

THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE OF THE FRIENDS AT NEWPORT



1639

[William Hall](#), an inhabitant of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), joined with several others to found the town of [Portsmouth](#). William was spelling his name Haule.

A house was constructed for Friend Nicholas Easton, eventually facing Farewell Street, the first dwelling constructed in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). This dwelling would burn in 1641 and be replaced, and upon the death of Nicholas Easton in 1676, it and the property on which it stood would be bequeathed to the Newport [Friends](#). This piece of land eventually would be used in 1699 for the [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the Friends.

At [Portsmouth](#), [Samuell Gorton](#) joined Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#) in ousting [William Coddington](#). Upon Coddington's return to power Gorton would himself get turned out.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

In this year the Gortons had their daughter whom they named Mahershalalhashbaz.¹

The most wonderful name and one which was the least likely to have been selected from all the names appearing in the Bible was that of Mahershalalhashbaz, and there were, previous to 1680, two persons in the Colony bearing this name, one a daughter of Samuel Gorton of Warwick, whose peculiarities brought on him no end of troubles, while the other was a son of Mary Dyer, she who was hung for the crime of being a Quaker, on the grounds now comprising the beautiful Public Garden and Common in Boston.

1. Cf. ISAIAH 8:1-3, where the longest name in the BIBLE usually appears as "*Maher-shalal-hash-baz*." In Hebrew this meant "To speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey."



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1641

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the dwelling of Friend Nicholas Easton burned. This house would be replaced, and upon the death of Nicholas Easton in 1676, it and the property on which it stood would be bequeathed to the Newport [Friends](#). This piece of land eventually would be used in 1699 for the [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the Friends.

1676

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Nicholas Easton died, bequeathing the sum of £20 “in country pay” and his home and the land on which it stood to the Newport [Friends](#) (possibly, some of the adjacent land may also have been acquired by purchase from the widowed Ann Easton). This repurposed structure probably served as the 1st permanent place of worship for the local Quakers (for instance, the 1672 debate between the Reverend Roger Williams and various Quakers in Newport had taken place in a Friends meetinghouse). The piece of land eventually would be used in 1699 for the [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the Friends.

Friend Nicholas also left “to the maintenance of the burial yard where his body lyes, one Barrell of pork, to be managed by Christopher Houlder.”

Dutch traders were buying black slaves at 30 florins each in Angola and were selling 15,000 per year in the Americas at 300 to 500 florins each. In this year in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) the public friend [William Edmundson](#) became the first Christian of English extraction to categorize the holding of others in slavery as a “sin” (this had been a totalizing declaration which Friend [George Fox](#) had always avoided). –For this new totalizing conviction of his, Friend William would be at first shunned, and then excluded, from the fellowship of Friends.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1677

[Newport, Rhode Island Friends](#) recorded that William Allen and Patience Beer were married “at our publick meeting house in Newport.” Presumably the building in question was the dwelling house that former governor Nicholas Easton had left to the Friends upon his death in 1676.

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1689

In roughly this timeperiod, a [hermit](#) of Braintree, Massachusetts called “Tom Revel” was being rumored to be a [regicide](#), or holy man gone crazy. He lived with a pig, in a habitation that seemed to other residents of the area to resemble a pigsty. Whitney’s HISTORY OF QUINCY offered the tale that, when the man died, the Governor of the Province and other distinguished men came out from Boston and served as his pall-bearers. Several facts point to this being sheer fantasy: we know of no regicide of this name, we know that government officials could not have dared to display such public honor to one of the regicides, and we know that they would have been unwilling to show public honor to a mere hermit.



In what would become Windham, New Hampshire a mystery man named John Cates or Kates, who had been around New England at least since 1686, built the initial house. There has been a report that he had come to New England from Virginia, and it was considered possible that he had been the passenger from London who appeared under that name in the manifest of the ship *Safety* as of 1635. He withdrew from society, living for some time as a [hermit](#) in a cave near Windsor. There has been the idle speculation that he was one of the [regicides](#), hiding out, but that seems implausible. The Boston genealogist James Savage has suggested that perhaps John Cates had been merely a “misanthropic humorist, perhaps had been a [buccaneer](#), and thought seclusion his safest course.” We know now that he had not always been an isolate, as it would be discovered upon his death on July 16, 1697 that in his will, filed on May 5, 1696, he mentioned offspring in England. In this will he donated land for a community school, and for the poor of Windham, and money to the church

