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*The Carrington Room on the third floor of John Brown House, recently restored
and furnished with belongings, largely Oriental, of General Edward Carrington,
1775-1843.*

Photo courtesy Providence Journal-Bulletin

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THE RHODE ISLAND BUSINESS ELITE, 1895-1905: A COLLECTIVE PORTRAIT

by IAN S. HABERMAN
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THAT THE STORY of America's business elite has hardly been told becomes quite apparent when one does decide to tell it. In this, the "critical but neglected field of elite recruitment," as William Miller has called it, studies of the business elite — past and present — are lacking, a strange phenomenon that becomes all the more noticeable when one realizes that the source material for such studies is plentiful and near at hand.

Few historians have dealt with this problem of the ascent of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century business leaders. When historians have discussed this subject, most of them have used the wrong terms, attributing success "to the possession of more shrewdness or trickiness or more pluck or luck or other primate qualities than competitors." On the other hand, however, when they did have the right terms — for example, "social determinants such as family background or work experience" — they used them incorrectly.¹

In any case, the consensus that emerged was that the "typical" American businessman of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century was a "new man," an immigrant from the slums of Europe or from his father's farm, who rose by his own efforts from a boyhood of poverty, with little education or formal training, to a high position of wealth and influence.

By studying the backgrounds of 200 prominent American businessmen of that period, William Miller has shown that this generalization

¹William Miller, "American Historians and the Business Elite," in the *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 9, 1949.

is incorrect. An investigation of the Rhode Island business elite of this period leads to a similar conclusion.²

* * *

The "typical" Rhode Island business leader at the turn of this century was neither a poor immigrant nor the son of one. Of the 175 businessmen studied here whose birthplaces are known, only six, or less than four per cent, were born abroad (Table 2). This six came from generally middle-class backgrounds: Charles Fletcher's father owned a variety store in his native England; there also, James Lister's father was a farmer. Probably the best — and almost only — example of a "poor" immigrant who made good was Joseph Banigan. He was born in Ireland, began work at the age of nine, came to the United States, founded the Joseph Banigan Rubber Co. in Rhode Island, was in the 1902 *Social Directory*, and, when he died, left an estate of \$1,012,260. The immigrant, poor or not, was the exception.

The average age of these men in 1900 was about 57 years; in other words, most of them were born in the 1840s. In 1850, one sixth of the Rhode Island population was foreign-born.³ In spite of this, these business leaders were not the sons of recent immigrants. There were a total of ten "new" New England families in the study; of these ten, six were those previously mentioned as immigrants, while the remaining four were sons of recent immigrants. These four represent a little over two per cent of the entire group (Table 3A).

These four were all in the 1902 *Blue Book*. Albert and Bertrand J. Horton were brothers associated with each other in the Queen Dyeing Co., a business valued at over \$200,000. They were the sons of Robert Horton, a textile designer from Manchester, England, who settled in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1832.

George R. McAuslan, the son of a dry goods merchant from Scotland, became treasurer of the Chemnitz Company, a large textile

²In this study, 180 individuals have been investigated. They are divided into Textile (55), Manufacturing (20) which excludes any aspect of the textile trade, Dealer-Merchant (20), and Insurance-Real Estate-Finance (24). My method for arriving at these individuals is as follows: I have placed the list of members of the Providence Board of Trade in 1898 against whatever information was available about these men in various genealogies and histories of prominent Rhode Islanders, and if there was sufficient information available about a particular individual, then he was included in the list. The final list of individuals is given in Table 11.

³Peter J. Coleman, *The Transformation of Rhode Island, 1790-1860*, Brown University Press, Providence, 1963, p. 300.

concern; George L. Shepley's father came to the United States from England and started the insurance business which his son was to continue. In any case, then, all of these businessmen were raised in essentially middle- or upper-class homes.

The overwhelming majority were native-born Rhode Islanders. 127 of the 180 business leaders under study — or about 70 per cent — were born in Rhode Island (Table 2). The remaining forty-two individuals — including those born outside of Rhode Island but in the United States — were, for the most part, born in the Northeastern United States: thirty-six were born in New England, while the six remaining were born in New York (three), New Jersey (two), and Augusta, Georgia (one).

As for the ancestry of these businessmen, over 86 per cent of them (or 155 of the 180, with information lacking on 15) could trace the history of their families in America back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Table 3A). There was little difference in ancestry between those who were in the *Social Directory* and those who were not. One hundred one of the 119 listed in the *Social Directory* (85 per cent) and 54 of the 61 who were not listed (89 per cent) had genealogies that went back further than 1776.

Even were they not of colonial ancestry, these business leaders — including the immigrants and sons of immigrants — could point to British, and especially to English, forebears (Table 3B). The British Isles (including Ireland and Scotland) was the place of origin for 145 of the 180 individuals under study (about 75 per cent). There was little difference between those in the *Social Directory* and those not in it with regard to country of origin: 97 of the 119 in the *Social Directory* (or 82 per cent) and 48 of the 61 not in it (or 79 per cent) could trace their origins back to the British Isles. Ireland and Scotland counted for 10 of the 145, or about six per cent of the total group. Germany and France was the country of origin for only three of the 180, or a scant one per cent.

Of the 127 who were born in Rhode Island, only about ten were born in what can be termed a rural area (less than 2,000 people); the rest came from larger towns of over 2,000 people. Those who were not born in Rhode Island towns were born in such larger cities as Fall River, Dedham, Lowell, Taunton, New Bedford, Boston, Rehoboth, Dudley, Lynn, and Seekonk, in Massachusetts; Hartford, Connecticut; and Brooklyn, New York, Paterson, New Jersey, and

Augusta, Georgia. In other words, nearly all were raised in a generally urban atmosphere.

To discover the class origins of these businessmen, it is necessary to investigate the occupations of their father. Information as to the father's occupation was available for 132 of the 180 individuals (Table 4). Here, because of such a gap in available information, the attempt to generalize becomes sticky; yet certain trends are evident. Only thirteen individuals (seven per cent) came from what can rightly be termed the lower class; of the thirteen, nine reached the *Social Directory*, while four did not.

An equal number were sons of farmers and what may be called the middle class: there were 24 in each group, or a total of 48 (26 per cent of the entire group). Fourteen farmer's sons and seventeen men with basically middle-class backgrounds reached the 1902 *Social Directory* (31, or about 25 per cent of those 119 who were in the *Directory*); seventeen did not.

The remaining 71 individuals came from upper-class backgrounds; this total is more than the combined total of 61 for the farmer, middle-, and lower-classes. Of these 71 men, 52 were in the *Social Directory* in 1902 (or about 44 per cent of those studied who were in the *Directory*).

Again, it becomes difficult to generalize; but it can be said that over one half (and probably more) of the individuals under study came from upper- and middle-class backgrounds.

Poor boys usually go to work at an early age. It is obvious that the individuals under investigation were generally not "poor"; and, few of them went to work early in life (Table 5A). The average age at going to work of 160 of the 180 individuals (for which information was available) was 19.2 years. The average age of 106 (of 119) in the *Social Directory* was 19.5 years; for the 57 (of 61) who were not listed, 18.6 years.

Only fifteen of the Rhode Island business leaders under study began work at age fifteen or younger (eight per cent); 65 of the 180 began work during the ages 16 to 18 (36 per cent), while a full 83 individuals (or 46 per cent of the entire group) started work at age 19 or over (Table 5B).

Of the eighty-three men who started working at 19 years or older, forty-two or about one half of this group delayed their business

debuts by going to college. (Seven other individuals went to college, but either they were graduated or dropped out before they reached 19.) When they did enter the business world, their average age was 22 years.

Very few of the Rhode Island business leaders had no education: there were only seven. The remaining 173 had either a public or private secondary school education: 79 went to public schools, while the remaining 94 were able to attend private schools. The most popular private schools for Rhode Islanders were Mowry and Goff's, the East Greenwich Academy, the University School, and the Friend's School (Moses Brown) (Table 6A).

Only 49 (or about 27 per cent) of the Rhode Island business leaders in this study went to college, and those who did go nearly always had an upper-class background. Only ten of the 49 had middle-class or farmer origins (Table 6B). Those who attended college, however, usually went to Brown (30 of the 49). Another 13 went to business colleges (such as Scholfield's or Bryant and Stratton), while a few attended Harvard (two), Yale (two), M.I.T. (one), and Boston University (one). Some of those who went to Brown belonged to a fraternity, among them Psi Upsilon (eight), Theta Delta Chi (two), and Zeta Psi (two).

