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COVER

Doorway of the Hunter House, 54 Washington Street, Newport, built c. 1750 by Deputy Governor Jonathan Nichols. In 1756 it was bought by Colonel Joseph Wanton, also a deputy governor of the Colony, son of Governor Joseph Wanton. Together with other Wanton properties it was confiscated during the Revolution and served as headquarters for Admiral de Ternay while the French troops were in Newport. The house was later the home of William R. Hunter, United States Minister to Brazil. Now completely restored and open to the public, it is owned by the Preservation Society of Newport County.

This pedimented doorway was originally on the water side of the house. During alterations in 1870 it was removed and was later transferred to St. John's Rectory. In the course of the restoration it was returned to Hunter House but is now on the street side of the building.

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NO. 1

A TORY'S CLAIM TO THE WANTON ESTATES

by SYDNEY W. JACKMAN

Assistant Professor of History, Bates College

BEFORE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION the great families of New England were as much intermarried and interrelated as were the contemporary gentry in England. A family relationship in this earlier age meant far more than it does today and family loyalty and honor were considered to be of the highest importance.

William Browne was born in Salem in 1737. Graduating from Harvard College in 1755, he returned to Salem to prepare himself for the law. Soon after he married his cousin Ruth Wanton, the daughter of Joseph Wanton, the last Royal Governor of Rhode Island. By this marriage the connections with the Wanton family were made closer. In 1762 he entered politics and was elected to represent Salem at the General Court. Over the years he became increasingly conservative and so his ultimate loyalism cannot be considered as too surprising. He culminated his career in Massachusetts' politics by accepting an appointment as a *mandamus* Councilor. For this act he was ostracized by his neighbors and found it wiser, ultimately, to withdraw to Boston to seek the protection of the British garrison. When Boston was evacuated by the British army, he left with them and departed for England. In exile, he lived chiefly in Cowbridge in Wales, having been awarded a pension of £200 a year by the Crown as compensation for his lost affluence and offices. In 1781 he was appointed Governor of Bermuda and assumed the post in 1782. He remained in office until 1788 and then retired anew to England.¹

¹For a more complete study of Browne see S. W. Jackman, "The Early Life of William Browne, Governor 1782-1788," *The Bermuda Historical Quarterly*, v. XIII, No. 1, pp. 17-24.

Although much occupied by politics during his life in Salem, he did not neglect his business interests and his private fortune. He was vastly wealthy having been left by his father some 104,000 acres of land and £5,000 in ready money. This great fortune gave him an eminently secure position in the financial and social circles of Massachusetts. In 1770 his brothers-in-law, Joseph and William Wanton, desired to borrow money from John Winthrop. The sum in question was about £1,000. Winthrop was perfectly willing to loan the money to the Wanton brothers, but with characteristic New England thrift and care he desired a bondsman who resided in Massachusetts. The Wantons turned to a member of their own family to supply this need, appealing to their brother-in-law, William Browne. The latter agreed to accommodate them to act as surety for the money. Browne would pay Winthrop and the Wantons would pay him. Under these terms the loan was negotiated and all went well until the Revolution when, because of his loyalism, Browne's property was confiscated and he was left without any money. As Winthrop was not a loyalist his position was not endangered and he could collect his money from the confiscated estate. At the same time the Wantons lost their property through confiscation but with their debt to Browne still unpaid. The problem was made more complicated by the death of Joseph Wanton in 1780. As he died with his property escheated to the state and before he had received any compensation for his loyalty to the Crown, he left virtually no estate.

The Treaty of Paris of 1783 had in the fourth and fifth articles dealt rather specifically with problems such as the indebtedness of the Wantons to Browne. In accordance with these provisions, Browne ought to have been able to bring suit to regain his money. However, since the Wanton estates were now in the possession of the State of Rhode Island, a suit would have to be brought against it. Browne in fact attempted such a suit but as was the case with other such loyalist claims there was no real chance of success and the case never progressed.

Upon his retirement from Bermuda, Browne turned to the principals involved. He began with his brother-in-law William Wanton, who was now residing in New Brunswick. To present his case he hired Jonathan Bliss, formerly of Massachusetts and now of New Bruns-

wick, to represent to Wanton the desirability of settling the claim. After some initial difficulties — as the letters show — William Wanton agreed to pay half of the sum outstanding if the heirs of his brother Joseph would assume the other half. Browne accepted this solution and then began to solicit the other parties. Here complications ensued. The daughters of Joseph Wanton, or their husbands, and the guardian of young Joseph Wanton, had apparently no interest and little desire to fulfill the obligations of the late Joseph Wanton.²

Browne tried all possible methods of persuasion in his correspondence with them. Finally he was forced to go to law to prosecute his claim. The probable source of the difficulty was that the heirs of Joseph Wanton had inherited little from their father although they had received some money from the Crown as compensation for his loyalism. The only family property that still remained was that of Mrs. Joseph Wanton (now married to William Atherton, the guardian of her son), who would do all that she could to preserve it intact for her children. The heirs were not totally unfeeling and did offer Browne part compensation which he refused. He wanted complete settlement. However, the last letter written by Browne to Bliss is most pessimistic and would imply that he did not expect to succeed.

The case is a good example of the difficulties of the loyalists in attempting to regain their property. If the Wanton estate had been returned to the family or if the political climate in Rhode Island had been more favorable no such problems would have ensued. Unfortunately such was not the case; Browne was just one of the many victims of the Revolution.

The letters here presented are contained in Browne's letter book, which with other effects was left to his younger daughter, who married a member of the Tucker family in Bermuda. Their descendants have made it possible to present this material. The principal persons mentioned in the letters are identified in the notes.

²Modern legal theory would have it that Wanton's heirs had no obligations concerning debts incurred by him. If the estate were insufficient to meet the creditors' demands his heirs were not obligated themselves in their own property. However, an estate escheating to the state would now probably be subject to claim via suit on the state.

London, Percy street, February 25. 1792.

Dear Sir¹

I received your letter of the 10th of October last so late in the Season that it was not possible for me to acknowledge it as you wished; but I embrace the first opportunity this Season to express my regret at the trouble which has been occasioned by the unexpected delay I have met with in adjusting the concern between us.

I understood from Mr. Bliss,² "that you had proposed and consented to pay five hundred pounds sterling as your part of the bond; but you expected that I should look to your brother's children³ for the remainder." I consented to your proposal and signified the same to him. You will easily conceive my surprise, when, in answer to my letter I learnt from him, "that you would pay in december following, but required that the bond should be delivered up at the same time." Now how was it possible that I should persuade your brother's children to pay their portion of the bond, before I had received yours; when they knew that I had demanded the whole of you, before I ever applied to them about it? I could consider the condition only as an attempt to interpose an unreasonable and subject me to farther inconvenience. If I wrong you, I am sorry for it, but if not, then it was right that you should be compelled to do what you had voluntarily undertaken, and I had consented to meerly to procure an amicable accomodation. My claim is too old and the sum is of too much consequence to my family to be trifled with; but consistently with their safely I wish to do anything that will give you ease and satisfaction. I have repeatedly expressed this to Mr. Bliss and I rest assured that through him you will have the benefit of my disposition towards you. It seems to me, that you are so disturbed with your brother's children, as not to see what is due to another in a case, wherein they are interested with you. I know not how otherwise to account for your disregard in this instance to that manly sentiment and honourable

¹William Wanton (1734-1816) was the son of Governor Wanton. In July William Wanton and 54 other Loyalists in New York petitioned Sir Guy Carleton for lands in Nova Scotia. They cited in their petition their loyalty to the British Crown and the losses they had suffered. Lands were given to Wanton and he settled in New Brunswick where he became Collector of Customs of St. John until his death.

