.*

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Engraving from *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, v. 49, p. 101, February, 1779.

RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 18

APRIL, 1959

NO. 2

GENERAL GLOVER'S ROLE IN THE BATTLE OF RHODE ISLAND

by GEORGE A. BILLIAS¹

Assistant Professor of History, University of Maine

Historians have tended to misinterpret the role played by Brigadier General John Glover at the battle of Rhode Island in August, 1778. Prior to this engagement, the short, stocky Marbleheader had been a key figure in two brilliant amphibious operations. In a water-borne evacuation that has been called "America's Dunkirk," Glover's regiment had helped to ferry the patriot army trapped by the British on Long Island back to safety in August, 1776. On a cold Christmas night four months later, Glover's men had ferried Washington's army across the ice-choked Delaware to make possible the stabbing attack against the Hessians at Trenton that helped to turn the tide in the Revolution. Consequently, when Sullivan's army was evacuated by water from Rhode Island in the summer of 1778, historians jumped to the conclusion that Glover must have been responsible for the amphibious retreat.² Examination of primary sources, however, reveals nothing to support their contentions.

If military historians claim too much for Glover with respect to the amphibious operations on Rhode Island, they do not emphasize enough the important part he played in the fighting that took place on land. The little Marbleheader, who had demonstrated that he could rise to the occasion at Long Island, Pelham Bay, and Trenton,

¹For financial assistance in preparing this article the writer is indebted to the Coe Research Fund at the University of Maine.

²Christopher Ward, *War of the Revolution* (New York, 1952), II, 592; Thomas Amory, *Military Services and Public Life of Major-General John Sullivan* (Boston, 1868), 83; Henry B. Dawson, *Battles of the United States by Sea and Land* (New York, 1858), I, 437-438; Lynn Montross, *Rag, Tag, and Bobtail* (New York, 1952), 297; George Sheer and Hugh Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats* (New York, 1957); Herbert T. Wade and Robert A. Lively, *This Glorious Cause . . .* (Princeton, 1958), 141; all credit Glover with conducting the evacuation.

again showed his mettle near Quaker Hill.³ It was Glover's brigade which prevented the Rhode Island retreat from becoming a rout.

The object of the Rhode Island campaign was to capture the enemy base and garrison at Newport. Realizing the importance of its harbor, which could accommodate a large fleet, the British seized the town in 1776. Strategically located between New York and Boston, Newport served as an ideal place from which the British launched raids on both land and sea. When the French fleet arrived in American waters, Washington eventually committed d'Estaing's force against this somewhat isolated British base.

General Sullivan was directed to take command of the Rhode Island campaign. From the Continental army he was given a small but elite force composed of Glover's and Varnum's brigades as well as a detachment under Colonel Henry Jackson. From the French he was expected to receive the active co-operation of d'Estaing's fleet along with the 4,000 French troops that were aboard. Over and above these regulars Sullivan was to count upon the assistance of the New England militiamen, who were called out to support him.

Being located on an island, Newport could be taken only by an amphibious operation. Recalling that Glover had ferried Washington's army across the Delaware, Sullivan planned to use the chunky brigadier in a similar capacity on Rhode Island. Glover's Fourteenth Continental Regiment, composed largely of fishermen and sailors from Marblehead, which had been involved in the Trenton operation, had been disbanded in 1776.⁴ There were no skilled seamen available to ferry Sullivan at Rhode Island. Consequently, Sullivan promptly issued instructions to send the Marbleheader back to Massachusetts to round up some experienced mariners for the campaign. These orders dated August 1, 1778, read in part as follows:

You will please to proceed to Boston, Marblehead and such other places as you may think proper, to engage two or three hundred Seamen or other persons well acquainted with Boats who are to act as Boatmen in the Expedition against Rhode Island.⁵

³For Glover's role at Pelham Bay, see "Pelham Bay: A Forgotten Battle," *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*, January, 1958, by George A. Billias.

⁴Many historians have mistakenly assumed that Glover's Marblehead regiment was still in existence. See Ward, *op. cit.*, 592; Nathan Sanborn, *Gen. John Glover and His Marblehead Regiment in the Revolutionary War* (Marblehead, 1929), 39.

⁵Sullivan to Glover, August 1, 1778, cited in William P. Upham, "A Memoir of John Glover," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* (1863), 107.

It has always been assumed that Glover carried out these orders; evidence shows it was unlikely that he did so. On the day that the seamen in Salem, Massachusetts, turned out for the expedition under Captain Samuel Flagg, General Glover was still in Rhode Island.⁶ On August 3, when Boston boatmen were preparing to march to Sullivan's assistance, Glover was taking up quarters in Providence at the home of Joseph Laurence.⁷ Although Glover had nothing to do with the recruitment of mariners, they responded handsomely to Sullivan's call. Marblehead sent one hundred boatmen, Boston, eighty; Newburyport, sixty; Salem, twenty-five; and a number came from smaller coastal towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.⁸

The campaign got under way on August 9, a foggy Sunday morning, when American troops were ferried from the mainland to Rhode Island, the island on which Newport is located. There is no direct evidence that Glover was in charge of the crossing, but the operation had all the earmarks of some of the Marbleheader's earlier amphibious exploits.⁹ Hours before the crossing was made the troops were painstakingly rehearsed in a military procedure that was unfamiliar to most. ". . . [T]he army was ordered to parade near Howland's Ferry," noted one participant, "in order to embark and reembark in the boats that they might the better understand such a maneuver. . . ." ¹⁰ Certainly no one in the army was better qualified to instruct the troops in this procedure than General Glover.

Originally plans had called for a simultaneous landing by both French and American forces on August 10. The Americans were to cross from the mainland and attack the northeastern side of the island, and the French, jumping off from their base on Conanicut Island, were to strike on the northwestern side. However, when Sullivan discovered that the British had pulled out of their fortifications on the northern end of the island on August 9, he sent his troops over immediately to occupy some of the abandoned British redoubts.

⁶*Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, August 3, and August 10, 1778.

⁷Sally Drowne to her sister-in-law, August 3, 1778, cited in Louis Gottschalk, *Lafayette Joins the Army* (Chicago, 1937), 244.

⁸Williams to Pickering, August 20, 1778, Pickering Papers, xvii, 210, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁹In the order of battle drawn up for the crossing, Glover's brigade was to form the left of the first line. Jonathan Titcomb Orderly Book, August 8, 1778, Massachusetts Archives cccxxvii, 37, in State House, Boston.

¹⁰William P. Cutler and Julia P. Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Mannaseh Cutler* (Cincinnati, 1888), i, 66.

