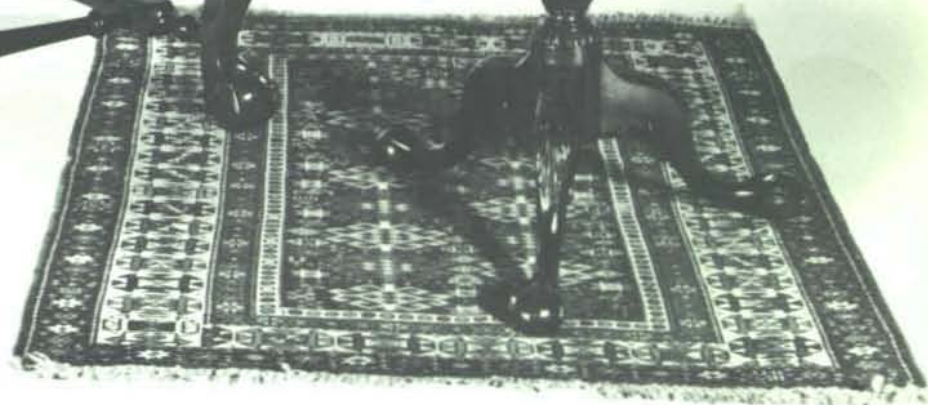


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Table of Contents

Paintings at John Brown House
by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr. 35

"Fortunes to be Acquired"—
Textiles in 18th-Century Rhode Island
by Florence M. Montgomery 53

Rhode Island Housewrights, Shipwrights,
and Related Craftsmen
by Joseph K. Ott 65

Earning a Living 1788-1818:
Job Danforth, Cabinetmaker
by William M. Pillsbury 81

150th Annual Meeting 94

VOLUME 31, NUMBERS 2 & 3 MAY AND AUGUST 1972

This selection from the Society's prized museum possessions includes several items made by skilled Rhode Island artisans in the 18th century. The silver tankard, c. 1725, bears the mark of Newport silversmith Samuel Vernon (1683-1737). Robert Feke painted the portrait of the Reverend John Callender in Newport, 1745; and the great wing chair is attributed to the hand of John Goddard of Newport, c. 1760. The exquisitely handsome pie crust table was probably made in Charleston, South Carolina, but it has a history of early Rhode Island ownership.

Toward the end of his term as the Rhode Island Historical Society's cabinet keeper in 1880, Edwin Martin Stone reported a fairly large collection of "likenesses of Rhode Islanders and Rhode Island events." Some are shown here in the Cabinet on Waterman Street displayed "with some regard to order and fitness."



Paintings at John Brown House

Through Art we gain higher glimpses of Nature —
Thomas Cole.

Thomas Jefferson in "Hints to Americans Travelling in Europe, 1788" expressed what was probably the prevailing sentiment of most pragmatic Americans in the years immediately succeeding the War for Independence in abbreviated remarks on painting and statuary —

*Painting, statuary. Too expensive for the state of wealth among us. It would be useless therefore and preposterous for us to endeavor to make ourselves connoisseurs in those arts. They are worth seeing, but not studying.*¹

From a man of such obvious intellectual eclecticism, Jefferson's negative remarks may come as a surprise. Nonetheless that such an attitude prevailed seems indisputable.

Many of America's leading artists of the eighteenth century consistently belittled the American connoisseur and his lack of patronage to the arts. In the 1760s John Singleton Copley blamed his lack of development on the "disadvantages" of being a painter in the colonies. Charles Willson Peale remarked to the expatriated American artist Benjamin West in London that "the State of the arts in America is not very favorable at present."² Like so many of his peers, Peale found it difficult to support a family on income derived solely from portrait commissions and was forced to diversify his activities. The situation was no better over fifty years later when Thomas Cole (1801-1848) lamented —

*I am not the painter I should have been had there been a higher taste. Instead of working according to the dictates of feeling and imagination, I have painted to please others in order to exist.*³

Institutional indifference to the fine arts was not uncommon. Perhaps the most notorious of all slights

by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr.*

was encountered by the nineteenth-century art critic and collector James Jackson Jarves who for over ten years attempted without success to sell to an American museum — at a price considerably below his cost — his own collection of early Italian paintings assembled during years abroad. In 1859 Jarves approached Charles Eliot Norton with hope that the Boston Athenaeum would buy the collection, but the Athenaeum was unable to solicit funds necessary for purchase. Five years later with still no buyers Jarves offered the collection to the New-York Historical Society. Again he met with no success. The Society saw no reason why it should acquire a collection of pictures that had aroused so little interest among the public while on view in New York. Finally in 1871 the entire collection of 119 Italian paintings was sold to Yale College for \$22,000. Today the Jarves Collection is one of the prized possessions of Yale University Art Gallery.

Like other art academies, athenaeums and historical associations organized in the nineteenth century, the Rhode Island Historical Society was founded by a small group of citizens concerned about general public apathy and subsequent disregard for tangible materials of history. In its constitution of 1822, the Society's *raison d'être* was so defined:

... to procure and preserve whatever relates to the topography, antiquities, and civil, religious, literary and natural history of the State of Rhode Island.

To accomplish these ends its activities were to include collection and preservation of a library of books, pamphlets, maps, manuscripts, prints, papers, and paintings "relating to the history of Rhode Island . . ." It was also to maintain a museum.

While its founders recognized value in collecting paintings and museum objects, the Society nonetheless was primarily conceived of as an institution to encourage and promote the study of history. That a collection of paintings and museum "relics"—Indian

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1 *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* 13:269.

2 Charles Coleman Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale* (New York, 1969) 233.

3 Barbara Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism and the American Experience* (New York, 1969) 66.

artifacts, small household implements, and personal ephemera — was incidental is borne out in the Society's records of accessions, lectures, publications, and correspondence.

As the Society advanced into the 1870s, its founders' broad definition of institutional goals and activities realized greater actuality. It would be wrong however to conclude that an equal blend of activity existed; rather there existed a greater diversity. For example, toward the end of Edwin Stone's term as cabinet keeper (1851-1880), he was able to point with satisfaction to a fairly large collection of "likenesses of Rhode Islanders and Rhode Island events" as well as to indicate a degree of aesthetic appreciation in noting that "the pictures . . . have been re-hung with some regard to order and to fitness."⁴ It is also recorded during this period that the portrait of Reverend John Callender, painted by Robert Feke in 1745 and a gift from Henry Bull of Newport in 1848, was dutifully restored by Mr. D. Chase for \$25.00!

With the appointment in 1880 of Amos Perry as Stone's successor, the Society acquired the services of a man whose appreciation for tangible materials of history — especially paintings — was far greater than that of any of his predecessors. Perry fully recognized the value of museum collections to the study of history. In 1893 he remarked that historical materials

*help the library, supplement it, illustrate its contents and often convey more vivid ideas on any given subject than could be obtained from any amount of written or printed material.*⁵

He hesitantly conceded that "life-like portraits . . . may serve the cause of history better than elaborate essays."⁶

As "handmaidens of history," museum collections were given fuller attention during Perry's regime. Besides an addition in 1891 of a central portrait gallery to the Society's Waterman Street headquarters where the painting collection was on permanent view, the first published catalogue of portraits and landscapes in the collection was issued in 1895. And, for the first

time, interspersed in Society publications were articles on art historical subjects, notably George C. Mason's work on Gilbert Stuart and Professor Carey Poland's pioneer research on Robert Feke — first delivered as a lecture before Society members.

Even though Perry recognized the value of museum collections, objects like paintings were not interpreted or collected as art objects. It was not that Perry or his circle lacked the "higher taste" alluded to earlier by Thomas Cole, but rather that primary emphasis was on study of history. Perry expressed such a sentiment when he remarked that whereas in ". . . an Art Club or a School of Design, the artist and his work might well take the first place,"⁷ in an historical society the prominence of the sitter or event as it relates to Rhode Island history was of paramount importance. Such a rationale has guided accession policy to the present and explains the character of the collection. As a result the Society owns today likenesses of Rhode Island military heroes such as William Barton, Oliver Hazard Perry, and Ambrose Burnside; of statesmen such as Samuel Ward King, Elisha R. Potter, Samuel Eddy, Job Durfee, and James Fenner; and a host of portraits of prominent educators, inventors, and divines — Francis Wayland, Henry Barnard, John Russell Bartlett, Wilkins Updike, Zachariah Allen, and Bishop Thomas Clark.

While it might be expected that this policy would produce inconsequential works, such is not the case. The Society's collection today includes important paintings of exceptional quality. The explanation for this can be partially attributed to the fact that Rhode Island has been blessed with her share of talented artists and craftsmen. In the eighteenth century Newport was the seat of a dynasty of cabinet-makers whose unsurpassed skills joined and carved dark planks of mahogany into masterpieces of construction and design, silversmiths who hammered and chased silver with the bold assurance of master craftsmen, and artists whose brush strokes captured vivid likenesses of Rhode Island's citizenry. Birthplace

4 *Proceedings Rhode Island Historical Society*, 1880-81, 30.

5 *Proceedings RIHS*, 1892-93, 65.

6 *ibid.*

7 *Publications Rhode Island Historical Society* 3:2 (July 1895) 76.

8 Among them Samuel King, Gilbert Stuart, and Edward Greene Malbone.

and home of several of these skilled artists,⁸ Newport and environs were frequently visited by outsiders seeking lucrative portrait commissions among wealthy residents.

John Smibert — trained in the baroque London school of portraiture — visited Newport early in its history. Other artists tried their luck, leaving behind a rich legacy of their work. Long Island-born Robert Feke temporarily settled there in 1742, the year of his marriage to Eleanor Cozzens of Newport, and is known to have revisited in 1747. Joseph Blackburn, an English court painter, resided there ca. 1754-55. Cosmo Alexander, famous as the early teacher of Gilbert Stuart, was in Newport in the late 1760s. John Trumbull passed through in the early 1790s on his "head hunter" sketching trip from South Carolina to New Hampshire. The young Romantic Washington Allston attended school in Newport before entering Harvard College.

By the end of the eighteenth century Newport, ransacked by British troops during the war, was no longer the seat of power in Rhode Island. While the picturesque seaside city still retained its appeal for artists — a myriad of well known artists painted in Newport at one time or another during the nineteenth century: John LaFarge, William Morris Hunt, Martin Johnson Heade, Frederick Kensett, William Trost Richards, Samuel Colman, Worthington Whittredge, R. Swain Gifford, Daniel Huntington and Homer D. Martin — Providence attained the position of leadership in the state.

As a thriving mercantile and industrial city whose leaders built elegant mansions furnished in the latest styles, Providence became a stop on the itinerary of numerous artists in search of new commissions. Whereas in the eighteenth century there are but few documented visits to Providence by trained artists — and no distinguished artist made Providence a permanent home — in the nineteenth century such men as Thomas Sully, Bass Otis, Henry Cheever Pratt, Cephas Giovanni Thompson, George P. A. Healy, and Martin

Johnson Heade sought and received commissions here. At the same time local inhabitants supported a native school of portraiture centered around such relatively unknown artists as James Sullivan Lincoln, Thomas Young, Sanford Mason and Cornelius T. Hinckley.

The earliest American painting in the collection is the portrait of *Anstis Updike*, daughter of Richard and Mary Jenkins of Bristol. It has been tentatively attributed to the *Aetatis Sue* limner of Albany, New York and was probably painted ca. 1722, the year Anstis Jenkins married Daniel Updike of Newport and North Kingstown, when the limner is known to have visited Newport on a trip which took him as far south as Jamestown, Virginia. The painting descended in the Updike family to Mr. and Mrs. Harding Updike Greene who have recently given it to the Society. According to the family genealogy this picture was one of two belonging to Wilkins Updike Greene and his brother Frank Greene. The pendant portrait is now missing.

Events surrounding the lives of early eighteenth-century upper-Hudson patroon painters, especially the *Aetatis Sue* limner, are slowly unfolding through the diligent research of Mary Black, and a significant corpus of their oeuvre has been identified and attributed to specific limners working mostly in the Albany-Kingston area. In the case of the *Aetatis Sue* limner, documentation on his trip to Newport and to Jamestown, Virginia is scarce and the number of paintings that survive from this brief period in his life are extremely few. With the discovery of the portrait of *Anstis Updike* an important addition has been made to this artist's oeuvre outside of New York.

The *Aetatis Sue* limner is so called because of his habit of signing his paintings "*Etas Suae*" or "*AEtatis Sua*" or some variation of the same, followed by the age of the sitter when painted. Like the Gansevoort, Wendell, or Van Epes limners of the upper-Hudson school, identification of his given name at birth has not been made. His association is with a group of pictures that are distinct in style yet unmistakably

Anstis (Jenkins) Updike, bride of Daniel Updike of Newport and North Kingstown. Painted in Newport, 1722, this is the earliest American painting in the Society's collection.



connected with the New York patroon painters. Since they were self-trained artists, it is not surprising that their work is characterized by linear, hard modeling of forms, awkward stances and anatomical distortions, as well as interest in small decorative items often of iconographical significance.

The first professional artist known to have worked in Newport arrived seven years after the departure of the *Aetatis Suae* limner. John Smibert (1688-1751) brought

abilities of a modestly skilled artist far in advance of anything fashionable Newport had known. He must have been well received for numerous paintings dating from this visit survive. Two of these, it has always been presumed, were the large portraits of Joseph and Mary Wanton given to the Society in 1891 by Edward Perry Warren. In fact, such is not the case. With publication in 1969 of Smibert's *Notebook* that lists 241 American period paintings done between 1729-1746, and with the

discovery of new facts, it can safely be concluded that the portraits in question are of Mr. and Mrs. *Samuel Browne, Jr.*, of Salem, Massachusetts, painted by Smibert in 1734.

The methods of a researcher are similar to those of a detective. In the case of the two portraits, re-identification of the sitters resulted from a logical combination of small clues none of which alone provided enough evidence to prove anything conclusive. The first clue came with publication of Smibert's *Notebook* by the Massachusetts Historical Society. Ostensibly containing a complete list of his painting in America except for January-April 1729, it nowhere records an entry for the Wanton portraits. But it might be argued that these were painted during four months in Newport for which there are no listings. However when it was discovered that Joseph Wanton married Mary Winthrop in New London on August 21, 1729, and given the fact that Smibert was in Boston by May 1729, it then became evident — if one was willing to concede that these were not pre-marriage portraits — that the paintings in question were not done during Smibert's first winter in Newport.

A succeeding clue helped in establishing who the sitters were once the Wanton identity had been challenged. It came in the form of an almost identical eighteenth-century copy of the Society's female Smibert portrait, owned by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Having descended in the Sargent family — the portrait is entitled *Mrs. Epes Sargent* — its provenance was beyond suspicion. But how could two paintings — one an original, the other a copy — go by different titles? It was discovered that Mrs. Epes Sargent had married Epes Sargent of Gloucester in 1744 — two years after the death of her first husband Samuel Brown, Jr. of Salem — and that she was none other than Katherine Winthrop, younger sister of Mary Winthrop who had married Joseph Wanton in 1729. Somewhere along the line the identity of the sitters of the Society's paintings had become confused probably as a result of the sister relationship of Mary Wanton and Katherine Browne.

Smibert's *Notebook* helped to confirm re-identification. In 1734 — the Brownes were married in 1732 — he recorded 3/4 length (50x40") portraits of "Samewell Broun Esqr." and "Mrs. Brown." These references are

In 1745 Robert Feke painted a sensitive portrait of the Reverend John Callender, who had performed Feke's marriage ceremony to Eleanor Cozzens three years before.



unquestionably to the portraits in the Society's collection.

Because of the incomplete nature of the Society's early accession books it is impossible now to determine the first painting acquired. One of the earliest additions was the half-length *Reverend John Callender* painted in 1745 by Robert Feke (ca. 1707-52) and given to the Society in 1847 by Henry Bull of Newport. This is one of two paintings (the other of *Reverend Thomas Hiscox*) commissioned in 1745 by Henry Collins of Newport to which the artist signed his name "Feak" rather than the more usual "Feke." The portrait of Callender — a sensitive rendering of the man who in 1742 had performed the artist's marriage ceremony to Eleanor Cozzens at the First Baptist Church in Newport — is one of only eight known works done by Feke in

the period 1741-45; by 1746 Feke had become a full-time painter although his artistic career did not extend much beyond 1750-51 when he disappeared from the colonies.

Callender, graduate of Harvard College in 1723 and author of one of the first histories of Rhode Island, *An Historical Discourse on the Civil and Religious Affairs of the Colony of Rhode-Island* (1739), is painted in a half spandrel below which appears "R. Feak pinx A. D. 1745." Depicted in a rather stark Geneva gown and white square falling band, the clergyman is radiant of face with features finely modeled and well composed. A recent cleaning has exposed two compositional changes originally made to the painting by Feke, one in the line of the sitter's right shoulder, the other in the line of his upper left arm.

The Society also owns the so-called *Late Self-Portrait of Robert Feke* and that of his wife *Eleanor Cozzens Feke* painted in Newport ca. 1750. Left unfinished by the artist for reasons unknown, the paintings were completed in the late nineteenth century by Providence portraitist James Sullivan Lincoln. In an attempt to determine the extent of Feke's work, the *Late Self-Portrait* has been recently examined under X-ray and infra-red light at the research laboratory of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The X-ray radiograph produced inconclusive findings as the painting has at one time been re-lined with white lead. Without X-ray evidence it is impossible to determine the condition in which the painting was left by the artist. One is unable to judge whether Feke sketched in the preliminary composition as it exists now or whether the composition was conceived by Lincoln when he completed the painting. Infra-red and ultra-violet radiation does substantiate that the tunic of the figure appears to be of a different pigment composition than that of face, neck and upper part of tunic, indicating that these areas were done at different times.

The provincial quality of American colonial painting is perhaps best seen in portraits of *Robert Jenkins* and *Betsey Jenkins* painted in 1748 by John Greenwood

(1727-92) and given to the Society in 1905 by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis J. Chace. Greenwood's career in America was short-lived; apprenticed to engraver Thomas Johnston in Boston, Greenwood did not begin painting until ca. 1745 and by 1752 had departed for Surinam, ultimately settling in London in 1762. His American production is small, numbering not more than seventy-five paintings. Most of his sitters were from Boston, as in the case of the *Jenkinses*, or Salem.

The portrait of *Robert Jenkins* is faintly signed below the opening, "J. Greenwood 1748." There is no visible signature on the *Betsey Jenkins*.⁹ The pose Greenwood used in his *Robert Jenkins* is the same in reverse that Feke employed in his *James Bowdoin II* owned by Bowdoin College. Such a fact is not surprising as both artists are known to have used English mezzotints as prototypes for "proper" poses, but it leads one to speculate if either was influenced by the other's painting. Both portraits were painted in 1748.

Re-attribution of a painting to another artist's oeuvre can be a difficult task. In making a new attribution a series of lead questions must be initially confirmed — artist and sitter contact; proximity of artist and sitter dates; conformity of sitter's age with approximate date of painting; and relationship of the painting to other documented examples of the artist's oeuvre done about the same time.¹⁰ In the case of the portrait of *Thomas Cranston*, misattributed at one time to John Singleton Copley,¹¹ answers to these types of questions allowed for a definite re-attribution.

Thomas Cranston, son of Samuel Jr. and Elizabeth Cranston, was born in Newport October 30, 1710 and died March 18, 1785. In 1754-55 he was residing in Newport. During those years the English court painter Joseph Blackburn — active in America 1754-63 — arrived from Bermuda. Blackburn's courtly style won immediate acceptance by Newporters and for a brief period he was flooded with commissions. Thomas Cranston no doubt was one of those commissioners. On the basis of style, the Cranston portrait fits into Blackburn's surviving Newport oeuvre. Its hard model-

9 Morton C. Bradley, Jr. in a letter to Clifford P. Monahan, June 1961, noted "a very obscure signature."

10 Isolating design, detail, and construction characteristics of individual cabinetmakers and regional schools of cabinetmaking has provided a valuable means of identifying pieces of American furniture. Such an approach in American painting is generally not so advanced but could aid immensely in re-attribution of paintings.

11 According to family tradition the *Thomas Cranston* was found — along with portraits of his wife and daughter Rhoda painted by Copley ca. 1756-58 — in an abandoned house in South Kingstown that once belonged to Cranston's son-in-law Edward Hazard. No doubt because of its association with the portraits of wife and daughter, that of Thomas was attributed also to Copley.

ing, choice of pose and positioning of figure, range of colors — especially the brilliant sharpness of blues — and subdued brush strokes all suggest Blackburn's able hand.

The portrait of *Dr. Isaac Senter* (1753-99) — gift of Mrs. John Carter Brown in 1936¹² — can be safely attributed to Samuel King (1748/9-1819) on the basis of style, but a document in the Senter papers (RIHS Library) lends additional weight to the attribution. A bill rendered to the estate of the late doctor in 1801 not only establishes the versatility of Samuel King — he charged Senter for painting and gilding his chaise, gilding picture frames, and painting his miniature — but also links King with the surviving portrait of Senter. Under December 4, 1793 the bill records "To Drawing his Portrait . . . 11.4.0." Interestingly enough the final entry records under March 15, 1800 "To Painting his Miniature . . . 4.4.—" This must have been a posthumous portrait as the good Newport doctor died December 20, 1799.

The existence in local private and museum collections of a significant number of paintings by James Earl (1761-96), younger brother of the more famous Connecticut artist Ralph Earl, suggests that James might have worked in Providence or environs sometime during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. No documentary evidence supports this hypothesis, nor do events as they are known surrounding James Earl's short life suggest a period of residence in Rhode Island. Born in Leicester, Massachusetts May 1, 1761, he sailed in 1784 for London where it is said he remained for the next ten years.¹³ By 1794 he was in Charleston, South Carolina where he lived until his sudden death two years later.

If the above facts of James Earl's life are correct, when would he have painted portraits of *Captain Thomas Smart* and his wife *Mrs. Smart* given to the Society by Mrs. A. Utley Wilcox in 1956? Unfortunately Earl was not in the habit of signing his work — nor do enough of his paintings exist that any can be positively dated — so it is difficult to date them on

style alone. And in the case of the Smarts, their vital records have not been discovered.¹⁴ It seems most likely that these portraits were done before 1784, the year Earl departed for England, during his first American period. While he would have been in his early twenties, undoubtedly he had been exposed from a young age to the painting profession through his older brother Ralph.

In any collection formed over a long time, unattributed paintings will exist. The Society's eighteenth-century collection is not without its share of such "mystery" pictures. Two of the most puzzling are portraits of *Samuel Chace* (1722-1802) and *General William Barton* (1748-1831). The *Samuel Chace* appears to be an American picture of the period ca.1735-40, but its attribution to any known early eighteenth-century artist working in America (Chace was born in Newport and died in Warwick) is most tenuous. The painting may be the work of a yet unidentified American artist. The portrait of Barton — hero of the capture of General Prescott, commander of British forces in New England — is equally problematical. Painted ca.1785, its style is reminiscent of military portraits painted by Charles Willson Peale of Philadelphia in the 1780s and 1790s, but it is clearly not by Peale. Continued research on the Barton portrait should lead to identification of the artist.

Augmenting eighteenth-century portraits is a small collection of American pastels. Three of these — likenesses of *Samuel Chace II*, his wife *Rosabella Angell Chace*, and *Reverend Enos Hitchcock* — are attributed to William Blodget (1754-1809), map maker, organist, and chaplain in the Revolutionary navy who also seems to have tried his hand as an artist.¹⁵ Blodget's known surviving work in pastels is scarce enough so that stylistic comparisons do not establish authentication, but attribution in all three cases is based on the artist's close connection with the sitters. As Samuel Chace II's brother-in-law — he married Chace's sister Ann on December 11, 1774 — Blodget would have been the natural choice of the family to render such

12 This portrait probably descended to Mrs. Brown through Senter's youngest daughter Elizabeth Senter Crocker, great-grandmother of the donor.

13 Biographical information is incomplete. A future exhibition on this remarkable family of artists sponsored by the National Portrait Gallery and the University of Connecticut Museum of Art will hopefully bring out additional information on James Earl.

14 Thomas Smart's military career is given in Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution* (Washington, D.C., 1914) 501.

15 Phyllis Kihn, "William Blodget, Map Maker, 1754-1809," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin* 27:2 (April 1962) 33-50.

Testimony to the quality of foreign artists who worked in America is a 1793 portrait of Captain George A. Hallowell by Franz Ludwig Hirschmann of Germany.



likenesses. In his capacity as organist at St. John's Church in Providence and later in his military service Blodget would have crossed paths often with Hitchcock, a native of Springfield, Massachusetts who moved to Providence as pastor of the First Congregational Society.

Besides several anonymous pastels is a pristine example of the work of an obscure German pastel'ist, Franz Ludwig Hirschmann, who probably visited

America in the 1790s, leaving a small sampling of his art. The oval portrait of *Captain George A. Hallowell* is signed in red crayon on the wood backing.

"Hirschmann Pinxit 1793," the same year that he executed portraits of *Captain Thomas Dring* owned by the Newport Historical Society and *Captain Daniel Prior* owned by the New Hampshire Historical Society. Exquisite in their detail and coloring, Hirschmann's

works are a testimony to the quality of foreign artists who worked in America but whose contribution to American art has been largely ignored.

Like pastels, miniatures form a small but important part of the portrait collection. Numbering close to fifty examples from late eighteenth century to mid-1840s when miniatures as personal effects were slowly replaced by the photographic image, they include likenesses of Browns and related families, Dexters and De Wolfs, by such recognized miniaturists as Edward Green Malbone and less known figures like Thomas Young, James S. Ellsworth, Moses B. Russell, Thomas Nixon and William Bache. The Malbone miniature of John Francis — Philadelphia merchant who married John Brown's oldest daughter Abby and subsequently became his father-in-law's business partner — is the earlier of two John Francis miniatures by Malbone and signed "Malbone 1795," indicating that it was probably painted in Providence in the fall of that year.

In a collection of close to 400 paintings, over sixty percent nineteenth-century portraits of ordinary quality, collected because of association value as portraits of prominent Rhode Islanders and not for intrinsic artistic merit, it should not be surprising that so many are unattributed or by obscure secondary artists who worked in or visited Rhode Island. Many of these second-line figures — like Francis Alexander, Sanford Mason, C. T. Hinckley, Hubbard L. Fordham and Thomas Young, whose works are included — are known today only by few surviving paintings which tend to be scattered about, newspaper advertisements that invariably announced the recent arrival and eminent abilities of said artist, and reminiscences or obituaries. Without a larger corpus of documentary material available to the researcher and because of the generally ordinary quality of the oeuvre, lives of these figures and analysis of their work will remain incomplete.