²Probably Jonathan Bliss (1742-1822) who graduated from Harvard in 1763. He was a member of the General Court of Massachusetts and was a Rescinder. He was proscribed by the Act of 1778. He retired to New Brunswick where he ultimately became the Chief Justice of the Colony. In this vexatious family quarrel between Brown and his relations, Bliss was acting as his attorney.

³These are the four children of Col. Joseph Wanton, viz., Joseph, Mary, Elizabeth and Ruth.

dealing which have always distinguished your character. But I request and I entreat that you would consider me and mine with that equity which we may expect from you. I know not what you may have been led to think of my situation and circumstances but if you had a just apprehension of them, I am sure you would not think the settlement of your engagement a matter of so little moment to me. I trust that upon farther reflexion you will be induced to do me justice, and I hope that you will ever believe me to be with due consideration and regard, Dear Sir,

sincerely and affectionately

yours

Your sister⁴ and children⁵

join me in kind regards to

Mrs. W. and yourself

By the Commerce sailed March 1 from the River

9th the Downs

W. Wanton Esq.

* * *

London, Percy street, feb. 25. 1792.

Sir

I received your letter of the 11th. of october last and I thank you for your attention to the business I had entrusted to your care. I am astonished that Mr. Wanton should suffer it to proceed to the length you mention and I am sorry that my kind intentions and your prudent endeavours have been so unexpectedly defeated. If the affair is not finished with him before this reaches you, I request you would pursue it with the same temper and disposition, which have hitherto influenced me in the matter. I cannot submit to any conditions, not yet adopted, which tend only to delay an adjustment. I think I have expressed myself so explicitly in my preceeding letters as to leave you in no doubt about my meaning and that it is unnecessary for me to add to my communications upon the subject.

Mr. W. in a letter dated oct. 10 1791 has so earnestly remonstrated against my proceeding, that I have written the inclosed letter, which is left open for your inspection. When you have sealed it, I request you would be so good as to hand it to him, if it comports with your own

⁴Ruth Wanton Browne was the daughter of Governor Wanton and hence the sister of Col. Joseph Wanton and William Wanton.

⁵William Browne had one son and two daughters.

recollections and any determinations you may have made since I last heard from you.

I have the honour to be with respect

Sir

The Honble
Jon'a Bliss Esq.
St. John
New Brunswick

your most obedient humb. Servt.

* * *

London, Percy Street, May 25. 1792.

William Atherton }
John Morrison } Esquires
John Wilkinson }
Christ: Darby }

Sirs⁶

I have just learnt from my Attorney in New Brunswick, that Mr. Wanton has paid him for me £500. sterling, together with the interest thereof from october 1790, in part of the bond for £1897. 10. O N. E. currency, in which he was bound to me with his deceased brother⁷ in 1770. I am now to request your attention, on behalf of the legal Representatives of the late Colonel Wanton, to what is still due to me thereon.

I am &c

* * *

⁶William Atherton was the guardian of Joseph Wanton, the son of Colonel Joseph Wanton and the nephew of William Browne. Atherton later married the widow of Colonel Joseph Wanton.

John Morrison of Chiswick, Middlesex, was the husband of Mary Wanton, the eldest daughter of Colonel Joseph Wanton. Morrison and Mary Wanton must have been married some time during the Revolution as he was a widower by 1782 with two young children. During the Revolution Morrison was an officer in the British army.

John Wilkinson was the husband of Elizabeth Wanton, the second daughter of Colonel Joseph Wanton. Wilkinson and Elizabeth Wanton were married in Charleston, South Carolina in 1782. During the Revolution Wilkinson was a Captain in the 64th Regiment of the British army.

Christopher Darby was the husband of Ruth Wanton, the youngest daughter of Colonel Joseph Wanton. He was in the 54th Regiment of Foot and was a Captain. Indications are that at the time of this family row he was still in the army as letters are addressed to him at Dover Castle, then used as a garrison headquarters.

Copy

Prescot, 28th. May 1792.

Sir

I am this morning favoured with a letter from you of the 25th instant, addressed to Messrs. Atherton, Morrison, Wilkinson and Darby, requesting their attention on behalf of the legal Representatives of the late Colonel Wanton, to a ballance due on a bond granted (as you mention) by Colonel Wanton, with his brother Mr. Wm Wanton to you in the year 1770 for £1897. 10. O N.E. currency; and on account of which bond, you say you have just learnt from your Attorney in New Brunswick, that Mr. W. wanton had paid him for you £500 sterling.

You must be very sensible that it is not in my power to do anything in this business, as I have no other connection with the Estate⁸ of Colonel Wanton, that the care of his son and of whatever may come to my hands for him. This being the case, I trust you will think with me that this matter, so far as it may concern the Minor had better rest till he comes of age.

I am very respectfully

Sir

your most obedient
humble servant
W. Atherton

W. Browne Esq.
Percy street
London.

* * *

Mr Wilkinson gave me no answer to my letter of the 25. of May.

When Major Morrison and Captain Darby left me in june for Stockton they assured me that while they were there, they would come to some agreement upon my demand and acquaint me with it.

* * *

⁷Joseph Wanton was the son of Governor Wanton. Initially he was not an active Loyalist but upon refusing the oath of fidelity in 1775 to General Lee he was placed under guard in Providence. After Rhode Island was occupied by the British, Wanton became increasingly active in the Loyalist cause. He later accompanied the British army to New York when Rhode Island was evacuated. He held the rank of Colonel in the loyal militia. As a result of his activities his property was confiscated. He died in New York in 1782 and was buried there.

⁸Wanton himself cannot have left much. However, his widow, the daughter of James Honeyman, sometime Judge of the Court of the Vice-Admiralty of Rhode Island, had her own properties. These were originally forfeited with her husband's properties but were later returned to her.

[to be continued]

THE WILLIAM HARRIS MANUSCRIPT

Through the generosity of members and friends the Society has been able to purchase an account of King Philip's War written by William Harris and dated, Newport, August 12, 1676. Possibly no single item of equal importance to the history of Rhode Island has come on the market in the past, and there is slight chance of others coming to light in the future.

The letter came up for sale at an auction at Sotheby's in London last spring and the Society made what was considered a very substantial bid. Unfortunately, as our agent informed us, "the bidding on this lot was extremely brisk and [our] figure was very quickly passed." Successful bidder was a leading New York dealer who paid nearly twice the Society's limit. However, the Executive Board, convinced that the manuscript belonged in our library, was determined that it should not be allowed to go elsewhere. An active and successful drive for funds was staged, culminating in the acquisition of the document.

