

RECENT EVENTS IN GREATER RHODE ISLAND¹



"When one is happy in forgetfulness,
facts get forgotten."

— Robert Pen Warren, 1961
THE LEGACY OF THE CIVIL WAR



GO BACK TO THE PREVIOUS CENTURY

1900

In the [Touro Synagogue](#), to supplement the seats around the walls of the room, pews were installed.

**NEWPORT
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Between this year and 1932, the US Patent Office would be receiving some 350 applications for new designs of water closet. Two of the first of these to succeed would be to designs by Charles Neff and Robert Frame of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), who would imagine a siphonic wash-down closet that in later years, after redesign of the bowl by Fred Adee a decade later to avoid the messy overflows to which the design was prone, would become the norm of the nation.²

**GOD IN THE JAKES
WATER SUPPLY**

1. "Recent" meaning in the course of this extended 20th Century.



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At about the turn of the century the area of downtown [Providence, Rhode Island](#) available to its [Chinese](#) population was being narrowed down, by urban renewal projects, to the point that all of Chinatown was made up of one stretch along Empire Street. Surprise, the white people didn't really want the Chinese around.

Publication, in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), of Augustine Jones's BRIEF HISTORY OF PROVIDENCE FRIENDS SCHOOL, about the [Yearly Meeting School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on top of the hill.

In this year or the following one, the Quaker schoolhouse near Princeton, New Jersey, virtually abandoned and a ruin, would be torn down. The land on which it stood is now the parking lot of the new school.

August 10, Friday: A message reached the [Peking](#) legations that the relief force was on its way.

A team of [Harvard College](#) students defeated an invited team of British tennis players in a challenge match at Longwood Cricket Club in Brookline, Massachusetts. The victors' cup was donated by, and therefore named after, one of the Harvard students, Dwight Filley Davis.

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#) at 11AM Milton S. Hershey sold his Lancaster Caramel Company for the round sum of \$1,000,000.⁰⁰ (this bought-out entity would go on to become the Hershey Company of Derry Church, Pennsylvania, largest [chocolate](#) manufacturer in America).

1901

[Gypsy moth](#) infestations were discovered in [Rhode Island](#).



William Hannaway relocated the blacksmith operation from the lean-to on the west side of the mill at [Saylesville](#) to a nearby carriage house.

2. Some of the initial problems in the bowl design in Neff and Frame's unit, causing messy overflows, would be corrected a decade later by Fred Adeo. From this would develop the German-style toilet, in which the shit lies on a ledge at the rear for your inspection, until it is flushed down a hole at the front, and the French-style toilet, in which this arrangement is inverted, the hole being at the back. Only in British and American toilets does the shit fall directly into the water. In FEAR OF FLYING, Erica Jong would comment on this: "German toilets are really the key to the horrors of the Third Reich. People who can build toilets like this are capable of anything." Slavov Žižek comments that when one visits the lavatory, immediately one is knee-deep in ideology.



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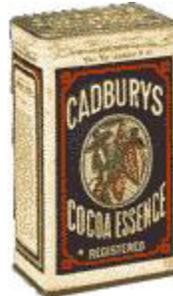
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In its beginnings, the Quaker Meeting for Sufferings committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), which had been so named because it was commissioned to care for Friends who were suffering persecution during the American revolution, had acquired a dominant position within the society. In 1872, in a belated recognition of the fact that Friends were no longer being persecuted for their peace testimony, the name of this governing committee had been updated to “Representative Meeting.” At this point the name was updated again, to “Permanent Board.”

Publication, in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) of Augustine Jones’s A SKETCH OF WILLIAM ROTCH, a pamphlet which contained information relating to the role played by Friends William Rotch and William Rotch, Jr. in the formation of the [Yearly Meeting School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) at the top of the hill.

1902

The [Quaker Yearly Meeting School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) went into debt in order to erect Hawes Gymnasium at a cost of more than \$30,000 (the debt would be eliminated later when a bequest would be received from Sarah J. Hall).



[Friend William Cadbury](#) of Cadbury Chocolates was offered a [cocoa](#) plantation on San Thome (a West African island) but saw an advertisement on which its workers had been listed as assets, at so much a head, so [Cadbury](#) instead looked to the Gold Coast (Ghana) where the quality of [cocoa](#) was at the time perceived as poor.

At the [Cadbury](#) facility in England, Men’s and Women’s Suggestions Committees were set up, formalizing a process that had already begun (in 1893 women had voted in favour of starting work later than 6AM and working later each day).



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1903

[Quakers](#) had in this year, as always, a grand reputation, more or less warranted, for probity and solidity, tending mildly in the direction of obesity:



It is evident, however, that there was in this year some doubt, among the general public, about allowing these Quakers of probity and solidity and stick-to-your-ribs substance to educate the next generation of your family. What sort of weird ideas would your kiddies try to bring home, from a Quaker school? –Would they try to bring home, for instance, the Quaker Peace Testimony? In this year the Friends [Yearly Meeting School](#) of the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) under Principal Augustine Jones (“principal” means that he was pocketing one half of the annual excess income) took out an advertisement, which it printed among other places in the “Who’s Who,” in which it offered among its many advantages as a school the fact that although it was admittedly “under the management of the Society of Friends,” what it was engaged in nevertheless amounted to nothing other than “the most complete preparation for the best American colleges and universities, and for the highest walks of business or professional life.” One need not be afraid of the influence of this Friend Moses Brown, since he also helped found Brown University (and you know that Brown University isn’t weird). You can feel free to send your child to this “unsectarian”



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school, since we can reassure you that in point of fact most of the students are non-Quakers and therefore non-problematic, and since we can reassure you that in point of fact most of the teachers also are non-Quakers and therefore non-problematic! Don't worry, the actual Quakers are in a minority and can be handled. (This actual advertisement is pictured on a following screen — so that you can judge for yourself whether these extrapolations from its implicit argument are appropriate or inappropriate.)

In the absence of any policy of racial inclusiveness it goes without saying that this advertisement by Principal Augustine Jones of the “Friends School” was aimed only at acceptably white matriculants. Despite the school's need to attract a wider clientele, and despite Quakerism, any applicant of color would have been turned away:

Quakers had created schools for free people of African descent and newly freed African Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but, well into the twentieth century, they showed little interest in educating students of color in the schools they had created for their own children. This disinclination was, in part, a function of the Quakerism of earlier centuries when Friends founded schools to retain the purity and the distinctiveness (or sometimes their own branch) of their religious society. Quaker children, Friends maintained, required a “guarded” education where teachers could instill religious values and limit the influence of the secular culture. As the Quaker population began to decrease, Friends faced the choice of opening schools to non-Quaker students or closing for lack of adequate income. Most schools chose the former, but they typically admitted the children of parents attracted to the particular teachings and quality of Quaker education, who — without concerted efforts to attract a diverse student body — were virtually always of European descent.³

3. Page 319 in Donna McDaniel's and Vanessa Julye's FIT FOR FREEDOM, NOT FOR FRIENDSHIP: QUAKERS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND THE MYTH OF RACIAL JUSTICE (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009).



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Friends School, PROVIDENCE Rhode Island

Augustine Jones, Principal

Historical

First opened at Portsmouth, R. I., Eleventh Month, 8th, 1784, by Isaac Lawton. Closed in 1788 for want of funds; opened again in Providence in 1819. Moses Brown (a founder of Brown University), donated the site, and subscribed to its funds, and left it \$15,000 at his death. His son, Obediah, donated over \$100,000 in 1822, and many other donations were made to the School : : : :

A THOROUGH School for boys and girls. Pupils may here lay the foundation in the elementary studies, pursue regular courses in the mathematics, sciences, ancient and modern languages, philosophy, and all the studies required for the most complete preparation for the best American colleges and universities, and for the highest walks of business or professional life.

The buildings are large, equipped in the best manner for educational purposes and for home life, and the new gymnasium building provides an admirable opportunity for recreation and physical development. The campus comprises 28 acres "on top of Providence," the cupola of the main building overlooking nearly every town in Rhode Island. There are spacious playgrounds for boys and girls.

While the school is under the management of the Society of Friends, it is under a broad and liberal policy. Less than half the teachers are Friends, and less than half the pupils are from the families of Friends. The moral and spiritual welfare of pupils is, however, promoted in a thoroughly unsectarian way.

The faculty includes a large number of permanent teachers, both men and women, of accurate scholarship and large experience.

FOR TERMS AND PARTICULARS ADDRESS **FRIENDS SCHOOL**

July 21, Tuesday: [George Thomas Downing](#) died after a long illness in his Bellevue Avenue home in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) (the funeral would be held at the Emmanuel Church on Dearborn Street).



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1904

As the Augustine Jones administration ended and the administration of Dr. Seth Kelley Gifford began at the [Yearly Meeting School](#) of the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the Lower School building was constructed at a cost of \$20,000 and the school formally changed its name to the [Moses Brown School](#).⁴ There were 172 students. The overt objective of the new headmaster would be to convert this old Quaker school into a college-preparatory academy. Here is how this new administration at the school would be described in Friend Eric Kristensen's "An Outline of Moses Brown School's History," prepared for the Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the Permanent Board on Financing Moses Brown School Renovations:

1904-1924: rising academic standards to compete with public high schools; Upper School (Forms I-V [grades 8-12]) curriculum reorganized as a college preparatory course, yet with a broad scope to satisfy those who may not go on to college (more than 90% of students in this period did go on to college); admission standards become stricter (number of non-college preparatory students rapidly declines); last herd of School's farm animals sold; day student enrollment greatly increased, and a lower school (grades 1-7) built to accommodate younger students; total enrollment regularly more than 300 students; number of girls continues to decline and co-education seen as a problem needing to be solved; numerous surpluses allowed the school to invest more than \$75,000 in physical plant; playing fields extended, tennis courts built, trees, shrubs and lawns planted, memorial gates erected and a fence installed along Lloyd Ave., heating and lighting systems extended and renovated, and Middle House remodeled. (page 8)

Here is how Friend Eric Kristensen had described the previous "Augustine Jones Administration" which was ending:

1879-1904: Music and art invade the school in great profusion. Student life flourishes with clubs, athletic associations and teams, and various society forms. Girls and boys mix in classes and in many extracurricular events. Elizabeth Fry fund established by Ella J. Wheeler with a gift of \$30,000 for scholarships; Stephen T. Olney bequeaths \$43,000 for the permanent fund of the school; other gifts and bequests by Sarah Slade, Timothy Earle, Philip Tripp, Eleanor Cattell and others bring the gift total to more than \$90,000 most of which was added to the permanent endowment. (page 7)

4. The school had been taking out advertisements in which it termed itself "Friends School," but in these advertisements it attempted to distance itself from the Friends, pointing out for instance that they were in a minority. Would not changing the school's name ease this problem of feeling a need to apologize for the Quaker influence? The suggestion to make this change had originated with Charles Sisson, a member of the School Committee. The timing of the name change obviously was inspired by the fact that the College of Rhode Island had changed its name to Brown University exactly one century earlier, in 1804. However, there is something to be said about this other than the mere timing of it. For some four decades the school had been being administered for the incentive compensation of its headmaster, who had been putting half of its annual surplus in his own pocket, rather than in implementation of the intent of its benefactor Friend Moses Brown (that it provided a guarded environment in which a Quaker education was provided to Quaker students) — and a sorry situation such as that cries out for a cover story. **Since we are no longer honoring our founder in fact, we will honor him nominally!**

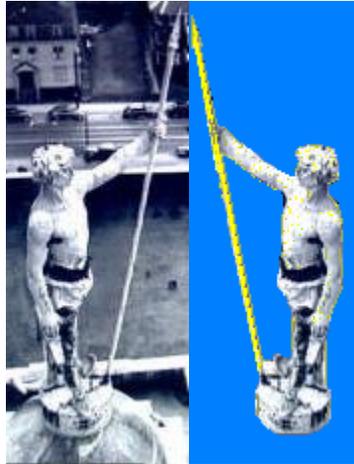


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June 11, Saturday: 14,000 [German](#) troops arrive in South West Africa to deal with the Herero uprising.

Completion of the [Rhode Island](#) state capital building of Georgia marble, on Smith Hill in [Providence](#). The dome of this building is the 2nd largest of four famous unsupported marble domes in the world: largest the St. Peter's basilica in the Vatican in Rome, then this Rhode Island state capital structure, then the Taj Mahal — and the Minnesota state capital building in St. Paul, where (incidentally) my spouse took her Oath of Allegiance to the US of A. The Rhode Island dome atop Smith Hill is tipped by a gilt statue which does not seem to photograph well by telephoto close-up, known as “The Independent Man”:





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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.

February: Lincoln Steffens's "[Rhode Island](#): A State for Sale" appeared in [McClure's Magazine](#):

RHODE ISLAND: A CORRUPTED PEOPLE SHOWING THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS CAN BE BOUGHT (CHEAP) TO SELL OUT THEIR CITIES AND STATES

THE political condition of Rhode Island is notorious, acknowledged, and it is shameful. But the Rhode Islander resents the interest of his neighbors. "Our evils are our troubles," he says; "they don't concern the rest of you. Why should we be singled out? We are no worse than others. We are better than some; we want to set things right, but can't. Conditions are peculiar."

This is all wrong. The evils of Rhode Island concern every man, woman, and child in our land. For example:

The United States Senate is coming more and more to be the actual

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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head of the United States Government. In the Senate there is a small ring (called the Steering Committee) which is coming more and more to be the head of the United States Senate. The head of this committee is Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, who has been described as "the boss of the United States," "the power behind the power behind the throne," "the general manager of the United States." The fitness of these titles is questioned, but it is a question of national politics, and all I know to the point in that field is what everybody knows: that Senator Aldrich, a very rich man and father-in-law of young Mr. Rockefeller, is supposed to represent "Sugar," "Standard Oil," "New York," and, more broadly, "Wall Street"; our leading legislative authority on protective tariff, he speaks for privileged business; the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, he stands for high finance. These facts and suppositions, taken together with the praises I have heard of him in Wall Street and the comfortable faith he seems to inspire in business men all over the country, suggest that we have in Senator Aldrich the commercial ideal of political character, and -if not the head- at least the political representative of the head of that System which is coming more and more to take the place of the passing paper government of the United States.

What sort of a man is Senator Aldrich? What school of politics did he attend, what school of business? What kind of a government is it that forms the traditions and perhaps the ideal of the most powerful man in our national legislature? What kind of a government does he give his own people in his own State? In brief, what is the System that he has produced and that has produced him? These are questions of national interest, and Rhode Island can answer them. Mr. Aldrich is the senior Senator for Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

And Rhode Island throws light on another national question, a question that is far more important: Aren't the people themselves dishonest? The "grafters" who batten on us say so. Politicians have excused their own corruption to me time and again by declaring that "we're all corrupt," and promoters and swindlers alike describe their victims as "smart folk who think to beat us at our own game." Without going into the cynic's sweeping summary that "man always was and always will be corrupt" it is but fair while we are following the trail of the grafters to consider their plea that the corrupt political System they are upbuilding is founded on the dishonesty of the American people. Is it?

It is in Rhode Island. The System of Rhode Island which has produced the man who is at the head of the political System of the United States is grounded on the lowest layer of corruption that I have found thus far - the bribery of voters with cash at the polls. Other States know the practice. In Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, and Pennsylvania "workers" are paid "to get out the vote," but this is only preliminary; the direct and decisive purchase of power comes later, in conventions and legislatures. In these States the corruptionists buy the people's representatives. In Rhode Island they buy the people themselves.



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The conditions are peculiar. As the Rhode Islanders say, their State is peculiar in many ways. But it is American. The smallest of the States, it is one of the biggest in our history. Poor in soil, it is rich in waterways, and the Rhode Islanders, turning early from agriculture to manufacture, made goods which they sent forth from their magnificent harbor to all the world in ships that brought home cargoes of wealth. One of the New England group of colonies, Rhode Island was founded as a refuge from the Puritan intolerance of Massachusetts. One of the "Original Thirteen States," It was the first (May 4, 1776) to declare Its independence of Great Britain, and the last (May 29, 1790) to give allegiance to the United States, So the American spirit of commercial enterprise and political independence has burned high in Rhode Island. There is nothing peculiar about that, and there is nothing peculiar about the general result of the corruption of the State.

Rhode Island is an oligarchy. But so were Wisconsin and Illinois and Missouri, and so are New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The oligarchy is the typical form of the actual government of our States. There is one peculiarity about the Rhode Island oligarchy, however. It is constitutional. The oligarchies of other States were grafted upon constitutional democracies. Rhode Island never was a democracy, and in that peculiarity lies the peculiar significance of this State to the rest of us.

Rhode Island has a restricted suffrage. Many a good American thinks that if we could "keep the ignorant foreigner from voting," and otherwise limit the suffrage to persons of property who would have a direct, personal, financial interest in government, we then should have good government. Should we? Rhode Island can answer that question. Again, many "thinkers" have thought that it was the wicked cities with their mixed populations which have degraded and disgraced us, and that if we could but devise some scheme of representation by which the balance of power could be given into the honest hands of the good old American stock out upon the healthy countryside we then should be saved. Rhode Island has such a scheme. The significance to the rest of us of the story of Rhode Island lies in the fact that its essentially typical condition was reached under extraordinary circumstances, which some "leading citizens" in other States think would correct their evils.

"Leading citizens" have made Rhode Island what it is. They always have ruled there. I have called the State an oligarchy. It used to be an aristocracy. "Freeholders" and their eldest sons alone participated in the colonial government under the charter of Charles II, and after the Revolution, when all the other States adopted constitutions, Rhode Island went on under its royal charter of 1663 and an "unwritten constitution" till 1842. I cannot stop to describe this "landed aristocracy" in an American State. It is sufficient that it closed with the Dorr Rebellion. The abuses were so intolerable that the people, the patient American people who have submitted to Croker, Quay, Cox, and other despots, rose in open revolt.

The next experiment was a "commercial aristocracy." The constitution of 1842 "extended" the suffrage from holders of



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real [property] to those also possessed of personal property – if they were native born. The “foreign vote” was restricted as before to real estate holders till 1888, when personal property qualified a foreign-born as well as a native voter. The “mob,” which owned nothing and paid no taxes, was allowed to vote, but only upon registering four months before election and then not “upon any proposition to impose a tax or the expenditure of money.” These registered voters, for example, cannot vote for members of city councils.

The most effective restriction of the suffrage, however, was established in the constitutional scheme of disproportionate representation. The Governor, elected by a majority (now by a plurality) of the voters of all classes, was made a “pure executive”; he had no veto. All legislative powers were lodged in the General Assembly of two houses. The lower branch, the House of Representatives, is limited to 72 members, no matter what the population may be, and while each town shall have at least one representative, no city may have more than one-sixth of the membership. This is undemocratic enough, but the Senate, says the constitution, “shall consist of one Senator from each town and city in the State.”

Here is the crux of the situation. A town in Rhode Island is what is known to most of us as a township. There are 38 “towns and cities” in the State. Their population in 1900 was 428,551. Of this total, 36,027 lived in 20 towns. Thus less than one-eleventh of the people of the State elect more than five-tenths – a majority – of the Senate. Providence, with 29,030 qualified voters, has one Senator; Little Compton elected one, one year, by a unanimous vote of 78. There are 14 such “towns” with less than 500 qualified voters; there are 20 with less than 2,000 each. Thus was the sovereignty of the State put into the hands of the “good old American stock but in the country.”

What happened? The “best people” continued to rule. The “best people” of the period after the new constitution were manufacturers, but their fine old houses stand today as witnesses not only to their wealth, but also to a refined taste. There can be no doubt that they came as near forming a real aristocracy as commercialism can produce. They certainly were just the kind of men that many theorists say should have control of government. Well, they got control in Rhode Island. How? With money. Aristocrats though they were, they were business men first, and they went after the key to control in a businesslike way. They bought up the towns. The “best people” sent offers of bribes to the good people of the countryside, and the good people took the bribes and let the best people run the government. It was a commercial aristocracy that corrupted the American stock in Rhode Island and laid the foundation of the present financial and political system of corruption in the State.

This class ruled till well down into the [1880s], and its leader, Senator Henry B. Anthony, “discovered” and promoted Nelson W. Aldrich, his successor, who represents the System, and General Charles R. Brayton, the boss who developed and directs it. Since Anthony’s time, the latterday business man – he who makes, not cotton goods, but money – the captain of finance, has succeeded



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to the control, but he has not disturbed the foundation stone of the System. He also rules with money. He, too, sends bribes to the towns of Rhode Island, and to him also the good "country" American has surrendered his sovereignty. There is no doubt about this. The corruption of the voters of the towns of Rhode Island is so ancient and so common that Governor Lucius F. C. Garvin addressed in March, 1903, a "Special Message concerning Bribery in Elections to the Honorable, the General Assembly," etc.:

"GENTLEMEN:- ... That bribery exists to a great extent in the elections of this State is a matter of common knowledge. No general election passes without, in some sections of the State, the purchase of votes by one or both of the great political parties. It is true that the results of the election may not often be changed, so far as the candidates on the State ticket are concerned, but many Assemblymen occupy the seats they do by means of purchased votes.

"In a considerable number of our towns bribery is so common and has existed for so many years that the awful nature of the crime has ceased to impress. In some towns the bribery takes place openly; is not called bribery, nor considered a serious matter. The money paid to the voter, whether \$2, \$5, or \$20, is spoken of as "payment for his time." The claim that the money given to the elector is not for the purpose of influencing his vote, but is compensation for time lost in visiting the polls, is the merest sophistry, and should not deceive any adult citizen of ordinary intelligence. It is well known that in such towns, when one political party is supplied with a corruption fund and the other is without, the party so provided invariably elects its Assembly ticket, thus affording positive proof that the votes are bought and the voters bribed."

This startling official arraignment had no appreciable effect within the State. It was too true. But the message attracted outside attention, and Mr. Edward Lowry, of the New York Evening Post, and Mr. Waldo L. Cook, of the Springfield (Mass.) Republican made investigations so thorough and reports so complete that, though I went over the same ground with more time and more deliberation, I found nothing to correct and little to add to their facts.

Nine of the towns are absolutely purchasable; that is to say, they "go the way the money goes." Eleven more can be influenced by the use of money. Many of their voters won't go to the polls at all unless "there is something in it." But there need not be much in it. Governor Garvin quoted a political leader in one town who declared that if neither party had money, but one had a box of cigars, "my town would go for that party - if the workers would give up the cigars." In another town one party had but one man in it who did not take money, and he never voted. A campaign marching club organized for a presidential campaign paraded every night with enthusiasm so great that the leaders thought it would be unnecessary to pay for votes in this town; few of the members voted. Another time, when no money turned up at a State election, one town, by way of rebuke to the regular



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party managers, elected a Prohibition candidate to the Assembly. Both parties buy votes, and though the practice seems to have destroyed completely all loyalty to the State, some loyalty to party remains in most of these towns. But even this sentiment is mercenary. The Democratic leader of a Democratic town told me that he has to pay something always. "For instance," he explained, "my town is all right. The Republicans can come in there with more money than I have, and I still can hold it. Suppose they have enough to pay \$10 a vote and I can give but \$3; I tell my fellows to go over and get the \$10, then come to me and get my \$3; that makes \$13, but I tell them to vote my way. And they do. And the Republicans do the same in their solid towns when we go in to outbid them." Another instance stated to me by a campaign manager was the experience of a "respectable business man" who lived in a town that usually "went wrong." The manager wanted to carry that town, and he asked the business man to do it. "I offered him a few hundred dollars," he said, "and he wouldn't take the money at first; said it would be of no use among the kind of men he could influence. But I got him to try it, and after election when he came to report he had learned something. He had spent most of the money, and he was astonished at the character of the men who took such money. 'Why,' he said, 'they took it as easy as you please.' They asked why we hadn't done that before. They said they were willing to vote our way if only we would make it interesting!"

This "respectable business man" discovered the most depressing development of the Rhode Island practices — the kind of voters that take bribes. They are Americans; others, too, but the worst of these rotten boroughs are the "hill towns," so called because they lie back away from the harbor and river and "big cities," up on the hills. There is the American stock pure; too pure, some apologists say; the hill towns are called degenerate. Maybe they are. The population of many of them has decreased slowly, but pretty steadily, for a hundred years. "The most courageous of the people have gone out," you hear, "and little new blood has gone in." But that only proves the point. These pure Americans are corrupt. Another consideration to be weighed is that the temptation has been severe and long. With so much power to bestow, their votes have been eagerly sought, as very valuable. But this accident only explains, perhaps, why other, more populous, districts elsewhere are not corrupt; they have not been tried. It is cheaper in Providence to bribe the opposition leaders, and in Missouri and Wisconsin to wait and buy the select men of the people, not the people. Where the people are tempted, in the country "towns" of Rhode Island, the people sell out.

And Rhode Island proves the willingness to buy. The respectable business man, who was astonished at the standing of the men who sold, was ready enough to buy, and he did buy, and he had no astonishment for his own conduct. Bribe-giving is "not so bad." Some men who talked to me of their vote-buying knew and said, and one of them plainly felt, that it was a shameful practice, but they all regarded it as necessary. Governor Garvin referred once publicly to a "district judge" who so regarded it, and so



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notorious is this case that a dozen men named the judge to me. The Democrats, who, being out of power, stand for reform and a new constitution, do not see how they can get control long enough to make the needed changes without more money than they can raise in the State, and the hope of some of the leaders is that an exigency will arise, say in national politics, which will enable them to collect enough "outside capital" to buy up the State for their party.

Bribery, bribery of the people, is a custom of the country in Rhode Island; it is an institution, and, like the church or property, it is not safe to attack it. This may sound preposterous, and there is a public opinion against the custom, but the country clergy, as Mr. Lowry showed and as Bishop McVickar of the Rhode Island diocese of the Episcopal Church confirmed, do not denounce bribery from their pulpits; they do not dare. The Bishop declared that the country clergy could not "speak out without coming to financial grief and ruin," and he proposed "doing something, so that no one will dare threaten local ministers with the loss of their positions." What does the Bishop mean by such language? "It is an outrage on our civilization," he added, "that young men of the church with high ideals should be put under the ban of the power of political immoralities and forced to acquiesce in evil for the sake of their families."

The good Bishop was pointing, when he spoke thus, at the System, of which this bribery institution is the cornerstone. Back of the vote-buyers are the most powerful interests of the State, the friends of "all that is," and even Bishop McVickar has been unable to do the "something" to free the clergy. The head men in the churches, the leading citizens in the State, the captains of finance and industry, won't let the clergy "preach politics"; they may preach the Gospel, not morality, not practical morality.

What is this precious System that can compel the respect, of silence at least, even from the Church? It is just such a typical financial political organization as we have seen in other States, only plainer; as General Brayton, the boss, says: "Bad, but not a bit worse than in many other States. Because Rhode Island is small, you can see things better; that's what makes the difference." But that is a most encouraging difference to those who want to see things better. Business men are back of the politicians that rule most corrupt States; in Rhode Island they are in plain sight, and everybody knows them and their operations. Here, also, there are politicians to "do the dirty work," but the very politicians in this State are not of the "low-down" sort. They are not "Irish immigrants"; the Irish are in opposition here. Nor are they saloonkeepers and keepers of disorderly houses, gamblers, and the "scum of the earth." So purely a business government is this that the officers and legislators, the bosses and the leaders, are typically native-born citizens of professional and business occupations. General Brayton himself comes of a fine old Rhode Island family, with a revolutionary record and a line of sons reaching from the Supreme Court bench to Congress; the boss went to Brown



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University and served with credit in the Civil War. Though he had himself admitted to the bar apparently only to enable him, as a St. Louis grafter put it, "to take fees, not bribes," none the less the boss is a lawyer.

And he is a "character." He is old now, blind, and some of his political friends said he was mentally weakened. I think they feared his candor; though, when I called, his relatives, after consulting with him, and reporting that he felt he had better not talk, they put the refusal on other grounds. It is better so, for whereas I make it a rule to treat such interviews as confidential, Mr. Lowry had his for publication, and here it is, a remarkable outline of the Rhode Island government by General Brayton himself:

"There is a lot of talk of bribery here, but ... I don't think there is much outright vote-buying done; the voters are paid for their time, because they have to leave their work and come down to the polls. Sometimes that takes all day. The Republican party shouldn't be blamed for the present state of affairs. The Democrats are just as bad, or would be if they had the money.

"The manufacturers in the State are really to blame for present conditions. If they would only hang together and wanted to do it, they could clean out the State in no time at all. They give to the Republican campaign fund in Presidential years, but usually when you go to them to get money for State elections they say: 'Oh! we'll take care of our town'; so in that way all of the towns in the State are peddled around, each manufacturer caring for his own town. Some of them haven't treated the party just right. The Republicans have never passed any legislation that would bother them, like the 10-hour law and things like that, until there was such a strong demand from the labor people and the citizens that the party had to do it.'

"What is your share in the forming of legislation and the passage of bills?"

"I am an attorney for certain clients and look out for their interests before the Legislature. I am retained annually by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, and am usually spoken of as 'of counsel' for that road. Of course, I don't have anything to do with damage suits or matters in relation to grade crossing. As everyone knows, I act for the Rhode Island Company (street-railway Interests), and I have been retained in certain cases by the Providence Telephone Company. In addition to these I have had connections, not permanent, with various companies desiring franchises, charters, and things of that sort from the Legislature. I never solicit any business,' added General Brayton, without a smile. 'It all comes to me unsought, and if I can handle it I accept the retainer.'

"What is your power in the Legislature that enables you to serve your clients?"

"Well, you see, in managing the campaign every year I am in a position to be of service to men all over the State. I help them to get elected, and, naturally, many warm friendships result, then when they are in a position to repay me they are glad to do it.'"



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The elected Governors of Rhode Island are called "administrative mummies." They have sat for years without power and without homage in the State House, while across the hall, in the office of the High Sheriff, Boss Brayton was the State. He directed the General Assembly. His word was law. He did not have to "dicker, trade, and buy," there was no "addition, division, and silence" for him. He handled the campaign funds of "the party," and with them the voters were bought at the polls. The legislator returned by the electors came bought. When the time for local caucuses was approaching, the party leaders came down to Providence to get money for expenses from Brayton.

"How much do you think you will need?" he would ask.

"Oh, say \$500."

"Five hundred dollars to carry that town! Who's your man for Senator?"

The leader would tell him. If the local candidate suited Brayton, a bargain was struck as to the amount; if not, he would say pointedly: "I guess there isn't any money for you this year." The leader then had to go back and pick out another candidate, or, perhaps, Brayton would give him a suggestion which the "other fellows" would have to "agree upon." At any rate, Brayton had to be satisfied or the party got no money for expenses.

When the General Assembly met he directed its labors, and his masterfulness is unprecedented. A good-natured, generous man, he adopted a cross, surly tone, which, alternating with kindness, made men fear and like him, too. Not at all vindictive, he punished severely as a matter of policy. If a member of the Legislature disobeyed him, he would say, "That man shan't come back," and that man rarely could be renominated and reelected. He was very open, and hundreds of anecdotes are told to illustrate his methods.

The Springfield Republican reported two, which are well known. Once, when the House of Representatives was in prolonged session, Brayton became hungry. "Damn it!" he exclaimed, "who is that fool talking in the House? It's lunch time and past. Sheriff, go in and see that the House adjourns." The House adjourned. Another time, this conversation was overheard between the angry boss and a most humble Republican floor leader:

"Damn it, cant I have a little bill passed when I want it?" said the boss.

"But, General, I didn't know you were interested in that bill."

"Well, I am, and I want it passed right away."

That little bill was passed right away.

"Where's Senator -?" said the boss in his blindness one morning when he arrived in the State House.

"In the Senate," said someone.

"Get him," said Brayton. "Bring him here. I want him to lead me out to [let us say] drink."

Such was the discipline of a coarse man made peevish by too much power. The only wonder is that men put up with it. But Brayton could reward, too. He had "success" as well as "failure" to bestow. The General Assembly "elects" judges, sheriffs, and fills most of the offices in between. It is the road to success, and Brayton has made it a rule to send on to these higher



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offices, even to the Supreme Court of the State, men who have served him in the General Assembly, thus controlled and thus disciplined. The law allows legislators to serve as district judges while sitting in the Legislature, and they do. The effect on the courts of all this is not for me to discuss (it is said to be "not so bad as you would think"). The effect on the Legislature is to make it absolutely subservient to the boss, who really appoints to all these offices, and thus controls all the patronage of the State. More than that, he has business to give – business that is not political. It puzzled me at first to find that there was so little bribery in a Legislature so corruptly devised. The pay of Senators and Representatives was small, and some of them served for years without the reward of promotion to the bench or any other office. The chairman of a most important committee explained it all frankly to me. There was some bribery, he said, but it wasn't typical. When he first opened his law office, a small corporation offered him \$5,000, besides his fee, if he could put through the Legislature an amendment to their charter. William G. Roelker, the Senator at the head of the committee that would decide, said it should not pass. The young lawyer did not know Brayton, but he went to him and told him all about his business.

"I told Brayton," he said, "just how it was; that I wanted that \$5,000, and after talking a long time to me, the General said he'd see about it; for me to come the next day. I went at the appointed time and Brayton was out. I was 'hot,' till a friend of mine came up and said my bill was through. Brayton had done it before he said he would, and when I offered to divide the \$5,000 with him, he nearly threw me out of his office. But he threw me into politics all right. He knew he was putting me under obligations forever; oh, he was shrewd all right. But wouldn't you go the limit for a man that gave you your first lift like that?"

I have heard thoughtful Rhode Islanders say that by such methods, by a cynical tone with young men and sneers at their college education and high ideals, by assisting them in "crooked business" and getting his corporations to employ the good fellows "and ignore the fools," General Brayton has corrupted more of the youth of the State than any man that ever lived in it – Brayton and his business backers – the men and interests he *says* he represents.

For Brayton was the front, not the head, of the System. Say what you will about the "boss," no one man can do what any American boss has done without the powerful backing of the "vested interests" of a community. Brayton had great personal power; he "organized" the Republican party; he systematized the corruption of voters; he chose legislators; he organized the General Assembly and ran it; he has gradually altered the government of the State. But he did not do this for his own uses. Brayton is not rich. He says himself that he took "fees" for legislation, but they were fees, not fortunes. The New Haven Railroad's annual retainer was only \$10,000. His fee for an ordinary bill was \$500. I know of one company that paid him as high as \$1,000, but that was for a piece of legislation worth, in Missouri, for



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instance, at least \$25,000. Like the voters of Rhode Island, like the local leaders, like the legislators, the boss of Rhode Island was cheap. "I often told him that," said one of his lieutenants to me when I had expressed this opinion, "and now that he is getting out, we'll raise some prices." Brayton was a bad and an able man, but he was a tool, and he realizes it now: "I have been the scapegoat of the party for 20 years."

Who are "the party" in Rhode Island? As I have said above, they are and they always have been the "leading business men" of the State. First the old aristocracy, then the old manufacturers, and Brayton's growl because they would not let him spend their bribery funds in their own towns is an echo of a past relationship. Then came the railroads, and the annual retainer of \$10,000 is what the scientists would call a rudimentary vestige of their interest. After steam comes electricity, and it is the electric railway men who are at the head of the government now. For, as General Brayton explained to Mr. Lowry, he serves others with "the understanding that when their interests conflict with those of the Rhode Island (street-railway) Company, the street-railway people are to have first call." So the Brayton government is a business government. The cost to the character of the people of the State is heavy, but never mind; Rhode Island has what honest business men of this country have long honestly said we ought to have in all States and all cities in the United States, a business government – of the business men, by the business men, and for the business men. What have the Rhode Island business men done with it?

The old aristocracy, we have seen, drove the people to revolt. The old manufacturers sought a high protective tariff, and they got it. The railroads sought rights, privileges, and property, and they got them in the way they preferred, by bribery, not by a fair contract with the State. This is what Rhode Island's older business rulers did with political power. Now for the "trolley crowd"; what have they done with it?

They financed it. They organized it into a company which they are selling to outside capitalists. "They" are Marsden J. Perry, William G. Roelker, and the Hon. Nelson W. Aldrich. Perry is the business man. He began life a poor boy, had some sort of connection with a theatrical show, till, entering the chattel mortgage business, he made himself a banker, promoter, and finally Rhode Island's first captain of finance. He is really an able man, dangerous, but only because he is spoiled by power. Roelker is the lawyer. Counsel to corporations, he was after money, and when they all got that he retired to play at Newport. Aldrich is the politician of the group. He also began life humbly, as a clerk and bookkeeper, first in a market, then in a wholesale grocery business, and in this he worked up to a partnership. Thus he was a business man originally – he is yet, for that matter – but business men in Rhode Island do not neglect politics, and Aldrich became alderman, legislator, speaker of the House, Congressman, and, finally, Senator. Having served it step by step, this leader of the United States Senate may truly be said to be a product, as he is now the supreme head, of the



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Rhode Island System.

There were others concerned with these three men, but they, representing the business, the law, and the politics of the State, conceived and carried to success a scheme to buy up, equip with electricity, and not only run, but finance, the old horse-car lines of Providence, Pawtucket, and, later, of the State. The first steps were taken in secret, but I understand that the plan originated with Perry. He was getting interested in public utilities and had put a lighting deal through the (business men's) city council of Providence. While he was thus in touch both with finance and politics, he had neither the capital, credit, nor political power needed for such a scheme as this. You don't have to have money for big as you do for small business; influence will do, financial and political "pull." Aldrich had both. As the highest representative of political power in the State, its senior Senator should have been the man most to be avoided and feared. His duty, if he took any part at all, was to see that the interests of the State were protected. But that is a moral, not a practical view to take of business and politics. Aldrich, as the Senator for Rhode Island, had gone to Congress as the representative of protected, that is to say, privileged, business. Indeed, it was as the representative of manufacturers of his State that he felt bound to make himself an authority on tariff legislation. And it was as such that the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee came in touch with Wall Street, the trusts, and the so-called moneyed interests. It was natural for a Rhode Islander to think of him for such business as Perry had before him. And Aldrich joined Perry; he became a partner in his scheme; he delivered Brayton and Brayton's System; and, besides the actual government of his State, Senator Aldrich brought, to back the scheme, capital from out of the State.

One of the explicit charges against Senator Aldrich was offered as an explanation of the scandalous campaign to elect about this time (1892) a Legislature to return him to the United States Senate. It was repeatedly made by Colonel A. K. McClure, the editor of the Philadelphia Times, and never denied by Mr. Aldrich, who, however, says he never denies such things. Colonel McClure declared that Aldrich as chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate, added to the House tariff schedules one mill – worth \$5 million a year to the Trust – to the duty on Sugar. "When this bill came to the Senate," said Colonel McClure in his Boston speech, "there was no open demand for an increase, but Senator Aldrich had a battle in Rhode Island, and it was a battle royal for cash. He had to be rejected to the Senate, and he gave an additional one-tenth of one percent, to the sugar men, and the sugar men fought that battle in Rhode Island and reelected him."

Just as Providence people were wondering where the money for that campaign came from, so they wondered who the men were in the railway deal and where that money came from. The street-car stock was bought up at advancing prices, and Brayton's Legislature was turning out bills to enable willing councils to grant franchises. Evidently they were powerful men, but all was



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a mystery till in 189S the United Traction and Electric Company was organized. Then Senator Aldrich appeared as president; John E. Searles (sugar) as vice-president; F. P. Olcott (Central Trust Company), treasurer; and Perry and Roelker as officers, directors, or stockholders in the subordinate companies; and the money proved to have been loaned by what is known in New York as the (Central) "trust company of the sugar crowd." The promoters issued \$8 million of bonds to pay for the property they bought and to equip it with electricity, and \$8 million of stock, which they divided among themselves, they and their outside backers, eight in all.

But they were not yet through. Considering their inexperience in such business, Aldrich, Perry & Co. displayed unusual foresight. The scheme, still to be executed, was to gather practically all the public utility companies in and around Providence into one great parcel, "The Rhode Island Company," and, way back in 1891, their first legislation was a general act providing that any town or city might grant exclusive franchises. In 1892 the General Assembly passed special acts for such exclusive franchises to the street-railway, gas, and electric light companies. These franchises were to be for 20 years; they might just as well have had them for 999 years, but it is amazing to see how often these public utility political business men all over the country have been satisfied with short-term grants. Apparently they thought only of a quick turn for cash. Perry, Aldrich & Co. made this mistake. It is said that they discovered it when they began to approach Philadelphia capital to sell out. Down there the captains of political industry had grants for 99 years, and they pointed out the defect in the Rhode Island charters. By that time it was almost too late.

Opposition was developing to this abuse of the powers of the State for private exploitation. The public, especially in Providence, began to ask questions and make demands. These demands were very moderate, and they seem finally to have resolved themselves into one – for a transfer system. Now, any expert street-railway man knows that transfer tickets wisely given increase traffic and profits, but President Aldrich was not such an expert. He was a "power behind a power," and he declared that the company would not pay interest on the bonds and dividends on its (watered) stock if the transfer privilege were granted. The absurd public continued, none the less, to regard this private business as a public convenience, and the cry was still for transfers. The company, which had got so much for little or nothing (a graduated tax of from 3 to 5 per cent, of the gross receipts), seeing that it might have to yield, looked about for something to get out of the public for the transfer privilege. Why not an extension of its 20-year franchise? A bill was put through the ever-ready General Assembly providing that a new contract, for transfers, etc., might be entered into by the companies and the City of Providence "for a term of not more than 25 years from the date of such contracts." Thus was the franchise to be extended. The trick was seen, and the public, having no effective representation in any



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branch of the government, resorted to mass meetings to prevent the city council from entering into the new agreement. The city council, composed, mind you, of business men, not of typical aldermen, and elected by a restricted suffrage, was a part of the State System; it had been put up to ask for this bill; it had asked for it; and now failed to clinch the bargain only through fear of the extra-legal expression of the public will. The next scheme appeared in an act (General Assembly, 1896) which provided for transfers at certain valuable central sites, which the city was to give to the company. This was no more preposterous than giving away miles of streets, but the public, again by sheer indignation, beat its own government. The transfer controversy went on for years, till 1902, and then the Legislature required the company to give transfers, but only so long as 5-cent fares were paid. The agitation for 3-cent fares had arisen in other places, and the Rhode Island Company, under the guise of giving "free transfers," fixed the fare at a nickel forever. That was the purpose of the act. And the effect of the "free transfers" was a sudden upward leap of earnings!

Meanwhile the company had been extending its lines, procuring franchises, privileges and unlimited rights in all the cities and towns that it cared to "tap." I know no councils so "respectable" and I know few grants more ridiculous in their terms. That of Bristol, which is typical, gives the company every license, excepting that it is subject to police and health regulations which the town authorities shall prescribe. This sounds almost "socialistic" in Rhode Island, but a characteristic clause is added: "with the consent of the company."

But Aldrich, Perry & Co. were in this business to sell out, and they had to have a perpetual franchise. They got it, and the act by which they got it is the "smartest" piece of legislation that I know of anywhere. "An act to increase the revenues of the State," is the title. The company, having failed to pay to the City of Providence the increased tax due, was being annoyed by public clamor, and irresponsible persons were beginning to take up the franchise tax notion. To head off all such dangerous radicalism once and forever, the company's Legislature put a State tax of 1 percent, on the gross earnings of all street-railway companies, this to be "in lieu and satisfaction of all other taxes excises, burthens, or impositions by or under the authority of the State." As in the Bristol franchises, as in the Providence transfer act, as in practically all such corporation legislation in this State, the law, however, was to become binding only when each company had given its consent.

But all this is by the way. The masterpiece of legislative treason – for it is no less – in this act, is the rest of this consent clause; which says that when the company has agreed, the act shall be binding and in full force between the State and such assenting company, and shall not be altered or amended without the consent of both parties." Governor Garvin characterized this as an "irrepealable law." It is a contract between United States Senator Aldrich as the State and President Nelson W. Aldrich of the street railway company, by which,



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without the consent of his company, his State cannot tax his company or alter or take back its franchise. It passed, and is believed by the company to be what Boss Brayton calls it, a "perpetual franchise."

With this legislation, these remarkable men passed for themselves also a charter, a sort of omnibus grant to lease, buy, etc., etc., all gas, electric light, street-railway, etc., etc., corporations in the State. This also was irrevocable, unlimited, etc., etc.; it was for a company to "hold" the public utilities in the State, and the name thereof was, fittingly, The Rhode Island Company. Even Pennsylvania capital could ask no more than the Rhode Island captains of industry, politics, and law had to offer, and the deal was going through when a gross error was made.

There had been some outcry at the doings of the Legislature of 1902, and to pacify the workingman a 10-hour law was enacted for street-railway conductors and motormen. The company consented and notice was posted on the car barns. Suddenly the notice came down, and Aldrich resigned the presidency of the company. It is understood that the "Philadelphia folks kicked; said they'd agreed to buy an 11-hour road, and they wouldn't take a 10-hour road." The law was mandatory, but that didn't matter to the Rhode Island Company. They refused to obey the law.