Represented on a higher level of aesthetic achievement are such as James Frothingham (1786/88-1864), ardent admirer of Gilbert Stuart's work — Samuel Lovett Waldo (1783-1861) and William Jewett (1789/90-1874), whose lengthy partnership in New York produced standard portraits of that city's elite — Henry Cheever Pratt (1803-1880), pupil of Samuel F. B.

Morse and compatriot of Thomas Cole — George P. A. Healy (1813-1894), whose visits to Providence in 1846 and 1859 produced a sizeable number of portraits — and Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904), esteemed today as landscape and still-life artist but as well a competent portraitist, a genre which he practiced in Providence probably to a greater degree than in any other place during a visit in the late 1850s. Besides these is a large collection of James Sullivan Lincoln (1811-1888), whose production over a fifty-year period as Providence's premier portraitist is documented by a manuscript list of paintings — including in most instances the artist's charges — kept by himself.

A bust size portrait of *William Goddard* (1740-1817), painted toward the end of his life, is attributed to James Frothingham at the beginning of his career when he seemed to be most influenced by the highly acclaimed Gilbert Stuart. In a characteristically candid analysis of his pupil, Stuart remarked, "There is no man in Boston, but myself, can paint so good a head." Frothingham's *Goddard* captured the zeal and compassion of a man whose life had been distinguished by public services not least of which was the founding in 1762 of the *Providence Gazette*, the town's first newspaper.

As in the case of Frothingham, it is not known if Samuel L. Waldo ever visited Providence. The fact that a handful of documented Waldo paintings exists in both local public and private collections suggests that he made it to Providence at some point. Two such paintings in possession of the Society, however, were not painted here. The earlier is a portrait on wood panel of *Mrs. Nicholas Brown* signed on the back "Waldo New York 1823." The date indicates that the portrait of Mrs. Brown (1800-1822) — daughter of John Brown's youngest child Alice who had married James Brown Mason — was painted posthumously, perhaps from a miniature supplied by the family. Such a miniature exists — a self-portrait of Mrs. Nicholas Brown, gift to her husband whom she married in 1820 — but probably did not serve as the prototype for the larger Waldo oil.

The later portrait of *David Crowley* is signed on the back "painted by Waldo & Jewett N. York 1852," three years before the partnership dissolved. It is

always said of these joint productions that Waldo was responsible for face and hands and William Jewett for dress and background, but in the *Crowley* it is difficult to differentiate between two styles. The story goes that David Crowley was one of four survivors from the steamer *Lexington* that burned at sea in January 1840. His portrait — which depicts the *Lexington* incident in the background — is of a more conventional type than the Waldo painting of Mrs. Brown.

Henry Cheever Pratt was one of many artists who visited Providence in the 1820s but like his peers did not stay for any length of time. He did advertise in the 1824 *Providence Directory* "Pratt, H. C., portrait and landscape painter, 47 Westmin[ster]," indicating that he had set himself up in a downtown studio, but by 1826 his name no longer appears. The portraits of *Russell Warren*, Providence's foremost architect in early Greek Revival style, and *Mrs. Warren* were probably painted during his 1824 stay. Pratt, who was in Charleston, South Carolina in 1819 and again in 1822, may have known the Warrens — who themselves spent a considerable amount of time there during those years — before he came to Providence; this would explain their choice of artist.

By 1846 when George P. A. Healy came to Providence "to paint a portrait of Levi Wheaton M. D. which he presented to Mr & Mrs Henry Wheaton," he was an established artist with an international reputation, having painted the royal families of England and France as well as presidents (Andrew Jackson) and prominent statesmen (John C. Calhoun). Healy had met Henry Wheaton in Paris and subsequently stayed with relatives of Wheaton in Providence in 1843, so that during his 1846 visit he was not a total stranger to the city. While no paintings are known to date from his earlier visit, an unpublished "Portraits taken in Providence by George Peter Alexander Healy," compiled in 1859 by Ann Allen Ives, records that he painted twenty-five portraits during his second visit.¹⁶ No doubt the artist remembered his earlier triumphs when twelve years later he again returned — the Ives list records that Healy was in Providence from September 1858 through January 1859. During this

"Henry Wheaton for town hall half length \$400" artist George P. A. Healy wrote of his impressive portrait of that renowned jurist.



five-month stay his income from portrait commissions reached \$7350.00!¹⁷

A sizeable number of Healy's portraits are still owned privately in families of original sitters while a handful have found their way into local institutions, notably Brown University. An important Healy portrait of *Henry Wheaton* (1785-1848), painted in 1846, is recorded in the Ives list as "Henry Wheaton for town hall half length \$400." Purportedly it was commissioned by Benjamin Hoppin and given to the City of Providence which in turn gave it to the Society in the late 1950s. It is one of six recorded portraits of Wheaton done either during his life or closely following his death — four of which were painted by Healy — one is

¹⁶ This manuscript account was recently given to RIHS by Mr. Frank Mauran III of Providence.

¹⁷ Not only does the Ives list document over fifty paintings done in Providence, but it also establishes Healy's

standard prices. For a full length portrait \$1000, for a half length \$400 — he did charge as much as \$600 in a few instances — and for bust size between \$200-300.

a copy of an earlier portrait by John Wesley Jarvis — and the other a copy of the Society's large portrait made in 1857 by Martin Johnson Heade.

Common bonds of art must have brought Heade, still relatively young and impressionable, and the mature Healy together in 1858. Heade, whose dramatically lit marsh landscapes were still several years ahead, no doubt considered the chances of success as a portrait painter on Healy's level, for during this time in Providence he produced more portraits than in any other period of his life. Those which survive reveal the imprint of Healy's influence both in style and scale. One is the portrait of *Bishop Thomas March Clark* painted ca. 1857-58 and given to the Society by Bishop Clark in 1890. The bishop — who officiated at Heade's wedding — is shown in billowy clerical robes painted rather flatly and badly in contrast to the more successful modeling of the face, one which reveals the artist's dependence on the daguerreotype. More of a portrait copyist than an original painter — it is known that he copied prints, miniatures and other paintings — Heade found the daguerreotype much to his liking in rendering portraits.¹⁸

Providence was not without its own small band of native artists who by and large filled the needs of the populace, but whose accomplishments were limited. James Sullivan Lincoln (1811-1888) moved here from his birthplace, Taunton, Massachusetts, at age fourteen to learn the engraving trade from William D. Terry. By 1832, apparently dissatisfied with opportunities afforded a young engraver, Lincoln had cast his lot as a portrait painter. For fifty years (1837-1887) he managed to virtually monopolize portrait commissions in the city, producing a monumental number of paintings documented in a manuscript account book kept by himself. The Society has the dubious distinction of owning the largest James Sullivan Lincoln collection in existence, ranging in years from the 1841 portrait of *William Jewett Pabodie* to the 1885 painting of *Colonel Charles Daniel Jillson* in full dress military uniform, and including likenesses of such Rhode Island luminaries as *John D. Howland* — a founder of the Society — *Zachariah Allen*, *Henry Barnard*, *Wilkins*

Updike and *Thomas Poynton Ives*, as well as a beautiful portrait of the artist's daughter *Ellen D. Lincoln*, done in 1883.

Providence merchants were among the first in the new American republic to develop a viable trade with the Orient. Not only did such trade produce fabulous wealth for merchant-princes but resulted in the importation of exotic Chinese household wares into fashionable Providence homes. Among these goods were portraits of many a ship captain, supercargo or young cabin boy painted during a visit to Canton — principal city in China for western trade — and used as decoration on board ship or at home.

Five Chinese portraits ca. 1805-1820 are part of the Society's collection. All but one are of men with strong Rhode Island connections. The portrait of *George Washington* — originally owned by Edward Carrington, United States consul to Canton in the early nineteenth century and a principal mover in the China trade — is one of many Washington likenesses taken by Cantonese artists from other paintings or prints. Carrington alone recorded in his "China Journal B" (1804-06) purchases of six "Apotheosis of Washington" — probably painted on glass — and ten "Portraits of Washington" — probably oil on canvas; paintings on glass were slightly more expensive — for William F. Megee. If one merchant at one time required so large a supply, imagine how many were ordered during the course of trade with China by all participants.

In the same journal Carrington noted that in 1805 he "Paid Foiqua for a Washington Print" which is not described. Lawrence Park in his definitive work on Gilbert Stuart states that "an 'Athenaeum' type portrait of Washington was owned in China," but he does not say where or how early it was there. In any case there were ample likenesses available to Chinese artists as models, most common of which were Stuart's so-called Athenaeum type. Such a model served as prototype for the Society's Chinese *George Washington*, painted ca. 1805-10 by an unknown artist.¹⁹

Besides the *Washington* portrait and those of *Stephen Dexter*, *Cornelius Sowle*, and *George W. Teel* — all painted before 1820 — the most interesting of the

18 One of Heade's best portraits — *Rebecca Clark*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston — was almost certainly taken from life.

19 The most complete list of Chinese artists working in Canton in the 19th century can be found in M. V. and Dorothy Brewington, *Marine Paintings & Drawings in the Peabody Museum* (Salem, 1968).

Chinese portraits is that of *William H. Townsend* (1802-1880), painted in Canton, November 1818. Then a cabin boy aboard the Carrington ship *Lion*, captained by his father, Townsend from an early age kept an account — three volumes interleaved sporadically with fascinating pencil drawings of ships, natives, and places he observed in his travels — titled "My Life and Reminiscences from my infancy." In its first volume the young author described the circumstances of his Chinese portrait but unfortunately did not name the painter:

Soon after this dinner party I was taken sick with the bilious fever of the Country & was reduced very low, so that father thought my recovery doubtful — but just before I was taken sick I had been to an "Artist" & sits for my "Picture" — which was not completed when I was taken sick — father, however had it "finished" up, as correctly as possible to take home should I not recover.²⁰

Townsend did recover indeed, to live an incredibly adventuresome life which included participation in the 1849 gold rush.

As builders, international merchants, sailors, commercial fishermen, and yachtsmen, Rhode Islanders have always been close to their vessels. They celebrated the beauties of these by commissioning portraits, many of which were drawn by foreign artists who as naval draftsmen were capable of detailed and accurate likenesses. The Society owns a handsome collection of such marines. Earliest is a watercolor drawing of the *Janson* of Providence painted by a Dutch artist Jan Mooy (1776-1847) in 1819, less than a year before the ill-fated ship — built at Dighton, Massachusetts in 1815 — was struck by drift ice off the coast of Holland where ship and cargo of coffee and rice were lost.²¹ Mooy, whose work is not uncommon in American collections but about whom little is known, created through compositional devices and dominance of subject a convincing and colorful likeness of the *Janson*.

Equally brief biographical information has been published on two northern European marine painters,

From an American painting or print, a Chinese artist copied this portrait of the first President of the United States.



C. Clausen of Denmark and B. H. Hansen of Hamburg, Germany. In the case of the former — whose work is held in numerous public collections — neither surname nor dates are available, while of the latter virtually nothing is known and his work is rare.

The Society owns two Clausen watercolors of the *Corea* of Providence — built at Duxbury, Massachusetts in 1834 — both signed along the lower right "C. Clausen Elsinore 1839." The more typical of the two shows the *Corea* sailing in calm waters, with the fortified town of Elsinore in the distant background.²² The second shows her without topsails in rough seas, rolling on

20 MS., RIHS Library.

21 Plate 984 in Brewington illustrates Mooy's version of the

sinking *Janson*. A similar drawing by Joseph Partridge is illustrated in *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections* 21:3 (July 1928) 90.

port side to reveal the structure of the deck. The treatment of the latter is rather bizarre in compositional effect and stylization as well as coloration. Both are nonetheless effective portraits.

The watercolor *Bart Trenton* signed "B. H. Hansen, Hamburg" along the lower right was not painted in the tradition of a portrait but depicts a dramatic rescue at sea. Its inscription in bold calligraphy along the lower border explains the rescue — perhaps as witnessed by artist Hansen who might have been serving as a crew member aboard the *Trenton* — "the Bart Trenton, Capt. Oliver Repaing to take the Crew from the Wract a Brig Casimir Capt William Winslow of Waren Rhode Island, on the 3d of February 1844." The *Casimir* can be seen floundering at the left while two lifeboats flying distress flags in choppy seas are awaiting the rescue efforts of the *Trenton*.

Marine watercolors of the French school of the nineteenth century dominated by Antoine Roux (1765-1835) and his three sons — Antoine, Jr. (1799-1872) — Frédéric (1805-1870) — Francois (1811-1882)— and such disciples as Honoré Pellegrin (ca.1800-ca.1872) — have received thorough attention for their production was of unequalled quality. It has been said that many an American captain detoured to Marseilles to avail himself of the talents of the Roux and their peers. Many of these pictures were brought back to America where they still serve as graphic reminders of bygone days of sailing ships. One such is of the *Tropic* — built in Bath, Maine in 1832 and owned in Providence by a syndicate of businessmen — signed "Frederic Roux, au Havre 1838" on the face and inscribed on back with artist's address and signature. It is interesting to note that Roux used the same background for the *Tropic* as for several watercolors illustrated Plates 1216-1218 in Brewington. Such conventions were not at all unusual among marine painters who were primarily concerned with the ship portrait.

Two watercolors given to the Society by Mrs. Harriet C. Edmonds in 1952 appear to be the work of Honoré Pellegrin, a contemporary of the Roux dynasty and

clearly influenced by their attention to correct detail and crisp, light drawing. The barque *Beaver* leaving Marseilles is signed "H^c Pellegrin a Marseilles 1842." The brig *Arkansas*, attributed to Pellegrin on the basis of style, was probably completed ca. 1837-38 when John Edmonds, ancestor of the donor, was master and part owner of the Providence-built brig.

American shipowners and masters did not rely exclusively on artists in foreign ports for likenesses of their ships. In America artists like English-born Thomas Birch and James Buttersworth, the Neapolitan Michel Felice Corné, English-trained Robert Salmon as well as native artists like Fitz Hugh Lane and William Bradford were capable of fine work.²³ However, most of these worked primarily in oils, not in the tradition of the French school of marine watercolors, and more often than not did not limit their work exclusively to ship portraits. Ships did play an important part in their paintings but were included for reasons other than portraiture.

Two of the most appealing marine painters were the twin brothers James (1815-1897) and John Bard (1815-1856), born in Chelsea, New York. Working as partners and individually, these self-trained, "primitive" artists produced a sizeable number of colorful portraits, mostly side paddlewheel steamboats viewed broadside. Limited in knowledge of such things as perspective, the Bards nonetheless steadfastly produced accurate drawings of many ships which frequented New York harbor and plied the Hudson River. Conscious of correct color detail, with each portion of the boat measured and drawn to scale — in most cases, being friendly with many boat owners, they probably had access to boat plans; in at least one case they actually measured an extant boat — they provide documentary evidence in their surviving work for the multitude of boats that once cruised the waterways of America. One of these survivals, a large watercolor of the *Steamboat Providence*, is signed "J & J Bard Painters, N. York" and was probably painted between 1838 and 1843 when the *Providence* was owned in New York, although it

22 See Plates 133-136 in Brewington for a similar background treatment.

23 For a good discussion see John Wilmerding, *History of American Marine Painting* (Boston, 1968).

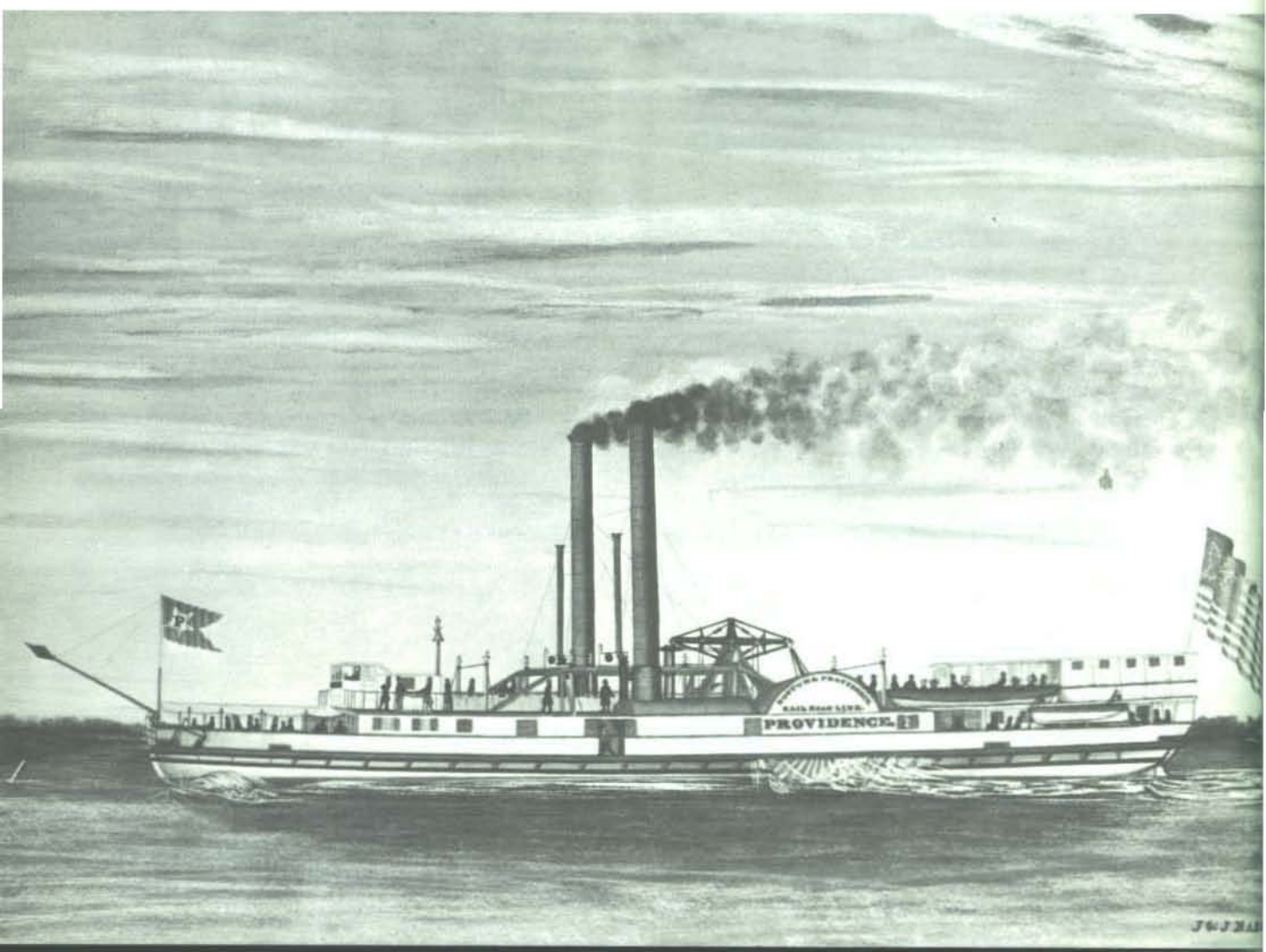
may have been done in 1832 when she was built there. If painted in 1832, it represents one of the earliest pictures by the brothers.

As longtime resident artists in New York, the Bards probably would have known of the English artist Thomas Chambers who came to America in 1832, initially settled in New York from whence he took up successive residencies in Boston and Albany, returning in 1858 to New York where he lived until 1866. By 1838 Chambers, a versatile artist and ornamental painter whose work in oils is similar to Bard watercolors only in its so-called primitive style, worked primarily as a marine painter. Sometime after 1838 he painted the view of the *George Washington* sailing from a yet-to-be-identified port. As a work of art the picture is important in the oeuvre of Chambers and of additional importance to the Society in that the subject was a ship

built in 1793 at Providence for John Brown. Last and smallest of three ships bearing the name of Washington owned by the firm of Brown and Francis, the *George Washington* was designed for the India trade and ultimately sold to the United States government which fitted her out as a cruiser.

One of the Society's masterpieces, the *Siege of Tripoli*, depicting Commodore Edward Preble's naval bombardment of Tripolitan fortifications in 1804, is a large oil canvas painted by Michel Felice Corné ca. 1805-10. One of three finished versions of the siege by Corné, the first of which was commissioned by Preble and which is signed "M. Corne pinxit in 1805," it was deemed by Preble — who must have had an active hand in describing the event to the artist — as a "tolerably correct . . . view of the Town & situation of the squadron & enemies naval force . . ." Preble also

Marine artists, twins James and John Bard, painted this careful portrayal of early steam transport.



provided a key to the action and fortifications, making it possible to identify participants. The Society's version — considerably smaller than the signed 1805 painting now owned by the United States Naval Academy — is virtually a copy of the original.²⁴

In that the Society's paintings have been assembled to celebrate men and women, ships and events (and to a lesser degree artists) that have been a part of Rhode Island's history, it should not be surprising that its landscape collection is comprised primarily of town views, natural scenery, and distinctive architectural monuments. Several of these include eighteenth-century topographical views such as the small pen and ink wash drawing of the *Seat of Henry Marchant* in South Kingstown, but the bulk of them can be dated in the nineteenth century when landscape painting came into vogue.

There are some remarkably fine panorama views as well as intimate vignettes of street and harbor scenes of Providence and environs. An outstanding example of the panorama tradition is the Society's huge theatre curtain hanging at the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design — the *Old Drop Scene* of the Providence Theatre, painted by John Worrall of Boston between 1808 and 1812, depicting a portion of Providence's east side development during expansive years. Two smaller panorama views are the famous pair, *Providence from across the Cove* — taken from different positions on the west bank of the Providence River — painted by Alvan Fisher in 1818 and 1819. Important as early examples of the work of Fisher, they are also key documents of how the city looked.

Of equal importance as documents and as works of art are four paintings of sites and buildings. The view of the *First Congregational Church* in Providence — painted sometime between 1806 and 1814 by an unknown American "primitive" — gains added significance in that it includes the only known contemporary view of John Brown House and its whitewashed board outbuildings. In the event of future restoration of these outbuildings, this painting would serve as a key document.

A charming vignette of a city scene is the watercolor *View of President Street, The Baptist Meeting-House and Adjoining Buildings* painted by little-known artist Joseph Partridge in 1822. Partridge, who arrived in Providence from Nova Scotia in December 1821 and seems to have remained in Rhode Island for no more than two years, was an accomplished and versatile artist who seems to have been well received. He advertised a school for ladies and gentlemen where "the various branches of Water Color Drawing, &c. . . . [and learning] to sketch from nature" would be taught. He also noted that "Views of gentlemen's country seats, factories, stores, &c. &c. will be taken when requested; as also, Anatomical Paintings, in all cases of decease."²⁵

Few of Partridge's works survive — he doesn't appear to have signed most of his pictures — and perhaps his greatest painting is this watercolor duly praised and the artist himself encouraged by an unknown admirer in the *Providence Gazette*, May 8, 1822:

This artist has resided in town but a short time, and his unobtrusive manners have not been calculated to usher him into that notice, nor procure him that patronage, which his merits richly deserve. Many specimens of his talents in sketching and painting rural scenery [he spent a summer sketching in Bristol and Newport] have been examined and admired by skillful judges; and the two interesting public lectures which he has given, illustrative of the art of painting, furnish abundant proofs of his ability at designing and execution, and establish his reputation as a scientific and practical painter. His view of President-street, the Baptist Meeting-House and adjoining buildings, with a part of the cove and distant hill on the West, has been justly praised as an admirably exact picture.

The writer further noted that the artist had recently completed views of the First Congregational Meeting House and "the interior of our Market-House, with correct likenesses of many of the occupants," both of which views are now lost.

The Society possesses numerous landscape views and an even greater number of printed views of places outside Providence. A watercolor *Pawtucket Bridge and*

24 The third version — which the author has not seen — is owned by the Maine Historical Society.

25 *Providence Gazette*, April 27, 1822.

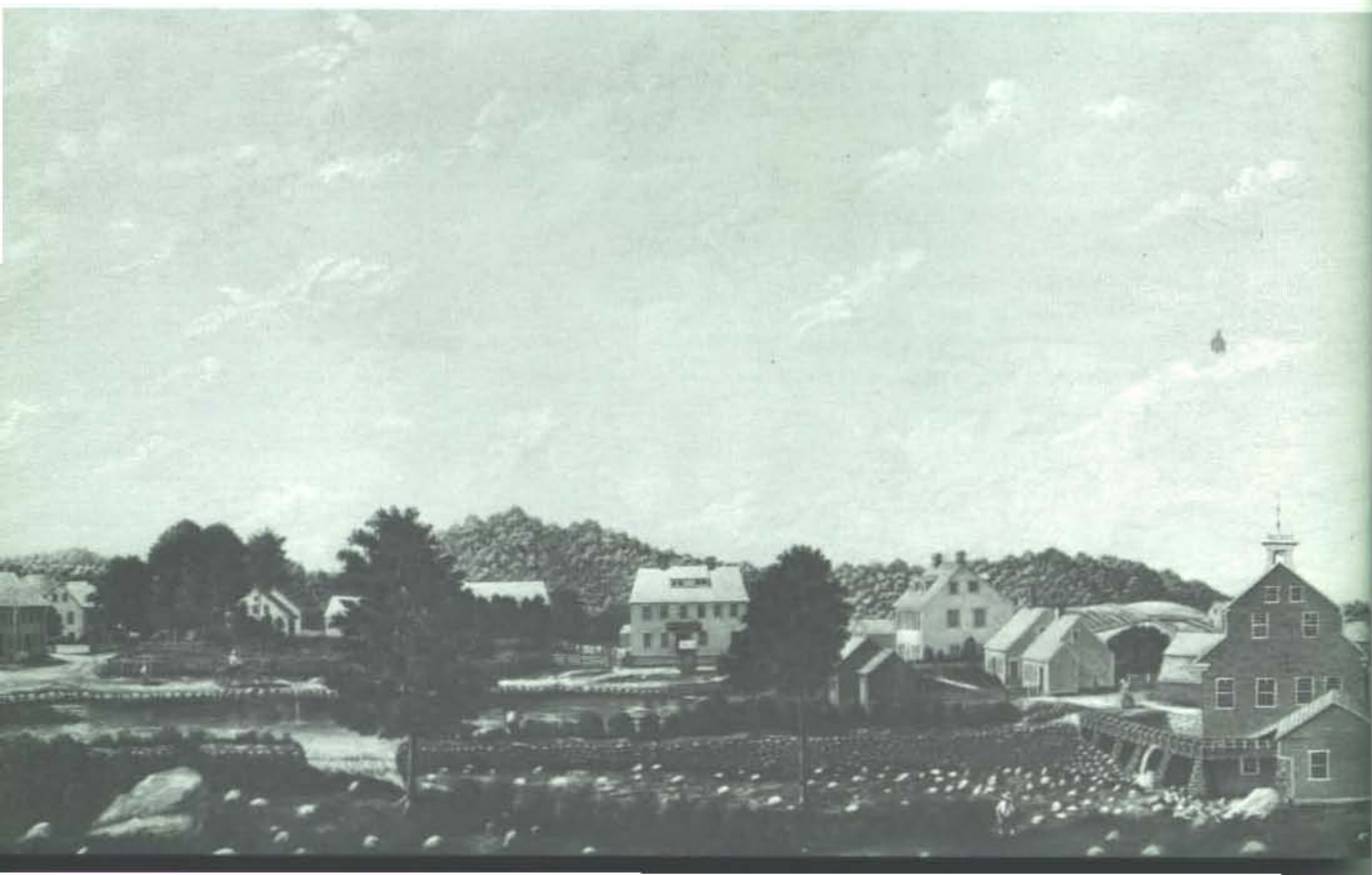
Falls — signed “D. B. 181-” for an unidentified painter — is of considerable topographical interest as it reveals the large white mill of Samuel Slater and Sons built on the falls of the Pawtucket River. This drawing was taken from an aquatint of the same title by John Rubens Smith of Boston, published in the magazine *Polyanthos*, December 1812. The practice of copying prints verbatim in another media was not unusual among “primitive” artists nor was it uncommon among more accomplished landscapists to “lift” smaller vignettes or backgrounds.