William Harris (1610-1681) came to Salem from England with Roger Williams in 1630, and in 1636 accompanied him from Seekonk to Providence. He played an important part in the affairs of the colony, holding many public offices. Throughout most of his life he was bitterly engaged in controversies over land.

Certain passages in the Harris manuscript are similar to parts of a letter of the same date in the British Public Record Office, which was published in *Collections of The Rhode Island Historical Society*, X, p. 162. In general the Society's letter goes into greater detail and contains material not included in the other.

The account begins with the events leading up to the war and with a justification of the English attack on the Narragansetts, whom Harris accuses of having aided Philip and of having laid up unusual supplies of food and munitions in preparation for a treacherous uprising.

The narrative goes on to describe ambushes, attacks, battles, and expeditions: the Great Swamp Fight; the defeat of Captain Pierce and the torture of the captives; the attack on Providence, March 29, 1676; the assault on the garrison house at Pawtuxet; and the capture and death of Canonchet.

Harris himself was closely touched by the ravages of war. His home was burned, his cattle and horses driven away, and he "lost a deer son a dilligent engenious temperate man in all things, whome the Indians lay in waite for by the way & kild him."

Telling of the Indian method of warfare, Harris writes that theirs was a "skulking fight (to say) creeping & cruching behind any bushy tree, rock, or hill . . . & then (as they see need) start up & run away (soe fast) among the shrubs & rocks (soe fast) that noe horse . . . can catch them, but if they see oportunity fire at a man." The English, on the other hand, "marched in a few files but a great length, & as they marched fired at the bushes (least the Indians should ly neer) but by the noyse of theyr guns: the Indians heard them: & slipped by them & shuned them as they pleased." Harris gives much credit for the ultimate colonial victory to the Indian allies of the English, who were able to fight the enemy in their own manner. He also states that on occasion seemingly friendly Indians proved treacherous.

Casualties and lack of powder and food gradually reduced the Indians to a desperate situation. Unable to feed their children or to carry them with them in flight they were obliged in many cases to kill them or have them killed. More and more of the Indians surrendered or came in to sue for peace. Among these was Potock, "the greatest Councillor knowne among the Indians," who, according to Harris, was persuaded to go to Newport by "Mr. Roger Williams a man well knowne to the Indeans who understands them, one Mr. Fener & one John Green commander of a slope." Potock was jailed in Newport and was later sent to Boston, where he was executed.

"The sd Councillor," writes Harris, "sayth he saved the sd Mr. Williams life whome the Indeans would & could have kild who promised him safe returne & now writs here glad he was not let returne. The duple minded man is unstable in all his wayes but the end of the upwright & just man is peace." The last sentence is a jibe at Williams, with whom Harris had many disagreements and by whom he had once been accused of high treason.

The letter, which was evidently written over a considerable period, ends on the day of King Philip's death, one of the last gruesome notes of the long account of tragedy and bloodshed being: "His head and hands are now on Rhode Island."

BOOK REVIEW

Girl with a Musket, by Florence Parker Simister, New York, Hastings House, 1959. 116 p. \$2.75.

The biography *Life of Deborah Sampson: the female soldier in the War of the Revolution* by Herman Mann provided the plot for this historical story which brings to life the tense days in Rhode Island when the British occupied Newport and threatened the rest of the colony. Eighteen-year-old Anne Saunders wanting to take part in the Revolution, disguised herself as a boy and enlisted for fifteen months' service in the troops guarding Rhode Island. Stationed at a fort on Warwick Neck the band with whom she was associated was in a strategic location to prevent the British from landing there and marching to Providence. Among their experiences were: aiding an American brig in an encounter with a British sloop; a mutiny at the camp; the dramatic capture of General Prescott, commander of the British forces in the state; and an encounter with a British frigate off Prudence Island. Anne's life as a soldier ended logically and in the following period of readjustment she made a decision for her future happiness and return to Brown's Mill, her home.

In the seventeen months the story covers Anne is clearly characterized. She does some growing up, readjusts her conception of values in life and her opinion about young Sam Prentice, in particular. The conflict she experiences as a woman posing as a man is believable and realistically presented and is the basis for the dramatic element of this absorbing and well-written novel.

The military events are historically accurate and the atmosphere of the times is vivid. The period as well as the characters come to life. The black and white illustrations including a location map by Lloyd Coe are clear, true and add interest to the story.

The combination of historical adventure and a girl deciding which of two men is the right one for her should have wide appeal for older girls of junior high school age.

This second story by Mrs. Simister is better than her first. She is making a real contribution to historical stories for boys and girls in recreating the early days of Rhode Island in an interesting and informative fashion.

Providence Public Library

VIRGINIA FOOKS

NEWS—NOTES

In 1945 the late Frank Hail Brown and his sons, the late Francis Hail Brown and John Francis Brown, gave the Society the John Brown chariot, oldest American built vehicle in existence. Until 1957, when it was shipped to Col. Paul Downing on Staten Island for restoration, it remained in a stable at 33 Power Street.

Scraps of paint, fabric, leather, and gold leaf indicated its former glory, but no one who had seen it in its shabby state could imagine the beauty of the stately chariot restored to its original condition, appearing as it did when it arrived in Providence one hundred seventy-five years ago from the shop of a Philadelphia carriage maker.

Funds for the restoration came from a bequest of Frank Hail Brown and a donation from the Rhode Island Foundation. The committee which had charge of refurbishing the chariot consisted of Professor Charles Wilson Brown, Mrs. Albert Harkness, Mr. George Jones, Mr. C. Prescott Knight, Mrs. Clifford P. Monahan, Mr. Thomas Ives Hare Powel, and the chairman, Mr. John Francis Brown.

The coach house was made ready to receive John Brown's chariot, and an attempt was made to have it appear much as it did when it was housed there in the eighteenth century. It had been emptied of newspapers; the brick and stone walls sandblasted, new heating and lighting installed, and an entrance made directly from John Brown House.

The chariot has aroused great interest and the number of visitors to the museum has nearly doubled since its arrival. The public is warmly invited to view this unique Rhode Island museum item.

* * *

The library has recently received the General Six Principle Baptist Archives. Manuscript material in the Archives includes the records of the General Six Principle Baptist Yearly Conference, 1774-1854, and the records of many Six Principle Baptist churches in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts from 1680 to 1945.

* * *

Mrs. William Touret and Miss Eleanor Spicer, both of whom had been working part time at the Society since March, 1959, left in December. Miss Matilda M. Coffey has been engaged as a full time employee in the first floor office.

* * *

Dr. Robert D. Eddy has given the Society many of the miscellaneous genealogical papers of his mother, the late Mrs. William H. Eddy. Mrs. Eddy was the compiler of the excellent Eddy genealogy and papers concerning that family have been turned over to the Eddy Family Association.