There was a strike. The men "had recourse to lawlessness," especially in Pawtucket. This was anarchy. The company was breaking a law itself, but that wasn't anarchy. Anarchy arises where other people break laws and injure my property. The company demanded police protection, such police protection as it had in Providence, where the State controlled the city police. Not satisfied with the conduct of the Pawtucket police, they had deputy sheriffs appointed and the militia called out to enforce the law (against the men). Thus the company won the strike, but the law that caused it stood. The courts were asked to declare it unconstitutional, but the courts could not see it so, and the company was in a bad fix. It was not without resources, however. Rhode Island has among its other preposterous institutions a post-election session of the Legislature. The General Assembly meets in the winter, and having done all it dares, adjourns till after election day in the fall; then the expiring body, no longer answerable at the polls, does what the "power behind the power" directs. After the election of 1902 the General Assembly which had passed it unanimously killed that 10-hour law and threatened to take from the city and give to the State the control of the Pawtucket police!

Aldrich, Perry & Co. were in a position now to proceed with their business, and they moved fast. We need not follow them. It was all a matter of high finance. By a complicated process of stock transfers, leases (for 999 years), and "sales," all among themselves, but through the medium of several underlying operating and holding companies, they managed to develop a total capitalization of \$39,160,200, while they still left the control of the property in the Rhode Island Company, with a capital of \$2,000,000. Perry is president of this company, but the famous



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U.G.I. (the United Gas Improvement Co.) of Philadelphia owns it. What the promoter's profits are I can't reckon, and the brokers to whom I applied in Providence declared they couldn't; they said they didn't understand it all. This much is certain, however: Aldrich, Perry, and Roelker made fortunes out of it. They made these fortunes out of their political power, but, as one of their defenders said, they did it without breaking a law or committing a crime. But how could they commit a crime? They were above the law. It was their law; they made it. True, they disobeyed the 10hour law, but that was "necessary," and exceptional. As in Philadelphia and Pittsburg, the System was so perfect that all they had to do, if they wished to commit a wrong, was to pass a law to make it right. This might take time, but wherever they could afford the time, they were patient. See how they waited, three or four years, for the irrevocable law that gave them their perpetual franchises!

Of course, they abused the law; they abused their legislative powers in the General Assembly, but they did this in the interest of business. "This is a business country, and the government is there to help business." Is it? An ex-official of the United State Treasury Department, who now is a prominent banker, said that to me once, and it is a common view taken by business men of the corruption of government in the interest of business. But is that what "the government is there for"? I think not. I think that it is this legitimate, business graft, not police blackmail, which is the chief cause of our political corruption, but this is no place for "academic" reflections. The point is that this must be the view taken of political power by Marsden J. Perry, one of the typical captains of industry of the United States, and by Nelson W. Aldrich, the head of a State and of the United States Senate. Let us say, however, that because the chosen people of Rhode Island sold out at from \$5 to \$25 a vote the sovereign power of the State, their financial and political representative had a right to sell a part of that power to outside capital for some \$40,000,000.

The next question is, what did they do with the rest of their power? They ruled; how did they rule? Suppose that it was right for them to rule and, ruling, to grant themselves extraordinary privileges. We hear that we cannot have the services in politics and government of able business men without paying for it. Let us put this \$40 millions down as fair pay for the privilege Rhode Island had of being governed by the ablest business men in the State. What have the business rulers of Rhode Island given in return?

The old manufacturers, having got what they wanted, a protective tariff, gave loyal allegiance to – what? To the State, to the United States? No, to "the party," to the Republican party. They let Brayton do as he pleased with the State. So with the railroad. The New York, New Haven and Hartford has "about all that it wants," but for "protection" in those bribe-bought rights, for license to break or "beat the law," it supports the System. That is the way it continues to pay the people of the State, by helping to keep the State corrupt.

And as for the Aldrich-Perry trolley crowd – their wants were



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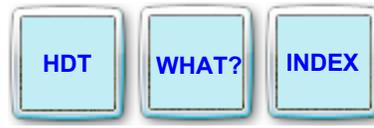
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very large and they were so exacting and so jealous that General Brayton often complained to his lieutenants about them; some people declare that the 11-hour labor law was due to one of his revolts. And we have seen that he had to condition all his contracts for legislation with the understanding that the street-railway had first call. However, the street-railway did not want everything. What of the rest?

Boss Brayton could do what he would with what was left. They didn't care apparently. And that was Brayton's business, to sell the rest. A man could go to Rhode Island and, if he respected the rights of the trolley crowd, he needn't pay any attention to the rights of the people of the State. Rhode Island was, and it is, a State for sale. In other words, these business men's business government was a government of boodle. Having their "legitimate graft," they let the rest be held for sale to other business men who applied with — fees. Incredible? What else did General Brayton mean when he said that in addition to his regular retainment by the steam and electric railways, he had "connections, not permanent, with various companies desiring franchises, charters, and things of that sort from the Legislature"?

Senator Aldrich declared to me, in the face of all this, that his government of Rhode Island was "good government." Now, he means what men of his class usually mean by the term: an administration, convenient and liberal to business, but strict with vice and disorder, and free from scandals and petty police graft. The Senator does not know whether this is true or not, nor does he care enough to inform himself. He is an inordinately selfish man, so selfish that in all the time I spent in his State I did not find, even among his associates, a single warm personal friend of the man. And as for the government of Rhode Island, General Brayton summed up the Senator's attitude toward that when he told Mr. Lowry that Aldrich took no active part until "about a year or two before it comes time for him to be elected again; then he gets active."

It IS true that in some of the cities and towns of Rhode Island petty graft has been neglected. At one time or another this evil has appeared among them, but the small business men selected for the council of Providence, for example, by a restricted suffrage, have offended chiefly on the side of supine indulgence toward larger business graft. Just now, however, the trains are laid for the development of this wretched political-vice business there. and a man who has the confidence of Mr. Ferry, and is in the pay of Senator Aldrich, is at the head of it; his patrons may not know it, but I believe they don't care, for the same man is corrupting Democratic leaders and wrecking the opposition organization; getting it to put up tickets so bad that the Republicans can win. The Democratic city of Pawtucket is subject to the corrupt control of the Third Ward Democratic gang in combination with one branch of the local Republican organization, and when a Republican leader of another branch pleaded last fall with the State organization to cut loose from this connection, the answer he received was "not this year." "This year" a Legislature was to be elected to return Aldrich



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to the Senate.

The worst case of "good government," however, is that of Block Island. This ocean community has a population of 1,396, almost all descended from the 16 original families that settled there. They always have had what they call a "king." The reigning king is Christopher E. Champlin, State Senator and a "Democrat." But Champlin "stood in" with Brayton, and this is what Brayton's business system permitted Champlin to do to his own people in his own town:

The chief business of the Block Islanders is that of hotel keeping. Champlin owns one of the largest hotels. Most of the traffic and most of the hostelries are at the eastern end of the island; Champlin's hotel is at the other end. Near it is the "Great Salt Pond," which the Senator proposed to make a harbor of by opening a breach to the ocean. The United States Government said it was not a feasible scheme; the channel could be made, but the sand drift of the seashore would close it. The State authorized the town to undertake the work, the State to pay part, the town the rest with money loaned by the State from school funds. Year by year, fresh appropriations had to be made to keep open the breach, till the State had spent \$129,123.90, the town \$62,000. Mr. Edward M. Sullivan, a young lawyer whom Governor Garvin appointed a commissioner to investigate the situation, reported that "the harbor is used exclusively by excursion steamboats and island craft," for which there was already a haven. "Some local interest more influential than the demands of coastwise commerce ... actuated those appropriations. The opening of Great Salt Pond was manifestly designed by its promoters, who are the principal owners of the land and its vicinity, to transfer the business center ... to the head of Great Salt Pond Each of these appropriations was made in the closing hours of the session ... and were not included in the appropriation bill of the committee of finance of any year. No report of the expenditure was made by the town council or the State committee ... There has been no public bidding or competition for the work, which has been done throughout by one contractor," etc., etc.

Besides this work, Champlin received State authority to build an electric railway line between the two ends of the island. Champlin made the town borrow at four percent, the money on which the road was to pay four percent. The town pays its interest; but the horse-cars, which are all there is of the electric railway company, have never made any accounting. Also, in much the same way, he had the town vote a steamboat, which he ordered of such a draft that it could enter his but not the town harbor. The town passed the legal limit of indebtedness, and the citizens were worried, but Champlin "owns" the council of five members - his brother, his father-in-law, another relative, and two loyal followers of his. The "town" voted his measure, and it might as well, for if it failed to the Legislature would. Brayton's General Assembly enacts special legislation so freely that I had almost forgotten to mention this absurdity explicitly. Besides the police of Providence and Newport, the State has taken the election machinery and many other local



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offices and functions from municipalities that have "gone Democratic," and where it has set up bipartisan boards. Republicans select the Democrats and thus use this power to corrupt the minority organization. The General Assembly, corrupt itself, is a corrupting upper council for every municipality in the State, as Block Island illustrates: A majority of the voters then declared, six years or so ago, under the local option law, for absolute prohibition on the island, but Champlin put through the General Assembly a special act permitting the sale of liquor on Block Island. Again, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals arrested a street-car driver for driving the pitiful horses that draw the miserable cars of the Champlin line. The General Assembly passed a special act which prevented such interference by the society in this one town!

They will tell you in Rhode Island that Block Island is an exceptional case. It isn't. It is typical; on a small scale it is like the case of Providence. But suppose we grant that it is extraordinary - it happened, it was possible. Doesn't it show that if you or I should go to a small town of Rhode Island, get political control, and send ourselves to the General Assembly, we could do what we would do to our town? If we delivered to Aldrich, Perry, and Brayton the things that are Caesar's, couldn't we have our Salt Pond, our poor little street-car line, and our great public debt? "Ah, but," they told me at first, "Champlin is a Democrat, and the Republican party cannot be blamed for his misdeeds." Champlin, the Democrat, was repudiated by his own party, and the Republican party took him up. He fought for his place in his party, and while he was making the contest for his "good Democratic standing," with a group of his own party for him, this man was the regular Republican leader in the Republican State Senate!

Both parties betrayed the common interests of this State. Political-financial, the System is bipartisan, too, especially in the Democratic municipalities where, as in Providence, certain Democratic leaders sell outright to the Republicans; or where, as in Pawtucket, the worst elements in both parties combine to graft upon the city; or as in Bristol, where they trade, the Democrats sharing the council and giving the Republicans the legislative delegation. Colonel Colt - a candidate now (1906) for the junior United States Senatorship for Rhode Island the great manufacturer and financier, controls Bristol, and when he ran on the Republican ticket for Governor a year ago the Democrats, who used to carry the town, put up no legislative ticket. There are many exceptions among both "organizations" and leaders, but they are indeed exceptions. Generally speaking, the people of Rhode Island are represented only by individuals and they can do nothing but protest. One of these protestants was Dr. Garvin, but he was Governor of the State and powerless.

This country doctor is the most singular figure in American politics. A New Englander reared down South, he attended a Friends' school, and traces of all these influences are marked in his character. A single-taxer, an individualist, an advocate of the "popular initiative for constitutional amendments" - this



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sweet-tempered radical who has stood for every reform that looked in the direction of democracy, marched, unmoved by ridicule, abuse, or defeat, without a sign of anger or of pain, straight into the confidence of a majority of the voters of this conservative New England community.

When the slowly rising discontent in the State approached the height of a majority, the Democratic party nominated Dr. Garvin, and his party, with help from independent Republicans, Prohibitionists, Socialists – all the opposition to the System that usually scatters, voted for him. He was elected in 1902 and again in 1903. He was elected as a protest, however, and that is all he has been. He could not be Governor in fact; General Brayton was that. As we have seen, the gubernatorial chair never had amounted to much more than an empty honor for "safe men." No veto power went with it, and the appointive power was really wielded by Brayton in the interest of the machine of the System. A Governor like Dr. Garvin would have made his own appointments, but Brayton and the System had seen Governor Garvin coming. They stifled the office before he got into it. When this Aldrich-Perry-Brayton company foresaw that the people might elect a Governor to represent the common interests of the State, they had the appointive power transferred to the Senate. They left it so that a "safe" Republican Governor, obedient to them, might seem to appoint, but not a "dangerous" Democrat like Dr. Garvin. The Governor's nominations go to the Senate, which may confirm or reject or ignore them; and, if it ignores them for three days, this Senate, constituted as we have seen, may proceed to make its own appointments. The United States Senate in its dignity is sensitive about the independence of the (upper) legislative branch of the government, and it is jealous of any encroachment by the executive. Its leader, Mr. Aldrich, comes honestly by his senatorial sensitiveness; where he comes from, the executive, representing a majority of all the voters, is something which the Senate, representing the System, ignores, overrides, and insults, and, as for encroachment, that is a sacred prerogative of the legislative branch.

Such, then, is the government of Rhode Island. Such is the System that has developed with a restricted suffrage, with the balance of power against the cities, with business men conducting both politics and government. What is the matter? What is the cure? The local reformers think that these very features which other reformers yearn for are the cause of the Rhode Island troubles, and that the constitution, "which did it," must be changed. A new constitution is indispensable to Rhode Island. Theoretically it is unjust, in practice it is tyranny, to maintain a government controlled by the purchase of twenty country districts which poll less than one-eleventh of the Tote of the State. But the old constitution did not "do it." This instrument facilitated. It did not produce, the System, and a new constitution will not destroy it. Other States, with constitutions as ingenious as the best that the reformers in Rhode Island can hope for, have developed essentially the same System. The Enemies of the Republic will overcome any obstacle that is merely constitutional, legal, or mechanical.



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The trouble lies deeper, and the cure must cut deeper. We have blamed our laws and our constitution long enough, and in turn we have charged our disgrace to our foreign population, to the riffraff of the cities, to our politicians, to our business men. And now, in Rhode Island, the American farmer is the guilty fool and his fellow-culprits are American captains of finance, law, and politics. Are they alone at fault? I cannot see it so. It seems to me that, in one way or another, we all are at fault. The provision of the Rhode Island constitution which lodged the dominant power out in the country, simply pointed to the farmer as the first man to corrupt; and he proved corruptible only because the strain came hardest upon him. His power should be spread out over the whole population, but then the pressure will bear hardest upon the political representatives of the people, and we know from other States that the representatives will sell, if there are offers to buy; and we know that the business representatives will offer to buy. And we know that we all will condone or submit, for some consideration – cash or protection, office or friendship, party loyalty or comfort. The best hope of Rhode Island, for example, should be in the leadership of the old manufacturing families, and the best of this aristocratic class have voted for Dr. Garvin. But would they if his office were not powerless? They told me, these gentlemen, that Aldrich did not represent them or their State. "He may represent our corrupt towns and your own New York," they said, "but he doesn't represent Rhode Island!" Yet Governor Garvin was defeated this year (by some 500 votes) because a Republican President had to be elected, and a Legislature to return to the United States Senate the arch-representative of protected, privileged business. (Dr. Garvin was renominated for Governor in 1905 at the head of a fusion ticket, and he and his ticket were defeated by an increased majority for the System's ticket.)

Aldrich does represent Rhode Island, and that is what is the matter with Rhode Island, and that is what is the matter with Aldrich. And he represents the rest of us, and that is what is the matter with all of us. Rhode Island will have reform when we all have reform; when we are all willing to make sacrifices for the sake of our country and our self-respect; when the American farmer will give up his \$2 or \$30 "pay for time lost in voting"; when the business man will be content to do a little less "business"; when the manufacturer will risk his unnecessary protective tariff (the graft, not the protection); when the captains of finance will be content with honest profit; when the clergy will face "the loss of their position and financial grief and ruin," rather than "be put under the ban of political immorality, and forced to acquiesce in evil." The Republican hope of compelling the other fellow to quit "within the party," is stupid; reform within a party so degraded and so happy as "the party" in Rhode Island is impossible. The Democratic party may prove a good engine for the work ahead, but the notion of those of its leaders who think to restore pure, representative democracy by buying up the people for a year or two, is American corruption carried to the limit of Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy. There is no reform but reform, and reform begins at home – with all



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of us.

1906

August 14, Tuesday: Eugene Schieffelin, the pharmacist who had introduced the European  sparrow and the European starling  *Sturnus vulgaris* to America, died in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) (Thoreau had not seen either of these birds).

October: A monument was dedicated near South Kensington, [Rhode Island](#), in memory of the Great Swamp Fight of December 19, 1675. They put the monument where they conjectured the fight to have occurred, although archaeological digs in the area have turned up nothing but layer after layer of pristine soil and sand. On the face of the monument they inscribed the suggestion that here **THE NARRAGANSETT INDIANS MADE THEIR LAST STAND** –forlorn last stands being romantic and all that– although actually the fight was inconclusive and anyway marked the beginning of English conflict with the [Narragansett](#) rather than the end of it (until this attack, the Narragansett had been neutral in regard to the fight of the English against the [Wampanoag](#), but, Metacom’s people having just been resoundingly defeated and scattered, the English at this point were determinedly expanding the conflict).

“KING PHILLIP’S WAR”



“The Great Swamp Fight ensured that the roused Narragansett would now prosecute the war against the English with great vengeance.”

– Eric B. Schultz, page 267



1910

A number of [Quakers](#) having moved to the island of Conanicut, they reopened the old meetinghouse in [Jamestown, Rhode Island](#) (this unheated structure would of course be useable only in the summer).

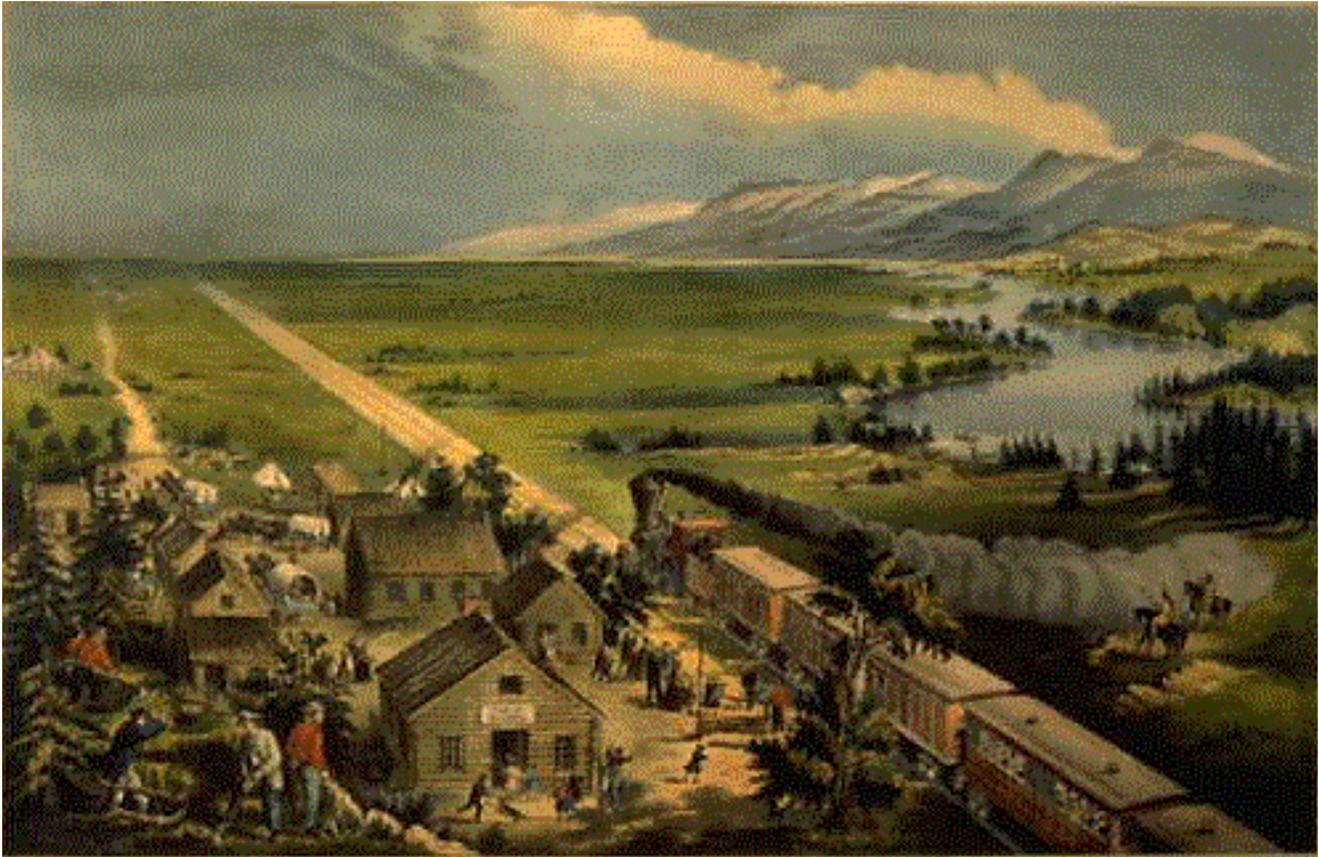


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The 13th national census.

As of 1790 the center of the human population of the USA had been a little town just about a day's travel inland from [Baltimore](#). By this period the center of population had relocated.



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(Nowadays, of course, we've all been coming from one or another center in Missouri.)



[Rhode Island](#)'s population had risen to over 540,000.

William B. Weeden's [EARLY RHODE ISLAND: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE](#) (NY: The Grafton Press).

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

April 26, Tuesday: Oscar Hammerstein signed a pledge that for ten years he would not attempt to stage any of his productions in [Boston](#), [Chicago](#), New York City, or Philadelphia. The impresario did not, however, pledge to stay away from [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#).

October 17, Monday: [Julia Ward Howe](#) died at her summer home in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) (the funeral would be at the Channing Memorial Church she had regularly attended).

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1911

A postcard sent with a penny stamp in this year illustrated beautiful downtown [Providence, Rhode Island](#):



Publication of [Friend](#) Rufus M. Jones's THE QUAKERS IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES, in New York and London. This book alleged that in the great New England race war of 1675/1676,

"The [Quaker](#) officials in the [Rhode Island](#) Colony were in every instance devoted to the maintenance of peace"

although the author also confessed that indeed these Quakers had been guilty of performing

"public acts of a warlike nature."



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(He provided us with no explanation whatever for how these two things would have been compossible.)

“KING PHILLIP’S WAR”



“The usual interpretation of the actions and inactions of the Rhode Island government has been that its members were inhibited by the pacifist scruples of the Quakers among them. Historians have not cited, nor have I found, evidence upon which to base this belief.... Such reading back of later Quaker understandings of the peace testimony obscures not only other wartime motives but the nature of the peace testimony as it was understood in that particular time and place. Third, in many respects the government activities do not appear to have been constrained. ... There were Quakers who bore arms during the war. Captain Weston Clarke, who was sent to relieve Warwick, Lieutenant Robert Westcott, who was killed in the Great Swamp Fight, and Abraham Mann of Providence, who was wounded are three examples.”



– Meredith Baldwin Weddle, *WALKING IN THE WAY OF PEACE: QUAKER PACIFISM IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY*. England: Oxford UP, 2001, pages 172-173, page 204

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

1912

April 14, Sunday evening: Radiotelegraph operator John Phillips was becoming increasingly frustrated.

He was having trouble keeping up with the stacks of business and social messages of the passengers of the liner, especially since that afternoon his radio transmitter had malfunctioned for a few hours. The huge passenger ship was drawing near the 80-mile-wide Atlantic ice pack and he had received an ice warning from the *Mesaba* that he had stuck under a paperweight on his desk. At 11:00PM a transmission between the *Titanic* and a shore station was interrupted by a broadcast from radiotelegraph operator Cyril Evans aboard the *Californian* about ten miles away, to the effect that his ship, surrounded by icebergs, had for safety reasons stopped for the night. Phillips responded,

SHUT UP, SHUT UP, CAN’T YOU SEE THAT I AM BUSY?



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April 15, Monday: The HMS *Titanic* sank shortly after sideswiping an iceberg, and 1,513 died in the chill waters.

WALDEN: If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter, -we never need read of another. One is enough.

The initial news reports which reached America were distorted. For instance, this is from the [Rhode Island](#) diary of John Hamlin Cady (1838-1914): “str. Titanic, largest str. afloat, strick an iceberg off Cape Race & sent wireless dispatches that she was sinking. Later passengers all saved.”

[TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS](#)

April 16, Tuesday: In the [Rhode Island](#) diary of John Hamlin Cady (1838-1914), a correction to the previous day’s news report: “The Titanic reports were false yesterday. She went down with 1600 passengers and crew, including the Capt.”

1913

The 1st air express shipment on record was a pot of Boston baked beans, flown in this year from Massachusetts to [Providence, Rhode Island](#) (imagine that).

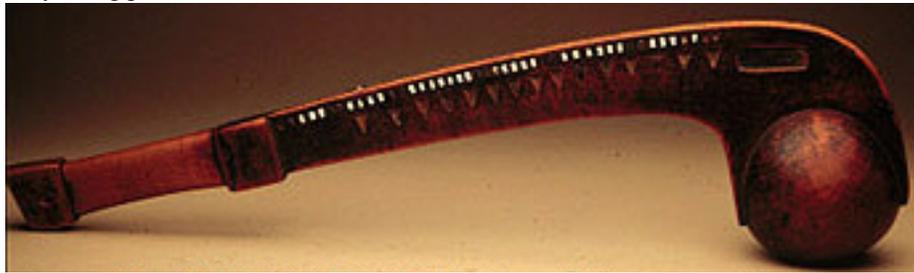




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At this point Dr. Warren King Moorehead learned that Mrs. Laura Anne Fuller Daniels of Union, Maine believed that she had in her possession King Philip’s authentic war club. Mrs. Daniels believed she was descended from the Reverend [John Checkley](#), a Church of England clergyman who became a missionary to the Indians in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). As the story was told, this Reverend had contact with Captain Benjamin Church and allegedly had secured this important relic from the native American named Alderman who had shot Philip in 1676. Family tradition contends that the Reverend traded his gold watch for [Metacom](#)’s war club, belt, and heavy pipe. The club had allegedly been handed down in the family, from person to person to Mrs. Daniels. There is no doubt that the Reverend Checkley had worked among the Indians of the Mount Hope area, although this definitely did not happen during Captain Church’s lifetime (1639-1717). There is also evidence which suggests that the Reverend was in fact a collector of Indian relics, of sorts, and that he probably handed some objects down to future generations of his family (described in his estate papers only as some “Indian toys”). Family tradition contends that there once existed a signed receipt from the native American who sold the artifacts to the Reverend Checkley. There is, however, no record which mentions these events or the club itself, until the mid-19th Century — at which time its authenticity as being King Phillip’s war club was already being presumed.



1914

A history was written, of [Brown University](#):

READ THIS HISTORY BOOK

A statue was made of a native American performer in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, which was touring Paris. This statue presently stands on Watch Hill in [Westerly, Rhode Island](#), where it is purported to depict a leader during “[King Phillip’s War](#)” — Ninigret, of whom no contemporary depictions survive.



“When one is happy in forgetfulness,
facts get forgotten.”
— Robert Pen Warren, 1961
THE LEGACY OF THE CIVIL WAR





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December 4, Sunday: The faked-up frigate USS *Constellation* completed its propaganda tour at Washington DC. After some repair work during this month, it would return to its duty as Stationary Training Ship at the US Naval Training Center of [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#).

1915

The [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly voted to take 14,800 acres of land in [Scituate](#) (38% of the town) to create a water supply reservoir for greater [Providence](#). This would result in the condemnation of 1,195 buildings, including 375 houses, seven schools, six churches, six mills, thirty dairy farms, eleven ice houses, post offices, and the Providence and Danielson Railway, an electric railroad.

January 4, Monday: [Kady Southwell Brownell](#) died at the Woman's Relief Corps Veterans' Home in Oxford, New York. The memorial tombstone is in the North Burial Ground in [Providence](#), and it is a stone inscribed for the entire Brownell family, naming Agnes Hutchinson Brownell –[Robert Brownell](#)'s 1st wife who had divorced him for his adultery with Kady– as well as Kady. The death date provided to Agnes on this stone is entirely convenient, listing her as dying even before she divorced him while actually she had been very much alive in [Rhode Island](#) well into the 1870s. Robert's and Agnes's daughters Josephine Brownell and Maybel Brownell are also listed on this stone (their son Eugene Brownell, unmentioned, had removed to Iowa).

1916

In England, Fry's, a competitor to [Cadbury](#) dating back to 1756 when [Friend](#) Joseph Fry had set up business as an apothecary and maker and seller of [chocolate](#), had been the market leader for the whole of the 19th Century. At this point that firm, suffering from inefficient buildings and outdated machinery, was no match for Cadbury's well-planned and efficient factory in Bournville, and so the manufacturing activities of the Fry's firm was absorbed into the Cadbury operation. Two formerly [Quaker](#) firms would be becoming one formerly Quaker firm.

In America, at the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), it became the recommendation of an ad hoc committee of the School Committee that [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#) create a separate building for the gender segregation of all girl scholars, whether they be day students or boarding students. (The girls were already de facto segregated, since in class they always needed to take the seats in the back. Although this proposal would not itself come to anything, in 1925 the existing Lincoln School would be purchased and converted to the use of these girl scholars — thus accomplishing the same objective.)

The exceedingly tall flagpole that had been erected at the [Moses Brown School](#) in 1898 was in this year destroyed by lightning (a matter of little consequence since Quakers don't have a flag).



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October 8, Sunday: At about 5:30 AM, Captain Hans Rose's U-53 surfaced off [Nantucket Island](#) to intercept a freighter, the *Kansan*. When the freighter attempted to telegraph its plight, the U-boat jammed the transmission. One of the officers of the *Kansan* produced the ship's American papers, whereupon this vessel was allowed to proceed. At about 6:00 AM, however, the U-boat encountered the British passenger ship *Stratheden* and advised its crew and passengers to abandon ship. As soon as the crew and passengers were clear of the vessel, it was torpedoed. At 10:45 AM this was repeated the British steamship *SS West*. All told, in a period of 15 hours the U-53 would sink a total of 9 non-US vessels in international waters just off the American coast, setting 256 persons adrift. One of these vessels, a Dutch one, had been carrying gasoline to London, and another, the *Blommersdyk*, contained "absolute and conditional contraband." Although a flotilla of 16 US destroyers came out from [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the United States and [Germany](#) were not at war so all they could do was attempt to get in between the submarine and the international shipping. Captain Rose entered into his log that "though it would have been very desirable to extend our activities off the American coast as long as possible, yet any further delay would have endangered the whole enterprise because of the fuel supply."

WORLD WAR I

October 8, Sunday-9, Monday: President Woodrow Wilson, acting on the resolution of Congress, proclaimed these two days "Armenian Relief Days."

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

1917

The smaller summer house that Friend [Abraham Redwood](#) had had erected in 1766 on his country estate was moved to the southeast corner of the grounds of the [Redwood Library](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

The Arkansas legislature granted women the right to vote in primary but not general elections (the result of this partial suffrage was that white women obtained the vote, women of color did not).

Five midwestern states, and [Rhode Island](#), granted women the right to vote in presidential elections only.

New York State became the 1st eastern state to fully enfranchise women.

FEMINISM



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1918

The minister (!) at the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) resigned from his post at this [Quaker](#)-funded school in order to enlist in the US military (!) and take part in World War I. (Meine Gott, whatever happened to [the Quaker Peace Testimony](#)? –Nowadays there happens to be a plaque at the school to honor its students who got killed while attempting to kill the enemy, but happens not to be any plaque to honor any student who had sought to honor our Peace Testimony.)

[Friend Floyd Schmoe](#), a Conscientious Objector, agreed to join a Red Cross ambulance unit serving at the front in France but never to touch a weapon of any kind. After the armistice but while German armies still occupied Eastern Europe, the Hoover Commission sent him to assist in delivering a trainload of food and clothing to refugees inside Poland. Upon his return to Kansas he would get married with his high school sweetheart, Friend Ruth Pickering, a pianist.



No [Nobel Peace Prize](#) was awarded in this year — there wasn't anyone to hand it to (the Red Cross having already been the recipient, in the previous year).

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

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1919

In England in 1916 Fry's and Cadbury's had merged their manufacturing operations, and at this point they merged also their financial interests. Two formerly Quaker firms had coalesced into one formerly Quaker firm.

At the combined factory Saturday ceased to be a full day of work and the hours of workers thereby fell, to 44/week.

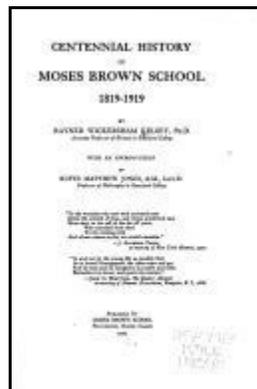


CHOCOLATE

The Moses Brown School of the Religious Society of Friends on the East Side of Providence, Rhode Island celebrated the centenary of its initiation in 1819.



Publication, by the school, of Professor Rayner Wickersham Kelsey's A CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF MOSES BROWN SCHOOL, 1819-1919.





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(Associate Professor Kelsey was at the Department of History of Haverford College.)

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES

Enrollment at the school, which had been 172 in 1904, had doubled to 345. It is clear that by this point in the curricular trajectory of the Friends' School the practice of informing the charges of the Peace Testimony of the Friends had been entirely discontinued, for the educational content being offered had come to differ not one whit from what would have been being offered in any lay academy intended for the socialization of the well-endowed. The influence of the Quaker founder [Moses Brown](#) had been entirely superseded by the influence of his Baptist brother of the *Gaspee* incident, [John Brown](#):

The social side of student life was natural and enjoyable, far removed from the stern repression of the ancient regime. The social occasions were manifold and multi-named: the introductory sociable in the fall and the farewell sociable in the spring were interspersed with the Hallowe'en, the Thanksgiving, and the Valentine sociables and other similar events. There were skating parties at Cat Swamp, and holiday excursions to Sakonnet Point and Newport. Above and before all there was the [Mount Hope](#) excursion. On this gala day the teachers and pupils not only



enjoyed the view of water and country green, but lived again the heroic scenes of earlier times. As they passed down the harbor the earthworks on opposite sides, at Fort Hill and Fields Point, were pointed out to them as the places where the bristling cannon of the Revolutionary patriots bade defiance to the ships of King George. A few miles farther down the bay appeared Gaspee Point, where Captain Ben Lindsay swung his packet around the point in 1772 and lured the *Gaspee* to her tightening berth on the sand-bar where the patriots of Providence seized and destroyed her. Then at Mount Hope, with the gracious view of wooded hills and far-flung bay, came those other visions of the good chief



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[Massasoit](#), friend and protector of the Pilgrim Fathers, and then the mighty struggle and tragic death of his son, King [Philip](#). Amid such scenes, with Walter Meader to point out the historical landmarks, and Thomas Battey to reveal the hidden wonders of nature in brook and inlet, field and forest, the picnic parties from Friends' School spent some of the happiest and most profitable days of the epoch. The life of the period was new life. The tendency of the preceding epoch to break through the ancient [Quaker](#) exclusiveness was accentuated. Old forms were laid aside. Innovations were welcomed if they gave promise of usefulness. The happy social life, the rapid growth of student organizations and activities, and the more intimate association with other schools and with outside interests in general, these were the sure signs that the ancient and medieval days were done, the renaissance accomplished, and the modern age at hand.



However, in this year the school discontinued the “principal” system of incentive compensation which had been in effect for well over half a century, and which had led to the desires of their founder, Friend Moses Brown, being so utterly ignored! –Would that mean that the school was going to go back to being what it had been chartered to be, a guarded environment for the imparting of a Quaker education to Quaker youth? Stay tuned.



1922

At its Newport Torpedo Station on what little of [Goat Island](#)⁶ in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) still remained above water level, the US Navy began work on its Mark 14 proximity torpedo, the brainchild of Ralph Waldo Christie.

MARY DYER

April: Mrs. William P. Buffum's reminiscences of the olden times at the [Friends'](#) Great Meetinghouse in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) were printed in the [Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society](#), Number 40:

The Story of the Old Friends' Meeting House

In 1700, half the whole population of Newport were Quakers, and the Yearly Meeting which occurred annually in the Spring grew each year in size and importance, until in 1743 it was attended by five thousand Friends, and was the event of the year in Newport.

Before the oldest part of the present Meeting-House was built, however, the earliest of the grand, old, Newport Quakers had aged, and some passed away - William Coddington and Henry Bull, Caleb Carr, Edward Thurston, and the Eastons. In their day, the Friends held their meetings mostly in private houses, either in Coddington's spacious home on Marlborough street or Bull's, so recently burned, on Spring street.

Before 1672, however, it seems certain that the Friends had a Meeting House, for it was in a Meeting House that the famous debate between Roger Williams and the Friends took place. This was a previous building to what we see standing now, and probably stood a little farther north on Farewell street. But even yet, many of the meetings were held at Coddington's, for we read on the Friends' records:- "In 1678, a mans' meeting at the Widow Coddingtons." Evidently there were strong attractions that hung about this mansion, whose Great Room had been the meeting place when George Fox was in Newport, and where Governor Bellingham of Massachusetts and his Company had been so royally entertained for ten days. In 1689, however, we find the friends breaking away from the Coddington House, never to return; for we read:- "It is 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."

About this time Philadelphia began to appeal more to some of the Friends in Newport than did their island home; and we find Edward Shippen leaving for the City of Brotherly Love. Later, Anthony Morris comes from Philadelphia, and marries Thomas Coddinton's

6. The native name of Goat Island had been Nomsussmuc, and it had been purchased from its local occupiers as early as 1658. The 26 pirates hanged at Gravelly Point in Newport in 1723, between high and low water mark, had been buried on the beach here between high and low water mark. Fort Anne (name to be changed several times) had been built in 1700 and had been still the only fort in Rhode Island at outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Fort Wolcott had been constructed here in 1794. The navy had taken over the island in 1869 and the Naval Torpedo Station begun. The city of Newport would purchase what was left of the island in the 1960s.



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widow for his third wife. She was a sister of Edward Shippen's wife, their maiden names being Howard. These men, Shippen and Morris, were both Colonial Mayors of Philadelphia, one after the other. So the two Miss Howards did well.

And here comes the first mention of the little Meeting House as we now see it, at the northwest end of the present line of buildings. At a meeting in 1706 the Friends "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." So the New Meeting House of that shadowy, far away time is the old Meeting House of today. Shall we not prize and reverence this building where our Forefathers worshipped over two hundred years ago?

The lot, generous in size, upon which the new little meeting house was erected, was without a doubt originally Easton land, having been probably part of the house lot granted to Nicholas Easton, one of the founders of Newport. It came to the Friends either by gift from him or by purchase from his widow Ann. The site of his house, the first house built in Newport, has always been said to be at the left of the Farewell street gate, as one enters the Meeting House yard. Nicholas Easton left to the Friends, with "one certain dwelling house and grounds" -possibly the present Friends' ground- the sum of £20 "in country pay." He also left "to the maintenance of the burial yard where his body lyes, one Barrell of pork, to be managed by Christopher Houlder."

Just at this point must be mentioned a few lines to show the tender care the Meeting extended toward its members. It seems that Ann Bull and Peter Easton were at odds in 1681; about what is not mentioned; but as Ann Bull, who had the distinction of marrying two Governors in succession, first Nicholas Easton and afterward Henry Bull, was the stepmother of Peter Easton, we can readily surmise that it was over some family matter, and quite likely about the disposition of Nicholas Easton's landed estates. The Meeting does not neglect the opportunity to put in a word of reproof, and records the minutes:- "Which act is for judgment of this Meeting that her sperrit was very hard and wrong, and gave Friends noe satisfaction."

Among the Quaker ministers who spoke in this ancient Meeting House, we find Governor John Wanton, a dashing Privateer in his youth, but who swung back to his fathers' faith later in life and was a powerful preacher. He was considered the wealthiest man in the Colony, and his Friends' principles did not prevent his wearing a bright scarlet cloak lined with blue. Among the amusing incidents told us as children of the worthies who worshipped in the building is that of the dear old Quaker, who while preaching took his capacious bandanna from his pocket and with it came a pack of cards, carefully inserted by his mischievous son. These fluttered down on the heads of his audience beneath him. It was a trying moment; but the old Quaker was equal to it. "Friends," he said, "an enemy hath done this" and calmly went on with his sermon.

Another Friend of the Ministers' Gallery who lived fifty years ago in Mrs. James little house on Cottage Street upon becoming



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engaged to be married described his future wife, "as a Godly woman with a large circle of acquaintances." We, who do not call ourselves very old, can remember the quiet restful meetings on First Day mornings in summer, held in the middle and largest Meeting House. This was built a hundred years later, in 1807, with a spacious gallery above for the Blacks, but long unused except during the Annual Yearly Meeting week, when it was filled with your people.

The Ministers' Gallery faced Farewell Street. On the "rising seat," as it was called, sat David Buffum with his white beaver hat. Next to him often was Levi Almy of Portsmouth, whose sermons consisted of texts strung together with almost no language of his own. George Bowen and Stephen Chase were beside them and Marmaduke C. Cope of Philadelphia.

On the other side of the aisle and facing the women below, was Annabelle Winn. Before speaking she would take off her bonnet with its snowy lining and strings and put it in the lap of the woman Friend next to her. After sitting a few moments to compose her thoughts she would arise and looking over our heads would give her sweet little message. She would begin sometimes, "As face answereth face in water," this being a favorite thought of hers. I cannot remember the rest of it.

In the seats in the body of the house were many to interest. Henry Morris, who lived on Washington street, was always there. He wore white gloves, and during a Prayer would pull the end of the seat cushion to the floor and kneel himself. He drove to meeting with a two-horse vehicle whose body hung low between the wheels and which went by the name of "The Octopus." Old George Carr was there, who unfailingly arrived at meeting with a rose in his mouth.

On the women's side, one that made an impression was dear old Deborah Wharton, for in Newport Orthodox and Hicksite Friends worshipped together. At the end of a seat sat the sisters, Anna and Eliza Hazard, one so dark and the other so fair and gray. John Farnum and his wife the aged Miss Longstreths who kept the school of renown, and others from Philadelphia staying at Mary Williams' delightful house on Washington street, were always to be seen at meeting when in Newport. The Friends from the cities wore black clothes - the men, broadcloth, and the women taffeta silk with white shawls. The country Friends still clung to the more ancient form of grey for both men and women.

To our childish minds the rustling of silk was always connected with a Friends' Meeting. It used to seem unusually hot on a summer meeting morning in Newport, and palm leaf fans were freely used by the elderly Friends, both men and women, as they listened to the long sermons.



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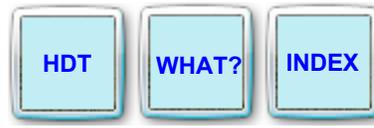
1924

September: The Gifford administration ended with Seth Gifford's retirement, and the Thomas administration began, at the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Here is how this new administration would be described in Friend Eric Kristensen's "An Outline of Moses Brown School's History," prepared for the Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the Permanent Board on Financing Moses Brown School Renovations:

1924-1955: School continues to build on combining its enrollment of boarders with the "Country Days" model initiated by the Gifford administration. Girls leave Moses Brown for Lincoln School. Daily chapel consisting of "a hymn, a scripture reading or words of inspiration from a guest speaker and silent prayer" started each day in the Upper School. Sundays included "Bible classes followed by services conducted by Dr. Purdy." Alexander Purdy was Acting President of the Hartford Theological Foundation and was Clerk of the Schools Committee, and came to the school nearly every other week to conduct morning services and meet older boys in discussion groups. In 1939, first non-Friends added to the Schools Committee. (page 9)

Here is how Friend Eric Kristensen had described the previous "Gifford Administration" which was ending:

1904-1924: rising academic standards to compete with public high schools; Upper School (Forms I-V [grades 8-12]) curriculum reorganized as a college preparatory course, yet with a broad scope to satisfy those who may not go on to college (more than 90% of students in this period did go on to college); admission standards become stricter (number of non-college preparatory students rapidly declines); last herd of School's farm animals sold; day student enrollment greatly increased, and a lower school (grades 1-7) built to accommodate younger students; total enrollment regularly more than 300 students; number of girls continues to decline and co-education seen as a problem needing to be solved; numerous surpluses allowed the school to invest more than \$75,000 in physical plant; playing fields extended, tennis courts built, trees, shrubs and lawns planted, memorial gates erected and a fence installed along Lloyd Ave., heating and lighting systems extended and renovated, and Middle House remodeled. (page 8)



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At its Newport Torpedo Station on what little still remained above water level of [Goat Island](#) in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the US Navy completed the development of a Mark 14 proximity fuse, brainchild of Ralph Waldo Christie, that would fit on the nose of a torpedo.

[MARY DYER](#)

During the 1920s the [Ku Klux Klan](#) was active in [Rhode Island](#), with one of its monster rallies being held during June of this year on the Old Home Day grounds of [Foster](#), with 8,000 in attendance and the honor of delivering the keynote address going to a white Protestant man from the South, United States Senator J.

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Thomas Heflin of Alabama.



The focus of this KKK anger in the rural northwest corner of Rhode Island was largely upon the Catholic immigrants of the cities rather than upon the local black citizenry.



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1925

[Dr. Elbert Russell](#)'s EARLY [FRIENDS](#) AND EDUCATION (15 pages; Committee on Education of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends). In about this year, his "The Little Girl God Forgot" and "Not This Man But Barrabbas." He was traveling for the Service Committee and delivering lectures at Guilford College, the University of North Carolina, and Duke University.