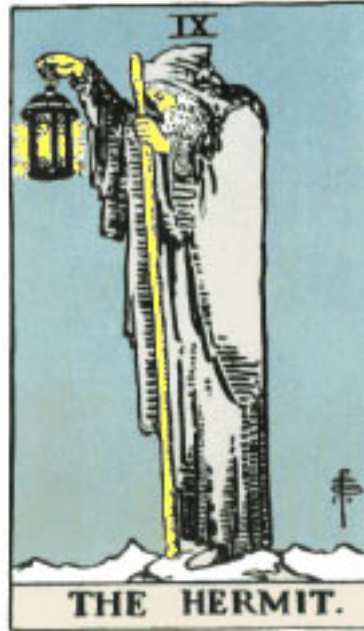


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(the popular tale that he what he had donated to the church was a set of silver plate is not accurate).



The Sieur Raveneau de Lussan, apparently in debt to some creditors in Paris and unable to continue his fashionable life, had become involved in several [buccaneering](#) expeditions which had taken place in the West Indies and the Pacific coast of South America. In this year he published his *HISTOIRE DES FILIBUSTIERS DE LA MER DE SUD* which would later be translated into English as *JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE INTO THE SOUTH SEAS IN 1684 AND THE FOLLOWING YEARS WITH THE FILIBUSTERS*.

When French [privateers](#) threatened [Block Island](#), a Captain [Thomas Paine](#) (later to become an associate of Captain [William Kidd](#)) sailed from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and succeeded in driving them off. But where was Captain Kidd himself? In this year he was a member of a privateer crew that commandeered a French ship and brought it to the English colony on the island of Nevis in the Caribbean. Governor Christopher Codrington renamed this ship *Blessed William* in honor of King William III and appointed Kidd to be its captain, with a privateer appointment to defend the island against the French and an agreement that to pay for



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this service he would be entitled to anything he could seize from the French (it would be interpreting this commission very liberally that would get Kidd into beaucoup trouble as a [pirate](#), and lead to his hanging in irons).



In [Newport](#), the [Quakers](#) agreed that “the Yearly Men and Womens Meeting which useth to be at William Coddinton’s shall be ye first part at ye Meeting House and later part for ye affayers of ye Church to be at Walter Newberry’s.” The meetinghouse referred to would presumably have been the repurposed residence that had been donated by the governor, Friend Nicholas Easton.



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In [Rhode Island](#), Henry Bull was in charge. From this year into 1763, there would be intermittent colonial wars between England and France, a 75-year struggle for empire that would frequently involve this little colony’s men, money, and ships.



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
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1699

The completion of the [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) at [Newport, Rhode Island](#) on the land donated in 1676 by Friend Nicholas Easton made this the largest structure of any kind in the colonies between Boston and New-York. They set the new building back from the existing house that they had inherited from Friend Nicholas Easton, on Farewell Street. One thousand worshippers could be seated.²



2. Although this view of the meetinghouse is from a lithograph made in 1865, it dates to approximately 1740 since the lithograph was based upon an over-mantle oil painting that is at the Newport Historical Society. The image depicts the meetinghouse still in its original square configuration, and still with its steeple. Notice ~~that after~~ there weren't enough Quakers in Rhode Island anymore, to justify such a large structure, it would be repurposed in 1905  as a black amusement center, hosting dances and that sort of thing — but that after it had been restored as a Quaker meetinghouse for purposes of the [Newport](#) tourist industry and carriage trade, no mention would be made in the tourist literature that the structure had also served as a black dancehall! —Gee, I wonder why it might be that the irony of it all so escapes people....