The most recent addition to the Society’s collection is a superb landscape view of *Clayville, Rhode Island* — again painted by an unidentified artist, probably an itinerant who stayed around only so long as there was demand for his talents. The painting, which identifies Josiah Whitaker’s store as well as a mill and other buildings, is difficult to date precisely — it was probably produced between ca. 1835 and 1855 — but can be placed within a twenty-year period by reason of biographical information about Whitaker as well as documentation on construction of a mill in Clayville

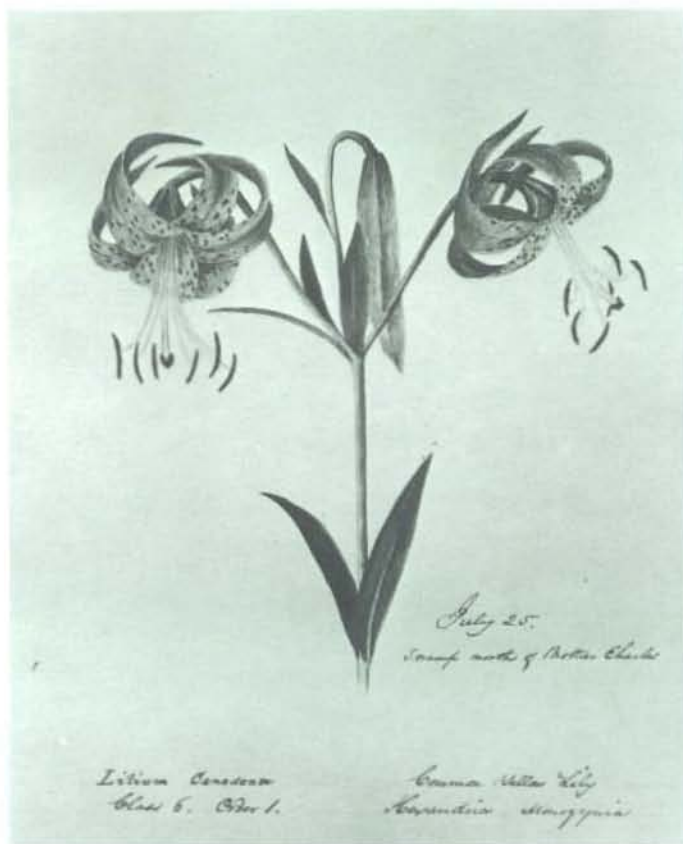
at the pond site. For an accurate image of a typical small Rhode Island mill and agricultural community in the early nineteenth century — in terms of mill architecture and mill buildings, domestic architecture, fencing and walls, modes of transportation, and even how the housewife hung out her wash — this painting has few peers.

A special collection — including a sketchbook of sepia drawings — numerous pen, pencil and watercolor drawings — and over five hundred botanical studies in watercolor of flora indigenous to Rhode Island — comprises the Society’s holdings of the work of Edward Lewis Peckham (1812-1889) given by his descendants. A native of Providence where he lived the majority of his life, Peckham began work as a clerk and accountant for the Merchants Bank, an occupation he pursued reluctantly for the course of his business life, but which did not appear to limit his artistic production. By about 1830 he began the series of intimate vignettes of streets and docks in Fox Point, views on Narragansett Bay and the Seekonk River, and picturesque farm views that he continued actively to turn out through the 1860s. At

“Josiah Whitaker — Clayville Store,” sign on the building in the center, identifies this record of a Rhode Island mill village.



As fresh and bright as the flowers Edward Lewis Peckham observed firsthand in his native Rhode Island is this example of his botanical drawings.



the same time, with a group of Rhode Island botanists like Stephen Olney and George Thurber, Peckham studied the flora of his native state, producing a collection of botanical drawings which remain today as fresh and bright as the flowers the artist observed firsthand.

A descriptive article of this sort cannot hope to more than touch on high points of a collection that numbers approximately four hundred paintings. Taken as a whole, it contains some remarkably fine examples of colonial and nineteenth-century American painting, and many paintings of historical importance. But it

would be wrong to suggest that the overall level of quality is consistently high.

When Thomas Jefferson remarked on the preposterousness and expense of collecting and studying "painting" in 1788, little did he realize the extent to which institutions and private collectors would vie for the spoils of art. That his remarks later proved to be fallacious is not surprising. At different points in time and in their own history, institutions have come to recognize the value of paintings as historical documents and as works of art.



"Fortunes to be Acquired" — Textiles in 18th-Century Rhode Island

by Florence M. Montgomery*

In the John Brown House, headquarters of the Rhode Island Historical Society, a remarkable collection of family textiles is preserved. Representative of imported furnishing fabrics are stout worsteds, handsome copperplate printed cottons, and brilliant Indian and Chinese painted fabrics which the Brown family and other successful eighteenth-century Rhode Island merchants brought, along with a wide variety of other merchandise, to Providence.¹ Here we shall examine the manner in which trade was conducted and how goods were merchandised. Strange textile terms will be defined and some indication of their use suggested. Since bed curtains among these textiles were probably fashioned by professional upholsterers or at least by skillful seamstresses, the craft of the eighteenth-century upholsterer will be examined with evidence gleaned largely from newspaper advertisements.

Surviving correspondence of Providence and Newport merchants can be divided into two parts — letters to and from shopkeepers and merchants in other coastal cities and neighboring inland towns and letters from English agents to Rhode Island merchants. Interwoven among these papers are threads of history recounted from a very personal viewpoint. Writing from Bristol, England, on March 1, 1766, Henry Cruger Jr. informed Aaron Lopez, Newport merchant, of the repeal of the Stamp Act "which never wou'd have come to pass had it not been for the Merchants and Manufacturers of England." Of conditions in Bristol prior to repeal he added: "Trade here was totally stagnated; not one American Merchant gave out a single Order for Goods, on purpose to compell all

Manufacturers to engage with us in petitioning Parliament for a Repeal of the Stamp Act, by which thousands were out of employ, and in a starving condition."²

Patterns of trade were first established at Newport. Unlike merchants in larger cities of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia trading directly with agents in London, Rhode Island merchants found it necessary to travel more circuitous routes, frequently calling at several ports to exchange cargoes. To obtain cash to purchase English manufactured hardware and drygoods, they sought to supply the West Indies with lumber, food stuffs, Surinam horses, candles, and much else. They also shipped to ports all along the Eastern seaboard.

From a survey of Brown papers at the John Carter Brown Library and the Rhode Island Historical Society, and from secondary sources like Gertrude Selwyn Kimball's *Providence in Colonial Times* and the more recent *Browns of Providence Plantations* by James B. Hedges, one gains the very strong impression that the Browns were excellent businessmen. They turned their attention to large enterprises but did not overlook small ones. Perhaps newspaper advertisements most clearly picture their diverse shipping, shopkeeping, and manufacturing activities.

Their ships sailed for the most part to the West Indies and along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to Nantucket and south to Charleston. On April 27, 1765, they announced in the *Providence Gazette*:

The sloop Four Brothers [Nicholas, Joseph, John, Moses] is now fitting for Philadelphia, and will sail by

"Red and white, and blue and white furniture calicoes, with farm houses" were offered in 1774 at Hill's Ready Money Variety Store in King Street (now North Main), Providence. This pattern called "Country Village" is part of a set of bed hangings. The textile was copperplate-printed in blue at Bromley Hall, 1780-90.

Photographs of textiles by Helga Photo Studio.

*Formerly assistant curator of textiles at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Mrs. Montgomery has written numerous articles for *Antiques* and other periodicals. She is the author of *Printed Textiles English and American Cottons and Linens 1700-1850* (New York, 1970).

1 These textiles are discussed in the author's "Furnishing textiles at the John Brown House, Providence, Rhode Island," *Antiques* 101:3 (March 1972) 496-502. Except as noted, those illustrated here are gifts of Mr. Norman Herreshoff to The Rhode Island Historical Society.

2 *Commerce of Rhode Island*, v. 1, 1726-1774 (Collections Massachusetts Historical Society, ser. 7, v. 9, 1914) 145.

the 15th of May next without fail . . . All Persons who may want to freight in said Sloop, are desired to apply to Nicholas Brown & Co., being the Owners of said Sloop . . . and they may agree on reasonable Terms.

In 1769 the *Four Brothers* lay at the wharf of Nicholas Brown & Co. loaded with "Choice Virginia Sweet Potatoes" to be sold on board "cheap for Cash." On June 16, 1770, they offered "Tar, Turpentine, Pitch, Rozin, Oil of Turpentine, Carolina Pork, Hogs, Lard, Duck, Ticklenburgh, Wool and Cotton Cards, Cod and Mackerel Lines." At the end of that year they "Wanted Immediately a Quantity of good square-edg'd Oak Boards."

That the Browns established Hope Furnace for the manufacture of pig iron and were highly successful in the manufacture of spermaceti candles, two commodities much in demand for export, is well known. During the Revolution they built and manned privateers to sail against the enemy. But some of their small enterprises, covering a wide variety of skills, are also of interest. On December 2, 1769, they sought nailmakers for an ancillary manufacture to their ironworks:

Wanted — A number of expert Nail Makers, to work on Hire, or on the Lay. Coal to be found gratis, and the Rods to be supplied, and paid for in Nails. There being a great quantity of Coal suitable for a Nail Manufactory at the Furnace Hope, about 12 Miles from Providence, a number of Workmen might be usefully and advantageously employed. Apply to Nicholas Brown & Co. in Providence, or Rufus Hopkins at Said Furnace in Scituate.

Late in the century when American textile manufactures were in their infancy, the Browns were among the first to undertake weaving on a commercial basis. On May 7, 1791, they advertised in the *Gazette*, hoping to "encourage the Manufactures of their Country"—*Cotton Manufactory. To be sold by Almy and Brown at their Store, a Variety of Cotton Goods, manufactured in this Town, among which are Cords of Various Sorts, rib and plain Thicksetts, Stockinet, rib and plain Denim, Jeans, Jeanets, Fustians, &c, &c. Also, Cotton Yarn of various Sizes, spun by Water.*

On June 25, 1791, notice was given that the "Rope-walk Concern" in which the Browns had an

interest would be "differently arranged." This referred to the long sheds or open-air enclosure, often 900 feet or more in length, where rope was twisted. Brown and Francis had an interest in a glassworks for which in January 1796 they sought a foreman.

Following establishment of the *Providence Gazette* in 1762, merchants and shopkeepers were quick to advertise in this four-page weekly and from their advertisements additional facts are learned about Providence trading. On November 6 James Green offered for sale two categories of manufactured goods of greatest importance to the colony of Rhode Island and, indeed, to all the American colonies — drygoods and hardware:

A large and complete Assortment of Braziers and Cutlery Wares, with every other kind of Goods made in Brass, Steel, Iron, Pewter, &c. Also, a very large Assortment of English Piece Goods of every kind that can be made use of.

Most of these goods, shipped twice a year from the largest British ports, London and Bristol, generally arrived in April and October. Wealthier merchants with larger interests like the Browns sold smaller lots of goods to shopkeepers at an advance of 60 per cent on English piece goods; 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ on stationers' wares; and 73 $\frac{1}{2}$ on hardware.³ On March 24, 1764, Capt. Aborn arrived on the *Elizabeth* from Liverpool and Capt. Fell on the *Newhope* from London; Peleg Thurston & Sons, at their store on Thurston's wharf in Newport, offered merchandise from these ships "wholesale, cheap for cash." The following week Daniel Marsh advertised goods from these vessels in Providence.

In April 1772 competition among shopkeepers ran high. John Brown imported spring assortments of goods on the ship *Providence* and on the snow *Tristram* which also carried merchandise for his brothers, Nicholas Brown & Co. Thurber & Cahoon, Thompson & Arnold, Joseph & William Russell, and Jabez Bowen, all leading shopkeepers, also received goods on these ships or bought some of the cargo for resale.

Two groups of customers were solicited by shopkeepers — townspeople who would purchase household linens, clothing materials, and groceries, or country merchants in "neighboring towns of Rhode-Island

3 Letter from Nicholas Brown & Co. to Capt. Solomon Owens, Nov. 9, 1771, John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

Colony, Connecticut, and the Massachusetts Bay." James Brown and Benoni Pearce advertised together on May 23, 1767, that "their Customers coming from the Westward, may save both Time and Shoe-Leather by calling at their aforesaid Shops; and those on the other Side will be well paid for crossing the Pavements, and be kindly received and well used." Nicholas Brown & Co. [October 19, 1771] assured both "Town and Country Shop-Keepers" that they could "depend on being supplied on as Advantageous Terms as by any other Importers in New England and may depend upon their Orders being executed in the best Manner." On October 22, 1791, Brown & Francis (John Brown and his son-in-law John Francis) described themselves as being the "original Importers" and wished "to encourage the Inhabitants of this State, and their Neighbours of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont, to frequent the Town of Providence so much nearer and [more] convenient than New-York or Boston."

Following centuries-old custom that started when many people could not read, Providence shops were designated by signboards. James Green's shop was at the sign of the Elephant and William Chace had a desirable location "next door to the Sign of Shakespeare's Head," the printing office. Other shops were named the Golden Eagle, the Greyhound, the Brazen Lion, the Arm and Bee-Hive, the Fish and Frying Pan, the Padlock, the Spinning Wheel, and the Golden Reel. A succession of owners occupied the shops known as the Bunch of Grapes and the Sultan's Head.

In keeping with their shop signs, some storekeepers included eye-catching cuts in their newspaper advertisements such as Hill's big elephant of March 26, 1774. Ornamental borders and a variety of type sizes lent emphasis. It would be interesting to know how the printer fixed his charges; often the same advertisement of a quarter page or full column ran in three or four consecutive issues and then appeared for another week or two in much shortened form. One of the few full-page advertisements noted was that of Joseph & William Russell, November 14, 1767, when they informed "Town and Country that William Russell is just arrived from London, and has brought over with him a large, neat and compleat Assortment of English,

Providence storekeeper Hill matched his shop sign with an appropriate cut in the Providence Gazette.



Imported from ENGLAND,
And to be Sold at
HILL's ready Money Variety Store,
The Sign of the ELEPHANT, formerly occupied
by Mr. James Green, next Door to Mr. Nathan
Angell's, in King-Street,
A large and general Assortment of English,
India, Scotch, Irish and Dutch Goods,
Suitable for all Seasons, at as low Rates as can be
purchased at any Shop or Store in Boston or else-
where, by Wholesale or Retail. Constant Attend-
ance given, and the smallest Favours very grate-
fully acknowledged.
Among his Assortment are the following Articles,
viz.

Plain and striped duffels	Wens and boys new fa- shioned macaroon bea- veret and beaver hats
Beaver skins	Mens and womens leather and silk gloves and mitts
Beaver coatings	New fashioned ribbons
Lamskins	Dutch lace
Bath beavers	Thread and blond dino
Whitneys	Red and white, and blue and white sarajine calicoes, with fawn houfes
Halfthicks	An elegant assortment of plain and flowered silks for cloaks
Kerseys	Silk handkerchiefs
Serges	Plain and striped lute- strings
Forestcloths	Mantua silks
Scarlet cloths for ladies cloaks	Chip hats, bonnet pa- per
Superfine, middling and low priced broadcloths	Buckrams
6-qr. to 12-qr. blankets Yard wide, 6-qr. 7-qr. and 8-qr. baile	English and India taffe- ties
Flannels	An assortment of crease and worsted
Velvets and velverets	Thread and tapes
New fashioned corded vel- vets for breeches	Ladies collars, shiraz Velvet ribbons for hats
Plushes	Plumes
Everlastings and draw- boys	
Camblettes	
Irish camblets	
Poplins and crapes	
Rich cord	
Denmark luitres	
Silk camblets	
Calimancoes	

Detail of advertisement, March 26, 1774.

India, and Hard-Ware Goods, suited to this Place, which he purchased from the first Hands in England."

On December 3 of that year, no less than ten shop-owners advertised general assortments of "English Hard-Ware and Piece Goods." Typical is Ebenezer Thompson's claim that he had "just imported in the very last Vessels from England, a most elegant, Compleat and Universal Assortment of European and East-India Goods."

Extravagant claims were made by advertisers who described their goods as "necessary, useful and ornamental," "fresh and neat," "large and curious," or "not usually imported into this town." Since goods arrived at least twice a year, they were "suitable for all Seasons, but more particularly for the Summer," or the "approaching Seasons."

The Russells described how the trade was conducted when they stated April 18, 1772, that their goods "were purchased for them at the different Manufactories in England at the very lowest Prices by the best Merchants in London."

Characteristic of such negotiations is the correspondence between Nicholas Brown & Co. and a London textile printing firm. English merchants took pride in shipping good quality merchandise to their American customers and, especially with new clients, were careful to explain the necessity of placing orders for the next season long in advance. The terms agreed upon were for a generous twelve months' credit with bills of exchange discounted at five per cent for earlier payment.

In the fall of 1770 Thomas Charles Williams, "connected with the House of Messrs. Thomas Williams and Company of Annapolis in Maryland and with the House of Messrs. Williams, Bellamy, and Williams of London in the printed Callico Manufacture way," called on the Browns in Providence bearing a letter from Henry Lloyd, their chief agent in Boston. Williams submitted patterns of printed textiles available from the parent firm, and the brothers selected a long list.

The following February, Williams and Bellamy acknowledged the "Order for Sundry Prints which we expect to forward per the first Ship that sails next Month," despite the fact that they had "shipped in the

Fall all the Printed Calicoes we then had, and have been lately Printing large quantities of Calicoes we bought at the East India Sale in November last, but they are not yet finished." They added: "We are extremely obliged to you for making a trial with our House and shall send you such Patterns and Cloths as we hope will induce you to favor us with a more considerable Order in the Summer." On April 26, 1771, they explained that

not less than Six Months is absolutely necessary for us to have your orders before they are to be ship'd, as the India Sales are but twice a year, at which times we must buy the Calicoes, and it takes several Months to print them afterwards. Goods that you expect to be ship'd here in February, tis absolutely necessary for us to have the Orders for by June at farthest, as we can scarce do anything in the Winter, unless you leave the Patterns to our choice, and which in many respects would be better. As you have the Patterns [samples] there, you will be capable of giving good directions as to the sort of work and the kind of Patterns though not confined exactly to the same.

Writing from New York on July 25 Thomas Williams urged the Browns to reorder and explained why their printed textiles would be of superior quality: "Would further Observe that the goods now expected are all fast Colours. Most of the single and two colour that was ship'd to Boston this year have been nothing more than a Logwood Die and will come Clean out with one or two washings." Perhaps not entirely sure of these new customers' tastes, nor of what they were prepared to pay, he added: "But should you in future prefer the Logwood Dies on account of their coming two or three shillings cheaper, please to Distinguish it on your Order and they will come, as shall print an Assortment of that Vile Work this Summer."

In February 1772, the London firm, disappointed at not receiving an order, again defended their goods, their prices, and the promptness of their shipments. By this time they earnestly hoped that they would be entrusted with the selection of new patterns for the Browns, a plan which had given "entire satisfaction" to "several very Considerable Houses":
What we meant and expressed about sending Orders in June was, if you confined us to particular Patterns, as in

case we had not them by us, we must wait several months for printing them before they could be shipped . . . But if you in future mention the sorts of work you want and leave the Choice of Patterns to us we shall be able at the first opportunity to forward your Goods, and will send you new Patterns and good Cloth and Work.

Of the large quantity of eighty-one pieces of printed textiles in their initial order, most were printed in two colors, or shades, such as red or purple, for which the strength of the mordant was increased to produce a second deeper shade in the madder bath. All were ordered by number, apparently following the samples brought by Thomas Williams. Intriguing descriptions, too brief for identification, include "Damask Ground Chints," "French Chints," and "Three Collours Fancy Ground." Copperplate printed textiles in the customary colors of blue, red, and purple were specified as "Furnitures," and there were also "2 pieces Copperplate Blues on Linen 2/4 #1929, Two Colours Furniture, a Large Full Pattern." Like many other merchants' orders, this one called for an amazing quantity of handkerchiefs; the total order amounted to 41 dozen, a number perhaps partially explained by the fact that nine dozen of them were listed as "Table" handkerchiefs, possibly indicating that they were intended to be sold for tablecloths.⁴

As outlined by James Hedges, sharp changes in trade were caused by the Revolutionary War and the blockade of Newport harbor. During this period when the Browns were conducting much of their business from Nantucket Island, they attempted to establish trade with France, Holland, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Russia, and other nations. However, for many reasons the new relationships were unsatisfactory. Edward Forbes in Dublin, although desirous of receiving orders and prepared to supply "Goods made as in Manchester," including moreens and worsted and silk goods, "Linnens . . . rival'd by none," checks, cotton goods, blankets, coatings, etc., could not grant the favorable credit terms to which Christopher Champlin, a Newport merchant, had been accustomed. Forbes wrote on April 10, 1784:

One great Barr to our enlargeing our Trade with you, is our Poverty in not being able to give the long Credits the Manufacturers do in England. Here, however, the

prices are proportionately low, and for ready money there is a discount for 2, 4 and 6 months given at the rate of 6 per Ct. per annum."⁵

In France much the same story was true; Alexander Keith, "an old established Merchant" in Nantes, sought Champlin's orders in 1784:

*I confine myself entirely to the commission branch and have made it an invariable rule to ship no goods for any quarter unless with Funds in hands either in Consignments, good bills, or a confirmed credit on one of the principal cities in Europe . . . The considerable concern I hold in one of the principal Callico and Chintz Manufactures of this City enables me to serve you with that essential article for your market in a manner respecting patterns, taste, stuff and price much superior to most others, being intimately acquainted with what is suitable for your Consumption.*⁶

From Hamburg Caspar Voght & Co. offered Champlin "choice Chintz and Calicoes" of which they said: "we change our patterns here every six months, and great pains are taken allways to bring them to greater perfection . . . We shall be very happy to see you become a large Customer for this commodity, as our Manufactures do exceedingly well and are the cheapest in Europe . . . but even for that same reason they [the textile printers] cannot and do not give long Credits and must be paid ready Money or in 4 weeks time."⁷

Foreign languages were troublesome; Jonathan Williams found the French not only ignorant of the Taste in patterns, and the quality of the Goods that suits our Countrymen, but all the Dictionaries in the World could not translate the names of the goods ordered. Order a French Merchant to ship a piece of Book Muslin and he would endeavor to find a piece of Mouseline de Livre, but no Manufacturer in Europe would be able to furnish him, and he would write in answer that it was not to be found, unless some American were to tell him that a piece of Goods called ourgandi answers to Book Muslin, except in the folding it.⁸

As soon as "the late unnatural War" was over and "the Intercourse between Great Britain and America being now quite open" English merchants again made overtures for American merchants' favors. Agreeable though it was for Americans to deal once again with

4 Correspondence between Nicholas Brown & Co. and Williams, Bellamy and Williams, London, and Thomas Williams, New York. John Carter Brown Library.

5 *Commerce of Rhode Island*, 198.

6 *Commerce of Rhode Island*, 232.

7 *Commerce of Rhode Island*, 256.

8 James B. Hedges, *Browns of Providence Plantations: Colonial Years* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952) 253.

familiar people along well-established lines, it was trade with the Orient which must have been exciting. The *Empress of China*, first United States ship to sail to Canton, embarked from New York; three years later, January 23, 1786, John Brown dispatched the *General Washington* on an eighteen-month voyage to Canton, with cargoes exchanged at several ports en route. Recommendations for future trading by Colonel Ward, the supercargo, were explicit and helpful: *At Madras they may contract for Book Muslin, at Coringo for long Cloths, at Calcutta for Muslins, Callicoes, Bengauls, Romals, Bandannoes, &c., at Pondicherry for blue Cloths, coarse Handkerchiefs and Nicanees . . . Vessels arriving late, not only have a bad market in which to sell, but must buy goods, which are the leavings of the East India Company.*⁹

Details for trade with "Marseilles, Barcelona, Canton, Manila, India in General, Bengal, Leghorn, Trieste, Rio de Janeiro, the River Plate, Salvador, and Pernambuco" are given in a remarkable *Trader's Book*,

kept between 1797 and 1809, whose author describes types of goods preferred in each market and lists articles which will sell profitably at home. "With regard to the various exports from Canton to the United States" he notes:

*Of silk goods, the best are, Sattins of 18 yds in a peice
do of 30 " " " "*

Lustrings of 18 " " " "

and the Colours ought to be Black, White, Cinnomon, Brown dove, Drabs, Silver grey, Fawn, & light Blue, for the Sattins; But the greatest Black.

Of Lustrings Black, Cinnamons, Browns, Dove, Drabs, Silver Grey, Fawn, Mulberry, Plumb, Flea [puce], & other Dark colours, with but little White, & a large proportion of Black.

The author recommends the purchase of teas, umbrellas, fans, sewing silks which "will do best in small skeins," and blue Nankeen which "ought to be fine, and of a navy blue." He lists prices current at Canton, specifies fees exacted by merchants and

140

Figured Lustrings or Lustrings, are also a saleable article when chosen fashionably, they are now worth 1000-reas or \$1.25 per boarder, which is equal to \$1.67 per yard, the colours ought to be light and airy, and the Silks something like the annexed patterns; which are called Florence Segere, and are 7/12 Ell wide. - Sattins also of much such figures will answer.