In this year and in 1927 the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would be issuing, apparently quite independently of one another, extensively revised Books of Discipline. In each of these revisions of the Books of Discipline the historic phrase "receive such into membership, without respect to nation or color" would be allowed to disappear. This would to all appearances be the result of mere editing as there had never been an official reversal of the color-blind racial policy that had been established during the 18th Century in either branch of the society.⁷

At the nobody-but-us-white-people [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), a playing field for the primary grades was created, and the Alumni Hall erected in 1868 received extensive renovation. At the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) it was reported that the most serious problem of this nobody-but-us-white-people school, for the past decade, had been a declining enrollment of the girl type of white children. To remedy the deficiencies which were causing this decline of one of the two types of white children, the existing Lincoln School standing a short distance to the east would be purchased by the Friends.

7. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as [Quakers](#) are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



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1926

The five girl scholars who were graduated from the [Moses Brown School](#) would be the last until the 1970s, since the Lincoln School on [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s East Side had taken over the function of being the [Quaker](#) school for girls.

The Rhode Island Supreme Court upheld the provisions of Ebenezer Knight Dexter's will,



declaring that no part of the [Dexter Asylum](#) property could be sold — much to the disgust of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) Alderman Sol S. Bromson, who declared that the city could board the inmates at the Biltmore

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Hotel for less than it was costing the public to maintain this asylum.



Despite this ruling, this is what the Dexter Asylum property looks like today from the air. Can you find a poor farm in this photo, somewhere amidst all the baseball diamonds and lacrosse fields and tennis courts and sports complexes?



The US Navy allowed Ralph Waldo Christie to fire two of his expensive new Mark 14 proximity torpedoes at an anchored scrap submarine. One of the two went off and the old sub sank! That was the end of expensive live testing, and production of thousands of these torpedoes proceeded forthwith. The torpedoes and fuses the Newport Torpedo Station on what little still remained above water level of what had been [Goat Island](#) in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) continued to test with would grow more and more different from the ones that were actually being manufactured and put untested into the naval inventory.

MARY DYER



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November: After a short period in dry-dock in Philadelphia, the USS *Constellation* was towed back to the US Naval Training Center at [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

1927

When the Independent Man atop the dome of the State House in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) was damaged by lightning, all the king's horses and all the king's men used 42 copper-plates staples to put the statue back together again.



The [Quaker Moses Brown School](#) on Providence's East Side was bursting with students, with an enrollment of 403 young scholars, and therefore plans were being made to erect a new building to supplement the Lower School building that had been erected so many years before (due to the intervention of depression and world war, construction of this new building would not actually begin until another three decades had passed).



RHODE ISLAND

ROGUE ISLAND

May 20, Friday, 7:52AM: Charles Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island. You'd suppose he had just gotten up from a nice long night of sleep, in preparation for this flight, but no, in fact he had not slept in almost 24 hours!



Laden with fuel, the plane was able to rise a mere 20 feet above the telephone wires at the end of the runway — which probably was the diciest point of the entire trip.

May 20, Friday, 8:52AM: Charles Lindbergh flew above [Rhode Island](#) at an altitude of 500 feet (Jerimoth Hill, by far the highest point in the state, is merely 812 feet above sea level). The air was still. Then, except for a bit of turbulence, the flight over Long Island Sound and Connecticut was similarly uneventful. —Only 3,500 miles and he would arrive at Paris.

May 20, Friday, 9:52AM: Boston lay behind Charles Lindbergh's "Spirit of St. Louis" plane; Cape Cod was to the right. Altitude: 150 feet. Airspeed: 107 miles per hour. Wind velocity: 0 miles per hour.

1929

At some point in the late 1920s, vegetables were no longer being planted in the spring in the fields of the [Dexter Asylum](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s East Side, and while dairy farming would continue through the 1940s, the poor farm would never be self-supporting. With rising real estate values and open space at a premium, city officials, developers, and assorted heirs began to attempt to change the conditions of the will of Ebenezer Knight Dexter. The idea was to break up the property and sell it off as house lots, using the income from this to pay for poor care elsewhere. Then there was a proposal that the grounds be transformed into a public park.



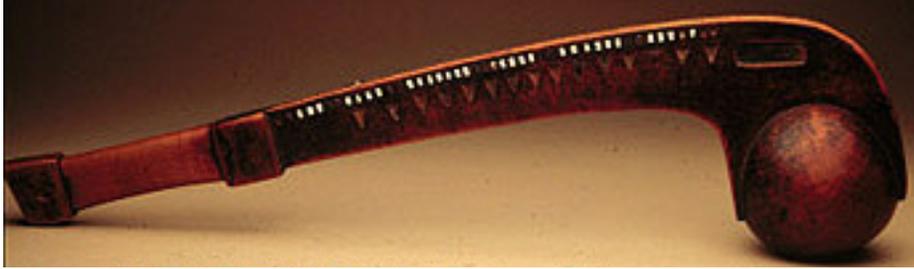
In 1957, such efforts at divestiture would succeed when the property would be sold at auction for \$1,000,777 to [Brown University](#) for use as a gym and athletic complex, as shown above.



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July: Warren K. Moorehead unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate the purchase, from Mrs. Laura Anne Daniels of Union ME, of the war club that was being said to have been collected by Alderman at the site of his killing of [Metacom](#) and was being said to have been passed on to Captain Benjamin Church and the Reverend [John Checkley](#) in exchange for the Reverend's gold watch.



(Mrs. Daniels's great aunt Angelica Gilbert James allegedly had inherited this antique head-basher from her distant ancestor, the Reverend Checkley of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Perhaps the unsuccessful Mr. Moorehead might have succeeded had he been able to offer to recover for this Mrs. Daniels her ecclesiastical ancestor's celebrated gold watch — or perhaps he ought merely to have bashed her on the gourd and made a run for it. :-)

1930

At some point during this decade, John Russell Pope designed the present garden of the [Redwood Library](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

[Caroline Hazard](#) edited a [Quaker](#) ancestor's diary, as [NAILER TOM'S DIARY OTHERWISE THE JOURNAL OF THOMAS B. HAZARD OF KINGSTOWN, RHODE ISLAND, 1778 TO 1840](#) (Boston: The Merrymount Press).



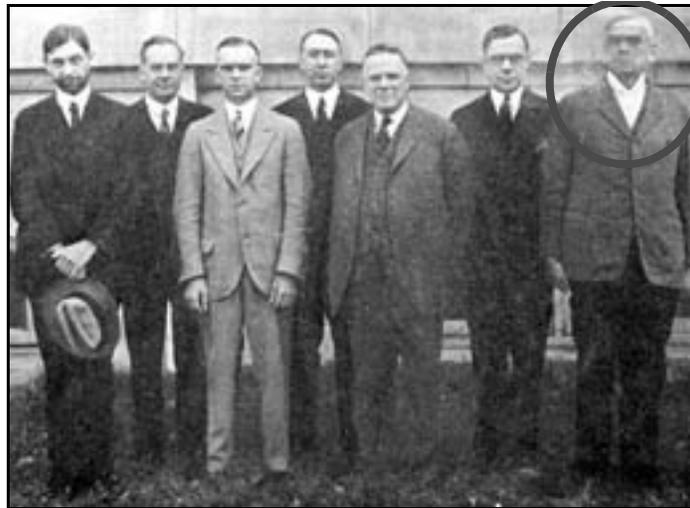
RHODE ISLAND

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1931

The Great Depression would be depressing enrollment at the [Quaker Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), with the number of white boys enrolled having already fallen to 366. As enrollment would drop off further to 318 white boys in the following two years, construction of the planned new Lower School would need to be put off indefinitely.

AN OPEN LETTER TO [DR. ELBERT RUSSELL](#) FROM ALLEN H. GODBEY⁸



8. Allen Howard Godbey, Professor of Old Testament History in the Duke School of Religion, was a Methodist minister. He was in addition the author of an open letter to President W.P. Few of Duke University. There are a number of recorded reactions by scholars, students, and alumni, on file at the Duke University Library for your evaluation. Professor Godbey had been the author, in 1889, of STANLEY IN AFRICA: THE PALADIN OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. A SUCCINCT AND CORRECT HISTORY OF THE TRAVELS AND EXPLORATIONS OF HENRY M. STANLEY, ... AND A COMPLETE HISTORY OF HIS LATEST AND MOST INTERESTING EXPEDITION, THE RELIEF OF EMIN BEY (Chicago: Standard).



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Also, in this year, Dr. Russell offered THE VALE OF [BEAVOR](#) TODAY as the John Bowne lecture.



1933

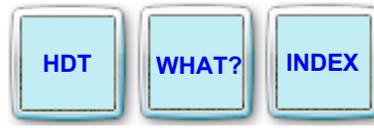
June 16, Friday: The Navy Department ordered the USS *Constellation* to decommissioned status, for preservation as a naval relic. Although numerous surveys were conducted and estimates given for the cost of restoring the vessel as a national historic shrine, no decisions on the ship's fate were taken. The vessel would remain in "Ordinary" at the US Naval Training Center at [Newport, Rhode Island](#) until [World War II](#).

President [Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) signed the National Recovery Act, providing for the creation of a Public Works Administration and giving him the power to regulate industry to stimulate the economy. He signed the Glass-Steagall Act, providing for reforms in banking to cut down on speculation and creating the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The organizing meeting of the Pennsylvania Association of [Clinical Psychologists](#), forerunner of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association, was held in Harrisburg. The group elected acting president Thaddeus Bolton, of Temple University, and acting secretary Florentine Hackbusch, of the state's Bureau of Mental Hygiene.⁹

Unknown assailants murdered Chaim Arlosoroff, a Labor Zionist leader.

9. Street, W.R. A CHRONOLOGY OF NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN AMERICAN [PSYCHOLOGY](#). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1994



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1934

The Great Depression had been depressing enrollment at the [Quaker Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), with the number of boy scholars enrolled having dropped off to 318 — but during this year they experienced an enrollment increase.

July 9, Monday: American Airlines inaugurated sleeper service between New York City and [Chicago](#).

Herbert Jasper of Brown University and Hallowell Davis of Harvard University were independently engaged at this time in recording the electrical activity of the human brain. At the Emma Pendleton Bradley Home in East Providence, [Rhode Island](#), Jasper achieved the 1st tracing of such electrical activity.

PSYCHOLOGY

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September 11, Tuesday/12, Wednesday: One citizen was killed at the mills in [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#), and two at the mills in [Woonsocket](#), when workers protested the hiring of strikebreakers and the National Guard was called in.



1935

Elisha R. Potter's EARLY HISTORY OF NARRAGANSETT WITH AN APPENDIX OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS MANY OF WHICH ARE NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME PUBLISHED. [Providence, Rhode Island](#).



At the [Quaker Moses Brown School](#), where there had been no cows since the herd was sold in 1924, the stone barn was remodeled into a gym for the Lower School.

News items relating to the development of ELECTRIC WALDEN technology:

- International Business Machines (IBM) developed a machine, descended from the Markograph, to score tests for the New York State Regents and the public schools of [Providence, Rhode Island](#).
- The Kludge paper feeder, as an adjunct mechanism to mechanical printing presses. (Nowadays we term a software patch a “kludge” if it has been jury-rigged and quick-and-dirty programmed to temporarily solve a crisis situation, but can be counted on to generate problems of its own.)
- G. Domagk discovered the sulphonamides.
- At Dupont, W.H. Carothers made the 1st nylon fibers.
- As part of their attempt to intercept the constantly growing percentage of Jewish students, Harvard University began to require all candidate for admission to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). This, supplemented by “interviews,” ought to do the trick.

1936

At the [Quaker Moses Brown School](#) for boy scholars on top of the hill in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), in this year, social dancing came to be permitted. A structural weakness was discovered in the main beams of Alumni Hall, constructed in 1868, which would require the complete renovation of that building.

 The main building is of brick, 220 ft. long, and contains a

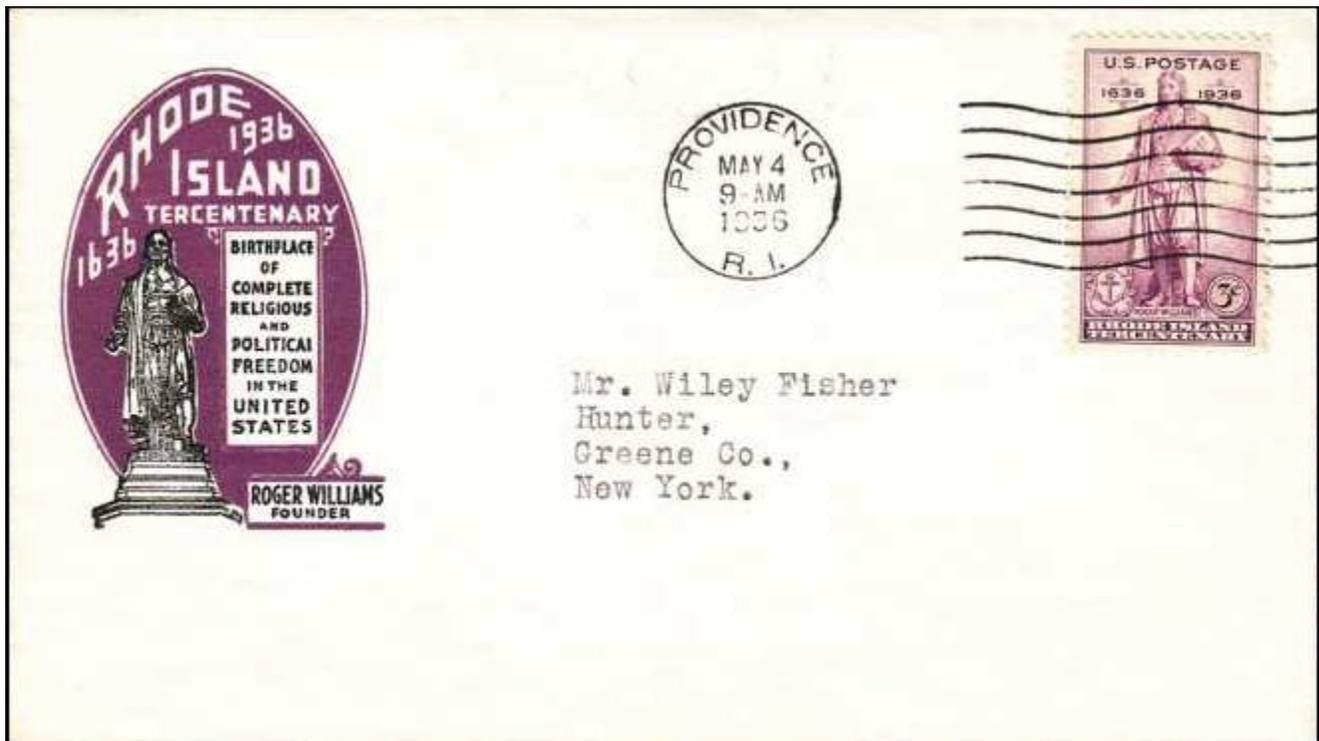


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dining-hall, girls' schoolroom, public reception-room, parlors and nurseries, recitation-rooms, and dormitories. An extension of brick, 76 ft. long, contains a boys' schoolroom and dormitories. "Alumni Hall," a three-story brick structure, 126 ft. long, contains on the first floor a grand public hall, besides rooms for the scientific apparatus and cabinets, the library, and reading-room; and on the upper floors dormitories for girls.

May 4, Monday: From May the 4th in 1636 to May the 4th in 1936 had been approximately three centuries, give or take a February 29th. Evidently, something had happen on this day way back then — something like the colony of [Rhode Island](#) getting born as the 1st completely free venue, both religiously and politically, in what would become the United States of America (and this connected with [Roger Williams](#), Founder):



So what was the above 1936 “Tercentenary” stamp and May 4th-franked envelope cover talking about?

Here it is, maybe. On this date Governor Henry Vane of the Massachusetts Bay Colony gave Connecticut Governor John Winthrop, Jr. a set of instructions for the punitive expedition led by Captain Endicott against the natives of Block Island and against the Pequots, an attempt to force these natives to hand over the killers of John Oldham and Captain John Stone for white justice. No, that couldn't be it, for such a news item has nothing to do with Founder Roger Williams, and nothing whatever to do with complete religious and political freedom in the United States! Something else, then.

In order to get a clue: In about this timeframe, what had the Reverend Williams been up to? —He had been landing near what would become [Providence](#), and negotiating with local native headmen and being granted

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)

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permissions, and then hearing from the Bay Colony that he was still within what they considered to be their current borders, and rowing across the bay and beginning again to negotiate with local native headmen and obtain permissions to set up a white settlement. –And, I hear, there was supposed to be religious freedom in



this settlement, for Baptists. (There's only a few little problems with this story, such as that the Baptist religion that we know anything about was not actually founded until a later timeframe, and such as that the Reverend Williams actually never was a Baptist minister and never delivered a Baptist sermon in a Baptist church, but instead was in his Rhode Island years a merchant and a slavetrader and a politician and an author, and such as that his kind of religious freedom –religious freedom, that is, for one persecuted minority of white adult male–actually would amount to something significantly less than complete religious and political freedom for anybody and everybody.)

I might also point out that the image used of the reverend is an utter fiction, since nobody made a painting or sketch of him while he was alive, or ever made a written record in which his appearance was in any manner characterized. Nobody actually has any idea whatever, what he might have looked like physically.

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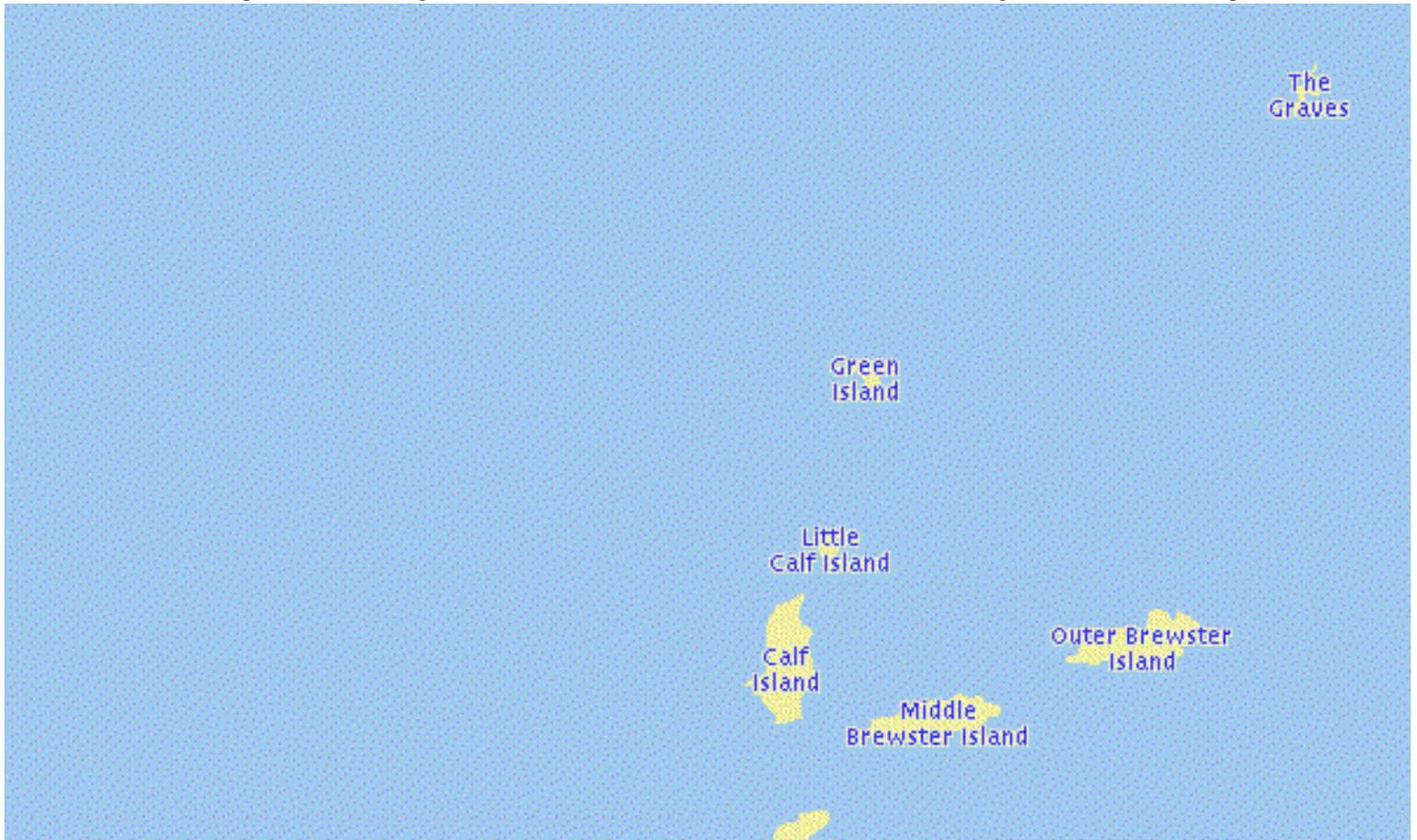


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1938

The wreck of the *City of Salisbury*, a freighter carrying animals, off the rocky ledge known as The Graves, inspired divers throughout the summer to visit the remains of what was becoming known as the “zoo ship.”¹⁰



TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

10. Graves Island was named in honor of the 17th-Century admiral Thomas Graves, but its name is now popularly associated with “watery graves” surrounding it as the result of numerous shipwrecks on and near these jagged rocks. Shipwrecks may have been more numerous around Boston Light, but disasters at The Graves have tended to be somewhat more flamboyant.

ROGUE ISLAND

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An east coast hurricane spread the [gypsy moth](#) beyond previously infested areas.



(I wonder if this ship had been sunk by the same major hurricane that blew down the trees that Thoreau had planted, and also blew down the elms at the [Newport, Rhode Island](#) cottage “The Elms,” and whether this was the same weather event that spread the gypsy moths.)





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September 21, Wednesday: British mediator Lord Runciman recommended to Prime Minister Chamberlain that the Sudenland be transferred to [Germany](#) without a referendum.

Czechoslovakia agreed to an Anglo-French plan which included the cession of the Sudetenland to [Germany](#). President Benes announced the agreement in a communique critical of Czechoslovakia's "friends" Great Britain and France.

Spanish leader Juan Negrín advised the League of Nations that all International Brigades were to be withdrawn from the fighting.

Poland demanded that Czechoslovakia hand over the Teschen (Cieszyn) district.

In the worst weather disaster for New England in its history, the 4th most fatal in all US history, the Category Four hurricane to be known as the "Long Island Express" struck seven states in seven hours and 682 died, 433 of whom were [Rhode Islanders](#).¹¹ Drifting dead, typically wearing heavy boots, were initially estimated from the air by counting the tops of heads that could be seen bobbing along the surfline. The downtown of [Providence](#) flooded 17 feet above its street surfaces. All the enormous mature elm-trees surrounding the [Newport](#) "cottage" named "The Elms" were blown down.¹² In Arlington, the steeple of the Pleasant Street Congregational Church was toppled. Most of the remaining isolated mature white pines that had been planted in the sandy loam by [Henry Thoreau](#) in what had been his [beanfield](#) in Walden Woods during his residency on Walden Pond, those that had not burned in that railroad fire in the 1890s, isolated as they had become by fire and standing only in sandy soil, were upset by the winds, which were measured to occasionally gust up to 183 miles per hour — with the exception of one grand old tree which could still be seen from a distance.¹³

[WALDEN](#): I planted about two acres and a half of upland; and as it was only about fifteen years since the land was cleared, and I myself had got out two or three cords of stumps, I did not give it any manure; but in the course of the summer it appeared by the arrowheads which I turned up in hoeing, that an extinct nation had anciently dwelt here and planted corn and beans ere white men came to clear the land, and so, to some extent, had exhausted the soil for this very crop.

THE BEANFIELD

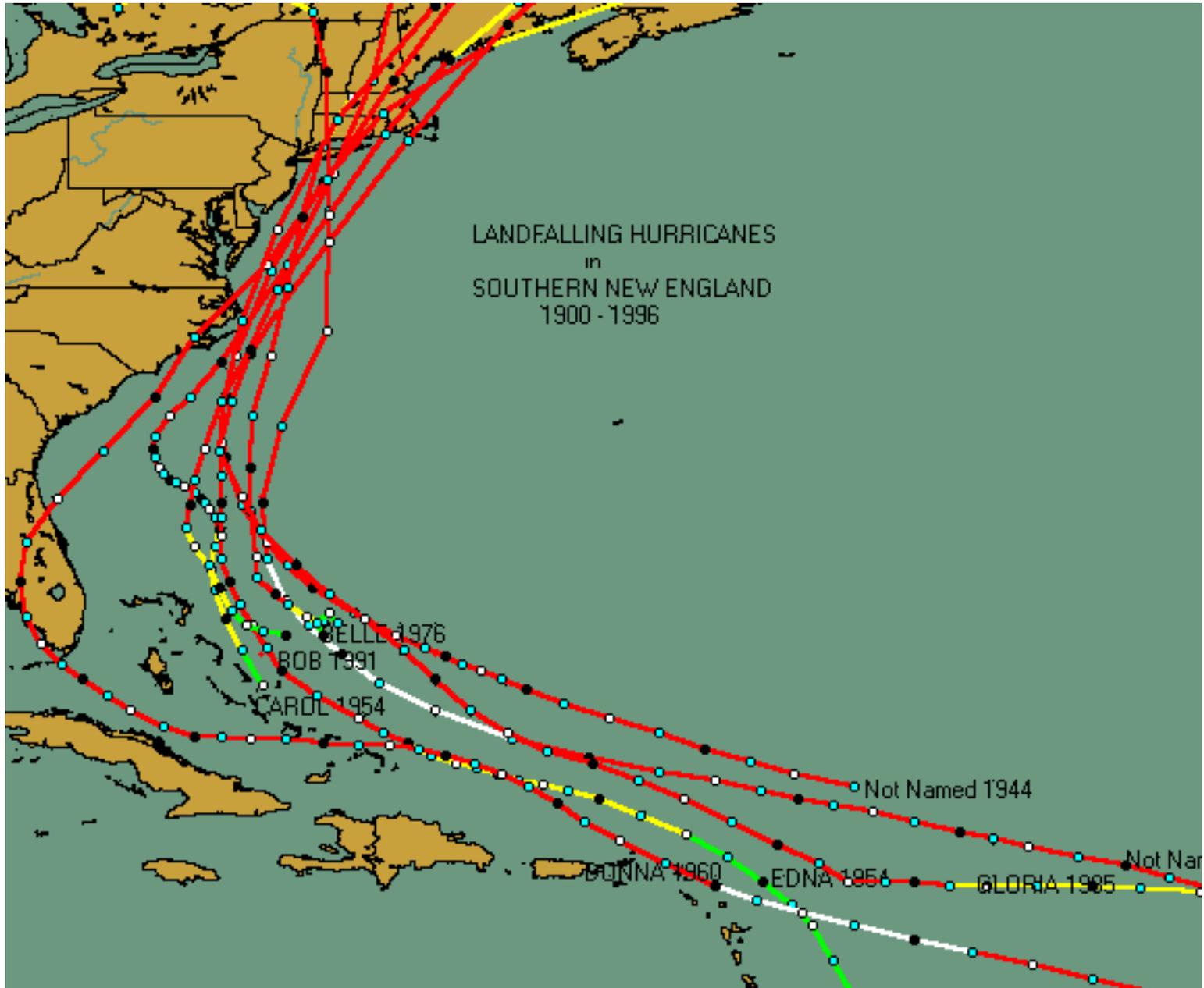
11. Some 4-foot-long metal tubes jammed into the marshy soil and sediment layers at Succotash Marsh in East Matunuck, [Rhode Island](#) (at the west side of the ocean entrance of the [Narragansett Bay](#)) by Tom Webb of the Geological Sciences Department of [Brown University](#), have revealed that there has been a series of overwash fans created by storm tidal surges, indicating that seven category-three hurricanes have struck Narragansett lowlands in about the past millennium. The 1st such overwash fan that has been revealed dated to the period 1295-1407CE, the 2nd to the period of roughly the first half of the 15th Century, the 3rd to approximately 1520CE (give or take a few decades), the 4th to the historic storm of the 14th and 15th of August, 1635, the 5th to the historic storm of September 23, 1815, and the 6th to the historic storm of October 4/5, 1869. The 7th such overwash fan obviously dates specifically to this historic storm of September 21, 1938.

12. 15% of the mature trees in New England were destroyed.

13. Professor Walter Roy Harding was said to be able to lead walkers through the woods to the base of this remaining tree.

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RHODE ISLAND

ROGUE ISLAND

Securely held in the root system of one of the white pines which had been blown over –although no-one would recognize this until [Roland Wells Robbins](#), an archeologist who lived on the old Cambridge turnpike, would inspect this eroded root system on November 11, 1945– were some of the stones from the foundation of the chimney of [Emerson's \(Thoreau's\) shanty](#):



A tree snapped and fell over the roof of the [Concord](#) bank, and one of the Doric pillars was knocked off its front portico.



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HDT

WHAT?

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The [“Texas” House](#), already damaged by fire, was destroyed during this hurricane.



THOREAU RESIDENCES

The Great Elm on Monument Square, the one known about town as the “Whipping Post Elm” despite the fact that it had never been used in such a manner, was severely damaged.

In [New Bedford](#), there was a storm surge of between 12 and 16 feet, and damage amounting to what today would be at least \$3.5 billion.

1939

Ernest Hamlin Baker’s mural about the slavery-intensive economic activities of the white “Narragansett Planters” of the southwestern region of the state of [Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations:



(The mural reminds us that there were more black [slaves](#) in Rhode Island at one time, than in the remainder of the states of New England put together. — I mean, how **dare** this artist remind us of something like that!)



RHODE ISLAND

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June: In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the story goes, the remains of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), founding daddy DWM, that had originally been interred in the orchard in the rear of his homestead lot at Towne Street (now North Main Street), but had since been relocated into the tomb of a descendant in the North Burial Ground, were sealed within a bronze container and set into the base of the monument erected to his memory on Prospect Terrace.¹⁴

October 30, Monday: U-boat U56 was lying in wait at periscope depth, ideally positioned in the middle of a contingent of the British Home Fleet just west of the Orkney Islands. In front was the battleship HMS *Rodney*, followed by the HMS *Nelson* (flagship of the fleet) and HMS *Hood*, all surrounded by a protective screen of destroyers. Lieutenant Wilhelm Zahn fired three torpedoes at HMS *Nelson*. Two of the torpedoes struck its hull but neither exploded! –It was getaway time. Had either of these torpedoes exploded there would have been hell to pay, as there was a conference going on on board the flagship, to determine England’s course of action after the torpedoing of the *Royal Oak* at Scapa Flow. The VIPs included C-in-C Home Fleet Admiral Sir Charles Forbes, First Sea Lord and Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, and Lord of the Admiralty Mr. Winston Churchill. Admiral Karl Donetz, the supreme commander of Germany’s U-boat campaign, would write in his war diary “Without doubt, the torpedo inspectors have fallen down on their job ... at least 30% of our torpedoes are duds!” Gunther Prien, hero of Scapa Flow, would remark “How the hell do they expect us to fight with dummy rifles?” This was almost as great an embarrassment to the German Navy as the torpedoes produced in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) would be to the US Navy!

WORLD WAR II

14. The original interment is probably now somewhere underneath the pavement of Benefit Street, or farther uphill in the district that once upon a time was the What Cheer estate, if subsequent construction has not by now destroyed this site. This park on Prospect Street is probably pretty close to where the burial had been, and at any rate, it is close enough. Actually, according to Professor Stanley Lemons, the historian for the First Baptist Church In America, when they had gone to look for the bones of the Baptist Reverend Roger Williams in the 1860s, they had found nothing but a tangle of tree roots, so they had simply used a few shovelfuls of the dirt they had dug out of their “dry hole,” dirt darker than the rest, and interred this in a soap box in a crypt in North Burial Ground as if it were the remains of the body — and so it was merely this anonymous “dark dirt” which was, in this timeframe, being sealed inside the bronze container and set into the base of the attractive nuisance on Prospect Terrace. Meanwhile, at Brown University, supposedly, somewhere they are preserving a suggestive tangle of tree roots that for those of sufficient imagination can be indicative of the shape of a human corpse.



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1940

The will of Ebenezer Knight Dexter had stipulated that “forty freemen” needed to be present at any meeting about the [Dexter Asylum](#).



Consequently, once per year, a meeting of “forty freemen” had been being arranged in the city council chamber to deal with matters pertaining to the Dexter donation. At this point such a subterfuge was abandoned and his will was altered by vote of the Rhode Island General Assembly to grant to the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) city



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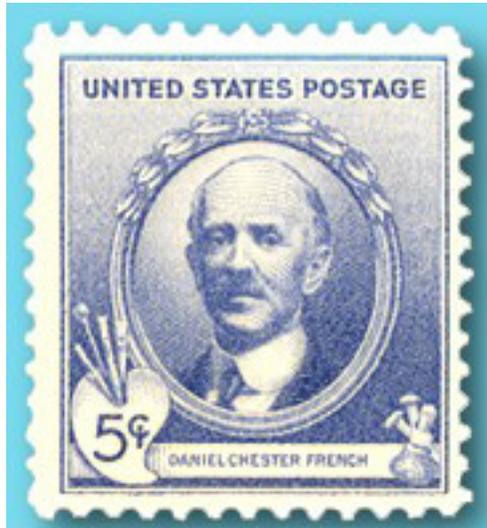
council the powers originally bestowed upon this “forty freemen” conceit.



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September 16, Monday: The [Daniel Chester French](#) postage stamp was issued.



The United States military conscription bill, the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, was signed by [President Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#), creating this country’s initial peacetime draft and formally establishing a Selective Service System as an independent Federal agency.¹⁵

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All males 21-36 were required to register for the draft. The FBI became responsible for locating draft evaders
15. Don't you feel so much safer? What if they gave a war and nobody came?

Please notice that there's an important difference, in these files, for the period of the 1930s and 1940s. The important difference is that, during the lengthy regime of President FDR, there's absolutely no mention at the national level of the Southern Democrat practice of the [lynching](#) of black Americans. During the FDR regime, these lynchings would be going on entirely uninterrupted, and the federal executive branch would be sponsoring zero zip nada niente anti-lynching legislation. Roosevelt was a Democrat, and it was an uneasy alliance between "liberal" Northern Democrats and "conservative" Southern Democrats that, election after election, was keeping him in power. For him to have supported anti-lynching legislation would have been for him to have split his support base, which was made up in roughly equal parts of white Northerners who did not much care what was happening to black Americans down south, and white Southerners who cared not at all that bad things would occasionally happen to the "uppity" among their black neighbors. (How do we know this? –We know this because FDR himself clearly explained his situation to the NAACP's Walter White: saving the lives of these black men would cost him more, in terms of support, than their lives were worth to him.)



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and deserters. Conscientious objectors were allegedly to be exempted on the basis of training and belief.



For the first time they would be required to serve their country doing “work of national importance under civilian direction.” This was to be the case regardless of whether the person in question was a citizen of the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and as such protected from all such conscription ever since the 17th Century by [Rhode Island](#)’s charter of religious liberty of conscience, a charter that had never before

been gainsaid.



MILITARY CONSCRIPTION



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1941

In Princeton, New Jersey (which initially had been largely [Quaker](#) but had then become over the years largely Presbyterian, with the local Friends meeting “laid down” as of 1878), a local monthly meeting was formally re-established. (Initially, this group would be meeting at the local YWCA and on the campus of [Princeton University](#), but eventually the monthly meeting would reconstitute itself at its historic Stony Brook property outside town, and a Friends School would also have constituted itself on those premises.)

Hope High School, which had been erected in a corner of the [Moses Brown School](#) bequest that had been seized by the city of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) by eminent domain in the realignment of Hope Street so that the street would continue directly into East Avenue, the older high school building that it had superseded became at this point the headquarters for the 6th Army corps, for the duration of [World War II](#). Hey, [Quaker](#) peaceniks pacifist cowards, this has got nothing whatever to do with you, so you keep over on your farm!



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During this year this school of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would lose a number of its teachers to the military draft, and the possibility of the students continuing to transit directly from their high school education into their college education was accepted to be just about nil.¹⁶

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)

An article in the [Sunday Journal](#) characterized [Dexter Asylum](#) on Hope Street as a “well-meaning legacy of a bygone day which has made time stand still.”



Pardon me, I’ve lived in Rogue Island for long enough to know what such a sentence signals locally. What it signals is “Hey, there’s a bunch of money here lying around loose, that maybe we can steal!” It’s the vibes of the wounded. It’s blood in the water. Cue sharks.

July 12, Saturday: The Naval Research and Development Board was created.

Naval Air Station, Quonset Point, [Rhode Island](#) was established.

A British/Soviet mutual-assistance pact was signed at Moscow.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

[WORLD WAR II](#)

16. The official school accounts make it clear that for the duration of the war, the Quaker Peace Testimony was entirely outside the bounds of the thinkable, both for the students and for their teachers. Their thoughts were consumed with ways to maneuver so that their military draft obligations would fit as neatly as possible into their overall personal life trajectories.

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)



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November 25, Tuesday: Renewal for five years of the Anti-Comintern Pact of November 25, 1936 at Berlin, by [Germany](#), [Japan](#), [Italy](#), Hungary, Spain, Manchukuo, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Rumania, Slovakia, and the Nanking regime in [China](#).

[Germans](#) crossed the Moscow-Volga Canal at Yakhroma and Dimitrov, 65 kilometers north of Moscow.

The *Association des Juifs en Belgique* (Association of Jews in Belgium) was established.

2,900 Jews were shot near Kovno (Kaunas).

[ANTISEMITISM](#)



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[Providence, Rhode Island](#) banned George Cukor's and Greta Garbo's final film, "Two-Faced Woman." In this comedy the problem with the Legion of Decency seems not to have been that she allowed herself to be photographed in the most skimpy of all possible swimsuits. It seems to have been in regard to the storyline: there is off-screen premarital sex with her bridegroom, that happens while he might, or might not, be persuaded that she is "the worldly-wise twin sister" of his intended innocent bride. Yeah, hotcha mental stuff!



I want to be torpedoed.

In the Mediterranean, the HMS *Barham*, a 31,100-ton British battleship, was hit on the port side by three torpedoes from the U-boat U331 commanded by Kapitän-Leutnant von Tiesenhausen. About 4 minutes later the *Barham*'s 15-inch magazine exploded, completely disintegrating the vessel and releasing an enormous quantity of black smoke. 862 died including its skipper, Captain G.C. Cooke. 395 would be rescued from the water by HMS *Hotspur* and HMAS *Nizam*. (U331 would be sunk on November 17, 1942 by torpedo-carrying Swordfish from the carrier HMS *Formidable*, with 32 deaths. Kapitän-Leutnant Hans-Diedrich Tiesenhausen would be among the 15 rescued and would survive [World War II](#) to die on August 17, 2000, in Vancouver, Canada at the age of 85.)



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Secretary of War Stimson noted in his diary “[Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) stated that we were likely to be attacked perhaps as soon as next Monday.”



The British decrypted the [Japanese](#) Navy message of November 19th (the US would decode this message on November 28th) and found that it had indicated that there was going to be an attack, and that the signal for this was to be issued over Radio Tokyo in the form of a fake weather report — in this broadcast a mention of rain would indicate a state of war and a mention of the east (Higashi) would indicate that the attack was upon the United States of America.

[Japanese](#) troop transports, en route to Malaya, were sighted off Taiwan.

The Navy Department ordered all US trans-Pacific shipping to take a southern route. Admiral Turner has testified that “We sent the traffic down to the Torres Strait, so that the track of the [Japanese](#) task force would be clear of any traffic.”

Fleet Admiral (Grand Admiral of the Fleet) Isoroku Yamamoto radioed an order to sail which was decrypted by the British on this same day and would be decrypted by the Dutch on November 27th. Although precisely when this order was decrypted by US Naval Intelligence is a national secret, indications are that we must have decrypted it on or before November 26th:

(a) The task force, keeping its movements strictly secret and maintaining close guard against submarines and aircraft, shall advance into Hawaiian waters and upon the very opening of hostilities, shall attack the main force of the United States Fleet in Hawaii and deal it a mortal blow. The raid is planned for dawn on X-day – exact date to be given by later order.

(b) Should the negotiations with the US prove successful, the task force shall hold itself in readiness forthwith to return and reassemble.

(c) The task force will move out of Hitokappu Wan on the morning of 26 November and advance to the standing-by position on the afternoon of 4 December and speedily complete refueling.¹⁷

WORLD WAR II

17. PHA Congressional Hearings Report, volume 1 page 180, transcript page 437-8



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December 7, Sunday afternoon, 1941: At the home of Helen May Clarke Grimes, in Spragueville near [Smithfield](#) northwest of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the radio was switched on. As they listened, news flashes began to come in about a [Japanese](#) attack that had begun at dawn, which had been about 1:20PM Eastern Standard Time.



Helen May Clarke Grimes of Rhode Island had no warning.

Helen had been keeping a diary since she was ten years of age,¹⁸ and made notes which indicate the fragmentary nature of the information available to the American people, who were given no real grasp that the toll of this “day that will live in infamy” actually was a dozen ships sunk or beached (three of them, the *Arizona*, the *Utah*, and the *Oklahoma*, damaged beyond repair), 164 aircraft destroyed and 159 damaged, and 3,566 American casualties, including 2,388 killed. Listeners like Helen were told only that the U.S.S. *Arizona* was sunk and the *Oklahoma* capsized, and casualty reports were never within an order of magnitude of being adequate:

Dec. 7 – This is a sleepy Sunday afternoon at home. We are in the little upstairs sitting room, Mother sewing, I writing, and Dorrance [her husband] listening to the portable radio. I haven’t anything to write about, really, and the Philharmonic is fast putting me to sleep although the broadcast is interrupted now and then with news bulletins on the tense “Far Eastern Situation.” After all we have been more or less tense for months.

.....
Later – I guess this is it! Japanese dive bombers have attacked Honolulu!

.....
4:30 – News bulletin. Taken down as given. Parachute troupes [sic] sighted – Pearl Harbor attacked by dive bombers – Manila bombed – smoke of anti-aircraft guns over Pearl Harbor – from 50 to 100 planes from Japanese aircraft carrier – attachés of Japanese government at Washington burning secret papers. We are shocked silent. Dorrance who is coming down with a cold is too carried away by the intermittent bulletins to realize how rotten he feels. The Albert Spalding program, Victor Herbert selections, Carmichael’s Stardust, Kostelanetz orchestra.

.....

18. Mystic River Historical Society: AN ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE 1915-1926: THE CHILDHOOD JOURNALS OF HELEN MAY CLARKE OF MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT.



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5 P.M. – At last more news – fragmentary, probably inaccurate. Washington: President Roosevelt is dictating message to Congress. Probably declaration of war tomorrow.¹⁹ Heavy damage and loss of life in Hawaii. It was a dawn attack. All aerial observation posts in Los Angeles ordered manned. Naval engagement reported. Pearl Harbor under bombardment.

Well, here it is: we're at war.

We hang close to the radio listening to program after program afraid we may miss a news bulletin no matter how vague or unconfirmed the reports may be. The Prudential (Insurance) Hour with Deems Taylor and Gladys Swarthout singing Paradise in Waltz Time from the motion picture Champagne Waltz.

At last, another bulletin. Japan announces she has entered a state of war with Britain and the United States from dawn to-day Dec. 7th, 1941. Government order just issued comes over WPRO: The Secretary of War orders that all plants working on defense orders institute a guard against sabotage.

Jimmie Cat jumps in my lap. The news has come to an end, the program returns to Gladys Swarthout.

5:45 – William L. Shirer, news commentator. Speaks of “flagrant aggression ... a war after 23 years and one month of uneasy peace” ... the battleship Oklahoma set on fire by Japanese bombs.

I should be reacting to this in some way, but I remain incredulous and interested, nothing more as yet.

An attempt has been made to contact overseas – no result. Honolulu – CBS calling Honolulu – no answer. Calling Manila – CBS calling Manila, go ahead Manila – no answer.

We take time out for supper, our ears on the radio.

6:30 – All marines notified to return to their stations ... order from Quonset.

Guam has been attacked by a squadron of planes ... Elmer Davis, commentator. He must have seen this happening months ago. Senator Wheeler, isolationist, says sensibly enough that “there is nothing to do now but lick the hell out of them.”²⁰ The Japanese have struck at Singapore, sinking two British ships.

We now hear Albert Warner, Washington news commentator – and next, Maj. Elliot who says the Japanese plan plainly underway for two weeks during treacherous negotiations at Washington. I have a conviction we have been sold down the river again. A year ago Oliver said every navy man on Jamestown said we'd be at war with Japan shortly. I suppose Major Elliot didn't know, or our beloved [sarcasm, as the author of this was decidedly not a supporter] President! Well, this is no time to think of that. We are at war.

Notice: all recruiting offices open to-morrow.

7:00 – Censorship on all out going cablegrams and radio messages. The Jack Benny Program ... Don Wilson, the announcer ... “J-E-L-L-O with that locked in flavor.” An interruption;

19. The sole dissenter would be Representative Jeanette Rankin, who had also voted against declaring war in 1817.

20. Burton K. Wheeler (1882-1975), senator from Montana (1923-1947), progressive Democrat, had helped create the isolationist “America First” committee of Charles A. Lindbergh and Norman Thomas. The committee would be dissolved four days after Pearl Harbor.