After informing the French of his landing, Sullivan pitched camp to await the arrival of the rest of his forces.¹¹

D'Estaing, though somewhat nettled over Sullivan's departure from the preconceived plan for a simultaneous attack, began to land troops on the opposite side of the island on the same day. But about midday, sudden news that a British fleet was approaching Rhode Island caused d'Estaing to change his mind. Recalling his troops, the French admiral sailed out to meet the foe the next day, leaving the Americans on Rhode Island more or less on their own.¹²

The patriots spent August 10 assembling their army, and in the duties that were assigned high-ranking officers Glover was given a post of honor and importance. The first line in the camp was composed of Glover's brigade on the left, Cornell's left of center, Greene's right of center, and Varnum's on the right. Glover was given command of the entire left division of the first line within the American camp.¹³

Determined to press the attack on Newport, Sullivan issued orders to his army on August 11 to advance the following day. Glover spent the day drawing ammunition and rations for his brigade in preparation for the march. To make certain that his troops were ready, Sullivan ordered the entire army paraded at four in the afternoon, and Glover's brigade was inspected along with the rest. The firing of a cannon the next morning was to be the signal to start the army on its way.¹⁴

That signal was never heard. Glover, who was brigadier for the day, awoke on the 12th to find a violent storm sweeping across the island.¹⁵ Winds of gale force howled through the American camp tearing tents away and exposing the troops to the elements. Pouring rains drenched men's muskets leaving them useless, and much precious ammunition was ruined. Roads turned into seas of mud, making the movement of artillery impossible. The storm lasted for two days, and during that time the American army remained paralyzed.

¹¹Sullivan to Massachusetts Council, August 12, 1778, Massachusetts Archives, cxcix, 412, State House, Boston.

¹²Three French frigates were left behind to be under Sullivan's orders.

¹³Lyman to Heath, August 10, 1778, Heath Papers, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 7th Series, Vol. iv, part ii, 245.

¹⁴Glover Orderly Book, August 11, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, August 12, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

August 14 dawned bright and clear, and Sullivan again made preparations to march on Newport the following day. This time Sullivan's order of march was more explicit. The road running north out of Newport extended about two miles to a fork at which point the East Road and the West Road respectively extended up the island in roughly a north and south direction. These two arteries were to be the main route of advance for the army. Of the brigades in the first line, Glover's was ordered to advance down the East Road, Varnum's down the West Road, and Cornell's and Greene's brigades down the middle between the two roads.¹⁶ Glover was to be in command of the left wing of the first line.¹⁷

The army moved forward as planned and came to a halt about a mile and a half in front of the enemy lines on Tonomy Hill. The besieged British looked up about noon of the 15th to see the surrounding hills swarming with patriots. Glover still commanded the left of the front lines and was subject to the orders of Lafayette who commanded the entire left wing.¹⁸

Later that day, however, Glover was relieved temporarily of command of his brigade and given other duties. Just what the nature of this new assignment was is not clear.¹⁹ Glover was put in charge of the Salem Volunteers and the Boston Independent Company.²⁰ Both these units had boatmen assigned to them, a fact which suggests that Sullivan might have been considering the possibility of an amphibious evacuation from the island even at this early date.

D'Estaing had promised to return to assist the Americans. While waiting for the French fleet's return, Sullivan resorted to siege operations. When d'Estaing did come back on August 20, however, he intended to abandon, not to press the attack on Newport. The same storm that had halted the American army on land had wrought havoc on both the French and British fleets at sea. D'Estaing argued that he had to go to Boston for repairs. Glover joined with Sullivan's

¹⁶*Ibid.*, August 14, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

¹⁷Jonathan Titcomb Orderly Book, After Orders, August 14, 1778, Massachusetts Archives, cccxxvii, 37, State House, Boston.

¹⁸Crafts to Heath, August 15, 1778, Heath Papers, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 7th Series, Volume iv, part ii, 253.

¹⁹Glover Orderly Book, August 15, 1778, in Essex Institute, Salem. Other writers claim that Glover was assigned temporarily on Sullivan's staff. Ordinarily such an appointment would have been announced in general orders.

²⁰*Ibid.*, August 16, 1778, in Essex Institute, Salem.

other general officers to send to the French admiral a sharply worded protest, which pointed out the "ruinous consequences" that would result if the fleet abandoned the American army.²¹ But it was to no avail, for d'Estaing had already sailed for Boston.

Minus the French fleet and troops the American army was left in a precarious position. Sullivan turned to his generals and sought their advice on what the army should do next. Glover's reply showed that he was in favor of continuing the attack in one of two ways. His first proposal was that Sullivan continue the siege by regular approaches, even at the risk of exposing the army to the danger of reinforcements the British might rush in to Rhode Island from elsewhere. If the siege were continued, Glover declared, steps should be taken to secure the forts close to the ferry in the northern end of the island in the event an amphibious retreat became necessary.²²

Glover's second suggestion was significant because he proposed a technique he knew well: an amphibious attack. Send a small force in boats, Glover argued, to storm the rear of the redoubt at the head of Easton's beach.²³ Once the redoubt was taken, a larger force could attack along the beach and turn the enemy flank, thereby breaching the British defenses in front of Newport. It was a bold scheme and might have succeeded if attempted. Unfortunately it was not. With the militia leaving his army every day in alarming numbers Sullivan felt his force was too weak to launch such an attack.

Retreat was the only alternative. Working parties had been busily preparing a position for the army on the northern end of the island for some time. Heavy stores and baggage were sent back in advance so that the army could move unencumbered. As darkness descended on the evening of August 28, the American army quietly struck its tents and moved out. Shouldering their knapsacks, Glover's brigade with the rest of the left wing wearily trudged back up the East Road.²⁴ By three the next morning the patriot army took up a new position

²¹Sullivan and His Officers to d'Estaing, August 22, 1778, in Otis G. Hammond, *Letters and Papers of Major-General John Sullivan* (Concord, 1931), II, 243-246; hereinafter cited as *Sullivan Papers*.

²²Glover to Sullivan, August 23, 1778, *Ibid.*, 261-262.

²³General Nathanael Greene also pointed out the same possibilities for such an attack. Greene to Sullivan, August 23, 1778, *Ibid.*, 253-254.

²⁴Sullivan to Titcomb, August 27, 1778; General Orders, August 27, 1778, both in Jonathan Titcomb Orderly Book, Massachusetts Archives, CCCXXVII, 37, State House, Boston.

in the vicinity of Butts Hill. Sullivan's left extended to the East Road and his right to the West Road and there were covering parties on each flank.²⁵

It was dawn before the British commander, Sir Robert Pigot, discovered the Americans had gone. Two columns were sent in pursuit up each of the main roads. Pigot's move was, in reality, only a reconnaissance in force because many of his troops remained behind to defend the Newport lines lest the American maneuver prove a ruse.²⁶ The column speeding up the East Road was headed by Brigadier-General Smith and was composed of veteran British troops including the Twenty-second and Forty-third Regiments and the flank companies of the Thirty-eighth and Fifty-fourth Regiments.²⁷ About seven in the morning the advance of this column encountered and received sharp fire from the American rear guard and picket screening the Patriot army. While General Smith rushed up reinforcements and brought up guns, the Americans kept up a retreating fire and fell back to Quaker Hill.