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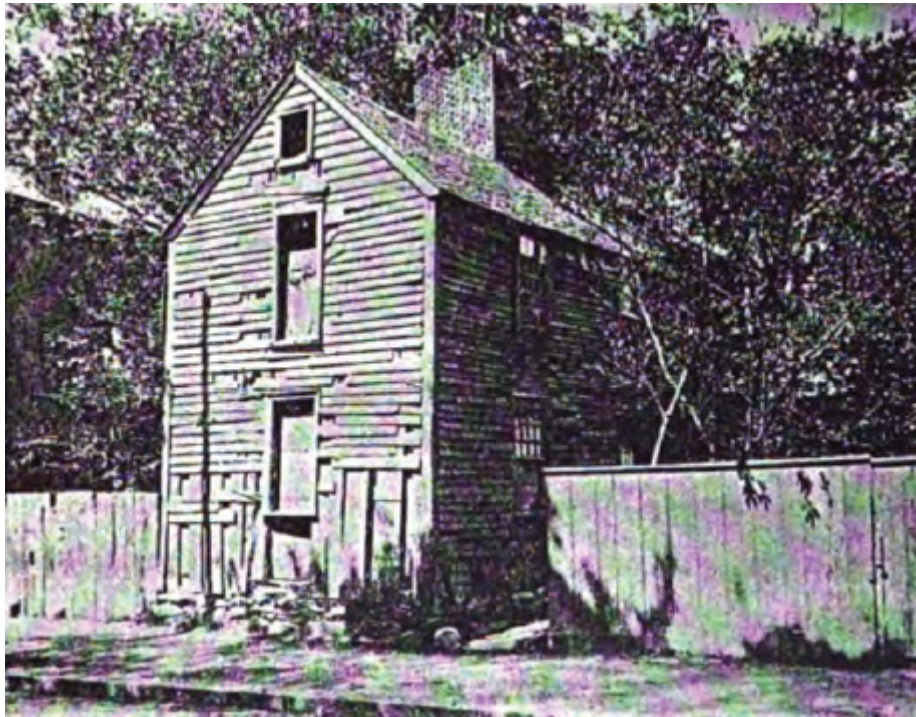
OF THE FRIENDS

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1705

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was enlarged “for the conveniency of the women’s meeting.”

[Providence](#) would use the back portion of this house as its jail from 1705 to 1733. The building was near the Benefit Street school.



[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)

1706

The [Quakers](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) “proposed that the old Meeting House may be better put in order for a stable toward the winter, and also proposed that money may be procured toward finishing the New Meeting House of Newport.”

[GREAT MEETINGHOUSE](#)



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1708

By this point the dwelling house that had been donated to the [Friends](#) of [Newport](#) by the former governor, Friend Nicholas Easton, that had functioned until the erection of the [Great Meetinghouse](#) nearby in 1699 as their 1st permanent place of worship and had been frequented by Friend George Fox, had been for several years in service as a stable.

In this year Colonel Robert Quarry made some remarks about [Rhode Island](#).

COLONEL ROBERT QUARRY

Governor Samuel Cranston made an official response to the Board of Trade in England.

GOV. SAMUEL CRANSTON

[Friend Deliverance Smith](#), a selectman of [Dartmouth](#), refused to collect the tax for the maintenance of a "hireling minister" and would endure an extended period of imprisonment.

Deliverance Smith, a son of Ruhamah Kirby ... lived on his father's homestead place on Smith's Neck, where his descendants still live. He was an active member of the Friends' Meeting of Dartmouth. In 1702 he had charge of building an addition to the first meeting house at Apponegansett. In 1703 he was chosen at a monthly meeting "to enspect [*sic*] into the report considering Ebenezer Allen and abusing of an Indian called Jeremiah." And in the same year he was chosen by the meeting one of an inquisition "to inspect into the lives and conversation of Friends." In 1706 he was a Selectman and Assessor and refusing, for conscience sake, to assess the sum of sixty pounds annexed to the Queen's tax, for the maintenance of a hireling minister, was arrested by the Sheriff of Bristol, under order of the General Court at Boston, and committed to the County gaol at Bristol. "Friends having unity with him on his sufferings do appoint Benjamin Howland and Judah Smith to procure a hand to manage the said Deliverance Smith's business whilst he is in prison on the account of trouble, and friends engage him his wages and the monthly meeting to reimburse the same." The committee reported at a later meeting that they had employed James Russell "to look after Deliverance Smith's business for one month." The meeting agreed to appropriate "as much money out of stock as will pay the said Russell for this monthly work." At subsequent meetings it was provided "that Deliverance Smith don't [*sic*] want a hand to look after his business, he being still a prisoner on truth's account." John Tucker was appointed by the meeting to go to Boston "to see if he can get any relief for our friends who now remain prisoners with Deliverance Smith





