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RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 18

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NO. 4

A SOLDIER WRITES HIS CONGRESSMAN:

The Civil War Letters of Livingston Scott to Thomas A. Jenckes

by FRANK F. WHITE, JR.

Junior Archivist, Maryland Hall of Records

IN MAY, 1862, Livingston Scott, a young Brown University student, interrupted his education to enlist in the newly-formed Tenth Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteers. Four days after its muster, his regiment proceeded to Washington where it relieved older and more experienced troops for active duty elsewhere. "Certainly no regiment ever left the State more promptly in response to the Governor's call," says a brief history of the regiment, "and no regiment hastened to the rescue of the Capital under a more solemn sense of duty."¹ On September 1, Private Scott returned to Providence where, after an uneventful period guarding the forts which surrounded Washington, he was mustered out of the service.

In July of the next year Scott again answered the call to the colors. At that time he received his commission as first lieutenant in the Third Regiment of Rhode Island Cavalry and his appointment as adjutant of the regiment. He served in that capacity during his period of training at Camp Meade, near Jamestown, Rhode Island, and later in the Department of the Gulf.² Scott was subsequently promoted to captain

¹"Tenth Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteer Infantry," in *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Rhode Island for 1895*. Volume I. (Providence, 1893), p. 481.

²"Third Regiment Rhode Island Cavalry." *Ibid.*, Volume II. (Providence, 1895), pp. 221-317. Referred to hereinafter as *History*.

Scott was commissioned on August 24, 1863, when he was mustered in. He received his captaincy on January 2, 1864. He was borne on the rolls as absent from April 19 to July 13, 1864, when he returned to duty. He was again absent on General Court Martial duty from October 25, 1864 until January 24, 1865. Records of the Adjutant General, State of Rhode Island.

The Third crossed the Mississippi River on March 3, 1864, and marched almost

of Company F. He was mustered out on November 29, 1865.³

Scott has described his Civil War experiences in a series of letters to his friend and associate, Congressman Thomas A. Jenckes of Rhode Island.⁴ His letters differ from those usually written by Civil War soldiers, as they reflect the outlook of a college-trained individual who was also an officer. Scott had little interest in the issues involved in the war, but instead his letters reveal a soldier whose patriotism waned rapidly.⁵ They also portray a person who expressed a great deal of contempt for his superiors and who most of all desired to leave the service because he was disgusted with the political bickerings and intrigues of the various officers in the regiment.

Scott was born in East Blackstone, Massachusetts, on January 5, 1839, the son of Emory and Waity (Jillson) Scott. At the time of his enlistment in 1862 he had completed his junior year at Brown. His military career was marred early in 1864 by a serious foot injury which was further complicated by his surgeon's faulty medical treatment.⁶ This undoubtedly helped embitter him toward the Army. After spending some months on sick leave, Scott was assigned to court martial duty, probably because of his legal training. After his return to his regiment in January, 1865, he remained with it until it was mustered out in New Orleans in November of that year.

Following his return to civil life, Scott was admitted to the bar in continually through Louisiana for several months. It participated in the Red River Expedition and the Battle of Pleasant Hill on April 9. It arrived in Alexandria on April 25 after leading the advance from Natchitoches. For many months, the regiment was on patrol duty and many expeditions in search of guerrillas. It remained on picket duty until it was mustered out. *History*, pp. 221-317.

³Muster Rolls, 3rd Rhode Island Cavalry, National Archives.

⁴Thomas Allen Jenckes, jurist and legislator, was born on November 2, 1818, at Cumberland, R. I. After his graduation from Brown University in 1838, he formed a partnership with Edward H. Hazard of Providence. He specialized in patent law. In 1841, he was secretary of the "Landholder's Convention," and the next year, he served as secretary of the Rhode Island Constitutional Convention. He was elected to Congress from the First District of Rhode Island in 1863 and served in that capacity until 1871. He died in Providence on November 4, 1875. For many years, Scott was associated with Jenckes, and was probably a clerk in Jenckes' office at the time of his entry into the service.

⁵Scott's letters to Jenckes are among the Thomas A. Jenckes Papers in the Library of Congress.

⁶See Scott's Pension File WC 681848, National Archives.

Scott claimed that the surgeon put spirits of ammonia on his injured foot rather than aqua ammoniac. This caused his foot to become entirely raw and forced the crushed bones to settle back into place as best they could.

Rhode Island and practiced law in that state for several years. Between 1869 and 1884 he lived in New York and New Jersey, and then he once more returned to Rhode Island. He served for many years as a judge and participated actively in the Rhode Island G.A.R. in which he served as department commander and as judge advocate. He also held offices in Masonic organizations. In 1893 he became judge of the Woonsocket Probate Court, a position he held until his death on March 11, 1909.⁷

Scott's letters written during his service with the 10th Rhode Island all deal primarily with his trip to Washington, his regiment's reception on the way, and life in camp. "Our passage from Providence was very pleasant being as far as Philadelphia a perfect ovation," he noted. "Below that point our welcome was less hearty."

This series of letters also contains Scott's changing opinion of military life. "For many days confusion reigned supreme in camp, striking and pitching tents in better locations formed the amusement of the poor privates while the petty officer whose general knowledge and common sense was probably inferior strutted and ordered with all the self-complacency of a Brigadier General," he commented somewhat sardonically. Life in Washington was not too pleasant for the young soldier of the 10th. The city did not appeal to him and he soon came to hate the regular afternoon thundershower "which by the way is an established institution in this section." All this camp routine was monotonous to Scott. It was, he said, "grand fun if you could only think so. I must confess however it requires some power of will to change the nature of things."

The great bulk of Scott's correspondence with Jenckes deals with Scott's service in the 3rd Cavalry. Recurring themes in these letters are his desires to get out of the service, pleas which became even more desperate as the end of the war approached. "You have influence and can easily secure me a discharge," he wrote. Scott also constantly entreated Jenckes to intercede on his behalf, to use his influence to help get Scott a promotion, and help him solve all his problems. "All I desire is to get out of the service," are recurring words in nearly every letter. Scott was also an excellent judge of character. "The Army," he observed, "is the place to study human nature. If a man

⁷Obituary Notice, *Woonsocket Call*, March 11, 1909.

has a mean trait, it is sure to appear, or if he is weak, it will be known."

Scott also expressed great concern over the administration of the Third. He was quite unhappy in the service. Colonel Parkhurst he characterized as a weak officer. Both majors he disliked intensely. He had an extremely low opinion of his regiment's field and staff which he attributed to a lack of harmony among its members. Yet, he remained aloof from all the regimental bickerings and outwardly, at least, he never took sides in any of the controversies and never uttered any public complaints except to Jenckes. "What I say," he wrote, "I should not like to have known, for 'twould only injure the regiment and God knows it has received hard knocks enough already."

Scott's discontent was further magnified by the dismounting of the regiment.⁸ "Not content with taking our arms and forcing muskets into our hands," he complained somewhat bitterly, "they have brigaded us with Negro troops and they hold the post of honor."

Scott's complaints to Jenckes apparently did him no good. There is no indication in any of the letters that Jenckes ever did anything for Scott and there is no indication in Jenckes' papers that any help was ever offered or given. Scott, in spite of his discontent and numerous efforts to resign, stayed with the Third until it was mustered out. His service record makes no mention that he ever received his promotion to major nor does the regimental roster record that fact. Although the soldier wrote his congressman, the congressman was apparently unwilling or unable to help him. He seems to have turned a deaf ear to all Scott's remonstrances because he had more important duties to perform.