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news from the office of the Providence Journal – Providence police are requested to round up all enlisted men. War Extra editions are on the streets.

I am surprised at Mother. I expected her to be shocked, horrified, but she seems excited, stepped up, her asthma forgotten.

The program continues ... a Dennis Day song. How are the performers reacting? – they must be getting this awful news.

More bulletins; Shanghai: the Japanese have taken over the American Light Company.

7:30 – Providence Cake commercial ... the Fitch [Shampoo] Band Wagon program with – Oh, another news bulletin, from the Prov. Journal: Gov. McGrath has called a meeting ... Newport takes immediate precautions ... six Japanese planes said to have been shot down. Unconfirmed report that Wake Island is occupied by Japanese. A black-out of Panama Canal ordered for to-night.

Back to the scheduled program again: Horace Heidt and the "Shepherd's Serenade," with Frankie Carle at the piano ... "I'll Never Forget," this weeks Band Wagons top tune.

Just happened to remember that Elizabeth Colby and her husband are stationed at Honolulu.

News bulletin: 104 dead and 300 wounded, not including civilian population as a result of Japanese raid on Hawaii.

8:00 – A Pinkerton Fur commercial ... the Chase and Sanborn Coffee Hour with Charlie McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd on Edgar Bergen's knee. Just ordinary Sunday night listening mixed in with a world shaking event.

Ray Noble's Orchestra ... Abbot and Costello ... Judy Garland, the guest star.

News: The Governor of the Dutch East Indies has declared war on Japan ... likewise Costa Rica. Well, that will be a help!

In Shanghai bombs fall on the International Settlement ... and Judy Garland sings. Zing Went the Strings of My Heart.

Commercial: Shop at Newberry's first. News flash: All women and children in Manila ordered evacuated. Mayor La Guardia has issued an order that all Japanese nationals remain in their homes until their status is settled.

Back to the regular programs – this one Carter's Little Liver Pills and it is terrible. A long wait this time lasting through an Inner Sanctum mystery story and into the Ford Musical Hour which comes on at 9 o'clock. Jimmie Cat is in my lap again, mother is embroidering a bureau scarf for Constance. Somehow small things seem important – things I can understand like the radiator clanking as the steam comes up, or the small spot of nail varnish flaking from my thumb nail.

9:30 – At last more news. Washington officially announces 100 dead and 300 wounded. Wake Island is said to have surrendered to a superior Japanese force. There has been one – perhaps two – ship casualties. Japanese of San Francisco under careful watch.

Back to the Ford Hour, the second half of the program taking place at the U.S. Naval Training Station at Great Lakes,



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Illinois. There is a band, and a commanding officer, Rear Admiral John Downes thanks Edsel Ford for the new auditorium and recreational building presented by him to the Naval Training Station. We listen to the Training Station Chorus, the Training Station Band, and a Lieut. Edward Peabody who plays a medley of Southern airs on his banjo.

10:00 – Commercial: This Christmas shoppers are using Gerber's lay away plan. News Flash: Canada has declared war upon Japan. Grand Central Station is jammed with men in uniform rounded up by Shore Patrol and Military Police from theaters, restaurants and bars. All officers on leave called back to their posts. State of emergency declared in San Francisco. Mother says thank God constance isn't there.

At last they have established direct radio contact with the Philippines. The commentator tells of one news reporter who broadcast over wrong channel in his haste.

The Telephone Company makes an announcement. Long distance is so over taxed it is asked that no calls be made unless strictly necessary.

Clare Booth and Vincent Shean speak. Shean describes Wake Island and the base made there, and the 1100 American soldiers now probably the prisoners of the Japanese.

The Army and Navy Departments are flooded with pleas from families for knowledge of men in Hawaii and the Philippines.

10:30 – Following a Nylon hosiery commercial²¹ comes a CBS special broadcast. There is an unconfirmed report of a big naval engagement at sea. Eric Severied reports from Washington: the city is swarming with reporters, the portico is lighted; there are lines of shiny cars and a mass of faces standing in the cold waiting news.

There has been heavy destruction at Hawaii. Unconfirmed reports state that we have lost two capital ships and the airfield has been leveled. President Roosevelt will address joint session of Congress at 12:30 to-morrow.

It is 4:30 in London. Parliament meets today to declare war on Japan directly after America.

A Columbia broadcast: Guam is in trouble ... Shanghai bombed. I have smoked until my mouth is dry: I am too tired to write more. It is now eleven o'clock, we have been glued to the radio for hours.²²

21. Nylons had been on the market since May 15, 1940.

22. This volume of the diary is at the Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence, Rhode Island.



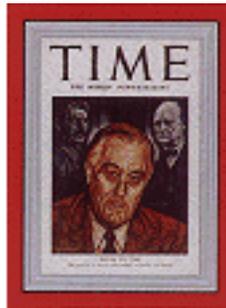
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Remember, at an early point in the autumn, Kilsoo Haan, an agent for the Sino-Korean People's League, had indicated to Eric Severeid of CBS that the Korean underground in [Korea](#) and [Japan](#) had obtained proof not only that the Japanese military was planning an attack on the US naval facilities at Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu, but also that this attack was scheduled to take place before [Christmas](#). Eric Severeid had been informed that one Korean had sighted the actual plans. What would Eric Severeid have been thinking on this day as he listened to these radio reports? –Has anyone ever dared ask him?

[WORLD WAR II](#)

Remember, late in October, US Senator Guy Gillette had been informed by Kilsoo Haan that the [Japanese](#) were planning to attack the US fleet in December or January, whereupon Senator Gillette had personally alerted the State Department, Army and Navy Intelligence, and [President Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#). What would Senator Gillette have been thinking on this day as he listened to these radio reports? –Did anyone ever dare ask him?



The people in the US federal government who had been briefed by Eric Severeid of CBS or by US Senator Guy Gillette as to what this Korean agent was passing along to us — what might they have been thinking on this day as they listened to these radio reports? Will we ever know?



**Koreans knew.
Eric Severeid of CBS knew.
Senator Guy Gillette knew.
President Franklin Delano Roosevelt knew.**



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December 10, Wednesday: Cuba declared war upon [Japan](#).

[WORLD WAR II](#)

The Japanese landed on Camiguin Island and at Gonzaga and Aparri on the island of Luzon in the Philippine Islands. They captured the British-controlled islands of Abemama, Makin (Butaritari) and Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands (Kiribati). The US Marine garrison on Guam surrendered to a [Japanese](#) landing force.

Führer [Adolf Hitler](#) commented that [President Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#)'s words on the previous day had amounted to a de facto declaration of war.

[German](#) and [Italian](#) forces began a full retreat to the west from Tobruk (Tubruq).

S.S. Commander Heinrich Himmler ordered that the ill, mentally ill and those otherwise unfit for work be removed from concentration camp populations and gassed to death.

Brazil froze all the [German](#), [Italian](#), and [Japanese](#) assets it could get its hands on. Argentina froze all [Japanese](#) assets.

The British warships HMS *Repulse* and HMS *Prince of Wales* were sunk off Kuantan, Malaya. The ships had been spotted by submarine I-58 just before dawn and a flight of nine "Betty" torpedo-carrying planes of the Japanese 22nd Naval Air Flotilla led by Lieutenant Haruki Iki had scrambled from the Japanese base at [Saigon](#). The battleship *Prince of Wales* was hit by 4 torpedoes and sank at 12:33PM. 327 died. The cruiser *Repulse* was hit by 14 torpedoes and sank at 1:20PM. 513 died. The Far Eastern Fleet commander, Admiral Sir Tom Phillips, went down with his ship. The Japanese lost 4 planes. A total of 2,081 would be plucked from the water by escort destroyers HMS *Electra*, *Vampire*, and *Express* and would be dropped off at Singapore.

Cavite Navy Yard, Philippine Islands was heavily damaged by enemy air attack. United States naval vessels damaged at Cavite, Philippine Islands:

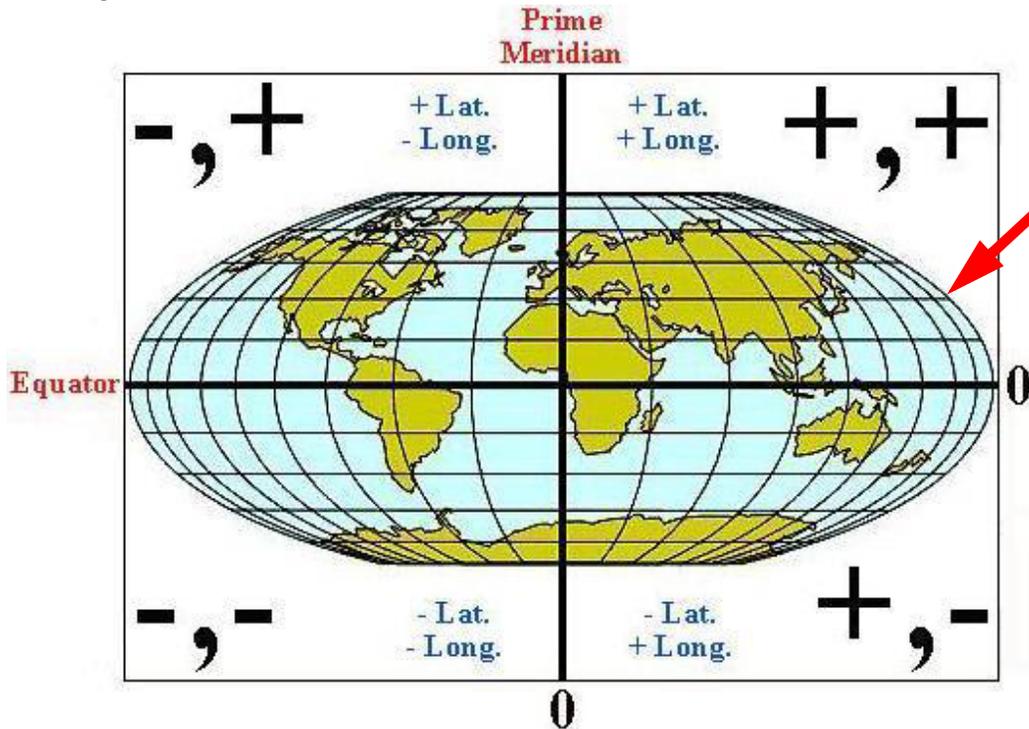
- Destroyer *Peary* (DD-226), by horizontal bomber
- Submarine *Seadragon* (SS-194), by horizontal bomber
- Submarine *Sealion* (SS-195), by horizontal bomber
- Minesweeper *Bittern* (AM-36), by horizontal bomber

Japanese naval vessels sunk:

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- Submarine I-170, by carrier-based aircraft, Hawaiian Islands area, 23 degrees 45 minutes North, 155 degrees 35 minutes West

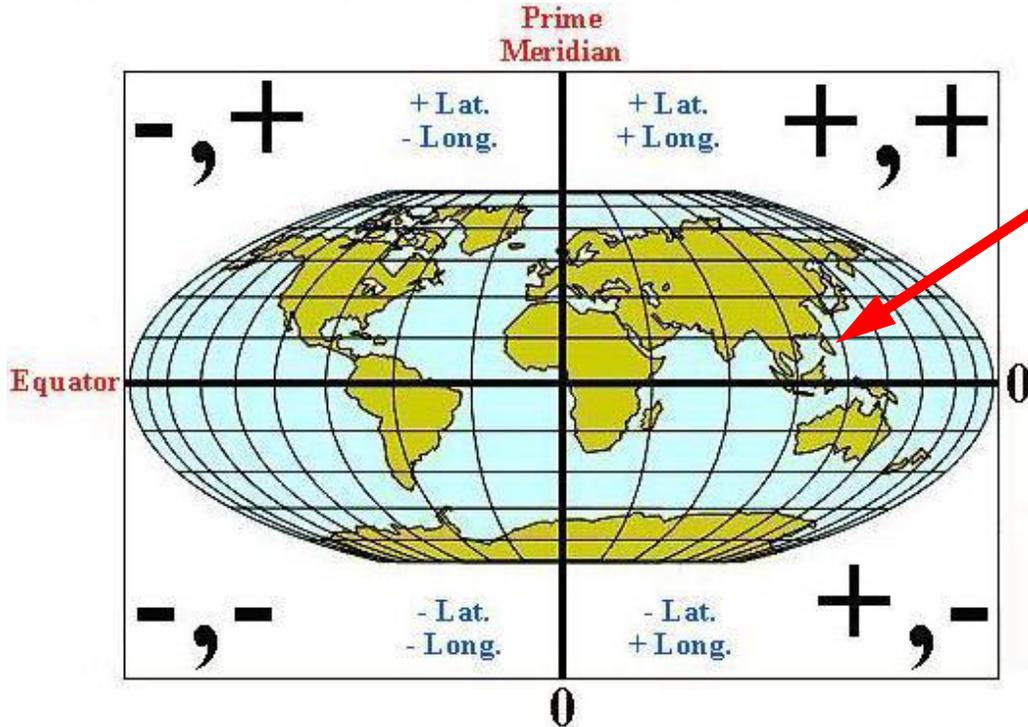


- Minesweeper No. 10, by Army aircraft, Philippine Islands area, 17 degrees 32 minutes North, 120 degrees 22 minutes East

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- Minesweeper No. 19, damaged by Army aircraft and grounded by own forces (total loss), Philippine Islands area, 18 degrees 22 degrees North, 121 degrees 38 minutes East



At the home of Helen Clarke Grimes, in Spragueville near [Smithfield](#) northwest of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), as in many homes in America, the radio was being kept constantly on, not for the soap operas that filled the daytime airwaves, but for the sporadic news flashes about the war situation. Helen made notes for her diary:

Dec. 10 - From London comes news that the ill-fated and short-lived Prince of Wales has been sunk by Japanese aircraft. In the year of its service it saw action with the Bismark from which it emerged badly crippled, and later served as the meeting place of Churchill and Roosevelt in the mid-Atlantic.

The Repulse has been lost, too.

Keeping the radio tuned-in all day means listening to an endless series of "soap operas," the daytime serials for moronic women. The sensible thing is to listen to regular news broadcasts at stated intervals, but I find myself compelled to listen almost continuously for every stray bulletin, which is downright idiotic of me.

There is a report that American bombers have sunk one Japanese transport and hit five others, three by direct hits.

Noon 12:00 - The Japanese attempt to land troops on Luzon has been beaten back by our forces.

The British report a heavy battle going on in Hong Kong.

No news from Germany.

the last of the trans-Atlantic steamship service has been discontinued. Only planes now link us to Europe.

Some idiot in Washington has chopped down four of the Japanese cherry trees along the Potomac, and pinned messages to the

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hacked trunks.

December 11, Thursday: Canti di prigionia for chorus, two pianos, two harps and percussion by Luigi Dallapiccola, to words of Mary, Queen of Scots, Boethius and Savonarola, was performed completely for the initial time, in the Teatro delle Arti of Rome.

Lieutenant Haruki Iki flew over the area of ocean in which his flight of torpedo bombers had struck two ships on the previous day, killing 840, to drop a bouquet of flowers.²³

In Washington DC, four of the cherry trees were found to have been chopped down in what must have been a retaliation for the [Japanese](#) bombing of Pearl Harbor (because messages had been pinned to the stumps). In hope to prevent future vandalism, for the duration of the war the government would be referring to these trees as “Oriental” flowering cherries.



Soviet forces captured Istra, west of Moscow. As [President Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) had hoped and expected, [Germany](#) and [Italy](#) declared a state of war with the United States.

GERMAN WAR DECLARATION

23. Maybe he should have been a florist. (Albert Einstein would suspect that maybe he should have been a plumber.)



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[Adolf Hitler](#) addressed the *Reichstag* in regard to these “circumstances brought about by President Roosevelt,” saying that he had been given information of “a plan prepared by President Roosevelt ... according to which his intention was to attack Germany in 1942 with all the resources of the United States. Thus our patience has come to a breaking point.”

The United States immediately declared by joint resolutions of the Congress a state of war with Germany and Italy. Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic declared war against Germany and Italy. Poland declared a state of war with Japan. [Mexico](#) severed diplomatic relations with Germany and Italy.



Wake Island's Marine defenders repulsed a [Japanese](#) landing attempt and sank two of its destroyers:

- Destroyer *Hayate*, by Marine shore batteries.
- Destroyer *Kisaragi*, by Marine aircraft.

The [Japanese](#) effected landings at Legaspi, Luzon, Philippine Islands.

WORLD WAR II

At the home of Helen Clarke Grimes, in Spragueville near [Smithfield](#) northwest of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), as in many homes in America, the radio was being kept constantly on, not for the soap operas that filled the daytime airwaves, but for the sporadic news flashes about the war situation. Helen made notes for her diary:

Dec. 11 – Now that President Roosevelt has all the power he has demanded in his insatiable desire to rule absolute, it remains to be seen if he is capable of applying it wisely – or if he will continue his Grand Court of Lagado.

It is no time for national disunity, the people must stand or fall with the man thrice acclaimed by the majority.

An early report gives news of a Japanese battleship sunk by American bombers off the Phillipines.

This morning, Hitler in one of his high flown speeches declared Germany at war with the United States. Italy obediently tailed along.

ROGUE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND

By 10 o'clock we had received word that the United States had declared war against Germany.

A late bulletin reveals that there were four attacks on our fleet in Pearl Harbor: three on Sunday and a fourth on Monday, which may have been the basis of a preposterous rumor emanating from Washington itself the early part of this week that ninety percent of the fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor had been destroyed.

December 12, Friday: Haiti, Panama, and Honduras declared war against [Germany](#) and [Italy](#). The Polish government-in-exile declared war on [Japan](#). [Japanese](#) forces occupied Legaspi in southern Luzon. [Japanese](#) troops pushed Indian defenders out of Jitra, Malaya, 670 kilometers northwest of Singapore, while [Japanese](#) planes bombed Pinang, killing 600 people.

Slovakia declared war on the United States and Great Britain. Rumania declared a state of war with the United States.



WORLD WAR II

Cuba instituted a draft. Cuba, Uruguay and Venezuela froze all [German](#), [Italian](#) and [Japanese](#) assets. Several demonstrations supporting the United States were dispersed by police in Buenos Aires. Prime Minister [Winston Churchill](#) boarded the battleship *Duke of York* to meet with United States representatives at the



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Arcadia conference.

The Naval Air Transport Service (NATS) was established.

In retaliation for an attempt to kill a [German](#) officer, 743 Jews were arrested in Paris and imprisoned at Compiègne.

[ANTISEMITISM](#)

At the home of Helen Clarke Grimes, in Spragueville near [Smithfield](#) northwest of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), as in many homes in America, the radio was being kept constantly on, not for the soap operas that filled the daytime airwaves, but for the sporadic news flashes about the war situation. Helen made notes for her diary:

Dec. 12 – Tin Pan Alley is said to be swatting out patriotic songs at a great rate of speed, although with the war only five days old none has as yet hit the air waves. Of course we have had Irving Berlin's "Any Bonds Today" for some time, but that might be classed as a pre-war song, as E.B. White remarked, "innocently combining patriotic fervor with a definite rate of interest." It is a tuneful affair and as such has become very popular. However, it is my belief that music will appeal to the heart, the soul, or the feet, but seldom touches the pocket book....²⁴

24. Within ten days, a song entitled "Good-Bye Mama, I'm Off to [Yokohama](#)" would be written, published, on the air waves, and on sales racks in music stores. Within just a few months, Frank Loesser's "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" would be achieving top ratings. Irving Berlin would author "Any Bonds today" as the official song of the US Treasury Department's National Defense Savings Program. There would also be "Cash for Trash," "Get Out and Dig, Dig, Dig," "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," "I left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," "This Is the Army," "As Time Goes By," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Rosie the Riveter," and "We Did It Before and We'll Do It Again."



ROGUE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND

1942

[Elbert Russell](#)'s THE HISTORY OF [QUAKERISM](#) (New York: Macmillan Company).²⁵ The Quaker group initiated by Friend Elbert in [Durham, North Carolina](#) would swell with the addition of [conscientious objectors](#) working at the Duke Hospital during [World War II](#).

[Dr. David Tillerson Smith](#) became president of the North Carolina [Tuberculosis](#) Association.

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on top of the hill in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), a summer session was added so that students who would be seniors in the following year could complete their studies before being drafted and going off into "service" in the US military during [World War II](#). At night the city of [Providence](#) was blacked out, to make it harder for the German bombers to fly all the way across the Atlantic Ocean and bomb Providence the way they were flying all the way across the English Channel and bombing London. Military searchlights criss-crossed the skies.

The US Navy began to make use of Rear Admiral Ralph Waldo Christie's²⁶ expensive new Mark 14 proximity torpedoes in live combat situations. Field commanders reported back again and again from the battle zones: "This new torpedo doesn't go off." The Bureau of Ordnance, of course, refused to credit such reports. At the Newport Torpedo Station on what little still remained above water level of what had once been [Goat Island](#) in the harbor of [Newport](#), production of the deficient devices continued apace.



William Wager Weeden's SAMUEL GORTON, a bulletin of the [Newport, Rhode Island](#) Historical Society.

SAMUELL GORTON

25. This book would receive the [Mayflower Cup](#) award of the [North Carolina](#) Literary and Historical Association for works of nonfiction by local authors.

26. Commander, US Submarine Force, Southwest Pacific (ComSubSoWesPac).



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Summer: After the US Navy had fired some 800 of Ralph Waldo Christie's expensive new Mark 14 proximity torpedoes in live combat, with many of them failing to go off, someone thought to test the devices and see how deep they were running. The calibration of the depth device on the torpedo was off, and the torpedoes were running about ten feet too deep. Was that why they were refusing to go off, and refusing to blow enemy ships out of the water? If so, a simple adjustment rule-of-thumb would be all that was necessary. At the Newport Torpedo Station on what little still remained above water level of what had once been [Goat Island](#) in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), production of the deficient devices continued apace. But, would adjusting these



devices to run at a shallower depth correct the problem? Well, no. According to the design records that had been a problem — but it had evidently not been the whole problem. So, the commanders of American submarines began to inactivate the proximity fuse, and attempt to make these reluctant devices of war explode by colliding them directly against the hull of the target ship, at the waterline. But, would these devices go off when they rammed directly into a ship hull? Well, no. —It seems there was yet another problem. According to the design records, the contact fuse in the device's nose was of such delicate manufacture that when it struck a ship hull it would instantly deform and become inoperative, and therefore not ignite the torpedo's main explosive!

This thing was a dud, it was a dud, it was a dud! This thing was full of the spirit of Friend [Mary Dyer](#) the Quaker martyr — on whose farm it had been developed!



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August-October: Lieutenant (Junior Grade) [Richard Milhous Nixon](#) underwent basic naval officer training at the Naval Training School, [Naval Air Station Quonset Point, Rhode Island](#). He was then posted as a Lieutenant to the Naval Reserve Aviation Base at Ottumwa, Iowa.



WORLD WAR II

1943

July 24, Saturday: American troops captured Cefalu, Sicily. The Fascist Grand Council asks King Vittorio Emanuele to assume “effective command” of the [Italian](#) armed forces.

In “Operation Gomorrah,” Air Marshall Arthur Harris ordered further Royal Air Force bombing of Hamburg. 2,300 tons of high explosives would eliminate 1,500 [German](#) civilians — which would be what, approximately a ton and a half per fatality?



The US submarine *Tinosa* fired a total of fifteen proximity-fused torpedoes at one of Japan’s largest tankers, the *Tonan Maru* that was carrying petroleum to the island of Truck, and managed to hit it eleven times. Ten of the eleven hits did not result in explosions, because of the Mark 14 proximity fuses provided by the Naval Torpedo Station, [Newport, Rhode Island](#). The [Japanese](#) tanker did not sink.

The main reason why the Mark 14 went so seriously wrong was that the torpedo station, short on budget and long on optimism, barely tested it. The few tests they ran were not of production weapons under simulated wartime conditions. In all the years of development before the war the [Newport](#) Torpedo Station fired a grand total of two armed torpedoes at a vessel, which was moored at the time... Before the Mark 14 torpedo failures, the Newport Torpedo Station was the country’s only torpedo development center, which is just the way [Rhode Island](#) politicians wanted it; but after the war the station was shut down and then razed





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for hotels and condominiums.

MARY DYER
GOAT ISLAND



[German](#) Submarine U-622 was sunk by US Army aircraft, off Norway, at 63 degrees 27 minutes North, 10 degrees 23 minutes East.

WORLD WAR II

1944

[Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s Chinatown was demolished during a widening of Empire Street, so the local families of [Chinese](#) origin relocated to Summer Street between Broad Street and Pine Street.

The [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was merged with the independent Providence Friends Fellowship Monthly Meeting and with the Nantucket Monthly Meeting (formerly a group of [Wilburites](#)).

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on top of the hill in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), enrollment was up to 361 and tuition increased for the first time since 1929. Henceforth the tuition for an Upper School student would be \$450 per school year and board for an Upper School boarding student would be \$650. (In the publication I am looking at, there is no mention of Quakers, or surcharges for non-Quaker children.)

June 29, Thursday: The 6,000-ton transport *Toyama Maru* was torpedoed by the USS *Sturgeon* while carrying more than 6,000 soldiers of the Japanese 44th Independent Mixed Brigade. Approximately 5,400 died and there were approximately 600 floaters.²⁷



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United States naval vessel sunk:

- Coast minesweeper *Valaor* (AMC-108), by collision, off [Newport, Rhode Island](#), 41 degrees 28 minutes North, 70 degrees 57 minutes West

[Japanese](#) naval vessel sunk:

- Minelayer *Tsugaru*, by submarine *Darter* (SS-227), Netherlands East Indies area, 2 degrees 19 minutes North, 127 degrees 57 East

[WORLD WAR II](#)

1945

Members of the defunct Greenwich Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) were received in the [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting.

The “Gurneyite” meetings with both programmed worship and pastors of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England and the “[Wilburite](#)” meetings with unprogrammed worship and without pastors of the New England Yearly Meeting came together with the Connecticut Valley Association of Friends and the independent Cambridge, Massachusetts and [Providence, Rhode Island](#) meetings, to constitute an expanded New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

When, at the end of [World War II](#), some British members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) went to Buckingham Palace seeking an audience with King George VI, the monarch inquired who these people were. Informed that they were Quakers, he allegedly responded “Oh, I didn’t know that there were any of them left.”

[Dr. Elbert Russell](#) spent the year teaching at Guilford College.

Friend [Rosalind Gower Smith](#) graduated from Duke University in [Durham, North Carolina](#).

Rebelling against their 79-hour work week, some of the [Conscientious Objectors](#) serving as attendants at the Eastern State Mental Hospital in Williamsburg, Virginia refused to report for duty. After extensive negotiations the American Friends Service Committee sent more attendants to the hospital and their work

27. At a first order of approximation there seems to be a remarkable similarity between fighting at sea and feeding fish.





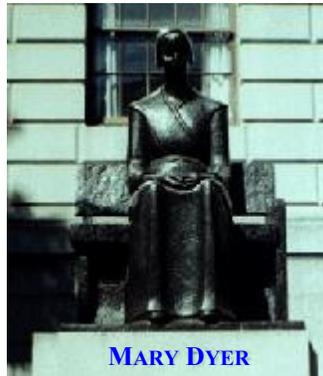
RHODE ISLAND

ROGUE ISLAND

week was pared down to a minimum of 60 hours.

During [WWII](#) 46 alumni of the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) had been killed. (Is there a monument to honor their war dead, anywhere on this supposedly-[Quaker](#) campus?)

The legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts revoked the Edict of Banishment which had been enacted against Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#) and authorized \$12,000.⁰⁰ to erect a bronze in the memory of the missionary martyr, Friend [Mary Dyer](#) (the statue would actually depict Friend Nancy St. John, wife of the Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#)). In downtown [Boston](#) Nancy now faces the bronze of Mistress Hutchinson.²⁸



28. In 1865, a paradigmatic old-school dead-white-male thingie in honor of Horace Mann, sculpted by Emma Stebens, had been positioned on the State House grounds, and so these new bronzes in honor of Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#) and Friend [Mary Dyer](#) were in this era positioned in such a manner as to outflank that old erection — a positioning which has given rise to the idea that the one bronze might be adorned with the so-Mannly locution “You have stepped out of your place, you have rather been a husband than a wife,” the other with the so-Mannly locution “My life not availeth me in comparison to the liberty of truth.”



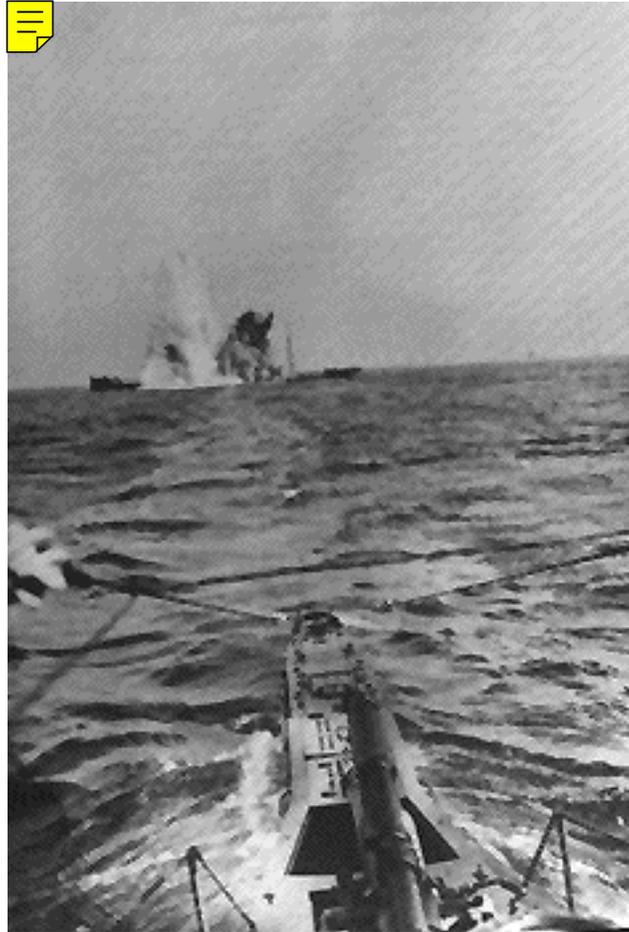
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May 5, Saturday: Ceasefire on the Western Front.

GERMANY

There's always someone who doesn't get the word! Our last U-boat loss was Captain Charles Prior's freighter SS *Black Point*, sunk on this day while carrying a load of coal to Boston by Captain Helmut Fromsdorf's U853, off Point Judith, [Rhode Island](#). 12 crewmen died, 34 survived.



U853 would be found by depth charges from escort destroyers, with no survivors.

Liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp.

The [Japanese](#) home islands had for some time been launching balloons with high explosive devices, to drift in the recently discovered "jet stream" in the general direction of America. Some 9,000 such devices were launched and there would be a sum total of 342 bomb reports filed in the US. Tragically, east of Bly, Oregon on this spring Saturday a pastor and his wife were taking five children for a picnic. While the Reverend Archie Mitchell was parking the car he heard his pregnant wife Elsie call out, "Look what I found, dear." There was



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an explosion.



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During a bombing run over southern Japan, one of our B-29s was rammed by a [Japanese](#) kamikaze.





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The crew of our B-29 bomber parachuted and the planes crashed near the town of Takete. The American flyers were taken to Fukuoka, about 100 miles north of [Nagasaki](#). The pilot, Captain Marvin Watkins, was taken on to Tokyo for interrogation, and would survive the war. However, at the anatomy department of Kyushu University, the other 8 flyers would be being used for bizarre student “medical experimentation.” One of the flyers, badly wounded, was anesthetized for an operation and presumed that what was happening was that these medical students were going to attempt to repair his body — nope, instead they practiced their surgical techniques by removing one of his lungs. Soon afterward, he would die. Some would be having portions of their livers excised, to find out how much could be chopped out of a human liver and the patient remain living. They would deliberately shoot a flyer in the stomach, in order to practice the removal of bullets. In one of their experiments they would use sea water as a substitute for saline solution, in order to discover whether this might prove to be an adequate substitute. The students would be practicing their amputation skills on the legs and arms of the flyers exactly as if they were doing this training as usual on cadavers. (After the war 23 of the doctors and hospital staff would be found guilty on various charges at the Allied war crimes trials held at [Yokohama](#). There would be 5 death sentences, which would not, however, be carried out, and there would be prison sentences, although when the Korean war would begin in June 1950, [General Douglas MacArthur](#) would reduce most of the sentences. All those who would be convicted in this atrocity, including those sentenced to death for their war crimes, would by 1958, which is to say, 13 years later, again be free men.)



All's fair in love and war.

United States naval vessels damaged, Okinawa area:

- Seaplane tender *St. George* (AV-16), by Kamikaze suicide plane, 26 degrees 10 minutes North, 127 degrees 19 minutes East



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- Surveying ship *Pathfinder* (AGS-1), by Kamikaze suicide plane, 26 degrees 38 minutes North, 127 degrees 53 minutes East

WORLD WAR II



1946

At the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), significant contributions were being made to the American Friends Service Committee.

Under “La Loi Mile. Marthe Richard,” the brothels of Paris were shut down and regulated medical examination of sex workers abandoned — such establishments had come to be regarded as venues of [slavery](#), although prostitution itself was quite OK and the demimondaines remained free to work the streets (the eponymous Mile. Richard was a member of the French Assembly).

In [Newport](#), dedication of the structure that had housed the 1st synagogue in what is now the United States of America, [Touro Synagogue](#) of Congregation Jeshuat Israel, as a national historical site.²⁹



Affixed to the south side of the exterior wall is a plaque with the following inscription:

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

29. Some of the Jews of this synagogue, like some of their Christian neighbors, such as the [Quakers](#) next door up the hill, had engaged in the [international slave trade](#). After their synagogue building, in what had become the bad part of town, had been deconsecrated, the empty structure, under a caretaker who was a Quaker, would find use occasionally, surreptitiously, for the harboring of escaping [slaves](#) as a station on the Underground Railroad, or so 'tis persistently said although I have never seen a scintilla of evidence to back up such claims (we all know that the way to make something true is to repeat it any number of times). —When you visit, and are proudly shown the must-see “secret hidey hole” beneath the lectern, for Heaven’s sake be polite and do not complicate matters by inquiring about participation in the international slave trade. Remember that the international slave trade wasn’t just for Jews.



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**TOURO SYNAGOGUE
JESHUAT ISRAEL CONGREGATION
FOUNDED 1658 THIS OLDEST SYNAGOGUE BUILDING IN THE
UNITED STATES WAS DESIGNED BY PETER HARRISON. GROUND
WAS BROKEN AUGUST 1, 1759. IT WAS DEDICATED ON DECEMBER
2, 1763. HERE 1781-84 THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MET, AND DURING WASHINGTON’S VISIT TO NEWPORT IN 1781 A
TOWN MEETING WAS HELD HERE. THE STATE SUPREME COURT
HELD SESSIONS HERE AT THAT PERIOD. THE BUILDING WAS
REOPENED FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES ON AUGUST 2, 1850. IN
1790 GEORGE WASHINGTON WROTE TO THIS CONGREGATION THAT
... “HAPPILY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES...
GIVES TO BIGOTRY NO SANCTION, TO PERSECUTION NO ASSISTANCE.”**

The USS *Constellation* was towed from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) to “Ordinary” at the Boston Navy Yard.

(**Needed Nautical Nomenclature:** Whereas steel ships are “put in mothballs,” wooden ships are “put in ordinary.” –Don’t ask.)



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1947

Continuing the effort to break Ebenezer Knight Dexter's unfortunately robust will, lawyers and genealogists in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) searched through old records to determine who had previously owned "Neck Farm." Could the heirs of this previous owner legally transmit to Dexter the right to forever determine the fate of that property? Could Dexter's heirs somehow break his inconvenient will? Could these frustrating unfortunates never be shuffled off, to somewhere else where we wouldn't have to **regard** them?



DEXTER ASYLUM

The [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) expressed concern that the [Moses Brown School](#) and the Lincoln School in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), although supposedly, nominally, they were under its care, were racist establishments that were not in fact extending this Quaker educational opportunity to "children of all races."

By the mid-1950s, most Friends schools in the East had admitted at least a few African American students, and in some cases a substantial number had gained admittance. In 1958 Friends Select and Westtown were the two Friends Schools with the most African American students. Friends in New England, however, appear to have lagged behind. In 1947 New England Yearly Meeting expressed its concern that Moses Brown and Lincoln School in Providence, Rhode Island, two schools under the yearly meeting's care, should include "children of all races in their school family"; six years later another minute suggested that the schools were



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then ready to do so. Still, in 1957 the yearly meeting continued to question whether Friends and their schools were “clear of discrimination.” Ten years later the meeting created a seventeen-member committee, including heads of the yearly meeting’s schools, to further “the meeting’s concern to meet the needs of more students from disadvantaged and minority groups” and to raise funds for scholarships. By the 1960s several African Americans had been admitted to Moses Brown School.³⁰

Former war prisoner and convicted felon [John R. Kellam](#) was accepted as worker for the [American Friends Service Committee](#)—which was queerly unprejudiced against him³¹ although they were well aware of his record of draft dodging— in a project called PennCraft:



I had been working for the American Friends Service Committee in its subsidiary called Friends Service, Incorporated, helping coal miners who wanted to build their own homes in their spare time, when they were only partly employed and had been completely unemployed earlier when their fathers built a group of stone houses in the farm adjoining the one that I had gone out to manage. I had only eight homesteaders building their houses, homesteading families. There were fifty in the original group, six and a half times as many. It was a place called PennCraft.

I worked at PennCraft for subsistence wages and I did truck driving, materials delivering, building techniques teaching, technical and administrative accounting, and later on some land subdivision surveying. I was accounting for dollars spent on materials and manhours of labor that were exchanged by the various homesteaders working on each others houses at times, keeping two sets of books. Manhours and dollars. The capital for that whole project had been originally contributed by the owners of the big idle coal mines and the mine workers union. They put

30. Page 332 in Donna McDaniel’s and Vanessa Julye’s FIT FOR FREEDOM, NOT FOR FRIENDSHIP: QUAKERS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND THE MYTH OF RACIAL JUSTICE (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009).

31. This was a special year for the American Friends Service Committee. Not only were they receiving Friend John as an employee, but also they were receiving the [Nobel Peace Prize](#).

ALFRED NOBEL



RHODE ISLAND

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in equal amounts and the Service Committee made this project out of it where the miners borrowed the cost of the materials, did their own labor, built their own houses and paid off for the materials over time on a contract per deed basis and eventually when they made their last payment, we delivered their deed, meaning that they were the sole owners of the property that they had created.

Well, fresh out of prison, after a very short time with the National Council for Prevention of War, I was told that the Friends Service Committee was looking for a new project manager at PennCraft. They had a young fellow just starting who within two or three weeks felt overwhelmed by his job so much that even with just a suitcase to carry, leaving a small trunkfull of stuff behind, he went out on the highway and hitchhiked all the way to his home in Minnesota, without notice to anybody. He was made almost sick by his job because it was just too much. I had more technical information about building included in my architectural training, even though I had never had any responsibility on a building job. The only practical experience I had ever had was from climbing all over new construction and watching the workmen, talking with them and seeing how they did things. This, along with talking sometime with the designing architect, was the only practical supplement to my theoretical design, mathematics and mechanical studies in college.

Anyway, I went to PennCraft knowing that this other fellow had left that way. When they hired me, they got in contact with him and said that his successor had been acquired and would show up at a certain date. Would he, therefore, knowing that he would not be expected to continue, with that assurance, would he then be willing to come back for a week or two and help to break me in to the job? I would be otherwise just as ignorant of what I was facing as he had been. With his help, I would be more likely to be able to continue for as long as needed at PennCraft. So he did come back and, incidentally, he did pick up his trunk! He stayed with me for just one week. It was the minimum time that he'd had to promise! Maybe ten days, maybe two weeks, but he wasn't sure of that. So I had to learn as fast as possible how to pick up his loose ends. I found, just as he had been, as soon as I realized what was pending, what was facing me, I felt as if I was forty days behind in my work on the first day! He had had that same feeling, so I wondered whether I would really be able to stick to it. But then I had my whole family out there so I had to stick with it no matter how difficult it was. Also I knew that I could go through a difficult experience.

There was an FBI man who came to PennCraft where I was working later on after I had been out of prison a couple of years. He showed his badge and I recognized FBI on it and he asked me if we could talk in some place that wasn't as open as at this barn where some fellow homesteaders were using materials and equipment. So we went up to the house. On the way I told him that with respect to his own official duties there was nothing I could say that could help him. The only thing that I could think of to say that would be constructive and helpful was that I felt he would be a lot happier if he would quit that kind of



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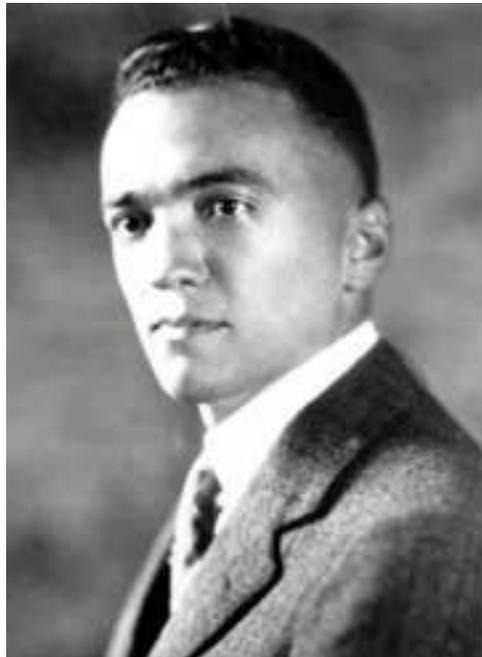
RHODE ISLAND

a job and get into something useful where he wouldn't be adversarial with people, or bothering them as they were trying to live their lives, as if they were criminals. It seemed to me that he would be much better off in any other kind of occupation. I said, "Weren't you ever interested in something else almost as much as you are in this?"

"I'd studied a while for the ministry."

"Oh, that would have been wonderful! Why settle for so much less?"

Maybe he wasn't too good at it! According to the congregation! Anyway, as an official of the FBI, ever since I became aware of how outrageously the FBI could go astray from the truth, under oath, in court, to lie about a defendant, there hasn't been an FBI man since that has been worth the time of day off my watch. But as a person, I said, "I respect you and I wish you could have a happier life than you could possibly have had with this job."

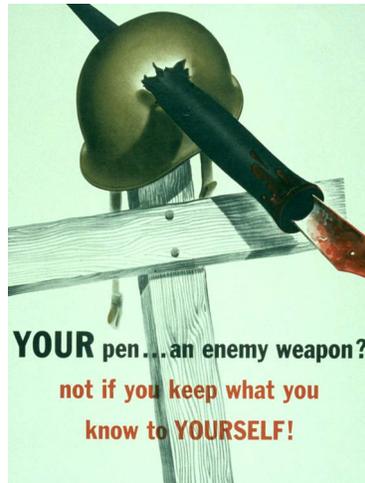


I still didn't know the worst about J. Edgar Hoover. When the whole press of the country acknowledges the sort of a defective guy he was, even in that position, and how he had lists of enemies and people he'd like to find a way of putting in jail, without caring in advance what they might have done that was contrary to law, I couldn't have respect for that kind of official so corrupted. Hoover wasn't so much of a misfit during the war as he was in peacetime, because the first casualty of war is the truth. One of the best tools in warfare is deception. You're trying to deceive the enemy even if it means deceiving your friends first, having them unwittingly tell the enemy things that are not so.



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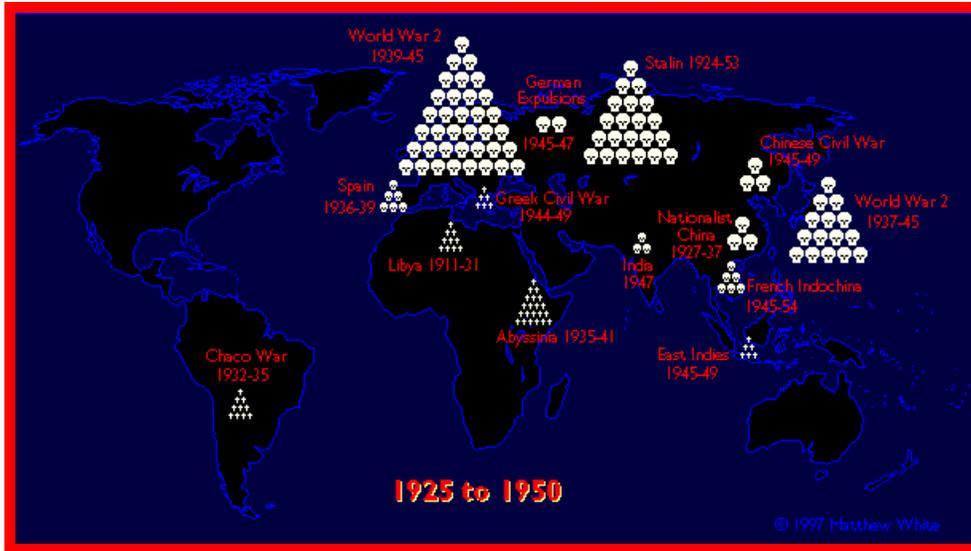
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YOUR pen...an enemy weapon?
not if you keep what you
know to **YOURSELF!**

1950

During the second quarter of the 20th Century, things had gotten pretty tough:



For sure, if more people had been willing like Friend [John R. Kellam](#) to do their duty, this picture would have been different. (But of course things were soon to be getting better. ;-)

While at PennCraft, Friend John circulated his resume, and finally he was able to move his family to [Providence, Rhode Island](#) and begin to engage in the profession for which he had trained.