During January items relating to the transit of Venus in 1769 were displayed in the Society's exhibition room. The material for the most part was from the collection of Mr. Albert E. Lownes, a former president of The Rhode Island Historical Society, but the telescope and a profile of Benjamin West were lent by Brown University. The exhibition was correlated with the talk given before the Society on the Transit of Venus by Prof. Charles H. Smiley on January 9, 1960.

* * *

Historical blue china from the collection of the late Albert W. Claflin will be exhibited during the month of February. The pieces selected deal with Lafayette's visit to America in 1824 as depicted on contemporary old blue Staffordshire. It is an outstanding exhibition and historically minded people will be well repaid by visiting it.

DEXTER BIBLE RECORDS

The following records have been copied from a family Bible, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, printed at Oxford in 1757, now in the Society's possession. It contains the notation: "This Bible was the property of Lewis P. Child, Dorrance and Pine Street. From him to Allen Aldrich, Union and Middle Streets, and he brought it to the Dexter Asylum. [the] Abigail in the family Record is supposed to be the youngest sister of Ebenezer Knight Dexter."

Providence November 12th 1775

Abigail Dexter was born the 8th day of april 1760

John Allin Dexter was born the 24 day of July 1761

Elizabeth Chipman Dexter was born the 21 day of february 1762

Abigail Dexter her hand Riting

March the 10 1767 William and Elizabeth Dexter Entered into Maredeg Covarnant

Stephen Night Dexter was Born ganuau the 27: 1768

Poly Cheklv Dexter was Born Nowember 1774

Elizabeth Dexter weddo her hand Righting

William Dexter Desed thes Life the 7 Day of guly 1775

William Dexter Ju Desed this life October the 8 1775 Aged 10 months and 23 days

A SOLDIER WRITES HIS CONGRESSMAN

by FRANK F. WHITE, JR.

[concluded from October, 1959, v. 18, no. 4, p. 114]

Rooms Gen. Court Martial

Thibodeaux, La.

Dec. 26th. 1864

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir: I have waited anxiously to hear from you, in the way of an order from the War Dept. for my discharge, or an order detaching me, but as yet none has appeared. I am however still waiting in the hope, that, now being near to the *source of power* you will be able to effect something for me in the way mentioned. I should prefer being detached, as I am not particularly anxious to leave the service.

I see by the Providence papers, which sometimes fall into my hands a very flattering mention of your Bankrupt Law, which I sincerely hope you will be able to push through this session. I believe that such a law would give to the commercial interests of the entire country a new vigor — a cordial very necessary at the present function of affairs. There is also another matter which I could wish might be brought to the favorable notice of Congress., a matter which I see is already talked of in the Senate. I mean, raising officers pay. The officers of the regiment have repeatedly urged me to write to you, asking you to advocate a measure of that kind. If you could carry through a measure of that kind successfully, it would secure you a popularity throughout the army. For myself I will say that I am able to live on my present pay (if I can get it) & to save something, but nine out of ten cannot & do not. Expenses are three times what they were at the beginning of the war, & for an officer to retrench is just a moral impossibility & if they cannot pay for what they want, they will run in debt. Let the consequences be what they may.

We have not been paid for eight months & complaints are heavy & just. Every mail from the north brings to every mess room in the Dept. of the Gulf, a tale of suffering and want, & the anxiety of the father, husband or brother is deepened by his inability to alleviate the sufferings of those most dear to him, and the result is *infamy*. To this cause I ascribe in a measure the rapidly increasing immorality in many sections of the north.

We expect to be paid in January, (as we have every month for the last half year) & we shall soon know whether we are to be again disappointed. I wish you would write to me, informing me how much I am indebted to you on the 1st of Jan. 1865, & as soon as we are paid, I will send the amount to you at Washington or wherever you direct.

You will see that I am again on a Court martial. I have been there about two months but expect in a few days to return to my regiment.

We grind up Deserters, spies, robbers, murderers, & all other offenders against military law.

What do you propose to do next spring? May I ask? to return to Congress? or represent our nation at some European court? I could wish the latter & that you would take me in some capacity! Very modest request!

But I must tell you before I close something of Thibodeaux. In the first place it is a city of some two or three thousand inhabitants. It is the chief town of the Parish of La Fourche. Its public buildings consist of a jail, court house, a few churches, & two seminaries. Gen. Cameron, Comdg. District of La Fourche, has his Hd. Qrs. here.³² The town in an old one & shows unmistakeable signs of decay. I should judge from appearances, & from what I am told that before war a very large business was done here. It was also a great *gambling rendezvous*. We occupy a Court room a building which I should judge from what I see was once a resort of gamblers.

The military authorities bear heavily upon that kind of work, yet there is much of it done. The citizens and planters from the adjacent country throng the coffee houses from morning till night, having nothing else to do. The language spoken here principally is the French, or rather a dialect of it. There is very little pure Parisian French spoken here. About three weeks ago Lt. Tefft of our regt. and twelve men, while on a scout, were taken prisoners, and Saturday last,³³ Lt. Eddy while fishing on Lake Verret about eight miles from Napoleonville was taken & paroled.³⁴ The fact is that the rebs are around every where. They are well informed of all our movements, even those of individuals. They told Lt. Eddy that Majer Davis had left Thibodeaux, for Napoleonville that afternoon which was true, & one also spoke of having met the Lt. at a store in Napoleonville which circumstance he afterwards called to mind.

The Court will soon be dissolved & we shall return to our regiment when I hope we shall have a dash at them.

I trust I shall hear from you very soon. Address me, Napoleonville, La.

Very truly,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Napoleonville, La.
April 30th 1865

Mr Jenckes:

Dear Sir: I have not written you for quite a long time, and thinking that, perhaps a letter from me may not be unwelcome, I seize an oppor-

³²Brigadier General Robert A. Cameron, U.S. Volunteers.

³³2nd Lieut. William A. Tefft, Company C, Third Rhode Island Cavalry.

³⁴1st Lieut. James M. Eddy, Company G, Third Rhode Island Cavalry.

tunity this morning, to give you an inside view of our life in Louisiana. It is so long since I have written, that I shall run the risk of being tedious, in sending you a lengthy letter.