⁸Scott, in his letter of September 13, 1864, indicates that the reason for the dismounting of the regiment was that "the Powers that be" had vented their spite upon the regiment. The regimental history indicates that such was not the case. "The horses had been poorly fed [after a march of over 1000 miles] and often suffered for water. Numbers of the best ones had died by the road side from sheer exhaustion; the Department had been drained of cavalry horses, and could not furnish the supply required. Accordingly, on June 23d, the order was issued to turn over all cavalry horses, arms, and equipment, and to report to the General Commanding the Defences of New Orleans for temporary service as infantry. The Regiment received its new arms and equipment and began to drill with them cheerfully. . . . In consequence of favourable inspection reports in reference to the efficiency and discipline of the command, the order was issued on the 20th of September to remount the Regiment." *History*, p. 225.

Camp Rhode Island
Tennallytown⁹
June 8th 1862

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: I should have written you before this but I delayed with the expectation of meeting you here as Mr. Hammond informed me that you expected to visit the camp last week.¹⁰ I was very glad indeed to see the welcome visage of Mr. Hammond. It almost made me forget that I was in the District of Columbia.

Our passage from Prov[idence] was very pleasant being as far as Philadelphia a perfect ovation. Below that point our welcome was less hearty and cheerful. At Baltimore we were received with that sullen silence so characteristic of a subdued mob. Occasional flag wavings however cheered our march through its dirty streets. Here for the first time we missed the welcome smiles of the fair maidens of Philadelphia and only occasional glimpses of some rebel beauty at the upper casements rewarded the eager and ardent gaze of the curious recruit. Some appearing bold and sullen to watch our silent march, others more modest but equally curious concealed, behind the halfclosed blinds their charms from the *northern spoiler*. We arrived in Washington on Thursday evening tired and dusty. On Friday morning we took up our march from Washington with "knapsacks strapped upon our backs." Old Sol poured upon us his streaming rays which together with the almost suffocating clouds of dust and the weights of our knapsacks severely tried the patriotism and endurance of fresh recruits. At the War Department, baggage waggons relieved us of our knapsacks after which our march was comparatively easy. We arrived at Tennally Town in the midst of a fine thunder shower which by the way is an established institution in this section. They occur regularly every night. There has been but one or two exceptions since our arrival. After the shower we pitched our tents and at dusk as the rain again began to descend we laid our wearied limbs upon the hard earth and lulled by the gentle pattering of the rain above our heads passed sweetly and quickly to the land of dreams.

For many days confusion reigned supreme in camp, striking & pitching tents in better locations formed the amusement of the poor privates

⁹Camp Rhode Island was also located in Tennallytown in the vicinity of Fort Pennsylvania.

¹⁰Barnabus B. Hammond, 1825-1887. He served for several years as an accountant for the New York and Erie Railroad. He came to Providence in 1858, and was associated with the Jenckes law office.

while the petty officer whose general knowledge and common sense was probably far inferior strutted and ordered with all the self-complacency of a Brigadier General. How strange that in the army all former social distinctions are levelled! I am fast learning the truth of this. But order is fast growing out of chaos and soon the rigid and regular discipline of camp life will [illegible] us. We are located in a beautiful oak grove about seven miles from W— on a gently sloping hillside. The tall oaks spread their heavy shade about us and screen us from the hot mid-day sun. The rustling of the dark foliage falls gratefully upon the senses and the stern discipline of war alone reminds us that we are not tourists—but soldiers. This is a beautiful section of country, as far as the eye can reach a rich luxuriance meets the view. No sign of cultivation is visible, but everywhere a wildness and beauty that is at once pleasing & sad. The cause of this seeming desertion the people tell us is because of the ravages of McLellan's [*sic*] army. They have been discouraged from pursuing their agricultural vocations. The air is laden with the perfume of the fragrant shrubs and flowers which grow in rich profusion. Indeed I find it difficult to express in adequate language the beauty which everywhere meets the senses. Tennallytown comprises a hotel, P.O., several private residences, and a few shops. The country is completely overrun with soldiers. There are several camps around us and one or two forts. The music of a regimental band of a neighboring fort (Pennsylvania) is now being wafted to my ear upon the still air.¹¹ It is grand. How I wish *we* had a band!

A part of our company was on guard duty around the camp yesterday and last night. I was among them. *The shower* came upon me during my relief. My blanket did good service. Mud was ankle deep. It was grand fun if you could only think so. I must confess however it requires some power of will thus to change the nature of things.

Our food has been very poor quality hitherto and there has been considerable dissatisfaction on the part of some. The ninth regiment was sworn in on Friday last. The tenth will probably be sworn in on the morrow. Considerable excitement was created Friday by Company B's refusing to take the unconditional oath, swearing to go wherever the Government might call them. Only four out of the whole company voted to take the unconditional oath. I am proud to state that I was one of the four. The Company have however reversed that decision and will now take the oath unconditionally. I must close now as darkness is creeping on & I daresay I have already wearied you. I should be very glad to receive communications from any of my friends. My address is Livingston Scott,

¹¹The name of Fort Pennsylvania was later changed to that of Fort Reno.

Company B Tenth R.I.V. Washington, D.C. Remember me to all,

Yours truly,
L. Scott

T. A. Jenckes, Esq.

* * *

Fort Pennsylvania
July 17th 1862

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: I am seated to pen you another communication which I shall not promise to be interesting or instructing. We are lying quite idle here at Fort Pennsylvania, are encamped without the fort. Companies B & H were detailed as garrison at this post. We found the ground occupied by the former garrison in an extremely filthy condition but its present condition is much improved. You are doubtless posted as to our recent march into Virginia, as I saw Mr. Hammond here on the day after our return. We have had a very easy time since we have been here, having drilled but little. We are about commencing to drill with the heavy artillery, which for its novelty will be pursued with I presume some interest. The health of our men is generally good. Capt. Dryer has been ill but is now better.¹² I am as well as I could wish to be and I like the business so well that I am tempted to go out in the three years quota that R.I. has got to send. The Gov. is here today; it is reported for the purpose of inducing the Battery to enlist for nine months longer. Whether his presence indicates any move for the tenth, I cannot say. Camp rumors are rife that we are soon to move. *We can't do this too soon*. I do dislike this inactivity. It will soon end however. The boys already begin to anticipate their return home. But few of them will I think be induced to enlist in the seventh. We have not been treated so well as we had a right to expect. Till within a few days we have been obliged to eat (the most of us) without knife or fork unless they had the foresight to furnish [them] themselves. Many were also deficient in pans, overcoats, blankets, &c. We have recently been supplied however and are quite well contented. If anything will make soldiers discontented it is to be poorly supplied with these articles. I do not say this in a fault finding spirit for I do not wish to find fault. I am satisfied. The weather is extremely hot but for the last few days we have been favored with refreshing showers. They are accompanied by violent winds which threaten to lift our tents from their bases. As I write the black clouds are climbing up the western sky and we expect that another tornado is at

¹²Captain Elisha Dryer, 10th Rhode Island. He later became The Adjutant General of the State of Rhode Island.

hand. It is quite laughable to see the boys flee for shelter when the storm breaks. I have expected to see Mr. Hammond here before this. Tell him I would like to *hear from him*. I had meant to write to Mr. Stead ere this but I have had so many to answer that my time is very nearly all taken up.¹³ I will write to him soon. Tell him not to wait for me.