One of the reasons I came to Providence was that Hurford Crosman had told me that the Providence Meeting, of which he had been a member years before, was in many ways very similar to the Florida Avenue group of Friends [in Washington DC]. He thought I would like it here.... Hurford had been my boss for three years when I was working at Friends' Service Incorporated, out at PennCraft, near East Millford, Pennsylvania. So when he said



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that, I was further confirmed in my inclination to take this job offer here in Providence. The man who was hiring me knew all about my having been a war objector. He knew there was a Friends' Meeting here. He was a member of the Episcopal Church. Episcopalians were reputed to be the best people around here! Ha-ha-ha-ha! But the vice chairman of our Providence Redevelopment Agency was an architect who had a lot of Quakers in his own ancestry. So my hiring boss, Louis B. Wetmore, told me that if my war history were somehow to become known, and I didn't need to spread it on the record, he thought it might even improve my standing with the vice chairman; and other people might think it only interesting. Shortly before that I had applied for a planning job in Lexington, Kentucky but when I asked if it would make any difference that I was a war objector, the man who talked to me said he would have to ask around. He got the contrary viewpoint – no we don't want any draft dodgers in here. So he thought it might be better for me to look elsewhere.

Albert Harkness, the architect who was vice chairman of the Providence Redevelopment Agency hiring me, turned out to be the architect who designed our meetinghouse here later on in 1952. I was able to get for him quite a bit of detailed information and specifications for that meetinghouse in Washington. So this Friends Meeting did turn out to be the same kind of warm family for Carol and me, and by that time, our two children. When we were about to send the children into the nearest public school, down at India Point on Ives Street, Friends were kind of dismayed because they thought that school had kind of a tough reputation. It was a very old, nineteenth century school building with extremely high ceilings and tall windows. It was built somewhere around half way between the Civil War and the turn of the twentieth century. It was on a plate of asphalt and not a blade of grass anywhere on the playground. There were quite a number of tough kids who bullied little kids. So they thought that we ought to send our older girl to pre-kindergarten, or nursery school, to Lincoln School here, which was then owned by the [Yearly Meeting](#). Friends in our monthly meeting were very much involved with their children at Lincoln School, their daughters. That was a girls' school then. Moses Brown School was by that time no longer co-educational, but had just boys. So, with very substantial scholarship aid from the school, our older daughter, Susan, and her younger sister, Wendy, after a couple of years, went in there. They had almost all of their education at Lincoln. When they were getting into the upper grades in high school, they decided they would like to attend Classical High School in Providence, which has a good academic reputation. So that's where they graduated.

Then there was a period in the mid-1950s when Carol had needed extended hospital care and I was becoming exhausted trying to cope with the parenting and the home. So one day Henry Foster, one of the old Quaker family Friends, came to me and said, "John, some of us have become alarmed at your looking pretty tired and we think that you are trying to shoulder too much of this alone. Even with some help you've been getting from the Perrys and



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others, you don't have any help at home. We think you should get yourself either a full time or at least a part time housekeeper. Full time would probably need to be a live-in housekeeper. Part time would be afternoon and evening. But we think that if you don't do that, you are doing yourself some harm physically."

"Well," I said, "I'm just hoping that Carol can be home again before too long and strong enough to do what she would like to do in taking care of her family."

"Well, it looks as if it may be a considerable time longer, and if the cost of housekeeping help is bothering you, there are a number of us who would be happy to chip in together and help you with at least part of that cost."

So I thought, if they are alarmed enough to be chipping in to help us, I'd better consider it very seriously. I can do it for a while and if it doesn't turn out to be too long, I might be able not to call on them for financial assistance. I'd had one or two raises by that time and was hopeful of further advancement, and maybe even promotions in my work. So I got myself a part time housekeeper and eventually switched to a full time housekeeper. It wasn't too many months after that that Carol did get home. But we kept that housekeeper for a while until Carol said that her life would be simplified if we let her go. Eventually that worked out. There were other examples of helpfulness that we received from this meeting and from the meeting in Washington earlier.

Over the years in public service, working for the government, and that was what my whole training was for, it was always a sensitive thing to know when it was safe to let anybody know, incidental to other things, about my war experience, and when not to. I tried to keep it out of my work environment as much as I could. And yet, Friends in the Meeting and attenders—casual people—would probably find out from time to time. There was always a possibility that somebody would say it in the wrong



context and, who knows, my job might even blow up in my face and I would suddenly be unable to take care of raising and financing a family. It's remarkable that in all of those thirty-one and a half years that I was working as a planner for the city of Providence, nobody once outed me in any way to put my job in jeopardy. People were so kind, so sensitive and careful to never compromise me. It confirmed the wisdom of what my first city planning boss, way back in Duluth, Minnesota in the 1930s, had told me, about ten years later.



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The advice of that first planning boss, Aaron B. Horwitz, was against putting any mention of my wartime prison experience into my resume. After prison, when I had a professional job again, I was beginning to send out my resume to various planning agencies, people who might hire me, and ingenuously, I filled in all the blanks. There were no gaps in the calendar record of me on my resume. I sent one to Aaron Horwitz back in Duluth because I was wondering if he might know of some planning opening where I might fit in. Well, he wrote back to me, horrified, that I had put something in my resume that would be a real stopper for a lot of potential employers. He said, "It's good to tell only things that are true, of course, but there are situations and many different kinds of lives of people where the whole truth does not need to be stated. This is one of them." He said, "My Jewish world community knows of hundreds of others. In some cases life depends upon not letting out more of the truth than is necessary. It's usually possible, while saying only truth, to judiciously leave other things out that don't need to be said." He was, incidentally, a very active Zionist. He was working for a new homeland for world Jewry to have as a country of their own. He was completely dedicated to that need to be answered. Eventually, in 1948, the State of Israel was born. I was working for him from 1938 to 1940. Later on, he and his wife emigrated to Israel and he taught city planning at the University of Tel Aviv, Jaffa. They visited back home here and every time they went back to Israel again they would take a houseful of furniture that they had bought here because wood was in such short supply that furniture was just too expensive. He and his wife, Bertha, contributed mightily, as many other Jews did helping the people who were going to be the future citizens of Israel. He was a very wise man and he had a deliberate way of talking. You could just see him sifting through all the angles before he would decide what was appropriate to say. He did this in his professional work and he did it in his personal life. He was probably the most thoughtful person I've ever known. All the time I was in contact with him and in occasional letters later, I always had the feeling that I would like to be as much as possible like him.

Immediately that Friend John had a decent salary, he also faced the need to rationalize how a portion of his mandatory income tax payments might get used for shameful purposes of war.

[O]ne of the mayors in the middle years of my career had so put a threatening fright into the city employees that most of them were anteing up handsomely toward the mayor's re-election campaign. The union suddenly found itself able to sign up on the first day over eight hundred of us. Eventually they had about three quarters of the three thousand city employees signed up. Under the labor laws they became our representatives. One of their agreements with the city, working from a position of power, was that the city would buy back our time, back to the day we were each hired, as if we had each been contributing union dues ever since. So, we were full fledged members of the union and we had the regular schedule of pensions due us whenever eventually we retired, with minimum age for such retirement. If



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we retired earlier there would be shavings off that rate, the union kind of standard contract. But this was a big windfall. I think it was enough that it ultimately compensated for the wipeout I'd had during the war. I was compensated in another way. The effective tax rate for me in the early years was about ten percent income tax. There was no Rhode Island income tax then. The federal income tax took about ten percent of my gross pay and there was no recompense for that. The government was buying bombs all the time and fighting the cold war. I felt that tax was being taken from me for purposes that I could not agree with. If I had decided to, that could have given me a feeling of quite a lot of guilt. I understood very well those people who were in occupations that gave them an income so low that although they could subsist on it, they wouldn't owe any federal taxes going for warfare and planning for future wars threatening everybody else on earth if they didn't do our bidding. If we got mad enough we could annihilate whole countries. We were not that much different from the Germans. A lot of us had the same backgrounds in countries that were chronically at war. Europe was a big crossword puzzle of ethnic types that had been displaced by war as survivors of greater and smaller holocausts. Well, along came the lottery and Rhode Island looked forward officially to getting about half of its tax money from the lotteries. Some of it was given to the cities. I remember a bumper sticker that said, "I'm for the lottery – let the fools pay my taxes!" So I thought of a rationalization that was handy. Maybe a tenth of my salary comes federally and state, through city, from taxes that I don't approve of, paid to a government that does warfare, a federal government, state and city doesn't do it, but maybe a tenth of my salary gets paid by this awful, socially destructive lottery. So maybe my dirty money intake goes to dirty money outgo. Maybe the lottery is paying my war taxes. What a handy thought! Ha-ha-ha! True rationalization! But I could live on the clean part of my money and my family wouldn't be suffering any longer on account of my principles. Maybe I really didn't need to knock my future in the head by doing my job well, getting paid in clean and dirty money and letting the dirty part of that money get confiscated by federal taxation that I wished didn't have to go there to buy bombs.



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1952

At the Anniversary dinner of the [War Resisters League](#) the speakers were William Neumann and Lyle Tatum.

What money was left, out of Friend [John R. Kellam](#)'s mother's inheritance from his pharmacist father, predeceased, came to him and to his older brother in equal portions. This amounted to some 60 shares each of the common stock of Norwest Corporation, worth then \$36 dollars per share, plus about a \$6,000 each in cash settlement of the estate. John would put that cash into buying almost half of the house in which he has resided on Firglade in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) — bought for a little over \$13,000, its current tax evaluation is \$146,700!

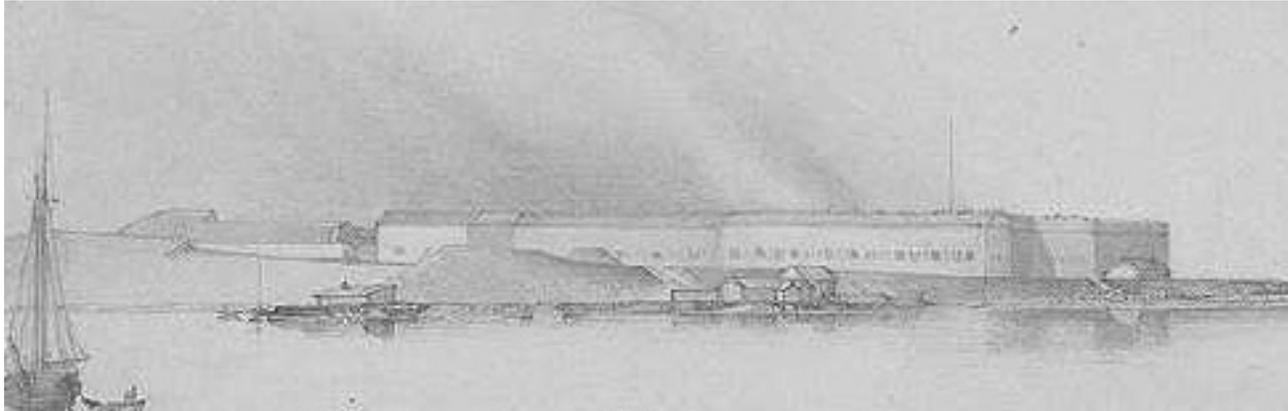




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The fort that had been guarding [Newport](#) Harbor for two centuries and more, Fort Adams, the second largest such stone fort along our nation's coastline, was in this year decommissioned, which is to say, upgraded from expensive militaristic nuisance to remunerative militaristic [tourist trap](#).



[RHODE ISLAND](#)

September 28, Sunday: For many years the Friends of [Providence](#) had worshiped in [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#) at what had been known as the “South” meetinghouse, the “North” meetinghouse having been across the river in



[Smithfield](#) (this “South” meetinghouse near Lincoln has by now become one of the two oldest surviving continuously operated [Quaker](#) meetinghouses in America). Then, belatedly, a Quaker meeting had taken place within the town limits, near the town fort on Stammers Hill (at the foot of today's Olney Avenue). Then a new meetinghouse had been erected on North Main Street on the site of what is today the brick firehouse, and eventually it was expanded. When that expanded building had become old, it had in 1844 been put on heavy sledges and tugged by a team (a team of horses, we are told) down the snow-covered Town Street, then up Wickenden Street on Fox Point, and then uphill to 77 Hope Street, where it became a 2-family residence (demolished in 1860; the site now has an apartment building). Thus its century-and-a-quarter old foundation had been cleared, to hold up the west half of a 3d meeting house created in 1844 of plain uninsulated barn construction (the east half of the new structure would be on top of crawl space). This newer meeting house on Meeting Street had lasted the local Friends for 108 years, until the city of Providence was needing a central site for a proposed new Fire Station (another site was available to the city, but a brick building on it would have



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been more expensive to clear and its location between North Main Street and Canal Street had inferior access for fire equipment). So we offered our lot to the City and it was purchased gratefully for enough money to cover 90% of the cost of erection of a better new structure. Our very plain 1844 building was of no architectural import,³² so we took the benches and little else and the City razed what was left behind. In consequence, in about this year, a 4th meeting house was erected, a brick meetinghouse with a slate roof, at the corner of Olney and Morris on Friend [Moses Brown](#)'s trust property atop the hill on the East Side. The land is subject to a long term lease from the New England Yearly Meeting, which is trustee for this trust property established by Friend Moses.³³ Friend Thomas Perry clerked the building committee and the architect was Albert Harkness. In September the building was dedicated, with a talk by Alexander Purdy. — That's where you can now³⁴ join

32. Sometimes people get the idea that we Quakers worship old stuff. Yes, we have a long history but no, we don't.

33. I have seen a Moses Brown School document that refers to this lot as "school property." This is their insolence, as it is not. The Moses Brown School is squatting on the trust land left by Friend Moses precisely as the Friends meetinghouse is squatting on it, only through the permission of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. The difference between the school's use and the meetinghouse's use is that the monthly meeting holds a long-term lease entitlement whereas the school holds no such legal document.

34. Sometimes people get the idea that the Quakers are gone. No, we're still here.

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us for worship:



1699	The "Great Meetinghouse" in Newport, Rhode Island
1704	2-story Saylesville meetinghouse completed
1718	"Providence" monthly meeting set off from "East Greenwich" monthly meeting
1719	Construction began on a small Smithfield meetinghouse
1725	1st Providence meetinghouse erected near town fort at the very north edge of town, on "Stampers Hill" (up from Town Street at the foot of Olney Lane)



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1745	Kitchen shed added to Saylesville meetinghouse; 2d Providence meetinghouse erected at the corner of what at the time was known as Town Street but is now known as North Main Street and what at the time was known as Gaol Street but is now known as Meeting Street, across from Salt Cove; the name "Stamper's" having passed out of existence, this Quaker meetinghouse was being referred to as that of the Providence Worship Group of the Providence Monthly Meeting
1755	The small Smithfield meetinghouse was enlarged
1752	The Smithfield Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends's "upper" meetinghouse was at Woonsocket or Quinsnickit, and its "lower" meetinghouse was at Saylesville
1775	The 1719 Smithfield meetinghouse was again expanded
1783	The Quakers who met in the meetinghouse on Main Street in Providence, Rhode Island had up to this point been considered to be a "worship group" affiliated with the Providence Monthly Meeting (with meetinghouses in Smithfield and in Saylesville), a worship group that happened to be meeting to worship locally for convenience rather than going on the carriage ride all the way north to the Smithfield meetinghouse on the one side of the river or the Saylesville meetinghouse on the other side of the river. At this point the affiliations and the names were rearranged. Henceforth the group that was attending the Smithfield meetinghouse and the "Lower Smithfield" meetinghouse near Saylesville would be considered to constitute a separate Smithfield Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. That is, there would be two monthly meetings rather than one, and the name "Providence" would hereinafter adhere to the group that actually was inside the town of Providence.
1784	2d Providence meetinghouse enlarged
1822	2d Providence meetinghouse renovated: "what was called the Negros Gallery" removed (still in existence in Saylesville meetinghouse)
1844	2d Providence meetinghouse moved to Hope Street and became a residence; 3d meetinghouse erected with its west part atop old foundation
1849	The Smithfield meetinghouse was remodeled
1860	the old meetinghouse, become a residence on Hope Street, was demolished
1881	The Smithfield meetinghouse burned, and would be replaced by the present structure
1952	3d meetinghouse property at Main and Meeting streets purchased by city of Providence for firestation
September 1952	brick 4th meetinghouse, on Moses Brown farm property atop College Hill at corner of Olney and Morris (99-year renewable lease), dedicated



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1953

May 28, Thursday: A new board of directors was constituted for the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), made up of 13 members of the School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#), 3 members of the Moses Brown Alumni Association (to wit the president of that group, the predecessor in office of that president, and one additional member of their selection), 2 members of the Moses Brown School Parents' Council (to wit, the chairperson of that group, and the predecessor in office of that chairperson), and 7 persons selected by the new Board of Directors from among the alumni, the parents, and other friends of the school. At this meeting William Edwards was elected as president, Friend Thomas Perry, Jr. as vice president, and Mrs. Edwin Sherman as Secretary.

June: The Board of Directors of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) was beginning their search for a new headmaster to succeed the retiring L. Ralston Thomas.

1954

The postoffice in [Providence \(Moshasuck\)](#), [Rhode Island](#) attempted to block a delivery of V.I. Lenin's STATE AND REVOLUTION (1917) to [Brown University](#) on grounds that these were "subversive" materials.

At this point [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s families of [Chinese](#) extraction were residing near Graves Lane.

A Restoration Committee undertook the refurbishing of the [Touro Synagogue](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). For one thing, the rows of pews which had been installed in 1900 were discarded. The clock that Judah Jacobs of London, England had presented to the Congregation in 1769 (1767?) was restored. Its brass works still keep approximate time.

October: At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), it was announced that Schoolmaster L. Ralston Thomas was retiring and his post being filled by a member of the New Haven monthly meeting, Friend George St. John.

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "The [Nicholites](#) of [North Carolina](#)" ([North Carolina Historical Review](#) 31, pages 453-462).

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WHAT?

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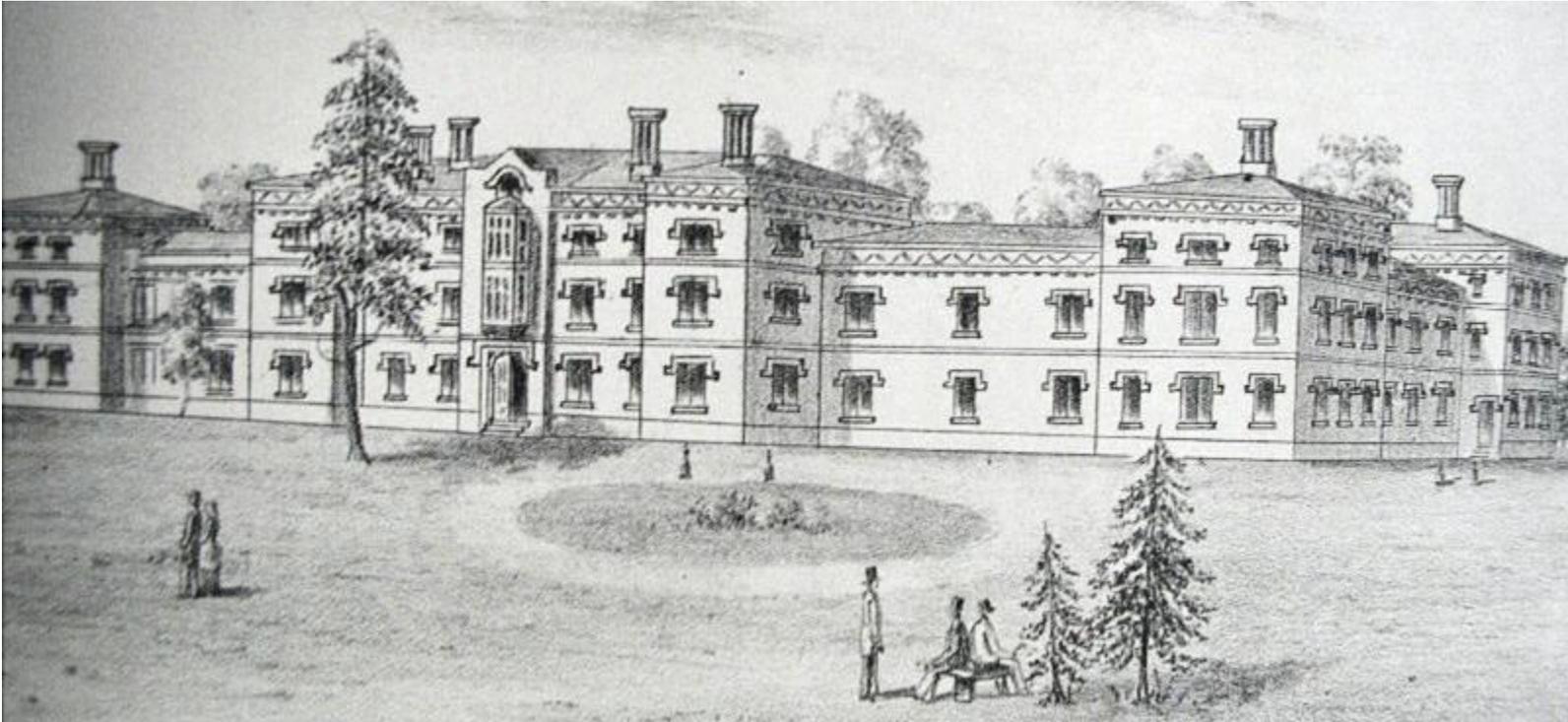
ROGUE ISLAND

1955

In financial difficulties, [Butler Hospital](#) for the Insane in [Providence](#) offered to sell itself to the state of [Rhode Island](#) for a token sum of \$1 (the state would decline to accept the responsibility).

The inflation experienced throughout our economy has produced an enormous increase in the cost of operation. The increase in receipts from patients, though large, has not been commensurate with the increase in these costs.

PSYCHOLOGY



This would not be to indicate that our government, in this year, was opposed to infrastructure. For example, in this year a proposal for new interstate highways was being considered (as illustrated on a following screen).



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1956

An association calling itself Friends of Butler purchased advertisements, asking that the general public contribute to keeping [Butler Hospital](#) for the Insane in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) in operation. There was a printed coupon. Some 1,200 citizens responded.

PSYCHOLOGY

The folks in [Kingston, Rhode Island](#) decided that they no longer greatly needed to use their old stone jailhouse as a jail (today the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society uses the building for display of its somewhat eclectic collection of antique items).

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[Brown University](#) President Barnaby Keeney, acting as an angel of mercy, proposed that [Providence, Rhode Island](#) sell or lease the [Dexter Asylum](#) property on Hope Street to the university for a gym and athletic complex: “If and when the Courts permit the City to dispose of this land, it must honor its obligation to the Dexter Trust by obtaining the best possible income for the support of the poor ... the University is in a position to help.” Providence Mayor Walter H. Reynolds hesitated at this face-saving deal to dispose of the inconveniently in-your-face asylum, noting that the estate could provide space for as many as 150 new home sites — but today [Brown University](#)’s athletic complex stands where the asylum formerly stood.

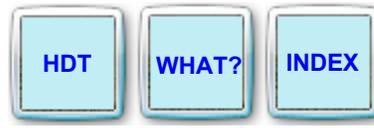


Since publishing the above, it has been pointed out to me that along with the winning bid of \$1,000,777 that Brown University made in purchase of this distressing property, they also turned over to the city their older sports facility, Aldrich Field northeast of the Bears stadium on Elmgrove Avenue, for tax-producing development (a recently demolished eyesore, only the cupola of that structure now remains).

1957

February 18, Monday: The facilities of the former [Butler Hospital for the Insane](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) were re-opened after a \$700,000 fund-raising drive, and were renamed “Butler Health Center.”

PSYCHOLOGY



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May 17, Friday: Friend [Bayard Rustin](#) took part in the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom to Washington that urged President Dwight David Eisenhower to enforce the US Supreme Court's 1954 ruling requiring desegregation of the nation's schools.



The pilgrimage culminated with a rally of 20,000 at the Lincoln Memorial.

Groundbreaking for a new science building on the campus of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

The wife of André-Marie Tremeaud, the former prefect of Algiers, was killed by a package bomb.

[Egypt](#) declared that it would never allow an Israeli-flagged ship through the [Suez Canal](#).

End of May: After studying the condition of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the principal of the Germantown Friends School in Pennsylvania, Henry Scattergood, and the headmaster of Gilman School in Baltimore, Maryland, Henry Callard, recommended "that strenuous efforts be made to engage more teachers who are Friends, to enroll an increasing number of children of Friends, and to take vigorous steps toward reestablishing Quaker influence and practice in the School." In response to this recommendation, steps would be taken to cause the students to attend Sunday meetings for worship in the Friends meetinghouse next to the campus. (It is unclear to me how effective this could have been, since many of the students would not have been from Quaker families and anyway would not have been on campus during a weekend and might well have been worshipping with their families in their own churches of choice on First Day, while other students such as for instance Jews would have been worshipping on a day other than Sunday. –Doesn't this make you suspect that we're not being shown the whole picture here?)

June: After but two years of service as Headmaster at the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Friend George St. John was gone. Accounts differ in regard to the nature of his departure. The institution's official truth is that he resigned, but then, of course, we all understand the imperatives of institutional truth don't we?



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Summer: Different [Quakers](#) remember different years, but in **about** this timeframe there was a tense confrontation at the New England [Yearly Meeting](#), over the governance of the [Moses Brown School](#). School officials were saying that the school could no longer function properly if it remained a Quaker boarding school, that such a requirement kept the enterprise on the edge of financial collapse. Meanwhile, various Quakers were becoming outraged at the manner in which the governing board of the school, although a committee of the Yearly Meeting, had gotten inbred, incestuous, noncommunicative, authoritarian, and, fundamentally, self-perpetuating.³⁵ A decision was reached, that the Yearly Meeting's school would no longer cater to the sort of students who would come and live there separate from their families of origin, but would instead cater to students who lived in the bosoms of their families in the surrounding community, which is to say, the vicinity of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). It is an open question whether any of the Quakers who assented to this were aware at the time that, since there were only a handful of Quaker children living within daily commuting distance of the school buildings, this decision to abandon boarding was in essence a fateful decision to start educating children of non-Quaker backgrounds in preference to the children of Quaker families.

July: The School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), and the Board of Directors of the [Moses Brown School](#), announced the appointment of Robert Cunningham, a non-Quaker, as Acting Headmaster of this [Providence, Rhode Island](#) institution.

35. There is a commonality to be noticed here, between the [New England Friends Home](#) asset of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in Hingham, Massachusetts, and the [Moses Brown School](#) asset of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in Providence, Rhode Island. Neither institution will permit a full and fair appraisal of the asset. Both institutions offer entirely fraudulent balance sheets in which the value of assets are persistently lowballed. The New England Friends Home, for instance, is carrying the land value at its nominal acquisition value of \$10,000 way back when, while their cost accountant falsely asserts that the use of such a value rather than the true current value is mandated by the tax laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Home relies upon the appraisals that its banks conduct every three years in order to validate the wisdom of their loans, disregarding the fact that such bank appraisals limit themselves merely to ascertaining that the value of the asset if forfeited would exceed to some degree the open balance of the loan (\$2,100,000 on a property informally estimated to be worth at least \$6,000,000), and falsely pretending that such a lowball figure represents the true total worth of the property were it put to its highest and best economic use. In the case of the Moses Brown School, I have seen no evidence that the asset has ever been appraised — and in the absence of such an appraisal, the non-religious prep school that presently occupies a campus that is worth approximately (order of magnitude) \$200,000,000 on the open market and is the property of the Quakers is being allowed to maintain its entirely secular occupancy at an annual rent of \$0.00. It is an ongoing surreptitious asset transfer of mind-boggling magnitude.

Given such a situation, there is only one possible explanation: the school has become an example of what the sociologists refer to as “regulatory capture.” That is to say, like the Civil Aeronautics Board which protected airlines from competition, the Interstate Commerce Commission which restricted competition in transportation, and the Department of Agriculture which implements policies that are alleged to favor the interests of large corporate farming concerns over those of consumers and family farmers, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Quaker committees that are supposedly governing Moses Brown School and the New England Friends Home have been infiltrated and taken over by people whose loyalty is not “upstream,” to the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, but “downstream,” to those in actual control of these entities as institutions functioning as business corporations. The term “regulatory capture” is central in a stream of research that is often referred to as the economics of regulation, which is critical of earlier conceptualizations of regulatory intervention by governments as being motivated to protect public goods. Two cited references, which I have not yet consulted, are M.E. Levine and Forrence, J.L.’s 1990 paper “Regulatory capture, public interest, and the public agenda. Toward a synthesis” in the [Journal of Law Economics & Organization](#), 6: 167-198, and J.J. Laffont and Tirole, J.’s 1991 paper “The politics of government decision making. A theory of regulatory capture” in the [Quarterly Journal of Economics](#), 106(4): 1089-1127.

Outside the United States government apparatus, the most notorious current example of regulatory capture happens to be the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. That agency is presently paralyzed because the most vicious nations have insisted upon having seats there and influence there, and are using their seats and their influence to ensure that the Commission not do its job.



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October 4, Friday: When the [Dexter Asylum](#) of [Providence](#) emptied itself and closed its doors, its records were donated to the [Rhode Island](#) Historical Society.

[PSYCHOLOGY](#)



1958

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Robert Cunningham took charge as Acting Headmaster under the following stipulations:

that a qualified Friend be employed as Assistant or Dean;
that a special effort be made to add to the faculty some able and experienced teachers who are Friends;
that the Headmaster take early steps designed to upgrade the faculty, strengthen the curriculum, and lay the groundwork for a new Development Program;
and that he will join sympathetically in any studies which may be undertaken to develop further co-operative activities with Lincoln School and the possible integration of some of the activities and/or services of the two schools if they should prove to be feasible and desirable.

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Friend Whittemore Whittier was made Assistant Headmaster.

A Middle School was created. An advising system was created for Upper School students. Enrollment began to exceed 500 students.

The building that the Quakers had been using as a residence for retired spinster [Quaker](#) teachers, in Amesbury MA, the Huntington Dixon Home, had been condemned as unsafe for congregate living. Friend [Polly Thayer Starr](#) came to the rescue when her mother Ethel Thayer, an Episcopalian, died, by donating her mother's lovely quiet slate-roofed home on Turkey Hill near Hingham MA, which is now the [New England Friends Home](#). This Georgian-style brick-veneer building had been erected after the larger shingle summer home previously



on the site had burned in 1929. Interestingly, at the back of the property there is a small pet cemetery having headstones bearing appropriate verses — and among these pet graves there is a headstone for one Peter Kocche. Mr. Kocche had instructed Mrs. Thayer in German and had once expressed a wish that his ashes might

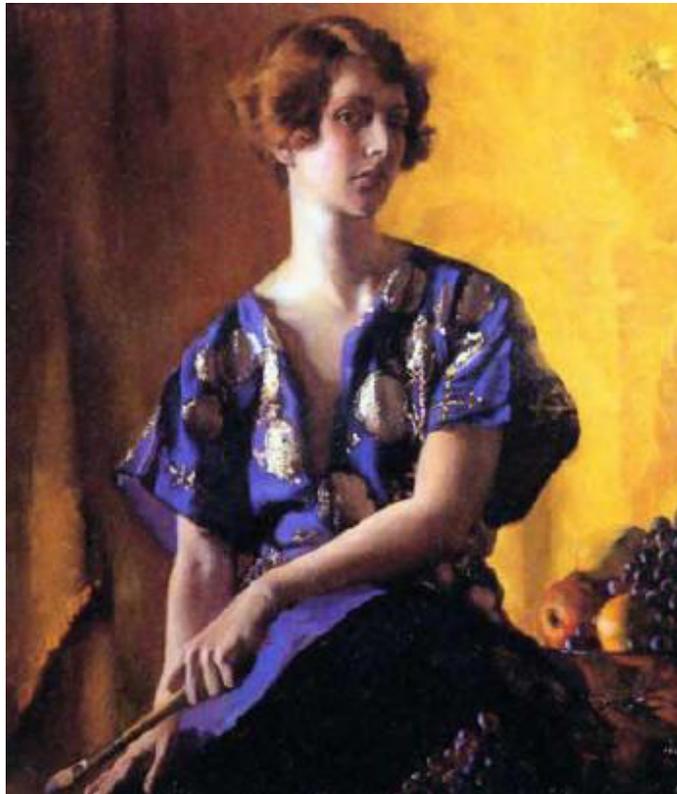
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be interred there, so when eventually he died, this comment had been taken seriously.



Friend Polly is an artist of note and here is one of her self-portraits:



Her portrait of her mother Ethel is hanging in the building. The blue tiles used in the building were imported from Japan, the marble in the fireplaces from Italy, the carved woodwork in the library fireplace from England.



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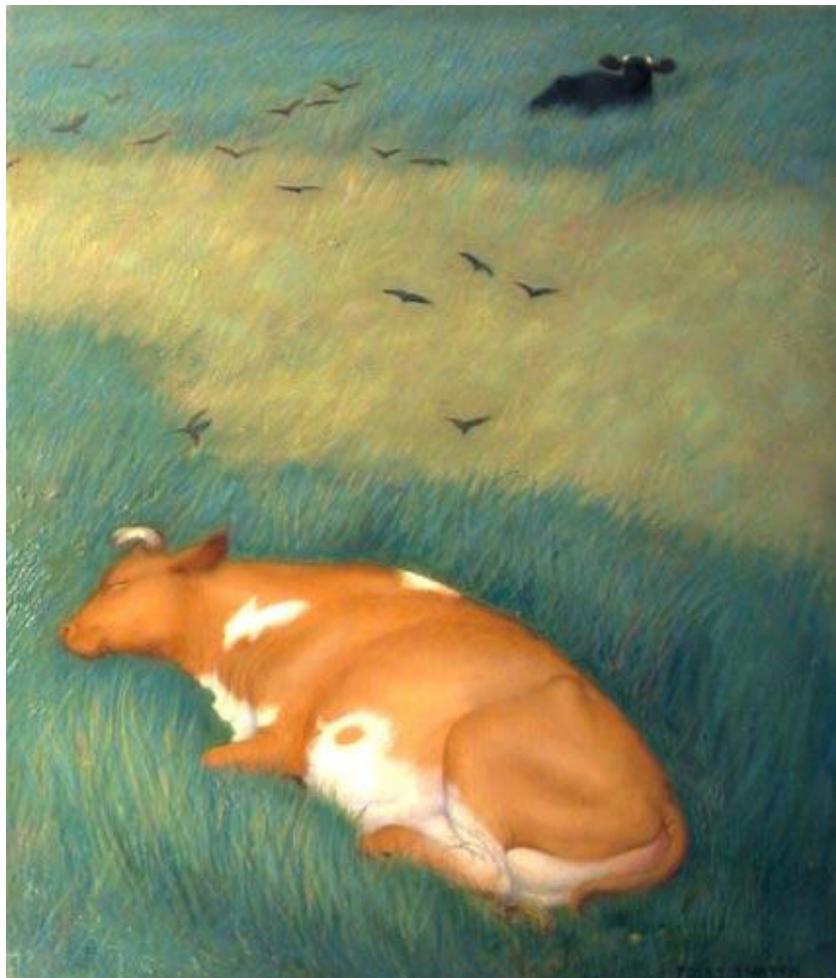
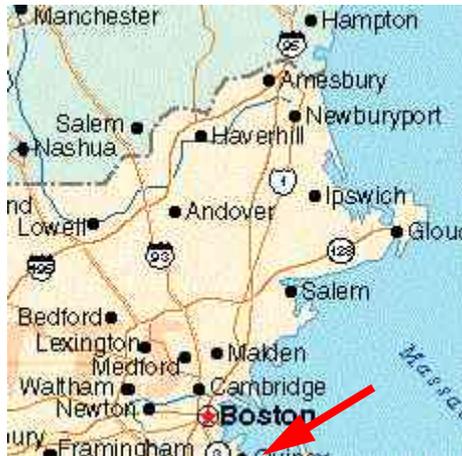
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Stone camels and peacocks and pheasants had been added from the San Francisco World Fair in 1935. There is an oil portrait of Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#)'s mother, Friend Abigail Whittier, and several depictions of the poet himself. There is a photograph of the Whittier farmhouse in Haverhill ("Snow Bound") and a photograph of the later home in Amesbury MA. A number of nice-to-have items were found in the basement of the home in Amesbury: spectacles, slipper chairs, sofa, gilt mirror, candlestand, etc. The folding wooden stand and brass tray were brought from [Egypt](#) by Katherine Howland, who also provided the Rose Garden Memorial. Before the building would be opened for senior occupancy, some \$110,000 worth of renovation work would need to be accomplished, some \$40,000 of which would come out of the fund established in 1886

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by Sarah Nichols Pope-Dixon.³⁶





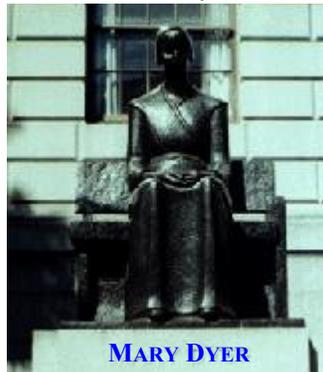
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January: At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), a science building was dedicated.

1959

July 9, Thursday: In front of the State House in [Boston](#), dedication of the [Mary Dyer](#) statue by sculptor Sylvia Shaw Judson. She had been the winner of the competition sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and by Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, and by the Fairmount Park Commission in Philadelphia.



(The model for this statue was [Friend](#) Nancy St. John, wife of deposed Headmaster George C. St. John at [Moses Brown](#) School in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).)

The central inscription reads:

MARY DYER

QUAKER

WITNESS FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

HANGED ON BOSTON COMMON 1660

**"MY LIFE NOT AVAILETH ME
IN COMPARISON TO THE
LIBERTY OF THE TRUTH"³⁷**

36. Fire escapes and a fire alarm system were added. Some of the rooms on the 2d floor were subdivided, creating 10 bedrooms, and the 6 bedrooms on the 3rd floor remained unchanged, as did countless bathrooms. Three new bedrooms were created on the 1st floor from what had been servant quarters. The kitchen was enlarged. As a safety measure, the lily ponds were filled in to create rose gardens. The driveway was paved and a parking-lot installed. The carpet in the "Whittier Room" was a gift from members of the Providence, Rhode Island monthly meeting and the carpet in the Library was a gift of the Hartford, Connecticut monthly meeting. Katherine Haviland, the first director of the Home, planted flowering crabapple trees in front of the house. The renovated structure would open in 1961.



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At about this point an entirely new situation had been inaugurated at the [Moses Brown](#) School. The interests of the school as an institution had decidedly diverged from the interests of the owners in perpetuity of the Moses Brown farm bequest (the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends) when the school had left off being a boarding establishment for Quaker children from all over the New England states and had begun to cater exclusively to local students living with their local families. This was simply because these local students who had become the overwhelming bulk of the student body were not Quakers, nor had their parents any particular interest in Quakerism. What these families needed from the Moses Brown School was an affordable whitebread college-prep education that would prepare their progeny for entry into ivy league colleges. The name of their game was upward mobility over the generations.

So what was the school administration to do? The staff of the school had begun to consist, more and more, of teachers and administrators who had no connection whatever with Quakerism. They were teachers, period. They were administrators, period. —And along would come these representatives from the New England Yearly Meeting, and harass them while they were out and about in their function of prepping these upper-middle-class local kiddies for taking their ivy-league matriculation examinations. The things the Quakers wanted were utterly irrelevant — and they owned the place.

The solution was simplicity itself. The school administration delegated teachers and administrators to go turn Quaker and begin to attend the annual get-togethers of the New England Yearly Meeting, and infiltrate the committees that dealt with education issues. The Quakers of course suspected nothing. Pretty soon these infiltrators were more Quaker than the Quakers.

37. [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) has beautifully told the story of [Samuel Shattuck](#)'s mission in his poem, "The King's Missive." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow has made the sufferings of the [Quakers](#) the subject of his dramatic poem, "New England Tragedies." The story of Quaker sufferings is told in George Bishop's "New England Judged." The best modern book on the subject is Hallowell's "Quaker Invasion of Massachusetts." A total of four [Friends](#) were executed — [William Robinson](#), [Marmaduke Stevenson](#), [William Ledra](#), and [Mary Dyer](#). Even Waldo Emerson would see a moral in this, although he would come at the facts in a simplified manner:

We are always coming up with the emphatic facts of history in our private experience, and verifying them here. All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history; only biography. Every mind must know the whole lesson for itself, — must go over the whole ground. What it does not see, what it does not live, it will not know. What the former age has epitomized into a formula or rule for manipular convenience, it will lose all the good of verifying for itself, by means of the wall of that rule. Somewhere, sometime, it will demand and find compensation for that loss by doing the work itself. Ferguson discovered many things in astronomy which had long been known. The better for him.

History must be this or it is nothing. Every law which the state enacts indicates a fact in human nature; that is all. We must in ourselves see the necessary reason of every fact, — see how it could and must be. So stand before every public and private work; before an oration of Burke, before a victory of Napoleon, before a martyrdom of Sir Thomas More, of Sidney, of Marmaduke Robinson, before a French Reign of Terror, and a Salem hanging of witches, before a fanatic Revival, and the Animal Magnetism in Paris, or in Providence. We assume that we under like influence should be alike affected, and should achieve the like; and we aim to master intellectually the steps, and reach the same height or the same degradation, that our fellow, our proxy, has done.



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Meanwhile, the Friends monthly meeting in Providence had relocated its meetinghouse from Meeting Street downtown (where the city needed to erect a fire station) to a nearby lot on former Moses Brown farm land, at the corner of Morris Street and Olney Street. This meeting “on campus” would provide a perfect cover story, as the Quaker content of the education offered by the school reached a vanishing point. “Of course Moses Brown School is a Quaker school, see, it’s named after a Quaker! Of course it’s Quaker, look, its football team is named ‘The Quakers’! Look, we have a Quaker meeting on campus! Look, the children are taken over to this meetinghouse once a week, during their class day, to sit in silence for twenty minutes! Look, we actually have a Quaker teacher here, to teach the children how to build boats! Nobody can accuse us of not being a Quaker school!”

To ensure that the Providence monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends remained compliant and convenient for the school, the school’s infiltrators infiltrated its Ministry and Counsel Committee. Once ensconced in this central committee, these infiltrators ensured their continuity by arranging that the only Quaker names that could be nominated by the Nominating Committee once a year, to become new members of this all-important M&C committee, would be names pre-selected by the school’s infiltrators. Thus no “unsafe” person would ever be allowed to become a member of the controlling committee (this is called self-perpetuation). They also ensured their continuity by decreeing that the only issues that could be brought before the meeting’s monthly Meeting for Business were items on the pre-established agenda, and that the M&C committee had total control over the setting of this agenda. They also ensured their continuity by decreeing that the only way to bring an issue before the meeting was to get it on the agenda to be discussed at the monthly Meeting for Business. They also ensured their continuity by decreeing that members of M&C could serve two terms, and then if they laid off for one term, would be able to come back.

And, of course, no conflict of interest rules would ever apply. For instance, it would always be perfectly proper for paid employees of the Moses Brown School to sit on the Quaker boards that made decisions about the school, and for paid employees to serve as advocates of the interests of the school in all Quaker discussions of the goings-on at the school. Their self-interested pronouncements would always have full weight, and no accusations of conflict of interest or of concealed agenda could ever be brought. Nor would it ever be possible for the Quakers even to know who was on the school’s payroll, or the extent to which these infiltrators were being financially compensated for this infiltration efforts — since it would be a violation of their privacy to ask these people where their money was coming from, or how much was in it for them.

Thus it would come to pass, over the years, that instead of the Quakers controlling the school and its endowment, the school and its endowment would control the Quakers.



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1960

During this decade Friend [Milton Mayer](#) would refuse to sign a loyalty oath, and take the Department of State before the Supreme Court for its refusal to grant him a passport (he would win a Supreme Court ruling that the relevant portion of the McCarran Act was unconstitutional, and finally be issued his passport).

UNAMERICANISM

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#) became a full professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, [Texas](#). He had risen from instructor in seven years, which is still a record for that institution. A number of honors were bestowed on him during those years, being chosen as “outstanding professor,” “Friendliest Professor,” and “Senior Class Sponsor” a number of times. He was also initiated into Blue Key national leadership honorary society. He had served in various capacities such as freshman advisor, member of the College Planning Board, and faculty advisor to Delta Kappa Epsilon.