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in the County Gaol of Bristol." At the meeting held first month, ninth, 1709, John Tucker reported that he had been to Boston and had succeeded in obtaining a release for the prisoners on condition that they paid the fees of the sheriff "which they could not do, therefore they are still continued prisoners." The funds were raised, the sheriff satisfied, and Deliverance Smith and his imprisoned companions were released. "Thomas Taber, Junior, being a friendly man and a late prisoner with our friend, Deliverance Smith, and he behaving himself as becometh the truth, which he suffered for the time of his imprisonment, and friends having unity with him in his sufferings, do think it their Christian duty to contribute something towards the support of his family in the time of his late imprisonment." Only four months later Deliverance Smith was again in conflict with the constituted authorities for conscience sake. At some risk of boring you I will give in full the communication which he and his fellow sufferers addressed to the Dartmouth monthly meeting holden [*sic*] the fifteenth day of the sixth month, 1709. It is as follows:

Dear Friends and Brethren: Thinking it our Christian duty, and according to the good order of truth to give you the following account. Friends, on the ninth day of the third month last, in this present year, we whose names are underwritten, three of us being at the town house in Dartmouth, were impressed by John Akin of the train band, in the Queen's service, to go to Canada, and he required us to appear the next day at the house of Josiah Allen, to receive further orders. Accordingly we went to said Allen and when we came, our further order was to exercise in a warlike posture, and we told said Akin that we could not in conscience act in any warlike posture, nor use carnal weapons to destroy men's lives, who said he took notice of our answer and told us we might go home until further notice, which we did, and remained at or about the house until the eighteenth day of the month, and then being ordered to appear before Col. Byfield we went with William Soule, who was impressed by the above said Akin the 11th of the same month to go to Canada in her Majesty's service, and ordered to appear at the town house in Bristol on the 18th day of the said 3d month. So we went to Joseph Wanton's where we met with our friend William Wood who was going with his son William Wood to Bristol, for Robert Brownell came the 11th day of the 3d month 1709 and impressed his son to go to Canada in the Queen's service. Afterwards Nathaniel Soule warned him to appear at the town house in Bristol on the 18th day of the said 3d month. Then we considered the matter and thought it might be best for William Wood to leave his son there and go and speak in his son's behalf, which he did.

Then we went to Bristol together and appeared before



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Col. Byfield who asked us some questions, to which we answered that we could not for conscience sake act in a warlike posture to destroy men's lives, for in so doing we should offend God and incur his displeasure. And William Wood, junior, was called, his father spoke in his behalf, and Col. Byfield asked him if his son was a Quaker too, and he said it is against his mind to go to war, and he would not kill a man for the world. Then one that sat by said Byfield said "Take him!" and then he took down William's name in his book. Then he put us all under command of Capt. Joseph Brown and charged us to march with him to Roxbury by the 25th of the said month, which charge we could not obey; but afterwards, he being more moderate, desired us to go down not in any warlike posture but to take our own time, so as to meet Capt. Brown at the Governor's at Roxbury, the said 25th of the month, which we finding freedom to do accordingly went thither and laid our cases before the Governor, Joseph Dudley, who was very kind and gave us our liberty to go home without demanding money of us, or we paying him any, in which liberty, through the goodness of God, we still remain your friends:

JOHN TUCKER
WILLIAM WOOD
JOHN LAPHAM, JR.
DELIVERANCE SMITH

Governor Dudley doubtless concluded that men who refused "to act in a warlike posture" would prove but indifferent recruits for her Majesty's army. The evident astonishment of the Friends that there was no demand for money from them indicates that official graft was not unheard of even in those early days.

The date of the birth of Deliverance Smith is not known. It must have been subsequent to 1659, in which year Deborah Howland, the first wife of John Smith, was living in Plymouth. Deliverance appears to have been the first child of John Smith's second marriage to Ruhamah Kirby of Sandwich. He died August 30, 1729, being probably about seventy years of age. Until the year of his death his name appears constantly in the records of the monthly meetings as one who was charged with the administration of the affairs of the meeting. He married Mary Tripp, the daughter of Peleg Tripp and Anne Sisson, of Portsmouth. Deborah Smith, the daughter of Deliverance and Mary, married Eliezer Slocum, a great grandfather of Anne Almy Chase.