Yours truly
L. Scott

T. A. Jenckes, Esq.

* * *

Fort Pennsylvania
July 24th 1862

Mr. Hammond

Dear Sir: I write to inquire how the seventh is progressing and if there is a chance for me there. I see that appointments are being made, and I am anxious to see my name among the *appointees*. If I was there I should be glad, as I could then attend to the matter myself, with a chance of success. As it is I must have an agent or I shall be left out in the cold. If it will not be too much trouble I wish you would see what you can do for me. Ask Mr. Jenckes' advice and assistance to obtain a commission for me. I wish very much to go again but I cannot serve any longer than my present term as a private. Let them give me a commission. I'll deserve it, or will resign it. If your business will admit please allow of no delay and write me the result of your effort.

Yours very truly,
L. Scott

P.S. Address
Livingston Scott
Co. B 10th R.I.V.
Washington, D.C.

* * *

Camp Mead, Nov. 13th 1863

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: I received a letter from S.S. Bradford yesterday, saying that I could have the horse that you looked at last week for \$225.¹⁴ I think he can be bought for \$200. I intended to have come to the city to see

¹³Mr. Stead is unidentified, but was probably another of Jenckes' associates.

¹⁴Shadrach S. Bradford, 1812-1875. He was a wool merchant in Providence and a fellow and trustee of Brown University.

about it, but Col. Parkhurst refused to allow me to leave camp.¹⁵ Now what is to be done in this case? I am unable at present to pay for the horse at any price & it isn't to be expected that Mr. Bradford will wait for his pay, & again if the horse is not bought soon some one else may get it. I like the horse, & think it just what I want. I shall be unable to come to Providence myself before the 24th or 25th.

I am sorry that my wants are so numerous, and that I cannot at present supply them myself. I hope in a few months this state of things will be changed. I give below a list of my outfit remaining to be bought:

Horse	\$200.
Bridle, horse blanket & saddlecloth	12.
Belt	6.
Sash	15.
Sabre, common cavalry	8.
Heath [<i>sic</i>] for fixing overcoat and making	20.
Rubber coat & leggings	
Total	\$261.

If I could receive my two months pay I could reduce this amount somewhat, but that is an event uncertain. Old Army Officers say it is quite likely we shall not be paid before spring. Certainly not till next pay day, 31st December.

If this is so, my daily expenses will have to be added to the sum. It costs at present five dollars per week to live. This ought to be reduced & I think can be as soon as every officer of Field & Staff can make arrangements to mess together.

I shall come to Providence if possible the 25th instant. Will you be at home? What reply shall I make to Mr. Bradford?

Very respectfully,
L. Scott

* * *

Camp near Jamestown
Jan. 15th 1864

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: I will this morning perform my promise to write you and to post you as to the movements of the *third* R.I. Cav. I do not presume that in the multiplicity of natural cares your position places upon you, long letters will be *extremely* uninteresting; therefore any communication will be brief. The paper perhaps may have informed you that the 1st

¹⁵Lieut. Colonel Charles H. Parkhurst, 3rd Rhode Island Cavalry. He resigned his commission on May 26, 1865.

battalion of our regiment embarked for New Orleans about two weeks since.¹⁶ We have now about a company & a half here in camp & are filling up rather slowly.¹⁷ I think however that we shall finally succeed in raising the regiment. I have been promoted & am now Capt. all of which is very pleasant of course. I think I shall have the next co. I am not mustered out and shall not be, until I can be mustered in as Capt.

There is one piece of news. I have to tell you & sorry I am too. My horse turns out to be *heavy*. Bradford refused to take the horse back, but gave twenty five dollars. When I talked with him about buying the horse, he said he was sound as far as he knew. He declared he knew nothing about it. So I suppose I shall have to sacrifice considerable upon him. As I shall be in a Co. I do not think, I shall take him out with him. I can draw eighty two horse and can use one of them myself. The horse did not show the heaves a bit when I first saw him. He had probably been fed *for the market*. I begin to believe there is nothing fare [*sic*] in a horse trade. It may be valuable experience & indeed it ought to be for the price paid. If your duties allow you, should be pleased to hear from you. My P.O. address is Jamestown, R. I.

Very truly yours,
Livingston Scott

* * *

St. John's Hospital
New Orleans, La.
Apr. 29th, 1864.

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: You perceive by the date of this, that I am at present an inmate of a Hospital. Yes, I am suffering from one of those little accidents, trivial seemingly, but yet, one of the most painful, it has ever been my lot to experience. I was riding upon one of the streets here, at a trot, & in turning my horse suddenly to avoid an approaching horsecar, he slipped and came down before I could extricate my foot from the

¹⁶"The First Battalion, Major Davis, embarked on board the Southern Metropolis for New Orleans, December 31st, 1863, and was reported to General Banks commanding the Department of the Gulf, January 14th, 1864. On the passage, two severe gales were experienced, and fourteen horses were lost. Gen. A. L. Lee, then Chief of Cavalry, visited the Battalion previous to its being disembarked, and gave it the compliment of reporting it in the best condition he had ever seen in the Department, particularly the horses." *History*, p. 222.

¹⁷Recruiting for the regiment was slow, but "as ably and warmly supported during the period by His Excellency Governor James Y. Smith, who used every effort to make it a regiment of good, able men, to provide it with the best of horses, and to equip it in the best possible manner, so that it should be second to no regiment of cavalry in the Federal service." *History*, p. 221.

stirrup. I have been here ten days & a greater part of the time I have suffered intensely. It is doing well now. My disappointment was heightened by the fact, that it occurred only a few hours previous to our departure up the river, so that I am left here alone. O if I had been wounded in battle I should not have minded it much, but to be maimed in such a contemptible way, at such a time, is truly provoking.

There seems to be nothing going on here, neither in military nor civil affairs. All business is stagnant. The levees are deserted. In the military, we have been moving a little. Banks¹⁸ or rather Smith¹⁹ had a little fight with Dick Taylor,²⁰ in which, from what I can learn, we did not *gain any decisive advantage*. Our 1st. Batt. was there and fought splendidly. It stands higher than any other in the Dept.

You know it was always my desire to get a position on some Gen. Staff. & I think I should like to make a change to such a position. My present position is in some sense a good one, but there is too much responsibility for the pay. I have on my hands \$30,000 or \$40,000 worth of property for which I am responsible. This property is of many different kinds & consists of a great many little things. These things are easily lost & they *must be accounted for*.

Since I have been Capt. I have worked constantly like a *nigger* & have suffered more anxiety than I even did before. & Must say that I do not wish to receipt to Government for any more property as Captain, & wish you could secure me a position as I speak of. Hoping to receive a favorable reply from you soon, I remain,

Yours very truly,
Livingston Scott

P.S. Address me:
St. James Hospital
New Orleans, La.

* * *

¹⁸Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, 1816-1894, prominent Massachusetts politician, who succeeded Major General Benjamin F. Butler in command of the Department of the Gulf. He resigned his commission after the disastrous end of the Red River Expedition.

¹⁹Major General Andrew Jackson Smith, U.S.A., 1815-1897. He took part in the siege of Vicksburg and commanded the 16th Corps during the Red River Campaign.

²⁰Lieut. General Richard Taylor, C.S.A., 1826-1879. He commanded the Confederacy's Trans-Mississippi Army until June, 1864. He defeated Banks in the Red River Campaign.

Camp Parapet, La.
Aug. 12th. 1864.