When they did start to work, about one third of the Rhode Island business leaders were given employment by their fathers or relatives; a similar percentage remained in business with their fathers (or relatives) or in businesses that their fathers (or relatives) had founded. This was essentially an upper-class phenomenon; that is, most of those who were given their first jobs by their fathers or relatives and who were connected throughout their lives primarily with those businesses owned or founded by their fathers or relatives were overwhelmingly from the upper class. Of the 60 given their first employment by fathers or relatives, 54 had upper-class origins; of the 62 individuals who finally situated in their father's or relative's businesses, 55 had upper-class origins (Table 7).

Over half of the businessmen under study had connections with more than one business. Many were on bank boards, with insurance companies, and directors of other companies in the area (Table 8). Of the 180 men, 105 (or 58 per cent) were connected with more than one business, while the other 75 (or 42 per cent) were connected

with only one.

This was more prevalent among those listed in the *Social Directory* than those not listed. Of the 119 in the *Directory*, 80 (or 67 per cent) had more than one business connection, with the remaining 39 (or 33 per cent) associated with only one business; only 25 of the 61 not listed in the *Directory* (or 41 per cent) were connected with more than one business, with the remaining 36 (or 59 per cent) limited to just one. The average number of business connections for those in the *Social Directory* (including those who were associated with only one business) was 4.2; excluding those that had only one business, the average rises to 5.7. In other words, if a businessman were connected with more than one business, it was usually with more than five businesses. For those not in the *Directory*, the average including one business was 2.1; excluding one business, it was 3.8.

The typical Rhode Island businessman could claim Protestant, and often Episcopal or Congregational, religious backgrounds. Lack of information plays an important part in statistics on the religion of these businessmen: no information was available for one third of the men under study. Even with this serious handicap, certain trends can be found (Table 9). Forty-two of the individuals under study (about 25 per cent) were Episcopalians, belonging primarily to St. Stephen's or to Grace Church; the second largest group were the Congregationalists, 28 of 180 (or about 15 per cent), and they usually belonged to the Beneficent and Central Congregational churches.

The other denominations which constitute a percentage of significance were the Baptists (19 of the 180, or ten per cent), and the Unitarians (16 of 180, or nine per cent). These four religions constitute almost 60 per cent of the total. Occasionally there was a Methodist, a Christian Scientist, a few Quakers, and a Universalist. There were no Jews on the list and only one Roman Catholic, the "rubber baron" Joseph Banigan.

Rhode Island businessmen participated quite heavily in the political life of the state. They held public offices in local, state, and federal government, with these offices ranging from alderman to governor to U.S. senator. A total of 79 businessmen served in elected positions. While it is difficult to obtain statistics on the political affiliation of all of the 180 individuals under study, information was discovered for about 99 men. Of these 99, there were 90 Republicans and nine

Democrats (Table 10A). It would be fairly safe to assume, then, that most Rhode Island businessmen were Republicans. There was little difference in party affiliation between those in the *Social Directory* and those not in it. Percentagewise, there were equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats: of those in the *Directory*, 59 of 64 (with available information) were Republicans (92 per cent); of those not in the *Directory*, 31 of 35 (with available information) were also Republicans (90 per cent).

The most frequently held office on the local level was that of Common Council member (30); in addition to this, 49 different businessmen were, at one time or another, state representatives (Table 10B). Both those in the *Social Directory* and those not in it served in these two positions. Six governors of the state came from the ranks of these businessmen: none of those who served as governor was omitted from the *Social Directory* in 1902 since such an important elected official would have been immediately placed on the list, if, in fact, he had not been previously on it. The same is true for the two U.S. senators and the three who were U.S. representatives. One of the six lieutenant-governors of the state drawn from among these business leaders was not in the *Directory*, the reason probably being that he resided in Bristol (W. T. C. Wardwell). Both the socially registered and unregistered served as the mayors of Providence (three) and Pawtucket (one). Also at the local level, nine individuals served on their town school committees, while another fourteen were aldermen.

The greatest difference between those in the *Social Directory* and those not in it — with respect to politics — was mainly in the area of appointed political positions: of 23 nonelective officeholders, 19 were in the *Directory* and four were not. These offices consisted mainly of aides-to-governors (six), delegates to national conventions and presidential electors (seven), judges (three), U.S. circuit court judge (one), customs collector (one), and the various state commissioners of charity, health, police, parks, and parole (nine).

Another area in which the socially registered were separated from those not so registered were the private clubs. A few of the businessmen under study who were not in the 1902 *Social Directory* were, in fact, permitted to join several of these elite clubs; but the number is so small that they have been omitted, and only those businessmen in the *Directory* have been studied.

There were basically three different types of private clubs: (1) social clubs, (2) common interest clubs, and (3) sports clubs. The prominent Providence social clubs and the number of Rhode Island businessmen used in this study who belonged to them were: Hope (46), Central (25), Squantum (24), Pomham (16), West Side (ten), and Elmwood (eight). The well-known common interest clubs were the Art (28) and the University (15). The most heavily subscribed sports, outdoor, or athletic clubs were Agawam Hunt (21), Wannamoisett Golf (21), Rhode Island Yacht (17), Rhode Island Automobile Club (seven), and the Narragansett Boat Club (five). Eighty-seven of the 119 in the *Directory*, or about 73 per cent, joined such clubs. On the whole, most of those who did belong to such clubs, usually belonged to three. Many of these same people took an active part in the support of the Rhode Island School of Design (24) and The Rhode Island Historical Society (14). Only six not in the *Social Directory* gave such support to these two institutions.

Both those in the *Directory* and those not in it, however, contributed time and money to aid such charitable institutions as the Rhode Island Hospital, the Rhode Island Homeopathic Hospital, and Butler Hospital. The number of such societies is seemingly endless: R.I.S.P.C.A., the R.I.S.P.C. to Children, the Charitable Fuel Society, the various Home and Rescue Missions, and even the Pine Ridge Camp for Consumptives.

Most of the Rhode Island businessmen studied here lived in the Providence vicinity: 143 of the 180. By far, the most concentrated area was the East Side-College Hill section. Most of those who lived there (102) were in the *Social Directory* (85 of the 102). In addition to the East Side, a fair number of these business leaders lived in the Federal Hill and Elmwood sections of Providence. These sections were not primarily of a lower class, for most of the businessmen living there were in the *Social Directory*. Elmwood, however, was a more fashionable area than Federal Hill: only four of the ten in Federal Hill were in the *Social Directory*, while nine of the twelve living in Elmwood were so listed.

A number of those in the *Social Directory* had a second house, usually on the water for summer living. This was true of 29 of the 119 businessmen in the *Directory* (about 25 per cent). By far, the single most important group was at Warwick Neck (eight); there were

only four individuals who had houses at Newport. Five of those who summered at Warwick Neck were worth an average of \$124,760; three of the four at Newport showed real and personal estates worth an average of \$375,760, with the fourth individual the president of a company that paid the city of Providence \$28,929 on real and personal estates worth \$1,808,100. In other words, the truly wealthy owned summer houses at Newport; those still in the elite class, but somewhat lower on the tax rolls, spent their summers on Warwick Neck. The other summer houses were usually in Barrington, Bristol, Narragansett, and Watch Hill; one went to Martha's Vineyard and another to Jackson, New Hampshire.

* * *

Was the Rhode Island businessman of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century this "new man" he was supposed to be? All evidence points to an emphatic NO. Not an immigrant nor the son of one, the typical Rhode Island businessman was born in the north-eastern United States, usually Rhode Island, and could trace his ancestry back to English forebears who settled there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He was raised in an urban environment, in a middle- or upper-class household, completed at least a secondary school education, and sometimes attended college. He was a Protestant, probably Episcopal or Congregational. He did not start to work until he was past nineteen years of age, and then, it was usually in a business that was operated by a member of his family. By middle age, he had reached a position of prominence within the state. He was usually connected with more than one business; a Republican, he participated in the running of his community through elected and appointed positions; he belonged to several clubs, and took an active part in community affairs; he lived in the East Side-College Hill section of Providence, and, sometimes, owned a summer house at the shore.