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES



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1710

By this point the old dwelling house on Farewell Street in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), that [Friend](#) Nicholas Easton had donated, that had initially been used as a place of worship, that had been the meetinghouse used by Friend George Fox but which then had been put into service as a stable, was by this point entirely gone — for in this year Samuel Easton was petitioning the Quakers for permission to build a shop “where the old meeting house stood.”

[GREAT MEETINGHOUSE](#)

1729

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was again enlarged.

1747

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#) of [Rhode Island](#), seating a thousand worshipers, was at this point enlarged to include a second-floor youth gallery seating an additional 500. A moveable wooden divider was created, so that the meeting could be separated on occasions into a men’s meeting and a women’s meeting.³



This was the year of arrival of the reformer, [Friend](#) John Woolman, who generated a crowd so large that no building could contain them, so that meetings would be held at the waterfront ropewalk of Joseph Marshall. Woolman spoke of the relationship between greed and exploitation, and warned wives not to expect their husbands to provide them with luxuries since this might drive their husbands into immoral compromises in business. (From the context in which this occurred, and from the reaction of his audience, it is clear that Friend Woolman’s injunctions against cruelty were aimed at the abuse of fellow humans, rather than at the abuse of whales.)

3. This view of the meetinghouse dates to 1850, after it had been several times expanded.



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1758

In about this year the Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) prepared a map of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) which is now at the [Redwood Library](#).



This map indicates that there were substantial buildings on Farewell Street, Marlborough Street, and Tanner Street surrounding the [Friends'](#) meetinghouse. A sampling of the accounts of the Proprietors of Easton's Point indicates that the Quakers were benefitting from making the grounds available for use.

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1770

June 20, Wednesday: Jonathan Nichols paid the [Quakers](#) £12 “for a lot in ye meeting house field” and Ruth Goddard paid them £58 for “her half of part of ye meeting house field.” Clearly, they renting out the grounds of their [Great Meetinghouse](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

November 19, Monday: Benjamin James paid the [Quakers](#) £8 for rental of “a house lot by ye meeting house,” the [Great Meetinghouse](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

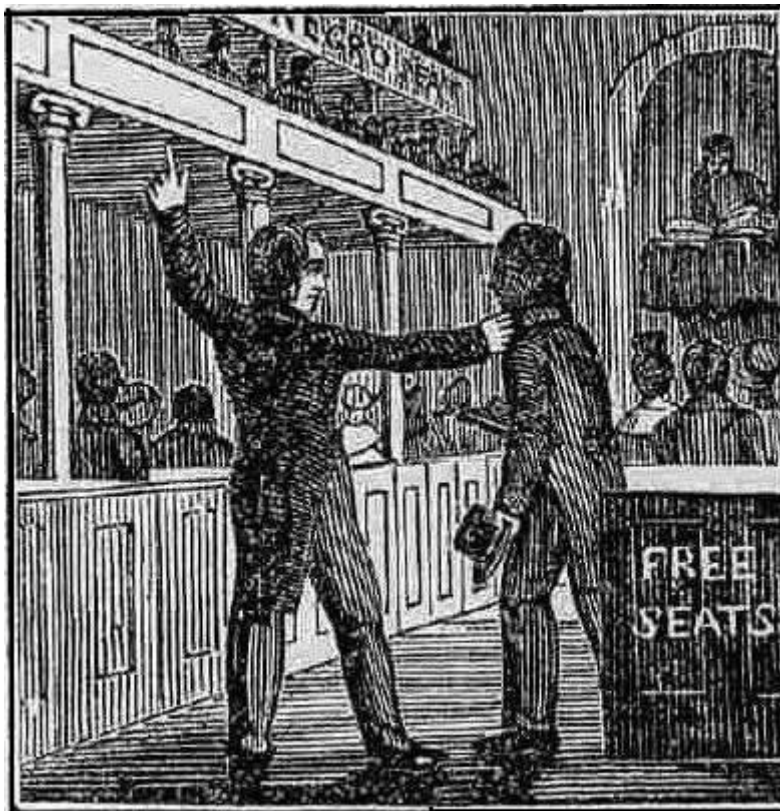
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THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

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[GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM](#)**1807**

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was enlarged to accommodate the New England [Yearly Meeting](#). The renewed structure featured a spacious gallery above, which was intended for the use of persons of color (as it would turn out, this gallery would ordinarily be quite empty, except that during the week of the Yearly Meeting it would be packed with white people).