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: After a long silence, so long perhaps as to appear blameworthy, I again address you to inform you of the condition of things out here. The reason I have not done so oftener, is, that I feared to trespass on your time while you were in session in Washington. Besides I could not have given you a very flattering account of the regiment, & consequently felt ashamed almost to say anything about it. I hoped that something would occur (as has already been thus in the return of Majer Davis²¹ and the advent of Col. Sayles²²) to restore our regiment to its former enviable position. Majer D. of the 1st. Batt. left it at Grand-Ecore last April right in the midst of the campaign at the order of the Sec. of War to answer charges preferred against him by Gov. Andrew.²³ From that time the regiment began to run down. The Administration of Lt. Col. C. H. Parkhurst was weak indeed. In consequence we were dismantled. Officers resigned others disobeyed orders, were court-martialed, & war generally broke out in camp. At length Majer D— returned & comparative order was restored. Our reputation is fast being returned at Hd. Qrs., which had been entirely lost. It is said that Lt. Col. P.— sent a communication to Hd. Qrs. asking the reason of our being dismantled, & received for a reply, "the inefficiency of its commanding officer." He has left us and returned north, where it is to be hoped for the good of the regiment he will remain. With such a record as his I should not care to return to my regiment. He has taken every means in his power to injure me, he even tried to prejudice Majer Davis against me, which however, he did not succeed in doing, I am happy to say. Col. Sayles arrived about a week ago, & the regimental organization is now complete. We expect soon to be remounted. William E. Peck of East Greenwich is my 1st. Lt. He came out with the Col. & is as homesick as he can be.

My foot does not seem to improve. I am almost discouraged. The Surgeon, Asst. Surgeon & the Surgeon of the 4th N.H. regiment, all tell me that if I remain in the service, I am likely to lose my leg as the slightest bruise will start the varicose ulcer upon my ankle which has been months in healing, & the result would probably be loss of leg. Scarcely a

²¹Major George R. Davis, 3rd Rhode Island Cavalry. He resigned on August 11, 1865.

²²Colonel Willard Sayles of Providence.

²³Governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts. Major Davis previously served as Captain of Co. H 8th Mass. so he was subject to Gov. Andrew's control.

day passes but that I injure it more or less. It has broken out twice slightly since I returned to camp, but is now healed again. Under these circumstances I wish to leave the service. I am willing to run all *ordinary* risks incident to military life, but the *certain* loss of limb I do not court. I have resigned once on a surgeon's certificate of disability, but at Hd. Qrs. it was neither approved nor disapproved but endorsed as you will see recommending sedentary employment. I am now on a court martial, but that is temporary besides I am made responsible for my property without the ability to take care of it. There remains but one way of getting out of the service & that is by obtaining an order from the War Department ordering my honorable discharge. This I wish you would obtain for me. You have influence & can easily do it. I send you my resignation & surgeon's certificate, as they were endorsed. This will enable you to state the case clearly. I wish you would attend to it without delay, & you will eternally oblige me. This Dept. is called the meanest in the Union. Neither officer nor man can get leave of absence nor a discharge, till he is ready to die. It is not that I am tired of the service, for I am not, but the prospect of almost certainly losing a leg is by no means gratifying especially as a useless sacrifice. If I could in this way serve my country, I would not murmur but suffer gladly. I wish you would reply as soon as possible telling me what you can do for me in this matter.

Very respectfully,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Camp Parapet, La.
Sept. 13th, 1864.

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: We still swelter beneath the hot sun of Louisiana at Camp Parapet, & the prospect is very good for our remaining here awhile longer. I might also add without reflecting at all upon the patience or military discipline of the regiment that the said prospect is not greeted in that quiet, satisfied way that soldiers are supposed to welcome whatever happens.

I would not say it publicly to the injury of the regiment, but there exists here a deep feeling of discontent, — and even of disgust for the service, & were it, to day, left to their option, not a third part of the officers would remain, & as soon as we are paid which we expect in a few days, I believe that our number of men will be badly reduced by desertion. A large number have already taken advantage of the Gen. Order transferring soldiers to the Navy. This state of feeling has been

gradually forming, & is very much to be regretted. Again, added to this there is little or no unanimity of feeling among the officers themselves. They are pulling & hauling, some to secure one object, some another. Some want to kick out an officer that they may succeed him, others to gratify a personal feeling. And this feeling ranges from the lowest up almost to the highest in rank. There is another bone of contention in our midst, which is a vacant majority. The 1st Battalion regarding themselves as veterans, believe they are best entitled to it, on the score of three months longer service. The result of all this ill feeling has been, that charges have been preferred against nearly half the officers of the regiment. Several have already been tried & others yet remain to be tried. The chief cause of all this was the dismounting the regiment & assigning it to garrison duty within the "defences of N.O." Our regiment seems to have been an unlucky victim upon which the "Powers that be" may vent their spite. First we were dismounted, our cavalry arms taken from us, & infantry arms forced into our hands. We bore this quietly as we could but 'twas a bitter pill & I feared at one time it was too nauseous to remain upon the stomach. We determined that if we had suffered thus on account of any neglect on our part, that we would atone for it, and we have always since, endeavored by our cheerful alacrity & obedience to orders and our promptness & efficiency, to win back our lost position. We succeeded so well, as to secure the compliments and praises of every Inspector who has inspected us, & we have been cheered by their promises that we should soon be remounted. A United States regular Inspecting Officer Capt. Baker²⁴ pronounced on us the best regiment that he had inspected in the Dept. On the strength of that report Genl. Banks has himself promised several weeks ago, that we should be remounted, as soon as horses could be procured. O! delusive hope! A Negro regiment (dismounted cavalry) has just been remounted!!!

That we are dismounted however is not the worst of it. Not content with taking our horses and our arms & forcing muskets into our hands, they have brigaded us with negro troops & they hold the post of honor. And labor, such as befits *them* is now alas! to be performed by the ill-starred 3. It is too menial — too severe for them to use the shovel & pick. Until within a few days we have had no drills for several weeks, every man almost being required for fatigue duty. Our men have thus become much worn, & many of them are sick.

Col. Sayles is now in command of the Carrollton District, as Col. Bartram the Commanding Officer has gone north on leave of absence,

²⁴Probably Captain Eugene M. Baker, 1st United States Cavalry.

& it is to be hoped under his administration white soldiers will stand at least an even chance with colored.²⁵

My foot is much better than when I wrote you last, & I consequently feel much encouraged. We expect soon to be paid, & when we are I shall send funds home to take up the notes you hold of mine. The Government owe me about nine hundred dollars, but I may not be able to get it all next pay day on account of the property in my possession. I don't know how that will be. Any way I shall, if I do not take the notes up, lessen the principal very much.

Very respectfully,
Livingston Scott

Hon. T. A. Jenckes

* * *

Napoleonville, La.
Oct. 20th 1864

Mr. Jenckes

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 26th ult. was recd. a few days ago, for which I am greatly obliged. In the first place, let me congratulate you and the whole country upon the *glorious results* that have attended the efforts of Gens. Grant and Sherman.²⁶ I trust we shall not be disappointed in hoping, that the end of this terrific struggle is close at hand.