TABLES

For the following tables: (Tables 1-10 inclusive)

- (1) total people studied = 180
- (2) no. in 1902 *Social Directory* = 119 (66 per cent of the total)
- (3) no. not in 1902 *Social Directory* = 61 (34 per cent of the total)
- (4) *SD* refers to those in the 1902 *Social Directory*
- (5) *NSD* refers to those not in the 1902 *Social Directory*

TABLE 1
Kind of Business in Relation to Social Standing

<i>Type of Business</i>	Social Standing				TOTAL	
	SD		NSD		(SD + NSD)	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Textiles	55	46	27	44	82	45
Manufacturing	20	17	8	13	28	16
Dealer-Merchant	20	17	18	30	38	22
Insurance-Real Estate-Finance	24	20	8	13	32	17
<i>Totals</i>	119	100	61	100	180	100

TABLE 2
Birthplace in Relation to Social Standing

<i>Birthplace</i>	Social Standing				TOTAL	
	SD		NSD		(SD + NSD)	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Rhode Island	82	69	45	74	127	70
Providence	49	41	12	20	61	34
Other Rhode Island	33	28	33	54	66	36
Outside Rhode Island ^a	30	25	12	20	42	23
Outside U.S.A.	4	3	2	3	6	4
No Information	3	3	2	3	5	3
<i>Totals</i>	119	100	61	100	180	100

^aThis includes all of those born outside of Rhode Island but in the U.S.A.

TABLE 3
Ancestry in Relation to Social Standing, and Country of Origin in Relation to Social Standing

<i>Ancestry (Table 3A)</i>	Social Standing				TOTAL	
	SD		NSD		(SD + NSD)	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Old New England Family	101	85	54	89	155	86
(To U.S. in Seventeenth- Eighteenth Centuries)						
"New" New England Family	8	7	2	3	10	6
(To U.S. in Nineteenth Century)						
No Information	10	8	5	8	15	8
<i>Totals</i>	119	100	61	100	180	100

<i>Country of Origin (Table 3B)</i>	Social Standing				TOTAL	
	SD		NSD		(SD + NSD)	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Country of Origin (Old N.E.)						
England (incl. 2 Ireland)	85	71	46	75	131	74
Other	6	5 ^a	1	2 ^b	7	3
Country of Origin (New N.E.)						
England (incl. Ireland)	6	5	1	2	7	3
Other	2	2 ^c	1	2 ^d	3	2
No Information	20	17	12	19	32	18
<i>Totals</i>	119	100	61	100	180	100

^aincl. 5 Scotland, 1 France.

^bincl. 1 Scotland.

^cincl. 1 Scotland, 1 Germany.

^dincl. 1 Germany.

TABLE 4
Father's Occupation (Class) in Relation to Social Standing of Rhode Island Businessman under Study

<i>Father's Occupation^a</i>	Social Standing		TOTAL
	SD	NSD	(SD + NSD)
Upper Class ^b	52	19	71
Middle Class ^c	17	7	24
Farmer	14	10	24
Lower Class ^d	9	4	13
<i>Totals</i>	92	40	132

^aIn terms of class.

^bUpper class is taken to include such occupations as textile manufacturer, insurance broker, founder of a company, physician, lawyer, financier.

^cMiddle class is taken to include such occupations as important textile worker, postmaster, druggist, grocery store owner, dry goods business (small).

^dLower class includes such occupations as carpenter, tanner, pewterer, laborer.

TABLE 5
Age Going to Work in Relation to Business and Social Standing, and Age Going to Work in Relation to Social Standing

<i>Business (Table 5A)</i>	Social Standing	
	SD	NSD
Textiles	20 years	18.4 years
Manufacturing	18.4 "	17.4 "
Dealer-Merchant	18.6 "	19.3 ^a "
Insurance-Real Estate-Finance	19.6 "	18.6 "

^aI have no ready explanation for this discrepancy between the SD and NSD in the Dealer-Merchant category: (1) no more percentagewise in the NSD went to college than those in the SD; (2) equal percentages were in their father's or relative's businesses, so it cannot be said that those in the SD started work earlier because of that; and (3) it does not have anything to do with lack of information. It is just something that cannot be explained.

Age (Table 5B)	Social Standing		TOTAL (SD + NSD)
	SD	NSD	
15 or under	9	6	15
15 to 18	40	25	65
19 or over	57	26	83

Average age at going to work of all = 19.2 years.

Average age at going to work of those in SD = 19.5 years.

Average age at going to work of those in NSD = 18.6 years.

TABLE 6

Education in Relation to Social Standing, and Education in Relation to Class Background (Father's Occupation)

Type of Education (Table 6A)	Social Standing		TOTAL (SD + NSD)
	SD	NSD	
None	1	6	7
Public Secondary	52	27	79
Private Secondary	66	28	94
Total Secondary	118	55	173
College			
Brown	24	6	30
Other Colleges	8	11	19
Total to College	32	17	49
Total not to College	87	44	131
	(119)	(61)	(180)

Number Going to College

Class Background (Father's Occupation) Table 6B

Upper Class	39
Middle Class	8
Farmer	2
Lower Class	0
Total	49

TABLE 7

Class Background in Relation to Source of First Job, and Class Background in Relation to Occupation in Family-owned-or-Founded Business

Class Background (Father's Occupation)	First Job	Occupation in
	with Father or Relative	Father's or Relative's Business
Upper Class	54	55
Middle Class	3	4
Farmer	2	3
Lower Class	1	0
Totals	60	62

TABLE 8

Business Connections (Number of "Interlocking Directorates" and Social Standing

No. of Business Connections (B-C)	Social Standing		TOTAL (SD + NSD)
	SD	NSD	
No. of people	119 (100%)	61 (100%)	180 (100%)
No. having more than 1 B-C	80 (67%)	25 (41%)	105 (58%)
No. having only 1 B-C	39 (33%)	36 (59%)	75 (42%)
Avg. No. of B-C (incl. those with only 1 B-C)	4.2	2.1	3.0
Avg. No. of B-C (excl. those with only 1 B-C)	5.7	3.8	4.0
Median	3	1	2

TABLE 9

Religion and Social Standing

Religion	SD	NSD	TOTAL (SD + NSD)
Episcopal	25	17	42
Congregational	21	7	28
Unitarian	11	5	16
Baptist	10	9	19
Methodist	1	0	1
Catholic	1	0	1
Other Protestant	9	4	13
Jewish	0	0	0
Totals	78	42	120

TABLE 10

Political Affiliation in Relation to Social Standing, and Elected Office-holding in Relation to Social Standing

Party Affiliation (Table 10A)	Social Standing		TOTAL (SD + NSD)
	SD	NSD	
Republican	59	31	90
Democrat	5	4	9
Totals	64	35	99

Elected Offices (Table 10B)	Social Standing		TOTAL (SD + NSD)
	SD	NSD	
Governor	6	0	6
Lieutenant-Governor	5	1	6
U.S. Senator	2	0	2
U.S. Representative	3	0	3
State Representative	31	18	49
Attorney General	0	1	1
Mayor	2	2	4
Common Council	18	12	30
Alderman	8	6	14
School Committee	4	5	9
Totals	79	45	124

TABLE 11

List of Individuals Used in This Study

An asterisk (*) refers to those in the *Social Directory* in 1902.

(T) stands for those in Textiles (all aspects of Textiles).

(M) " " " " Manufacturing (excl. Textiles).

(D-M) " " " " Dealer-Merchant.

(I) " " " " Insurance-Real Estate-Finance.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| *Aldrich, Nelson W. (I) | *Chace, Jonathan (T) |
| Almy, Darwin (M) | *Child, Charles H. (T) |
| *Ames, William (T) | *Church, Henry A. (M) |
| *Andrews, Clarence C. (D-M) | Clark, Henry C. (D-M) |
| *Angell, Edwin G. (M) | *Colt, L. B. B. (I) |
| Anthony, Frederick E. (M) | Colt, Samuel P. (M) |
| *Arnold, Benjamin F. (D-M) | Comstock, Andrew (D-M) |
| *Arnold, Christopher B. (T) | *Comstock, Louis H. (D-M) |
| *Arnold, Frederick W. (I) | Conant, Hezekiah (T) |
| *Arnold, Newton D. (M) | *Cooke, Henry W. (I) |
| Babbitt, Edward S. (I) | *Davis, Jeffrey (T) |
| Baker, Nathan H. (T) | Davis, Wm. D. (T) |
| Ballou, F. A. (M) | *Daval, Joseph (M) |
| *Banigan, Joseph (M) | *Deming, Richard H. (T) |
| *Barstow, A. C., Jr. (M) | *Dennis, Arthur W. (T) |
| Barstow, Geo. E. (T) | *Dexter, Edgar M. (I) |
| *Bates, Isaac M. (D-M) | *Dunnell, Wm. Wanton (T) |
| Bowen, Amos M. (I) | *Dyer, Elisha (I) |
| *Bradley, Charles (I) | *Eaton, Amasa M. (I) |
| *Brown, D. Russell (T) | *Eddy, Charles F. (T) |
| *Brown, Frank Hail (T) | *Eldredge, Henry P. (D-M) |
| *Brown, H. Martin (T) | Farnum, Herbert R. (T) |
| *Brownell, Stephen (T) | Farnsworth, John P. (T) |
| *Bucklin, Edward C. (T) | *Fenner, Herbert N. (T) |
| Bugbee, James H. (D-M) | *Fletcher, Charles (T) |
| *Burgess, Edwin A. (T) | *Foster, J. Herbert (T) |
| Bush, Charles S. (D-M) | Foster, Samuel (T) |
| Calder, Albert L. (D-M) | Foster, Samuel J. (D-M) |
| *Calder, Albert L. 2d (T) | Fuller, George A. (T) |
| *Calder, George B. (D-M) | *Gardner, Rathbone (I) |
| *Campbell, John P. (T) | *Goff, Isaac L. (I) |
| Carpenter, Charles E. (D-M) | Goff, Lyman B. (T) |
| *Chace, Arnold B. (T) | Goodwin, A. K. (D-M) |
| *Chace, James H. (T) | Gowdey, Wm. B. (T) |