Glover, whose quarters were located in a house at the foot and east of Quaker Hill, narrowly escaped injury and death as a result of this British cannonade.²⁸ He and his staff were sitting at the table hurriedly swallowing their breakfast while their horses stood saddled at the door. Finally the firing on the hill became so heavy and incessant that Glover ordered Rufus King, then a young law student who had volunteered his services as aide-de-camp, to mount and investigate what and where the firing was.²⁹ King left the table and another officer named Sherburne took his place. No sooner was Sherburne seated than a spent cannon ball whistled through an open window, and barely missing the other officers smashed into Sherburne's foot. Sherburne had to have his leg amputated, but his morale was lowered for other reasons. "[T]he loss of a leg might be borne," he sighed, "but to be condemned all future life to say I lost my leg under break-

²⁵Sullivan to President of Congress, August 31, 1778, *Sullivan Papers*, II, 280-281.

²⁶*Diary of Frederick Mackenzie* (Cambridge, 1930), II, 381.

²⁷Pigot to Clinton, August 31, 1778, in Dawson, *op. cit.*, I, 442-444.

²⁸Besides the near miss described above, Glover's horse was killed in the course of the battle of Rhode Island. Sullivan to Washington, September 15, 1778, *Sullivan Papers*, II, 342-343.

²⁹For King's appointment as Glover's aide-de-camp see Glover Orderly Book, August 17, 1778, in Essex Institute, Salem.

fast table, is too bad."³⁰

The cannon ball was a grim souvenir from the fighting that swirled atop Quaker Hill. Colonel Edward Wigglesworth with his regiment was holding the key position in spite of the pounding they were taking from British guns. There was danger from another quarter, however. The hard-driving Hessian column that had been sent up the West Road on the other side of the island already had outflanked Wigglesworth's post, and one regiment surging east was on the point of making contact with the British column, thus cutting off Wigglesworth's retreat. Not a moment too soon, John Trumbull, son of the Connecticut governor (in later life the famous painter) who was acting as Sullivan's aide-de-camp at the time, was sent up the shell-swept hill to order Wigglesworth to retire.³¹ Back down the northern slope of Quaker Hill came Wigglesworth, with Smith's troops in hot pursuit. American reinforcements rushing up the long straight incline to assist Wigglesworth glanced up to see a horde of friend and foe alike descending upon them. "[T]hey took to their heels along with the rest," observed a British officer at the scene, "and did not stop till they came to the Cross road."³²

Just north of the crossroad mentioned was the position assigned to Glover in the American line. The spot was well-chosen. To Glover's left lay Tyler's brigade crouching behind an abatis. On Glover's right was Colonel Christopher Greene, whose brigade included a regiment of Negro troops raised in Rhode Island. Glover's artillery, which had a clear field of fire, opened up on the oncoming British troops.³³

Whether the Rhode Island retreat would turn into a rout now depended largely on the behavior of Glover's men. As Wigglesworth's regiment and the troops sent to reinforce them came streaming into the patriot lines, there was a moment of panic. Would Glover's men too catch the fever for retreat and run pell-mell before the British? If they did, the rest of the American line on the left would become untenable and the enemy force, light as it was, might press home a disastrous attack. Fortunately Glover's men stood fast and braced

³⁰Theodore Sizer, ed. *Autobiography of Colonel John Trumbull* (New Haven, 1953), 48; hereinafter cited as *Trumbull's Autobiography*.

³¹*Trumbull's Autobiography*, 47.

³²*Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, op. cit.*, n, 382.

³³*Ibid.*

themselves for the impending assault.

A large-scale attack against Glover's position was never carried out. Taking note of the way the American artillery could sweep the ground, the manner in which the stone walls in the area served as ready-made fortifications for the patriots, and the great number of troops massed in the vicinity, the British decided to call off the assault. Smith's column shuddered to a halt, and the British commander ordered his men back to the top of Quaker Hill where his artillery could fire down upon the American lines.³⁴ As General Sullivan described the action to Congress, "The Enemy advanced on our left very near, but were repulsed by Genl Glover. . . ."³⁵

The hard-fought engagement ended at four in the afternoon after repeated British attacks on other parts of the American line had failed to dislodge Sullivan from his position. News came the next morning that an enemy fleet with reinforcements was on its way to relieve the Newport garrison, and the Americans hurriedly took steps to evacuate the island. Sullivan's boatmen prepared to ferry the army back to the mainland.

Sullivan had come very close to losing his corps of seafaring specialists about a week prior to the evacuation. On August 20 he had noted that the enlistments were close to expiration for the "spirited Citizens of Salem, Marblehead, etc., who so cheerfully turned out to take charge of the boats. . . ."³⁶ Sullivan pleaded with them to stay on a few more days and placed them under General Glover, a man they knew and could trust. The Salem Volunteers were released from Glover's command on August 24, and put under the "command of Colonel Lee, to guard the boats and to man them when the occasion may require."³⁷ The colonel referred to was none other than William R. Lee, Glover's second-in-command in 1776 and veteran of the Long Island and Trenton amphibious operations, who had volunteered for the Rhode Island expedition. The Salem Volunteers did yeomen's work in transporting Sullivan's army to safety, but whether Glover's former brigade major was still in command of the boatmen during

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵Sullivan to President of Congress, August 31, 1778, in *Sullivan Papers*, II, 283.

³⁶Glover Orderly Book, General Orders, August 20, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

³⁷*Ibid.*, General Orders, August 24, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

the operation is open to question.³⁸

The amphibious evacuation conducted on the night of August 30 was a masterpiece. Sullivan made a pretense of erecting defenses in front of his army and withdrew his forces while his working parties made noises to confuse the enemy. The operation was carried out under the cover of darkness, Sullivan reported to Congress, in the face of an enemy whose forces were superior to his own and whose vessels held command of the water.³⁹ By early morning the entire withdrawal had been completed without the loss of a single man or piece of artillery.

Military historians notwithstanding, it appears highly unlikely that Glover was responsible for this amphibious operation. In his letters to Congress and to General Washington, Sullivan made no mention of any important services rendered by the Marbleheader in the evacuation. In fact, Sullivan listed by name those officers to whom he gave full credit for the water-borne withdrawal, and Glover was not among them.⁴⁰ But if Glover had done little to assist the American retreat by water at Rhode Island, he should be remembered for the role he played in halting the British advance on land at Quaker Hill. For in the final analysis it was this repulse of the British at Quaker Hill that prevented a rout and made the amphibious retreat to the mainland possible.

³⁸On August 27 Captain Flagg, leader of the Salem Volunteers, was ordered to take charge of the boats at Howland's Ferry and apparently superseded Lee's command. See Glover Orderly Book, General Orders, August 27, 1778, Essex Institute, Salem.

³⁹Sullivan to President of Congress, August 31, 1778, *Sullivan Papers*, II, 285.

⁴⁰Sullivan to Washington, August 31, 1778, *Ibid.*, 287-288; and Sullivan to President of Congress, August 31, 1778, *Ibid.*, 286.



The Society suffered a saddening loss in the death of Miss Louise G. Huling on March 5 of this year. Miss Huling had been a member of the staff as a secretary and bookkeeper since 1945 and during this long service had gained the affection of visitors to John Brown House by her friendly interest and cheerful helpfulness. She will be missed by all who knew her.