You will see by the place of date of this letter that we have moved from our old quarters. Yes we have been remounted, & whom to thank I do not know, but whoever they are, let them know that every officer & man of the 3rd R.I. Cav. renders their honest & heartfelt thanks. We have been moved into the country & are stationed half way between Donaldsonville & Thibodeau on the Bayou La Fourche at a little town called Napoleonville. Our duty consists of picket & scouting. We hold a line of some 22 miles; & as there is no one, except a few guerrillas to oppose us, we are enabled to do it without much trouble. One of our patrols exchanged shots with the enemy last night, but generally there is hardly variety enough to produce a healthy digestion. We except warmer work bye & bye however. We are about commencing the erection of huts for winter quarters, so we shall probably rest here for a while. I am still desirous of making some change in my *Military position* not that I desire to leave the service, for my foot is much better, but I would like a staff position, where I should be not so much exposed.

For the last two months my health has been declining, & have been on duty but little of the time. I have the chills & fever. The fever I have

²⁵Colonel Nelson Bartram, 17th New York Infantry Regiment.

²⁶Scott here refers to the campaigns waged by Grant before Richmond and those by Sherman in Georgia.

constantly, every day, the chills, or *shakes* rather, not so often, but they are *terrible* when I do have them. The Col. positively refuses to aid me in the way of getting detailed, as he says he will oppose the efforts of any officer to get detached. I wish you could effect it in some way for me. Can you reach Gen. Canby,²⁷ Banks, or Hurlbut²⁸ or Gen. Arnold²⁹ who is in R.I. now, I understand? It seems to me you might be able to effect it, with the influence you possess. I really wish you would make an effort. I do not believe my health will very long endure the rough exposure to which I am liable here, though I shall do my duty as well as I am able & as faithfully as my health will allow.³⁰

Very respectfully,
Livingston Scott

P.S. I sent \$250 to my brother a short time ago to pay to you. It was my pay as Adjt. which I have just succeeded in getting. I expect to be paid four months pay in a few days when I shall send more.

L. Scott

* * *

Napoleonville, La.
October 23rd 1864

Mr Jenckes:

Dear Sir: Sooner than I expected, I again address you. I can no longer remain in the 3rd R.I. Cavalry, without at least making an effort to sever my connections with it. The events of the last twenty four hours have made this necessary, to preserve my own self respect. I will explain. On the night of the 21st. inst., the Rebels about two or three hundred strong made a dash in about ten miles above us, and after plundering several plantations decamped. We pursued them on the following morning, but returned at night (last night) having failed to overtake them.

²⁷Major General E. R. S. Canby, U.S. Volunteers who later commanded the Department of the Gulf. He received Gen. Johnston's surrender on May 4, 1865.

²⁸Major General Stephen A. Hurlbut, U.S. Volunteers. He was also a commander of the Department of the Gulf and the 16th Corps.

²⁹Brigadier General Richard Arnold, U.S. Volunteers. Arnold was a native of Rhode Island.

³⁰The regimental history previously referred to, comments that the Third occupied the entire State of Louisiana as its field of duty. "Frequent and rapid marches, the swampy nature of much of the country passed over, short rations when on expeditions longer than had been provided for, and exposure to a malarious climate, told severely on both men and horses. It was not a field or service attractive to men ambitious of military glory and was none the less important as a feature of the great plan for subduing the rebellion; and the part taken therein by the Third Rhode Island Cavalry has given it a record honorable to itself and to the State it represented." *History*, p. 223.

This morning, the regiment, or at least the effective part of it started again with several days rations in pursuit. I was relieved of my command, which was given to Lieut. Sayles³¹ a cousin of the Col's, an *embryo Captain*—(but I suppose the Col. thinks it will look better to have the promotion follow some brilliant exploits.) *The Col. took the precaution* of asking the Dr. if he thought I was able to stand the march. The Dr. replied in the negative *of course* although he hadn't thought it necessary previously to excuse me from my regular duty and the scout of the day before I was allowed to go upon, & was thought well enough after it, to obey an order to prepare my command for the scout today which required the greater part of the night to do. I made special request of the Col. to allow me to go. But he refused me in the most short and offensive manner. My Co. is one of the largest at present in the regiment & I think a good one. I had hoped that I might share in whatever credit it might win.

Why the Col. should thus insult me, I hardly know. I have supported him in nearly all his measures, I have defended him. But I think I have a clue. His treatment of some of the officers of the regiment during the *late dissensions* I did not endorse & he knew it well, although I took no sides against him in any question. I have been surprised & pained several times recently at his treatment of me although he has not ventured to insult me before. I regard it as an imposition of the rankest kind; & one to which I will not submit tamely. He thinks to make me fear the power that resides in the Hd. Qrs. be he reckons without his host. He can compel *some* of the Line Officers, & has, to echo his sentiments, to entertain his dislikes and preferences, to fear his power & to court his favor, but I am happy to say *I don't train in that Co.* I neither fear the one, nor desire the other. *I will approve* what my conscience justifies & criticise what it condemns. I have always done my duty faithfully & none of my superior officers has ever had occasion to find fault. I have not deserved this. And when I go upon my duty again, in this Regiment, it will be when I cannot avoid it. I shall report myself upon the sick list at present & the Col's favorite may enjoy his command. I desire & urge you if possible to get me out of this regiment, either a detail or a discharge, for I solemnly declare the service I shall hereafter render Col. Sayles will be of small value. I sincerely hope I shall do my country no wrong. I know this is selfish to allow personal feelings like this to influence me to the detriment perhaps of the public interest & in the performance of public duty, but I cannot feeling so.

³¹1st Lieut. Thomas Sayles, Company D, 3rd Rhode Island Cavalry. He later commanded Company H with the rank of captain adjutant and also served as regimental adjutant.

Again let me urge you, if possible, to get me removed from the regiment. I know he thinks he will bend me to his will, that he will make me subservient, as he has done too many others, but by Heaven he never will. He shall find that other people live in this *world* besides Col. Sayles & probably will for some time. Please let me hear from you favorably soon.

Very respectfully,
Livingston Scott

P.S. Direct your letters to New Orleans. Our mail comes by courier.

[to be concluded]

BOOK REVIEW

Collected Papers, Armorial, Genealogical, and Historical.

By Richard LeBaron Bowen, Rumford Press, Concord, New Hampshire, Privately Printed, 1959.

The *Collected Papers* of Richard LeBaron Bowen, as the title indicates, cover a variety of subjects, including colonial needlework and colonial silver,

The titles are as follows: The Latest English Research on the Scott Family; The Arms of Richard Scott (1) and (2); The Scott Family Needlework; Godfrey Malbone's Armorial Silver; The Mother of Christopher Helme; The Arms of the Rev. David Lindsay of Virginia; The 1690 Tax Revolt of the Plymouth Colony Towns; and reviews of Pedigrees of Some of the Emperor Charlemagne's Descendants and Early American Currency.

As was to be expected from the pen of the distinguished historian of Rehoboth these papers show exhaustive research, full documentation, careful compilation and cogent reasoning.

The account of the distinguished Scott family of eighteenth century Newport merchants, descended from the early Providence settler, who came from Glemsford, co. Suffolk, and his wife Catherine Marbury, sister of the famous Anne Hutchinson, is especially valuable, based as it is on documentary evidence, as the early Newport Records were largely destroyed during the Revolution. The discussion of the Scotts of Glemsford is full and exhaustive and most carefully worked out. There is an excellent discussion of the great illuminated pedigree of the Glemsford Scotts, deducing their descent from the ancient and knightly house of Scott of Scott's Hall in Kent, drawn up in 1608 and brought here by the family. While such pedigrees are not uncommonly to be found in England, this is the only instance known to this reviewer of one being brought hither. It must be remembered that such pedigrees were drawn up in a very uncritical period and cannot be accepted without careful verification.