During this decade Friend [Jeanne Whitaker](#) would help create an American Friends Service Committee office in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

The Ford Foundation, concerned about the general physical unfitness of America’s youth, funded a Monsanto Corporation study of a new all-weather playing surface. Initially this new all-weather playing surface would be termed “Chemgrass,” but you are probably more familiar with the product under a later coinage, “Astroturf.” The first experimental Chemgrass playing field would be installed during this decade inside the fieldhouse at the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). The surface would hold up well for more than 25 years. Yea team! Go Quakes!³⁸

[Dr. David Tillerson Smith](#) served as consultant for [tuberculosis](#) in the Veterans Administration Hospital system for the Southeastern United States. He received Duke University’s highest recognition by his appointment as James B. Duke Distinguished Professor of Microbiology (the student body would proclaim him “best preclinical teacher”).



38. I bet you didn’t know that Quakers had a special thing for competitive team sports!



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1961

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the playing fields were extended. MB was really turning into a sports school! Go team! Yea Quakes!

When he attended a triennial meeting in Kenya, [Friend Kenneth L. Carroll](#) began what would turn out to be a long connection with the [Friends World Committee for Consultation](#), both on the national and international levels. He would serve for a time as Assistant Clerk of the FWCC, Section of the Americas, and for a number of years would chair the nominating committee of the world-wide FWCC. In that capacity he would attend a number of their meetings on three continents.

The name of the Butler Health Center in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) was changed to "[Butler Hospital](#)."

PSYCHOLOGY

1962

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence](#), a rigidly racially segregated institution, ground was being broken for a new classroom building which would have nothing whatever to do with Quakerism but which would, despite that sad fact, be denominated "Friends Hall" as lip service to the Quakers who were paying approximately a third of the school's bills and receiving in return for their investment in Quaker education approximately diddly squat. Also, completion of the new football field for our football team "The Quakers," and a surrounding track.

Also in this year, publication of Mack Thompson's MOSES BROWN, RELUCTANT REFORMER, about the life of the now-ignored eponymous founder of the New England institution who had created and funded it in an attempt to guard children against too contaminating an encounter with worldly beguilements. Meanwhile, very near to the University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill, [North Carolina](#) at which this book was being printed, in the nearby municipality of [Durham](#) in what is known as the "Deep South," the members of the local [Quaker](#) monthly meetings were collaboratively and very deliberately beginning to offer a Quaker education to students of all colors! Informal discussions among Durham and Chapel Hill Friends raised the notion of founding a racially integrated school as an appropriate response to segregated public school facilities. At a



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meeting of a special School Committee attended by Mildred Ringwalt, Adolph and Christa Furth, [David Tillerson Smith](#) and [Susan Gower Smith](#), and Peter and Martha Klopfer, the Durham Meeting (and then also the Chapel Hill Meeting) agreed to allow their facilities to be used. The Claremore Fund, a foundation in California interested in furthering the cause of racial integration, would award this Committee \$6,000 as seed money.

(Go figure – in this year a rigidly racially segregated [Quaker](#) institution of education, in [Rhode Island](#), matched up against a totally racially integrated [Quaker](#) institution of education, in [North Carolina](#).)

The Birth of the School³⁹

The year 2012 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Carolina Friends School. CFS was incorporated as a not-for-profit educational institution in 1962. The idea of the School was born among a group of Friends from the Durham and Chapel Hill Friends Meetings in the midst of the Civil Rights movement. These Friends wanted to provide education that was racially integrated and rooted in both Quaker values and sound, progressive educational practices.

[Writing for the School's twenty-fifth anniversary publication in 1988, Mildred Ringwalt, the first chair of the CFS Board, recalled that "the idea of starting a Friends school" originated with Cecile DeWitt, a woman professor of physics at UNC-Chapel Hill. Cecile had failed to interest the foundations she had approached about funding a racially-integrated school, but she told Mildred that "You can do it where no one else can!" – because Mildred was a Quaker.

In fact, the group of Friends who started CFS (Mildred Ringwalt, Adolphe Furth, Stuart Willis, and Claude Shotts from Chapel Hill, and Peter and Martha Klopfer and David and Susan Smith from Durham) did succeed in attracting a start-up grant from a family foundation. However, they used the money not to launch a feasibility study – as the grantor had expected – but instead to hire a teacher!

Carolina Friends School opened its doors to students on Sunday, September 13, 1964. The first CFS classroom was the Durham Friends Meetinghouse. Yesterday I spoke with Barbara Boineau, the first teacher at the "Durham Kindergarten" (now known as Durham Early School). Barbara raises alpacas in Utah now, but as I spoke with her, memories flooded back about the first days of CFS, the school that she helped to birth.

Answering my surprise that the first day of school should have been a Sunday, Barbara explained that on Sunday evenings teachers, parents, and students would first spread out a large canvas tarp to cover the Meetinghouse floor and then bring out of storage the supplies and equipment needed for that week. Thus the religious became the secular.

Barbara was very clear that what she did as a teacher was informed by Quaker values and practices. Martha Klopfer and Naomi Adams, her volunteer coteachers and school administrators,

39. Written by Carolina Friends School teacher Jim Henderson during November 2012



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helped Barbara facilitate the marriage of Quaker values and progressive educational practices. Children were taught to explore silence, to look within, to respect the differences in others, to love nature, and to seek community. Sound familiar? Barbara had a background in Montessori education but she also practiced an approach to learning she called "creative education." There were times in the school day for instruction, and times for imaginative play. Both times mattered. "Kids who came from tightly controlled families we loosened up," Barbara told me yesterday. "Kids from loosely controlled families we tightened up." The families that came to the Durham Kindergarten were both white and black. A community of parents quickly formed, focused on issues of carpooling as well as racial integration. Many of the first CFS parents were members of the Duke University and the North Carolina Central University faculties, Barbara recalled. Both President Sanford of Duke and President Friday of UNC were early supporters of CFS.

The following year, in 1965, the "Chapel Hill Kindergarten" opened at the Chapel Hill Meetinghouse with a similar purpose and philosophy. Ruth Wright taught the five year olds and Margaret McCallister the six year olds. In 1966 the main campus opened, right next to the Klopfer's farm. The first structure on the main campus was an oversized water tower. David Smith wanted the School to plan for future growth. As CFS entered the twenty-first century, we needed a new well. David Smith would have been very pleased!

A small group of visionary Friends and progressive educators gave birth to CFS. The School survived trying, early years. It learned to stand and then to walk - to laugh, to talk, to serve. And so the School grew to maturity. Now, as a Fiftieth Anniversary Committee begins to plan a year of celebration in 2014-15, CFS parents and teachers gratefully recall the names, and the dedication, of the remarkable people who labored to give this community life.

Thompson, Mack. *MOSES BROWN, RELUCTANT REFORMER* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1962):

 PROVIDENCE LIES in the northwestern part of Rhode Island only a few miles from the Massachusetts border. It stands astride the Providence or Great Salt River at the head of the great Bay of Narragansett that stretches down to Newport and the Atlantic. In the eighteenth century, a score of sloops, schooners, and brigantines could ride safely at anchor in a great salt cove near the center of town while their owners outfitted them for a new voyage to the southern coast, the West Indies, or England.

 It was on the east side that the first Browns settled. Chad Brown and his family arrived in Boston from England aboard the ship *Martin* in 1638 but quickly moved to Providence. Chad was a man of strong character and exceptional ability. He soon rose to a position of eminence in the civil and spiritual affairs of the tiny commonwealth. Two years after his arrival he was chosen one



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of five arbitrators to settle a serious land dispute that divided the colony. The same committee drew up a new frame of government - "the Combination" - which served for several years. He was an elder in the Baptist Church and a man of deep religious feelings. Subsequent generations of Browns followed in Chad's footsteps, adding occasionally to the family's property holdings, continuing their interest in the Baptist religion, and extending their influence by marrying into other prominent families throughout the colony.

Moses Brown was thus born into a family that had lived in Providence for a hundred years. His father recorded his birth in "James Browne's First Ledger": "Heir folloth the time of the bearth of the children born of the boddey of hope Brown wife of James ... Seventh and Lastly Moses September the 12 AD 1738."⁴⁰ For fifteen years Moses celebrated his birthday on that date, but in 1752 the Gregorian calendar was adopted in the British Empire and thereafter the celebration was held on September 23. Moses' mother, Hope (Power) Brown, left no account of her life or of her son's childhood, but he undoubtedly attended the Baptist Church with other members of the family and held the conventional religious beliefs of the time and place. George Taylor, a Church of England man, kept a schoolhouse for a time near the Quaker meetinghouse in the north end of town, and Moses may have received his early education from him.⁴¹ There is a legend -perhaps true- that Moses attended school until he was thirteen; at any rate, by the time he had reached his teens he could "read, write, and do a sum in the rule of three." Whatever formal education he received was supplemented by informal schooling at home, in his uncle's countinghouse, and on the Providence wharfs. As a boy he was fascinated by the busy water front and often waited on his uncle's wharf for the sloop *Four Brothers* to tie up after a voyage of several months to the West Indies. As a nephew of the owner, he was undoubtedly allowed to satisfy his curiosity about the ship and cargo and to question the master and crew about their experiences in the Indies, on the Guinea Coast, or at one of the southern ports. He quickly won a reputation as an expert judge of West Indian molasses. The story is frequently told of the importer who was asked by a prospective buyer "What casks are your best?" and the reply, "Ask that little molasses-faced Moses, he will tell you."⁴²

Moses' education in business really began when he moved from his home on Towne Street to his uncle's house across the lane and started his apprenticeship in the shipping business. Removal to his uncle's home was dictated by common sense. James, Moses' oldest brother who had probably assumed responsibility for Moses' education, had recently died while on a voyage to Virginia. The other brothers, Nicholas, Joseph, and John, were serving their apprenticeship with uncle Obadiah, and were still not old enough to look after their young brother. Since Moses

40. JAMES BROWN: HIS BOOK OF ACCOUNTS BOTH DEBT AND CREDIT, 1, Rhode Island Historical Society. Moses was probably born in the old Homestead House on Towne Street near what is now the junction of College and North Main Streets.

41. Petitions to the Rhode Island General Assembly, 1734-38, III, 20, Rhode Island Archives, State House, Providence, hereafter cited as Rhode Island Archives.

42. Hedges, *The Browns*, 14.



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was expected to follow them into the shipping business, what could be better than close association with a man of Uncle Obadiah's proven business acumen. To a certain extent, his uncle also would fill the vacancy left by the death of his father.



THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION presented members of the Society of Friends with a terrible dilemma: whether to remain faithful to their religious principles as Quakers or to their political principles as Englishmen or Americans. As Quakers they condemned war as morally and spiritually evil; it resulted in hatred and bestiality and could not possibly solve anything - good could not come from evil. In Pennsylvania as early as 1756 many Quakers had withdrawn from participation in political affairs because of the government's policy of violence toward the Indians and its involvement in the French and Indian War.⁴³ Although Quakers had become unpopular because of their pacifism they had not been molested. In Rhode Island they had fared pretty much the same. The approaching conflict with England, however, placed Quakers throughout American in a much more difficult position. Both royal and revolutionary governments began to question the sincerity of Friends' neutrality, and the Quaker elders and ministers began to enforce more strictly the Society's testimony against war. Unlike Friends in the middle colonies, New England Quakers had no great leaders such as the Pembertons to hold the members steady. When the war broke out in New England, Friends there began to grope for leadership and guidance.

For Moses Brown the decision as to what course to follow was not an easy one. Privately he sympathized with the American cause. This was to be expected. He had been deeply involved in agitation against British policy during the preceding decade, and it would have been odd indeed if he had become a Tory. Had he not become a Quaker, he would probably have joined his brothers in their support of the Revolution. His position was therefore a difficult one, and he stated his views on public events carefully. In a long letter to his good friend James Warren, member of the Massachusetts revolutionary Provincial Congress, he tried to define his position: "My religious principles thou art I presume sensible does not admit of my interfering in war, but my love for my country, and sense of our just rights is not thereby abated, and if my poor abilities could be any way subservient to a happy change of affairs nothing on my part shall be wanting."⁴⁴

Publicly, Moses was until early 1776 an advocate of compromise and reconciliation. He sounded more like a British sympathizer than a neutral Quaker. In April 1775 he pleaded for "a restoration of all those benevolent and kind offices that hath for more than a century subsisted between this and our mother country."⁴⁵ In an appearance before the Providence town meeting he endorsed the sentiments of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Dartmouth, who urged an "accommodation of the unhappy differences subsisting between the two countries."

At the same meeting he persuaded the council to postpone the



Theodore Thayer, *Israel Pemberton: King of the Quakers* (Phila., 1943), 18-96, 113-22.

May 11, 1775, *MOSES BROWN PAPERS*, II, 32.

William Greene Roelker, *THE PATROL OF NARRAGANSETT BAY (1774-76)*, *Rhode Island History*, 8 (1949), 45-63.



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erection of an artillery battery until the General Assembly could meet to discuss proposals for reconciliation. At one point in his campaign he traveled to Boston to lay before the Massachusetts military governor, General Gage, more than half a dozen letters from men in Providence and Newport urging peaceful reconciliation.



IN THE COURSE of the long years of the Revolution, Moses Brown emerged as the leading Quaker in New England. The basis of his leadership was an ability to hold the diverse groups within the various meetings together in the face of economic disaster, public ridicule, and divided loyalties. The solidarity of the Society of Friends was threatened not only by external enemies but by internal disputes. The war raised many problems that Friends had never had to deal with before, and the individualistic tendencies of their beliefs encouraged many to challenge the authority of tradition and the collective will of the meetings. To Moses the internal conflicts brought on by the war were as serious as dangers from battle or from governmental authorities, and he made strenuous efforts to minimize their effects.

The most divisive threats to the Society were posed by paper money and taxes. These two issues were intimately connected with the much broader question of acceptance or rejection of the new governments which used the taxes and money to support their civil and military establishments. In the early years of the Revolution, some Friends felt that currency issued by the rebellious governments should not be accepted, and this attitude became the official position of the Society, although it was more strictly adhered to in the middle states than in New England.⁴⁶ Moses thought that the distinction made by Quakers between specie and paper money was ridiculous; one promoted the war as much as the other. His position was determined by sympathy for the American cause and by common sense: it was fortified by his experience when distributing the donations to the poor sufferers around Boston from 1775 to 1777. There he found that while some Friends accepted specie, others refused to take the new paper currency "from a principle of its promoting the war as well as on account of the authority making it."⁴⁷



In order to halt this practice, Moses decided to organize a society for the abolition of the slave trade. He already had a plan, drawn up in 1786, modeled after similar organizations in America and England. There were many people in the state eager to emulate their friends in New York and Philadelphia. Meetings were held in Providence during January 1789, and on February 20, in the Friends' meetinghouse, the Providence Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was officially organized with ex-Congressman David Howell as president, Thomas Arnold, merchant and Friend, as secretary, and Moses Brown as treasurer.⁴⁸ Samuel

46. Pemberton to Moses Brown, August 28, November 9, 1775, MOSES BROWN PAPERS, Misc. MSS., B-814, Box 6. The Pembertons' refusal to accept paper money issued by the revolutionary governments may well have been an expression of their pro-British feeling rather than an effort to maintain the Quaker discipline, although admittedly the two motives are hard to differentiate. For an argument that Israel Pemberton did not defend the acts of the British government, see Thayer, ISRAEL PEMBERTON, 207.

47. April 30, 1776, MOSES BROWN PAPERS, Misc. MSS., K-AB.

48. See the announcements in the United States Chronicle, February 5, 12, 19, 26, 1789.



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Hopkins sent his congratulations but objected to the title given the society as being "too confined. It should, at least, be extended to the whole state. And I think it ought not to be confined to the Abolition of the Slave Trade. It ought to promote the freedom of those now in slavery, and to assist those who are free, as far as may be, to the enjoyment of the privileges of freemen, and the comforts of life." [...]⁴⁹

Back in Rhode Island, Moses devoted himself to the cause of the freed Negro. Appeals for financial assistance received prompt and generous attention, and he was always ready to go to the aid of a Negro who was in trouble with the authorities. Slaves who had escaped from their masters and Negroes who were in danger of being sold into slavery found sanctuary in his home, one of the main stations on the Underground Railroad that ran from Quaker homes in New Bedford to inland Massachusetts. Despite the secrecy which shrouded the business on the escape route -few records were kept- numerous references in Moses' correspondence suggest that the traffic to and from his house was heavy. Indeed, his activities as well as his correspondence make it clear that he was considered the leader of the antislavery movement in New England.

49. Samuel Hopkins to Moses Brown, March 7, 1789, MOSES BROWN PAPERS, VI, 57. [Quoting from page 202, Chapter 9]



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1963

G.I. Joe was born in [Rhode Island](#). (His inventor, of the Hasbro corporation, coined the term “action figure” to cope with the cultural given that little boys weren’t supposed to play with dolls. Dogtags were provided, but Dad needed to purchase his weapons and other equipment separately.)



G.I. Joe

[A.J. Muste](#) began to function as a central coordinator for the movement to end American involvement in [Vietnam](#).

The Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed after six years of demonstrations and public pressure.

The March on Washington was the largest demonstration to date, bringing more than 250,000 people to the Lincoln Memorial. The [Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) gave his “I have a Dream” speech.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

December 15, Hanukkah: Rededication of the [Touro Synagogue](#).

NEWPORT
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1964

January: Robert Cunningham resigned as Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Friend Whittemore Whittier, the Assistant Headmaster, would serve as Acting Headmaster until June 30th.

In Chapel Hill, [North Carolina](#), a 30-year-old assistant professor of Zoology at Duke University, Friend Peter H. Klopfer, along with five other professors and several younger persons, were arrested on a charge of simple misdemeanor trespass after a [civil disobedience](#) action at a local segregated restaurant. The case of Professor Klopfer would differ from the others, who would all be convicted either after trials or after a collective plea bargain — in his case the jury would deadlock and the judge would declare a mistrial. Subsequent to this court event, however, the local prosecutor would rely on a procedural device whereby the indictment might remain open indefinitely, hanging over the professor’s head as a legal threat to guarantee future “good” conduct. This interesting variant on primate behavior would be taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, which would decide that such a legal procedural device might not be deployed in such manner as to nullify statutes of limitations.

July 23, Thursday: At the Wood River Junction facility in Charlestown, [Rhode Island](#), a plant for recovery of uranium from scrap material left over from fuel element production, a worker accidentally dropped a concentrated uranium solution into an agitated tank containing sodium carbonate and there was a [criticality](#). The operator received a fatal dose of some 10,000 rad (100 Gy). Ninety minutes later a plant manager returned to the building and attempted to turn off the agitator, but this caused another smaller [criticality](#) from which he and another administrator received doses of up to 100 rad (without immediate ill effect).⁵⁰

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

[WALDEN](#): If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter, -we never need read of another. One is enough.

50. There have been in the nuclear industry, to date, some 70 such criticality excursions and some 21 resultant fatalities, but –so far at least– there hasn’t been a single atomic blast! Cross your fingers.



RHODE ISLAND

ROGUE ISLAND

1965

Friend [Jeanne Whitaker](#) began to teach at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. She would teach there until 1999, while attending the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) with her children. During this period there would be many trips to Africa and to France, where most of Jeanne's sisters were teachers.

THE CREATIVE CENTRE OF [QUAKERISM](#), ed. [Kenneth L. Carroll](#) (Birmingham, England; Philadelphia: Friends World Committee for Consultation).

In its temporary building on Alexander Avenue, the [Carolina Friends School](#) of the [Durham, North Carolina Friends monthly meeting](#) began to offer not only racially integrated kindergarten classes, but also 1st-grade

ROGUE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND

classes.



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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
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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





RHODE ISLAND

ROGUE ISLAND

1978-1980	Alice S. Keighton
1980-1982	John B. Hunter
1982-1984	Edward M. Arnett
1984-1986	Calhoun D. Geiger
1986-1988	John P. Stratton
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2012-2013	Marguerite Dingman
2013-	Co-clerks Cathy Bridge & David Bridge

A back wing was added to the First Day School of the [Quaker](#) monthly meeting at Stony Brook near Princeton, New Jersey.

William Paxton became Interim Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

Friend Gordon Brown, Jr., a member of the School Committee, became concerned over the racial composition of the Quaker school, and urged “that more Negro students be recruited” (by the late 1960s, this committee would be funding scholarships specifically for Negro students).



ROGUE ISLAND

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May 22, Saturday: At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), a new fieldhouse was dedicated.

June: A selection committee was formed by the Board of Governors and the School Committee to decide upon a permanent replacement for the resigned headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Robert Cunningham.

December: The selection committee of the Board of Governors and the School Committee reported that Gordon Davis had been approved to become the next Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

1966

Vincent “Buddy” Cianci, Jr. graduated from [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).





RHODE ISLAND

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1967

June 18, Sunday: In the skies above [Woonsocket](#), the sighting, and photographing, of a flying saucer demonstrated once and for all just how overwhelmingly important [Rhode Island](#) really is in the great scheme of things.



(See, I told you that you wouldn't understand.)

1968

June 3, Monday: Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces besieged Saigon for two days.

Opposing group of students battled again at Rome University and the police cleared the campus.

FBI agents invaded the Church of the Mediator in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) and arrested two men for avoiding conscription (50 people were attempting to prevent the action).

Andy Warhol was shot and seriously wounded in his New York studio by Valerie Solanis, who had appeared in one of his films (she would be judged incompetent to stand trial).

1969

February: There were a series of [civil disobedience](#) sit-ins and protests on the campus of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Enrollment had reached nearly 600.⁵¹



ROGUE ISLAND

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- April: Headmaster Gordon Davis submitted his resignation effective July 1st. The School Committee of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Friends appointed a selection committee to obtain a permanent replacement for Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).
- June: Peter Mott was selected to be the next headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

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.

51. In this year, also, black students protesting alleged racism at the public Hope High School across the street were also trashing its facilities.



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[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.⁵²



52. 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.

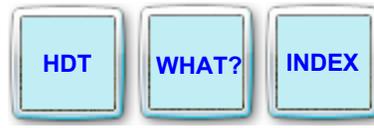


ROGUE ISLAND

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1971

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), [Butler Hospital](#) became affiliated with [Brown University](#)'s Medical School.

PSYCHOLOGY

The “cumbersome and complex system” of governance of the Quaker boys school and the Quaker girls school (Lincoln School) on the East Side of [Providence](#) began to engage the full attention of the Schools Committee and the Permanent Board of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#). The Board of Trustees of the two schools set up a Religious Life Committee charged to advise it in regard to “the development and planning of religious programs as part of the School life.” Planning was begun on an addition to the residence of the Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) that could function as a space for student meeting for silent worship. (This addition was to be known as “The Exchange.”)

When the city of [Providence](#) implemented a desegregation plan in its public high schools, one involving extensive busing, parents and students marched to protest what they consider to be an attack on the quality of educational programs. Was the local private Quaker institution of education, the Moses Brown School on the East Side of Providence, also implementing a desegregation plan at this point? –We don’t know, and the officials at the school aren’t saying. All we know is that at some point during the 1970s, earlier in the decade or later in the decade, the Quaker institution would accept its very first student of color. It has proved impossible to ascertain the year, and it has likewise proved impossible to ascertain the name of this student, specifically because the school’s officials have stonewalled every attempt to obtain such derogatory information. The only thing we know for certain is that when finally such students of color were found acceptable whenever that was during this decade, they would not at least initially find themselves being treated the same as the white students.

Quaker Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, who taught African American history there in the 1970s and later became a school trustee, charged that of all students at Moses Brown on scholarship, only African Americans were expected to wait on tables and scrub floors.⁵³

1972

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s “Martha Simmonds, a [Quaker](#) Enigma” ([Journal of the Friends’ Historical Society](#) 53:1, pages 31-52).

The [Reverend George Mills Houser](#) was interviewed by Jervis Anderson for his A. PHILIP RANDOLPH: A BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT:

“We in the non-violent movement of the 1940s certainly thought that we were initiating something of importance in American

53. Pages 339-340 in Donna McDaniel’s and Vanessa Julye’s FIT FOR FREEDOM, NOT FOR FRIENDSHIP: QUAKERS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND THE MYTH OF RACIAL JUSTICE (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009).



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life. Of course, we weren't able to put it in perspective then. But we were filled with vim and vigor, and we hoped that a mass movement could develop, even if we did not think that we were going to produce it. In retrospect, I would say we were precursors. The things we did in the 1940s were the same things that ushered the civil rights revolution. Our Journey of Reconciliation preceded the Freedom Rides of 1961 by fourteen years. Conditions were not quite ready for the full-blown movement when we were undertaking our initial actions. But I think we helped to lay the foundations for what followed, and I feel proud of that."



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The old [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Conanicut or Jamestown, Rhode Island](#) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Rather than having a School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) overlooking a single board of overseers for both the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) and the Lincoln School on the East Side of [Providence](#), there would in the future be two separate boards of overseers, plus a Coordinating Committee of the New England Yearly Meeting. (The Schools Committee, which had been in existence since 1780, was to be laid down.)

There was formed an “Ad hoc Committee on the Long Range Future of the Relationship of the New England Yearly Meeting to the Moses Brown School and the Lincoln School.”

[Calhoun D. Geiger](#) left off being a director of [Quaker Lake Camp](#) in the piedmont region of [North Carolina](#) to become a teacher at the Carolina Friends School in [Durham](#). He would initiate the Upper School Service Learning Program. After retiring as a teacher, he would continue to serve on the school’s Board, and teach basket weaving.

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May 15, Monday: The headquarters for the US Army in [Vietnam](#) was decommissioned.

The US Supreme Court decided, in the case of *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 406 U.S. 205, dealing with an Amish reluctance to school their children beyond the 8th grade, that a way of life, however virtuous and admirable, may not be interposed as a barrier to reasonable state regulation of education if it is based on purely secular considerations. The court held that to have the protection of the religion clauses of the US Constitution, the Amish would have needed to base their claim on their religious belief, rather than through the creation of a way of life based on a mere subjective evaluation and rejection of contemporary societal norms. This is not the sort of world in which every person is going to be allowed to decide his or her own standards on matters of conduct in which society as a whole has important interests. In the words of Chief Justice Warren Burger:

Thus, if the Amish asserted their claims because of their subjective evaluation and rejection of the contemporary secular values accepted by the majority, much as Thoreau rejected the social values of his time and isolated himself at Walden Pond, their claims would not rest on a religious basis. Thoreau's choice was philosophical and personal rather than religious, and such belief does not rise to the demands of the Religion Clauses.

(Of course this Supreme Court decision, however abhorrent, would have no impact at the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence](#), since not only was the school's curriculum entirely secular but also nothing was being offered to its children that would even remotely approximate a religious orientation. There was simply no conflict – and no plausible expectation of any conflict – with reasonable regulation of public education by the [Rhode Island](#) legislature.)

1973

June 26, Tuesday: The Rhode Island General Assembly enacted Public Law Chapter 280 (RI General Laws 11-23-2), making [capital punishment](#) by lethal gas mandatory for murders committed by persons while under confinement in the state correctional institutions. (Such an [execution](#) would however be determined, in 1979, to be in violation of the US Constitution.)



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1974

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), construction work began on a new building for the Lower School.

Publication by the school of William Paxton's *MOSES BROWN SCHOOL: A HISTORY OF ITS THIRD HALF-CENTURY, 1919-1969* (Paxton was head of the school's English Department and this was billed as a "Continuation of Rayner W. Kelsey's Centennial History of Moses Brown School, 1819-1919").

The fences and curbing designed by Isaiah Rogers of Boston, that had been put in place in 1842 around the Jewish Cemetery on Bellevue Avenue as part of the bequest by [Judah Touro](#), and that had been put in place in 1843 around the [Touro Synagogue](#) as part of the bequest by [Abraham Touro](#), were renovated.

1975

The cost of living in the [New England Friends Home](#) on Turkey Hill near Hingham, Massachusetts is reported, by the institution, to have been at this point about \$11 per day.⁵⁴

The board of governors of the Lincoln School for girls on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) decided to overtly declare the mission of their school to be "the education and development of young women," with nothing at all in regard to any alleged involvement with [Quakerism](#). That being the case, the Coordinating Committee that had been struggling to integrate the activities of that school with those of the Quaker [Moses Brown School](#) for boys on the East Side was forced belatedly to confront a hard fact, that the objectives of the two schools were "not coincident."

54. Such institutional statistics are, of course, entirely bogus. The prices that the residents pay are nowhere near the true costs, since the Home has an endowment that in part sustains it. This is a classic case of a "disregarded externality" and is dishonest. The basic reason for this persistent dishonesty, upon which the Home Committee and the Matron insist, seems to be that, for so long as the responsible parties can keep the true costs of the service entirely hidden, there is no way for anyone to evaluate their job performance, and determine whether the service provided is superior to, or inferior to, the services provided by the Home's tax-paying, for-profit nearby competitors. There is a commonality to be noticed here, between the [New England Friends Home](#) asset of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in Hingham, Massachusetts, and the [Moses Brown School](#) asset of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in Providence, Rhode Island. Neither institution will permit a full and fair appraisal of the asset. Both institutions offer entirely fraudulent balance sheets in which the value of assets are persistently lowballed. The New England Friends Home, for instance, is carrying the land value at its nominal acquisition value of \$10,000 way back when, while their cost accountant falsely asserts that the use of such a value rather than the true current value is mandated by the tax laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Home relies upon the appraisals that its banks conduct every three years in order to validate the wisdom of their loans, disregarding the fact that such bank appraisals limit themselves merely to ascertaining that the value of the asset if forfeited would exceed to some degree the open balance of the loan (\$2,100,000 on a property informally estimated to be worth at least \$6,000,000), and falsely pretending that such a lowball figure represents the true total worth of the property were it put to its highest and best economic use. In the case of the Moses Brown School, I have seen no evidence that the asset has ever been appraised — and in the absence of such an appraisal, the non-religious prep school that presently occupies a campus that is worth approximately (order of magnitude) \$200,000,000 on the open market is being allowed to maintain its occupancy at an annual rent of \$0.00. It is an ongoing surreptitious asset transfer of mind-boggling magnitude.



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1976

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quaker](#) Weavers at Newport, [Ireland](#), 1720-1740" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 54, pages).

In this year and the following one, restoration work was done to the old [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Conanicut or Jamestown, Rhode Island](#), a structure dating to 1786 (the building is now maintained by the Jamestown Historical Society).

[Providence](#)'s Lincoln School for girls was set off as a separate corporation from the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

RHODE ISLAND

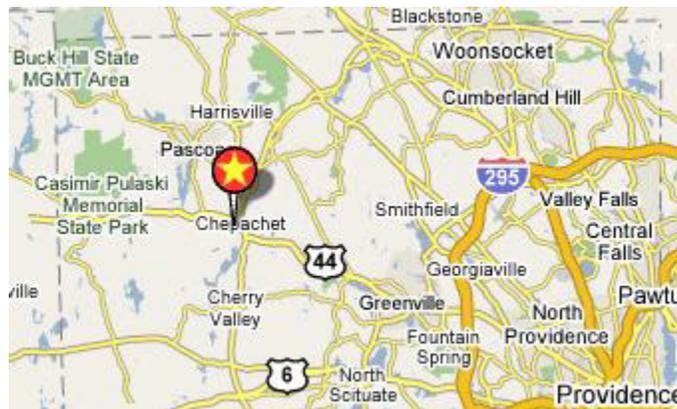
ROGUE ISLAND

At the Bay Path Cemetery in Charlton, Massachusetts, a marker was added to the burial plot of [John Adams](#) pointing out to tourists that this was the famous bear tamer.



The former investment banker turned survivalist, Mel Tappan, published SURVIVAL GUNS to help his fellow survivalists select appropriate home-defense weapons (Mel would succumb to congestive heart failure in 1980 at the age of 47 without any hordes of crazed San Franciscans ever having stormed his compound on the Rogue River of Oregon).

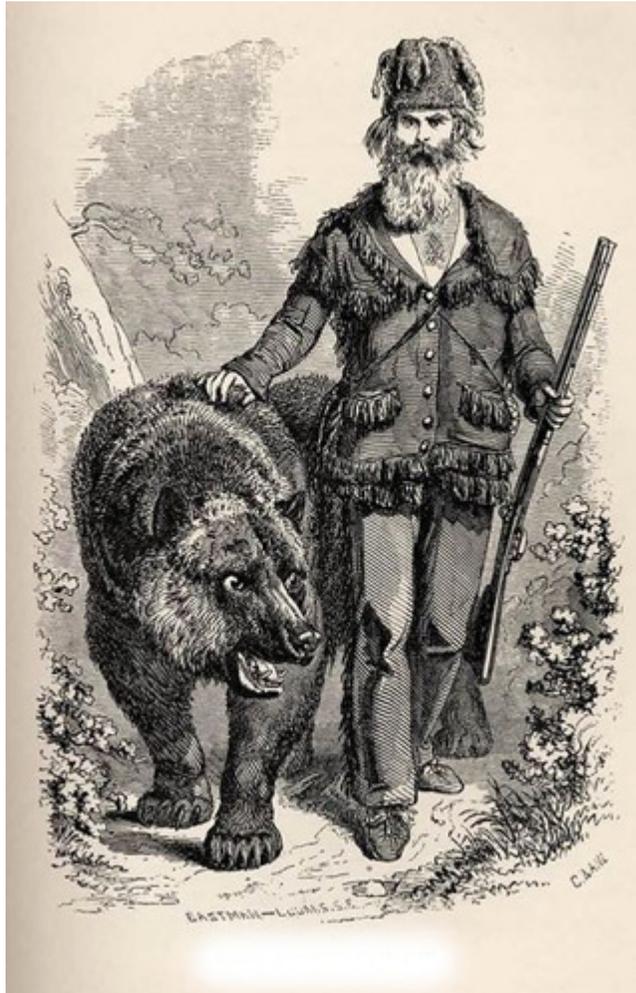
For the 150th anniversary of the gunning down of Betty, The Learned Elephant, the state General Assembly proclaimed May 25th as “Elephant Day.” The citizens of [Chepachet](#) placed a commemorative plaque at the Chepachet River, marking the spot at which a gang of their local citizens concealed in a grist mill had cut down Little Bett with a broadside of anonymous gunfire.



Little Bett would also be celebrated, eventually, in this shameless [Rhode Island](#) town, by means of a specially

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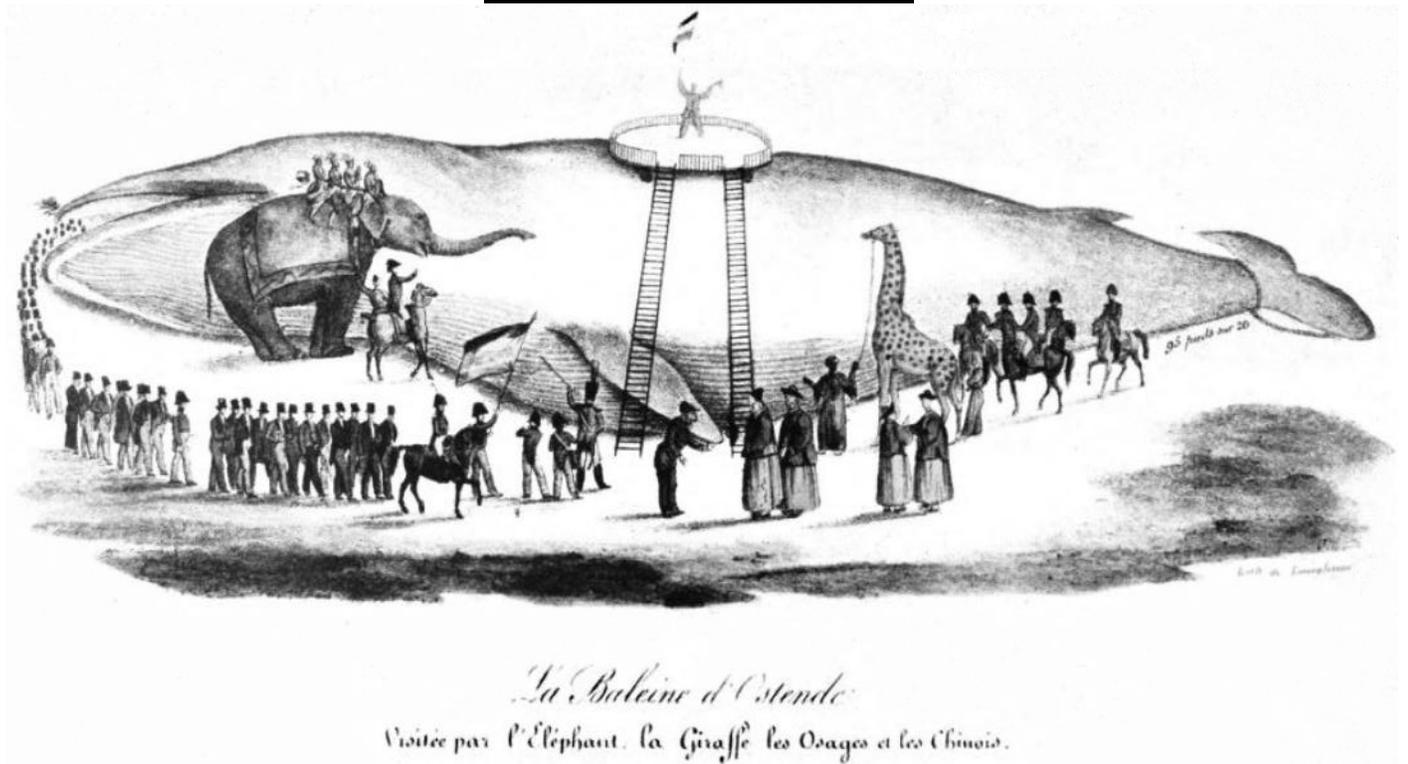
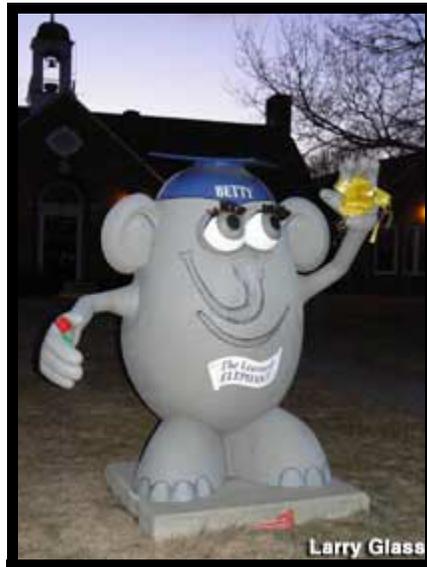
RHODE ISLAND



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painted and decorated "Mr. Potato Head" in front of their courthouse:





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Fall: Since the Lincoln School for girls was no longer under the governance of Quakers, girl scholars were once again admitted to the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). A total of 62 girls were admitted. There was comment about the cost of maintaining a boarding program at the school — which had begun so many years before as exclusively a boarding school.

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "A Look at the [Quaker](#) Revival of 1756" ([Quaker History](#) 65, pages 63-80).

QUAKER HISTORY DOWNLOAD

1977

Late June: The resignation of Peter Hawes as Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) became effective. Assistant Headmaster Richard Gaines was appointed Acting Headmaster for 1977/1978 while a Search and Screen committee began to look for a permanent replacement.

1978

In 1880 the white [Rhode Island](#) government had unilaterally terminated the tribal status of the [Narragansett](#), taking 3,200 acres of their reservation and leaving them with two acres. Attempts at legal redress had been denied in 1898 by the Rhode Island Supreme Court, and despite the fact that this was a clear violation of the Non-Intercourse Act of 1790, the federal government had declined to intervene — on the grounds that the Narragansett had never signed a treaty with the United States. At this point, however, with the settlement of a lengthy lawsuit much of the reserve was recovered (their reservation near Charlestown currently has about 2,500 acres).

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quakerism](#) and the Cromwellian Army in [Ireland](#)" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 54, pages 135-54).

David Burnham was made Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

The "cost" of living in the [New England Friends Home](#) on Turkey Hill near Hingham, Massachusetts was reported, by the institution, to have been at this point about \$13 to \$14 per day, depending on the size of the room.⁵⁵



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1979

In 1973 the Rhode Island General Assembly had made [capital punishment](#) by lethal gas mandatory for murders committed by persons while under confinement in the state correctional institutions. In this year, however, the Rhode Island Supreme Court determined that such a mandatory death sentence provision violated the cruel and unusual punishment prohibitions of the 8th amendment to the US Constitution (State v. Anthony, 398 A.2d 1157 and State v. Cline, 397 A.2d 1309).

1980

Thomas Gorton's [SAMUEL GORTON OF RHODE ISLAND AND HIS DESCENDANTS](#).

April 18, Friday: [Pawtucket, Rhode Island](#), began a [baseball](#) game against Rochester. The game would end in a tie — several days later.

SPORTS

Lebanese Moslems kidnapped 3 UN soldiers, a reporter, and a photographer. They executed two of the [Irish](#) soldiers and injured the third. The 3 still alive were released.

The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights of the OAS reported that over the previous decade at least 6,000 people had been kidnapped, tortured, and murdered in Argentina, by the government.

Ländler for thirteen strings by Wolfgang Rihm was performed for the initial time, in Baden-Baden. Also premiered was Rihm's Nature Morte -- Still Alive for thirteen strings.

April 23, Wednesday: The [Pawtucket/Rochester baseball](#) ended after 3 days, 8 hours and 25 minutes of play, with Pawtucket winning 3-2. (This is the longest professional baseball game to date.)

SPORTS

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55. Actually, since the Home is endowed and receives contributions, the prices the residents pay are nowhere near the true costs. This is a classic case of dishonesty involving a “disregarded externality.” Such dishonesty in “cost” accounting enables the responsible parties to keep the true costs of the service entirely hidden so that there is no way for their job performance to be evaluated and no way to determine whether the service they are providing is competitive with services which might be obtained by contract with one of the Home’s nearby tax-paying, for-profit elder-care competitors. The way it’s set up, it’s a no-fault, best-effort situation without measurements or responsibilities — of course that’s a sweet package, whenever you can negotiate it.



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1981

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the boarding department was continued for the time being but only under close scrutiny.

Antonio Caprio, Jr., principal of Hope High School (the public high school across the street), resigned upon being charged with having burned down his own home.

December 31, Thursday: In all likelihood Friend [John R. Kellam](#) took off early this afternoon from his work in the urban renewal, redevelopment, and long range city planning position he had held for so many years in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) — as from this point forward he would be a retired man.

I retired from that after thirty-one and one half years, at the age of sixty-five years and two months, with a pretty nice pension, more than seventy percent of the average of my final three years' salary rate.



1982

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the idea of being even in part a boarding school was “laid down” by the Board of Overseers. In the future the students would come primarily from the neighborhood, which is to say, the toney East Side of Providence, and would therefore of necessity be primarily non-Quaker (nevertheless, a small “Residential Community” would be retained for students and faculty).

Friend Margaret Katranides has reminisced about her time with the [Durham, North Carolina](#) Friends, from 1980 to 1982, as follows:



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You were the first meeting I was a member of, and I was grateful that my state of agnosticism was not a barrier. You assured me that if I was open to the spiritual search, you didn't object to the fact that I had not yet found much except for the sense that there was something real in the darkness within me.

I am grateful for the messages I remember from morning worship, and for the gentle but serious silence from some who didn't give messages out loud. Once I tried to elicit something from Virgie Geiger, by saying that I would sometimes have a thought in meeting but before I could decide whether or not to share it, someone else would speak on the same idea, saying more and saying it better, and I asked if that happened to her. She silently smiled and nodded. (What a teacher!) Cal Geiger spoke out loud, and set some high standards for us all for following faithfully what we were being taught. Hale Stevenson gently reminded us not to scapegoat others for the evil in the world, saying that when he looked clearly inside himself he could understand where evil comes from without needing to look outside himself. (This from such a gentle, honest man.) Harry Nagel ended a post-worship round robin by saying, "...and I love everybody in this room," thus giving me a label for the feeling of warmth and rest that would come from a gathered meeting.

So many ways I learned about being Quaker from you all. You gave me a great foundation for the long learning path I continue to travel.



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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	<u>Susan Gower Smith</u>
1957-1960	Frances C. Jeffers
1960-1961	Cyrus M. Johnson
1961-1965	Peter H. Klopfer
1965-1967	Rebecca W. Fillmore
1967-1968	<u>David Tillerson Smith</u>
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	Calhoun D. Geiger
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

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February 22, Monday: On the 250th anniversary of the birth of President George Washington, a 22¢ stamp was issued to commemorate the [Touro Synagogue](#) which he had visited in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the expression their warden (*shamash*) Moses Seixas used in addressing Washington, “to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance,” and the letter by which Washington had responded to them, acknowledging them by repeating warden Moses Seixas’s phrase back to them:



March 16, Tuesday: The USSR announced a unilateral freeze on the deployment of new [nuclear missiles](#) in Europe. The Reagan administration termed this a propaganda ploy.

The Turkish government revealed that in all, since the military takeover of September 1980, 15 people had died in custody under torture.

In a [Newport, Rhode Island](#) court, Claus von Bulow was convicted of twice trying to kill his wife with insulin injections.

Passacaglia for solo cello by William Walton was performed for the first time, in Royal Festival Hall, London.