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1841

June: Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) was on tour with an Englishman, Friend [Joseph Sturge](#), who was going to the various meetings on the Atlantic seaboard to speak of his experiences in the freeing of the slaves of Jamaica.



When they reached the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) held at [Newport](#), they were informed that they would not be allowed to use the [Great Meetinghouse](#) for any such antislavery discussion. The two young men were considered by this [Quaker](#) group to represent the practice of arriving at decisions “by majorities, frequently after excited discussions,” when what was needed was silence, compassion, unanimity, and a gradualist approach. Rather than whip up opposition to the evil white people of the South by lecturing among the good white people of the North, the [Rhode Island](#) Friends felt it would be better to appeal directly to the consciences of the good white people in the South who were most directly involved in this evil. “In order for his peaceful release, the hearts of those who now control him [the slave] must be touched and softened.” After such a

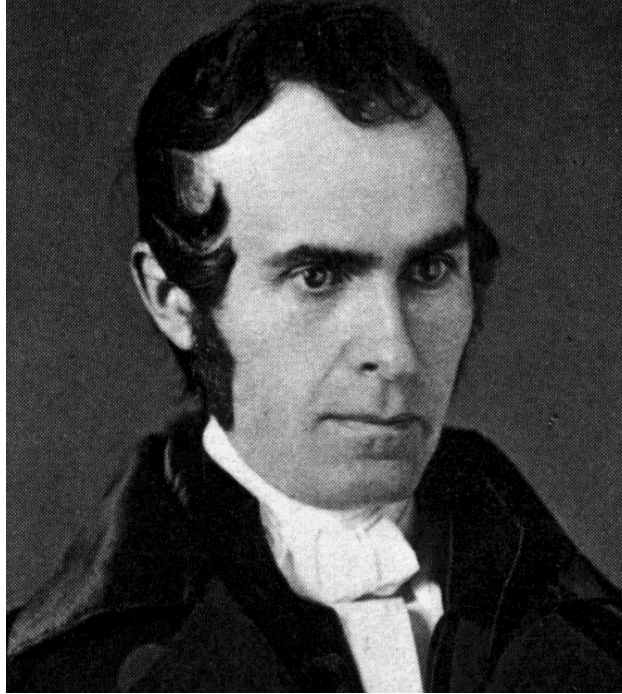


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rebuff, Friend Whittier for several years would refuse to attend his yearly meeting.



Here are the reactions of Friend Joseph Sturge upon touring a slave trading emporium near Washington DC at some point during this month:

In the afternoon I proceeded by a steam packet, with one of my friends, to Alexandria, about six miles distant, on the other side of the Potomac. A merchant, to whom I had an introduction, kindly accompanied us to a slave-trading establishment there, which is considered the principal one in the district. The proprietor was absent; but the person in charge, a stout, middle aged man, with a good-natured countenance, which little indicated his employment, readily consented to show us over the establishment. On passing behind the house, we looked through a grated iron door, into a square court or yard, with very high walls, in which were about fifty slaves. Some of the younger ones were dancing to a fiddle, an affecting proof, in their situation, of the degradation caused by slavery. There were, on the other hand, others who seemed a prey to silent dejection. Among these was a woman, who had run away from her master twelve years ago, and had married and lived ever since as a free person. She was at last discovered, taken and sold, along with her child, and would shortly be shipped to New Orleans, unless her husband could raise the means of her redemption, which we understood he was endeavouring to do. If he failed, they are lost to him for ever. Another melancholy looking woman was here with her nine children, the whole family having been sold away from their husband and father, to this slave-dealer, for two thousand two



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hundred and fifty dollars. This unfeeling separation is but the beginning of their sorrows. They will, in all probability, be re-sold at New Orleans, scattered and divided, until not perhaps two of them are left together. The most able-bodied negro I saw, cost the slave-dealer six hundred and eighty-five dollars.