Plain Lustrings are also a saleable article when chosen fashionably, they are now worth 1000-reas or \$1.25 per boarder, which is equal to \$1.67 per yard, the colours ought to be light and airy, and the Silks something like the annexed patterns; which are called Florence Segere, and are 7/12 Ell wide. - Sattins also of much such figures will answer.

government officials, and details the cost of renting furniture for the trading season. More important than the very complete descriptions of goods, however, are over thirty small swatches of various French and Italian textiles pasted into the book where they have remained to this day bright and clean.¹⁰

Newspaper advertisements quickly reflected Eastern trade with listings of goods. On May 22, 1790, "A Large Vendue — at Hoppin and Snow's Auction-office," Providence, included:

A large quantity of Indian Goods . . . directly from Calcutta (the Capital of Bengal) consisting of as great a Variety as has ever been sold at any Vendue in New-England, among which are — printed Calicoes and Chintzes, of every Kind, Muslins and Muslin Handkerchiefs of all Sorts; long Cloths, of different Qualities, and many other Cotton Cloths which from their Durability have been found very profitable for Family Use, either in Shirting or Sheeting . . . Also, Bandano and Pulicat Silk Handkerchiefs, Persians, Taffetas, Gingham, Doreas, Baftas . . . with many other NEW GOODS which would not be generally known by their Names.

Elias Hasket Derby, one of the richest merchants in America, advertised in the *Providence Gazette*, February 26, 1791, his "India Sales at Salem." The long list includes comment on the use for which some of the strange-sounding textiles were suitable. From Bengal came "Baftas, Sannas, and Cassas — White Cloths proper for Shirting and Sheeting; Dureas, or striped Muslins; Durea Chintz, or painted, striped Ditto; Chintz, a great Variety; Striped Cottons . . ." From Madras came "Ginghams, Blue Cotton Handkerchiefs; Long Cloths of a superior Quality, suitable for Shirting; Madras Patches, beautifully figured; Camboys, or blue and white striped Cottons; Moreas, or plain white Cloths; Madras Cambricks . . ."

Brown, Benson and Ives (successors to Nicholas Brown & Co.) imported in the *Rising Sun* in 1793 a representative cargo of the exotic wares available from China, including tea, porcelain, lacquer, sugar, spices, and silk textiles such as sattins, lustrings, persians, and taffetas. Cargo aboard the *John Jay* (1796) included "Bohea Tea . . . China Ware, consisting of Dining Sets, Tea Sets, Cups and Saucers, &c. An Assortment of

Center motif of an Indian painted and resist-dyed cotton palampore brought to Providence probably in the last half of the 18th century.



Lacquered Ware, Nankeens, wide and narrow, of the best Kind, and a few Boxes of well assorted Silks."

The powerful union of merchants at Canton called the *Cohoang*, exacted exorbitant and numerous fees which were greatly resented by American merchants who constantly looked for other ports at which to trade. An editorial in the *Providence Gazette*, September 13, 1794, discussed the

ADVANTAGES of Opening a TRADE to JAPAN — No Trait of the American character has been more conspicuous than the spirit of Adventure which has appeared in our merchants and mariners since the establishment of our Independence. Of this, besides the numerous voyages to India and China, by the common route, the Track of the Alliance round the southern extremity of New Holland, and that of the Columbia round the globe, are incontestible demonstrations. Perhaps no species of traffic has promised more lucrative advantages than the fur-trade from the north-western coast of North-America and the adjacent islands, across the Pacific Ocean to China.

Bright swatches of French and Italian textiles illustrate the import and export recommendations of a Trader's Book, kept between 1797 and 1809.

9 William B. Weedon, "Early Oriental Commerce in Providence," *Proceedings Massachusetts Historical Society*, ser. 3, v. 1 [1907-1908] 237.

10 RIHS Library.

The character of the Brown family, and perhaps especially that of John Brown, is summed up in this editorial, for it has been suggested that the reason he went into business for himself in 1771 was because the risks he was willing to take and the enterprises of which he dreamed were greater and more daring than his three brothers could allow. But boldness brought success, and several times John Brown was first with a venture which later became standard for commerce or manufacture.

As a result of trade with Europe and later with the East, millions of yards of textiles were brought to America each year. Many of them were used for towels, and bed and table linen; in this group fall Irish Hollands, oznabrigs, ticklenburgs, thicksetts, fustian, sheeting, dowlas, shirting checks, Russia diapers, bed ticks, etc. There is scarcely an end to the men's and women's clothing materials in wool, cotton, silk, and mixed fabrics which came to Providence and other ports. As a single example of the variety, in June 1771 "an Assortment of plain, flowered, netted, sprigged, striped, spotted, and open-work Lawn for Aprons" was imported. Just what percentage of textiles was used for these purposes is not known, but it was probably much larger than the amount used for bed and window curtains, slip-covers, and upholstery. Nevertheless, these furnishing fabrics, so rarely found today, are of great interest to anyone concerned with historic houses and museum period rooms. From the few sets and partial sets of curtains which survive, one can see that many were professionally made, and the same is true of most original upholstery found on antique furniture.

If a letter book or account book of a Rhode Island upholsterer were to be found, much could be learned about the business. In the absence of such documentary information, I read the *Providence Gazette* from 1762, first year of its publication, through 1800 in the hope of finding upholsterers' advertisements and of learning about the craft and the materials used. Although this search was disappointing, from upholsterers' advertisements in other coastal cities one can learn the styles of bed and window curtains which they were prepared to execute. One sees immediately that furnishing fabrics offered by upholsterers corresponded to the imports of merchants. Hyns, or Hynmer, Taylor, Philadelphia

upholsterer, advertising in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, January 19, 1780, offered for sale:

*A few pieces of the most elegant chintz, both for firmness and richness of pattern, that has been imported into this country; a superfine blue and white cotton copper plate furniture pattern set of bed curtains, with every article compleat, to fit a large size four post bedstead; two large window curtains, to draw in drapery of the same pattern; a painted four post bedstead, with calico furniture fringed, and made to draw in drapery, with cornices; a white cotton Manchester counterpan, in good condition.*¹¹

On the handsome furniture made by the Goddards and Townsends for members of the Brown family, one can be certain that there was fashionable, fine quality upholstery work. Perhaps this was done in the cabinet-maker's shop by an employee, for few names of upholsterers are recorded.¹² Only one advertisement was found, dating from the close of the Revolutionary War, May 24, 1783.

*Caleb Gardner, Upholsterer, begs leave to inform the Public, that he carries on his business, in all its Branches, at the House of Paul Tew, Esq., opposite Mr. Samuel Young's. The Favors of the Public will be gratefully acknowledged, and those who may please to employ him may depend on having their Orders executed in the best Manner, and after the newest Fashions.*¹³

There may be more than a little significance in the fact that Josiah Bumstead, an upholsterer and paper stainer at 53 Marlborough Street, Boston, advertised in the Providence paper of April 11, 1795.¹⁴ The question arises whether Providence customers were obliged at this date to rely on Boston shops for upholstery work, wall paper, and looking glasses. From his advertisement we learn of the general nature of his business, comparable to that of an interior decorator today. He offered "a very extensive Assortment of Paper-Hangings, both French and American Manufacture, among which are some suitable for Wainscoting, Chimney Boards, Entries, &c., with some very elegant Borders." In furniture he had "a great Variety of gilt and mahogany framed Looking-Glasses," bedsteads, "Parlour and Chamber Chairs, easy Chairs, lolling Ditto, Card-Tables, Dining-Tables, &c." He carried

11 All Philadelphia newspapers cited from Alfred Coxe Prime, *Arts and Crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland, and South Carolina, Gleanings from Newspapers* (Topsfield, Mass., ser. 1, 1721-1785, 1929; ser. 2, 1786-1800, 1932).

12 John Williams and Robert Stevens, both of Newport,

billed Isaac Senter for upholstery work in 1786 and 1796. Joseph K. Ott, "Recent Discoveries among Rhode Island Cabinetmakers and Their Work," *Rhode Island History* 28:1 (February 1969) 11.

13 Caleb Gardner billed a client "To making a Easy Chair

Easy chair with embroidered flame-stitch covering. The back is decorated with animals, birds, and a pastoral scene of a shepherd with his flock. Beneath the upholstery the wooden frame is inscribed "Gardner, Junr. Newport 1758" recalling the notice of Caleb Gardner, Upholsterer, in the Gazette, 1783.



Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art, American Wing, gift of Mrs. J. Insley Blair.

almost all "articles in the Upholsterers Line," including "Bedticks, Feathers, Feather-Beds, Mattresses, Fringes, and Tassels." At the end of the advertisement he added: "Orders for any Kind of Cabinet or House-Furniture will be executed by the best Workmen and faithfully attended to."

From these examples it can be seen that the business of upholsterer alone could not support these men of varied talents nor fulfill their ambitions. As we know, the most prosperous colonials were merchants, and the more enterprising upholsterers apparently desired a share of the profits which trade would bring.

and Case 1-16-0." Ott, "Still More Notes on Rhode Island Cabinetmakers and Allied Craftsmen," *Rhode Island History* 28:4 (November 1969) 117.

14 Listed at this address in *Boston Directory*, 1796.

15 Benno. M. Forman, "Urban Aspects of Massachusetts

One reason for the lack of upholsterers' advertisements is found in Ebenezer Thompson's notice in the *Providence Gazette*, December 18, 1762, in which he lists London-made bed hangings:

8-4, 9-4, and 10-4 ready made China and Lincey Beds double and threble Vallens, made in London by the best workmen; green and crimson Harriteens and Chinas; Manchester blue, yellow and green check and bed Furniture.

China, also spelled cheyney, was related to worsted moreens and harateens; some with moiréed or watered finish and others stamped with a pattern by means of a hot metal roller. How these differed from "embossed serge," listed in Providence in 1764 and 1786, is not clear except that serge was generally a part worsted, twilled material. Harateen, far sturdier and less costly than silk, was used for window curtains in the Presbyterian Meeting House in Providence which in March 1778, "was broken open, and robbed of a large green harrateen curtain, belonging to the pulpit window; also of one green tammy and five red harrateen curtains." Strong, bright colors of red, blue, yellow, and green were favored in these worsteds with occasional references noted of crimson, scarlet and purple.

In Boston, the nearest large city, at least 17 upholsterers are known to have worked before 1725,¹⁵ and as early as 1713 Rupert Lord named himself upholsterer in the January 4 issue of the *Boston News-Letter*. Prior to the Revolution upholsterers' advertisements are infrequent, but one in the *Boston Gazette*, dated June 17, 1765, is typical:

*Just imported from London, and to be sold by John Simpkins . . . crimson, green and yellow Harrateens, Chaney's, Linceys, Trimmings of all Sorts, Quilts, Counterpins, Coverlids and Bedticks, Buckram . . . Where may be had all Sorts of Curtains, Feathers, Easy Chairs, Cushions, or any sort of Upholsterers Work.*¹⁶

For the most part imported goods were offered "at Publick Vendue," or auction, and a surprisingly rich and varied selection was available. In 1715 a "Silk Bed and Cushions" were "lately arrived from England," in 1732 "a fine new Silk Damask Quilt and Quilted Cushions of the same," and in 1738 "a Sattin Covered, curiously embroidered with gold Lincey for Curtains."

Furniture in the Late Seventeenth Century," *Country Cabinetwork and Simple City Furniture*, Winterthur Conference Report, 1969 (Charlottesville, Va., 1970) 4.

16 All Boston newspapers cited from George Francis Dow, *Arts and Crafts in New England, 1704-1775*, *Gleanings from Boston Newspapers* (Topsfield, Mass., 1927).

Detail of pink calimanco quilted petticoat which, with an added border of plain material, later served as a coverlet. England, 18th century.



Silks, always expensive, are rarely mentioned but sturdier woolen materials are found in great variety. Also in Boston there were "a Handsome Bedstead with Calaminco Curtains, Vallens, Tester & Window Curtains" in 1729; "a fashionable yellow Camblet Bed lin'd with Satten, a great easy Chair and Window Curtains, suitable for a Room, a Field Bedstead and Bed, the covering a Blew Harrateen" in 1735; and in the same year "a Coach-head Bed and Bedstead with its Curtains and Vallents, &c. as it stands, being a blew China." In 1737 "a yellow Mohair Bed lined with a Persian [thin silk] of the same Colour, and six Chairs of the same Mohair, little the worse for wear" were to be sold.

Striped, checkered, flowered, and plain calimancos woven in a wide range of colors are known from merchants' sample books, and Norwich was the chief town in England for their manufacture.¹⁷ Because they were highly glazed they were frequently used as substitutes for shiny silk satins and brocades in ladies' petticoats, and remnants were sold for women's shoes. They were offered in Providence as late as 1789 in

black, Saxon green, drab, claret, and blue which, however, may have been intended for dress goods.

Camblets, fine worsteds in tabby weave, finished without glaze, were produced in solid colors or in changeable weaves produced with warp threads of one color and weft of another. Fine, plain, striped, and cross-barred camblets came to Providence in 1762.

Handsome worsted damasks, known from a few remaining examples and advertised in Providence in 1762 and 1767, are called "bed sattins" in several pattern books. Since they were woven on a complex draw loom, they were probably more expensive than stamped wools.

More costly was "silk and worsted damask," a combination fabric advertised by John Taylor of New York in 1768, and Richard Kip of the same city in 1784 when he noted "rich yellow silk and worsted damask" and "a sofa, twelve chairs, and three window curtains of sky-blue silk and worsted damask, stuffed, garnished and fringed."¹⁸ Remnants of a set of yellow silk and worsted hangings woven in a large foliate pattern are found in the Moffatt-Ladd House, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and may be part of the "Yellow Damask Bed" listed in James Moffatt's inventory of 1768.¹⁹ William Franklin, son of Deborah and Benjamin, ordered from London in 1765 "Three curtains of Yellow Silk and Worsted Damask." He specified "Each Curtain to be Three yards and a quarter long — to contain Four breadths of the Damask — & to be hung festoon fashion."²⁰ Timothy Golding, a London upholsterer, was to make these curtains which were intended for Franklin's dining room.

Among the coarser wools used for upholstery purposes was baize, listed in Providence in 1778 in a variety of bright colors — red, blue, yellow, scarlet, crimson, and green. "Drapery and Colchester Baizes" were sold by John Ward in 1790, along with an unusually large variety of other wools: broadcloth, Forest cloths, coatings, shalloons, durants, moreens, calimancoes, lastings, and camblets.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century an increasingly wide variety of washable materials is noticeable. Furniture checks came from Manchester in Lancashire which by mid-century had become the

17 Six merchants' sample books containing Norwich worsteds are in the Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

18 All New York newspapers cited from Rita Susswein Gottesman, *Arts and Crafts in New York. Advertisements and News Items from New York City Newspapers* (New York, v. 1, 1726-1776, 1938; v. 2, 1777-1799, 1954).

Chintz, block-printed in madder colors, probably at the Leven printfield in Scotland about 1795. A frame mark with the letters P Y Ca and number 2 is visible. On the reverse appear the words British Manufactory 37 and the crowned



center of the cotton goods industry in England. In Boston "1 Mohogany four Post Bedsted with Red and white Furniture Check and 3 Window Curtains" was sold in 1770.

Dimity, a white cotton material not unlike modern seersucker, was widely used for simple bed hangings; one would have found it especially suitable for summer. "Narrow and wide striped Dimities" were offered by Samuel Young in January 1794.

Both India painted and resist-dyed cottons, and English block and copperplated printed fabrics were imported in great quantities and varieties. To Providence in 1773 on John Brown's ship *Charlotte* came "Calicos, chintzes, and patches, best copperplate Curtain Furniture," and at Hill's Ready Money Variety Store "red and white, and blue and white furniture calicoes with farm houses" were offered in 1774. "Most beautiful dark chintzes," a fashion of the 1790s, were listed on November 23, 1793, along with "a very handsome Assortment of best Quality bright coloured

cypher of George III. By law such marks were stamped at the end of a piece of chintz destined for export if a drawback was to be claimed.



Copperplate, or Furniture, of Excellent Figures." At the New Cheap Shop, in December of that year, one could purchase "a beautiful Variety of red and white, and purple and white Copperplate Furniture for Curtains." In 1797 "dark Stripe Chintzes of the newest Fashion, light ditto" came from London.

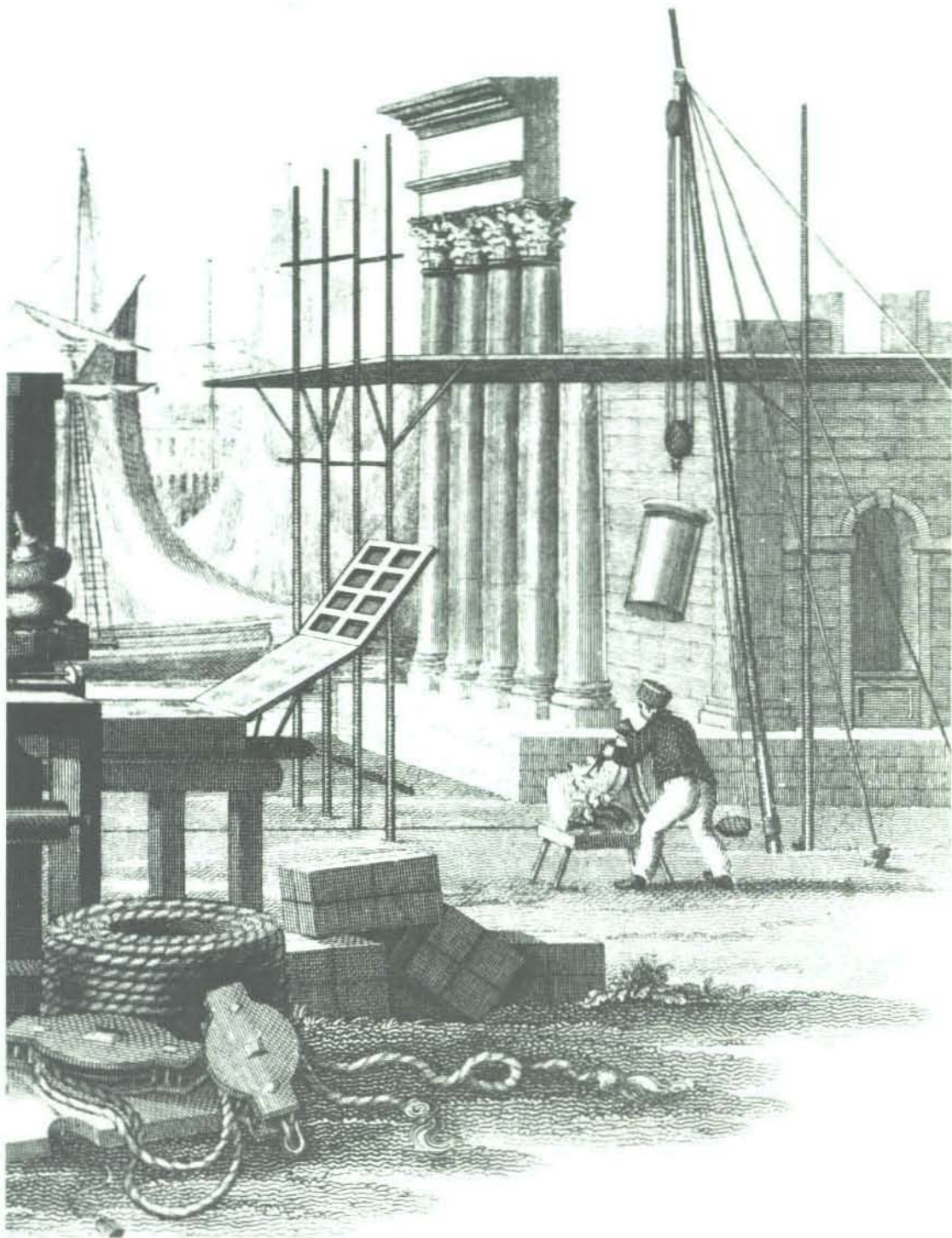
Thus the merchants conducted their business, buying from London and selling wholesale to shopkeepers or at retail in their own shops. Despite great risks, men like the Browns of Providence were successful and were among those who undertook the town's responsibilities as it grew.

Ever-changing fashions brought the latest novelties to America, including new furniture styles. Materials for seating furniture, beds, window curtains and slipcovers were supplied by upholsterers. First apprenticed and trained in London, here in America they assumed more and more the role of interior decorators as their clients prospered.

19 Abbott Lowell Cummings, *Bed Hangings* (Boston, 1961) Fig. 12.

20 *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 35:4 (October 1911) 440.

Detail from membership certificate of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers shows a stone cutter at work and indicates crafts represented in the organization.



Rhode Island Housewrights, Shipwrights, and Related Craftsmen

by Joseph K. Ott*

These listings were compiled for two reasons: first, as a cross reference to validate the host of new Rhode Island cabinetmakers who have recently come to light; and, second, to indicate some of the men who built and decorated the houses and ships we study today as part of our heritage. Fortunately very few, if any, of the following housewrights, carpenters, shipwrights and other workers coincide with men previously considered furniture makers. They are, however, important in their own right and deserve more attention than they have received in the past.

In the various craft descriptions used in this article there may be deviations from those given in such sources as the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *English Dictionary* of N. Bailey (London, 1759). While first generation and well-educated men would probably use the "proper" terminology in the New World, the same cannot necessarily be said for their descendants, probate clerks, executors, tax assessors, merchants, and others whose records provide the sources for these names. There were also regional differences in term usage, and some men worked at more than one trade at a time.

It is also difficult to be sure, in Rhode Island, of the methods by which craftsmen were trained. The guild system and trade customs of their own country were certainly in the minds of first generation workers, but one develops the feeling that later generations were considerably more pragmatic in their approach. The term of apprenticeship is usually the standard seven years when formal indentures have been found.

Housewrights built houses and other buildings. They worked with their hands, but could make plans, direct and organize other workers, and bring to completion a concept or design previously chosen by patron or owner. The design could be originated by the housewright, or worked out between contracting parties, and

would be drawn from printed sources, oral descriptions, or copied or adapted from existing buildings, nearby or far away. Housewrights ranged from men capable of building great churches and mansions to those whose talents were limited to simple dwellings and outbuildings.

The term "house carpenter" is less frequently encountered, but seems to have been used synonymously with "housewright" in most instances. Richard Munday described himself as "house carpenter," certainly an understatement to those who feel such a craft merely meant a carpenter who worked on houses.

Carpenters were "workers in wood." They made and repaired sash, doors, hearths, simple furniture and all sorts of odd things such as shower stalls, farm implements and book shelves. Not only were they employed to keep buildings in proper condition, but they would work on new buildings under direction of a housewright, and on ships under direction of a shipwright. A distinction could be made between the rural carpenter, whose skills were used more broadly in a wider range of projects (as a wright, for instance) and the urban carpenter, whose work was more specialized.

In a sense every working man was a carpenter; odd jobs were part of his chores around house or farm. This was particularly the case in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Generally speaking, though, a carpenter was more familiar with tools than a day laborer or ordinary citizen, but far less sophisticated both in technical skill and ability to transform an idea or design into an actual object than a housewright, shipwright, or cabinetmaker.

A complicating factor in describing a carpenter's status or skill level was the need and desire of men to keep busy and employed. Thus specialists frequently did quite ordinary work when their talents were not in use for a specific house, ship, or piece of furniture.

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While John Bannister had many ships built, and regularly used the same men for each phase of their construction and outfitting, there was still a great deal of time for these men to seek additional work as carpenters or day laborers.

The term "joiner" is often encountered and its use should be clarified. Previous authors have used it synonymously with "cabinetmaker," and in Rhode Island at least, this seems quite justified. When a joiner worked primarily on items other than furniture, the term is usually qualified; hence we see a few references to "ship joiner" and "house joiner," instead of the more normal "shipwright" and "housewright." The term was becoming archaic in the eighteenth century, but it persisted longer when used for cabinetmakers. "Shop joiner" was also used for those who made furniture, but this was rather rare.

There are some crafts that do not fit easily into categories. Thus, a "turner" who turned wooden parts on a lathe and a "carver" who carved wooden parts decoratively served men who built houses, ships and furniture as subcontractors. These specialists are not included here as they have been treated in reference books and standard sources as primarily related to cabinetmaking.

Three articles in the 1969 issues of *Rhode Island History* and a fourth study in preparation list several men among the cabinetmakers with the notation: "... may be more of a carpenter than a maker." These men are not included here unless a reference has been found that identifies their work with more exactness.

It has been stated that there were only two brick buildings in Newport in 1750, and only six at the beginning of the Revolutionary War (Downing, 31, 61). The reasons are somewhat unclear, but perhaps include the prevalence of rather easily workable stone and a shortage of clay. There was also a popular feeling that brick buildings held moisture and, in a seaside town, would be unhealthy as residences. It was probably lack of experience with this building material on a broad scale that led John Stevens (very likely a mason, as this family was famous in the field) in 1760 to write to John Frothingham of Charlestown, Massachusetts, concerning fine points of masons' pricing policies.

Frothingham replied with a detailed account of "Masons' Rules of Work," (page 78) that gives us common pricing practices or "union rates" in a craft hitherto undocumented. It should be noted that masons' work included brick and stone as raw materials, and labor on houses, walls, hearths, chimneys, even including lathing and plastering. The jobs of a mason, then, could overlap those of a bricklayer and similar craftsmen. It would appear that at least some masons were capable of building a house of brick and/or stone and could function as housewrights. I would assume they would require the services of the latter, or at least carpenters, for the needed wooden parts of the building.

Detailed as the masons' rules are, they do not approach the elaboration of *Rules for House-Carpenters Work in the Town of Providence*, printed in 1796 by Carter and Wilkinson as a revision of the original rules drawn up in 1750, and now in the collection of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. A similar copy, formerly in the Society's library, carried the notation "Property of Philip Allen bought of Abel Allen 1813," and "Abel Allen . . . Book." Allen's activities are given in part in Ott 3:116, beginning as early as 1792.

It is interesting to note in passing, these rules were begun in 1750, a Providence cabinetmakers' price agreement was made in 1756 (Ott 2:49), and the Charlestown masons' rules were in existence in 1760. In addition, an agreement to regulate the price of spermaceti (Rhode Islanders were famous for their candle trade) was signed by important Providence and Newport merchants in 1761 (*The Browns of Providence Plantations, Colonial Years*, James B. Hedges, Cambridge, Mass., 1952, 95 ff; Richardson, 78). All these agreements are within a twelve-year period, and may represent a relatively sudden awareness of the advantages of regulated markets.

It is not the purpose of this account to analyze these trade practices in the several colonies, but it is amusing to note that despite the detailed work descriptions disagreements could still occur, and the expenses of extra work needed to remove a hill when paving a street, for instance — the masons' rules — would still have to go before the committee. Arguments pro and

con would probably sound very familiar to anyone today who has to deal with union practices, contract building work, and like projects.

Stone cutters cut and carved stone for buildings and ornamental use. Perhaps the most significant item of local interest in the following lists is the entry for Gabriel Allen, who worked on the John Brown House fireplaces.

The painters included are mostly house and ship painters, although several ornamental painters and one possible "limmer" (William Allen) have been noted who are not found in standard sources. No attempt has been made in this article to list well known or recognized artists, even though they may have worked occasionally on prosaic projects, for the simple reason they are treated fully in other references. Two exceptions to this are William Bache and T. Nixon, with the justification of giving new information.