Mr. Bowen has carefully noted the weak place in this Scott pedigree, which requires verification before it can be accepted.

The discussion of the arms used by the Rhode Island Scotts is very full and carefully done, and the discussion of the needlework cannot but be of great value to students of colonial handicrafts.

The account of the heraldic silver of Godfrey Malbone, the great eighteenth century merchant of Newport, who came from Princess Ann co., Virginia and married into the Scott family, is very complete and of great value to all interested in colonial armorial silver. Mr. Bowen was fortunate in having access to the Malbone family papers and as a result his account of Godfrey Malbone and his father Peter Malbone of Lower Norfolk and Princess Ann counties is especially valuable. More about Peter may be obtained by an examination of the records in those counties. Some notices of the Virginia Malbones will be found in James's "Lower Norfolk Antiquary" and in Mrs. Kellam's "Old Houses of Princess Ann Co., Virginia." Peter evidently resided on Lynnhaven Bay. There is some account of the Malbone family in Chester co., England, but a connection with them has not been established.

In "The Mother of Christopher Helme," the early settler of Dover, New Hampshire and later of Warwick, who was the son of William Elmes, of the gentle family of that name, he presents evidence that his mother was, undoubtedly William's third wife, Priscilla Wentworth. The chart showing the Marbury family intermarriages and the group of early Maine and New Hampshire settlers, the Wentworths, Helmes, Lawsons and their connection with the Marburys and Hutchinsons is especially valuable.

"The 1690 Tax Revolt of the Plymouth Colony Towns" deals with an incident in Old Colony history that has not been sufficiently noticed, and this paper should be of great value to future historians of that region.

In a group of papers so carefully compiled it is very difficult to find something to criticize. In "The Arms of Richard Scott (1)," page 7, it might have been well to point out that Staffordshire is a West Midland county, as the impression might be conveyed that it was one of the Northern counties.

Each paper has a most careful and full index, a matter of great value in a work of this nature.

The *Collected Papers* is a notable addition to early Rhode Island history and is a must book for all persons interested in colonial Rhode Island.

Ogunquit, Maine.

G. ANDREWS MORIARTY, F.S.A.



CURIOUS CRIMES IN COLONIAL NEWPORT COUNTY

by CONSTANCE D. SHERMAN

The American Museum of Natural History

A MOST CURSORY EXAMINATION of the Superior Court files reveals that the colonial inhabitants of Newport were involved in a series of crimes as devious as any that ever perplexed the fertile mind of Earle Stanley Gardner and his cohort Perry Mason.

Since the Blue Laws were rigidly enforced, it is not surprising to learn that planting a peach tree on Sunday was a criminal offence. But in 1687 two gentlemen were summoned to court because they had opened their shops on the first day of December, the date appointed by the Governor and his Council for a celebration of Thanksgiving. The first of these was Christopher Hargill, a blacksmith, born in 1634, who came from Virginia to Newport in April, 1680. He stated that it was not he but his son who had opened the shop and that what the lad did was on his own account. He himself was lame. Samuel Stapleton, who was also indicted on December 13th, took a less conciliatory attitude. He informed the jury that he was above the observation of the day and time.

By all odds the most common crime was theft, and the favorite objects to pilfer were articles of clothing and foodstuffs. In 1722 Benjamin Footman, a laborer, was found guilty of stealing a waistcoat with silver buttons. That same year in Kingston, Solomon Coomes took a homespun coat valued at three pounds from George Webb and a black horse, together with its saddle, from Ephraim Gardner. As punishment he was sentenced to be sold for four years by the sheriff. A coachmaker, Samuel Aspin, evidently aspired to be the Beau Brummell of Newport, for in March, 1730, he stole from Isaac Anthony not one but three beaver hats and, in the same month, he was indicted for taking from Thomas Brown one lute string hood, one handkerchief, one yard of ribbon, one hat and a pair of gloves. On both counts he was sentenced to restore the stolen goods, to repay twice their value, to receive an appropriate number of lashes, to pay the costs of prosecution and, if his estate were insufficient, to be sold by the sheriff. Other articles of wearing apparel which tempted the weak into wrongdoing were black Barcelona handkerchiefs, shoes, and worsted stockings. The latter were valued at 15/6 a pair in

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1720, which seems a high price.

In the year 1681 Thomas Joanes was caught stealing a firkin of butter. In April, 1714, Dorothy, an Indian woman, received thirty stripes at the cart's tail for stealing wine from a warehouse. In September, 1722, Mary Silverwood took a bottle of Venus treacle, and in 1776 Sarah Fitzgerald was charged with taking pork and three salt fish. But the most daring escapade was that of Isaac Cooper and Richard Partelow, who removed twenty-four dozen bottles of beer from the Colony House in Newport. They had cause to regret this Gargantuan thirst when they were sentenced to be sold for a term not to exceed two years.

Animals were frequently taken from their owners. In March, 1730, John Martin purloined eleven horses from Benedict Arnold. In 1767 John Wilcox appropriated five live geese and one turkey, and in 1684 John Williams was found guilty of stealing pigs. Sheep and a ram also tempted the light-fingered.

Finally, in August, 1754, Abraham Dayton, an innkeeper, was indicted for taking from on board the sloop *Nanny* twenty-five pounds of Spanish indigo of the value of two hundred pounds old tenor. He was ordered to pay the cost twofold and all charges or to be whipped with twenty lashes. For want of sufficient estate to pay the fine and costs he was sold for three years.

That highways, bridges, and fences were a source of irritation to the colonists is apparent from the records. In 1671 John Easton was indicted for shutting up a highway in Newport, and that same year Anthony Emery was charged with digging in the King's highway a well, wherein a man drowned. He was acquitted when the jury ascertained that he had filled up the well so it could no longer endanger passers-by. In 1702 John Balcom was charged with cutting cows' tails and demolishing a bridge; Henry Mory demolished a bridge in Providence, and in September, 1717, Jacob Clarke was indicted for putting up a fence in Dexter's Lane, Providence, "in a contentious and tumultuous manner."

The seventeenth century records contain numerous references to Indians. To give but two, William Newman was accused on May 8, 1671, of conspiring with the Indians against the English, and in 1678 John Cartwright and Nicholas Utter were found guilty of robbing Indian graves. During this same period piracy flourished on the high

seas. Some of these maritime highwaymen were, however, brought to book and William Adams in 1681, Thomas Longford in 1699, and Robert Munday in 1703 were all indicted as sea robbers.

But conspiracies plagued the colony long after Indian troubles and piracy had subsided. John Paine provoked the authorities in 1672 by procuring a patent from the New York government for Prudence Island, which was a rightful appurtenance of the Providence Plantations, and in 1782 the Tory Benjamin Durfey sailed his sloop laden with Rhode Island onions, cheese and thirty sheep from Portsmouth to Long Island, then in the possession of Great Britain, where he sold these products.

Occasionally, as today, an individual attempted to practice a profession for which he was unqualified. Richard Speare affirmed himself to be a Bachelor of Arts and performed the marriage ceremony without a legal license. On March 31, 1685, he promised to do so no more and desired the favor of the court. Hester Borne was judged guilty of a misdemeanor for practicing chirurgy in 1703, and in 1718 Thomas Bingham, a joiner, administered a physic in such inexpert fashion that the patient died.