AWAY TO RHODE ISLAND FROM THEIR CELLARS

by DOUGLAS EDWARD LEACH

Assistant Professor of History, Vanderbilt University¹

IN SEPTEMBER, 1675, with King Philip's War spreading fast, the people of Warwick assembled in town meeting to consider their perilous situation and lay plans for their security. According to the surviving record of that meeting, Captain Edmund Calverley, the chief military officer of Warwick, complained that some of the townspeople had disobeyed his commands, and "did goe away to roadiland [Aquidneck] from ther Cellers without Leave of the said Captaine And now ar gon away againe . . . against the order of this towne And their owne engadgments. . . ."² The problem before us concerns these refugees and many others like them from other towns in Rhode Island, Massachusetts Bay, and Plymouth Colony who congregated on the island of Aquidneck in Narragansett Bay to escape the fury of Philip and his followers. With Indian raids creating terror all along the frontier from Maine to Connecticut, hundreds of people hastily gathered children and belongings, and flocked along the roads and trails leading to comparative safety. These were the people who, to paraphrase a famous entry in the Providence town records, stayed not but went away. In most cases there was no disgrace attached to their flight. Their tragic counterparts have crowded the roads in every major war of modern European history, and of course the Korean War as well.

Aquidneck Island, with its two towns of Portsmouth and Newport, blessed with a gently rolling terrain of fertile soil, and surrounded on all sides by good salt water of the Narragansett Bay variety, seemed a perfect place of refuge for the endangered communities on the mainland. Of these there were five in Rhode Island plus a number of others nearby on territory belonging to Plymouth and Massachusetts.

We like to think of our ancestors as the very embodiment of courage in the wilderness. We like to picture them confronting the Indian menace with complete intrepidity, jaws set, trusty flintlocks in hand, clear-eyed womenfolk standing by to reload the weapons as fast as they are fired through the loopholes of the shutters, all flint-hard in

¹This article was originally presented as an address at the meeting of the Society of Colonial Wars in Rhode Island, December 30, 1958. I have made some changes for publication.

²Warwick Records, Town Book A-2 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), pp. 149-150.

their determination not to yield their hard-won possessions to the savages. Although there were many people like that in the New England communities in 1675, they were by no means typical. Our ancestors were pretty likely to be average folk, and in many ways like ourselves. They wished to continue living normal happy lives, and they possessed a strong instinct of self-preservation. Their minds were only partially disciplined to face the reality of imminent violent death accompanied by mass destruction. So the frightened people of such exposed settlements as Warwick, Wickford, Pettaquamscutt, and Westerly began to think about leaving for safer territory, especially when they detected signs that their near neighbor, the powerful Narragansett tribe, might be in secret alliance with Philip and the Wampanoags.

As early as the 30th of June, 1675, a sloop commanded by one Robert Taylor slipped into the mouth of the Pawcatuck River and proceeded upriver to Westerly. Mr. Taylor brought news of the somber developments of the past few days at Swansea and of the suspected infidelity of the Narragansetts. The Westerly people boarded the sloop with whatever possessions they could accumulate, and departed for the welcome haven of Aquidneck. Our information concerning this evacuation comes, interestingly enough, from a letter written from the neighboring community of Stonington, Connecticut, where the people were also in a state of fright and no doubt envied the good fortune of the Westerly people in being able to escape so readily from the endangered area.³

Following the surprise attack on Mendon, Massachusetts, by a party of Nipmucks on July 14th, some of the people of that frontier settlement, fearful because of their isolation, buried whatever Puritan scruples they may have had and wended their way to the island of refuge in Narragansett Bay.⁴ How long they remained there in the swirls and eddies of Quaker and Baptist argumentation I am unable to say.

Meanwhile there was growing alarm in the several Rhode Island settlements strung along the western shore of Narragansett Bay. The Narragansett sachem Pessacus, when questioned by Rhode Island officials, claimed to be unable to keep the young braves of the tribe

³Thomas Stanton and Thomas Minor to the Governor and Council at Hartford, June 30, 1675. Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Papers, XVIII, 137.

⁴Massachusetts Archives, LXX, 38.

in check, and advised the local settlers to stand upon their guard or else flee. So reported Roger Williams from Wickford on June 27th.⁵ Partial evacuation of the Wickford community was already under way, and by the 10th of July most of the inhabitants were on Aquidneck Island. Likewise Jireh Bull's family and others of the people who lived around his trading station at Pettaquamscutt took the opportunity to move across the bay. On July 10th it was reported that the Narragansetts were in a warlike posture, and that the majority of the settlers along the western shore had fled to the island, while others, remaining, were busy fortifying their houses against a possible attack. Vacated houses were being plundered by the Indians.⁶ Richard Smith, writing from his trading post at Wickford on October 27th, remarked that many of the local inhabitants had moved away and that most of the others were planning to do the same.⁷ Obviously, the fewer the people left in a community, the more precarious was their situation.

Farther up the bay the town of Warwick, bailiwick of the redoubtable Samuel Gorton, was trying hard to stand fast. As early as June 20th we find the Warwick town meeting busily making plans for defense. Five houses, those of James Greene, Thomas Greene, John Knowles, Richard Carder, and Captain Randall Holden, were designated as places of refuge and defense. It was agreed that the danger signal would be two gunshots.⁸ Within a week of this meeting Warwick got a good scare when an armed party of about a hundred Narragansett warriors showed up in the outskirts of the town. Fortunately, however, this seems to have been a demonstration rather than a raid, and the unwelcome visitors slipped away again without engaging in hostile action.⁹ No doubt the affair caused some serious second thinking on the part of those householders who had rejected the

⁵Narragansett Club Publications, VI, 371. Also in the *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 4th Series, VI, 302.

⁶Henry Stephens to Thomas Stanton, June 29, 1675. *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 3rd Series, X, 117; Connecticut Archives, War I, 7; Thomas Stanton to Wait Winthrop, July 9, 1675. Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Papers, XVIII, 137.

⁷Daniel B. Updike, *Richard Smith* (Boston, 1937), 112-113.

⁸Warwick Records, Town Book A-2 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), pp. 143-144.

⁹Roger Williams to John Winthrop, Jr., June 27, 1675. Connecticut Archives, War I, 2a. Published in the Narragansett Club Publications, VI, 370-371, and the *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 4th Series, VI, 302.

possibility of evacuating the town. At any rate, during that troubled summer a number of the Warwick people forsook their homes for the safer shores of Aquidneck Island, thereby disobeying town authorities, who were opposed to evacuation, as I have earlier said. Samuel Gorton, who had no intention of being intimidated by a pack of yelping redskins, disdainfully remarked, "Many people in these partes are like soules distracted, running hither and thither for shelter, and no where at ease; whole families together not leaving there houses only, but goods and livelyhood also; which hath ocationed much more spoile then otherwise would have bin People are apt in these dayes to give credit to every flying and false report; and not only so, but they will report it againe . . . and by that meanes they become deceivers and tormenters one of another, by feares and jealousies."¹⁰ No doubt the local Indians were well aware of the growing panic of the settlers, and were taking considerable satisfaction therefrom.