In the first place, I am glad to state that my health is excellent, and has been for several months. The health of our regiment, or at least that portion of it, stationed at this Post, has been very good, until recently. There are five companies, mine among the number, stationed here, which Post is also the Hd. Qrs. of the Regt. Col. Sayles is in command. Three companies are stationed at the *Hermitage*, (so called) across the Mississippi at Donaldsonville, La. under the command of Lt. Col. Parkhurst. Two at Plaquemine. One at Terrebonne, on the N.O. & Opelousas R.R., about fifty miles from N.O. and one at Howina. So you see, that, we are well scattered. I returned from duty on Court Martial, in Jan. last. I found my Company in a most wretched condition, but half-mounted—half armed, half clothed, and half fed. No discipline. They had just been inspected, together with several other companies, by Gen. Sherman, and the result was very unsatisfactory. But today I should like nothing better, than to be inspected by him. We were inspected a few days ago by Lt. Col. Smith, on Gen. Sherman's Staff, who reported the detachment perfect.³⁵

My Co. is in splendid condition, and I feel proud of it. It is said to be the Company here. Of course, I feel a degree of pride in these reports—very natural, I think. I have a very excellent orderly sergt. Charles H. Scott, whose efforts I have aided very much to place the Company in its present condition.³⁶ By the way, I have a favor to ask of you. It is that you will use your influence in obtaining him a Commission. He is, in my opinion the most deserving man in the regt. He is capable and has earned the position. He came out with me as an orderly Sergt. & while I have been away from the Company, he has been more the Commander of it, than any of its officers. He is complimented by every one both officers & men from the Col. down. I should regret much to lose him from the Company, but I am not so selfish but that I would hail with joy his promotion. The Col. has recommended him to the Governor, but his recommendation seems not to have had that influence which a Colonel's ought to have. There are several chances to muster him in, and even if there were not, he ought to be commissioned for he has earned it. It would be a satisfaction to him & to his friends to feel, that his service had been appreciated. His promotion would be received with pleasure

³⁵Probably Lieut. Colonel George W. Smith, 88th Illinois Infantry Regiment.

³⁶Charles H. Scott of Providence was mustered in on Feb. 4, 1864. He was promoted from Private to First Sergeant in Company F. On July 1, 1865 he received his commission as First Lieutenant in Co. E.

by the whole regt. If you can serve him in this, you will be doing an act of *justice* and a very great favor to me.

And now I must give you some sort of an idea of the interior life of our regt. To use a vulgar phrase "*things are mixed.*" "The house is divided against itself." There us no unity of feeling among the officers. There are scarcely two officers in the regt. that think alike, or who have confidence in each other. The feeling that usually exists between Field & Line is lost in that, which exists in the Field and Staff *itself*. First — the Col. & his Staff pull in the same boat. The strongest party, perhaps, though its strength is comparative, rather than positive. Second — Lt. Col. Parkhurst & Majer Davis work together, while Majer Davis works his own craft, with what support he can gather from the line, which is rather limited. He is consequently left behind. In consequence of the regt. being so scattered, the line is not united but have generally ranged themselves on one side or the other. What I say in regard to this matter, I would not like to have known, for 'twould only injure the regiment, and Gods knows it has received hard knocks enough already.

The Col. is a weak, suspicious man of very strong prejudices, hasty in his temper & his acts, often doing that, for which afterwards he feels obliged to apologize. His practical knowledge of military is small. He can not drill his regt. or at least he has not yet, without blundering. His judgement [*sic*] is poor, & is ruled by his prejudices; to such an extent, that he makes enemies of those who are disposed to be friends. He has around him his set of admirers, and all others are regarded with suspicion.

To counteract the effect of his unpopularity with the officers, he curries favor with enlisted men, and had to this end, been guilty of some of the most foolish & unmilitary acts. He has once interfered with the management of my company, and upon the false representations of one of my men seconded by *Majer Davis* has revoked my order, and then, to crown all, in a fortnight afterwards, he acknowledges that he was too hasty — that he was wrong — but *did not volunteer to undo what he had done* and you may be sure I did not ask him to.

He was under arrest here, a week, a short time since, by order of Gen. Sherman but succeeded in getting released, after some little annoyance.

Col. P——t it is said is drunk most of the time. I cannot say as to the truth of the rumor. He longs for consolidation and in that event hopes to get the command. Majer Burt [illegible] with Col. P., but he pulls a weak oar. He is small *Potatoes*. Majer Davis is a *bear* to them all, and they all hate him, as they do the devil and fear him as much. They are rather more than a match for him however. He has no separate com-

mand but is allowed to stay *loose* round Napoleonville, sort of spare hand. He is the most capable man in the "Field," the best officer by all odds, and he chafes under his restraint. He returns the hate of his brother officers in the Field, with interest and prays for consolidation of the regiment, in which event, he will try to throw Col. P. overboard and get the command. His ambition is insatiable. He is an unprincipled hypocrite, and I believe would sacrifice his own brother on the altar of his ambition if such sacrifice would gratify it. His ambition is equalled only by his vanity. He swallows the most massive flattery without a gasp. A few weeks since he and the Col. were at swords point, never spoke except on necessary business, each took every opportunity to annoy the other. The Majer was most bitter in his denunciations against the Col., and he would [utter] them openly to the line officers, and tried in every way possible to gain their support. He failed in obtaining mine and now hates me and would do any thing he could to injure me. He can annoy me sometimes, but that has been the extent to which he has been able hitherto to injure me.

But today, he frowns upon, and licks the Col's hand, whom he hates & who hates him with that utmost intensity. Standing as I do, apart from either party, I enjoy, extremely, the little scenes, that I see enacted around me. I take care to let the actors see, that I *understand the play*, and that is a source of most bitter annoyance to them. I find that a position of *neutrality*, in such a case as this, gives me a greater consideration with all the parties than an adherence to either side would give, and despising both as I do, I think there is not much danger of my becoming a partisan. You will say that I am bitter & perhaps unjust, but I think if you could see as I do, day after day, these little facts unrolling themselves, see these little mean traits of character developing, you could come to the same conclusion. I hate a sycophant, and how a man can lose his self-respect, as to cringe and fawn, today, upon a man whom but yesterday he reviled with all the bitterness and venom of his nature, I can not comprehend. Mr. Jenckes, this is a place to study human nature. The army, I mean. If a man has a mean trait, it is pretty sure to appear, or if he is weak, it will be known.

You see I have not the highest opinion of our Field & Staff, Taken together, it is a *weak machine* and run in sort of a disjointed manner. That is why, we are here today instead of living in the field *doing something*. I believe that if Majer Davis was in command, the regt. would gain a reputation, for he is a soldier, full of spirit and energy, and he would work hard for the regt., for his own sake. I would like to go under him on our campaign, though I have no confidence in his honesty. But I have no *fears* of him myself, I don't have to ask him, or any one else

what my duties are. I can drill my own squadron, and think I can fight it too. My Company business moves like clock work, and even he feels obliged to compliment me.

But I am spinning out this letter to an enormous length. I must cut it short.

I sent you two hundred dollars last January by express to Washington City. I have never received any acknowledgement of its receipt, and I do not know if you ever received it. Please inform me in regard to it. We expect to be paid six months pay this week & I shall make arrangements to take up my note. The glorious news from Virginia was received with acclamations of joy here, especially by the soldiers. They are looking for a speedy peace, and return home. The people, those that I have talked with, are satisfied the thing is about up, and desire to return to the union and have peace.

The assassination of the President struck us with consternation. It was too horrifying to believe, and the news was not to be believed, till a confirmation of it proved it was all too true. It is regretted by the rebel as well as union man, as such an outrageous deed could not otherwise be regarded.

The warm weather is upon us and I dread its effects upon my men. I have not lost thirty men from various causes, since we came here. I fear more will go under this season. I hope this will be our last here, & think it will. If you ever see Mr. Hammond give him my regards. I shall expect to hear from you soon.

Address: Capt. Livingston Scott
3rd R.I. Cavalry
Napoleonville, La.