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| *Granger, Wm. S. (M) | *Lippitt, R. Lincoln (T) |
| *Grant, George H. (T) | Lister, J., Jr. (T) |
| *Greene, Edward A. (T) | *Little, Robert B. (D-M) |
| Greene, Wm. C. (M) | Littlefield, Geo. L. (T) |
| *Gross, Harold J. (I) | Martin, Joseph W. (D-M) |
| *Gross, J. Mason (M) | *McAuslan, George R. (T) |
| *Grosvenor, William (T) | *Merriman, Chas. H. (T) |
| Hall, Wm. H. (I) | *Metcalf, Alfred (T) |
| *Harrington, Charles C. (I) | *Metcalf, Jesse (T) |
| Harrington, R. A. (D-M) | *Metcalf, Stephen O. (T) |
| Harris, Charles E. (D-M) | *Nicholson, Samuel M. (M) |
| Hawkins, Amos M. (M) | *Northam, Robert E. (I) |
| Hayward, Wm. S. (D-M) | Nugent, C. Franklin (I) |
| *Hazard, Jeffrey (T) | *Olney, Charles P. (D-M) |
| *Hazard, Lauriston H. (T) | *Olney, Frank F. (T) |
| *Hazard, Rowland (T) | *Ormsbee, John H. (D-M) |
| *Hidden, Charles (T) | Paige, Henry (D-M) |
| Hidden, Henry A. (T) | *Palmer, John S. (M) |
| *Hidden, Walter (T) | *Pearce, Edward D. (I) |
| *Hidden, Wilkins U. (T) | *Peck, Leander R. (T) |
| Hoffman, Wm. H. (D-M) | *Peckham, F. H., Jr. (I) |
| *Hopkins, Edwin W. (T) | *Peirce, J. Lewis (D-M) |
| *Horton, Albert (T) | Peirce, William C. (M) |
| *Horton, Bertrand I. (T) | *Perkins, Charles H. (M) |
| *Howard, Charles T. (I) | *Perkins, Frederick E. (M) |
| *Howard, Elisha H. (T) | *Perry, Marsden (I) |
| *Huntoon, Harrison B. (M) | Phetteplace, James F. (T) |
| Inman, Olney T. (T) | *Phillips, Eugene F. (M) |
| *Jackson, Benjamin (I) | *Phillips, Gilbert A. (I) |
| *Jackson, Daniel (T) | Pierce, George L. (D-M) |
| Jenks, Stephen A. (T) | *Place, William H. (M) |
| Joslin, H. V. A. (I) | *Platt, E. P. (M) |
| Joslin, William E. (T) | *Pomroy, Gorham P. (D-M) |
| *Kelly, Arthur L. (T) | *Pope, William H. (T) |
| *Kelly, John B. (T) | Potter, Frank K. (D-M) |
| Kendall, Hiram (I) | *Potter, Isaac M. (M) |
| *Kenvon, James S. (D-M) | Ralph, Allen B. (D-M) |
| *Kimball, Charles D. (D-M) | *Rice, Herbert W. (D-M) |
| Kimball, James M. (T) | Rodman, Robert (T) |
| Kirby, Henry A. (M) | Rodman, Albert (T) |
| Knight, B. B. (T) | Rodman, Walter (T) |
| *Knight, Robert (T) | *Sack, A. Albert (T) |
| *Knight, Webster (T) | *Shepard, John, Jr. (D-M) |
| *Ladd, Herbert W. (M) | *Shepley, George L. (I) |
| *Lippitt, Charles Warren (T) | *Sisson, Charles (T) |

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Slater, Alpheus B. (D-M) | *Tillinghast, Albert H. (T) |
| Smith, Albert W. (T) | Tillinghast, George E. (T) |
| *Smith, Amos D. (T) | *Tillinghast, James E. (I) |
| *Smith, Edwin A. (I) | *Treat, Robert B. (T) |
| Smith, Henry E. (T) | *Tucker, James (D-M) |
| Sweet, Jesse B. (D-M) | Wall, Beriah (I) |
| *Taft, Royal C. (T) | Wardwell, W. T. C. (D-M) |
| *Talbot, Frederick (D-M) | Waterman, John (T) |
| *Tanner, Charles S. (D-M) | *Westcott, Oren (I) |
| *Thompson, D. M. (M) | *Wilkinson, Henry W. (M) |
| *Thurber, William H. (D-M) | *Woods, J. C. B. (I) |

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A RHODE ISLAND HONEYMOON
IN THE WESTERN COUNTRY

transcribed by NOEL P. CONLON

The dedication of the Zachariah Allen Room in John Brown House on March 10, 1966, and Mr. Norris G. Abbott, Jr.'s lecture, "Zachariah Allen — Citizen of Providence," delivered before members and friends of the Society on March 12, 1967, have lately focused attention on this distinguished Rhode Islander. In the following letter to his brother-in-law, post-marked Lexington, Ky., June 20, 1817, and received in Providence July 9, 1817, Zachariah Allen continues, in the eighty-fifth year after his death, to make some contribution to the history of his state.

Paris June 20th 1817, (Kentucky)

Dear Sir

As you¹ will probably feel a little interest in learning where we are in the Western Country, I have availed myself of an opportunity afforded me by Mr Corlis² table to give you official information. Harriet³ has already directed to you several letters, and wishes me to threaten you with another soon, and a scolding one too, if she does not find some letters in Lexington on her arrival — Mr Corlis & family we found well they seemed quite confounded at our appearance before his door, & appeared hardly able to realise that it was us, He in turn enjoyed the surprise of the family on our entering the room — He has an excellent farm capable of producing seventy five bushels of Corn per acre — By the side of his log house he has erected a handsome two story brick house, the two principal materials of which, the brick and lime, he procures from the very cellar — The country around him is well settled with agreeable neighbours — The farms command here from twenty five to thirty dls per acre — & with tolerable cultivation at the present high prices of grain will clear themselves in three years — The forests are particularly beautiful — there is no brushwood in them, & the massy trunks of the trees seem to elevate themselves from the green sod like huge pillars to support the dense foliage above — We had a pleasant ride over the mountains on horseback, a mode of travelling recommended to us by Mr

Gilman. Harriet is delighted with it, & paces off forty three or four miles with less fatigue than in riding the same distance in a carriage. The roads we have passed are too stony & rough for wheels, & indeed are hardly tolerable on horseback in many places — & our ride was rendered much pleasanter by our joining a lady & couple of gentlemen returning home from Philadelphia to Kentucky — We took a boat together at Pittsburg & arrived at Limestone after the short passage of Six days, a distance by water of about 500 miles. We were invited to one of their houses to take some cherries — They have here only the sour common Morilla cherry. The fine heart cherries are never seen here as the soil is not favourable, You may in this respect congratulate poor Providence for its fertile soil. We have had several invitations to dine from those who have been travelling with us — Their hospitality can be afforded so cheap & with so little trouble that I believe invitations with them are not quite such formidable things as with us — In the taverns the tables are loaded with provisions sufficient for three times the number of guests — In the market a chicken costs only 8 or 10 cts, a turkey 40 or fifty, & a pig for roasting 33 cts — at what are considered the present high prices — A common labourer has 75 cts per day & found — by the year from 80 to 100 dls — I have seen several mechanics from Providence on this side of the mountains who are full of complaints — they say they cannot make but a trifle more per day than at home — But I think they do not consider that the same sum here would support them almost as long again as in N. England — We landed a short time at Marietta on our descending the Ohio — It has the appearance of a miserable dull place, the houses going to decay, a meeting house with unhinged doors & broken windows, & the inhabitants moving like shadows on a dial plate. To complete the ruin of this place, the freshes of the Ohio rise four or five feet over the bank or plain on which it is built. A shop keeper pointed out to me a line five or six inches higher than his counter stained by the water on the wall. Mr Corlis & family desire their respects may be transmitted, excepting Miss Mary⁴ who sends her love — Harriet is just preparing herself for paying a visit to a neighbour nine miles distant who has called upon her. About the middle of August I think we shall make our appearance. Untill then I remain sincerely

Yours —

Z. Allen⁵

Zachariah was going to give my love but I concluded that I had rather do it myself by adding two or three lines — I long to hear from you. Do remember me affectionately to all the family — we shall stay here until Sunday when I hope to get some letters in Lexington — farewell dear brother — believe me your sincerely attached Sister — Harriet.