However, the hard core of Warwick defenders continued steadfast for the time being. On October 2nd another town meeting was held at which permission was granted to Edward Searle the Elder of Mashantetat and his family to remain in Warwick as refugees until the Indian peril was over.¹¹ This seems to indicate that the local authorities in Warwick not only intended to stay where they were, but were even looking ahead to the day when the temporary crisis would be a matter of history. Clearly, they were underestimating the seriousness of the danger.

Further evidence that the people of Warwick intended to stand their ground is found in the town records, where it was recorded on November 4th that a civil suit for debt, Walter Todd, plaintiff, was assigned for trial at Warwick the following March—this at the very time when the Commissioners of the United Colonies, meeting at Boston, were about to lay plans for the expedition into the Narragansett country which would result in the Great Swamp Fight and the subsequent destruction of the English communities in that area.¹²

Providence, too, its dwellings strung out like beads on a string all along the length of the hillside which is now crowned by Brown University, was still clinging steadfastly to its position. A town meeting held on October 14th inaugurated daily patrols of six men each to

¹⁰*Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 4th Series, VII, 628.

¹¹Warwick Records, Town Book A-2 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), p. 151.

¹²Warwick Records, Town Book A-1 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), p. A.

discover lurking Indians in the vicinity. Anyone failing to show up for this hazardous duty was made subject to a fine of five shillings.¹³

By the 19th of November the colony government at Newport had been informed of the impending invasion of the Narragansett country by the army of the New England Confederation, and accordingly sent word to Providence in order that the settlers there might be on their guard against Narragansett retaliation. Walter Clarke, who drafted the letter of warning to Providence, added a postscript requesting Providence to "Lett Warwick Magestrates know the substance of this."¹⁴ Thus it is certain that Warwick was still being held as late as the 19th of November.

As we all know, the Narragansett tribe did become full and open belligerents following the arrival of the English army in their country. In this way the deadly danger which, until now, had been potential, became immediate and actual. Such settlements as Wickford, Warwick, and even Providence, found themselves in the front lines, so to speak. It is no wonder, then, that still more of the mainlanders now hastened to pack their belongings and begin the chilling, wind-swept sail across the bay to Aquidneck. By March, Providence apparently was held by only a handful of men—the records list twenty-seven names—who had established a garrison at the home of William Field located about midway between Fox Point and Roger Williams' spring. These men were holding the town despite a recommendation by the colony government that they abandon Providence and seek shelter on the island as so many others had already done. On or about March 17th the Indians fell upon Warwick, destroying most of the houses there, and we may assume that the town was deserted for the rest of the war. Most of the townspeople had made their way to Newport or Portsmouth. Likewise, on March 30th, Providence experienced the full fury of Indian attack. Although the defenders of the garrison managed to survive, with great credit to themselves, a large number of the dwellings along the town street were burned to ashes.¹⁵

¹³*The Early Records of the Town of Providence*, IV, 53.

¹⁴Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts, X, 144. Published in *Some Further Papers Relating to King Philip's War* (n.p., 1931), 11.

¹⁵*Publications of The Rhode Island Historical Society*, VIII, 161; *The Early Records of the Town of Providence*, VIII, 12; *A Letter From the Council of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay to the Council of the Colony of Connecticut* (Providence, 1921), 11-12; John Russell Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, II, 533-534; Noah Newman to John Cotton, April 19, 1676. American

The following day the Council of the Bay Colony, moved to pity, actually invited Roger Williams to take refuge in some Puritan town provided he would keep quiet in matters of religion, but the aged man of controversy failed to take advantage of the offer.¹⁶

Until now we have been sweeping our searchlight of inquiry up and down the shoreline of the mainland, as we watched the mounting panic and resulting flight of the people. I believe it is no exaggeration to say that by April of 1676 not a single white family was residing in the area between Providence and Point Judith. Most of the former inhabitants of that area were now existing as refugees — displaced persons, we have called such in our own time — on the island of Aquidneck. Soon after the terrible battle in the Great Swamp in December, 1675, the refugees were joined by a considerable number of wounded soldiers who were quartered and cared for in Newport homes.¹⁷ Obviously, such an influx of refugees and wounded soldiers created a multitude of problems for the local and colony governments on Aquidneck, as well as for all the regular inhabitants of that island.

Immediately upon arrival at Newport the fugitives would be faced by the necessity of securing food and shelter. There cannot have been many vacant houses awaiting them, and there was no organization or agency equipped to provide large amounts of food and adequate housing for the strangers. Of course, some of the new arrivals must have had relatives and friends on the island who would be willing to take them in, but for the most part these unfortunate people probably had to fend for themselves. No doubt it was possible to rent shelter of some kind in either of the two towns, and it may be that the authorities there tried to facilitate such arrangements. Temporarily, at least, food must have been proffered as an act of charity.

The long-term problem was more difficult. No-one knew how long it would be before the hostile Indians were subdued, and after December, 1675, few were inclined to be optimistic in this matter. It might

Antiquarian Society, Curwin Papers, III, 8. Published in Richard LeBaron Bowen, *Early Rehoboth*, III, 15-19; William Hubbard, *The Present State of New England* (London, 1677), 66; Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the War* (Boston and London, 1676), 24; John Hutchins Cady, "The Development of the Neck," *Rhode Island History*, II, 35-36 (January, 1943).

¹⁶Massachusetts Archives, X, 233. Photostat in Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts, X, 103.

¹⁷Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York, 1958), 135.

be several years before the refugees could safely venture onto the mainland again. In the meantime they must live. The problem was how to maintain them indefinitely while keeping the extra burden on the local inhabitants as light as possible.

Most of the displaced persons on Aquidneck were farmers of a sort, and their natural recourse for sustenance would be the soil. Every New England town in the 17th century had certain land within its borders known as "common land." This was land belonging to the community as a group, and normally was used for such purposes as pasturage and haying. Now in the time of emergency, with refugees clamoring for a means of subsistence, the local authorities of Portsmouth and Newport made available to them for planting purposes some of the common land of the two towns. Roger Williams, himself not one of the refugees, mentions that some of the people from Providence obtained permission to enclose and farm a portion of the Newport common land. The town records of Portsmouth, in an entry for March 8th, provide further evidence:

... whereas severall persons by Reason of the troublsom times with the Indians are necessitated (by their beinge forced from their habitations, and thereby Some of our Neighbour) for a Supply of Land to plant on, and this Towne beinge willinge to afoard Neighbourly Charety to men in want and distress, doe agree and Order that one hundred acres if there be Occassion for Soe much Shall be Sett or laid out in Such Convenient places in this Townes Comons as may be most Convenient for those that want releife, and Soe as it may not be prejudiciall to any free Inhabitant, and what shall be Soe lent to men they shall improve by Sowinge or plantinge for the time of two yeares from the date of this Meetinge, and noe longer, and then the Said Land to be freely left with the fences to the Towne, and not built upon, ...¹⁸

On April 4th the General Assembly of the colony took further steps to secure the island against Indian invasion and also ordered the taking of a census. The people on Aquidneck were to be classified in four groups: the "proper inhabitants," that is, the regular residents of the two towns; "English now come amongst us"; Negroes; and Indians. The last group, of course, would consist of Indian servants attached to English families.¹⁹ Such exact information as this would be of great

¹⁸Clarence S. Brigham, ed., *The Early Records of the Town of Portsmouth* (Providence, 1901), 188-189; Roger Williams, "An Answer to a Letter Sent From Mr. Coddington" (*Proceedings of The Rhode Island Historical Society*, 1875-76).