Very respectfully,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Terrebonne, La.
May 25th 1865.

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir: Many changes have, and are now taking place in the 3d R.I. Cav. since I last wrote you, and as I have a little spare time, I will assume, or may be worry you for a few minutes. You will notice that the place of the date of this letter is not that of my former letters. Capt. Bicknell's Company, which I have had for some weeks been stationed here, became so demoralized, that the Commanding Officer of this Post, made a most bitter report to General Cameron.³⁷ The result was, I was sent with my company to relieve him. I did not like to move, for I was very pleasantly situated at Napoleonville. It is very lonely here. The Col. sent my Company because he considered it, as he told me, the best com-

³⁷Captain George F. Bicknell, Company C, Third Rhode Island Cavalry.

pany at Napoleonville. I am glad to have an independent command, and I will show, that my company will not run down, while away from the regt.

Lt. Col. Parkhurst has resigned, and his resignation will be accepted, I think. I understand he proposes to practice law in New Orleans. His departure from the regiment opens the field for *ambitious majers*, of which we have two, Majer Davis & Majer Burt. Majer Burt was first commissioned, but owing to some difficulty was mustered after Davis. He has done excellently of late. He has command of a battalion at Plaquemine, and the Inspector General reports his command, first rate. Majer Burt is honest.³⁸ He lacks something of the *dash*, upon which Davis relies for his success, but his judgment is nowise inferior. He works hard, and is enthusiastic in the work. He has had considerable experience in the first R.I. Cav. and when he left that organization, General Duffie, then Col. said he lost his best majer.³⁹

He is striving for the Lt. Colonelcy, and is the best man for it. Davis is also exerting every power he can control to gain the prize, but he ought not to have it. He has but few friends in the regiment among the officers. He is an unprincipled man, and belongs to Massachusetts. We want none but good Rhode Islanders to command us. He has the greatest amount of assurance the most *cheek* (so as to speak) of any man I ever met.

After having tried to injure me, every way he could, he yet has the imprudence to ask me to help him to the Lt. Colonelcy. If I had the power today to dismiss him from the regiment, I would do it before I slept. There has been no harmony in the regt. since he has a superior officer in command, and there never will be as long as he remains in it.

He will smile, and flatter, and at the same time, he [is] plotting against you. He is hypocritical, treacherous, bigoted, and the vainest man I ever saw. He is an object of my deepest contempt. There is a way, in which, the regiment can be relieved of him. Viz, Majer Burt and he, are both striving for the Lt. Colonelcy. If Majer Burt gets it, Davis will resign, and we shall be relieved of his baleful presence. The Col. desires Burt's promotion to the Lt. Colonelcy, and requested me to interest you in his favor. I also certainly think, his promotion would [be of] advantage [to] the regiment very much. We shall be rid of Majer Davis, and his intrigues, which is the case today in a great measure of the internal dissension in our regiment.

There is another thing, also, which the Col. desired me to write you

³⁸Major Edmund C. Burt, Third Rhode Island Cavalry. He was detailed for a time as Acting Assistant Inspector General on the staff of General Cameron.

³⁹Brigadier General Alfred N. Duffie, formerly colonel of the First Rhode Island Cavalry.

about, and that is the consolidation of the 1st R.I. Cavalry with us. If this can be effected, Rhode Island will still have one Cavalry regiment in the field, whereas if it is not thus done it is quite probable, we shall be consolidated with some other regiment, and may possibly lose our name. We have a good reputation, at Head Quarters Dept. Gulf, though a great many people take great pleasure in decrying us. But it is *just* my opinion that we can knock the spots off any regiment in this Dept. in Drill or Discipline.

If the Governor would request it, the consolidation might be possibly effected, and with the happiest results. Don't you think you could make the Gov. see it in that light?

I know you used to take an interest in our regiment, and have no reason to think, that it has in any degree abated. It is true we are a good way off, but we still look to Rhode Island for support and encouragement. We are coming home sometime, I trust, and desire to come home as the 3d R.I. Cavalry. To secure this, and also to the end that we may come home with honor, I earnestly make these requests. 1st. Secure Majer Burt the Lt. Colonelcy, which will free us from Majer Davis and his vile intrigues. 2d. Let Governor Smith request the consolidation of the 1st with us, under the name of the 3d R.I. Cavalry.⁴⁰ We can thus maintain our regimental organization. I make these requests for the peace & welfare of our regiment, and for the honor of the State of Rhode Island, both of which objects, will, I believe, be secured by such action, as I have suggested. If you feel willing to act in this matter, I most earnestly wish you would, for I certainly think it will serve the interests of the regiment & state.

But there is no time to be lost. Davis is in earnest, and is at work. He is in his element, when engaged in intrigue. I would give two months' pay to beat him. There will be no living with him, if he is allowed to win. He will go in for an eagle or a star next.

I hope you will not feel annoyed at this importunate request, for the subject matter, is of some interest, or should be of interest to every Rhode Islander, and I write to you instead of others, because I know you best, and know you possess great influence and, that you are willing to use it for the good of the service, when satisfied that will be the effect of its use. I must now close. I will keep you informed of what passes here. I sent funds to my brother a few days ago, for the purpose of taking up

⁴⁰Governor James Y. Smith, previously identified. He served as governor of Rhode Island from 1863 to 1866. The First and Third Rhode Island Cavalry regiments were not merged although orders had been issued by the War Department on Feb. 16, 1864. They were later annulled. The First served in the Virginia theater.

my notes, which you hold. It will soon come to hand, if not already.

Good bye,
Your most grateful friend
Livingston Scott

* * *

Napoleonville, La.
June 3d 1865.

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir: Change upon change. I am again at Napoleonville as you see. I remained at Terrebonne one week, when I was ordered to report with my command to Col. Sayles, at Napoleonville. Our regiment is concentrating here — in fact the last two companies arrived today. We are bound for the Western Louisiana. Expect to go in a few days. I seize an opportunity today to write you, for fear that I shall not have an opportunity again, before we start,

Col. Parkhurst's resignation has been accepted, and he is now on his way home. Now is the time to press the claim of Majer Burt for the Lt. Colonelcy. He is the most worthy man for the position, and I hope you will interest yourself in his behalf. Col. Sayles desires it and urges me to do all I can for him. The feeling begins to manifest itself in behalf of the two *claimants*. Majer Davis claims it on the ground of Seigniority. He is very unpopular, and in my opinion his promotion would continue that unhappy dissensions that have existed in our own regiment. He is working with all his might for the promotion. He is all smiles and condescension, even to those he hates, as he hates the devil.

It is time this foreigner was ousted from the regiment, for the honor of the State, and if you could secure Majer Burt's promotion we can get rid of him. You could win the thanks of most of the officers of this regiment, in that case.

I earnestly request you to act immediately. Gov. Smith I am sure would listen to you, and you could easily turn the scale in favor of Burt. I write thus earnestly from partially perhaps a selfish motive. I will out with it. The Col. says he will recommend me for Majer for the first vacancy. The regiment is not large enough for three Majers, although we have three now. When one of the Majers is promoted no one can be mustered in his place. But if Burt is promoted, Davis I am confident will resign, which will leave but me and I want to beat *him* Davis. He has treated me shamefully, and I would like to be the means of *running him out*.