Have the goodness to remember me to my friends in P. Tell Richard⁶ we stopped at a house on the mountains where we had a salmon trout for dinner weighing three lbs, and where they sold them by the pail full. — This may be interesting intelligence also to Crawford⁷ — Tobacco has sold at five dls — considered as the highest price this season.

¹SAMUEL GREENE ARNOLD, A.B., A.M. Trustee Brown University 1800-26. Merchant Providence, R.I.; b. Providence, R.I., Jan. 20, 1778; d. Providence, Feb. 19, 1826. *Historical Catalogue of Brown University 1764-1914* (Providence, 1914), p. 64.

WELCOME ARNOLD (Jonathan) m. Feb. 11, 1773, Patience, daughter of Capt. Samuel Greene, of Warwick, R.I. They had fourteen children of whom four only reached maturity, as follows:

MARY ARNOLD, b. April 19, 1774; d. Feb. 16 (18), 1851.

SAMUEL G. ARNOLD, b. Jan. 20, 1778; d. Feb. 19, 1826.

ELIZABETH HARRIET ARNOLD, b. Oct. 5, 1796; d. August 30, 1873.

RICHARD J. ARNOLD, b. Oct. 5, 1796; d. Mar. 10, 1873.

William Waterman Chapin, *Genealogy of the Family of Jonathan Arnold of Smithfield, R.I.*, p. 5. Typewritten ms. in R.I.H.S. Library. See also Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, second edition, Vol. II (New York, Appleton, 1874), pp. 312, 319.

²The Kentucky papers announce the decease, on the 21st of June, of JOHN CORLIS, ESQ., aged 72 years. This gentleman, it will be recalled by many, was for a long course of years one of the most distinguished citizens of Providence. He was extensively engaged in foreign commerce, and for a time, his enterprise, industry and sagacity were crowned with ample success. His acknowledged skill as a merchant could not, however, exempt him from the calamitous vicissitudes of trade. After a reverse in his fortunes, he, in the year 1815, removed with his family to the State of Kentucky where he lived universally respected, and where he has just closed his long and chequered life. His various trials, painful though they must have been to his sensibilities, he sustained with true dignity — never indulging in fruitless murmurs, and never lapsing into unmanly dejection. These trials were not without their alleviations — among the chief of which Mr. Corlis was privileged to reckon the unforfeited confidence, and the hearty good will of his fellow citizens.

He occasionally visited his native city — the theatre of his former activities, enjoyments and distinctions; and it is only a few months ago, that he left this, his unforgotten home, with the melancholy pressage, in which too his friends shared, that he left it for the last time. The pressage has been accomplished. His changeful existence upon the earth is ended — an existence once full of pros-

perous fortune, but in its latter stages, clouded by those sad experiences which so impressively teach us what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue. *G. Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal*, Providence, July 15, 1839, p. 4.

³ARNOLD, ELIZA HARRIET, youngest daughter of Welcome, Esq., and Zachariah Allen, both of this town, by Rev. Dr. Crocker, at St. John's Church, April 29, 1817. James N. Arnold, *Providence Gazette Marriages 1762-1825*, p. 486.

⁴MARY ANN CORLIS, third child of John and Susan Condy (Russell) Corlis, b. Dec. 3, 1794. She married Charles Bradford and had a son, William Russell Bradford, b. May 29, 1818. The other Corlis children were:

GEORGE WILLIAM CORLIS, b. Dec. 22, 1790.
JOSEPH RUSSELL CORLIS, b. Nov. 5, 1792.
JOHN CORLIS, JUN'R, b. Mar. 5, 1797.
CHARLES RUSSELL CORLIS, b. Nov. 17, 1800.
SUSAN CONDY CORLIS, b. Dec. 15, 1803.
ELIZA BOWEN CORLIS, b. Nov. 15, 1805.
HANNAH HAYLEY CORLIS, b. Sept. 15, 1808.
FRANCIS LOUISA CORLIS, b. Oct. 8, 1810.

Of this family, now scattered through the West, we possess no further record. John Russell Bartlett, *Genealogy of That Branch of the Russell Family Which Comprises the Descendants of John Russell, of Woburn, Massachusetts, 1640-1878* (Providence, 1879).

⁵ZACHARIAH ALLEN, A.B.; A.M.; LL.D. 1851. Trustee Brown University 1826-82. Admitted to bar 1815; lawyer Providence, Rhode Island, 1815-22; cotton manufacturer Providence 1822-82; member town council, Providence; member Rhode Island Historical Society 1822-82, president 1880-82; one of founders Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, 1824; Providence Athenaeum; Butler Hospital for the Insane; Free Public Library; president Providence Association of Manufacturers and Mechanics. Author *Practical Mechanics*, 1829; *Practical Tourist*, 1832; *Philosophy of the Mechanics in Nature*, 1851; *Bi-centenary of the Burning of Providence in 1676: Defence of the R. I. System of Treatment of the Indians and of Civil and Religious Liberty*, 1876; *Solar Light and Heat*, 1879; also several articles in scientific magazines. Phi Beta Kappa; b. Providence, R.I., Sept. 15, 1795; d. Providence, March 17, 1882. *Historical Catalogue of Brown University 1764-1914*, p. 88. See also Chapin, *op. cit.*, p. 24; *Biographical Cyclopaedia of Representative Men of Rhode Island*, Providence, 1881, pp. 259-261; *Providence Journal*, March 11, 1966, p. 13; *President's Letter . . . Rhode Island Historical Society*, Vol. 1, No. 10, April 1966, p. 3.

⁶RICHARD JAMES ARNOLD, A.B., A.M. Trustee Brown University 1826-73. Merchant Providence, R.I., 1814-23; rice and cotton planter, Bryan County, Ga., 1823-61; resident Providence 1861-73; charter member Rhode Island Historical Society; trustee 1836-41; member Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry; Phi Beta Kappa; b. Providence, R.I., Oct. 5, 1796; d. Providence, March 10, 1873. *Historical Catalogue of Brown University 1764-1914*, p. 90.

⁷Probably CRAWFORD ALLEN, A.B.; A.M. Merchant, cotton manufacturer, Providence, Rhode Island; b. Providence, R.I., March 27, 1799; d. Providence, April 22, 1872. *Historical Catalogue of Brown University 1764-1914*, p. 93.

CASTIGLIONI'S VISIT TO RHODE ISLAND

translated and annotated by SAMUEL HOUGH

John Carter Brown Library

COUNT LUIGI CASTIGLIONI, born in Milan in 1756, a graduate in botany of the University of Pavia, arrived in Boston on May 17, 1785. He spent the next two years in a systematic trip through the United States and Canada. Convinced that "the revolution accomplished in these last years in North America is one of the most memorable events of this century, and may, in time, produce important consequences in Europe," this young man set about to observe not only the vegetation of America, but its politics, its economics, and its mores.¹

The record of these observations were published in a two-volume book, printed at Milan in 1790: *Viaggio negli Stati Uniti dell'America Settentrionale fatto negli anni, 1785, 1786 e 1787 . . . con alcune osservazioni sui vegetabili piu utili de quel paese*. (Travels in the United States of North America made in the years, 1785, 1786 and 1787 . . . with some observations on the most useful plants of that country.) The first volume of the book was translated into German, but other than that, the text has previously been available only in the original Italian.