¹⁹Bartlett, II, 535-536.

advantage not only in planning for the defense of Aquidneck, but also in handling the problem of the refugees. Four men were designated as census takers: John Coggeshall and Jireh Bull (now apparently a resident) for Newport, and Robert Hazard and John Sanford for Portsmouth.

Clarence S. Brigham has offered the suggestion that the world-famous stone tower of Newport, far from being a product of Viking workmanship, was actually built by refugees during the time of King Philip's War as a sort of relief project.²⁰ I know of no evidence to sustain or destroy this interesting conjecture, although the first documentary mention of the old tower comes only about eighteen months after the close of the Indian war.

So far, the regular residents of Aquidneck have shown themselves to be sympathetic, if somewhat reluctant, hosts to the miserable fugitives from the mainland towns. Now it is necessary to raise the cover on a less creditable part of the story — the question of wartime profiteering. Although it is impossible at this late date to ascertain all the facts in the matter, we have enough evidence to lead to the conclusion that some of the islanders apparently took advantage of the plight of the refugees and wounded soldiers. Specific charges are leveled against two men: William Coddington, who was governor during most of the war, and John Cranston, a physician. The witness against Coddington is Roger Williams, who was not living on Aquidneck, and therefore may have acquired his information indirectly. Moreover, being at the time engaged in rather heated controversy with Coddington on other matters, Williams would be receptive to any derogatory information against him. This does not mean, however, that his testimony may safely be ignored. According to Williams, a company of Providence refugees

obtained leave of the Government at *Newport* to inclose a piece of the Common to get Corn. . . . They inclosed and sent two men (thought to be acceptable with Mr. Coddington) to pray his favour to make use of some of his windfall Trees (which lay by them) for two gates (that all might pass through, etc.) But Mr. Coddington . . . turns these poor Providence distressed Souls off with a denial, viz except they would gratify his worldly selfish ends and conditions, which their grieved Souls . . . turned away with grief,

²⁰Kenneth J. Conant, "Newport Tower or Mill," *Rhode Island History*, VII, 6 (January, 1948).

and made some other shifts which God provided for them.²¹

This was only the first of the charges against Coddington. Williams continued that "when Providence men had broken up the Land, and planted the first year, and hoped to reap a second Crop . . . Mr. Coddington for his own private end . . . would not give way to it." Furthermore, "A poor man came to Mr. Coddington in these late bloody distresses, and offers to buy a *Bushel* of Corn for his poor Wife and Children in great want, etc. Mr. Coddington though abounding . . . would not let this poor Soul have a *Bushel*, except he would pay him a weeks work for it, which it is said the poor man was forced to give him." If these charges are true, and there is now no way to prove or disprove them, then Governor Coddington was a profiteer taking advantage of the miserable condition of the displaced persons from the mainland towns of his own colony. Doubtless others, too, were engaged in the same practice. Poor old John Kingsley complained from Rehoboth (now Seekonk) that if the people of that distressed town tried to obtain desperately needed meal from Aquidneck, "there is won wolf in the way, and hee wil have money, which won of 40 hath not it to pay, tho thay starve; yea 1 sh for 1 bushel, caring and Bringing There is unother, that is the miller, and hee takes an 8 part."²²

The charges against John Cranston as a wartime profiteer are derived from his role as a physician undertaking the care of wounded soldiers brought to Newport in the days following the Great Swamp Fight. In May a certain widow of Lyme, Connecticut, asked the authorities at Hartford to effect the release of her wounded son, who was in the custody of Major Cranston at Newport. She claimed that when her son was well enough to come home, Cranston had refused to discharge him until his bill was paid. Now in view of the strained relations between Rhode Island and Connecticut during those years over the question of jurisdiction in the Narragansett country, Cranston's business caution is understandable. Unlike a modern hospital, Cranston at least did not, so far as we know, deprive the patient of his trousers to prevent his escaping to the outside world ere he had

²¹Roger Williams, "An Answer to a Letter Sent From Mr. Coddington" (*Proceedings of The Rhode Island Historical Society*, 1875-76).

²²Connecticut Archives, War I, 68. Published in J. Hammond Trumbull, ed., *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, II, 445-447, and in Bowen, III, 20-23.

settled his account with the business office. But on the other hand, Cranston might well have taken into consideration the conditions of extraordinary distress which prevailed throughout much of southern New England at that time. Fortunately, the General Court at Hartford undertook to pay the bill in this case, although perhaps not in the form Cranston had expected. What the Newport physician received was a note of thanks together with forty bushels of Indian corn and a barrel of oatmeal.²³

Later, when the war was over and the Connecticut soldiers were all back from Aquidneck's makeshift hospitals, the government at Hartford adopted a more bitter tone in recalling the services of Rhode Island physicians. They spoke bluntly of the "basest sort of profiteering," and charged that "when in the sharpest of the winter our souldiers had a cruell fight with the enemy . . . and retreated to Rhod Island for recruit with our wounded men, we were forced to pay dearly for what releife they had there; and our souldiers when they were so well that they could be removed into our Colony for cure, they having not money there to pay, . . . Cranston tooke indentures of our souldiers to serve him for yeares, for what they had had, before he lett them pass."²⁴

Actually, the exaction of indentured service in payment of debt was far from extraordinary in colonial America. The fact that Connecticut's bitter complaint was made in conjunction with her new drive to gain jurisdiction over the Narragansett country is of the greatest significance. We shall perhaps not be unfair to Connecticut if we conclude that the leaders of her government were using the tragedy of the Great Swamp Fight and its emotion-charged sequel as a sharp tool in their attempt to undermine Rhode Island's prestige at the royal court, and thereby gain their ends.

I have not attempted to prove that wartime profiteering at the expense of refugees was general or widespread on Aquidneck Island. No honest court would convict Coddington, or Cranston, or anybody else solely on the evidence here presented. But it is quite clear that there were tensions arising out of the influx of refugees from the mainland towns, and plenty of room for suspicion of profiteering. In pass-

²³Connecticut Archives, War I, 70; Trumbull, II, 276; *The Petition of Abigail Lay* (Providence, 1920), 14-15.