The Society owns several charming profile portraits by these men. They are well colored with water colors, on paper, and are oval in shape, about five to six inches high. Bache and Nixon worked in Providence and Newport in part of 1809 and 1810, and their notice in the *Newport Mercury*, given in detail in their listing, gives rise to mild speculation they may be among those artists who went from town to town painting the thousands of larger unsigned portraits that exist today. This, however, seems unlikely, as their small likenesses were signed, the time required for a sitting was short, and their rates low (close to that for Samuel King's silhouettes). Other private arrangements between painter and sitter were possible of course.

Shipwrights built ships. They functioned in their field as housewrights did in theirs, but with this difference: building, outfitting, and finishing a ship required many more specialized craftsmen. The requirements of the merchant owner and captain forced a highly organized effort that involved many men over a long period of time. "Ship Carpenter" is a term sometimes encountered, and was probably used analogously with "house carpenter"; many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers used the terms synonymously. In the following lists, only the principal subsidiary workers in wood employed in shipbuilding

are mentioned. Among these are blockmakers, who made the blocks through which ropes pass.

From certain sources, and particularly from John Bannister's recapitulations of the expenses of furnishing hulls for his trading voyages, a "shipwright" seems quite different from a "boat builder." For each ship the expenses of building the hull are listed first, with several shipwrights involved. Further down the list, among the specialized craftsmen, usually only one of which was employed, boat builders are named along with carvers, bricklayers, sailmakers, blockmakers, riggers, etc. The obvious conclusion would be that boat builders made small craft, as dories, to be carried on the larger ones. They probably built small fishing sloops and shallops also.

Although M. V. Brewington in *Shipcarvers of North America* (Barre, Mass., 1962, 43) states "... as early as 1781 one development in the mechanics of ship decoration, purely local and apparently short lived, was to be found in Boston," John Bannister was employing Alexander Williams much earlier in 1747 and 1748 in Newport in the arcane position of "head builder," the development to which Brewington refers. As in the case of "boat builder," it seems a specialized craft.

Although it cannot be said with complete certainty, for Rhode Island it appears a head builder, as Brewington indicates, was a man who applied and integrated the figurehead and subsidiary carved decorations to the hull. He was versed in aesthetics and practical construction, but not a carver in the accepted sense. John Brown, in describing his large ship *George Washington* (John Brown Papers D, RIHS Library), says in a letter dated Dec. 21, 1797: "We have taken off her head being very large and heavy and have put on a new light one of 7 feet long." Again, whether or not a vessel had a head was one of the vital points contained in the official Certificates of Measurement issued by port authorities together with length, breadth, depth, tonnage, and number of masts and decks. As might be expected, the larger the craft, the more likely it was to have a head: sloops and schooners, and even brigantines, had them infrequently, while ships (in the specific sense) practically always did. A 1793 certificate for a ship built by Benjamin Tallman carried the

notation it had a "man head," while another by Benjamin Comstock the same year had a "woman head." In 1795 Tallman put a "serpent head" on the *Polly* [Customs].

Chaisemakers, obviously, have little to do with houses, ships or furniture. They are included here as craftsmen who were specialized and highly competent wood workers, able as the others to bring an idea or design to fruition. There are few detailed contemporary illustrations of eighteenth-century carriages or working vehicles. However, from bills of sale, repair bills, and descriptions, it is apparent the chaises of wealthy owners were often brightly and elaborately painted and gilded, had carved decorations, and, of course, were soundly made to withstand rapid movement over cobblestone and dirt roads. Further, the experience of these skilled workers with the strength and versatility of native American hardwoods gave them an advantage in design that was to be dramatically demonstrated later in the nineteenth century when coachbuilders such as Brewster won international awards ("Builders for the Carriage Trade," Paul H. Downing and Harrison Kinney, *American Heritage*, v. VII, No. 6, Oct. 1956, 90).

Far too little has been written about all these craftsmen as such; they are usually discussed casually by an historian on his way to establishing the more important issues of political trends and the like. Yet they are important: to paraphrase Carl Bridenbaugh in his *Colonial Craftsman* (New York, 1950, 165), they worked long and hard hours, and their ambition and desire to do better was one of the great driving forces in the democratization and growth of American society. In their day, they were usually what we would call "middle class." They became active in politics, education, civic affairs, and a host of other areas.

With a good family background, a fortunate marriage, a particular eminence in his field (and men such as silversmiths, cabinetmakers, and the higher forms of housewrights had the edge), or some such impetus, a craftsman might attain the highest levels of society. "Whatever the social status of a colonial craftsman came to be, however, it is certain that such American conditions as freedom from guild restraints, [ability to earn] higher wages, and the greater dignity of labor

guaranteed the artisan a better social position than he ever enjoyed in old England," (Bridenbaugh, 163).

It should be noted that the following lists are by no means exhaustive; they were developed as a benefit in the search for new data on known or undiscovered cabinetmakers. Alexander B. Hawes, who is studying seventeenth-century maritime history, kindly provided many names of early shipwrights from the Rhode Island Land Records. In an earlier time, George H. Richardson, local historian of Newport, listed hundreds of men in various occupations, from horse jockeys to town criers, with much additional data. Though largely without references, spot checks over the years have seldom if ever shown his work to be in error and his contributions are given here with confidence. Standard reference works, such as Bjerko, use his names without question.

It is hoped other students of Rhode Island's past will note similar craftsmen and their sources and give their names to the Rhode Island Historical Society's library staff so eventually a much more complete roster can be made.

In the following, a man is listed under the craft by which he was described in a deed or other recorded document, an account book or ledger, or tax list. The name is followed by the source, the page number, and the year mentioned in that source. Unless otherwise indicated, the dates are presumed to be working dates. No organized effort was made to list men after about 1815. For convenience, sources are simplified in most entries; those so abbreviated are given in full on page 79 .



HOUSEWRIGHTS

- Allen, Darius.* Mechanics; Jan. 13, 1794; Providence.
Angell, Isaac. Mechanics; Feb. 18, 1790; Providence.
Arnold, James. Richardson; 1725; Newport.
Arnold, Nicholas. Arnold Papers, RIHS Library; 1791-1820; Cranston.
Avery, ———. Richardson; 1725; Newport.

- Baillie, Joseph.* Richardson, 1775; Newport.
- Barber, Reynolds.* Ott 3:117; 1776; Exeter.
- Beere, John.* Richardson, 1708-1716; Newport.
- Beverly, Stephen.* *Providence Directory* and Joseph J. Fenner Papers, RIHS Library; 1826; Providence.
- Bissell, Francis.* Richardson; 1726-1727; Newport.
- Bliss, John.* Downing 63; 1739; Newport. Worked on Colony House.
- Brown, William.* Town Tax; 1785-1787; Providence.
- Budlong, Job.* Town Tax; 1795-1800; Providence.
- Burk, Richard.* Town Tax; 1795-1802; Providence.
- Burr, David.* Mechanics, Feb. 15, 1790; Providence.
- Bush, Aaron.* Brown 39; 1813; Providence.
- Carpenter, Oliver.* Town Tax; 1769-1787; Providence.
- Chapman, Ralph.* Richardson; 1693-1718; Newport.
- Church, Rufus.* Downing 488; 1750; Newport.
- Cole, Captain James.* Richardson; 1713; Newport.
- Cole, Joseph.* Brown 115; 1829-1831; Providence.
- Cook, George.* Richardson; 1718; Newport.
- Cranston, William.* Richardson; 1725; Newport.
- Drutey, _____.* Town Tax; 1775; Providence.
- Earl, John.* Brown 168; 1810-1812; Providence.
- Easton, James.* Richardson; 1714; Newport.
- Edman, Thomas.* Benoni Waterman Account Book 12, RIHS Library; 1763; probably Warwick.
- Ellery, _____.* Richardson; 1727; Newport.
- Finch, William.* Downing 490; 1770; Newport. Listed as "house joiner."
- Franklin, Asaph.* Brown 24; 1763-1764; Providence.
- Freeman, _____.* Town Tax; 1784-1787; Providence.
- Gibbs, Jonathan.* Downing 503; before 1777; Newport.
- Gibbs, Robert.* Richardson; 1704; Newport.
- Goddard, Daniel.* *Newport Mercury* death notice, May 28, 1764 (quoted in Bjerko), father of John Goddard, famous cabinetmaker, and probably same man as the shipwright (q.v.); Newport.
- Greene, Samuel.* Downing 63, 81; with Wing Spooner built Redwood Library, 1747, worked on Malbone house, c. 1760; Benoni Waterman Account Book; 1763-1764; Newport.
- Hammett, Edward.* Downing 510; 1808; Newport. Son of Nathan Hammett.
- Hammett, Nathan.* Downing 510; 1808; Newport.
- Hammett, Nathan, Jr.* Downing 510; 1808; Newport.
- Hammond (or Hammon), Jonathan.* Isham 4; described as "joyner" in 1744 deed, and "house carpenter" in 1762, worked on First Baptist Meeting House, 1775; Providence.
- Hudson, Thomas.* Downing 508; 1808; Newport.
- Knowles, Edward.* Isham 28; worked on First Baptist Meeting House, 1775. One of many who subscribed and whose contribution would be paid in labor. Note: These other men are not listed here as this is not a definitive craft description. Ott 3:118; 1791; Almy and Brown Papers, Land Records, deed to Moses Brown, RIHS Library; 1810; Providence.
- Lambert, Daniel.* Richardson; 1717; Newport.
- Lathrop, Nath.* Mechanics; Jan. 13, 1794; Providence.
- Lawton, Jonathan.* Downing 495; 1744; Newport.
- Lindley, Joshua.* Brown 192; 1789-1790; Mechanics; July 25, 1796; Misc. Writs, 1781-1799, for Providence, Smithfield, etc., RIHS Library; 1797; Providence.
- Linsey, Christopher.* Richardson; 1713; Newport.
- Miller, James.* Town Tax; 1812; Providence.
- Munday, Richard.* Downing 57; 1721-1740; Newport. Though he described himself as "house carpenter" it is uncertain whether the term had the same meaning as it does when applied to others listed here. Certainly he was Newport's first architect-builder and his career is treated in standard sources.
- Norman, George.* Downing 488; 1822; Newport.
- Norton, Benjamin.* Richardson; 1705; Newport.
- Ormsbee, Caleb.* Mechanics; July 28, 1796; Providence.
- Packard, Mehzar.* Misc. Writs . . . ; 1795; Providence.
- Pearce, Samuel.* Town Tax; 1800-1803; Providence.
- Peckham, Henry.* Downing 68; 1754; Newport. With Wing Spooner signed agreement to build the house of John Townsend, famous cabinetmaker. A copy of the original manuscript is in the Newport Historical Society.
- Pelham, Captain Edward.* Richardson; 17th century; Newport.
- Pettis, Joseph.* Brown 106; 1786-1787; Town Tax; 1785-1787; Providence.
- Pitman, Benjamin.* Downing 109, 456; 1806; Newport.
- Potter, Jere.* Misc. Writs . . . ; 1781-1799; Providence.
- Rider, Joseph.* Richardson; 1752-1754; Newport.
- Shaw, Lemuel.* Beriah Brown Papers, RIHS Library; Aug. 22, 1754; South Kingstown.
- Sheffield, James.* Richardson; no date; Newport.
- Smith, Nedeblah.* Mechanics; Feb. 15, 1790; Providence.
- Snow, Thomas and Josiah.* Sessions Papers, RIHS Library; Aug. 21, 1809; Providence.
- Spooner, Charles.* Bolhouse 11, 13; 1772; Newport.
- Spooner, Joshua.* Cooke Papers, v. 1, RIHS Library; Feb. 11, 1762; Providence.

HOUSEWRIGHTS — continued

- Spooner, Wing.* Downing 63, 68, 81; worked on Redwood Library 1747, with Henry Peckham on house of cabinet-maker John Townsend 1754, and on Malbone house c. 1760; Newport.
- Staples, ———.* Town Tax; 1787; Providence.
- Staples, Samuel.* Town Tax; 1794-1797; Providence.
May be same man as above.
- Stone, ———.* Town Tax; 1787; Providence.
- Sumner, James.* Isham 11; 1775; Boston. Various descriptions as "master workman," "engineer," etc., he was brought to Providence to be in charge of the erection of the building and/or steeple of the First Baptist Meeting House. Whether he continued to work in Providence as did some of his Boston carpenters is not certain. The variety of his titles, all correct contemporary terminology in one way or another, shows the danger in strict adherence to dictionary descriptions of crafts.
- Swinburne, Thomas.* Richardson; 1713; Newport.
- Taylor, Robert.* Richardson; 1712; Newport.
- Tefft, David.* Misc. Writs . . . ; 1799; Cranston.
- Thurber, Squire.* Mechanics; Feb. 15, 1790; Providence.
- Tiffany, Jonathan.* Almy and Brown Papers, Box 32; 1805; Providence.
- Townsend, Christopher.* Downing 63, 75; "was signed on as a housejoiner" during building of the Colony House 1739, and described as "shipjoiner" in a deed taking part of the Quaker lands on Easton's Point 1725; Newport. His reputation is chiefly established, however, by his work as a cabinetmaker. From signed examples it is evident he was capable of sophisticated work, and his production of pieces such as desks for export cargo is documented in standard sources.
- Wanton, William.* Richardson; 1704; Newport.
- Wardwell, Stephen.* Stone 117; c. 1771-1775; Providence.
Possibly served only as apprentice.
- Wheaton, Comfort.* Cooke Papers, v. 1, Feb. 11, 1762; Isham 4; born 1723, active 1763, worked on First Baptist Meeting House 1775; Providence.
- Wheaton, James.* Isham 13; worked on First Baptist Meeting House 1775; Providence.
- Wilbour, Joshua.* Downing 111; c. 1800-1802; Newport.
- Williams, John.* Beriah Brown Papers; May 24, 1746; probably South Kingstown.
- Wilmarth, John.* Brown 31; 1763-1768; Providence.
- Wilson, John.* Beriah Brown Papers; 1774; South Kingstown.
- Wyatt, Benjamin.* Autograph Book, 91, RIHS Library; Downing 63, 68; Bolhouse 9, 10, 11, 1735, 1739; Newport.

CARPENTERS

- Alverson, Richard.* Rhode Island Manuscripts, RIHS Library; died June 14, 1789; Smithfield.
- Allen, Benjamin.* Town Tax; 1757; Providence. After this year is described as a "Joyner" 1758-1760.
- Arnold, Caleb.* Richardson; 1757; Newport.
- Bacon, Elijah.* Stone 33; active before 1790, died 1801; Providence.
- Bailey, Paul.* Downing 500; 1809, 1816; Newport.
- Banks, Samuel.* Richardson; 1708; Newport.
- Barber, John L.* Downing 511; 1839; Newport.
- Boone, James.* Richardson; 1785; Newport.
- Bowers, Benjamin.* Richardson; 1743; Newport.
- Cahoone, John.* Richardson; 1755; Newport.
- Cane, John.* Richardson; 1795; Newport.
- Chapman, Israel.* Downing 63, 81; 1739-1747; Newport.
Worked on Colony House and Redwood Library
- Child, Oliver.* Richardson; 1744; Newport.
- Church, Edward.* Richardson; 1743; Newport.
- Church and Sweet.* Ott 1:19; Greene; 1822-1828; East Greenwich. A variety of detailed bills exist.
- Clarke, Western (?).* Richardson; 1772; Newport.
- Cole, James.* Town Tax; 1797-1798; Providence.
- Cook, Nathaniel.* Town Tax; 1798-1812; Providence.
In 1798 listed as "house carpenter."
- Cornell, George.* Richardson; 1795; Newport.
- Crain, ———.* *Life and Recollections of John Howland* by Edwin M. Stone (Providence, 1857) 17; 1775 to early 1780s; Providence. With Stevens, was one of the many masons and carpenters from Boston who worked on the First Baptist Meeting House. After its completion he stayed in Providence and worked for Clark and Nightingale.
- Crandall, Samuel.* Richardson; 1775; Newport.
- Gibbs, Elisha.* Richardson; 1775; Newport.
- Gibbs, James.* Richardson; 1779; Newport.
- Gould, James.* Town Tax; 1793-1797; Providence.
- Greene, John Holden.* Stone 116; born 1777; died 1850; Providence. Though described by Stone as "by trade a carpenter," he was an architect-builder of the first rank, and his life and buildings are treated in standard sources.
- Hammitt, Benjamin.* Richardson; 1773; Newport.
- Hammitt, Edward.* Richardson; 1752; Newport.
- Hammitt, Walden.* Richardson; 1825; Newport.
- Hammond, Joseph.* Richardson; 1780; Newport.
- Hannah, V. (?).* Richardson; 1727; Newport.
- Hathaway, Samuel.* Bolhouse 161; 1766; Newport.
- Hoxie, Lodowick.* Bannister 371; 1748; Newport.

Huddy (i). Richardson; 1753; Newport.
Hudson, Robert. Brown 204; 1786-1790; Providence.
 Many bills are detailed.
Knight, Richard. Richardson; 1679-1684; Newport.
Ladd, John. Benoni Waterman Account Book I; 1763;
 probably Warwick.
Langley, William. Richardson; 1774; Newport.
Lawton, Isaac. Richardson; 1756-1763; Newport.
Lawton, Jonathan. Richardson; 1785; Greene; 1801;
 Newport.
Ludlow, Henry. Town Tax; 1794; Providence.
Marshall, Samuel. Richardson; 1775-1797; Newport.
Martindale, John. Richardson; 1730; Newport.
Mason, James. Town Tax; 1783-1784; Providence.
Melvil, Thomas. Downing 63, 81; 1739-1747; Richardson;
 1775; Newport. Worked on Colony House and Redwood
 Library.
Moody, James. Richardson; 1775; Newport.
Newman, John. Stone 113; born 1772, died 1831; Provi-
 dence. Apparently specialized in building stairs.
Palmer, Edward. Richardson; 1743; Newport.
Peckham, Henry. Richardson; 1765.
Perry, Jonathan. Richardson; 1743; Newport.
Petter (?). ———. Town Tax; 1784; Providence.
Phillips, Job. Richardson; 1762; Newport.
Pitman, James. Richardson; 1776; Newport.
Potter, Joseph. Town Tax; 1749; Providence.
Rogers, Thomas. Richardson; 1741; Newport.
Rogers, William. Richardson; 1728; Newport.
Rude, William. Bolhouse 16; 1766; Newport.
Sanford, Esband (?). Richardson; 1732; Newport.
Shaw, Anthony. Richardson; 1776; Newport.
Sherman, Samuel. Richardson; 1775; Newport.
Shepard, Wing. Richardson; 1754; Newport.
Smith, Daniel. Richardson; 1784; Newport.
Smith, James. Richardson; 1785; Newport.
Smith, William. Downing 113, 498; 1827, 1870; Newport.
Stevens, ———. *Life and Recollections of John Howland*
 17; 1775 to early 1780s; Providence. Like Crain (q.v.)
 he came from Boston and worked on First Baptist Meet-
 ing House, then stayed in Providence several years.
Stillwell, ———. Richardson; 1754; Newport.
Sweet, Stephen. Ott 1:23; 1815; East Greenwich.
 Probably the Sweet of Church and Sweet.
Thurston, William. Richardson; 1756; Newport.
Tompkins, Samuel. Richardson; 1775; Newport.
Townsend, Thomas. Richardson; 1775; Newport.
Warkham, Samuel, Sr. Richardson; 1714; Newport.

Waterman, ———. Town Tax; 1785; Providence.
Weatherby, ———. Richardson; 1753; Newport.
Wheaton, James. Town Tax; 1776; Providence.
Wilbour, Joshua. Richardson; 1800; Newport.
Williams, John. Town Tax; 1784-1785; Providence.

MASONS

Andrews, John. Town Tax; 1757-1761; Providence.
Andrews, Zephaniah. Isham 12; Stone 113; born 1739,
 died 1816; Providence. Credited with the work on John
 Brown's and Joseph Russell's houses and University Hall.
 See also standard sources for local buildings.
Bliss, John. Downing 63; 1739; Newport. Worked on
 Colony House.
Bosworth, Ichabod. Town Tax; 1784; Providence.
Brown, Elisha. Town Tax; Brown 69; 1783-1798;
 Providence.
Brown, Joseph. Richardson; 1750-1759; Newport.
Brown, Philip. Richardson; 1795; Newport.
Brown, William. Richardson; 1772-1783; Newport.
Castles, John. Richardson; 1779; Newport.
Caswell, Joseph. Richardson; 1763; Newport.
Center, Solomon. Richardson; 1743-1758; Newport.
Chadwick, John. Richardson; died (?) 1715; Newport.
Clark, James. Richardson; 1783; Newport.
Drown, ———. Town Tax; 1784; Providence.
Freeborn, Henry. Richardson; 1795; Newport.
Hale, Joseph. Town Tax; 1798; Providence.
Hartshorn, Stephen. Almy and Brown Papers, Bible Society
 and Moses Brown Deeds; 1722; Providence.
McGregor, Alexander. Downing 110; before 1824 to 1860;
 Newport. Did the 1824 portion of Fort Adams' walls.
Nichols, Herbert. Richardson; 1735; Newport.
Nichols, Kendall. Downing 63; 1739; Newport. Worked on
 Colony House.
Nichols, Samuel. Richardson; 1750-1761; Newport.
Peckham, Joshua. Richardson; 1772; Newport.
Peckham, Phillip. Richardson; 1776; Newport.
Phillips, ———. Town Tax; 1791-1792; Providence.
Pitman, Benjamin. Richardson; 1785; Newport.
Pitman, Samuel. Richardson; 1740-1762, 1795; Newport.
Rodes, Samuel. Richardson; 1753; Newport.
Smith, John. Warner Papers 2, RIHS Library; July 11, 1652;
 Providence.
Smith, Joseph. Richardson; 1762-1776; Newport.
Stevens, George. Town Tax; 1757; Providence.
Stevens, John. Bannister 56; Downing 494 etc.; (including
 descendants) 1705 to early 20th century; Newport.

MASONS — continued

This first Stevens set up his shop in 1705 and it has been in continuous operation since by various members of the family. These well known craftsmen were also marble workers, stone cutters, brickmakers, glaziers, painters, surveyors and map makers.

Turner, Lawtence. Richardson; 1673; Newport.

Wright, Henry. Richardson; 1728; Downing 63; 1739; Newport. Worked on Colony House.

BRICKLAYERS

Mason, William. Town Tax; 1808; Providence.

Nichols, Kendall. Richardson; 1716-1725; Newport.

Probably the same man as the mason.

Prosser, Joseph. Richardson; 1726; Newport.

Rounds, George. Richardson; 1727; Newport.

Smith, Charles. Richardson; 1726; Newport.

BRICKMAKERS

Clarke, Lawrence. Downing 31; Richardson; 1691;

Newport. "Granted the liberty to dig clay and make brick."

Clinton, Lawrence. Richardson; April 27, 1681; Newport.

"Voted that Lawrence Clinton and Joseph Murry have liberty to fence in a piece of land near the fish ponds for the purpose of making, and also have the liberty to cut wood in the neck where they dig their clay, for the burning of their bricks."

Knapp, Nehemiah. Brown 138; 1765-1768; Providence.

Murry, Joseph. Richardson; April 27, 1681; Newport.

See Lawrence Clinton above.

Shores, Zephaniah, Ott, John Brown House Loan Exhibition

Rhode Island Furniture (Providence, 1965) xxi; 1786;

East Providence. Said to have made the brick for John Brown House.

Stevens, John, and others. Bannister 56; Downing 494;

Richardson; Newport. Worked on many of Bannister's ships, presumably on cooking ovens, etc. See John Stevens, the mason.

WALL BUILDER

Holmes, Dick. Richardson; 1749; Newport. "Negro."

PAVER

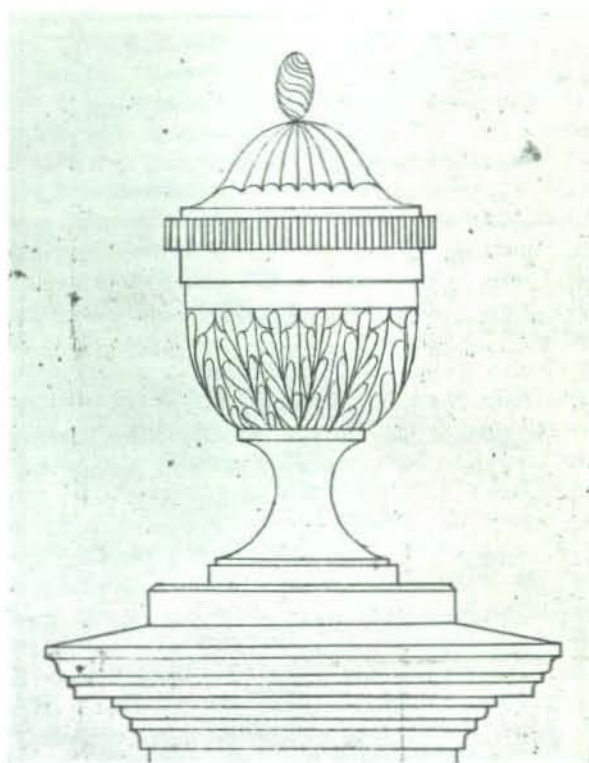
Jones, ———. Richardson; 1764; Newport.

PLUMBER

Chambers, Patrick. Bannister 56, 108, 120, etc.; 1747;

Newport. Recorded as working on Bannister's ships.

Detail of a monument design from the Joseph J. Fenner Papers, Rhode Island Historical Society Library. On the base column below this detail, the stone cutter noted the overall height "6 ft. 10 in." and price \$190.



STONE CUTTERS

Allen, Gabriel. Mechanics; July 25, 1796; Stone 58; Ott,

John Brown House Exhibition . . . xxi; born 1749, died

1824; Seekonk, Mass. and Providence. Emigrated from

England to Boston about 1770, moved to Seekonk and

then to Providence. He was a stone cutter in Seekonk

and was described as stone cutter in Mechanics, 1796.

He became a member of that Association in 1789. Allen

is chiefly interesting as the man to whom John Brown

presumably referred in 1788 when he wrote John Francis

in Philadelphia, "Mr. Allin, the Stone Cutter hear have

no Marvel buy him . . ." This letter was concerned with

- the fireplaces in Brown's new house and it seems safe to assume Gabriel Allen was the local stone cutter involved.
- Ames, ———*. Richardson; no date; Newport.
- Bagley, Joseph*. Town Tax; 1806-1808; Providence.
- Bull, John*. Richardson; 1775; Newport.
- Fenner, Joseph J.* Joseph J. Fenner Papers; 1806-early 1830s; Providence. Although he began his career as a merchant, he became a stone cutter in 1806 and worked on gravestones, fireplace mantels, door sills, steps, monuments, etc. Fenner sold both wholesale and retail in the northeast states, imported stone from other states as well as abroad, and in general ran a very active business. Many of his tombstone inscriptions in manuscript form exist in his papers, giving important genealogical information, and his sketches of monuments and mantels are useful also. His papers attest to the fact that he was capable of quite elaborate workmanship and had the patronage of the leading citizens of the town.
- Hartshorn, Stephen*. Almy and Brown Papers; 1781; Providence. Although described as a mason in 1772, a later deed lists him as a stone cutter.
- Stevens, John, and others*. 1705 to early 20th century; Newport. See entry under MASONS.