The idea of becoming Majer is new. It was first suggested by Col. Sayles himself a few days ago. But I had already decided to support

Burt. And, though I don't think Col. Sayles is *great shakes*, I am by no means unwilling to avail myself of his offer to recommend me, since we are *this time* working for the same object. I will in a few days obtain the recommendation for the Majority, and send it to you with the modest request that you will in person present it to the Governor, and ask for my promotion. For why should I not have it? I hope I do not flatter myself when I think that there is no better managed Co. than mine, and Col. Sayles certainly thinks so, for he has said so to others. I confess that I am a little ambitious and perhaps a little self-satisfied (to speak mildly), but I think not overmuch. I must close. With much gratitude for past favors,

I remain your friend,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Franklin, La.
July 8th 1865

Mr. Jenckes:

Majer Burt is Lt. Col. Majer Davis resigns today. I want to be made Majer at once if possible.

Our station you see is changed. We are, that is my Company is on the Lecche. I like very much, but about that Majority, I hope you will hurry the thing through. It don't [*sic*] matter whether I can be mustered or not. But [illegible] be if Majer D—resigns. The courier waits and I must close—will write again soon.

Very respectfully your friend
Livingston Scott

* * *

Franklin, La.
July 31st 1865.

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir: I have been stationed here for four weeks. I like very much. It is a lovely town and a rich section of country—the very garden of Louisiana. I have an opportunity now of going into business here with an excellent chance of making a fortune if I am allowed to get out of the service. I have made the acquaintance of a very wealthy man since I have been here. He owns six plantations in this vicinity. He desired to engage some one whom he believes competent to run his plantation.

He wishes me to take an interest in one, two, or three of his plantations. He will sell me (very low) taking back a mortgage one quarter of each, will advance the money to run them, will furnish stock and every thing else, and give me a good salary besides. The great question in the minds of the planters is will the negroes work? can they be made to work under the new system of free labor? Mr. Bethel the planter alluded to is a thorough business man of large experience. He believes it can be done but has no faith in southern men to make it successful. He is now in Washington for the purpose of seeing the President, an old friend of his. He will return in eight or ten days. If I am able to command the labor I can make a fortune in ten years. I believe it can be done.

My military ambition is somewhat cooled, for it is somewhat unprofitable (pecuniarily). *I am growing old* and it is time, I began to make something. The facilities for making money here are very great. A fortune can be made in a short time.

The opportunity that now offers may never again be offered, I can now enter into a *great business* without *Capital*. with only one chance against me—that is the failure of the free labor system. Indeed it is the misgiving as to its success that induces Mr. Bethel in his offer.

All I desire is to get out of the service. I have resigned but it is no go now what shall I do—lose the best chance in my life? I don't like to think so. The war is over. I am not needed—can be spared as well as not. Indeed I can be of more service in business here than I can be in the army, both to the Government and to myself.

Will you take my case in hand? I send enclosed my resignation just received disapproved also one to the Secretary of War. I will pay you for your trouble and expense. I wish you would go to Washington and make personal application to the Secretary of War. I feel that this is the last honorable resort, or I would not ask you to do this favor. If this should fail I am quite sure but I would compell them to dismiss me dishonorably rather than lose this chance. If you will accept this task I wish you would go to W—n at once. I wish to come home on a visit first. I trust this matter to you & shall expect my discharge by the first September. Do this and my gratitude shall be greater if possible than ever before for past favors. The courier waits for this and I must close. I hope to hear from you immediately after the receipt of this.

Direct this to Napoleonville, La., as before.

Respectfully,
Your true friend,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Head Qrs. U.S. Forces
Franklin, La.
August 25th 1865.

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir: I do not hear from you and being somewhat anxious I write again to press upon your attention, the matter of my resignation. I have tried every means in my power, to secure the acceptance of my resignation, by the military authorities here, without avail. I have sent my resignation to Gen. Sheridan, Comdg Military Division of the Gulf, but it was disapproved.

The Secretary of War is the only power left to try & if that fails, I suppose I must submit. But it seems hard. There are hundreds of officers allowed to leave the service, who have not done as much or suffered as much as I in the cause. But the "powers that be" must be obliged even if I am compelled to see the golden opportunities slip away.

I am still stationed at Franklin, comdg the Post. I like here very much, and hope that the remainder of my military service may be performed here. The location is healthy & the facilities for enjoyment rare.

Our duty here is chiefly to manage the plantation labor, administer the amnesty oath, and keep up the communication with the forces farther up in the country.

Things are very unsettled as yet. Every thing seems paralyzed. No business is being done. A few are making preparations to cultivate the plantations next year, but the majority are discouraged. The negroes are most fearfully demoralized & will do but little work. I tend and I believe that next year, this labor will be so managed, that the Parish of St. Mary, the fairest in the State, may again blossom as of old. There is no monied capital here, and almost every planter is desirous of taking a partner, who can furnish money. Many plantations are for sale. Plantations which, four years ago, were valued at seventy thousand dollars can be bought for Twenty Thousand. There are thousands of acres in the market but no longer. This Parish offers the best inducement in the world to speculators.

Land, which is capable of producing almost everything, & in the greatest abundance, can be bought for, from five to fifteen dollars an acre.

I prophesy that in two years this parish will contain almost as many northerners as natives. The property here *must* change hands. In the first place the old planters can not work the free labor system, as successfully as we, & they know it, 2d. They have no money, and can raise none. People, who four years ago counted their Hundreds of Thousands, are

now upon the point of starvation, & are fed by the Government. I issue at this Post about five thousand rations monthly, to the destitute, and many of them once rolled in their own carriages, and counted slaves by the scores. It is hard to realize the results of this war without seeing them. This people has been severely punished, in fact ruined by their own madness.

From one end of the Parish to the other you see the blackened ruins of magnificent sugar houses, the toppling columns that mark the spot where once were dwellings, and even those standing time and neglect have given them premature age. Nature, too, seems to have done her utmost to add to the desolation of war. The magnificent cane fields, extending for miles as level as the floor, & which was once the sole wealth of the parish, are producing now a most luxuriant crop of weeds. Everything is overgrown with weeds, which almost reach the stature of trees.

I must stop — the courier is waiting. I hope that you will give your personal attention to the matter of my resignation. — I should be very glad to hear from you. Address me at Napoleonville, as before, and the letter will be forwarded to me.

Your friend,
Livingston Scott

* * *

Head Qrs. U.S. Forces
Franklin, La.
Sept. 28th, 1865.

Mr. Jenckes:

Dear Sir:

Your letter was duly received. I was much pleased to hear that you would take some steps to get me out of the service. I am still more than ever anxious to get out for the following reason. Capt. E. E. Pomeroy [Pomroy] has been made Major.⁴¹ And I don't propose if I can help it to serve under him. I beg you will push the matter of my discharge at Washington with vigor. I am expecting every day to hear from it. But if it is not already accomplished do me this serve and I will be most eternally obliged.