Our guide told us that they sometimes sent from this house from fifteen hundred to two thousand slaves to the south in a year, and that they occasionally had three hundred to four hundred at once in their possession. That the trade was not now so brisk, but that prices were rising. The return and profits of this traffic appear to be entirely regulated by the fluctuations in the value of the cotton. Women are worth one-third less than men. But one instance of complete escape ever occurred from these premises, though some of the slaves were occasionally trusted out into the fields. He showed us the substantial clothing, shoes, &c., with which the slaves were supplied when sent to the south; a practice, I fear, enforced more by the cupidity of the buyers, than the humanity of the seller. Our informant stated, in answer to enquiries, that by the general testimony of the slaves purchased, they were treated better by the planters than was the case ten years ago. He also admitted the evils of the system, and said, with apparent sincerity, he wished it was put an end to.



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1857

Completion of construction of Fort Adams guarding [Newport](#) Harbor, at 60 acres with 468 cannon the second largest along our nation's coastline. Of course, cheap desperate Irish labor had been utilized to cut and move and position the stone that had been required. This sketch of the fort, and of three [Rhode Islanders](#), had been done about seven years earlier:



The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was again enlarged.

The old stone jail of [Kingston, Rhode Island](#) was again added to, with iron bars embedded within the new walls. Originally the sheriff's family had occupied the ground floor and the cells had been upstairs. In the new arrangement, the sheriff's family occupied the front of the building and, in the two-story annex, the bottom portion was used for criminals who needed to be seriously locked up, while the upper portion was used for the housing of debtors. In one of the cells upstairs, for instance, there was some decorative painting around the edges of the ceiling.



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1867

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was again enlarged.

At [Yearly Meeting School](#) in [Providence](#), it was decided that henceforth they would begin the school year in September and end it in June so that the scholars would be able to provide labor at home during the harvest season (this change is for some reason said to have created a large excess of boys over girls at the school). Although the Quaker scholars would continue to walk down the hill to the Friends meetinghouse for Sunday morning worship and for midweek worship, the practice of attending Sunday afternoon meeting was discontinued. Also discontinued was the practice of morning meeting in the school itself.

A new attitude was emerging toward [Quakers](#) in the arts: “Call it by what name you will, mysticism, spiritualism, transcendentalism, it will scarcely be going beyond what history warrants to affirm that every writer or thinker who has taken deep hold of the hearts, not of the intellects, of mankind, has been a teacher of the doctrine of the ‘Divine Principle in man,’ of the ‘enthusiasm (*vergötterung*) of humanity.’ An illustration of the same truth will be furnished by every poet who has touched the deepest sympathies of the heart, whether he write in prose or verse.... He that dishonoureth the creature dishonoureth the Creator.”⁴

However, it would be a mistake to presume that the above shift in attitudes regarding the arts meant that Quaker students would be able to learn to play a musical instrument. Not so. Even in 1881, when a grand piano would be offered as a gift to the Moses Brown School, it would be accepted only under a stipulation that “music lessons should be given at the school only to those pupils whose parents specifically requested it.”

4. Alfred W. Bennett in the [Friends' Quarterly Examiner](#), 1, no. 1 (1867)



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1905

Since there weren't a thousand or more [Quakers](#) anymore in the vicinity of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would not be assembling there anymore, the [Great Meetinghouse](#), which in 1699 had been the largest structure of any kind in the American colonies between Boston and New-York, was repurposed as a black entertainment center, hosting segregated dances and that sort of thing.⁵



A number of the evangelical opponents of [Elbert Russell](#)'s critical Bible teaching at Earlham College were associated with the Christian Workers' Training School for Bible Study and Practical Methods of Work (or Cleveland Friends Bible Institute) that had been founded by [Holiness Friends](#) J. Walter Malone and Emma Brown Malone in March 1892 at the Whosoever Will Mission in a former Free Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

Friends had to learn by sad experience that the "Inner Light" is not an easy substitute for the encyclopedia.

5. This view dates to 1850. Note that when eventually this building would be restored as a [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in the service of the [Newport](#) tourist industry and carriage trade, their tourist literature would carefully avoid divulging the factoid, that the white silent-worship center had seen major service as a jiving black dancehall. Notice also that the repurposing of this meetinghouse as a dancehall has enabled us, by the deployment of carefully interlocking qualifiers, to claim that our meetinghouse near the Great Road in [Lincoln, Rhode Island](#), the oldest portion of which was erected after the oldest portion of this Newport meetinghouse was already standing is the oldest in **New England, that has remained in continuous use** (the actual oldest in all America in continuous use being the Great Meetinghouse of the Third Haven Friends in [Maryland](#), which has been in continuous use since shortly after August 14th, 1684).