PAINTERS

- Aldrich, Thomas*. Town Tax; 1799-1802; Providence.
- Allen, James, Jr.* Richardson; Bannister 326; 1743-1748; Newport.
- Allen, John*. Richardson; 1737-1739; Newport. Painted Trinity Church.
- Allen, William*. Ott 3:114; 1774-1791; Town Tax; 1784-1791; Providence. In some years described as a "limmer" in tax records, though information in Ott 3 makes the term uncertain in his case. Certainly he was an ornamental painter, and his account book covers many entries for chaises and shop signs.
- Bache, William*. Groce, George C. and Wallace, David H., *Dictionary of Artists in America* (New Haven, 1957) 18; born 1771, died 1845; Richardson; 1810; Bristol and Newport. During his 1809-1810 stay in Providence associated with T. Nixon [q.v.]. The *Newport Mercury* of April 28 and May 5, 1810 carried the following notice:
Striking Likenesses — W. Bache & T. Nixon, Have the honor to inform the Ladies and Gentlemen of Newport of their arrival in Town, and respectfully offer their services in the line of their profession — They engage to give a speaking likeness and handsome painting to any person that will favor them with an half-hours' sitting, for the small sum of Two dollars. — They also cut profiles and execute likenesses in a new and handsome style of black, on a fine vellum paper, for fifty cents.
Having painted during the winter in Providence and Bristol with great success, they flatter themselves they are already known as artists, in Newport, and deem it unnecessary to say that they can warrant to give universal satisfaction to those who may favour them with their patronage. As their stay in town will be short, persons wishing to employ them are invited to call soon at Mrs. Cottrell's, No. 128, Thames-Street.
 Newport, April 27, 1810
- The Rhode Island Historical Society owns painted silhouettes of Gabriel Allen and his wife, Nancy West Allen, and Nancy Allen Lippitt, all done by Bache in 1810. The Society also has profiles painted in colors by T. Nixon in 1809 of Captain Hobart Rhodes and his wife Phoebe Smith Rhodes, and General Christopher Rhodes and his wife Elizabeth Allen Rhodes. Attributed to Nixon on the basis of style are painted profiles of Josiah Whitaker and of an unknown gentleman and his wife, possibly Captain John Gladding and spouse. All these were presumably painted in Providence, as the sitters were from the area. See the introductory text for additional comment.
- Brown, Samuel*. Ott 3:113; 1799-1824; Providence.
 Also a gilder.
- Cahoone, James*. Usually found in the following partnership. Married Mary Yeates on Dec. 20, 1747, and another or the same James Cahoone married in 1763. "James Cahoone and Son" billed the brig *Bayonne* on July 10, 1794 "To Marking name Brig," "To painting head," and "Marking 2 Boats" all for 0-7-6; Shepley Papers 90, RIHS Library; Newport.
- Cahoone, James and Yeates, Seth*. Bannister 56, 226, etc.; Downing 507, 508; Ott 1:10; Greene; 1747-1789; Newport. Worked on ships, houses, did "marbleing," etc.
- Campbell, ———*. Richardson; 1767; Newport.
- Cary, ———*. Richardson; 1761; Newport.
- Clark, Samuel*. Town Tax; 1800-1806; Newport.
- Cook, ———*. Richardson; 1708; Newport. ♣
- Fletcher, John*. Richardson; Downing 39; 1728-1729; Newport. Worked on Godfrey Malbone's house.
- Gibbs, William*. Downing 453; Richardson; before 1708-1715; Newport.

PAINTERS — continued

- Giles. ———. Richardson; 1708; Newport.
- Grinnell, Peter. Of Grinnell and Taylor, Peter Grinnell and Son; Ott 1:20, 3:113; Bjerkoe and other standard sources; 1789-1840; Providence. Well known ornamental painters and gilders who worked on mirrors, probably of their own or locally subcontracted manufacture, picture frames, chaises, fire buckets, etc. In at least two instances (Ott 1:20) they subcontracted ornamental painting as well.
- Hunt, Edward. Richardson; 1726; Newport.
- James, John. Town Tax; 1800; Providence.
- King, Samuel. Richardson; 1807; Newport. The notation "3 copies for 25 cts. Neatly painted on glass, 1 dollar," refers to his activities as a silhouette cutter.
- Kipp. ———. Town Tax; 1773; Providence.
- Lawton, Jeremiah. Greene; 1792-1799; Newport.
- Logant, William. Jacob Whitman Account Book 150 etc., RIHS Library; 1761-1783; Providence. Probably an ornamental painter as he did work on chaises.
- Lugden, George. Ott 3:113; 1798; Providence. Also a gilder.
- Melville, D. Richardson; 1807; Newport. Silhouette cutter.
- Nixon, T. *Dictionary of Artists in America* 473; Richardson; 1810. During his 1809-1810 stay in Providence, Bristol, and Newport, associated with William Bache. See Bache for more details.
- Pearce or Pierce, John. Town Tax; 1783-1786; Providence.
- Pelsue, William. Bannister 488; 1749; Newport.
- Pitman, Moses. Richardson; 1776; Newport.
- Pitman, Peleg. Richardson; 1776; Newport.
- Stevens, Phillip. Downing 494; 1816; Newport. See entry for John Stevens, mason.
- Taylor, William. Town Tax; 1798; Providence. Probably the man associated with Peter Grinnell (q.v.) from 1789 to about 1807.
- Tyler, William. Town Tax; 1773-1777; Providence. Possibly same man as above.
- Vaughn, John. Richardson; 1726; Newport.
- Wallcott, ———. Town Tax; 1798; Providence.
- Weeden, William. Richardson; 1742-1762; Bannister 355; 1748; Newport.
- Westcott, ———. Town Tax; 1796; Providence.

T. Nixon painted this "speaking likeness" of Elizabeth Allen Rhodes, wife of General Christopher Rhodes in 1809. The tinted painting on paper is $4\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ inches.



- Probably same man as Wallcott above.
- Yates or Yeates, Samuel. Downing 507, 508; 1763, 1789; Newport.
- Yeates, Seth. Ott 1:10; John Bannister's Account Book; 1746-1747; Greene; 1747-1789; Newport. Usually worked with Cahoone (q.v.), but many bills to Isaac Senter in the Greene Papers show he worked alone too, possibly as the more skilled and active of the pair.
- Yeates or Yates, Stephen. Downing 507; 1763-1777; Newport. Probably same man as Seth, above.

SHIPWRIGHTS AND BOAT BUILDERS

In the list that follows "BB" will be used to denote a boat builder.

- Ames, ———. Town Tax; 1787; Providence.
- Anthony, Richard. Customs; 1794; Providence. Built the brigantine *Dolphin*.
- Armington, Josiah. Customs; 1794-1795; North Providence, Pawtucket. Built the ship *Charlotte* and the brigantine *Flying Kite*.
- Ballou, David. Customs; 1795; Pawtucket. Built the snow *Susan*.
- Barlow, Moses and Sons. Richardson; 1807; Newport. BB
- Barnia, Jethro. Town Tax; 1776; Providence. BB
- Barstow, Caleb. Customs; 1795; Providence. Built the ship *Liberty*.
- Bates, Sherman. Oliver Spink Papers, RIHS Library; 1818; North Kingstown.
- Beere, John. RILR 2:409 and 3:234; 1707-1716; Newport.
- Belcher, Benjamin. Richardson; 1706; Newport.
- Belcher, Edward. Richardson; 1770; Newport.
- Bowen, Isaac. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.
- Bowen, Nathaniel. Customs; 1793-1795; Warren. Built the schooner *Commerce* and the sloop *George*.
- Bowers, Charles. Customs; 1793-1795; North Providence. Built the brigantine *Maria* "... and the place to which she belongs is painted on her stern agreeable to law," also the schooner *Friendship*, and the sloop *Blue Bird*.
- Bowers, Jonathan. Bannister 355; 1747-1748; Richardson; 1775; Newport. BB
- Bowers, Sylvester. Field, Edward, ed., *State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations at the End of the Century* (Boston, 1902) v.2:400; Records of the Committee to Build the Ships *Providence* and *Warren*, MS., RIHS Library; from about 1750 to at least 1776; Pawtucket. Though commissioned to make a draft of the larger *Warren*, actually he was the master shipwright for the *Providence* while Tallman built the *Warren*. The Committee's records provide many details of ships' materials, construction, and organizational plans, in addition to noting the vote — after the launchings — to spend \$50 for "providing an Entertainment for the Carpenters that worked on the Ships."
- Btattle, Robert. Downing 508; 1773; Newport. BB
- Brook, Peter. RILR 2:145; 1701; Newport.
- Brooke or Brooker, John. RILR 3:359; died before 1715; probably Newport.
- Brown, Clarke. Bannister 56, 120, 200 etc.; 1747; Newport. BB
- Brown, Nathaniel. Field, v. 2, 399; 1711, Providence; earlier at Bullock's Cove.
- Brown, William. Richardson; 1752-1753; Newport. BB
- Bull, James. Newport Court of General Trials, Superior Court, Book B; 1741; Newport.
- Bullock, Jabez. Customs; 1787; Providence.
- Burrows, Thomas. Richardson; 1715; Prudence Island. BB
- Butler, John. Bannister 226; 1747; Newport.
- Carr, Caleb. Customs; 1795; Warren. Built the sloop *Hope*.
- Carver, ———. Richardson; no date given; Newport. BB
- Chapman, Isaac. Legal Papers; 1737; Newport.
- Chapman, Ralph. RILR 1:434 and 2:307; 1693-1704; Legal Papers; 1737; Newport.
- Child, Oliver. Bannister 120; 1747.
- Cole, James. RILR 3:109; 1713; Newport.
- Comstock, Benjamin. Customs; 1793; Providence. Built the sloop *Juno*.
- Covell, William. Downing 494; 1829; Newport. BB
- Cranston, Peleg. Bannister 108; 1746; Newport.
- Cranston, William. Bannister 355; 1748; Newport.
- Darling, Benjamin. Bridenbaugh, Carl, *Peter Harrison, First American Architect* (Chapel Hill, 1946) 11; 1740; Providence.
- Easton, James. Bannister 56; 1746; Newport.
- Eddy, Edward. Customs; 1794; Warren.
- Eddy, Jeremiah. Customs; 1793-1795; Providence. Built the sloops *Sally*, *President*, and *Liberty*.
- Gavin (?), Andrew. Bannister 385; 1748; Newport. BB
- Gibbs, Robert. RILR 2:342; 1704; Newport.
- Goddard, Daniel. Bannister 371, etc.; 1748; Newport. Built hulls for Bannister and is listed also as "carpenter" when working with other shipwrights in furnishing a hull built in Warren. Sometimes listed in standard sources as a "housewright" (q.v.).
- Gould, Daniel. Richardson; 1709-1714; Newport.
- Guyles or Gyles, William. Bannister 61, 226; 1746-1747; Newport.
- Hasard, Robert. RILR 1:9; 1671; Portsmouth.

SHIPWRIGHTS — continued

Hayward, Joseph. Downing 510; 1796, 1810; Newport.

Hicks, George. RILR 3:159; 1699; Newport.

Hicks, John. Richardson; 1677-1695; Newport.

Hookey, Stephen. Bannister 226, 275; 1747; Newport.

Sometimes listed as "carpenter" as in Goddard's case, and in Richardson as "spar maker" in 1724.

James, William. Downing 503; 1711; Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.

Jenkins. ———. Town Tax; 1764; Providence.

Jones, David. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.

Jones, John. Town Tax; 1800-1803; Providence.

Kelly, John. Customs; 1795; Providence. Built the ship *Liberty*.

Kettle, Joseph. Bannister 226; 1747; Newport.

Kinnicut, Roger. Kimball, Gertrude S., *Providence in Colonial Times* [Boston, 1912] 249; about 1740; Providence.

Langley, Nathan. Richardson; 1750; Newport.

Lowden, Richard. Richardson; 1750-1752; Newport. BB

Miller, Nathan. Bannister 371; 1748; Warren.

Milward, James. Downing 489; 1785-1795; Newport.

Mix, John. Richardson; 1695; Newport. "Granted about an acre of land on Goat Island for ship yard and same to be continued to him for twenty years."

Norton, Benjamin. RILR 2:378; 1705; Newport.

Peterson, Joseph. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.

Potter, Abijah. Customs; 1793; North Providence. Built the brigantine *Louisa*.

Potter, Reuben. Town Tax; 1772-1785; Providence.

Rogers, John. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.

Salsbury, Jonathon. Customs; 1795; Providence. Built the ship *Mary*.

Sayer and Helme. Bannister 108, 200; 1747; Newport. BB

Sayer, Joshua. Richardson; 1731-1750; Bannister 56; 1747; Newport. BB

Shaw, Sylvanus. Richardson; 1775; Newport. BB

Sheffield, James. RILR 3:167; 1715; Newport.

Sheffield, Nathan. Richardson; 1775; Newport. Described as ship carpenter.

Shrieve, ———. Richardson; 1772; Newport. BB

Simpson, John. Bannister 120, 275; 1747; Newport.

Sometimes listed as "carpenter."

Simpson, Samuel. Bannister 120, 275; 1747; Newport.

Sometimes recorded as "carpenter" as in Goddard's case.

Smith, Nathaniel. Richardson; 1763-1777; Newport.

Southwick, Jonathan. Richardson; 1795; Newport. BB

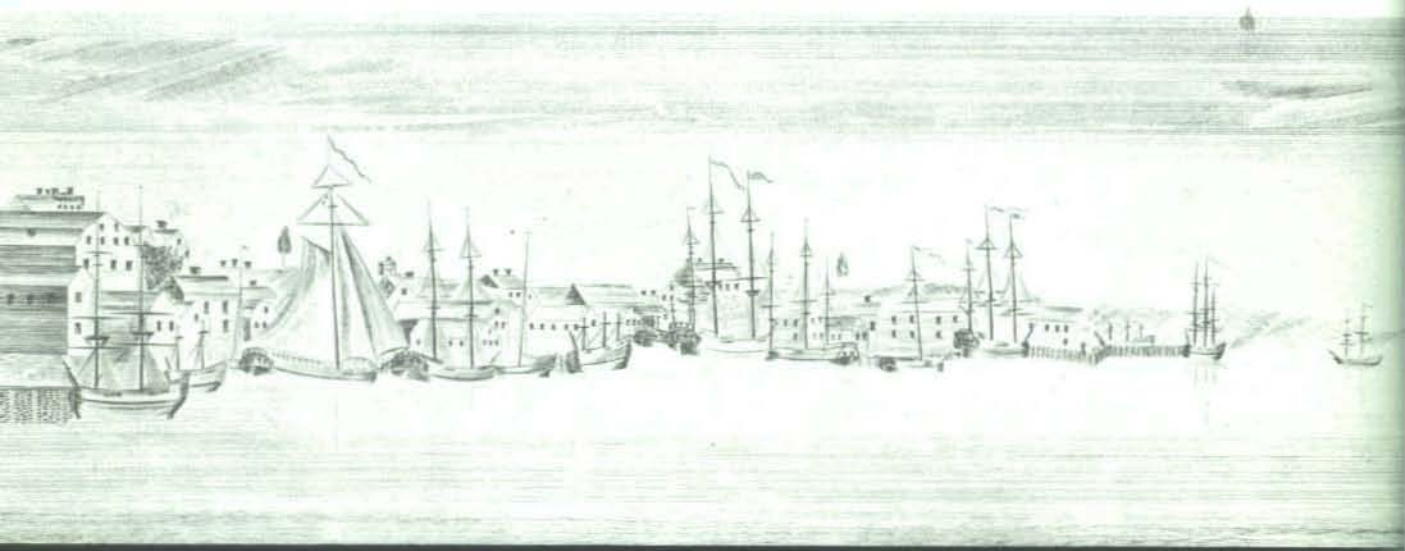
Stafford, Josiah. RILR 2:58; 1697; probably Newport.

Stevens, Thomas. RILR 3:235; 1714-1715; Swansea, Mass.

Tallman, Benjamin. Stone 68; born 1741, died 1836, active and nationally famous in his field throughout his life; Providence. Built the frigate *Warren*, John Brown's *George Washington*, *Ann and Hope*, and many more, totalling about a hundred vessels. The *George Washington* is well known for being the ship Brown foisted on the federal government as a man-of-war. In a recently discovered Certificate of Measurement, Tallman in 1793 gives her length as 108 feet, beam 32½ feet, depth 21 feet, and a burden, "carpenter's measure," of 600 tons. The official Providence surveyor, William Barton, gives her length as 130 feet 9 inches (the surveyor's length is usually greater than the builder's and may be an overall or deck figure, while the latter's is at the water line or, in some instances at least, at the keel), about the same beam and draft, and with a 624-ton burden based on the longer length (Customs).

In another newly discovered document dated December 21, 1797, John Brown apparently first offered her for sale as an Indiaman; "she is 115 feet by the keel," 33½ feet by the beam and 14½ or 14¼ feet in the hold [he is not quite sure], "a very fast sailing ship by and large." He also credits her with "about 820 tons but she will stow 1200 tons of china or other light goods by measurement" (John Brown Papers).

Nothing came of this evidently, because in the summer



of 1798 Brown offered her to the government as "fitted in all respects for A Ship-of-War." She was now represented as "one of the best sailers in America," and Brown conveniently neglected to give any dimensions. Interest in the ship was then generated, an inspection made on John Brown's home ground of Providence, a highly favorable report given, and the Secretary of the Navy purchased the *George Washington* forthwith. This beamy merchantman eventually developed, of course, as a "dull Vessel" not at all fast and in poor physical condition as well. Hedges, James B., *Browns of Providence Plantations: The Nineteenth Century* (Providence, 1968) 72-74.

Tarp, John. Town Tax; 1783-1784; Customs; 1795; Providence. Built the snow *Rebecca*.

Thurber, John. Town Tax; 1801-1806; Providence.

Thurber, Samuel. Obadiah Brown Papers; 1759; Town Tax; 1759-1793, 1800-1804; Providence. Built for the merchant Brown a white oak "square stern'd sloop . . . 47' by the keel . . . 18' by the beam with a 7 foot hold."

Thurston, Grindall. Bannister 108, 120; 1747; Newport. Sometimes listed as "carpenter."

Thurston, Samuel. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport. Sometimes listed as "carpenter" as in Goddard's case.

Thurston, William. Bannister 120; 1747; Newport.

Townsend, Christopher. Downing 75; 1725; Newport. Also described as "house joiner" (q.v. for details), while known today for fine cabinetmaking. It would appear he was producing furniture while describing himself at times as a house or ship joiner.

Vial, John. Richardson; 1724; Newport. BB

Wanton, John. RILR 2:322; 1705; Newport.

Wanton, William. RILR 2:126; RILR 3:179; 1700-1702; Providence.

Wilkie, Nathaniel. Town Tax; 1783-1784; Providence.

Williams, Alexander. Bannister 120, 355; 1747-1748; Newport. Also listed as "head builder," (q.v.).

Winslow, George. Richardson; 1757; Newport. BB

SPAR MAKER

Hockey, Stephen. Richardson; 1724; Newport. Also listed as a shipwright at a later date.

OAR MAKER

Miller, William. Richardson; 1775; Newport.

BLOCKMAKERS

Allen, Isaac. Bannister 56; Richardson; 1725-1747; Newport.

Allen, William. Richardson; 1755-1768; Newport.

Baster, Roger. Richardson; 1671; Newport.

Birge, Henry. Richardson; 1709; Newport.

Bull, Jireh. Richardson; 1704; Newport.

Champney. ———. Town Tax; 1780; Providence.

Chantrell, Joseph. RILR 2:368; 1706; Newport.

Chasney, Benjamin. Town Tax; 1772; Providence.

Coleman, John. Thomas Willing Francis Papers, RIHS Library; Dec. 19, 1788; Providence. Worked for ship *Warren* bound for Calcutta.

Downs, John. Bannister 58, 76, 113, 120, 259, etc. Richardson; 1747-1751; Newport.

Harewood, Edward. Town Tax; 1798; Providence.

Hews or Huges, Thomas. Richardson; 1763-1775; Newport.

Johnson, Thomas. Richardson; 1741; Newport.

Lambert, John. Richardson; 1741-1753; Newport.

Martin, Joseph. Richardson; no date given; probably Newport at one time. In Greene, a Joseph Martin of Providence billed the schooner *Mary* for a block "9 inches, 0-2-8;" a lignum vitae truck and one sheave for 0-2-3; and also for a pump box, all on Sept. 20, 1799. This Martin is probably the same as the cabinetmaker mentioned in Ott 1:21 and other sources, using his skills in another field.

Monroe. ———. Richardson; 1795; Newport.

Mumford, Benoni. Richardson; 1803; Newport.

Norman, Moses. Richardson; 1795; Newport.

Norton, Thomas. Richardson; 1711; Newport.

Peckham, Isaac. Downing 113; 1807; Newport.

Robinson, Henry. Richardson; 1809; Newport.

Tuell, James. Richardson; no date given; Newport.

White. ———. Richardson; 1775; Newport.

Zeno (?), *Peter.* Richardson; 1775; Newport.

HEAD BUILDER

Williams, Alexander. Bannister 120, 355; 1747-1748. Sometimes listed as a shipwright.

CHAISEMAKERS

Bailey, Stephen. Greene; 1824; Providence.

Cannon, Charles and John. Downing 498; 1810; Newport.

Daggett, Russell. Almy and Brown Papers; 1803; Providence.

Frothingham, Nathaniel. Ott 1:15, 3:117; 1770-1787; Providence.

Lewis and Reed. Joseph J. Fenner Papers; 1811-1812; Providence.

Newman, David. Almy and Brown Papers; 1811; Moses Brown Papers, Misc. Real Estate, RIHS Library; 1809; Rehoboth, Mass.

Pitcher, James and Lemuel. Providence Gazette, Jan. 6, 1798, notice that the "copartnership" was dissolved by the death of Lemuel.

Skills of Rhode Island craftsmen are represented in the ships and structures of this 1798 Providence waterfront scene.

CHAISEMAKERS — continued

Rice, Nathan. Benoni Waterman Account Book 19, 89; 1750-1751; East Greenwich. Billed Waterman "by the Making one Chare 50-0-0," an amount considerably in excess of the cost of an expensive chair at that time. Later billed him for painting the "chare" and "Several articles" for same. Another entry for making a saddle and harness for a "chare," and other entries elsewhere indicate "Chare" was used for "chaise" in many cases, complicating the work of early researchers on "chairmakers."

Richardson, Harman. Legal Papers 159; 1768, 1771; Providence.

Seaver, Richard. Ott 1:15; 1770; Providence.

Smith, Noah. John Carter's Ledger, RIHS Library, 310; 1774-1775; Almy and Brown Papers, Box 35; 1790; Providence. See also account book of William Allen, painter, 1774-1790, RIHS Library, for more transactions within these dates and *Mechanics*, 1791, for general trade in this field.

Smith, Samuel. Town Tax, 1800; Providence.

Stall, William. Legal Papers, 159; 1771; Ott 1:23; 1784-1787; Newport. Also see entry for John Stratton below.

Stone, Samuel. Joseph J. Fenner Papers, 1820; Providence.

Stratton, John. Ott, Carriages and Their Problems," *The Bulb Horn*, v. 30, no. 2:30, 31; 1790-1801; Greene; 1790-1801; Newport.

Stratton and Waite. Richardson; 1789; Newport.

Taylor, Edward. Stone 110; late 18th century; Providence.

Thorp, Reuben. Stone 110; late 18th century; Providence.

Williams, Henry. Joseph J. Fenner Papers; 1811-1812; Providence.

MASONS' "ARTICLES"

On February 8, 1762, John Frothingham of Charlestown, Massachusetts, wrote this letter to John Stevens of Newport. Found in a desk owned for generations by the Sheffield-Townsend families, transcribed by permission of Samuel S. Sheffield, the letter is located at the Newport Historical Society. The desk is now in the collection of the Newport Restoration Foundation.