Yours truly,
Livingston Scott
Capt. 3d R.I. Cav.
Comdg Post

⁴¹Captain Edwin C. Pomeroy, Company I Third Rhode Island Cavalry. The regimental roster does not list him as major. Captain Raymond C. Perry is the only officer listed both as captain and as major in the Third. This is probably an error by Scott. His name is spelled Pomroy on the regimental roster.



61. WINDSOR CHAIR

Various Woods

Pennsylvania *c.* 1760

This Windsor chair with its expertly devised comb started off in life as a *great* chair of considerable style, the property of the eminent Rhode Island Quaker, Moses Brown. Its Pennsylvania origin is clearly indicated by the terminating ball on the foot and the various leg turnings of the so-called blunt arrow type. It was evidently Moses Brown's favorite chair, for as he grew to a very advanced age he had the legs cut down, the saddle removed, and the whole frame upholstered to give him greater ease. The saddle and feet have been restored. We see the nonagenarian seated on this green, upholstered chair in the only portrait made during his lifetime—a pen and ink sketch made by his stepson, William Harris.

It is probable that one side stretcher and the central stretcher have been replaced, for they are of a later, more decadent form. However, the original stretcher, on the left side in the illustration, connecting the front and back legs, shows a fairly strong bulbous turning. The nicely carved ears of the cross member of the comb are a major item of ornament, while the well-shaped seat and the strong rake of the legs are indeed attributes of a very handsome armchair.

E.B.M.

Ex-collection Julia D. and Franklin R. Cushman



62. CORNER CUPBOARD

Mahogany

c. 1800

When fine china came into vogue after the American Revolution, cupboards of this kind were made chiefly for parlors or dining rooms while the cruder pine cupboards would have ornamented the kitchen. This mahogany cupboard with its fine inlay of continental inspiration may have been made in Maryland. At any rate the secondary wood, white pine, bespeaks its American origin.

The projecting cornice is well handled with its dentil mid-moulding, while the frieze is simply inlaid with a circle, bellflowers and string banding. Two glazed upper doors, having latticed astragals with a simple inlay edge, enclose three adjustable shelves, and the matching lower section of light brown mahogany veneer has two covered doors outlined with triple perimeter string inlay of tulip wood. Ornamenting the door corners are quarter fans of alternate woods. In the center of the lower doors the oval cartouches, which show French influence, have a finely executed inlay of urn, flowers, and scrolls. The chamfered corners of the cupboard body are outlined in string inlay as is the moulding connecting the two members. The skirt shows a course of checkered inlay with a central pendant completely inlaid with an elliptical fan motif. One feels that the bracket feet may have been cut off, for they are too short and insignificant for this highly ornamental piece.

E.B.M.

Ex-collection Elliot Flint



63. TALL CLOCK

Mahogany

Rhode Island c. 1800

Caleb Wheaton, a Quaker, who made this tall clock, was the most important of the Providence clockmakers. He not only made clock movements of superior workmanship, but also placed them in cases made by Newport craftsmen of the Goddard school. For these reasons his clocks are particularly pleasing in looks, good in proportion, and excellent in every respect.

Wheaton's advertisements in the *Providence Gazette* cover the period from 1781 to 1796. The Directory of 1824 lists him as a member of the firm of Caleb Wheaton & Son, and since this name appears on the face of the clock, it seems likely that it is one of his later productions. Moreover, the enameled dial indicates a later period. Wheaton died October 31, 1827, at the age of seventy. The case of the clock is of mahogany, pleasingly inlaid with a line of satinwood around the base and around the door. The elongated oval inlay on the door is unusually graceful. It has a deadbeat movement with a sweep second hand. The dial is thirteen inches in diameter, and because of this, the clock had to be very tall, eight and one-half feet in height.

The clock stood for many years in the hall of Dexter Asylum, and it seems reasonable to believe that it was originally the property of Ebenezer Knight Dexter, under the provisions of whose will the Asylum was built.

E.C.D.

Gift of the City of Providence



64. BREAKFAST TABLE

Curly Maple

Rhode Island *c.* 1735-1750

The cyma curves of the porringer top of this curly maple breakfast table are pleasingly restrained. The slightly ornamental skirt balances the rather slender legs and small pad feet. The total design is well enough executed to suggest Job Townsend's work (*cf.*, Joseph Downs, *American Furniture Queen Anne Chippendale Periods*, No. 302), while there are no overdone elements to destroy the usefulness of the table. In Rhode Island, breakfast tables were made in many patterns, but the simple porringer type were produced for many decades. They may be seen in portraits painted by Gilbert Stuart prior to the Revolution, and many such tables were included in the venture cargoes of the Newport cabinetmakers before 1750.

E.B.M.

Ex-collection Grace E. Johnson

NEW MEMBERS

September 10, 1959—January 1, 1960

- | | |
|---|--|
| Harold E. Adams, Jr.
East Providence, R. I. | Mrs. Richard W. Lisle |
| Miss Bertha J. Burlingame | Miss Sandra H. MacLaren
North Providence, R. I. |
| Mr. Wallace Campbell, 3rd
Peacedale, R. I. | Mr. C. Gordon MacLeod |
| Mrs. Herbert N. Couch | Mr. Earl H. Mason |
| Mr. Robert F. Daughton | Mr. Karl L. F. Poyton
Warwick, R. I. |
| Mr. Domenic DiOrio, Jr. | Mr. Norman Pierce
Chicago, Illinois |
| Mr. Harold Draper
Warwick, R. I. | Miss Marion P. Radlo
Pawtucket, R. I. |
| Mr. Thomas C. Greene, Jr.
Potowomut, R. I. | Mr. Norman L. Sammis |
| Mr. John A. Gwynne | Mr. Frederic Schwartz, Jr. |
| Mrs. Frederick C. Hoffman
Pawtucket, R. I. | Miss Constance D. Sherman
New York, N. Y. |
| Mr. H. Stanley Howe | Mr. Craig M. Smith
Webster Groves, Missouri |
| Mrs. C. Curtis Knight | Mr. Kenneth Y. Whipple
Oxford, Massachusetts |
| Reverend William P. Lewis
Scranton, Pennsylvania | Mr. J. Bruce Whyte |

FEBRUARY EXHIBITION

Lafayette's visit to America in 1824 as depicted on contemporary Old Blue Staffordshire pottery from the collection of the late Albert W. Claffin.

LECTURES

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|---|-----------|
| March 13, 1960 Sunday | 3:30 p.m. |
| 99 YEARS OF IRONS & RUSSELL | |
| WILLIAM E. SMITH | |
| President, Irons & Russell | |
| President, Jewelers Board of Trade | |
| April 24, 1960, Sunday | 3:30 p.m. |
| RHODE ISLAND GRAVESTONE CARVING AND CARVERS | |
| <i>(illustrated with slides)</i> | |
| ALLAN LUDWIG | |
| Candidate for a Doctorate in History of Art | |
| Yale University | |