From Boston Castiglioni went through New Hampshire and Vermont to Lake Champlain and Montreal and then south to New York. On his next trip he went to Georgia and then up through the South to Pennsylvania. This is all recounted in the first volume. The second volume contains material on Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey and a trip through Connecticut where he stopped at New Haven and Hartford and where he made some curious observations on bundling and the sexual freedom of young American girls.

These chapters on Rhode Island are the last which describe individual states, for he goes on to write of the Federal Government; the bulk of the volume is on botany. Although his information is not always accurate and his sources not always clear, Castiglioni's account

¹This information is drawn from an article by Dr. Antonio Pace, "The American Philosophical Society and Italy," in the *Proceedings* of the American Philosophical Society, v. 90, n. 5 (December 27, 1946), pp. 392-97. Dr. Pace announced his intention of publishing a translation of the *Viaggio*, at that time; an intention which, according to a letter of November 29, 1966, he hopes to fulfill. All interested in American and Italian culture wish him well.

is probably as full of information on the state as that of any foreign observer of the late eighteenth century.

I have translated the text without deletion. My intention was to present the text in such a way that the English reader would capture some of the sensations that the Italian reader might feel from the words and the way those words are formed into sentences. Sentences are allowed to run on, and the syntax often remains awkward. However, some superfluous commas have been removed, and a few obscure passages clarified. In translating proper names words like *Deadham*, *Massachuset*, *Gulf of Narraganset* have been left in the spelling and form that appears in Italian as having a valid and distinct flavor, but I have translated *Nuova Inghilterra* into *New England* as this would be more easily understood.

Castiglioni explains in his account of Massachusetts that he uses the word *selvaggi* rather than *aborigini* (though he slips and uses *primitivi* once). Here *Indian* is used perpetuating a mistake the Count wished to avoid, but which eliminates the problem of translating *selvaggi*, which would be awkward.

Castiglioni's notes are designated by letters; mine are numbered.

I wish to thank Mr. Paul Richards, who helped me avoid mistakes of language; Messrs. Bradford Swan, Frank Coyle, and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, who guided me to sources of Rhode Island history; Mr. Glenn Skillin, who called the work to my attention; Mr. Thomas R. Adams, who encouraged the effort, and the Brown family, past and present, whose generosity granted hospitality to Castiglioni and provided me with the books and the library in which to work.

Voyage in the State of Rhode Island

From the border of Connecticut through Worcester and Sudbury, I came in two days to Boston, and from there, having passed through the towns of Roxbury, Deadham, Walpole, and Attleborough, I arrived in good time at Rehoboth, a little village worthy of consideration because of some ingenious water works that are found there. It is situated, this village, in a valley at the source of the Pawtucket river, which forms some falls there and which determines the border between Massachuset and the State of Rhode-Island.

The city of Providence a little way from Rehoboth is located at 41° 49' latitude and was founded in 1635 by a certain Roger Williams,

in a place previously called Moshawsih by the Indians. Never thinking that the new settlement could become in time a commercial city, he built a number of houses at the edge of the river in a location little suited for commerce, as large ships could not come near there because of the shallow water. That notwithstanding, the population having grown, it became a commercial center of distinction, contesting with Newport for the title of Capitol of the State. The oldest part of the city is that on the east bank of the Providence river which divides the city. This section extends from the city for about a mile, from north to south on the slopes of a pleasant hill, and on the east side of the opposite rise are various houses, which one reaches by way of a wooden bridge,¹ and a large embankment built on the low ground that was formerly flooded by the river. The streets are tortuous, and rough and the best of these which runs along the river is the only one paved. The town hall,² the Baptist Church and the College (a rather large structure located to the east on the summit of the hill) are the buildings most worthy of observation.

The inhabitants trade in building lumber, cordage, whale oil and spermaceti candles, but this profitable commerce, that greatly flourished in former times, was rather damaged by the war, and much more at present with the new issue of credit notes, has rapidly dropped two-thirds in value, and produced great difficulty among the merchants. The women enjoy, with those of Newport, the reputation of being among the most beautiful in America, but are subject to losing their teeth early, like those of Boston, and die easily in youth of consumption. This terrible disease has become more common during the last few years in these parts, and it seems indubitable that in many cases it is communicated from one to another individual of the same family. Despite the slaughter that this disease causes annually, the fair sex is so numerous that one counts about seven marriageable young girls for each young man,³ and this proportion originated from the great number of men employed in sailing, and those who, to

¹Weybosset bridge, first built in 1711-14. In 1744 a £15,000 appropriation was passed by the Rhode Island Assembly for the bridge and embankment. cf. Samuel G. Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island* (N.Y., 1860), v. 2, pp. 43, 143, 232, 243.

²This is the old State House on North Main Street built in 1762.

³According to the 1782 state census there were 205 males between age 16 and 22 and 293 females of the same age. cf. William R. Staples, *Annals of Providence* (Providence, 1843), p. 292.

support themselves, go to live in Virginia and other southern states.

The climate of Providence differs little from that of Boston, unless the cold is less intense in the winter, and the heat more stifling in the summer, for being situated, this city, among high and sandy hills. The land of the vicinity is almost sterile, but nevertheless the city is provided with meat and poultry in abundance which come from the Gulf of Narraganset, and from settlements even further away. Water fowl and fish from the sea are plentiful and they commonly drink Cider as in nearby Massachusset.

Seven miles distance from Providence towards the west there is a rich iron mine, belonging to Mr. Brown, located in a deep hollow surrounded by little hillocks on which one sees nothing but a few young shoots of western plane-trees.⁴ The land is sandy covered with large bolders on the surface, and to some depth mixed with loam, under which one finds the mines. They have dug here a deep shaft, near to which there is a steam pump to extract water. This machine was built by the brother of its present possessor with the knowledge he had obtained from books about similar machines built in Europe, making a number of changes to adapt, with great ingenuity, to the circumstances of this country. For example, the container of the boiling water and the tube in which piston moves, are all of wood, and the furnace is made of a solid chamber of iron, ending in a conduit of the same metal; that revolves in the wooden container at some distance from the sides to reduce the danger of starting a fire. With the force of this machine the ingenious inventor imagined that he could extract minerals from the shaft, but it resulted for this operation in great loss of time, and as it could damage the not too sturdy shaft with its movement and the jolting of its wheels, it is no longer used. The ore removed from the shaft is very rich until the depth of seventy feet, but here it becomes scale and of inferior quality, other shafts have been dug some distance from the first, which already furnish better iron. The richness of this mine is such that it gives fifty percent iron on the first fusion. At times this is united with ocre,⁵ and other

⁴Hematites niger cum ochra ferri.

⁴The Cranston ore bogs were owned, primarily, by John Brown, 1736-1803. They were first dug in 1765 and supplied ore for the Hope Furnace. Joseph Brown, 1733-1785, built the steam pump. For a more detailed contemporary description of the steam pump, by Manasseh Cutler, cf. James Hedges, *The Browns of Providence Plantations* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 278.

times is a pretty, bright, black,⁶ it is also found mixed with little pieces of lead.⁷

The morning of September 18, I continued the voyage to the direction of Newport, accepting the gracious offer of Mr. [John] Brown to carry me in his carriage as far as the village of Bristol. Towards eleven in the morning we left Providence, and passing the Seakonk river, we found ourselves in the state of Massachusset. We saw then the two towns of Rehoboth and Barrington, and crossed the Warren river near a village of the same name, arriving at the Peninsular on which Bristol is situated. This peninsula, surrounded on the east by Mount Hope Bay and to the west by Providence Bay is divided down the middle by another small inlet, called Bristol Bay, forming almost two tongues of land, one to the west, that is called by its Indian name Papa-Squash, and contains various plantations, and the other to the east, where Bristol is located. This little city was founded as an English colony in the period that the first settlements in the Gulf of Narraganset were formed, and was in former times fairly commercial, but as the land around it being not very fertile, and its situation less advantageous than that of Newport, it lost its former luster, and is nothing more than a small and poor village.

Mount Hope Bay which, like the others named above, forms part of the Gulf of Narraganset, taking its name from a mountain situated to the east of Bristol, where the colonists killed the last Sachem of the Narraganset Indians, and Papa-Squash Point, or Popa-Squash Point, named thus from Popa, child, and Squash, woman, being the place which formerly the Indian children and women took refuge in time of war.