Sr I Received your Letter from Newport Sepr 16th 1760 and Should have ben glad to have ~~to have~~ [sic] Served you but it was at that time an Exceeding Busie

time wt me I put it in My Desk with Some other Papers and forgot it till this winter Over Haling Some Letters it came to Hand as to what you wrote about wether Arches in A Brick House are Paid for Over and Above we in the Rules of Work usd to Say to Setting Windows etc So much per window when we did No More than Turn a Common Arch wt Common Brick the Turning the Arch and Setting the Window were Both Included (tho I think it was not So well Expressed) and Has Made Some misunderstanding among Workmen Some I believe has Had it for Both and Some not but it is Better Exprest in the Last Articlcs or Rules of work which I Shall Herewith Send you as to Rubd and griged [?] Work Such as Straight Arches Over Window Pilasters facioes and Mouldins Cut & Rubbed they are Commonly Charged by the time it Takes A Common Straight Arch as Charged Last Summer was about 1-6-8 Equil to £10 our Old Tennor ———

MASONS RULES OF WORK IN LAWFULL MONEY 1761

	Lawful Money
1 Stone Wall per Pitch be	0- 5- 4
2 Laying Bricks per Thousand Large Sort be	1- 0- 0
3 Small Ditto	0-16- 0
4 Turning Arches over Brest Summers be	0-16- 0
5 That Brick Cant per foot be	0-00-10
6 That Making flew Ovens Exclusive of Laying Brick be	0-16-00
7 That filling walls per yd be	0- 0- 9
8 That Setting Windows Turning Arches through over Ditto	0- 3- 0
9 That Cutting Quoins per foot be	0- 0- 5
10 That Laying Water table and Cover per foot be	0- 0- 5
11 That Laying Common Hearths	0- 3- 4
12 That Making Little Chimneys be	1- 1- 8
13 That Making Brick fence per foot be	0- 0-10
14 That Perging of funnels be per funnel	0-16- 0
15 That Making Common Cabbousse be	1-04- 0
16 That Leathing and Pleastering be per yard	0- 0- 9
17 That Leathing and Pleastering be per yd finding Materials	0- 2- 4
18 That finishing Pleastering be per yard	0- 3- 4
19 That Setting Dutch Tile be per Tile	0- 0- 3¼

20	That Whitewashing Common Rooms be	0- 6- 0
21	That Slacking of Lime per Hogshead be	0- 2- 8
22	That Sifting of Lime per Hogshead be	0- 1- 4
23	That Screening of Sand per Load be	0- 0- 8
24	That Setting Stills per Hundred Gallon be	0-13- 4
25	That Making of Scaffolds be Charged According to the Time it Takes	

you perceive by the foregoing Articles they are all put in Lawfull money (the first time it has bin so) A Doller as fixed by Law in Old Tinnor is 45/ in Lawfull Money 6/ Seven and Half for one as we Call it our Accomps are Mostly Made out in Old Tennor That always Haveing the Same Relation to Lawful Money one Shilling Lawfull Money being Seven and Six pence in Old Tennor is Easier understood and Saves a great many fractions one Shilling Sterling being just Ten Shillings in Our old Tennor and being So fixed we can the Easier Reccon when we are at a Los the value By the Prices of work at Home —————
I Learn from Doctor Danforth A young Gentleman Lately Come from New Port that you are paveing your Street and as I am upon the Matter it may be no Diservice to you to Let you Know How Paveing is done Here the Price usd to be 7/6 old Tennor per yard Common Paveing ["less" or "unless" indistinct; attempted erasure ?] when it was done wt very Small Stones and flowers as Some Time in yards it is Chargd in proportion to the Extra Time Mr Thornton & Forsdick undertook the Boston Lottery pavement they Had for it /9 per yd Lawfull Money. I undertook the CharlesTon Lottery Pavement I Had for it /10 per yard the Land being more uneven So [?] more Labour to Prepar the ground But where A Hill or Nole was to be Removed Some Rods it was Removed in Carts at the Expençe of the Committe —————

Sr I am Quite willing to Serve you in any thing tho we are Strangers to Each oather I have thought many ~~many~~ [sic] Times while I have bin writing to you Among what Sort of Men to Reckon you but Hope you may be One that is walking in the Narrow way that Leads to Life among the fiew that find it Our Blessed Lord has tought that if a Man Should gaine the whole world and Loos his own Soule he would be a great

Looser — Don't Let us Loose our Souls for A Thing of Nought But Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and the Righteousness thereof then are we Safe for Both Worlds is it not Reasonabe to Make the greatest provision where we are Longest to Tarry to Choose the good Part that Cannot be Taken from us that when the Earthly House of this Tabernacle be dissolved we may have A Building of God an House not Made with Hand Eternal in the Heavens —————

These from your friend and Humble Sert —————

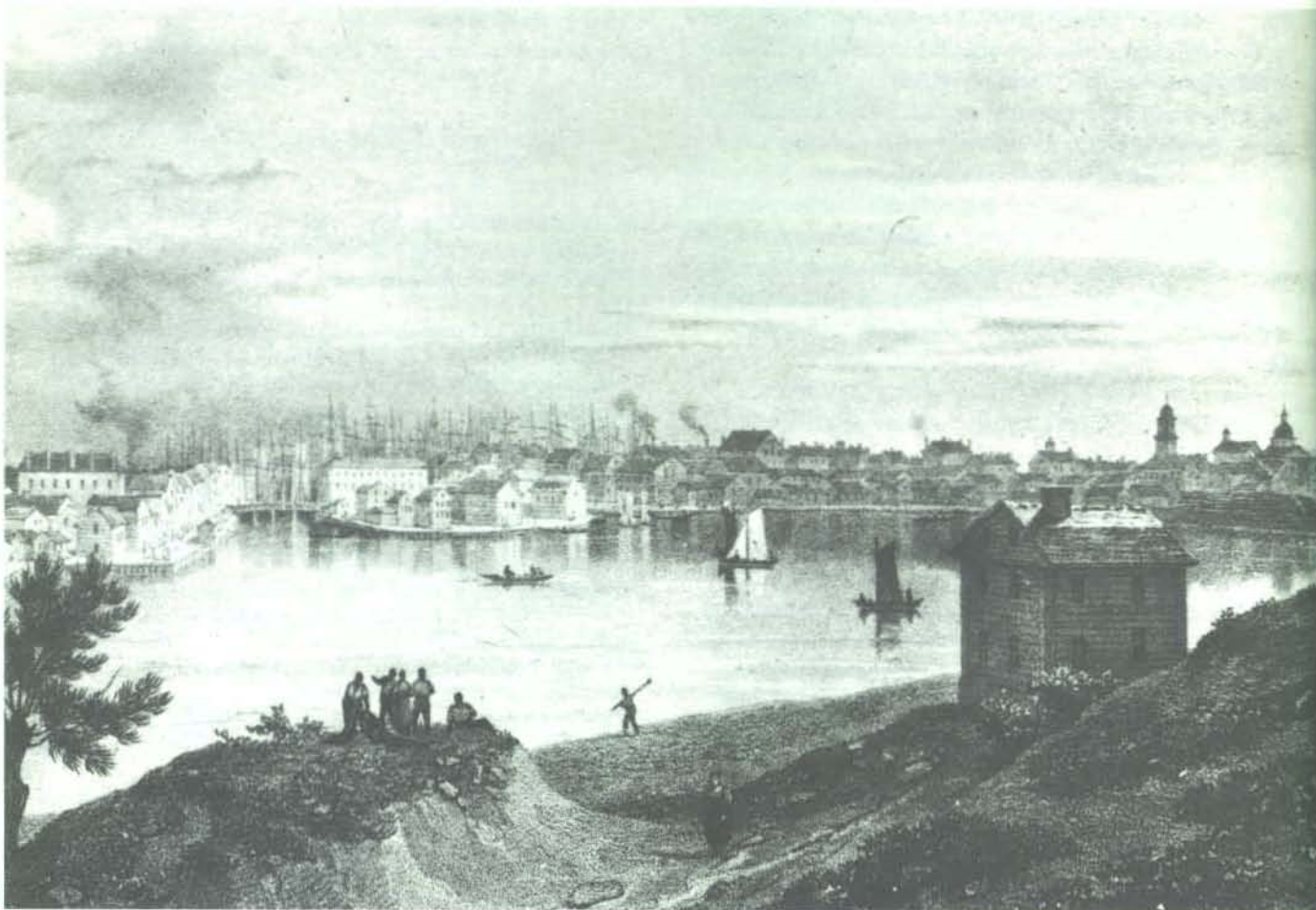
John Frothingham

CharlesTown Febr 8th 1762

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After the Revolutionary War, Providence emerged as the commercial heart of southern New England. In this detail of a lithograph showing the Great Bridge at left, and the west side across the Cove, ships and buildings indicate the activity developing in Job Danforth's day. His property lay at the south side of the Cove. In this picture it would be approximately at the tip of the white sail, slightly right of center.



Lithograph from sketch by Jacques Gerard Milbert ca. 1823.
"Providence from the North."

Earning a Living 1788-1818: Job Danforth, Cabinetmaker

by William M. Pillsbury*

The cabinetmaking trade in Providence during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has begun to emerge only recently from obscurity.¹ The fame of the Townsend-Goddard clan in eighteenth-century Newport for many years overshadowed interest in Providence cabinetmakers and their furniture, and only with the revival of interest in Federal period furniture has that of Providence begun to receive the attention which its design and workmanship merit. Newport never recovered from British occupation which resulted in considerable property damage and a radical drop in population. Providence, which was not occupied by the British, replaced Newport as the trading center of Rhode Island, and in the postwar business expansion the city emerged as the commercial heart of southern New England. New wealth and an increase in population resulted in the building of numerous houses including some of the most elegant late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century examples in America.

One of the cabinetmaking shops responsible for furnishing Providence houses belonged to Job Danforth (1745-1838) whose account "Boock No. 2" is in the Rhode Island Historical Society Library. Because his first account book is missing Danforth's business records begin only in 1788 and end in 1818 after several years of nearly inactive accounts. The possible existence of now missing day or minute books further hinders an accurate account of the total production and income from Danforth's shop, although the one existing book probably records a reasonably accurate view of the products made by Danforth and the types of services which he rendered. These existing accounts also give some insight into the organization of the cabinetmaker's shop, although entries which indicate apprentices and journeymen workers are probably

incomplete. The economy of the period as indicated in Danforth is a mixture of barter and specie, and credit appears to have been extended to customers for several years as a matter of course. Business and personal relationships between Danforth and other Providence craftsmen may be determined, in part, from his accounts.

This article is limited, necessarily, to the organization, economics and furniture of Job Danforth's shop as his "Boock No. 2" indicates each of these facets. The greatest proportion of this paper is devoted to a statistical examination of furniture mentioned in Danforth. In order to produce this, Danforth needed assistance in the running of his shop.

SHOP ORGANIZATION

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the usual work cycle of the cabinetmaker started at about fourteen to sixteen years of age with apprenticeship to a master cabinetmaker. At the end of the apprenticeship, age twenty-one or younger, the apprentice became a journeyman paid wages, on piecework, or a combination of both. The journeyman might have moved and worked in several towns for more cabinetmakers until he had accumulated enough capital to establish his own shop. At this stage the cycle was renewed when the new proprietor took on an apprentice to help him.²

The only mention of an apprentice in Danforth appears in the account of George Armington (or Amington as spelled in the book) who is listed in the *Providence Directory* 1828 as a cabinetmaker on Benevolent Street. Between 1798 and 1800, Armington ran up a bill for £4.4.3 worth of "a pare of shoes, stuff for two tea tables," a few feet of maple and cherry

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1 Largely through efforts of Wendell D. Garrett, Eleanore B. Monahan, Charles F. Montgomery, Joseph K. Ott, and others.

2 Charles F. Montgomery, *American Furniture: Federal Period* (New York, 1966) 13.

boards and of "cash pade" out to him. His account was credited "by what I was to find you while you was a printes to me."³ Danforth's son William also worked for him during this period, for in 1798, in Amos Throop's account two entries mention "William Work Repairing a Gate — 2/6" and "George [Armington] Work on Your Barn — 4/6."⁴ William's account with his father from 1802 to 1806 enumerates about one thousand feet of maple, chestnut, cypress and pine boards.⁵ This quantity may indicate that William worked in his father's shop on his own account and was charged for the wood he used.

Another possible worker in Danforth's shop was Nathan Waterman Jr., son of Richard Waterman of Coventry and nephew of Nathan Waterman of Providence. Nathan Jr. boarded with Danforth from 1795 to 1801.⁶ A Nathan Waterman who was a shop joiner is mentioned in Walter R. Danforth's reminiscences of Providence.⁷ Walter was one of Job Danforth's sons. For five months in 1789 to 1790, Amos Chase paid £1.5.0 for the rent of Danforth's shop which may indicate that he was a journeyman cabinetmaker renting space in the Danforth shop.⁸ During the summer of 1811, Holdey Arnold came to live and work for Danforth for sixteen weeks. His expenses for room and board were 2/6 per week and Danforth paid him the same amount for his work, so the account was settled neatly.⁹ These accounts indicate that Danforth had at least one apprentice, if not two, a journeyman and possibly some assistance from his sons. Danforth's income indicates that he could not have had much more help.

SHOP ECONOMICS

Job Danforth's annual income may not be complete because other account, day, or minute books may have existed which recorded further transactions. Amounts given in the accounts are not large by today's standards, and equal only £1,949.12.10 from 1788 through 1805 and \$722.42 from 1806 through 1818, or \$6,621.80 for the thirty-year period.¹⁰ This averages to \$220.72 per

year, including very lean years from 1807 to 1818, and is obviously less than the one dollar per day (six shillings) earned by journeymen in Philadelphia and New York cabinetmaking shops around the year 1800.¹¹ Danforth appears to have been able to earn a higher average income if he had been just an ordinary journeyman, but it is quite probable that his full income does not appear in this one surviving book. The possibility exists that he may have had income from real estate rental or other sources which he never bothered to enter in his shop book.

Until 1809, between sixty and eighty-three percent of the annual total came from furniture sales and the balance was derived from the miscellaneous goods and services which Danforth rendered to his customers. After 1809, the percentages of income made up by furniture, labor wages, repairs, wood sales and miscellaneous goods and services varied unpredictably because of a severe decline in Danforth's entire business. The year 1798 was his most prosperous; his charges to customers amounted to £188.15.7. Overhead was probably quite small because Danforth owned his buildings (two houses and barns),¹² his tools and probably made the greater proportion of his furniture himself.

Using the formula outlined by Charles F. Montgomery based on labor charges and masters' retail prices for furniture in the 1796 *Cabinetmakers' Philadelphia and London Book of Prices*, it appears that Danforth easily could have made his furniture in the peak year 1798. In the Philadelphia price book Montgomery notes that costs and profit increased the retail price to an average of three and one half times the labor cost. Hence it follows that if one knows the retail price of a piece of furniture just before or after 1800 he can approximate the time required for making it by converting the retail price to dollars and dividing by three and one half.¹³

Thus, the furniture that Danforth sold for £152.8.4 in 1798 (see Table 1) took him just over forty-one days to make if the formula is correct in this case. Danforth's

3 Danforth, 201. Subsequent references to Danforth's "Boock No. 2" are noted by page numbers only.

4 p. 199.

5 p. 255, 259.

6 p. 167.

7 Clarkson A. Collins 3rd, ed. "Pictures of Providence in the Past, 1790-1820: Reminiscences of Walter R. Danforth," *Rhode Island History* 10:3 [July 1951] 90.

8 p. 23.

9 p. 289.

10 See Table 1.

11 Montgomery, 23.

12 Henry R. Chace, *Owners and Occupants of the Lots, Houses and Shops in the Town of Providence, Rhode Island in 1798* [Providence, 1914] 12.

margin of profit and overhead may have been less, but he still could have made his furniture and performed his other services in 1798 with little assistance provided that the account book indicated the entire output of the shop. After making his furniture and performing miscellaneous services for his customers Danforth then had to have the patience to await payment.

PAYMENTS TO THE CABINETMAKER

Payments took many forms depending upon the trade and position of the debtor. Often Danforth took on account items which he could either use himself or re-sell to his customers, and the possibility exists that he may have asked certain debtors to repay in goods needed in his family or requested by customers.

Prominent customers such as Jabez Bowen often paid for their furniture and miscellaneous services with cash, although Danforth sometimes had to extend credit to them for several years before he received his money. Andrew Dexter ordered £10.18.2 worth of purchases between 1789 and 1798 when he finally settled his account.¹⁴ The firm of Mason and Lannard owed £37.16.2½ for goods purchased between 1789 and 1793. They paid in 1794.¹⁵

More numerous than cash payments were notes and orders payable either by the debtor to Danforth or by some third party in debt to Danforth's customer. Combinations of cash, notes, orders and goods sometimes went into the settling of an account. Hard money or specie was not always the most convenient or even possible means of paying a debt because of its scarcity. Examples of these varying types of payment abound in Job Danforth's "boock." In 1796 Lewis Bosworth paid for his considerable order of furniture (high post bedstead, eight mahogany chairs, window and bed cornices and two tables) with cash and a "note of hand" totaling £17.17.0.¹⁶ John Warner in the next year settled his account "by an order on Joseph Peck,"¹⁷ and Danforth credited Jonathan Coy's account "by a discount of noot with Mary Coy — £0.13.1."¹⁸ Three "chears at 5/- @" and "a due bil on Kingley Carpenter"

balanced David Bacon's account,¹⁹ but a far more complicated arrangement appears in that of John Waterman, a clothier, in 1790. Danforth delivered a beaver hat to Asa Franklin, cashed an "order upon Mason and Lannard" for Waterman and sold him "2 Quarts wisinger Rum" in return for which Danforth accepted sixteen hundred weights "of heay by the hand of Mr. Boyd" in full settlement of Waterman's £1.13.7 account.²⁰ These seemingly complicated entries are far from unique and illustrate the extent to which individuals went to avoid the use of cash.

Nathan Jackson, a shopkeeper, in 1798 reimbursed Danforth for furniture "by Sundreys out of [his] shop," and in 1804, after Jackson became register of deeds, paid up his account by allowing Danforth to register a deed.²¹ Even the Benevolent Congregational Society's Deacon Samuel Nightingale paid Job Danforth in kind for three boxes and a communion table "by a Discompt in paying for my pue in the meteing house — £1.9.0."²² Provisions supplied John Williams with the means to pay Danforth for his maple desk and two tables in 1797. Mutton, fresh pork, corn, beef and "cash received of John Barton," evidently a debtor of Williams, settled the £6.3.0 account.²³ The most interesting of the provision payments can be found in David Hill's account in which Danforth agreed to be paid in the future with corn at a specified price, or, in other words, with corn "futures":

1789 To a tea tabel wich I am to
October 6 have 5 bushels of corn for — £0.15.0
17 To a chest Delivered your order — £0.15.0
to be pade in corn at 3/- — £1.10.0

On January 14, 1790, Hill paid Danforth "9 Bushel of corn and 2 Bushel of potaters," which indicates that one bushel of corn equaled two of potatoes.²⁴

Specialized services either from the home or educational fronts benefited Job Danforth in exchange for his work. On December 8, 1790, Ann Medbury of Scituate paid for her three-and-one-half-foot table "by weaving 18 yards of cloth," a coverlet and some more unspecified cloth.²⁵ Widow Tallman spun 5/6 worth

13 Montgomery, 23, 25.

14 p. 5-6.

15 p. 21.

16 p. 167-8.

17 p. 189.

18 p. 15.

19 p. 101.

20 p. 49-50.

21 p. 187-8.

22 p. 165-6.

23 p. 183-4.

24 p. 31-2.

25 p. 49-50.

of yarn in exchange for Danforth's services in "staining and polishing a Larg tabel" in 1789.²⁶ As Job Danforth's spelling indicates, the educational standards of his generation (at least for spelling and handwriting) were less than those imposed upon his children at the end of the eighteenth century. Daniel Box's account in 1792 is credited "by your schooling accompt — £10.4.4" in payment for furniture, wood and repairs.²⁷ Five years later John Lawton paid for furniture and sundries, including "framing a slate," "by amount of his Bill for Schooling up to Septem.r 22nd: 1797 — £10.18.6."²⁸ Both these men evidently taught Danforth's sons well because a number of entries in his book appear faultless by modern standards in both spelling and handwriting.

Possibly the most important form of payment to those interested in furniture was the wood that Danforth received from various customers. He could not have received all of his wood as payment because there are noticeable shortages of mahogany and cherry on the customers' credit side which may indicate that Danforth purchased these primary woods outright from a lumber merchant or country woodcutter. Many of the Danforth customers who supplied wood lived outside of Providence in Johnston, Scituate, Cranston and Glocester where secondary cabinet woods such as chestnut, maple, pine and oak came from. Cherry, "sipros" (cypress), ash, birch, black walnut and mahogany appear less frequently. The appearance of cypress in the accounts is unusual because it is a southern wood which can grow no farther north than southern Delaware and was used extensively, it is thought, in Carolina furniture. Two possible explanations for this wood are either coastwise importation because of its resistance to dampness and insects or the mistaken identity of a local wood of the same family.

FURNITURE FROM THE SHOP

Furniture sales appear to have accounted for between sixty and eighty-five percent of Danforth's annual income during the most productive decade 1795 to 1805 (see Table 1). Danforth enumerates fifty-eight different

furniture forms and variations of these in his account book. The possibility exists that this figure is slightly inaccurate because in some entries Danforth did not specify the type of form made, but rather he wrote only "table" or "chair" (see Table 2). Tables and stands, desks, chests of drawers and bureaux, bedsteads, sideboards, sofas, bookcases, a fire screen, clothes horses, sea chests, coffins and chairs were all made by Danforth.

Tables and Stands. Nineteen different types or variations of tables exist in Danforth's accounts. The most numerous type is the "three-and-one-half-foot table" whose description never becomes more exact. Other dimensions are sometimes noted, particularly those of four feet and four and one-half feet. These tables may have been simple drop-leaf dining tables with either square tapered legs, or less likely, with cabriole legs and pad feet, two legs swinging to support the leaves. The tops of these tables are nearly always approximately square when the leaves are opened, so that a four-foot table would have longer, deeper leaves than a three-and-one-half-foot table. Mahogany, cherry and maple constituted the woods used, depending upon whether the customer wished to pay only nine shillings per foot for a maple table or exactly double that figure, eighteen shillings, for the rich show and durability of a mahogany table. An even more expensive variation was a mahogany table with claw feet which cost twenty-four shillings per foot. Thomas Jackson, a wealthy Providence merchant, ordered four such tables of three and one-half feet each from Danforth in 1795.²⁹ Possibly made to fit end-to-end in the dining room, these tables must have made an impressive sight lined up in a row.

Stands of all types were also popular. Maple candlestands cost from seven shillings six pence and mahogany ones cost thirty. The entries in Danforth's account book indicate that "stand" may mean a small table on a single central pillar with three legs. Candlestands had either "turned tops" or tops which were unspecified and may have been either round, square or

26 p. 23-4.

27 p. 9-10.

28 p. 159-60.

29 p. 161.

elliptic. Those candlestands listed with "turned tops" cost nearly twice what a stand with an unspecified top cost. "Turned tops" may have referred to "dished" tops and the unspecified ones may have had a flat top surface. Entries which designated stands without any adjective may refer to urn, basin or kettle stands. These undesignated stands ranged in price, as stated above, from seven shillings six pence to thirty shillings. The price of a cherry stand ranged equidistant between prices of maple and mahogany stands. This price formula appears valid for most other forms of furniture as well. A cherry stand cost eighteen shillings while a cherry stand with a turned top cost twenty-four shillings which was a considerable sum for a stand. When the entries do not specify the wood, the wood used was probably maple. Numerous instances occur where the price was the same for a table of unspecified wood as for another more explicitly stated maple. Cherry and mahogany appear to be expensive or unusual enough to warrant careful mention in Danforth's entries.

Pembroke tables of maple, cherry and mahogany played an important role in Providence house furnish-

ing because of their versatility for dining, tea serving and general use. The cheapest maple tables cost one pound seven shillings and the mahogany Pembroke cost up to four pounds four shillings.

Tea tables appear in Danforth's entries at a lower price than Pembroke tables possibly because they contained no leaves. The only clue to their shape is one entry which mentions a square tea table of unspecified wood, probably cherry, which cost one pound eight shillings. Other tea tables of unspecified shape and wood cost as low as thirteen shillings six pence, but these tea tables generally cost between fifteen shillings and one pound. Mahogany tables cost from one pound sixteen shillings to two pounds. From the one entry describing a square tea table, the form of the other tea tables may be inferred as either square or rectangular with, possibly, square tapered, molded square or cabriole legs.

Only one entry in Danforth mentions a "round table." His round table was made of maple and cost one pound twelve shillings which indicates that it must have been similar to a Pembroke table in extent of workmanship. A unique form in the accounts is a

Figure 1. Mahogany tilt top tea table attributed to the shop of Job Danforth of Providence, c. 1790. This and the pieces illustrated in Figures 2, 3 and 4 are gifts to the Society from J. Danforth Edwards, a descendant of the cabinetmaker.

Photographs of this and Figures 2, 3, and 4 by Coleman duPont and Paul Guertin.



"crossed-leg table" which may have been a top on two sets of crossed legs similar to the modern folding-tray table. This simple table sold for only eight shillings six pence and was made of an unspecified wood. Danforth also made twelve kitchen tables the prices of which average one pound seven shillings. This price must have provided a good-sized table of one of the cheaper woods.

A "frame for a marble slab" appears once at fifteen shillings and was probably the frame for a side or mixing table. In 1801 Job Danforth made two "leaf ends to a mahogany table with a large leaf to each" for Jabez Bowen.³⁰ These table ends may have been semi-circular with the leaf attached to the flat side. The cost of these table ends was four pounds four shillings each which was a considerable sum for only part of a dining table. In 1796 Danforth made a "communion tabel" for Deacon Samuel Nightingale of the Beneficent Congregational Society.³¹ Being a member of this meeting house, Danforth deducted seventeen shillings, the cost of the table, from the annual rental of his pew.

Chairs. One hundred twenty-five chairs appear in Danforth's book. Banister-back chairs, children's chairs, close-stools armed and unarmed, three-back chairs, armchairs, joiners' chairs and one lolling chair were all sold in Danforth's shop from 4/0 for a "three-back" chair in 1793 to £3.0.0 for a lolling chair in 1801. The next most expensive were mahogany armchairs which sold for £2.2.0. Mahogany side chairs sold for £1.13.0 and a black walnut side chair sold for three shillings less in 1792. A cherry chair cost 18/0, while an ordinary close-stool could be bought for 12/0. Danforth sold only one set of six banister-back chairs (in 1794) at 6/0 each and for £1.1.0 he sold what he called a "joyner's chair." A "child's chair" in 1793 sold for 7/6.

The chair and cabinetmaking trade accounted for between sixty and eighty-three percent of Job Danforth's income during his more productive years from 1788 to 1809. In all probability Danforth worked for the most part in the Queen Anne and Chippendale styles. The tea table or stand (Figure 1) attributed to

Figure 2. One of a set of kylix back mahogany side chairs attributed to Job Danforth, c. 1790. This style of chair was not uncommon in New England. This set, however, can be attributed to the Providence cabinetmaker by the line of family descent.



Danforth is made in the earlier Queen Anne style. The chairs illustrated in Figures 2, 3 and 4 which are also attributed to Danforth were made by a craftsman who was familiar with the neo-classical furniture styles. These chairs and the table exhibit no veneers or inlay.

30 p. 237.

31 p. 165.

Figure 3. Similar to Figure 2 in its use of the kylix and swag motif in the splat, this shield back mahogany side chair, also thought to be the work of Job Danforth, is perhaps more successful than Figure 2 in terms of design. Both chairs retain the traditional stretchers of an earlier period.



The accounts make no mention of stringing or inlay of any kind, or even of veneers, although it hardly seems possible that Danforth did not use them on occasion for sideboards and chests. In sideboards, chests and other furniture Danforth may have used

Figure 4. Urn back chairs like this seem to have been made mostly in Connecticut and Rhode Island. While similar in form they lack many of the pleasing details seen in Figures 2 and 3. Often made of local woods, chairs of this type are associated with the names of several Providence cabinet-makers including Danforth's. The history of ownership of this chair can be traced back to Job Danforth's son, Walter Raleigh Danforth, Mayor of Providence 1853-54.



chestnut, cypress and pine as "secondary" wood for drawer linings, backing, and other unseen parts. Only these three woods appear in the accounts in quantities

over a thousand board feet which seems to indicate that Danforth made frequent use of them. "Primary" woods, which showed most prominently on furniture, are mentioned as including maple, cherry, black walnut and mahogany.