The wording of some of the accusations is delightful. Henry Jackman was indicted in 1675 for "roaming into dwelling houses in Newport." Mungo Crawford was guilty of "vexatiously troubling His Majesty's subjects with vexatious suits," and in 1710 John Harrell was accused of "assiduous tumult." The preceding year a barber, John Earle, published "a scandalous libel." In 1718 Captain Edward Pelham left his cellar open to the street in Newport. This was a menace to the unwary and Pelham, as a shipwright and a deputy, should have known better. That vested authority was no more sacrosanct in the seventeenth than in the twentieth century is apparent from the indictment of William Earle. A freeman since 1658, he was sentenced in 1700 for abusing the constable of Portsmouth. Even the Royal Governor did not escape, for in 1710 Eleony Pembroke was sentenced for mistreating the Honorable Samuel Cranston, but how or for what cause is not divulged by the records.¹

¹*General Court of Trials Record Newport County 1671-1724.* Book A except as otherwise noted. The accounts of Samuel Aspin and John Martin appeared in Book B, John Wilcox in Book E, Sarah Fitzgerald and Benjamin Durfey in Book F.

A NEWPORT STREET FIGHT IN 1768

by KENNETH SCOTT

Research Professor in American History, University of Tampa

DURING THE DECADE preceding the Revolution the British government endeavored to stamp out the wholesale smuggling practised by many colonists and countenanced by still more. Since officers of the customs relied upon the aid of the navy, both collectors of customs and personnel of naval vessels became increasingly unpopular. The *New-London Gazette* of May 19, 1769, angrily protested, "The whole naval force of h-s Br-t-n-c M-j-y seems to be principally aimed against those [the American] colonies." The presence of ships of war in American harbors led to clashes between British and Americans and contributed to the hostility which came to a head in 1775.

One such clash occurred on the night of Tuesday, May 3, 1768, in Thames Street, Newport, near Green Dragon Lane, so called from the name of the inn which stood there. H.M.S. *Senegal*, Thomas Cookson commander,¹ had arrived in Newport from Halifax on January 6, 1768.² Between eleven o'clock and midnight of May 3 eight men from the sloop *Senegal* were ashore: Robert Young, mate; Thomas Carless and Charles John Marshall, midshipmen; John Connelly, Francis Everitt, William Boxley, John Nichols, Jr., and Edward Hammond. They were in the company of Henry Sparker, a journeyman shoemaker of Newport, and Philip Dexter of Providence. Perhaps all had partaken too freely of the cheer afforded by the tavern. In any event a difference arose between the Americans and the men from the *Senegal*, whereupon, according to the British, they were "assaulted . . . and knocked down" by Sparker, Dexter, Elijah Knap,³ and one other person unknown. Carless maintained that in trying to defend himself he "unfortunately" wounded Sparker and Dexter. The local newspaper did not accept the plea of self-defense, but guardedly remarked that it still seemed a little uncertain who the aggressors were. Some details, however, were clear enough:

¹Cookson's seniority is given as 24 January 1746, among the masters and commanders whose names are given in *A List of the Flag-Officers of His Majesty's Fleet*, January 1, 1767, p. 11.

²*Newport Mercury*, January 11, 1768, p. 3.

³Knap died in Newport on April 28, 1806, in his eighty-sixth year (*Newport Mercury*, May 3, 1806); in 1768 he was about forty-eight years of age.

Carless, using a sword of the type known as "cut and thrust," stabbed Sparker in the left breast near the left pap, inflicting a wound one inch wide and four inches deep, from which the victim almost instantly died. For a time Dexter's life was thought to be in danger because he had received a stab in his right side and his head had been very much cut and mangled. Marshall and Young were accessories.⁴

The body of the deceased was taken to the house of Elijah Knap, where the next day it was examined by Coroner Charles Bardin and a jury of twenty-four, whose verdict was one of wilful murder, charging that Sparker had been attacked, assaulted, and wounded by a number of men belonging to H.M.S. *Senegal* in such manner that he soon after died from his wounds.⁵

Carless was promptly arrested, together with Marshall and Young, who were charged with "aiding, assisting, abetting, comforting and maintaining" him, and all three were committed to the Newport jail. On May 6 they petitioned the General Assembly, then in session in Newport, setting forth their version of the affray and claiming that they had acted in self-defense. They pointed out that the next session of the Superior Court, at which they were scheduled to be tried, would be held in September and that by their detention in prison until that time His Majesty's service might greatly suffer. They therefore requested that a special court might be authorized for their trial, whereupon the Assembly obligingly ordered a special session to be held in Newport in June.⁶

⁴*Newport Mercury*, May 9, 1768, p. 3; *Providence Gazette*, May 7, 1768, p. 3; Minutes of the Superior Court for Newport County, Book E, pp. 380-381 (ms. in the office of the Clerk of Court, Newport); the indictment of Carless, Young, and Marshall, file no. 13,722 (ms. in the office of the Clerk of Court, Newport); the petition of Carless, Marshall, and Young, Petitions to the General Assembly, v. 13, p. 6 (ms. in the office of the Secretary of State, Providence).

⁵Inquisition taken May 4, 1768, file no. 13,723 (ms. in the office of the Clerk of Court, Newport). The members of the coroner's jury were Pollipus Hammond, foreman, Samuel Hunt, Richard Woodman, John King, Benjamin Brown, James Westcott, Robert Stoddard, William Burroughs, Jr., Job Gardner, William Downing, Francis Malbone, John Coddington, Thomas Wickham, Jr., Timothy Balch, Borden Chase, John Slocum, William Lake, Nathaniel Helme, Joseph Belcher, James Clarke, Joseph Brown, Timothy Allen, Clark Brown, and Samuel Marryott.

⁶*Rhode Island Colonial Records* v. 6, pp. 544-545. His Majesty's service would have been still further impaired by their long detention, since on May 10 another officer, Midshipman James Dod, attempting to swim a quarter of a mile from the *Senegal* to Goat Island, was drowned, having been overchilled or seized with a cramp (*Newport Mercury*, May 16, 1768, p. 3).

The special court met on June 1. The judges were Joseph Russell, chief justice, Metcalf Bowler, Nathaniel Scarl, and Samuel Nightingale, with John Grelea, Jr., as clerk. Justice of the Peace Martin Howard was occasioned "extraordinary Trouble" in helping with the trial. Sheriff Joseph G. Wanton and his deputy, Jacob Richardson, returned forty-five jurymen and summoned the witnesses, while Oliver Arnold, attorney general, represented the Crown at the three-day trial. What tipped the scale in favor of the accused was the fact that Philip Dexter had almost recovered and the fact that his testimony "was greatly in Favour of the Prisoners." The jury, described by the *Mercury* as "consisting of Gentlemen of Capacity and undoubted Reputation," went out and in a few minutes returned to their seats, declaring the prisoners were not guilty, a verdict which was to the entire satisfaction of the court. The prisoners, acquitted on grounds of self-defense, were immediately and honorably discharged, with no costs taxed against them, the colony paying all charges.⁷

The outcome of the trial must have been a tremendous relief to the officials of the colony and to Captain Cookson, for surely the affray was damaging from the point of view of relations with the townfolk. No sooner were the prisoners released than the *Senegal* set sail for Halifax.⁸ Despite the acquittal the brawl and its tragic ending doubtless served to irritate public opinion against the British government and its representatives.⁹

⁷Accounts allowed in the June, 1768, session of the Assembly (ms. in the office of the Secretary of State, Providence); Minutes of the Superior Court, Newport County, Book E, p. 381 (ms. in the office of the Clerk of Court, Newport); *Newport Mercury*, June 6, 1768, p. 3; *Providence Gazette*, June 4, 1768, p. 3 and June 11, 1768, p. 3.