From Bristol we toured about in the bay and in the evening went to the Point Pleasant estate belonging to Mr. Brown.⁸ The winds the next day were very strong, and contrary to our way, and the day was rather rainy, for this reason it was determined to stay, entertaining

⁶Hematites niger radiatus.

⁷Galena Plumbi. This mineral was studied only a few years ago by the learned Swiss mineralogist Barone d'Harmelin.

⁸On the quality of the ore cf. Hedges, *op. cit.*, p. 124, and John L. Bishop, *A History of American Manufacturers from 1608 to 1860* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1864), v. 1, p. 503.

⁸For this estate cf. Howard W. Preston, "Point Pleasant, William Vassall's confiscated estate," in *Rhode Island Historical Society, Collections*, vol. xviii, no. 1, January, 1925.

ourselves the rest of the day by fishing, in the intervals when the rain ceased. Besides various little fish that are well known, we caught one rather curious species that goes by the name of Toad-fish. This fish is white, speckled and striped in brown. Its figure is oblong as long as it stays in water, but as soon as it is placed on land it begins to inflate so that in a few minutes it becomes perfectly round, and continually breathing air with its mouth, it produces a disgusting snort. One of these fish caught by us, reached a prodigious fulness, being hit with a rock, burst with a bang like an inflated bladder and was then inadvertently thrown into the sea. A little time later we caught another smaller one of the same species, which equally as the first ballooned, but we threw this one, without examining it, back into the water, at the touch of which it shot the air from its mouth, and restored to its former shape, swam precipitously towards the bottom and disappeared. This phenomenon is common in the genus of this fish, called *Orbis* by the antique Romans because of their round figures and pig fish by some Italians because of the strong grunt that they produce in the rapid breath of air in the narrow fissure of the gills, as Rondelezio says.⁸ Although because of the carelessness of my companions I could not examine it diligently, I believe that the fish that we caught was that species called *Texrondon testudimeus* by Linneus, that one finds in the seas of the East Indies and of America.⁹

The morning of the twentieth in a little sail boat we descended Bristol Bay, and leaving to the east the little island called Hog's Island, we crossed the channel that divides Papa-Squash point from Prudence Island. The water of the channel being much rougher and the wind blowing harder, my companions feared that, following a trip down to Newport, the sea would become too rough for their return, and so we went over to Prudence Island and going ashore climbed a hill on which there is located another estate of Mr. Brown,⁷ from which one enjoys a very pleasant view of the island and of the mainland that form the Gulf of Narraganset; here as it happened we found a large sailing ship, on which in less than two hours we were

⁸*Gulielmi Rondeletii de Piscibus*, Lib. 15, cap. 7 *De Orthogorisco, sive Luna Pisce*, Lugd. 1554, p. 424.

⁹*Systema Natura Linnei, and Amanit. Academ.*, Vol. I, p. 309, tab. 14, fig. 3.

⁷This was the Wanton farm confiscated from the last royalist governor of Rhode Island, Joseph Wanton. John Brown bought it from the state in 1781. cf. Charles G. Maytum, *Paragraphs on early Prudence Island* (Providence, 1964), p. 101.

taken to Newport. This city is located at 41° 29' latitude in a lovely inlet of the sea, near the southernmost point in Rhode Island, on the slope of a hill, having narrow streets, but smooth and paved and the houses are nearly all wood and decrepit. The town hall is not yet finished⁸ and the Churches of the various sects are not very attractive. The inhabitants although rather poor because of the great losses suffered in the war, are notwithstanding very hospitable, and the women are devoted to imitate European luxury. The climate of this city is very temperate and is considered one of the most healthy in North America because the sea air makes the cold less severe and tempers the heat of summer for which reason gentlemen of the Carolinas and of other southern states and the ill come to pass the hot season at Newport. This is the home of Nathaniel Green, of whom I have already spoken in the voyage in Georgia⁹ and it could boast another illustrious soldier in Benedict Arnold, if he had not sullied the fame earned by his courage, by being a traitor to his country and trying to hand over to the English Washington himself. Arnold is of one of the oldest families of the state of Rhode Island and did a profitable trade in livestock before the war. After his treason he went to England from where, perhaps also because of the little regard he was held there, he came to live in Nova Scotia, where it is said, he has again taken up his old trade.

Monday, September 25th, I returned from Newport to Providence, and then made the trip to Boston, from where I took my course to Portsmouth, and from there I returned to New York. I passed the following winter partly in this last city and partly in Philadelphia,

⁸The state house, now called Old Colony House, was built in 1739, but used as a barracks by the English and a hospital by the French. "It was so damaged that in 1781 the courts and assembly had to meet in the synagogue. In 1784, Joseph Nightingale, Esck Hopkins, and Daniel Mason [were] appointed to report repairs needed." Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent Scully, Jr., *Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 56.

⁹Nathanael Greene. Castiglioni had written: "... I left for Malborough-Grove [i.e., Mulberry Grove] [on the 25th day of March, 1786] owned by General Greene on the banks of the same river [the Savannah]. This superb American commander distinguished himself in the southern states by conserving his small army against the English troops which were very much superior in numbers and in discipline. He is a native of Rhode-Island and came to Georgia in the autumn of 1785 to settle on this vast property awarded to him by the State of Georgia in compensation for his important services. (a) In June of 1786 he died of the disease called sun-stroke — *Viaggio*, vol. 1, p. 240. At vol. 1, p. 283 his role at Ninety-six is described."

until spring came, then I left May 16, 1787 from New York for Europe on a newly constructed Spanish brigantine called *Galveztown* which, after twenty-eight days of happy navigation, entered the Spanish port of Corunna.

On the Former and Present State of Rhode Island

The ancient inhabitants of this land were the Narraganset Indians, who were divided into various tribes and who subsisted for the most part on fish. Their number and their unity made them for a long time formidable to the first European immigrants, until little by little, as occurred in the other settlements, they became diminished, so that some years after there no longer existed Indians of this, in other times, powerful nation. The first English settlement occurred in the year 1635 in the following manner: Roger Williams, minister of the Church of Plymouth, had disseminated many new dogmas, but these not being well received, he thought to change his residence, and took himself to Salem, where for sometime he had been wanted as minister. The Magistrates were opposed to this, knowing the love of novelty of his character, but the people insisted, despite the opposition of the Magistrates, upon his selection to this honorable seat. For only a short time, however, were those people happy in their choice, inasmuch as he urged that the Church of Salem, the only one he believed to be orthodox, separate itself from the Churches of England and of the others of America, the people not wanting to consent to this novelty, he scornfully left the Church of Salem, in fact, he also left his wife because she attended the above named Church. Despite all these disturbances the Governor would not have been induced to be involved in the affair, if Williams had not persuaded a high official to cut the cross from the colors of the King as a sign of anti-christian supersition.¹⁰ The soldiers, angered to see their flags mutilated in this way, no longer wished to assemble for military exercises, and so many disputes were born for this single reason, that the Governor, after

¹⁰Williams believed that the red cross contained in the canton of the English colonial flag was blasphemous. He convinced John Endicott, then an "assistant," subsequently governor of Massachusetts, of this belief and Endicott cut the cross from the ensign at Salem. For this incident cf. Howard M. Chapin, *Roger Williams and the King's Cross* (Providence, 1928). John Winthrop's journal has a suggestion of military disorder in the phrase "many refused to follow them" (Winthrop, *A Journal of...the Settlement of Massachusetts*, Hartford, 1790, p. 79). Winthrop has no suggestion, however, that this incident was the reason for Williams' banishment.

having tried in vain to persuade him to retract his fanatical doctrines, found himself obliged to banish him with his followers. Then, we repeat, he founded the city, to which he gave the name of Providence, considering it as a refuge which had been supplied him. Here he was rebaptised by a certain Holmann,¹¹ who was then rebaptised with ten others. Doubts afterwards arose to him about the validity of this second baptism, not being able, after his strange idea, to derive authority for it from the Apostles, unless through the means of the ministry of the English Church, which he held heretical, therefore, he refused to have communion with christians of other sects, being persuaded that God would send new Apostles, in the number of which he believed he himself must be included. Becoming in this way Founder, Governor, and Protector of the new colony, he went in the year 1643 to England, where by means of the Knight Henry Vane, he obtained from the Count of Warwick a charter of incorporation of the new colony under the title of Providence Plantations. At his return, which was forty-eight years after his exile from Massachusetts, being of advanced age, and having changed principles and conduct, he preached tolerance of the other sects and died in the year 1682 in the city founded by him, esteemed by Indian and colonist alike.