Desks. These appear in Danforth's accounts as the third most numerous form. Seventy-six desks in four variations (see Table 2) are listed. The least expensive Danforth designated the "writing desk" which he sold from twelve shillings up to two pounds eight shillings depending upon the wood used or whether a frame was included because at the basic price this was a lap desk. The most common desk is listed as just a "desk" which probably was the usual slant top with three or four drawers beneath. These in maple were sold from two pounds five shillings to three pounds twelve shillings "without trimmings"—without pulls, locks and escutcheons which were generally left for the purchaser to buy separately. The higher price, three pounds twelve shillings, included ogee bracket feet. The addition of this more stylish feature cost the purchaser twelve shillings extra, but may have been included on the more expensive cherry and mahogany desks, the former selling between £5.8.0 to £7.16.0 and the latter for as much as £11.3.0. Another variety is listed as a "doyal (double) headed" desk the price of which approximates three pounds like that of Danforth's regular desk. Only one desk-and-bookcase appears in Danforth's book, and he sold this in 1799 for £6.12.0. In all probability this was made of maple because the price for such a complex piece of furniture appears low. Hardware or "trimmings" was not included generally in the price of Danforth's desks. "Trimmings" cost from 2/10 in 1795 for lock, hinges and knobs (not pulls) for a £3.12.0 desk and in 1800, for a £4.4.0 desk the "trimmings" cost 17/4, an unusually high price which must have included locks for all the drawers.

Chests of Drawers. Job Danforth made at least seven varieties of chests of drawers the most popular of which was the "high-low case of draws," the others being a "low case," a "high case," a chest upon chest, a single

"nest" of drawers and a chest listed only as a "case of draws." "Chest of draws" appears only once, in 1797, in the account book. Danforth evidently preferred the word "case" to "chest."

All of the "high-low" chests were made of maple and were sold from £2.8.0 to £4.5.0 depending upon extras. Twenty-seven of these chests or "cases" appear in the accounts and they were probably about five feet high. Danforth made the "low case" of drawers only in maple which sold for £3.6.0 and was not nearly so popular as the "high-low" form. Only one "high case," in cherry wood, is mentioned and cost ten pounds. In 1798 the word "bureau" appears and seems to indicate a standard or low chest of drawers. The bureau had a price range from three pounds for maple to nine pounds for mahogany. The most elaborate but not the most expensive bureau described is one with five drawers, a mahogany "swelled front" and cherry top and ends which cost £7.10.0 in 1803. This must have presented an unusual appearance unless the cherry was stained to match the mahogany as was probably the case. Another variety of chest mentioned is the "nest of draws" which cost £3.12.0 in maple, the only wood in which this form appears.

Bedsteads. Danforth lists entries for six types of beds, the most numerous of which was a simple low post variety priced between 18/- and £1.0.0 each, and the cheapest of which was the camp bedstead for 13/6. The most expensive was a bed which he made for his son Job Jr., a pewterer, in 1798.³² It cost £13.10.0, or nearly as much as a mahogany sideboard (£15.4.0). Birch, maple, cherry and mahogany were used in high post bedsteads for which Danforth charged from £1.4.0 to £4.4.0. A set of fluted bed posts of birch cost £2.2.0 and the side rails an extra 3/6. In 1793 Danforth sold an ordinary high post bed, stained and polished, for £1.10.0 and he charged 4/6 extra for a set of rails with keys to turn the screws which held the bed together. Some entries list high post beds with "pins" to hold the rope mattress supports. In 1811 Danforth made a "cheretre canepé top bedstead" for Joseph Fenner for twelve dollars.³³ This entry is the only mention of a

32 p. 211.

33 p. 283.

34 p. 257.

Emblem of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers as it appeared in an announcement of a meeting, October 12, 1822, in the Providence Gazette. Job Danforth was an early member of the organization.



bed canopy, but the price is nearly the same for this bed as for other cherry high post beds which are not so explicitly described, so probably most of the high post beds listed did have canopies. Because many bedrooms in small houses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had to be used during the day for other purposes, the "turn-up bedstead" solved the problem of what to do with the bed in the daytime. The "turn-up" cost £1.9.0 which was 9/- more than the trundle. Small children, too, had their cradles and cribs costing from 18/- for a maple cradle to £2.8.0 for a cherry crib which could be considered an extravagance.

Sideboards, Sofas, Bookcases and Clockcases. Only a few of the really expensive forms of furniture appear in Danforth's accounts. A mahogany sideboard was the most expensive article of furniture and cost up to £15.4.0. Mahogany clockcases were priced from £7.10.0 to £12.0.0 possibly depending upon size and elabora-

tion, and a cherry case could be had for a little over £6.0.0. Danforth sold bookcases of maple and cherry for about £3.0.0, although in 1808 he made "a chereetre Boock case with mahogany sash doors" for William Lee at fifteen dollars, or about £4.10.0.³⁴ Danforth made exposed legs and stretchers of his sofas either in cherry or mahogany, the mahogany model costing £4.4.0 and the cherry £3.16.6 or only 7/6 difference. Most of the cost of sofas was due to framing of the upholstered section. These sofas were possibly the late Chippendale style so-called camel-back variety.

Miscellaneous Small Furniture. Small pieces of furniture rarely turn up in Danforth. Only one fire screen, of cherry, which sold for \$3.50 (or slightly over £1.0.0) is recorded, and eleven clothes horses are listed, one of which is described as having "four pins" and priced at £1.0.6. The less explicitly described horses generally cost 12/- to 15/-. Danforth made a number of various kinds of specialized chests and boxes such as sea and house chests, knife boxes and meal chests, large and small. In 1803, he records a large cypress box which he sold for 18/-. This box is the only mention of cypress used in a piece of furniture in Danforth's accounts, but its use could have been included as a secondary wood in much of his furniture because he accepted several thousand board feet of cypress in payment of his accounts. Chestnut was popular because he often accepted this wood also as payment for goods bought from him.

Coffins. Furniture for eternity appeared to have been a Danforth specialty. He made ninety of them. A child's coffin began at 5/9, which must have been baby-sized, because the price of coffins of ordinary unspecified wood for adults started at 15/- and went as high as £4.16.0 for a mahogany one. Black walnut, used comparatively little by Rhode Island cabinetmakers, was used infrequently in coffins and cost £2.8.0, while the cherry model went as high as £3.0.0. Price structure on coffins was variable because of individual size requirements. They were made to order at the time of death as in the case of cabinetmaker Jonathan W. Coy's

wife who died in 1803. On July 22 of that year Coy supplied Danforth with twenty-eight feet of "cheritry" boards with which Danforth made Mary Coy's coffin for £3.0.0 and credited Coy's account 4/0 for the cherry wood.³⁵

Furniture Mending. Repairing cabinetwork and chairs represented only a small percentage of Danforth's income. Between one and five percent of shop income derived from mending furniture, putting rockers to chairs, staining and polishing tables, and other similar repairs. Danforth also made repairs on shop counters and fixed Gershom Jones' cart which continually broke down apparently under the weight of too much pewter. In 1803, for Jabez Bowen, Danforth altered a regular bedstead so that it would turn up against the wall. The price of the work was seven shillings. Stephen Jackson had Danforth convert a case of drawers into two "beaurows" in 1801, for which he paid £2.18.2, including 10/2 for the hardware "trimmings" on the new bureaux. In 1803 Danforth cut and put casters to a chair for Jackson at one shilling. Occasionally when tables and chairs came into the shop for repair they were to be stained and polished for about six pence. Putting rockers to chairs constituted another repair or alteration which Danforth performed for about two shillings.

SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Cabinetmakers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries could not depend on fluctuating demands for furniture from their customers in order to make a comfortable living. In consequence these craftsmen performed many other kinds of services and sold other kinds of merchandise. Appraising of estates was a job well suited to the talents of a man who knew household furnishings and their value. Job Danforth appraised the estate of Archibald Stuart on March 12, 1805, for 12/0 after having made the coffin for £3.12.0. From 1789 to 1806 James Burrill kept Danforth busy

mending the hog pen, whetting saws and fixing signs in addition to furniture-related work. Nathan Waterman employed labor from Danforth for raking hay, harvesting corn and other miscellaneous work. Danforth also supplied him with dung, lime and fence boards. In his shop and on his sloop Richard Jackson found work for Danforth and his helpers. Shelves were mended and the store received five candle boxes at one shilling each (1789). From 1798 to 1802 Danforth supplied Bennett Wheeler with numerous pieces of "furniture" (cloth for bed hangings, etc.), besides "boxing up the trees" in the house and making two tubs. Danforth sold the "furniture" by the foot and by the piece. Phillip Arnold's account shows that Danforth bought sundries for him at "Mr. Dexter's shop," while Arnold gave him cypress and chestnut boards in return for "sundries," rum, salt, tea and 4½ yards of green baize (1789-93). In the years 1796-7, Danforth worked on the roads for the city of Providence for several days for which he charged 7/6 per day. Seven shillings six pence is also what the Dominy family of craftsmen at East Hampton, Long Island, charged for their labor by the day during this period, so that labor wages appear to have been standardized.³⁶

Danforth seems to have taken as payment on account items which he knew could be resold to other customers. His shop acted as a clearing house for small quantities of many different articles. He might even have asked his debtors for specific goods which others of his customers wanted, thus enabling Danforth to make a small additional profit in collecting his debt. Danforth collected over fifty casks of lime in 1801 from his clients and resold forty to James Aborn and Christopher Williams who, in turn, may have resold them, used them on their farms or as a mortar constituent. Danforth may even have made a small essay into the venture cargo game with the merchants Mason and Lannard when, on March 16, 1791, he noted "2 tables at what they fetched £3.9.0." These

35 p. 249-50.

36 Charles F. Hummel, *With Hammer in Hand: Dominy Craftsmen of East Hampton, New York* (Charlottesville, 1968) 235.

37 Hummel, 218-9.

tables could have been carried aboard the firm's sloop on which Danforth himself worked for several days after the entry just noted. Danforth further supplemented his income by renting rooms to people and boarding them. He also rented space in his shop between 1789 and 1790 to Amos Chase for £1.5.0, and rented his hatter's shop in 1797-8 to Alpheus Billings at \$7.50 per quarter. Little information from the book can be discerned about this extra activity other than the existence of the shop from which Danforth sold several castor, or beaver, hats to supplement his income.

Cash income in a barter economy was less important circa 1800 than in today's cash economy. Danforth's account book indicates that the local Providence economy was more oriented toward a customer-to-customer rather than a producer-to-consumer relationship. Large sums of cash were not necessary to purchase the necessities or luxuries of town life so long as the craftsman was paid with household goods, food, business supplies and services in return for his product and services. Danforth may never have become wealthy, but the evidence indicates that he led a comfortable life with all the essentials and some of the luxuries which did not have much cash value, but did carry a high living value.³⁷

"Boock No. 2" contains enough evidence to partially reconstruct the business practices of cabinetmaker Job Danforth and, indeed, the ways of earning a living of the typical cabinetmaker or other craftsman of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Providence. Danforth's type of shop disappeared by the second quarter of the nineteenth century because of the transition from the craft tradition to factory production. His book has given us a little better view into the workings of a cabinetmaking shop, its product, the economy in which it functioned, and its master.

PAGE 67 OF JOB DANFORTH'S ACCOUNT BOOK
ILLUSTRATING A TYPICAL ACCOUNT

		(67)			
		Gershom Jones Dr			
			£	S	d
1792		(To foot of account brot from Page 8)	29	9	11¼
March	7	to hanging a Door	0	1	4
	31	to mending a Bread-trough	0	2	0
April	11	to two felt hats @ 6/.	0	12	0
	12	to one Do. Delivd. Howland Clark	0	6	0
	18	to mending a wheelbarrow	0	2	6
	25	to mending three flasks	0	3	0
May	11	to a bedstead	1	0	0
	22	to mending a Cart	0	0	9
June	3	to Fifty Feet half inch boards	0	1	0
	23	to Board for a Level	0	1	2
		to a Rocker to a Chair	0	1	0
July	7	to putting Boards to a Cart	0	1	
Octr.	2	to wheting a saw	0	1	3
Novr.	3	to mending a hog pen	0	1	0
Deer.	7	to repairing Bellows	0	1	2
		to whetting a saw	0	0	10
	13	to putting high posts to and repairing a bedstead	0	14	6
		to trimming two Desks and repairing Drawers	0	5	6
		to a Kitchen table	1	6	
	16	to putting up Clock and Glasses	0	3	6
		to mending a Chimney board and Bellows	0	3	0
1793					
Jany.	12	to altering a Chimney board	0	4	0
Feby.	9	to Repairing a Fire Board	0	1	4
March	11	to Making a Large Chimney Board	0	9	0
		to Frame for a Grindstone	0	12	0
	29	to mending a Cradle & whetting a saw	0	1	6
May	13	to a 4½ feet Table	2	0	0
	17	to making a Swift	0	1	6
	22	to making a ladder	0	3	6
July	9	to Four Pieces of Mapel to set up a worm	0	1	6
	27	to Whetting a Saw	0	1	4
		to a board for Casting houseleads	0	0	8
Carried to Page 68			£38	14	9¼

Table 1

JOB DANFORTH'S ANNUAL INCOME AND ITS SOURCES
AS INDICATED IN HIS ACCOUNT BOOK NUMBER TWO

Year	Furniture	Repairs	Labor Charges/Day	Wood Sales	Miscellaneous	Total
1788	£ 24.13.6	10/4	2.19.0	1/0	2.12.10	30.16.8*
1789	61.19.0	4.16.6	1.19.3	16/9	13.14.7	83. 6.1
1790	56.10.6	2.19.9	3. 3.8	1.12.6	29. 1.10	93. 8.3
1791	79. 7.9	2.18.2	2. 5.6	4/3	24.10.11	109. 6.7
1792	66. 2.0	4.17.9	4/8	7/4	48. 4.11	119.16.8
1793	61. 6.0	1. 6.4	5/0	10/6	32. 5.6	95.13.4
1794	46.14.6	1. 5.4	2. 5.0	1.15.9	36.15.0	86.15.7
1795	128. 2.2	3. 5.8	16/0	1/0	26.14.3	158.19.1
1796	85.19.8	6. 4.6	1. 0.6	1. 5.11	51.14.0	146. 4.7
1797	112.16.9	2. 2.1	4. 0.9	1.14.2	46.18.11	167.12.8
1798	152. 8.4	1.12.2	12/-	2/8	34. 0.5	188.15.7
1799	72.18.6	2.14.2	3. 0.3	18/6	35. 1.7	114.13.0
1800	53.17.10	3. 3.4	0	3/4	14.17.8	72. 2.2
1801	119. 0.5	3. 0.6	1.16.0	14/11	54.19.7	179.11.5
1802	69. 5.3	5.19.11	0	1.19.5	12. 0.2	89. 4.9
1803	79. 9.10	6.14.0	1. 4.8	1.11.3	13.10.7	102.10.4
1804	47.18.2	1.13.2	3/8	1.18.1	9. 9.5	61. 3.0
1805	32.15.0	3. 9.2	2. 8.6	6. 0.4	5. 1.1	49.13.1
1806	29.15.8	1.13.0	1. 6.3	0	7.16.10	\$166.88**
					+ \$31.31	
1807	8.12.2	7/9	0	0	6. 3.9	\$50.71
					+ \$1.19	
1808	6. 6.0	\$.65	0	0	\$ 3.24	\$52.93
	+ \$27.					
1809	4.16.0	\$1.06	\$.42	0	1/9	\$92.98
	+ \$33.				+ \$42.17	
1810	\$48.	0	\$2.25	0	\$52.54	\$102.79
1811	1.13.0	5/0	\$1.75	0	\$55.45	\$ 90.77
	+ \$26.50	— \$.73				
1812	\$41.00	\$.66	\$1.42	0	\$ 5.71	\$ 48.79
1813	\$52.00	\$.16	0	0	\$ 3.59	\$ 55.75
1814	0	\$.90	\$.82	0	\$ 2.29	\$ 4.01
1815	\$ 6.00	0	0	\$1.26	\$.91	\$ 8.17
1816	0	\$.38	0	0	\$.40	\$.78
1817	0	\$.20	0	0	\$ 2.77	\$ 2.97
1818	\$36.25	\$3.50	0	0	\$ 5.14	\$44.89

* Majority of entries given in pounds sterling until 1806.

** Majority of entries from 1806 to 1818 given in dollars.

Six shillings equal one dollar.

One pence equals 1.4 cents.

Table 2

FURNITURE FORMS AND QUANTITY PRODUCED BY JOB DANFORTH, 1788-1815

<i>Bedsteads</i> — 93		<i>Chests</i> — 39		<i>Sofas</i> — 5	
Camp	18	House	4		
High Post	22	Meal	1	<i>Tables</i> — 215	
Low Post	1	Sea	10	3½-foot	67
Trundle	6	Unspecified	24	3-foot, 4-foot, 4½-foot	13
Turn-up	2			Candlestands	14
Unspecified	44	<i>Clockcases</i> — 10		Card	1
<i>Bookcases</i> — 5		<i>Clothes Horses</i> — 11		Carving	1
				Communion	1
<i>Bureaux</i> — 5		<i>Coffins</i> — 90		Crossed Leg	1
		Children's	31	Fly	1
<i>Cases or Chests of Drawers</i> — 38		Adults'	59	Frame for Marble Slab	1
Case	3			Half-Round Dining Ends	2
Chest	1	<i>Cradles</i> — 8		Kitchen	12
Chest upon Chest	1			Light	2
High Case	1	<i>Cribs</i> — 2		Pembroke	28
High-Low Case	27			Round	1
Low Case	4	<i>Cupboards</i> — 2		Stands	13
Nest	1			Tea	26
<i>Chairs</i> — 119		<i>Desks</i> — 76		Tea Server	2
Arm	11	"Dobal Headed"	6	Toilet	2
Banister Back	6	With Bookcases	1	Unspecified	27
Child's	1	Writing	9		
Close-stools	2	Unspecified	60	<i>Trunks</i> — 1	
Joiner's	6				
Lolling	1	<i>Screens</i> — 1			
Three Back	12				
Unspecified	80	<i>Sideboards</i> — 5			

*Job Danforth His Book
No 2*

The Rhode Island Historical Society

One Hundred and Fiftieth Annual Meeting

The one hundred and fiftieth annual meeting was held Sunday, January 23, 1972 at 3:30 p.m. in the Library, 121 Hope Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Joseph K. Ott, president. Minutes of the previous annual meeting, printed in *Rhode Island History* 30:2 (May 1971), were received as published. Mr. Townes M. Harris, Jr., treasurer, read the financial statement for the year ending June 30, 1971 which showed a total deficit of \$27,484.19. Mr. Harris explained that income budgeted was \$11,300 less than expected and expenses were \$13,700 more than budgeted with the greatest amounts in the areas of publications, investment, and audit. His report was received and placed on file. Mr. Leonard J. Panaggio read the report of the nominating committee; it was accepted and its nominees were duly elected. Members then rose and stood in silence as Mr. Ott read the necrology for 1971.

In his president's report Mr. Ott took note of the successful completion of the David Patten Manuscript Reading Room, the announcement of the grant to begin publication of Nathanael Greene's papers, the well staged production of our second Lawn Festival, and plans for our gala anniversary ball. Mr. Ott then outlined trustees' activities in the area of fund raising, discussing the survey which had been conducted. He stressed the Society's importance to the State-wide community and particularly our relations with the businesses of Rhode Island. He concluded by thanking the staff for its services and the members for responding to the appeal for conservation funds for the Society's collections.

Mr. Albert T. Klyberg, director, reported next on the importance of a professional staff and explained the extent of unfinished work confronting them. At the same time he stressed the continuing need for active member participation as volunteers and as scouts for historical materials to be added to the collections. Mr. Klyberg noted the pioneer work of the Rhode Island Film Archive and the recognition it was receiving in the historical profession. He then called attention to the weakness of the operating budget while summarizing the grants for new special projects in 1971 which totaled \$220,000. He outlined four areas for future activity to improve the financial strength of the Society — increased State appropriations — increased number of members — increased awareness of members for the need of special gifts, bequests, and endowment — and an increased participation of businesses and corporations. He concluded by noting the growing shortage of shelf space in the Library.

Miss Nancy E. Peace, the Society's librarian, reported on the growth of the Library's collection and explained the need to curtail circulation of books to members. By having all Library holdings in the building, everything becomes available to any and every reader. Also the cost of administering circulation is reduced, giving the staff more time to catalog the collection. Wear and tear is cut down.

Photocopying facilities and longer library hours on Saturday also provide greater access. By way of accessions Miss Peace noted that fifty-nine manuscript groups have been added in 1971 and that Mr. Nathaniel N. Shipton, curator of manuscripts, had processed a total of forty collections for the year. Printed materials accounted for 434 accessions. Volunteers like Mr. Joseph K. Ott, Miss Irene Eddy, and Mrs. Christine D. Hathaway continued to provide high quality auxiliary service to the efforts of the staff.

Mr. Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., curator of John Brown House, reported on the Society's conservation program, particularly in the area of paintings, and discussed the application to the American Association of Museums for accreditation.

Mr. Bradford F. Swan gave the sesquicentennial lecture which traced highlights of the Society's century and a half of collecting and publishing.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. A collation followed.

Respectfully submitted,
A. T. KLYBERG,
per *Secretary*

Necrology 1971

Mrs. Francis O. Allen
Mr. W. Russell Burwell
Miss Harriet M. Cappon
Mrs. Peter Pineo Chase
Mr. Charles F. Cottam
Mr. John Yale Crouter
Mr. Raymond Curtis
Prof. Samuel Foster Damon
Mr. Alexander J. Dimeo
Mr. Herbert E. Easton
Miss Helen Fitts
Mrs. Washington Frazer
Carl R. Gross, M.D.
Mr. Harold A. Grout
Mr. Thomas Hetherington
Mrs. Holton W. Horton
Miss Ada P. Huxford
Mr. John E. Janes
Mr. Edmund H. Keiler
Mrs. C. Prescott Knight, Jr.
Mrs. Albert E. Leach
William L. Leet, M.D.

Mrs. Austin T. Levy
Mrs. Frank D. Lisle
Mr. Kenneth D. MacColl
Mr. John S. Mahoney
Mr. Charles C. Marshall
Most Rev. Russell J. McVinney
Marcius H. Merchant, M.D.
Mrs. E. Bruce Merriman
Mrs. Randolph T. Ode
Mr. Charles H. Philbrick
Mr. Romeo S. Picerne, Sr.
Mr. Karl L. F. Poyton
Miss Gladys Prior
Mrs. Winfield Scott
Mr. Harold E. Staples
Mr. Frederick B. Thurber
Miss Ruth E. Tripp
Mrs. F. A. Wallace, Jr.
Rev. George D. Wilcox
Mr. George E. Wilson
Mr. Ralph W. Wood
Mrs. Norman E. Wright

Statement of General Fund — Revenues and Expenses
Year ended June 30, 1971

REVENUES:				EXPENSES:	
Dues		\$ 27,317.00		Salaries	59,245.27
Contributions:				Pension	8,339.67
General	\$ 253.00			Social security taxes	3,881.40
Corporate	200.00	453.00		Director's discretionary fund	972.10
State of Rhode Island		21,000.00		Supplies	2,162.13
City of Providence		2,000.00		Telephone	1,627.84
Patriotic societies		340.00		Promotion	3,233.48
Admission income		1,094.15		Membership	3,150.18
Outside services		2,360.87		Library	4,195.89
Special lectures		954.50		Quaker material purchases	2,311.00
Miscellaneous		43.46		Museum	2,322.26
Transfers from other funds for current operations:				Lectures	3,028.18
Consolidated endowment income	50,051.37			Publications	15,352.98
Restricted funds	4,591.17			Heat, light, and housekeeping	4,754.09
General Fund—allocated surplus	98,615.97	153,258.51		Grounds	4,100.15
TOTAL REVENUES				Buildings	2,768.08
			\$208,821.49	Insurance	2,851.15
				Group insurance and Blue Cross	2,135.52
				Microfilm	1,000.00
				Outside services	3,080.04
				Professional fees	4,350.00
				Miscellaneous	565.38
				Equipment	2,262.92
				Special projects—General Fund allocated surplus	98,615.97
				TOTAL EXPENSES	236,305.68
				EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER REVENUES	(\$ 27,484.19)

**Officers and Committee Members
elected at the 150th Annual Meeting to serve
until the Annual Meeting in 1973**

Joseph K. Ott, *president*
George C. Davis, *vice president*
Duncan Hunter Mauran,
vice president
Bradford F. Swan, *secretary*
Mrs. Norman T. Bolles,
assistant secretary
Townes M. Harris, Jr., *treasurer*
Lawrence Lanpher,
assistant treasurer

FINANCE

Bayard Ewing, *chairman*
Foster B. Davis, Jr.
Michael A. Gammino, Jr.
Clarke Simonds
Charles C. Horton

GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

Clifford S. Gustafson, *chairman*
H. Cushman Anthony
Harold Ingram, Jr.
Thomas M. Sneddon
Mrs. Henry D. Sharpe

JOHN BROWN HOUSE

Mrs. George E. Downing, *chairman*
Winslow Ames
Mrs. John A. Gwynne
Norman Herreshoff
Frank Mauran, III
John Nicholas Brown, *ex-officio*

LECTURE

Patrick T. Conley, *chairman*
Dr. Marguerite Appleton
Richard B. Harrington
Mrs. Clifford P. Monahan
Leonard J. Panaggio

MEMBERSHIP

E. Andrew Mowbray, *chairman*
Henry A. L. Brown
Mrs. S. Bradford Tingley
Walter R. Martin
Theodore F. Low

MUSEUM

Mrs. Peter J. Westervelt, *chairman*
Winslow Ames
Paul C. Nicholson, Jr.
Norman Herreshoff
Joseph K. Ott

PUBLICATIONS

Stuart C. Sherman, *chairman*
Henry L. P. Beckwith, Jr.
Mrs. Philip Davis
Wendell Garrett
Norman W. Smith
Joel A. Cohen, *ex officio*

LIBRARY

Malcolm G. Chace, III, *chairman*
Mrs. Robert M. Sherman
Albert E. Lownes
Franklin S. Coyle
Matthew J. Smith

AUDIT

Donald W. Nelson, *chairman*
Bancroft Littlefield
Robert H. Goff

The Executive Board is composed of the officers; chairmen of the standing committees; members at large: Norman T. Bolles, Walter R. Martin; the director; and Elliott E. Andrews, state librarian, *ex officio*.

Providence, July 3, 1822.

(CIRCULAR.)

SIR,

The Honourable General Assembly at their late June session having incorporated THE RHODE-ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, I now have the pleasure of informing you, that you have been elected a member thereof. The objects of the Society being "to procure and preserve whatever relates to the Topography, Antiquities and Natural, Civil and Ecclesiastical History of this State," it is confidently hoped you will cheerfully co-operate with us.

A meeting of the Society, for the purpose of adopting a Constitution and bye-laws, and electing officers, will be holden at the Manufacturers' Hotel, in this town, on Friday the 19th inst. at 3 o'clock, P. M. where your attendance is requested. Should it be inconvenient to attend personally, a written answer to this communication is desired.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

William R. Staples Secretary.