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1983

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence](#), construction began on a new student center.

The mill and homestead house at [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#) were purchased from the estate of Ella Moffett Mowry by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Del Grande.

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quaker Captives in Morocco, 1685-1701](#)" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 55, pages 67-79).⁵⁶

March 20, Sunday night: In a townhouse on [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s toney "East Side," Mayor Vincent "Buddy" Cianci, Jr., a graduate of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), assaulted Raymond DeLeo with a fireplace log and a lit cigarette.



The local police helped him do this.

56. Ken's interest in world history made him a frequent visitor not only to England and Ireland, but to France, Italy, Greece, and Israel. In fact, although he never made it to South America, he did travel widely on all the other continents, in the South Pacific, and in New Zealand.



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1984

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Nicholites](#) and [Slavery](#) in Eighteenth Century [Maryland](#)" ([Maryland Historical Magazine](#) 79, pages 126-133). Also, his THREE HUNDRED YEARS AND MORE OF THIRD HAVEN [QUAKERISM](#) (Easton, Maryland: Queen Anne Press).

The Overseers Committee of Princeton Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends began to consider the establishment of a Friends School under care of the local monthly meeting. There would be some three years of feasibility studies, and some local [Quakers](#) expressed concerns "about the financial responsibility of a school and the appropriateness of the building. Some feared that the project would unduly sap the energies and resources of the Meeting, that the project would undermine public education in Princeton, and that the school would assume more importance than the Meeting." The outcome of this would be that the school in question, when it would be founded, would be incorporated separately and placed under the care not of the local monthly meeting but of the Burlington Quarterly Meeting comprised of several monthly meetings in that New Jersey region.

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the Jenks Student Center was dedicated.

After abducting and beating up his former wife's boyfriend, Vincent "Buddy" Cianci, Jr., a graduate of this religious school, needed to plead no contest to an assault charge and step down as Mayor of Providence. That is to say, it was not as a result of 30 of his city employees being indicted on federal charges of corruption, or as a result of 22 of them being convicted, that this local figure needed temporarily to step aside from political office.



"Regular" required meeting for worship in the Upper School was reinstated (although we were not told what "regular" meant in this context, we were reassured also to be told that "Lower School and Middle School had regular daily and weekly worship for many years"; subsequent events have revealed to the Quakers watching this from off campus that by deployment of the claim "regular" in this context the school had not claimed "daily" –and had not claimed "weekly" –and had not claimed "monthly").

The Permanent Board recommended transfer of endowment funds for the Quaker school into a separate entity to be known as the Moses Brown Foundation.



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May 9, Wednesday: The [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly removed the mandatory [capital punishment](#) language from its General Law section 11-23-2. No crime in Rhode Island would make possible a coldblooded [execution](#).

1985

August 18, Sunday, 8:30AM: Steven Trotter of Barrington, [Rhode Island](#) came to the [Niagara Falls](#) with a device he had fashioned out of two plastic pickle barrels surrounded in large rubber inner tubes and covered with tarpaulin. He pushed off just upstream from the Horseshoe Falls, quickly reached the curl, and became, at the age of 22, the youngest person ever to survive the falls.





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1986

The Lynn MA [Quaker](#) monthly meeting was laid down. Its records are now at the Rhode Island Historical Society.



The Stony Brook monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) near Princeton, New Jersey approved the rental of their First Day School building for use as a Friends School.

Responsibility for management of the endowment funds of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) was transferred from the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends's Board of Managers of Investments and Permanent Funds to the Board of Overseers of the Moses Brown School, incorporated as the entity "Moses Brown Foundation" (note very carefully that responsibility for management of endowment funds, on the one foot, and ownership and control of endowment funds, on the other foot, are entirely different animals, since management is a delegable activity whereas ownership and responsibility are not thus transferable).

The Upper School instituted a monthly meeting for worship (the modifier "required" is nowhere to be found in their descriptive statement).

Professor [Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "Thomas Loe, Friend of William Penn and Apostle to [Ireland](#)" appeared in SEEKING THE LIGHT: ESSAYS IN [QUAKER](#) HISTORY IN HONOR OF EDWIN B. BRONNER, J. William Frost and John H. Moore, editors (Wallingford: Pendle Hill Publications, Haverford: Friends Historical Association). At the end of this year he retired from his duties as a professor of religion in Dallas, and as an activist in the Friends World Committee for Consultation, to return to his home town of Easton, [Maryland](#) and become a member of the Third Haven monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) (he would be serving on its Worship and Ministry Committee).



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1989

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "The Berry Brothers of Talbot County, [Maryland](#): Early Antislavery Leaders" ([Maryland Historical Magazine](#) 84, pages 1-89). Also, his "Voices of Protest: Eastern Shore Abolitionism Societies, 1790-1820" ([ibid](#), pages 350-360). He became clerk of the Third Haven Friends monthly meeting in Easton, Maryland (until 2001).

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the Board of Overseers became "self-perpetuating" with "nominating input" from the New England Yearly Meeting (we knew of course what "self-perpetuating" meant, having had some historical experience with hereditary monarchies, but wondered what "nominating input" might mean other than "you're free to petition of course, and maybe we'll pay some attention and maybe we won't").

1990

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Del Grande transferred the mill and homestead house at [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#) to the Town of Lincoln.

1991

Doug Reynolds of the Building Conservation Branch of the National Park Service began to research the history of the mill buildings at [Saylesville](#).

Robert J. Steinfeld stated quite falsely, in his THE INVENTION OF FREE LABOR, that "By 1804 slavery had been abolished throughout New England," despite the fact that the US census had recorded that as of 1800 there had still been at least 1,488 slaves in New England, and despite the legal fact that *post nati* statutes had ended birth into slavery in but two of the New England states, [Rhode Island](#) and Connecticut, and despite the fact that, in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, ambiguous judicial decisions and constitutional interpretations had merely discouraged slaveholding rather than actually proscribing the practice.

(The interesting thing is not that Steinfeld had his head up his ass, but that the power of the enduring myth of "white New England" was **still** so overwhelming even as of the Year of Our Lord 1991 that our history professionals **still** were presuming they would not be called on such preposterous prefabrications.)



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1992

Enrollment at the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) reached 760 students.

1993

A preservation studies class at Roger Williams University examined the contents of the mill buildings at [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#).

1994

Hasbro, a [Pawtucket, Rhode Island](#) firm which had come to own the [Milton Bradley](#) Company, revised “The Game of Life” for the generation of the baby-boomers. There was no longer, as there had been during the 19th Century, any pretense that playing this game was going to lead to the encouragement of virtuous conduct.



Bradley avowed that his game would promote virtue.

At the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), monthly, and then weekly, required meeting for worship in the Upper School was instituted (“Lower School and Middle School had regular daily and weekly worship for many years”).

The [Quaker](#) monthly meeting at Stony Brook near Princeton, New Jersey formally took the “Friends School” educational institution on its premises under its spiritual care. (The school’s by-laws at that time required that a majority of the school’s trustees be members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).)



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1995

January 5, Thursday: Americans who were, ostensibly, Christians, such as the good Baptist [John Brown](#) of [Providence](#),



[Rhode Island](#), had in antebellum years been much more heavily involved in the [international slave trade](#) than Jews such as those of the [Touro Synagogue](#) in [Newport](#). Nevertheless, antisemitic black militants had begun to identify American Jews with slave trading — as if Jews had been primarily or solely responsible. Therefore the American Historical Association passed a resolution: “The AHA ... condemns as false any statement alleging that Jews played a disproportionate role in the exploitation of slave labor or in the Atlantic slave trade.” A Jewish source has pointed out that:⁵⁷

In all, 934 [Rhode Island](#) vessels are known to have transported slaves to the western hemisphere between 1709

57. The figure of 1,275 persons listed as having been imported by Jews or by partnerships including Jews is entirely made up of individuals imported to the USA by the one [Newport, Rhode Island](#) businessman, President of the congregation of [Touro Synagogue](#), [Aaron Lopez](#):



This individual admittedly funded some 200 ventures at sea, approximately 20 of which were slaving ventures. No other such businessman was cited in this study despite the fact that Lopez was most definitely not acting alone in Newport, and despite the fact that the firm with which he was affiliated had another major North American office, in the port of Charlestown SC. To arrive at such a statistic, slaves delivered to other destinations went uncounted. The quote is per Eli Faber’s SLAVERY AND THE JEWS: A HISTORICAL INQUIRY, in the “Occasional Paper Series” funded by Anne Bass Schneider and Dr. Louis Schneider of Fort Wayne IN for the Jewish Studies Program of Hunter College.



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and 1807. A total of 925 owners have been identified for these ships, of whom only 42, or 4.5%, were Jewish. Furthermore, only a minute fraction of [slaves](#) were carried on ships owned by Jewish merchants. Shipowners whose religion is identifiable are known to have transported a total of 64,708 slaves to the New World. Of these, only 1,275 slaves, or 1.9%, traveled on vessels owned by Jews and non-Jews in partnership. In contrast, 62,829 of the slaves, or 97 percent, were transported on ships owned exclusively by Rhode Island's non-Jewish merchants.

Lest there be any doubt about it: the [Quakers](#) of [Providence](#) want you to know that there were Quakers also who were involved in the [international slave trade](#) out of [Newport, Rhode Island](#). We know this, not because we know the names of all of the offending families –our researches, which have produced names such as Wanton, are as yet far from complete– but because we know that our meetings had to struggle with such persons, whoever they were, mired in their livelihood, in order to clear them and our association of this fault. This was a process which involved a good deal of time and a good deal of soul-searching, and was then covered over in a good deal of forgetting and self-satisfaction.

October 28, Saturday: The former site of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church at 193 Meeting Street in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) was commemorated upon its 200th anniversary. This church was the first for Rhode Island blacks, having been founded in 1795 as the African Freedmen's Society, and before the civil war this group functioned at least in part as a destination point for those who were escaping from slavery on the Underground Railroad through Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut, into Rhode Island — a center around which they might re-order their lives. A former slave, Ichabod Northrup, who had fought in the Revolutionary War, had been among the founders of this association. At first the Bethel group had met in the homes of members and in the Quaker meeting house at the corner of North Main Street and Meeting Street. Such churches were disapproved of by the white community, but as one meeting place was removed by the authorities, it was replaced by another, and sometimes two or three. Eventually the congregation had been able to obtain its own building — the lot was purchased in 1820 and a building constructed on it in 1866. In 1961 the building had become shaky and the congregation sold the plot to Brown University in order to purchase their current Bethel Church at 30 Rochambeau Avenue and Hope Street. The first service at the new location was conducted in February 1962. The old site, which had become nothing but a tree-lined walkway to Brown University's Grimshaw-Gudewicz Building near the Sarah Doyle Women's Center, will now bear a commemorative plaque.

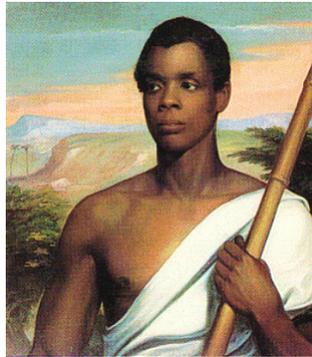


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1996

Steven Spielberg released his movie AMISTAD. An undercritical review of this Hollywood production by a professor of law has produced the following howler: “AMISTAD begins with the event that made that ship’s history different from other slave ships: the gradual extraction of a nail from the ship which allowed [Joseph Cinqué](#) (also known as [Sengbe Pie](#)) to free first himself and then the other slaves on board.” Obviously, the movie has made it appear as if the other slaves aboard [La Amistad](#) had been, on the night of the takeover of the vessel in Cuban waters, chained, whereas it is generally recognized by historians that only Cinqué was in restraints (a collar) — because only he had made any previous gesture toward escape.



I frankly acknowledge that I was initially overwhelmed by the Spielberg movie on *La Amistad*. However, after a period I began to have second thoughts. On the following screen are some other very problematic aspects of the movie, more accurately presented:



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- My trepidations center on the figure of [Joseph Cinqué](#) standing in court and petitioning “Give me free.” To my way of thinking Cinqué should have been presented as potentially a perplexing Patrick Henry figure, that is, as the sort of problematic person who indeed wanted freedom for himself but was ready to allow that having freedom for oneself involved, in that social context, the necessity of taking it away from others — of oneself owning slaves. The charge is available, that in both the case of Patrick Henry and the case of Cinqué, the personal freedom that was desired included the freedom to enslave others.
- It seems to me that the idea of “giving” freedom that is presented in this movie is a modern conceit and was something entirely alien to that time and place. To the very best of my understanding, freedom was recognized as something that was never given, but instead was recognized as something which ever of necessity had to be **taken**. My suspicion is that such a petition as this movie’s “Give me free” would have been greeted in that time and place with simple derision, with mockery; such a petitioner with manacled hands would have become the butt of rude rough barroom jests — would not by most have been taken at all seriously.
- The presentation of the complexities of the actual case, in this movie, were confined to the lower-court proceedings, and the appearance of this marvelous actor Anthony Hopkins performing John Quincy Adams before the Supreme Court of the United States of America was so constructed as to make it seem, quite falsely, that at the highest levels of our jurisprudence the Supremes were able to decide this case upon broad and righteous principles. The fact of the situation was quite different, of course. The Supremes decided this case on the basis of the same legal fine points and quibbling as had the lower courts. Had any of the petitioners made the mistake of informing the Supreme Court that actually he had been captured in Africa years ago while still quite young, before the international treaty in question had come into effect, the Supremes would have immediately and remorselessly returned these men to Cuba to face torture and execution. Thus, despite the fact that the movie’s depiction of our legal confusion begins with great accuracy, the movie winds up, suspiciously, merely perpetuating a popular patriotic myth, that at the **very highest** levels of our government, decency and wisdom must and shall prevail.
- John Quincy Adams defended the [La Amistad](#) mutineers by asserting a States Rights argument, not to be interfered with by the federal government, when in fact he, and his father before him, had been politically opposed to such States Rights. The Adamses were the quintessential political hacks of the first 50 years of the Republic, relentlessly pushing the economic agenda of their immediate neighbors at the expense of the rest of the citizens of the country. John Adams had attempted to subvert the Constitution and free speech with the Alien and Sedition acts and, when the voters punished him for this, seems never to have understood that he and those of his class were not entitled to more freedom than others. To become President after his father, the son had to subvert the electoral process through back-room political maneuvering, and be appointed to rule by the House of Representatives.



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- The historical defense attorney Roger Sherman Baldwin, portrayed by the actor Matthew McConaughey as a cynical but ineffectual real estate lawyer, had been an abolitionist before this case began, rather than merely as presented in this movie, a person able to see only the property implications of a human being's struggle for freedom. This defense attorney's supposed "development" during the film, from an insensitive ambulance-chaser to a caring abolitionist, falsifies this historical person's earlier commitment to the movement. The movie gives us no sense whatever that this ridiculous man is going to go on to become the honored governor of the State of Connecticut.
- The linguist who is depicted in the movie as a bumbling idiot and fraud –evidently for comic relief– was actually one of our foremost students of language during that period, Josiah Gibbs. It was this historical person, rather than the fictional Joadson or the fictional Baldwin, who successfully scoured eastern ports looking for a black sailor who understood the Mende language.
- District court judge Andrew T. Judson was opposed to abolitionists before the trial began and had strong racial antipathies — and yet very much overcame all this in rendering his verdict.
- [Joseph Cinqué](#) lied to his helpers in America. The film, however, never suggests that he was other than totally reliable.
- Cinqué would have been allowed to assist in no way in the creation of the legal defenses mounted by Roger Sherman Baldwin or John Quincy Adams. He would not even have been kept informed. To suppose that a black person would have been consulted or heeded, by any white movers and shakers, is to seriously misrepresent the ethos of 19th-Century America.
- John Quincy Adams was already assisting the defense team, as early as the district court trial, sending them questions and raising issues for their consideration.
- If a southerner like John C. Calhoun had mentioned the import of such a case it would not have been by use of a term such as "civil war." (He might conceivably have referred, instead, to "disunion" or to "secession.")
- Since the vessel [La Amistad](#) was brought into the Connecticut port during the month of August, there could not have been snow in the air.
- The depiction of presidential candidate Martin Van Buren on a campaign train indicates precious little awareness of 1840s campaign practices.
- The treaties governing the case were not merely the 1795 Pinckney treaty which might require the slaves to be returned to Spain, but also an 1819 American-Spanish treaty reconfirming that 1795 treaty and an 1817 Anglo-Spanish treaty which had outlawed the purchase of Africans in Africa for purposes of enslavement.



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- President Martin Van Buren did not appoint a special judge for the circuit court trial. The critical trial was conducted at the district court level and the hearing in the circuit court was merely an exercise in which the district court decision was affirmed so that the case could be rapidly appealed to the Supreme Court. The replacement of a local judge with the imaginary judge “Coughlin” for Van Buren’s political gain as depicted in the film is not merely pure filmic invention, but masks some real and even more repulsive national history. As an outrageous betrayal of our legal process at the highest levels, Secretary of State Forsyth had made arrangements for the persons involved to be placed on the USS *Grampus* and returned to Cuba to be tortured and murdered **no matter what the conclusion reached in the trial**. The President of the United States, his Secretary of State, and this Connecticut district attorney had agreed in early 1840 to a strategy that would subvert the entire course of justice and violate the separation of powers, simply to be rid of a political bombshell before the 1840 election. The prosecutor, District Attorney Holabird, changed tactics in the middle of the trial by acknowledging that the captives were indeed Africans, merely so that the White House could continue to hold them in custody even if this court set them free. In John Quincy Adams’s summation before the Supreme Court he of course described the pattern of executive interference with the [La Amistad](#) court case and revealed Van Buren’s shocking 1840 plot to send the Africans to Cuba regardless of the lower court’s decision, because executive interference with the judiciary is of course a topic which can be reliably expected to make justices of the Supreme Court most sympathetic (personal freedom is, by contrast, a “ho-hummer”).
- The appeal from Judge Judson’s ruling to the Supreme Court in 1841, nearly two years and three presidents (Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, and John Tyler) after the case had originally begun, was heard by five Southern justices rather than seven as was asserted in the movie’s voiceover. When the Supreme Court heard John Quincy Adams’s oral argument, only seven justices rather than the nine depicted in the movie were in attendance. This sort of merely numerical inaccuracy is insignificant, of course, but it does point out how little consideration Spielberg gave to the historical details underlying his movie — since this falsifying of the number of justices on the bench in fact served no storyline function whatever.
- The movie omits to mention that a rescue was being prepared by abolitionists who were willing to risk violating the law and having all their property seized by the government, in order to forward the victims to safety on the underground railroad. The rescue would have been easy since the African women were working in local homes and since [Joseph Cinqué](#) and the other African men were allowed out of the jail for regular sports on the New Haven town common, a green across from the tavern housing the jail facility. They staged athletic exhibitions and Americans tossed coins which the Africans used to buy rum in the saloon that was the entrance to the jail and that was being run by the jailer. Had this rescue plan been implemented their path to Canada might very well have led, at one point, through the Thoreau boardinghouse or through the home of the village blacksmith in Concord, Massachusetts.
- This Hollywood movie seems to have drawn a great deal of its visual imagery from the mural “Mutiny on the *Amistad*” created in 1939 by the African-American artist Hale Woodruff at Talladega College’s Savery Library, in Alabama. It is obviously from this mural that the movie has derived the ludicrous and impossible shape of its Hollywood prop-shop machetes, which make sense only from the perspective of a flat wall painting projecting three-dimensionally and which never could have functioned to chop sugarcane.



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- The movie has been based not on a reliable source such as Howard Jones's 1987 historical study *MUTINY ON THE AMISTAD: THE SAGE OF A SLAVE REVOLT AND ITS IMPACT ON AMERICAN ABOLITION, LAW AND DIPLOMACY*, but instead on a 1953 novelization of the incident by William A. Owens entitled *BLACK MUTINY: THE REVOLT ON THE SCHOONER AMISTAD*. On the current paperback edition of that novel, the publisher is claiming it as "a key historical reference for the major motion picture *AMISTAD*." The implication, of course, is that that old novelization by Owens is a careful and current historical account of the event; however, whatever scholarship went into the creation of this novel was not careful at the time, and assuredly is no longer current. On the back of the book as currently republished appears the following significant disclaimer: "Written as a novel in 1953 by William A. Owens, this is one historian's view of the Amistad mutiny."
- The movie seems to be arguing, especially in that final dramatic courtroom explanation, that an American ideology of freedom was the ultimate heroic force — and this is really, really problematic. In fact, it is a dangerous nationalistic mythification.
- At the home of John Quincy Adams in Quincy MA, the amaryllis plant used in the movie has four blooms, which for 1839 is at least two too many. The Spielberg film seems to turn on an influence by [Joseph Cinqué](#) upon Adams, in which Cinqué communicates to Adams an African perspective having to do with influence by ancestral spirits. In this African perspective, the ancestral spirits are actively struggling to cause their descendants, in the present, to honor them by appropriate behavior and by the offering of appropriate rites. Adams receives this in the movie, however, in a typically American way, as a need to live up to an example which has been set for us by our illustrious forbears. Not only would Cinqué never have been invited to visit Adams in his home, not only did such an interaction probably never take place even away from that home environment, but, in addition, these two points of view about heritage have little or nothing in common and the attempt which the movie takes to equate them is, if it is anything at all, disingenuous.
- The story that Cinqué returned to Africa only to become himself a slave trader seems to have derived from page 308 of William Owens's 1953 book *SLAVE MUTINY*. Owens seems to have done some research for this 1953 book, for in his "Afterword" he indicates that his typewritten notes from documentary sources were deposited in the New Haven Colony Historical Society. However, there are no footnotes in this volume and the author admits that he invented dialogue and "settings" for dramatic effect. Howard Jones, in his 1987 scholarly study *MUTINY ON THE AMISTAD: THE SAGE OF A SLAVE REVOLT AND ITS IMPACT ON AMERICAN ABOLITION, LAW AND DIPLOMACY*, alleges that "Cinqué returned to his people, although he eventually worked as an interpreter for the AMA mission at Kaw-Mende until his death about 1879" (page 255, note 27).
- Many of the settings used in the movie were anachronistic. [Newport](#) was used to represent New Haven, and many of the buildings visible in the scenes date only to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Newport's early 18th-Century Colony House stood in appropriately for the courtroom, for Roger Sherman Baldwin's office, and for the hotel in which Baldwin stayed during the Supreme Court deliberations. However, the [Rhode Island](#) State Capitol, erected in 1900, was used to represent the United States Capitol, apparently in the mistaken belief that the US Capitol in 1839 already had its dome despite that fact that this elaboration would not be added until the 1850s and 1860s. (The Roman Catholic church in which Judge Coughlin prayed was similarly anachronistic for the time and place of the [La Amistad](#) events.)



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- The *AMISTAD* movie does depict how [Joseph Cinqué](#) was kidnapped near the British colony of Sierra Leone by neighbors, but it fails to place sufficient emphasis upon the fact that this was done on account of his refusal to pay an acknowledged debt. He was apparently delivered to a Spanish slave merchant on the coast. Many Africans in North America did indeed owe their enslavement to this sort of initiation, though more were kidnapped in raids or wars. By British law Sierra Leone was supposed to be slave-free. At two points the film uses the Lomboko fort near Sierra Leone, that at the time was owned by the Havana trading house of Don Pedro Martínez. During the 19th Century era of illegal slave-trading many slaves were indeed kept in such “[barracoons](#)” but throughout the earlier era of legal slave-trading most slaves had been bought or bartered direct from other Africans.

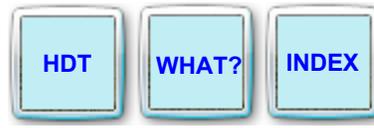
Cinqué was a member of an inland rice-farming group, the Mende, who basically lived by trading slaves and kola and palm products out toward the trading groups on the coast of Africa while trading European goods in toward the interior of the continent. At the time he was captured about half of the people living in Mende territory were slaves in agricultural work or in transit to the coastal trade. He probably had several names (Joseph Cinqué, Cinquez, or Singbe Pieh) not because Americans spelled his name in any manner convenient for them but because he had been trading with Englishmen, Spaniards, and Portuguese. Cinqué’s account of his capture –that the Portuguese seized him on a road near his home– is unlikely to have been the truth of the matter. More likely, he was himself a trader and had been betrayed into the same sort of thing to which he was subjecting others. Presumably Cinqué would have been telling the Americans what he supposed they wanted to hear, when he claimed that he had been a rice farmer and that he himself had never owned slaves. Cinqué was known as an African prince in his time, at least in America, and to be a prince among the Mende would have been to be a slaveholder and to be at least complicitous in the traffic in humans.

The basal problem in the *AMISTAD* movie is that it entirely elides the critical difference between not wanting to oneself be a slave or captive, and being opposed to slavery. The same problem surfaces in our understanding the Americo-Liberians of the period, who were by no means abolitionist in their sentiments. They were settlers who sought to serve as middlemen between two great systems of slave-produced goods — North American and African. They claimed to be Virginians and, even in Monrovia, they were indeed Virginians.

If we deflate these myths of the Patrick Henry who wanted freedom, the Cinqué who wanted freedom, etc., and if we deflate this Americo-Liberians-as-abolitionists myth, we may come to see more clearly the black and the white men and women who **did** oppose slavery.

Religious organizations with a history of involvement in abolitionism (the New Haven Congregationalists and the United Church of Christ and the United Methodists, among others) have been protesting that the movie invents a conversation in which abolitionist Lewis Tappan speculated that the African prisoners might be more valuable if they were executed and became “martyrs” to the anti-slavery cause. However, they should most definitely not be objecting, since such thought processes were in fact very common among white abolitionists. It is precisely what these religious organizations found most problematic about the movie, that I myself found most true to the actuality of the antebellum situation. I am grateful for the negative portrait of the abolitionists, in particular of the Buffum character. The arrogant manner in which these abolitionists seized upon the Right, in order to magnify themselves by invidious contrast with white Southerners who were the sheerest scum, was one of the prime causes of our civil war, and the trauma of our civil war is one of the prime reasons why even now this nation cannot bring itself to treat its citizens of color with anything approaching fairness. Had these abolitionists approached the Southern white as a person of honor facing an intransigent situation and a painful choice, the civil strife might have been averted and thus the era of Reconstruction and Segregation, from which in fact we have not yet emerged, could have been averted.





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These religious organizations have protested that “Tappan himself was willing to become a martyr, and, in fact, he and his brother paid dearly for their lifelong struggle against slavery.” This tempts me to go “Oh, give me a break.” In fact the prime cover story of the person who wants to sacrifice others to his own cause has **always** been “Look at how I myself am sacrificing, you cannot blame me for sacrificing you as well.” It is long overdue for the American public to see these abolitionists as the self-righteous troublemakers they were, part of all the problems rather than the solution for any of them. For too long we have attempted to ignore the deep chasms of suspicion that lay between the white abolitionists and the black abolitionists. It seems to me that in this constructed carriage scene in the movie, in which the Buffum character is made to speculate that the black prisoners may need to die for the good of the general movement, there was a spiritual accuracy which so far has been evading us. In fact the white abolitionists of the 19th Century in general impatiently wanted the black abolitionists to “sacrifice more for the cause,” and the response of the black abolitionists of the 19th Century was ever that the white abolitionists did not truly grasp what the struggle was all about,



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that the nature of the problem was that the black people of America were **already** being forced to sacrifice much too much during their lives.

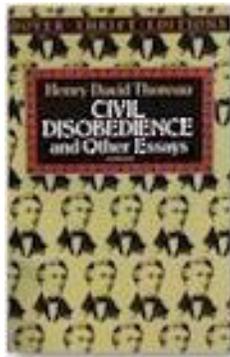
An excerpt from an Internet page offered by one of these religious organizations reads:

- > Visit our Amistad Page, designed to help you and your congregation
- > interpret the new Steven Spielberg movie. This epic about African
- > slaves who fought for their freedom and the Christian abolitionists
- > who defended them in court marks the beginning of the mass movement
- > to abolish slavery in the US.

But this is quite tendentious. In fact this case had no known influence on the abolition of slavery either in the US or in Africa. Had the slaves aboard the *La Amistad* not freed themselves, in general import nothing about US history and nothing about African history would be altered in the slightest. The advent of general freedom would have been neither delayed nor accelerated.

Here's another such snippet.

- > Although the movie is historically accurate when it shows the horror
- > of the slave trade or the courage of the *La Amistad* captives rising
- > up against their tormenters, the screenplay often misrepresents
- > Christian abolitionists as arrogant or self-serving. The movie even
- > invents a conversation in which abolitionist Lewis Tappan speculates
- > that the African prisoners might be more valuable if they were
- > executed and became "martyrs" to the anti-slavery cause. [and a
- > little below] "Tappan himself was willing to become a martyr, and,
- > in fact, he and his brother paid dearly for their lifelong struggle
- > against slavery," says the Rev. Thomas E. Dipko, a United Church of
- > Christ minister and head of an agency whose predecessor body was
- > founded by Tappan and other Christian abolitionists. "They advocated
- > civil disobedience for reasons of conscience, but they would never
- > have welcomed or exploited the suffering of other people,
- > particularly of slaves."





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To see how exceedingly accurate the film's negative portrayal of certain white abolitionists actually is—to see how very complicit abolitionism could be with a straightforward racist desire to solve the American problem of the presence of inferior people by arranging for American peoples of color to be eliminated— please consider a fine new study of the complex motivations of [Waldo Emerson](#) issued in 1997 by Oxford UP. The monograph of which I speak is by Anita Haya Patterson and is titled FROM EMERSON TO KING: DEMOCRACY, RACE, AND THE POLITICS OF PROTEST:

From Pages 4-5: "What I have found to be most compelling and bewildering about Emerson's writing -what has made it hardest for me to know how to think about him- is that his defense of rights and his racism are intimately and deliberately connected.... [T]he fervent, critical recuperation of American democracy undertaken by Emerson was shaped and indeed made conceptually coherent only through his recourse to racialist language and ideology. [Continuing in an endnote] Compare Orlando Patterson's claims regarding the sociohistorical necessity and consequences of the central contradiction between articulate defenses of freedom and the fact of slavery in America. Observing that 'Americans have never been able to explain how it came to pass that the most articulate defender[s] of their freedoms ... were large-scale, largely unrepentant slaveholders,' Patterson finds that '[s]lavery is associated not only with the development of advanced economies, but also with the emergence of several of the most profoundly cherished ideals and beliefs in the Western tradition. The idea of freedom and the concept of property were both intimately bound up with the rise of slavery, their very antithesis. The great innovators not only took slavery for granted, they insisted on its necessity to their way of life.... The joint rise of slavery and cultivation of freedom was no accident. It was ... a sociohistorical necessity' (SLAVERY AND SOCIAL DEATH: A COMPARATIVE STUDY [Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1982], viii-ix)."

What Anita Haya Patterson, Orlando's spouse, is alleging in this new 1997 book of hers is that all of us, even our most radical abolitionists, were and are deeply influenced by the "double-consciousness" we find in esteemed characters such as Emerson, a doubled consciousness which has been created over the centuries by our most intransigent national race and class predicament. Her hope is that we will find the courage and the grace, rather than merely to renounce in some easy and superficial manner this doubled consciousness we have inherited as Americans of various skin hues and of various heritages, instead to learn something of great value from it.



Thus the last sentence of her Epilogue is not merely a question but is also a daunting challenge for us all:

Page 199, Epilogue: "How can double **possibly** mean nothing?"



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This is a thinking and feeling person's book. I recommend it highly. If we were to pay attention to materials such as this, America would become a quite different place. But will such a movie make America a better place?



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In fact I am not at all certain that it is even **theoretically** possible to make a Hollywood movie that is historically truthful:

- Hollywood history must be histrionic, that is, it must present struggle in terms of good versus evil, and present this from the viewpoint of the righteous who have triumphed or will eventually triumph. The viewing public will not attend, and would not grasp the story line of, any historical narrative which deviated from these conventions. Thus in the *AMISTAD* movie, it was necessary to falsify history in order to present the legal case for freeing the Africans, once that case reaches the Supreme Court of the United States, as if it had been a struggle in which good triumphed over evil. The movie would therefore leave it entirely unexplained why, when in October 1841 the American slaves aboard the *Creole* revolted and killed some of the crew of the vessel and forced the survivors to sail the vessel to neutral waters in the Bahamas, the US government would spend the next 15 years unsuccessfully badgering the British authorities who had promptly freed these American slaves to return this “property” to US control so we could torture and murder “it.” Likewise, the falsehoods inherent in the movie would leave it entirely unexplained how it could be that when in 1857 the Supremes would rule in the case of *Dred Scott*, that no American black had any rights that any American white was bound to respect, this decision would rendered by a court the majority of the sitting members of which had been the very justices who had earlier voted to free the Africans of the *La Amistad* case!
- The point of view of the “Point of View” characters (POV) must be the one designated as righteous, or politically correct. Sorry little historical facts, such as that ex-President John Quincy Adams never displayed any concern whatever in regard to the slaves held by his wife’s family, and did not turn antislavery until after he had come to believe, in his sulking at home, that it had been the intransigent opposition of the Southern proslavery Democrats which had prevented him in his own turn as US president from accomplishing anything of note, prevented him from rising above mediocrity, sorry little historical facts such as these, must be neglected. It must be presented that Adams would have invited a negro into his home, and would have indulged in personal intimate conversation with that negro — certainly false. It must be presented that Adams was operating out of sympathy and generosity rather than out of vengefulness. Likewise, since the figure of *Joseph Cinqué* is the POV character in this film for black Americans, Cinqué must be falsified into an abolitionist. There is no evidence that Cinqué, who came from the Mende, a slave-owning tribe, was opposed to slavery. The only evidence we have is that he was, like the slaveholder Patrick Henry, in favor of **his own** freedom. Whether his personal freedom involved an entitlement to enslave others, or excluded an entitlement to enslave others, is something which is not on the record. We do know that he himself had been enslaved while in Africa due to his refusal to pay back an acknowledged personal debt.



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- The audience must be provided with a POV character with whom they can personally identify. Up to this point, that POV has always been, as in the case of the movies about A MAN CALLED HORSE, through white eyes. Even in this Spielberg movie *AMISTAD*, where there is a POV through black eyes, the audience is distanced by the techniques of subtle filmic narration, and this subtle filmic narration is overwhelmingly through white eyes and through white attitudes. Thus, even when the only heroes and the only actors on the screen are black, the structure of the events which they portray is the structure necessitated by the overarching white frame of reference, which is “We’ve got these people in our jail and are trying to figure out how best to dispose of them, so we need to figure out how we came to such a pass.”
- The story must be that of triumph, of overcoming. There is no triumph and no overcoming whatever in the true story of the *La Amistad*. By the conclusion of the case no lessons whatever had been learned, and no general societal situations had been altered in the slightest. The disposition of this case is therefore of necessity presented falsely in this movie, in order to transform it into a story of triumph, of overcoming, one of having had an influence upon the breaking out of a purgative civil war later on in our national trajectory. But that civil war would not be fought over the issue of slavery, rather it would be fought over the issue of union, plus, that civil war would most definitely not prove to be in any sense purgative. Nor did the *La Amistad* case (as is demonstrated in spades by the subsequent cases of the *Creole* and of *Dred Scott*) have any influence whatever toward the bringing on of this period of civil strife. To the contrary, judicial resolution of such conflicts was inherently generally tending toward the **postponement** of, or the **prevention** of, such armed strife.

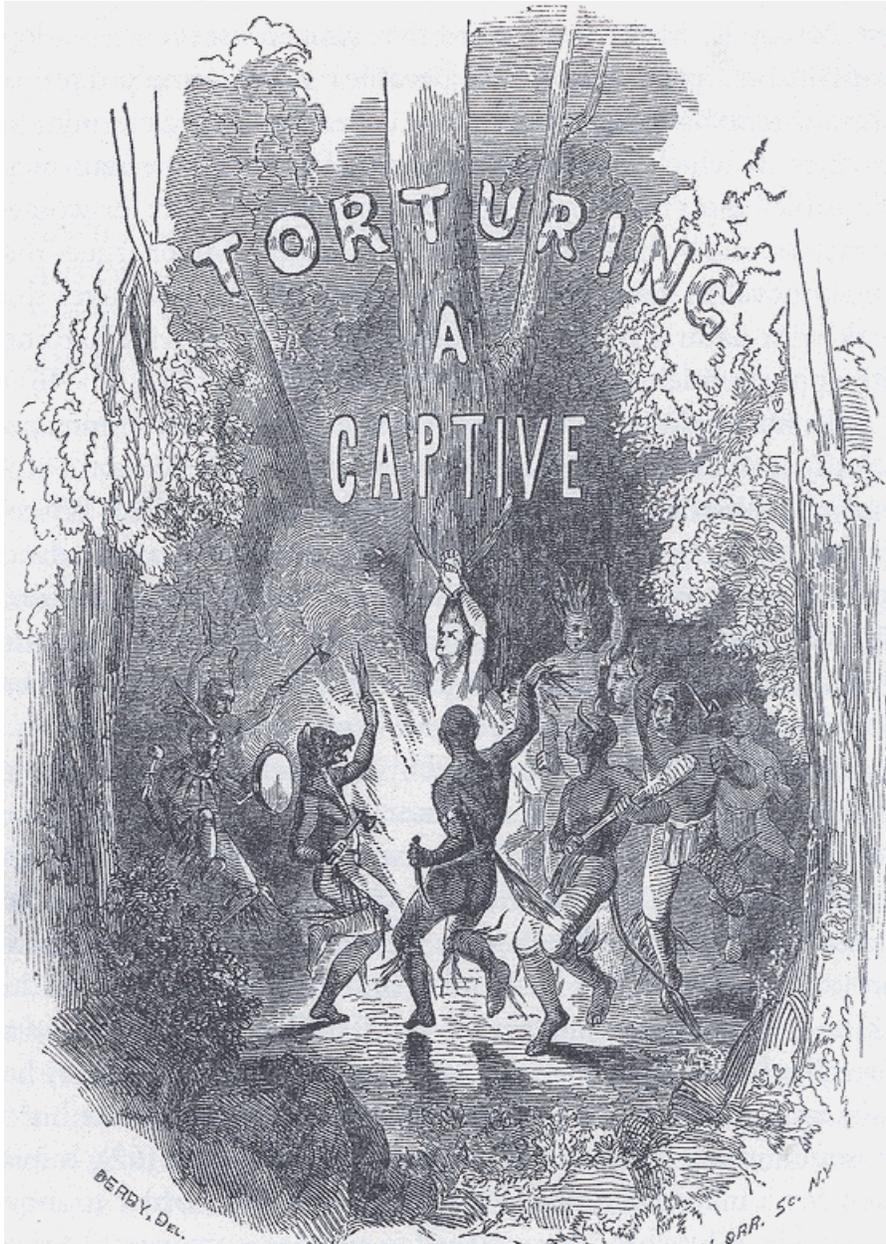
Why was this particular subject-matter chosen, to make a film of? The historic *Amistad* case was important and dramatic but in fact it had nothing whatever to do with the ending of human enslavement. It neither accelerated nor postponed our US Civil War. It created no freedom precedent. This historical case was entirely about adherence to international treaties by signatories to them. If at any time it had been established that these people had been transported from Africa during their teens, **before** the treaties in question had come into effect, all of them would have been instantly returned to Cuba by our justices, to be inevitably tortured and murdered. These were the same justices who, later, would decide the *Dred Scott* case. Their action in this case

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was consistent with their agenda, to make slavery work as an institution.



The Dreamworld studio, and director Steven Spielberg, have touted their film *AMISTAD* as a critical examination of slavery in antebellum America. They even prepared classroom materials to be used along with the showing of the film in schools. Why did they not do this with the story of [Nat Turner](#)'s revolt, instead, or with a major escape narrative such as that of Douglass, or the Crafts, or Tubman, or with a major rescue narrative such as those dealing with Shadrach or Jerry? The nasty suspicious thought arises, that the reason might be, because dealing with such real-life scenarios would have made it quite impossible to create yet another crowd-pleasing tale of self-righteousness and national unity and democratic triumph.



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Notice how readily the [La Amistad](#) incident lent itself to a portrayal in which the iniquity of human enslavement becomes associated with silly, moribund, reactionary, monarchical, and antirepublican despots in the Old World, rather than displaying itself as a fundamental economic, social, and ideological component of our American society. The makers of AMISTAD have merely provided us with yet another in a long series of sanctimonious images of American history in which Our Nation triumphs over Wrong Others without taking note of its own moral failings.

Slavery provided us with sugar, AMISTAD with saccharine.

April 27, Saturday: A memorial was dedicated to Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#), honoring her as a theologian, preacher, wisewoman and religious rebel in colonial America whose profound influence on religious thinking in America is gaining increasing recognition, was placed in Founders Brook Park, [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#). Commemorated with her was Friend [Mary Dyer](#), her friend and loyal supporter who became the only female to be hung for being a [Quaker](#) missionary in Puritan Boston.





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1997

An inventory was made of the contents of the mill buildings at [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#).

1998

At [Brown University](#), Professor Joanne Pope Melish's *DISOWNING SLAVERY: GRADUAL EMANCIPATION AND "RACE" IN NEW ENGLAND, 1780-1860*⁵⁸ was criticized by a reviewer for having been inadequately fulsome about William Lloyd Garrison's regard for colored people and their regard for him. Here is Professor Melish's <Joanne_Melish@Brown.edu> considered response:

Although Garrison began as a colonizationist, he became a rabid anti-colonizationist after 1830, and he was a vocal supporter of equal rights. Of course, abolition and removal were not necessarily contradictory notions; [Emerson](#) said that "the abolitionist wishes to abolish slavery, but because he wishes to abolish the black man." Making a somewhat different point, I am not convinced that language and action in support of the "elevation" of free people of color, and of equality as an abstraction, did not frequently coexist with a paternalistic racial ideology that objectified people of color as "projects" as surely as slavery objectified them as commodities. While Garrison's words and actions had important positive consequences for free people of color, and while I would place Garrison at the extreme left edge of an ideological continuum from inclusive empowerment through what George Fredrickson has called "romantic racialism" to outright racism and support for removal, I am not sure that he or any of his supporters were able entirely to transcend the racial ideology of his day – an investment in whiteness that I argue grew out of New England's slow elimination of slavery.

58. Joanne Pope Melish. *DISOWNING SLAVERY: GRADUAL EMANCIPATION AND "RACE" IN NEW ENGLAND, 1780-1860*. Ithaca NY and London: Cornell UP, 1998



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(In regard to [Waldo Emerson](#)'s comment above, that "the abolitionist wishes to abolish slavery, but because he wishes to abolish the black man": an exceedingly strong case could be made that Emerson was speaking here not only of wrong other abolitionists, but also of himself. That is to say, Emerson's writings leave no question but that he was frequently irritated by the very existence of black Americans, and bore them good will only as abstractions rather than in the solid flesh.)

(In regard to this comment by Professor Melish about "New England's slow elimination of slavery," above: In the year 2000 there would be a ruckus in [Rhode Island](#) when someone proposed that the word "plantation" be removed from the state's official name "Rhode Island and Providence Plantations." There would be indignant protests in the [Providence Journal](#) (the "ProJo") that the word "plantation" in New England had simply never implied human enslavement—that Providence's plantations had been simple farms—and it needed to be rudely pointed out to these protesting popular columnists that at one time according to the US census there had been as many slaves on their little state's grand plantations as in all the rest of New England put together!)

February 15, Sunday: An extraordinarily different article appeared in the local [Providence, Rhode Island](#) newspaper, the "ProJo":

History of slavery in R.I. not a story in black and white, but shades of gray

By JODY McPHILLIPS, Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

Steven Spielberg shot his slave-revolt film [La Amistad](#) in [Rhode Island](#) because the state has great Colonial architecture.

It made sense for other reasons.

Rhode Island played a bigger role than any other state in the [Atlantic slave trade](#) and had the only slave plantations in New England. At the same time, it was an early leader in the efforts to abolish slavery.

"Throughout the 18th century, Rhode Island merchants controlled between 60 and 90 percent of the American trade in African slaves," writes historian Jay Coughtry in *THE NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE: RHODE ISLAND AND THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, 1700-1807*.

To be fair, the American slave trade amounted to just a small fraction of the European trade, which brought more than 11 million Africans to the New World over nearly 400 years.

Only half a million of them went directly to North American colonies; the rest went to the plantations and slave markets of Central and South America, from which some would be resold later to the southern colonies.

By comparison Rhode Island, which came the closest of any colony to having a slave trade of its own, made more than 900 slaving voyages during the 18th century, transporting about 106,000 slaves.

Few actually settled in Rhode Island, which was poorly suited for large-scale agriculture with its small rocky



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farms and icy winters. But they were bought from the slave fortresses of Africa's Gold Coast with Rhode Island-made rum; transported on Rhode Island-built ships to the slave markets of the Caribbean; and later dressed in Rhode Island-made slave cloth.

Why did Rhode Island get so involved?

Money, mostly. The state had good ports and skilled seamen but not much good farmland. Once the fertile areas of South County were settled, the only place to make real money was at sea.

And no trade was as profitable as slaving.