When the Providence Plantations were founded in the northernmost part of the Gulf of Narraganset, the islands contained in it were, however, inhabited by Indians. A Mr. Codrington, a native Englishman was the first, who in the year 1637 bought from Canonicus, Chief of the Narraganset Indians, the island of Aquidneck, the name of which was changed to that of Rhode Island. He was made Governor by his followers, which post he occupied for many years, and although he was at first a zealous Presbyterian, for political ends he adopted a universal tolerance. This brought to the island people from various sects, principally the Quakers, who were elsewhere persecuted. The only obstacle to the growth of the colony were the Indians, who disturbed it very much for many years, hence the inhabitants asked to be united with the other colonies of New Eng-

¹¹The baptism of Ezechiell Holyman occurred on March 16th, 1638. The description in Castiglioni is a close translation from Winthrop's *Journal*, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-84. Although this text was not printed until 1790, the manuscript had been transcribed and was well known to New England antiquarians. Until more complete evidence can be discovered, it would seem that an American acquaintance of Castiglioni's, and this would include Jeremy Belknap, supplied him with this historical information.

land; but these not wishing to accept it, they appealed to the King Charles II, who united it to the Colony of Providence, conceding them ample privileges, and the same form of government has lasted here, nor was it changed by the revolution. The General Assembly meets two times a year, in May at Providence, and in October at Newport, being composed of a Governor, a Deputy-Governor, ten assistants, who form the so-called high chamber, and some deputies of the cities and regions who compose the common chamber. All these positions expire in the month of May of each year, when the people hold a new election.

The State of Rhode Island is located between 41° and 42° latitude and 71° and 72° longitude from London, extending fifty miles from North to South and about thirty miles from East to West. It is bordered on the North and East by Massachusset, on the West by the State of Connecticut, and on the South by the sea. The portion of the continent, that surrounds the Gulf of Narraganset, formerly known under the name of Providence Plantations, is divided in the southwest from the State of Connecticut by means of the Pakatuk river, and contains the county called King's County, the capital of which is South-Kingston. In a straight line to the North is Providence county, with the capital of the same name, to the east that of Warwick, which contains the peninsula of Bristol, and to the south-east that little tongue of land that is between the arm of the sea called the Seakonnet-passage, and the Massachusset border. Various islands are found here, of which three are the principal. Rhode Island properly called, which is the largest of all is sixteen miles in length and four to five miles in width. The land being rather hilly it enjoys at various places a beautiful view, especially where it narrows to only two miles and overlooks equally Cononicut and Prudence Islands, the Bay of Newport and a portion of the mainland.¹² Cononicut, to the west of the preceding, is no more than eight miles in length and about a mile and a half in its greatest width. On this island there is nothing except a little village called James-town. Prudence Island, finally, to the north of Cononicut, and to the west of Rhode Island and of Bristol Bay is five or six miles long, and more than a mile wide. Many other islands are found spread about the gulf, that being very small, and not yet inhabited, do not merit particular mention.

¹²This view is from Tonomy Hill.

The climate of Rhode Island is very variable. The season in April is cold and rainy, but then in May the vegetation makes rapid progress. The months of June, July, and August are very hot in Providence and in the more internal parts, but tempered by the sea winds at Newport and nearby islands. The months of September and October are the most delightful, being usually of clear skies and temperate air. Nevertheless, in these months dysentery prevails, from the abuse of fruit and of little attention to protect themselves against the first cold. Winter lasts from November to March: snow falls ordinarily towards the middle of December, but the cold is not as severe as in Boston.

In the year 1774 the inhabitants of this state grew to fifty-nine thousand, six hundred and seventy eight, fourteen thousand and nine hundred of whom were eligible for military service.^a Agriculture flourished greatly primarily on the island of Rhode Island, abundant in fruits and called with reason the garden of America, but in the time when the English were in possession of the island, they cut the fruit trees for firewood, killed the livestock, and ruined the most beautiful estates.¹³ Also the sheep, the number of which formerly grew to some thousands, were reduced in 1786 to a few more than three hundred. They cultivate on this island corn, flax, hemp, and here there are lovely lawns. On Cononicut Island which is divided into various estates, they make excellent cheeses and also Prudence Island enjoys fruitful land, although cultivation here is more difficult because of great quantity of rocks which cover the land. Otherwise the Gulf of Narraganset is very abundant in fish and these are counted eighty different species, among which the Tataag or Black-fish take first place on tables.

Horses, corn, lumber, dried cod, whale oil and spermaceti candles form the principal commerce of the state. Newport above all had begun again to flourish after the war when the hopes of its recovery were destroyed by the dissension that arose in that town in the following way. Rhode Island being one of the smallest of the United States,

^aIn *American Museum*, Vol. I, p. 305, the population of Rhode Island in 1785 was only 59,670. After another note, the population in 1775 was 58,000 and in 1783 was 50,000, a diminution caused by the War. *Recherches sur les Etats-Unis*, Part III, p. 210.

¹³Chastellux had also noted that "unfortunately vegetables were very scarce on Rhode Island, as the English had destroyed all the gardens." cf. *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782*, translated by Howard C. Rice (2 v., Chapel Hill, 1963), v. 1, p. 250, note 14.

and not having large and populated cities, the inhabitants of Newport and Providence were favorably placed in the Legislative body as the most informed in politics. Those of the country, not liking to see this distinction, acted so that in 1786 they selected among themselves the plurality of the membership of the assembly and took this occasion to make a new issue of paper money, as they had planned for a long time. Being persuaded that the opposition made in preceding years in the Legislative body to this issue depended only on the members having been merchants, so delighted were they to topple their influence, they did not foresee the ruinous consequences that would derive from it. In fact, these notes, which were not based on a stable foundation, quickly lost their value and the law passed to support them required they be accepted as cash, ruining forever more the commerce of Rhode-Island.^{b14}

The faulty direction of the government produced thus the ruin of this state, which although of restricted territory, could have competed with the others for wealth. Following the first mistake a thousand others were made, and among many was that of not wanting to concur with the suppression of the rebellion that arose in Massachusetts, giving indeed a free asylum to those delinquents, therefore some call this land in contempt, not Rhode-Island but Rogues-Island that is Island of Knaves, a title which is deserved by those who formented these pernicious innovations.^c

^bNotes are of two sorts, that is: of the United States in general and of particular states. The first of these issued by order of the Congress to provide the costs of the war, and which sustain it, however lacking the confidence of the public, their value went dropping to the point that they are reduced to almost nothing. The same occurred to those of the particular states which were not supported from mortgage by any base, therefore these serve for nothing unless it is the private advantage of some who defrauded in this manner their creditors, paying with paper notes authorized by the legislature, but which have no value in commerce. Another evil resulted from the certificates or promissory notes given by the legislative bodies to the soldiers and other persons instead of money. These have had to sell them in time, when they lost their credit, and now the tradespeople take possession of them paying them a fraction in relation to their entire capital, therefore the state bears all the load of them without having obtained the effect of helping those who had given their services and risked their lives for the Republic.

^cAlso, finally, they are experienced in the harmful consequences of bad management, since Rhode Island was one of the states which did not choose to ratify the new constitution.

¹⁴On this cf. Elisha R. Potter, *Some account of the bills of credit or paper money of Rhode Island* (Providence, 1880), *Rhode Island Historical Tracts*, series 1, number 8.

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(For 12 Months Ending June 30, 1966)

INCOME			
Dues		\$15,152.00	
Investment Income (Net)		37,585.53	
John Brown House Fund Income (Net)		308.23	
State of Rhode Island		21,000.00	
City of Providence		2,000.00	
Contributions — General	\$541.00		
Corporate	200.00	741.00	
Patriotic Societies		245.00	
Library Sales		1,057.35	
Outside Services		1,013.68	
Miscellaneous		588.36	\$79,691.15
EXPENSES			
Salaries		\$33,074.25	
Social Security Taxes		1,135.03	
Director's Discretionary Fund		774.70	
Supplies		2,058.65	
Telephone		957.08	
Membership		912.10	
Library		4,073.71	
Museum		1,994.90	
Lectures		853.80	
Publications		9,708.17	
Heat, Light, and Housekeeping		4,546.46	
Grounds		3,884.32	
Buildings		5,771.20	
Insurance		1,642.72	
Group Insurance and Blue Cross		1,238.20	
Special Insurance		2,000.00	
Microfilm Expense		4,806.12	
Carrington Expense		300.00	
Miscellaneous		4,213.13	83,944.54
			\$ 4,253.39

THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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