²⁴Connecticut Archives, Foreign Correspondence I, 22. Published in Trumbull, III, 302-303.

ing, we might take note of the fact that some of the economic pressure upon Aquidneck was relieved when, at the invitation of Governor Edmund Andros of New York (the same Andros who later, in 1690, was drummed out of New England after the Glorious Revolution), a group of the Rhode Island refugees transferred to Long Island and settled at a place now known as Glen Cove.²⁵

Space will not permit us to explore in any detail the story of how the Aquidneck refugees, after the war had come to an end, reoccupied and rebuilt their ravaged settlements on the mainland. That they did so with admirable courage and determination is not to be doubted. Imagine what a village must have looked like after successful attacks by the Indians. As late as the January following Philip's death we have a report from a Providence woman that only 20 houses out of a former 123 were standing.²⁶ The figures may not be completely accurate, but the impression they convey is a valid one.

Even a cursory examination of the colony tax rates will reveal the story of staggering loss and slow recuperation. In 1670, five years before the outbreak of King Philip's War, the colony tax was set at £300, of which the town of Providence was expected to contribute £57, or 19%. In 1678, two years after the war was over, the colony again required a levy of £300, but this time the amount required of Providence was only £10, or a little over 3%. Two years later Providence was being asked for 7% of the colony's tax revenue, and in 1701 the proportion was up to about 16%, indicating that the battered town at the head of the bay had nearly regained its prewar position relative to the colony as a whole. We note that in 1678, when Providence was assessed £10, Warwick was assessed £8, and Westerly £2. By contrast, the amount for New Shoreham on Block Island was £29, for Portsmouth £68, and for Newport a whopping £136. Even the newly established town of Kingstown in 1678 paid a larger tax than Providence.²⁷

The actual reoccupation of deserted towns commenced soon after

²⁵Daniel H. Carpenter, "Rhode Island Families Who Went to Long Island, 1676, During King Philip's War," *Rhode Island Historical Magazine*, VI, 213-216 (1885-86).

²⁶Mary Pray to James Oliver, Jan. 6, 1676/7. Massachusetts Archives, LXIX, 91. Published in *Further Letters on King Philip's War* (Providence, 1923), 22-25.

²⁷Rhode Island Archives, General Treasurer's Accounts, 1672-1711, pp. 54-56; Bartlett, III, 21; Fred A. Arnold, "The Town Bridge at Weybosset," *Publications of The Rhode Island Historical Society*, III, 121 (July, 1895).

the end of hostilities, with the movement being encouraged by the Rhode Island government in order to forestall any attempt on the part of Connecticut to fill the vacuum with her own pioneers. Enough people were back in Warwick by April of 1677 to hold a town meeting there. Shortly after this the colony government offered 10,000 acres of land in the Narragansett country (later reduced to 5,000 acres) as an inducement to settlers. Out of this arrangement emerged the new town of East Greenwich between Warwick and Wickford.²⁸

Everywhere amidst the ruins of villages was now heard the sound of hammering and sawing. With determination John Sweet, formerly of Warwick, ordered that "upon the ground where I had a Corne and fulling mill standing, in or near Aquidnessett afforesaid (before the Crewell indeans did destroy the said mill, together with my house,) ther be with all Expedition that may be, Another mill builded . . ." ²⁹ On June 12, 1678, the General Assembly appointed Conservators of the Peace for East Greenwich, Pettaquamscutt, Kingston, and Westerly, which would seem to indicate that resettlement was proceeding apace.³⁰ The intercolonial race between Rhode Island and Connecticut for control of the Narragansett country was not soon over, but the fact that the Rhode Islanders hastened to reoccupy the area after the end of King Philip's War doubtless was an important factor in determining the ultimate winner. Had it been otherwise, the considerable revenues and prestige derived from the Quonset Naval Air Station might today be accruing to citizens of Connecticut rather than Rhode Island.

The facts and interpretations which I have presented tend to indicate, I think, the weight of the burden which King Philip's War placed upon the population of Rhode Island — the mainlanders in the destruction of their property and the abandonment of their towns, the Aquidneck Islanders in the obligation to provide a haven for the refugees from the mainland. It was not an easy circumstance for anyone, with the possible exception of those who were in a position to profiteer. That tensions arose among the various groups only demonstrates that our forefathers were quite human after all, and that like their many descendants as well as those who reached these

²⁸Warwick Records, Town Book A-2 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), p. 153; Bartlett, II, 573-574, 587-589.

²⁹Warwick Records, Town Book A-2 (Transcript by Marshall Morgan), p. 240.

³⁰Bartlett, III, 13.

shores in subsequent centuries, they were motivated by a combination of benevolence and selfishness. We love them for their courage and their steadfast devotion to a cause. We love them for their virtues and despite their faults, because beneath the old-fashioned clothing and the old-fashioned way of speaking we think we glimpse a true reflection, or more correctly, a forecasting of ourselves.

THE 137TH ANNUAL MEETING

THE 137TH ANNUAL MEETING of The Rhode Island Historical Society was held at John Brown House on January 8, 1959.

President Albert E. Lownes called the meeting to order at 7:45 P.M.

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

Mr. Nathaniel M. Vose, Jr., Treasurer, read his report for the year ending June 30, 1958. A copy of Mr. Vose's report is printed in this issue on page 57.

The Membership Committee, Mr. Robert H. Goff, Chairman, reported that a net increase of 23 members had been received during the year and that the total membership as of December 31, 1958, was 1,791.

As the members stood in respect, Mr. Goff then read the necrology. Members of the Society who died during the previous year were:

Mrs. A. Perry Avery	Lucius C. Kingman, M.D.
Miss Laura M. Baggs	Mrs. Henry S. Lanpher
Mrs. Clarence S. Brigham	Mr. Richard C. Leland
Mr. David B. Campbell	Mr. Alfred B. Lemon
Mrs. Gilbert C. Carpenter	Mrs. John B. Lewis, Sr.
Capt. Edwin T. Day	Mrs. Arthur R. Marshall
Miss Eunice W. Dexter	Mrs. William L. Mauran
Mrs. William Holden Eddy	Mr. Houghton P. Metcalf
Mrs. R. Leslie Fletcher	Mr. George L. Paine
Mrs. Peter G. Gerry	Mr. Edward C. Parkhurst
Mrs. Rudolph F. Haffenreffer	Mr. Cyril F. Peck
Mrs. Henry Clay Hart	Mrs. Frederick S. Peck
Prescott T. Hill, M.D.	Dr. Charles Penrose
Mr. Daniel F. Holmes	Mr. John D. Sawyer
Dr. Lewis H. Kalloch	Dr. William B. Shepard
Mr. A. Livingston Kelley	Mr. Charles B. Toy

Mr. John C. B. Washburn, Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, reported that John Brown House is structurally in good condition. The largest items of expense during the year were the painting

of the trim, the painting of the fence, and the carolating of the elm trees. He added that the elm trees are in good condition and that the Dutch Elm disease had not infected any of them.

Mrs. Charles A. Robinson, Jr., reported as chairman of the Museum Committee that the new Exhibition Room had been completed, thanks to a generous \$4,000 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation and \$1,000 voted by the Executive Committee of the Society. She gave special thanks to John Nicholas Brown for his constant attention to the project and also to the architect, Conrad Green.