⁸*Newport Mercury*, Monday, June 13, 1768, p. 3: "His Majesty's Sloop *Senegal* . . . sailed last Week for Halifax."

⁹The affray is briefly mentioned in the Scrapbook of George H. Richardson (ms. in the Newport Historical Society), p. 163, and in Henry Barber's *A Chronological Account of All Material Occurrences from the First Settlement of Rhode Island in 1636 to the Year 1800* (ms. in the Newport Historical Society), p. 235.



57. UPHOLSTERED WINDSOR CHAIR

Various woods

c. 1795 Rhode Island

This upholstered Windsor is unique because of its height. The slender turned spindles and mahogany arms indicate its Rhode Island origin. Its style shows that it was made in the last decade of the eighteenth century and that it was therefore an old chair when it was used by the organist of the First Baptist Meeting House in Providence in 1834. Possibly its original use was as a clerk's chair in one of the rich commercial houses of Providence and it may have been given later to the organist at the Meeting House. The boldly raked, grooved arms and generously splayed legs, together with the well-proportioned vase turnings, make this a first-rate Windsor. Actually a few high chests with unusually high lids (butlers' chests) are known to have been made for the use of clerks. They usually stood at their work, but this chair no doubt was used by a less energetic scrivener.

The general appearance is one of sleek verticality mainly because of the slenderness of the turnings of the back and side spindles. Since a remnant of the hand-woven linen can be seen on the unshaped wooden seat and since the seat is edged with tack holes, there can be no doubt that we have here an original upholstered Windsor. During the last decade of the eighteenth century Rhode Island cabinetmakers must have produced Windsors similar to those upholstered chairs advertised by John de Witt at 47 Water Street in New York City in 1796 and the leather upholstered ones advertised by James Zwisler in the *Maryland Journal* of July 12, 1793. E. B. M.

Collection The Rhode Island Historical Society



58. CHIPPENDALE MIRROR

Pine, Gesso, and Gilt

c. 1760-1780 Probably English

Quite possibly this mirror may have English origin, since many English mirrors found their way to American homes during the colonial period. The strong *C* curves, rockwork, and leaf and flower ornaments suggest Chippendale's elaborate copies of older Florentine mirror designs. The nearest approach to the lighter mid-century rococo designs of Lock and Copeland in England were mirrors produced in Philadelphia where the fad for elaboration took hold more than in New England. This mirror, however, seems to lack even the restraint of the Philadelphia cabinetmakers.

E. B. M.

Ex-collection Mrs. John O. Ames



59. SECRETARY-DESK

Mahogany

Newport c. 1760

This impressive secretary-desk, probably the most highly developed of the block front group, is one of two pieces with nine carved shells now known to have been made by John Goddard. This piece was made for Joseph Brown, one of the famous four Brown brothers, merchant princes of Providence. This desk and its matching chest-on-chest, now in the Henry du Pont Museum at Winterthur, Delaware, are different from other Newport pieces because they are ornamented by nine carved shells and surmounted by boxes on the pediments. A further difference is that in the ten-lobed shells of these pieces the lobes curve upward while those of the John and Edmund Townsend case-pieces of this period turn downward in a reversed curve. This variance in shell carving refutes the earlier theory that the Newport shells are entirely similar. Furthermore, these shells are cut from the solid mahogany plank, which is mitered under the carved area of the desk lid. The volute on the cyma-curved feet, similar to the Winterthur example, is a closed spiral following the line of the desk blocking. This volute, together with the delicately carved urn finials, the deftly executed moulding around the inside of the broken pediment, the handsome pediment rosettes as well as the blocking and shell carving are all characteristics of John Goddard's most exacting plans.

The lines of the top blocking are carried up into conforming raised areas in the pediment, a feature not known on any other Newport secretaries. A clever device is used in hanging the doors so that the center area can fold back against its neighboring panel as seen in the cover picture. The interior cabinetwork and the sliding shelves for candles are relatively plain, as though to compensate for the extreme ornamentation of the exterior. The secondary wood of this desk is pine, but much Rhode Island furniture is of chestnut. The large Chippendale brasses follow a definition of ornament followed by other members of the Goddard-Townsend dynasty. Even the casual visitor to John Brown House is as much struck by the fire of the unstained Santo-Domingo mahogany as with the magnificence of proportion and the elegance of detail. This secretary-desk is the crowning glory of the eighteenth century mahogany age.

E. B. M.

Ex-collection Brown and Ives

60. GALLERY CLOCK

Pine, Gesso, and Gilt

Massachusetts c. 1840



Very little has been written about gallery clocks. There were very few of them made; and since they do not fit too easily into a collection of domestic clocks, they hold no special appeal for the antiquarian. Ordinarily they were ordered for specific locations in either churches or public buildings. Those made for churches were usually placed on the front of the balcony. They were severe in design, consisting only of a circular box to hold the movement, weight, and pendulum. The box was faced with a convex dial, which was enameled. The circular case was made up of a succession of mouldings, which somewhat relieved its simplicity. It was enriched by the application of gold leaf.

The gallery clocks made for public buildings were more elaborate. Basically they were the same circular box covered by the dial. The sides of the church clocks were well-moulded, leveling inward, whereas the sides of the clocks made for public buildings were more perpendicular to the back and not so well formed. This allowed for a space of three or four inches between the edge of the case and the outside of the dial, and this space was decorated with figured gesso work, gilded. A pendulum box below the case held a painted glass through which the swinging pendulum could be seen. Sometimes there was an elaborate bracket under this box; occasionally the case had curved ribbon work twisted around the perimeter; and now and then there was an ornament at the top of the case. Always the wood was covered with gesso and then gilded.

The clock here shown hung for many years in the Tax Assessor's Office in the Providence City Hall. It was made by Simon Willard & Son, the former being one of the two most important American clock makers. Born in 1753 and deceased in 1848, he is especially noted for his invention of the banjo clock. Since he retired in 1839, this clock was probably made between 1839 and 1848. John Ware Willard, in his book on Simon Willard (1910) lists only nine of these gallery clocks. Four were in churches. There were two in Washington, D. C., two at Harvard, and one in a Boston bank.

E. C. D.

Gift of the City of Providence

THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEW MEMBERS

June 1, 1959 — September 10, 1959

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Shaker Heights, Ohio	Mr. Herbert A. Whitney
Mrs. Edward G. Lawson	Mr. & Mrs. Ralph W. Wood
Pawtucket, R. I.	

LECTURES

November 12, 1959, Thursday 8:15 p.m.

RESTORATION OF THE JOHN BROWN CHARIOT

(illustrated with slides)

COLONEL PAUL H. DOWNING

Consultant, Horse-Drawn Vehicles and their appointments

November 22, 1959, Sunday 3:30 p.m.

ROLE OF RHODE ISLAND IN THE MAKING OF THE CONSTITUTION

FORREST McDONALD, Associate Professor

Department of History, Brown University

January 14, 1960, Thursday 8:30 p.m.

(following the Annual Meeting for members at 7:45)

TRANSIT OF VENUS

CHARLES H. SMILEY, Professor

Department of Astronomy, Brown University