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1970

Eric Foner's *FREE SOIL, FREE LABOR, FREE MEN: THE IDEOLOGY OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR* described how historical scholarship during the 1960s had brought a decline in the reputation of the early Republican party, as a number of scholars had begun to notice that it had been straightforward race prejudice—a desire to prevent blacks, either free or [slave](#), from entering the new western territories—that had been at the root of their antislavery crusade, rather than any great desire to bring race justice to America. (The book has been republished with a new introductory essay as of 1995.)

The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was restored under the guidance of Orin M. Bullock, architect, and then presented by its owner, Mrs. Sydney L. Wright, to the Newport Historical Society.

This structure had been at first a Quaker meetinghouse, and then, beginning in about 1905, a black dancehall. The main industries of Newport used to be piracy and the [international slave trade](#), and then the occupations of pirate and of international slave trader fell into some disrepute and the town fell into despair and disrepair. Now Newport has an industry again, that of catering to families on vacation. Tourism is king, Newport is no longer in disrepair, and despair has become a stranger there. Therefore, when this huge structure was restored, its history as an interesting swinging black dancehall has been carefully erased. (In Newport you can be confronted with black people as [slaves](#) and victims, but not as dancers and party-goers — it is, of course, not so much that there is no place in the catering industry for black people as that there is no place in the catering industry for such a thing as cognitive dissonance.)

On the East Side of [Providence](#), at the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), an unprogrammed meeting for worship was re-introduced, for such students as would voluntarily attend such sessions.



THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

OF THE FRIENDS

[GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM](#)

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quaker](#) Opposition to the Establishment of a State Church in [Maryland](#)" ([Maryland Historical Magazine](#) 65, pages 149-170). Also, his [QUAKERISM ON THE EASTERN SHORE](#) (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society).

Racially integrated primary education continued at the [Carolina Friends School](#) of the [Durham, North Carolina Friends monthly meeting](#), but in this year [Susan Gower Smith](#) and [David Tillerson Smith](#) provided funds and it became possible to add a preschool in a wooden addition to the temporary building.⁶



6. This wooden addition would later be replaced by a brick building. The Early School complex would serve Carolina Friends School for more than 35 years before being removed to make way for the new meetinghouse.



THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

OF THE FRIENDS

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Clerks of Meeting	
1943-1947	Edward K. Kraybill
1947-1948	William Van Hoy, Jr.
1949-1949	John de J. Pemberton, Jr.
1950-1951	Harry R. Stevens
1951-1952	John A. Barlow
1952-1957	Susan Gower Smith
1957-1960	Frances C. Jeffers
1960-1961	Cyrus M. Johnson
1961-1965	Peter H. Klopfer
1965-1967	Rebecca W. Fillmore
1967-1968	David Tillerson Smith
1968-1970	Ernest Albert Hartley
1970-1971	John Hunter
1971-1972	John Gamble
1972-1974	Lyle B. Snider (2 terms)
1974-1975	Helen Gardella
1976-1978	Cheryl F. Junk
1978-1980	Alice S. Keighton
1980-1982	John B. Hunter
1982-1984	Edward M. Arnett





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1984-1986	<u>Calhoun D. Geiger</u>
1986-1988	John P. Stratton
1988-1990	J. Robert Passmore
1990-1992	Karen Cole Stewart
1992-1995	Kathleen Davidson March
1995-1998	Nikki Vangsnes
1998-2000	Co-clerks J. Robert Passmore & Karen Cole Stewart
2000-2002	Amy Brannock
2002-2002	Jamie Hysjulien (Acting)
2002-2005	William Thomas O'Connor
2005-2007	Terry Graedon
2007-2009	Anne Akwari
2009-2012	Joe Graedon
2012-2013	Marguerite Dingman
2013-	Co-clerks Cathy Bridge & David Bridge



THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE


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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: November 22, 2013



THE GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

OF THE FRIENDS

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@brown.edu>.
Arrgh.