Mr. Clarkson A. Collins III, then gave his annual report as Librarian. He referred to a number of important additions to the manuscript collection, the largest being the records of the Lonsdale Company and other mills operated by Brown and Ives. Our fine collection of Rhode Island log books was expanded by the purchase of the logs of the bark *Maryland*, 1854-1860, and the ship *Island Queen*, 1856-1857. Income from the Chace Fund was used for the purchase of additional Quaker material, and microfilming of our voluminous newspaper files is continuing. In conclusion Mr. Collins stressed the need for additional shelf space, a problem which he said can be solved only by the construction of a modern library building.

Mr. Clifford P. Monahan, Director of the Society, then presented his annual report. He stated that the Society had received a \$6,000 appropriation from the General Assembly toward the microfilming of the State's newspapers now held by the Society. Work is proceeding on the restoration of the John Brown Chariot, and it is hoped that the project will be completed this year. He reported that the William Greene Roelker Room was dedicated on Sunday, January 12, 1958. In closing, Mr. Monahan stressed the need for an additional member to the staff.

In his annual address, President Lownes outlined some of the specific matters which he had worked on in the past year.

The report of the Nominating Committee for officers for the ensuing year was then submitted by Mr. O. Griswold Boynton.

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

FRANK L. HINCKLEY, JR., *Secretary*

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

For 12 Months Ending June 30, 1958

INCOME		
Dues		\$ 9,665.00
Investment Income (Net)		10,638.76
John Brown House Fund Income (Net)		191.16
State of Rhode Island		8,500.00
City of Providence		2,000.00
Contributions — General	\$2,003.50	
Corporate	1,115.00	3,118.50
Patriotic Societies		300.00
Sale of Publications, Books, etc.		558.21
Outside Parties and Services		221.43
Miscellaneous		190.86
From Chace Fund		500.00
		<u>\$35,883.92</u>
EXPENSE		
Salaries		\$17,711.00
Social Security Taxes		361.28
Director's Discretionary Fund		490.14
Supplies		435.47
Telephone		376.60
Membership		347.56
Library		1,834.33
Museum		622.13
Lectures		354.64
Publications		3,916.93
Heat, Light & Housekeeping		2,331.53
Grounds		2,575.26
Buildings		2,720.78
Insurance		522.44
Miscellaneous		167.49
		<u>34,767.58</u>
		\$ 1,116.34
Other Net Income during year		6,988.14
		<u>\$ 8,104.48</u>

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS		LIABILITIES, RESERVES, & SURPLUS	
Cash	\$ 21,779.21	John Brown House Fund	\$ 7,955.00
Special Funds	32,955.00	Jonathan Chace Fund	25,000.00
Investments	177,720.62	Life Membership Reserve	2,550.00
Fixed Assets	100,006.00	Fireproof Library Building	630.50
Other Assets	1,716.37	John Brown Chariot Restoration Reserve	5,819.05
		William G. Roelker Mem.	260.29
		Publication Fund	1,361.84
		Library Book Fund	576.43
		Quaker Material Purchases	828.19
		Anticipated Disbursements	1,112.67
			<u>\$ 44,832.97</u>
		General Endowments	242,928.49
		"Wilbour" Fund Reserve	41,102.41
		"Irene Seabury Cummings" Fund Reserve	5,000.00
		"Wing" Fund Reserve	1,000.00
			<u>290,030.90</u>
		Deficit	686.67
			<u>\$334,177.20</u>

NATHANIEL M. VOSE, JR., *Treasurer*



49. DESK

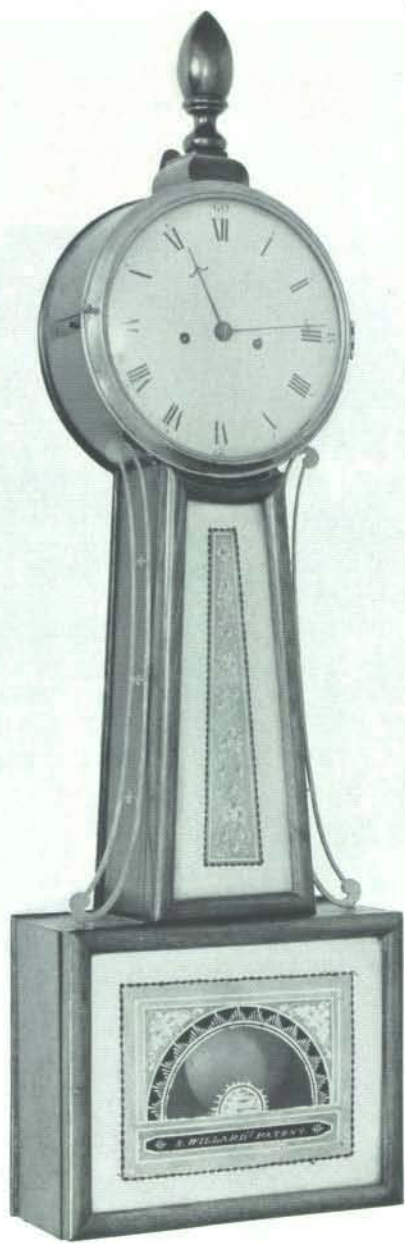
Mahogany

Probably Boston *c.* 1760-1770

Block-front, slant lid desks of this type were made in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. While very similar, the regional characteristics of each state are, in most instances, sufficiently in evidence to indicate its origin.

The amphitheater interior is of a design frequently found in Boston pieces, and the elaboration of the center door is noteworthy. The straight bracket feet give it a less sophisticated appearance than those with ball and claw feet.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



50. WALL CLOCK

Roxbury, Massachusetts, *c.* 1800

S. Willard's Patent

Wall clocks of this type are often referred to as *banjo* clocks. The Willard family and their contemporaries originated a design that has pleased each successive generation with its simple proportions, colorful glass panels, and appropriate finial. The works of brass, were designed to function within the limitations of the case and represent New England ingenuity at its best.

In this clock an unusual feature is the striking mechanism that is so seldom found in this type.

Ex-collection C. Prescott Knight



51. MIRROR

Probably English *c.* 1780-1790

Mirrors of this period have a quality of refinement that is evident to even the most casual observer. The beaded moulding, the bow knot, and the urn are all part and parcel of the brothers Adam as are the swags on the urn. As a wall decoration, it complemented to perfection the furniture of the period and emphasized the elegance of the last quarter of the eighteenth century designs.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



52. CHEST

Oak

English — Early 17th Century

Oak chests of this sort were made both in England and New England. This one is said to have been brought to Rhode Island about the year 1637. It remained in the possession of the original family, the Fields of Field's Point, until 1865 when William Field of Pomfret, Connecticut, gave it to The Rhode Island Historical Society to be kept as a memorial to the Field family.

A sturdy chest of plain but pleasing design, it has been fortunate in escaping the vigorous refinishing that has been the fate of many oak chests in New England, and appears to retain its original top and the full length of its legs.

Ex-collection William Field

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