Slave traders like the Browns of [Providence](#) amassed great fortunes, enough to build those mansions along Benefit Street and to found Brown University. Later, [Rhode Island](#) textile manufacturers produced the coarse cotton cloth slaves wore throughout the New World, much like prison garb today.

There were also coincidental connections.

Two groups who eventually settled here -the Portuguese and the Cape Verdeans- played huge roles in the early slave trade. In the 1400s, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to buy or steal humans from the west coast of Africa; they turned the empty, volcanic Cape Verde islands into a major depot for the worldwide slave trade and created a mixed-race population that flourishes today throughout southeastern New England.

And yet, from the earliest days, some Rhode Islanders were repelled by this human commerce.

The conflict tore families apart. [John Brown](#), of [Providence](#), was an avid slaver, his brother [Moses Brown](#) an abolitionist who fought him at every turn. [Bristol](#) slaver James DeWolf's son Levi made one slaving voyage and abandoned the trade in disgust; Levi's brother Charles once defended his extensive slaving activities by telling a preacher, "Parson, I've always wanted to roll in gold."

In 1774, the General Assembly outlawed importing slaves into [Rhode Island](#); a decade later, it was one of the first states to free children born of slave mothers.

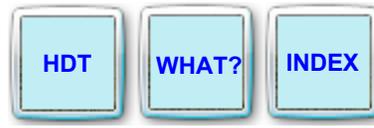
It's a complicated story, with many moral shadings. Or, as Keith Stokes of [Newport](#) says, "It's not black and white so much as gray."

Humanity is divided into two: the masters and the slaves.

- Aristotle, POLITICS.

How could it happen? How could supposedly civilized people enslave other human beings?

Historian Hugh Thomas, in THE SLAVE TRADE, says slavery is as old as recorded history, known in virtually all cultures. Typically, slaves were people who lost wars, owed debts, broke laws or were sold into servitude by



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impoverished parents.

Throughout the Middle Ages, enslavement was increasingly linked to religious conflict. Moslems would enslave Christians, or vice versa: the dominant culture felt they were doing the "less enlightened" people a favor, by liberating them from error and exposing them to the true faith.

By the 1400s, the seafaring Portuguese had begun trading with the small fiefdoms of northwest Africa. They went looking for gold, but didn't find enough; increasingly, they brought home slaves, with the blessing of the Pope. Better a slave in an advanced Christian nation than a free subject of a "cannibal" king, the reasoning went. African slaves quickly became highly prized as strong, hardy workers able to withstand punishing tropical heat. As European colonists flooded into the New World, demand for workers grew exponentially, especially in the Caribbean islands and the plantations of Central and South America.

At first, the Europeans tried to enslave the native Indians too. The first slaves transported across the Atlantic, in fact, went west to east: Taino Indians brought to Spain from the Caribbean by Christopher Columbus.

But the New World Indians proved too susceptible to European diseases, and not strong enough to cultivate the new cash crops of sugar, tobacco, rice, cotton and indigo in the tropics.

It was the Africans' bad luck that they were physically well suited to hard work in hot climates – and that African kings and chieftains were so willing to sell their enemies and rivals into slavery.

Over the next centuries, the combined lure of gold and slaves drew successive waves of Europeans to Africa: the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, and finally the English, in the mid-1600s.

They made no bones about why.

"A ship full of blacks brings more to the Treasury than galleons and fleets put together," wrote Pedro Zapata de Mendoza, governor of Cartagena de Indias (in present-day Colombia), in 1648.

The British entered the trade two centuries after the Portuguese, but quickly made up for lost time. One maritime city after another sent huge ships to Africa, capable of carrying as many as 450 slaves at once.

They made money hand over fist.

"Liverpool was in no way shy about the benefits brought her by the slave trade," Thomas writes about the city. "The facade of the Exchange carried reliefs of Africans' heads, with elephants, in a frieze, and one street was commonly known as 'Negro Row.'"

By the end of the 17th century, British traders had exported nearly 100,000 slaves from Africa; by 1725, 75,000 had been sold to British North America.



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It was about that time that slaving voyages start showing up in [Rhode Island](#) records.

The early eighteenth century marked the end of North America's novitiate in the traffic of slaves. In the seventeenth century, too poor or too concerned with primitive agriculture, colonists there had been slow to participate in any substantial way.

A few slaves acting as servants had always been seen in all the colonies; but it was not until the owners of plantations in the Carolinas ... realized they could make considerable profits from rice and indigo that anything like a regular trade in slaves began.

— Hugh Thomas

The only land in Rhode Island good enough for plantation-style farming was the [Narragansett](#) Country (South County today), where a handful of white landowners did get rich off the labor of black slaves in the years before the Revolution.

But the rest of the settlers had to come up with other ways to make money. The colony's most successful industry was distilling rum, which at first was sold mainly to other colonies. The strong, good-quality rum soon found a market with slave-trading Africans of the Gold Coast who preferred it to Caribbean rums, which could be weak, salty or packed in leaky barrels.

[Rhode Island](#) distillers in [Newport](#) (and later [Bristol](#) and [Providence](#)) were soon making double- and triple-distilled rums for the African trade, taking care to pack it in sturdy hogsheads. [Rhode Island](#) rum became so popular in Africa that, like gold, it served as money. The rum-for-slaves trade began slowly, with occasional voyages as far back as 1709. The triangle trade that evolved was simple: take rum to Africa, and trade it for slaves; take the slaves to the Caribbean, and trade them for molasses; take the molasses back to [Rhode Island](#), and make more rum.

Everybody made out — except the slaves.

At first, the trade was concentrated in [Newport](#). By 1725, one or two voyages a year were being recorded; by 1735, it was up to a dozen a year, a pace maintained until 1740, when fighting between England, Spain and then France disrupted all colonial commerce.

A pattern developed: when hostilities broke out, trade faltered; when peace resumed, slaving boomed. In 1750, 15 [Rhode Island](#) trips were recorded; by 1772, that number had doubled.

[Rhode Island](#) and, particularly, Newport, was, in the 1750s and 1760s, still the North American colonies' most important slaving zone. Newport, which always welcomed



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enterprising people without asking whence they came, also used more slaves in small businesses, farms, or homes than any other Northern colony.

– Hugh Thomas

One Rhode Islander in nine was black, the highest percentage north of the Mason-Dixon line. Most were slaves on the [Narragansett](#) Country plantations, but others clustered in Newport, where an artisan class of skilled workers developed.

Slavery in New England –and particularly liberal Newport– was probably never absolute. From the early days, a small percentage of Newport blacks were free men, having bought or otherwise obtained their freedom. Keith Stokes, in an essay on the slave trade, writes, “An early 1770s census lists nearly one-third of (Newport’s) 9,000 inhabitants as being Negro, both slave and free.”

Ship captains were always looking for able mariners; by 1800, “black seamen made up 21 percent of all Newport crews engaged in the West Indian, European and African trades,” writes Coughtry.

Yet at the same time, slavers were working out of [Providence](#), [Bristol](#) and [Warren](#) as well as Newport. (Bristol, in fact, surpassed [Newport](#) as the state’s primary slaving port as the century closed). Merchants in Greenwich, [Tiverton](#), Little Compton and [North Kingstown](#) played a lesser role.

The slavers were some of the colony’s leading citizens, their names still familiar today: Newport’s John Bannister (Bannister’s Wharf) and Abraham Redwood ([Redwood Library](#)); [John Brown](#) of [Providence](#) (Brown University); the DeWolfs of [Bristol](#), who built Linden Place.

One of the most active was [Aaron Lopez](#) of Newport, a founder of [Touro Synagogue](#), who entered the slave trade in 1762 and by 1775 was the largest taxpayer in Newport, with more than 30 ships.

Some were more reprehensible than others. In 1764, Simeon Potter of [Bristol](#) wrote to his captain on the slaver *King George*: “Water your rum as much as possible and sell as much by the short measure as you can.”

Or the captain of James DeWolf’s slaver *Polly*, who lashed a slave infected with smallpox to a chair, threw her overboard, and “lamented only the lost chair.”

Merchants not rich enough to build their own ships pooled resources and invested in voyages. Later on, the ships were more often owned by individuals or family groups.

Rhode Islanders made a go of slaving for a number of reasons. Their small, sturdy ships held from 75 to 150 slaves, far fewer than the massive British or French slavers, but their survival rates were better. Shorter loading times in Africa exposed the crews to fewer new



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diseases, and less crowding of slaves meant fewer died on the voyage, which took from five to 12 weeks.

[La Amistad](#)-style rebellions did occur -17 revolts were recorded on [Rhode Island](#) slavers between 1730 and 1807- but were about half as common as on British and French slavers, perhaps because conditions were somewhat better on the smaller boats.

The British destruction of [Newport](#) during the Revolution brought a temporary halt to the trade. When it resumed after the war, much of the action shifted up the bay to [Bristol](#), home of the DeWolf clan.

Without a doubt, then, the DeWolfs had the largest interest in the African slave trade of any American family before or after the Revolution; theirs was one of the few fortunes that truly rested on rum and slaves.

- Jay Coughtry

It was a family operation, all right - along the lines of la cosa nostra.

The first DeWolf slaver was Mark Anthony DeWolf, who began as captain for his brother-in-law, Simeon Potter. By 1774, Mark Anthony and Charles, one of his five sons, had completed seven voyages and may have been financing their own ships, Coughtry writes.

Between 1784 and 1807, seven DeWolfs completed 88 slaving voyages, or one-quarter of all [Rhode Island](#) trips made in those years; they were involved in 60 percent of the slaving voyages from [Bristol](#).

They didn't just sail the ships - they branched out into all aspects of the operation. James DeWolf, another of Mark Anthony's sons, married the daughter of William Bradford, who owned [Bristol](#)'s rum distillery; he went on to make another fortune in cotton manufacturing, and served in the U.S. Senate.

Other sons sold slaves at slave markets in Charleston and Havana; the family also bought a Cuban sugar plantation, so they had a piece of the action at all stages of the cycle.

They were resourceful. As the public grew more repulsed by slavery and anti-slavery laws began to be passed, the DeWolfs dug in, and used their clout and connections to keep the money flowing.

By the turn of the century, William Ellery, the customs collector in [Newport](#), was cracking down on illegal slaving. The DeWolfs got the General Assembly to create a separate customs office in [Bristol](#), and in 1804 snared the collector's job for Charles Collins, a DeWolf in-law and a slaver himself.

It was clear sailing out of [Bristol](#) after that.

Although slavery was outlawed nationally as of 1808, James DeWolf continued slaving until 1820, "the period of the [[Rhode Island](#)] trade's greatest profits," writes



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Arline Ruth Kiven, in a history of the state's abolitionist movement called *THEN WHY THE NEGROES?*

"This was also the time of his greatest affluence," although, she notes, there are no records for the [Bristol](#) port during this period because Collins burned them all when he was finally ousted in 1820.

Slavers were pretty crafty about staying ahead of the anti-slaving laws. A 1794 law banning U.S. citizens from carrying slaves to other nations, for example, had only one real enforcement provision: much like modern-day drug laws, the government could confiscate slaving vessels and sell them at auction.

Slavers promptly rigged the auctions so they (or straw buyers) could buy back the ships for pocket change. The government countered by getting the ships assessed, and then sending an agent to the auction to enter that price as an opening bid.

Samuel Bosworth, the surveyor for [Bristol](#), was the unfortunate soul sent to bid on the *Lucy*, a slaver confiscated from Charles DeWolf. He undertook the job "with considerable fear and trembling," writes Coughtry.

The night before the sale, Bosworth got a visit from DeWolf, his brother James, and [John Brown](#), who advised him to refuse the assignment. He stood his ground.

The next morning the DeWolfs dropped by again, telling Bosworth that while they certainly wouldn't harm a hair of his head, if he showed up at the sale he would probably be "insulted if not thrown off the wharf" by sailors.

Bosworth never made it to the auction. "His would-be baptizers, in nominal Indian dress and with faces blackened, seized him as he approached the wharf, and hustled him aboard a small sailboat" which took him for a pleasant two-mile ride down the bay, Coughtry writes. By the time he made it back to [Bristol](#), the *Lucy* had been bought by a captain who worked for the DeWolfs.

The DeWolfs - or their agents - at times went in for outright thuggery. In 1800 the Treasury Department sent Capt. John Leonard to [Rhode Island](#) as a kind of special prosecutor targeting slave traders. He promptly sued James DeWolf for \$20,000 over violations by DeWolf's slave ship *Fanny*.

The jury found for DeWolf. But some months after the trial, "apparently fearful that Leonard's strategy against DeWolf would become a dangerous and costly precedent, a group of civic-minded Bristolians traveled to Washington to make their own appeal at the Federal Courthouse," Coughtry writes.

When they spotted Leonard coming down the courthouse steps, "several unidentified assailants assaulted him."

Whereas, there is a common course practiced by



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Englishmen to buy negers so that they may have them for service or slaves forever; for the preventinge of such practices among us, let it be ordered that no blacke mankind or white, being forced by covenant bond, or otherwise, to serve any man or his assignnes longer than 10 years or until they come to bee 24 years of age....

– [Rhode Island](#)'s first anti-slavery law, 1652

The 1652 law was supposed to ban slavery of any kind from [Providence](#) and Warwick, or indentured servitude for more than 10 years. It was enforced for whites but largely ignored for blacks; like so many cultures before them, the British colonies were deeply conflicted over slavery.

In 1636, Roger Williams, who founded the colony in [Providence](#), questioned the justice of enslaving the Pequots. Yet in 1676, the same man denounced one of the early calls for freeing black slaves as "nothing but a bundle of ignorance and boisterousness."

Kiven writes that the northern part of the state was always less enamored of slavery than the seafaring and farming south.

Slaving was not confined to a particular religion or sect. Christians and Jews made fortunes in the trade, though by the early 18th century [Quakers](#) began to question the ethics of what they were doing.

Abolitionist sentiment got a boost in 1738, when an article in the [English Weekly Miscellany](#) "declared that, if Africans were to seize people from the coast of England, one could easily imagine the screams of 'unjust' which would be heard," writes Thomas.

In [Newport](#) in 1770, the Rev. Samuel Hopkins of the First Congregational Church preached his first sermon against slavery, and was surprised when his congregation -many of whom owned slaves- did not walk out en masse.

Three years later, Hopkins got the idea of sending two educated blacks to Africa as missionaries. To that end, John Quamine and Bristol Yamma were sent to Princeton College to prepare.

The Revolution intervened, however, and Quamine died aboard a [privateer](#), while Yamma apparently dropped out of school to go to work and disappeared into history.

According to Kiven, the Quakers were the biggest and best-organized religious group in [Rhode Island](#), and once they began to oppose slavery, its days were numbered.

One by one, slave owners changed their minds. "College Tom" Hazard, heir to [Narragansett](#) Country landowner Robert Hazard, refused his father's offer of slaves on his marriage (Robert was said to own 1,000 slaves in 1730).

In 1773, the younger Hazard convinced the Quaker Yearly Meeting to ban Quaker participation in slavery. That same year [Moses Brown](#) of [Providence](#) quit the family



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slaving business, and began a decades-long assault on his brother, [John Brown](#), for continuing to buy and sell humans; the next year he became a [Quaker](#).

The approach of the Revolution brought a temporary end to slaving, but also disrupted abolitionist momentum. In 1774, the General Assembly passed a law banning residents from importing slaves to [Rhode Island](#), though it said nothing about visitors, or slaveowners who might want to move here.

(That was partly because [Newport](#) had a prosperous relationship with rich Southern plantation owners, who summered in [Rhode Island](#) before the Civil War, to escape the ferocious southern heat).

Brown, working with Hopkins, set about lobbying the state legislature as well as the Continental Congress; Hopkins wrote a persuasive tract, DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS, which was used well into the 19th century as an argument for abolition.

The war also gave blacks a chance to earn their own freedom. In 1778, a law was passed freeing any slave who would enlist in the Continental Army; several hundred formed the First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment, which performed well in battle, although the soldiers later had trouble getting paid.

"Their courage in battle and the subsequent gratitude of the people of the state to them is credited for the law, passed in 1784, providing for the gradual abolition of slavery in the state," writes Kiven.

The new law, which freed children born of slaves, passed only after a provision banning the trade entirely was removed. According to [Moses Brown](#), the act was eviscerated by the Speaker of the House, William Bradford of [Bristol](#).

Yes, the same Bradford who ran the big Bristol rum distillery, and whose daughter was married to slave-trader James DeWolf.

State House insiders were apparently getting pretty sick of lectures from the reform-minded [Quakers](#). Wrote Brown, "We were much flung at by several."

Is it not extraordinary that [[Rhode Island](#)], which has exceeded the rest of the states in carrying on this trade, should be the first Legislature on this globe which has prohibited that trade?

— Rev. Samuel Hopkins, Nov. 27, 1787

Other states were wrestling with the slavery issue. It proved so contentious that in 1787, when the Continental Congress adopted a constitution, it deferred any national action on slavery until 1808.

New England, however, wasn't waiting around. [Rhode Island](#) banned the trade entirely in 1787; Connecticut and Massachusetts followed suit the following year.



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True, the slave trade would continue for 70 years, by one means or another. Some slavers shifted operations to ports like New York, which had not yet passed any slaving laws; others simply broke the law.

But in 1789, Hopkins and [Moses Brown](#) helped found the Providence Abolition Society, which worked for anti-slaving laws and sued those who broke them.

One such was [John Brown](#), Moses' brother. The society sued him in 1796 on charges of illegal slave-trading; though he offered to abandon the trade and pay all court costs, they seemed to want to make an example of him. They should have taken the deal. He was acquitted.

"The verdict was a definite defeat for the Society, many of whose members became convinced that a [Rhode Island](#) jury would not give judgment against the prominent type of men engaged in the slave-trade," writes Kiven.

Over the next few decades a pattern evolved. Abolitionists would pressure the government to pass anti-slavery legislation, and the slaving interests would do what they could to water it down.

Once a law was passed, business would temporarily falter while the slavers watched to see how strictly the law would be enforced; usually, enforcement was sporadic, and business actually increased.

The American and British governments finally banned slaving as of 1808. But the trade hardly stopped. Some American ships flew Spanish flags; Gen. George DeWolf of [Bristol](#) simply shifted his operations to Cuba.

The American law only banned the international slave trade. American slavers could still trade slaves internally, or move them up and down the coast. And they did, because demand was huge.

With the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, the demand for agricultural workers exploded in the south, Thomas writes. In 1792, the United States exported 138,328 pounds of cotton; by 1800, it was 17,790,000 pounds and by 1820, 35,000,000 pounds.

The planters weren't going to pick it themselves.

[Rhode Island](#) participation in the slave trade after Jan. 1, 1808, is a maddening puzzle, for most of the pieces are missing.

— Jay Coughtry

It looks like [Rhode Island](#) slavers began to pull out of the business after the federal ban, although it's hard to be sure since it was easy to cheat, particularly at first.

Some, like the DeWolfs, continued to slave illegally. But Coughtry concludes that "it does not appear that [Rhode Island](#) ports or individual [Rhode Island](#) merchants participated in the illegal heyday of the modern American slave trade" between 1820 and 1860.

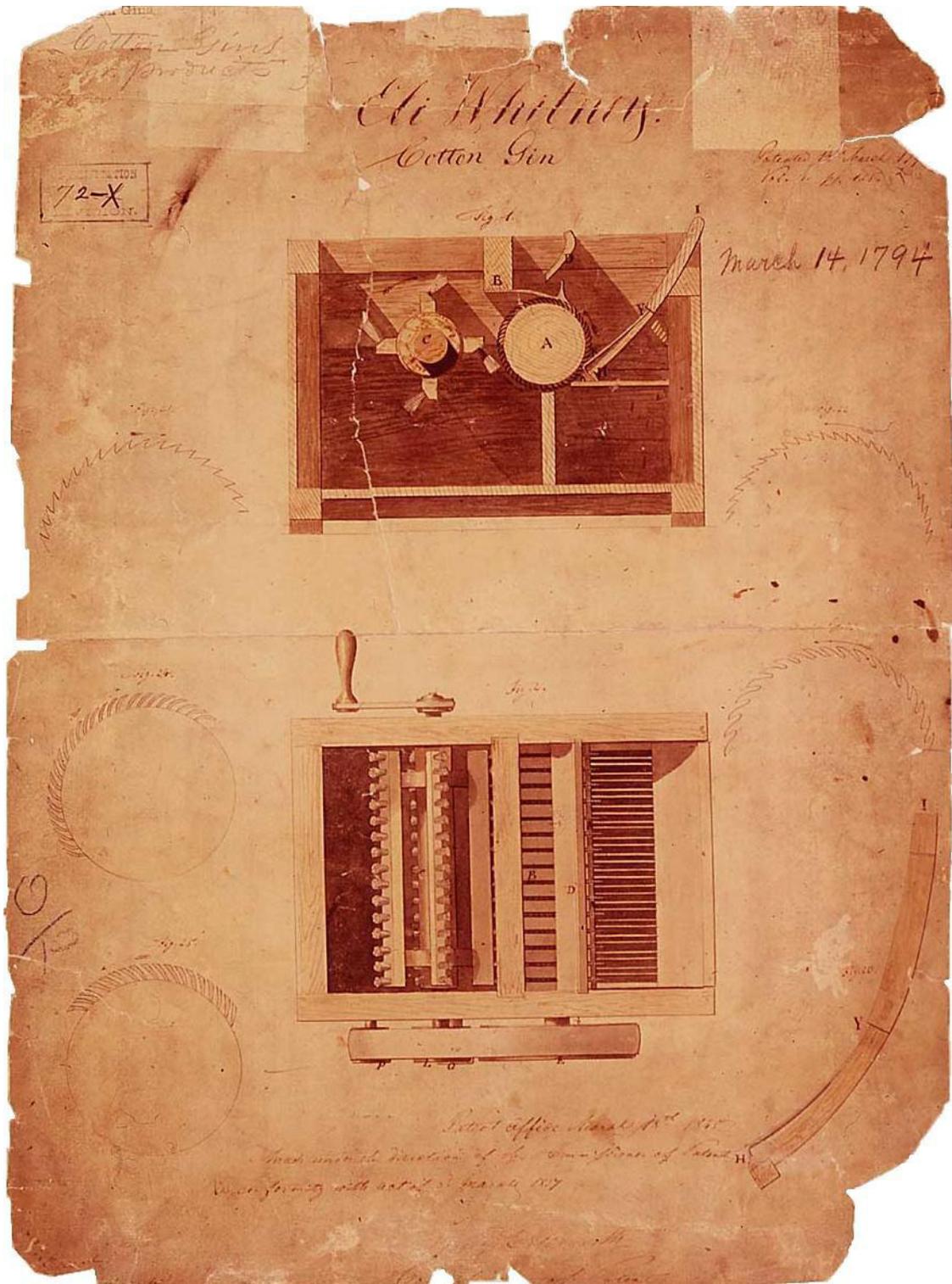
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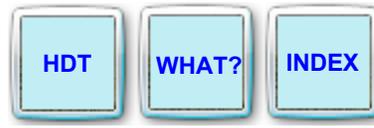
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They abandoned the business sporadically, much as they had started. [John Brown](#) died in 1803. James DeWolf quit the trade in 1808, though his brother George continued until 1820, when the sympathetic Collins was fired in [Bristol](#); after a series of business failures, George fled the state in 1825 for his Cuban plantation.

[Rhode Island](#) merchants gradually turned away from the maritime trade and invested their money in cotton mills – by 1830, the state had 130 of them. They managed to squeeze yet more profit from slavery: many specialized in coarse slave or negro cloth, worn by slaves throughout the New World.

Abolitionists kept up the pressure. The Providence Abolition Society was joined by other groups; three buildings still standing today served as stations on the Underground Railroad – the Isaac Rice homestead in [Newport](#), the Elizabeth Buffum Chace house in [Central Falls](#), and the Charles Perry home in [Westerly](#).

Some decided not to wait. In 1826, a group of free Newport blacks, led by former slave Newport Gardiner, sailed for Liberia with the help of the American Colonization Society.

Gardiner, who worked for years to buy freedom for himself and his family, was freed in 1791. He helped found the nation's first black civic organizations, the African Union Society, and the African Benevolent Society.

His decision to leave came 14 months after white rioters destroyed Hard Scrabble, the black community in [Providence](#) (University Heights today).

He was 75 years old.

"I go to set an example for the youth of my race," he said. "I go to encourage the young. They can never be elevated here. I have tried it for 60 years.... It is in vain."

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Kathryn Mae Gorton Thompson's FAMILY HISTORY AND STORY OF [SAMUEL GORTON](#) ([Rhode Island](#) Reading Room).

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "Memories of a Childhood in the Talbot County Jail" in LIFT EVERY VOICE: ECHOES FROM THE BLACK COMMUNITY ON MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE (Wye Mills, [Maryland](#): Chesapeake College Press; Friends of the Talbot County Free Library.)

Friend [Jeanne Whitaker](#) retired from Wheaton College and moved to [Providence, Rhode Island](#). She remains active in Quaker affairs, the new American Friends Service Committee Support Committee, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

April 26, Monday: An article in the [ProJo](#) by staff writer Robert L. Smith:

In the 1920s, the Klan ruled the countryside. The state's Klan groups drew from the skilled labor and professional classes and Klan members controlled many towns' government and police. Growing up in the Smithfield countryside, Dr. Daniel Russell glimpsed one of the seldom-told chapters in local history.

On summer Saturday nights, he and a friend would scramble up to the roof of the icehouse in the back yard and peer across Georgiaville Pond.

They climbed at dusk, because that's when the people in the field on the other side -the adults in ghostly white- lit the fiery cross.

"It was certainly something to see," recalls Russell, 79, a retired dentist. "We couldn't hear what they were saying, but they'd have a big meeting and then they'd burn a cross. They had on these white robes and they would parade around. We used to kind of laugh."

As the flames died, the two boys would climb down and run home, as if sensing they had witnessed something they were not meant to see. They probably need not have worried about their safety. Those hooded marchers were almost certainly neighbors.

In 1920s [Rhode Island](#), especially in the rural towns of the Northwest, a new force captured the allegiance of townspeople. The knights of the [Ku Klux Klan](#) spread their anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant, and anti-black venom among a welcoming populace. Klan gatherings were as common as clambakes and often drew a comparable crowd.

Young Daniel Russell was on his perch frequently.

Beginning in 1925, when an estimated 2,000 people assembled for the state's first Klan wedding, the Klan Field in Georgiaville drew regular gatherings. Smaller Klan groups met in Scituate churches, Burrillville barns, and the lodges of leading fraternal societies.

Their white hoods masked bankers, merchants and even town



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officials.

"It's sort of like a secret that people don't talk about," says Scituate town historian Barbara Sarkesian. "All the movers and shakers in the community -the Masons and the Odd Fellows- were all members of the Klan."

In a state founded on the principle of religious tolerance, America's foremost hate group found fertile soil, the historical record indicates.

Not all Rhode Islanders embraced the Klan. In fact, evidence suggests most rejected the secret order and expressed disgust with its ideals. But the so-called Invisible Empire was popular enough in June 1924 to draw 8,000 people to a monster rally behind Foster Town Hall.

Scituate resident Norman Smith, a retired professor of history at Rhode Island College, says such rallies must have tapped a deep well of passion.

"You can't find gatherings that size in [Foster](#) today," he says. That one could witness such a crowd in 1924 spoke to the times and to the changing demographics of the Ocean State.

Rhode Island in 1920 witnessed what historians call the second coming of the [Ku Klux Klan](#). A secret society that grew out of white Southern anger with the Civil War and its aftermath, the Klan had died out by 1870, only to be reborn at the close of World War I.

This time, recruiters roamed the North and New England states in particular, where white Protestant communities viewed with alarm the waves of arriving immigrants.

"The Klan became massively popular everywhere," reaching 5 million members in 1925, says Mark Potok, an editor for the Klanwatch program of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"What they're trading on is not really black stuff anymore, but Catholics and Jews. It's the peak of immigration in the United States, and the Klan was desperately anti-Catholic."

In 1920, Rhode Island's black population composed less than 4 percent of the state's residents. But, in 1921, about 45 percent of the state's 600,000 people were Catholic, and Klan recruiters often found a welcome mat off village lanes.

While the Klan leadership lived in and around Providence, much of its strength flowed from the countryside.

"The rural towns were where the immigrants were not," explains Smith, who has studied the Rhode Island Klan. "There were already many immigrants in eastern Rhode Island, but in the west, you still had a large number of swamp Yankees and other groups, which is where most of [the Klan's] support came from." Rhode Island Klansmen differed from their southern brethren in several respects. The Klan was linked with Democrats in the South, but Klansmen of New England were most often associated with Republicans, the more conservative party, Smith says.

The state's Klan groups also drew largely from the business and professional classes, not the poor and uneducated. They staged gatherings flavored with familiar cultural trappings.

"Outside of New England, you didn't see many Klans celebrating at clambakes," says Smith.

But in western Rhode Island, men and women wore white sheets to



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oyster suppers, chowder dinners and tent meetings. By 1924, newspapers were announcing Klan meetings as they might a community picnic.

A news brief on the front page of The Evening Bulletin of July 18, 1924, alerted Klansmen to a "union meeting" at Scituate's Advent Christian Church. Klan faithful also met at the Odd Fellows Hall in Clayville and at Eagle Schoolhouse on Gleaner Chapel Road, Sarkesian says.

More prominent were gatherings at the Grant estate in Georgiaville, where the Klan owned a farm field, in the [Smithfield](#) village of Greenville and in Foster Center.

Alabama's Sen. Thomas Heflin spoke at the Klan rally on the Old Home Day grounds in Foster on June 21, 1924, an event surpassed in size one month later.

According to the Providence Sunday Journal, more than 8,000 Klansmen and sympathizers from Providence and Kent Counties poured into the natural amphitheater behind Foster Town Hall early in the afternoon.

Car caravans arrived from Connecticut, Navy men from Newport. Local constables directed traffic.

"The exercises opened shortly after one o'clock . . . when a chowder dinner was served," the newspaper observed. Organizers staged a baseball game, running races, "contests for children." At night, a giant cross blazed while hooded Klansmen initiated 200 members in the glow of car headlights.

The Rhode Island Klan appeared to differ from other Klan dens in one other key aspect: It was not commonly associated with violence. Newspaper reports make no mention of lynchings, floggings or brandings common in other states.

Still, it dealt in terror.

Seeking to educate black children in the spirit of Booker T. Washington, the Rev. William Holland, a black minister from Virginia, in 1922 began busing black youth from Providence to North Scituate, and boarding them at a school he called The Watchman Institute.

The trade school and summer Bible camp was seared by suspicious fires twice in the '20s. The first blaze, in 1924, destroyed a boys' dormitory wing; the second, in 1926, badly damaged the girls' dormitory. Newspapers reported the Klan was suspected, but no one was ever arrested.

Elsewhere, there were occasional cross-burnings and incidents of racist leafleting.

Meanwhile, immigrants and minorities passing through western Rhode Island could hold little faith in public officials. The Klan's tentacles reached into almost every civic group and myriad public offices.

In the mid-1920s in Hopkinton, Klansmen held 11 of 22 town offices, 4 of 5 seats on the Town Council, the Rhode Island Historical Society reported in the May 1989 issue of the journal Rhode Island History.

The police chiefs in Hopkinton, Coventry and East Greenwich belonged to the Klan. So did the sheriff of Washington County, two state senators and the master of the state Grange.

A grand cyclops, John A. Domin, lived in Smithfield.



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Analyzing a report from a 1928 investigation by the state House of Representatives into the Klan, historian Joseph Sullivan determined that 63 percent of the state's known Klansmen held skilled or professional jobs. He attributed this to Klan dues, \$15 a year, or about the weekly wage of a well-paid laborer. But it meant many people dealt with the Klan in the normal course of life.

The man who owned the grocery store in Daniel Russell's boyhood village belonged to the Klan. So did a neighboring farmer. Russell recalls a big white arrow painted down the center of Farnum Pike, and words directing motorists toward the Klan field off Stillwater Road.

"That's how brazen they were," he said.

The state Assembly report sprang from a scandal that helped seal the Klan's demise in Rhode Island. In March 1928, The Providence Journal disclosed that the Klan had infiltrated the state militia and controlled three of the state's historic militia brigades.

A subsequent investigation helped smoke out Klan leaders and scare off potential members, historians say.

By the close of the decade, the Klan was a shadow of the group that once drew thousands to fiery gatherings in nighttime fields. But its impact probably echoed for years, insuring that, for many, the Rhode Island countryside remained a forbidding place.

Scituate town historian Sarkesian, in 1988, interviewed Mr. Holland's granddaughter, Jacqueline Holland Coffey, who grew up at the Watchman School on a small hill on the edge of the postcard village of North Scituate.

One night in the 1930s, she told the historian, the Watchman schoolchildren looked out to see a cross burning on the lawn.

North Scituate Elementary School stood just a few dozen yards away, but Jacqueline Holland Coffey was sent to elementary school in Providence.

Says Sarkesian: "The children were not allowed to go down to the village alone."

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2000

At this time I became again involved with a group at Brown University in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) known as CHUG, the Computing in the Humanities Users' Group. The group would meet periodically and shmooze over computer developments, while munching cookies and drinking soft drinks. At each meeting, someone would offer an informal talk. Actually, I had been involved with this group all the way back to 1987, while my spouse had been a PostDoc at the Pembroke Center and I had been a technical writer at Data General, and was at this point returning. I began to prepare to offer to the group a talk about my "Kouroo Contexture," only to meet with technical obstacle after technical obstacle. It seemed there wasn't space on any of their hard drives, onto which I might load the database for a demonstration. It seemed that because of compatibility issues, no classroom presentation equipment was available. Bottleneck after bottleneck, technical difficulty after technical difficulty. Finally I offered to cart in my own equipment and set up for my talk, and prepared for them a draft synopsis for use in their advance email publicity:

The Brown Computing in the Humanities Users' Group presents:

Brown can bring Scholarly Reliability to the Web

Austin Meredith

STG

5:30 pm Wednesday, MONTH DAY, 2000

STG Conference Room, Grad Center

Ground Floor, Tower E

A present complaint in regard to the Internet is that information found there needs to be treated with great care. Unfortunately, no system of validation has as yet taken hold. This presentation will propose that a site for scholarly literary research be placed on the Web, with the various data-elements made available on this site maintained and vouched for by volunteering scholars who have specialized in the subject matter in question.

Decades ago, Austin Meredith was involved in the collective effort which brought about, in the business world, the distributed relational database. He is now seeking to achieve the same sort of benefit, for scholarly literary research. Over the past decade he has created a massive modular transcluded database called the "Kouroo Contexture," which functions as a working context for further research into the Transcendentalists and their period. He will display the present contents of this database, and demonstrate how its modularity now allows responsibility for the reliability of its various data elements to be shared among groups of established scholars. His approach is "If business finds this valuable – why can't scholarship have some too?"



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CHUG provides a forum for discussing the use of computers in the humanities and for sharing ideas and information about computing techniques and applications. We regularly have talks and discussions by members of the Brown community and others about ongoing and future projects, research ideas, and computing techniques. We meet when opportunity arises, as announced on the newsgroup brown.bboard.announce. We always have refreshments.

When I offered this draft synopsis to Ellie Mylonis at the user group's center in the basement of a graduate student dorm, I belatedly discovered what all those strange technical obstacles had been about. The group, which basically maintained itself by offering technical services to the Brown community, teaching for instance the professors how to use PowerPoint in their classrooms, was going to permit no such talk to occur. Nor were they going to discuss with me, why it was that they were going to permit no such talk to occur. They were simply not interested in finding out what my database might be about. My concept that I had something to offer them was being taken as an implicit criticism of Brown University and of them — that in some sense its computer planning rather than being cutting-edge was inadequate. According to Ms. Mylonis, I was of course welcome to attend their club meetings — but would never be allowed to offer any such presentation to the club.

ASSLEY

Restoration work began on the mill buildings at [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#).

I, Austin Meredith, came to [Providence](#) from Southern California in this year as a retired person, and as a member of the Religious Society of Friends. As part of making this move, I promised my spouse that I wouldn't just hang around our new townhouse on Providence's East Side — but would find a way to get out there in our new community and make myself useful. Since the [Moses Brown School](#) was proclaiming itself to be a Quaker institution, and since it was just down the street from our new digs, I began to presume that I could fill in the slack hours of my retirement by providing volunteer services for the school.

ASSLEY

At this point the Quaker historian Rosalind Cobb Williams, "Posie," was a member of our monthly meeting that met at 99 Morris Avenue, amid the trees just beyond the sports field of the Moses Brown School. She had been clerk of our meeting, and had served as the New England Yearly Meeting's curator of Quaker records stored on the 2d floor of the New England Historical Society on Hope Street. She had not yet been forced out of the meeting on account of her historical research and on account of her friendships with persons of color.

[Obviously I am going to need to go into some detail here, since I have just written that Posie would be forced out of the Quaker faith in part on account of her having black associates. This flies in the face of something that "everybody knows," which is that Quakers, although they tend in England and America to be of the white persuasion, are not race haters. I will, therefore, digress to a piece of information that I had opportunity to learn back in 1958, at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas. The piece of information that I there and then acquired was that racial integration is one thing, but interracial association is something else. As a boy with a twisted spine, of course none of the other white UTex students wanted to be seen with me, but after awhile I got involved in a student movement to integrate the student cafeteria, and as part of this student group I was sometimes in the same room as some black Texans. At that time black students were being tolerated at UTex in Austin, so long as they did not take drama classes with the white students, drama classes in which there would be touching, and so long as they did not attempt team sports such as football in which students of different colors would be playing together on the same team, or competitive sports such as wrestling in which there would be interracial touching of skin. The black coeds lived in a special dormitory, Whitis House, one



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of the oldest and most decrepit on campus, and in the lobby of this dorm a white stripe had been painted on the floor from wall to wall to warn others away: THIS IS THE WHITE LINE: THIS FAR AND NO FARTHER. At the student center, black students could enter only through the service entrance and only if they were employed there. There would be no such thing as whites and blacks sitting at the same table or eating together, since while the white student would be sitting and eating, the black student employee would be erect and would be performing the traditional service role. Our logo was a mimeographed card with a simple drawing in which a black hand and a white hand were caught in the act of shaking hands, and our initial objective was to integrate the student cafeteria to the point at which, to get something to eat, black students would not need to snack out of the coke and candy machines, or to have a hot sit-down meal, board a bus and go all the way downtown to the Negro section of Austin. At this point I met a very obese and very black coed and we walked together on campus several times. Then, at my suggestion, we went together to a student production of Molière's "Le Misanthrope." I think I knew her a week, or slightly longer. We must have made an interesting pair: a male student who was deformed in that his spine was not straight, with a female student who was deformed in that her skin was not white. Then the student couple who were acting as the leaders and organizers of the righteous student movement for race integration came and had a serious sit-down with me. What was I trying to pull? What were my motives? Did I have a covert personal agenda that I was trying to implement? (After awhile it became clear that what they meant was, I must be trying to get in this black coed's pants, and this was obvious to them, and disgusting, and amounted to a harmful and selfish taking of advantage on my part.) They instructed me that from that moment, I was to keep my distance from any and all of their race integration activities. What I had learned there in 1958 in Austin was, of course, that race integration can be construed as one thing, a good thing, while race association can be simultaneously construed as another thing entirely, a bad thing. That bit of learning had lain fallow in my mind for 42 years and was brought forward again by the case of Posie at the Providence monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Now, you have presumably noticed that Quakers are not race haters and that they are always very polite, so it goes without saying that nobody ever fielded a term such as "niggerlover" when dealing with Posie and her peculiar predilections. And Posie, in turn, was scrupulously polite, and reacted to this treatment only by using her skills as a historian and going back to the point in time at which this pattern of apartheid behavior was becoming fixed (the 1830s), and describing how it originally happened, and publishing this as an article in Quaker History (this article was just ignored). It was one thing for Posie to be for racial integration, it seemed (all Quakers are for racial integration just as all Quakers are righteous), but it was another thing entirely for Posie to make friends among the blacks, have black associates. It was just too embarrassing, it was too like Friend Richard Ristow with his black pug Lapsang Souchong, as Richard kept his dog in his lap being fondled and muttering dog things during silent worship on a First Day (until Ministry and Counsel asked that Richard **stop that**). —Friend Richard would knuckle under and cease bringing his black pet to meeting with him, and Posie would at the end of her life take the advice of one of her black friends and enlist in the Episcopalians, refusing to have anything more to do with Quakers.]

On a Sunday during the summer of 2006 a curious incident has happened to me. I went over to the Friends meetinghouse adjacent to the Moses Brown School campus, as was my wont, an hour before our silent First Day meeting for worship was scheduled to begin, in order to unlock the doors and open the windows and pick up the mail and turn on the sound-amplification-for-the-hearing-impaired system in the attic, and generally get stale air out of the place. A young lady with a big dog on a leash approached. She walked around inside the meetinghouse and told me that she had once been there, because she was a former student at the Moses Brown School. I asked her, "In what year did you graduate?" She told me that she had graduated with the class of 2000. I asked her what the class on Quakerism had been like that year. She responded that she knew nothing about any such class. I asked her "Wasn't Betsy Zimmerman teaching such a class?" and she responded, "No, Betsy Zimmerman was my arts teacher." I commented that I had been told that that class was mandatory for all graduating seniors, and asked her if she could, in general terms, tell me what she knew about Quakerism. She said that of course she had been in and out of this building during her four years at MB, and remembered



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having to sit in the big meeting room in silence, but she said, nobody ever explained to her what this was about. She had no idea what Quakerism was, what it was about. Moses Brown was a Quaker institution, she knew, but what did that mean? She said “I don’t have a clue.” She added “It was a good school.” I told her that Meeting for Worship began in an hour, at 10AM. She wandered away and I wandered away, and I thought no more of this until it was time for Meeting for Worship and I noticed that she had not stayed for worship. –She had, it would seem, just been looking around and reminiscing while walking her dog. (Of course, although this is about what was going down at the Moses Brown School in 2000, it is something I found out about in 2006 and therefore at that point I began to reflect on the theory of “regulatory capture,” a doctrine in regard to which I have recently been brought up to speed by a Professor of Sociology. It seems that this is a frequent occurrence in all sorts of venues: it is through such “capture” that agencies that are supposed to be controlling become controlled by the entities that they are intended to control. For instance, as I was already aware as a veteran of the nuclear power industry, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of the federal government over time came to be controlled by the industry, rather than continuing to have a controlling power over that industry. I had watched over a period of years, as General Electric executives left to take important jobs in the NRC, and then a few years later came back to take even more important jobs again with GE. I had watched loyalty to the industry and disloyalty to the government be rewarded and rewarded.) It seems to me now, having had this conversation with this sociologist, that what has happened is that at about midcentury the Moses Brown School started sending its teachers to the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, where they managed to qualify themselves as Quakers in good standing and then volunteered themselves for the committees that were regulating the school from which they were receiving their paychecks. In that way, the Quaker committees that are supposed to be “upstream” in control of the school are actually now “downstream,” that is, controlled by the school. They do only their master’s bidding. When I made a request last year that anyone who had a potential “conflict of interest” (financial ties, etc.) recuse themselves, and no longer take part in the proceedings, I was greeted with outraged stonewalling from the very people who have these conflicts of interest. They are in control and have every intention of staying in control. They even have it set up now so that they have veto power over any new nominations for their committees: nobody can even get nominated, let alone appointed, without the existing committee’s explicit prior approval. My request that these individuals who had conflicts of interest identify themselves was met with the response that I was trying to pry into people’s private affairs, something which I had no right to do. I was informed that although previously I had been considered to be a member of the Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, and therefore a member of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, I was not any longer to be considered to be a member. Reclassified as a non-member, I had sacrificed any right to interfere in the proceedings. (But here I am getting ahead of my story.)



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When I, Austin Meredith, had come to [Providence, Rhode Island](#) from Southern California in the previous year as a retired person, and as a member of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), as part of making this move, I had promised my spouse that I wouldn't just hang around our new townhouse on Providence's East Side — but would find a way to get out there in our new community and make myself useful. Since the [Moses Brown School](#) was a Quaker institution, and since it was just down the street from our new digs, I had begun to plan that I would be able to fill in the slack hours of my retirement by providing volunteer services for the school.

The first thing I had attempted, to be of service to the school, was to write up a biography of Friend Moses Brown, founder of the school, and a history of the legacy that he left to provide for the institution that he had founded. When I had this all written up, in this year, I took it over to the teachers and staff at the School, and presented it to them. “Here,” I went, “Take this, make any alterations and elaborations as you see fit, take my name off of it and put your name on it, use it in your publicity, and use it in the teaching of your Quaker students. I give you all rights.”

I was startled by their response. They weren't at all involved in the Quaker history of their institution. Instead of going “Thank you, obviously you put a lot of work into this” they went “So, who's going to pay us for doing that?” They were more than uninterested, they were downright hostile.



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March: In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#) interviewed Friend [John R. Kellam](#) as a World War II [conscientious objector \(CO\)](#)⁵⁹ and adherent of the [Quaker](#) Peace Testimony:



THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): John, it's a pleasure to be here and thank you very much for allowing me to interview you regarding your experience as a World War II conscientious objector. We might begin with your description of what you knew about the history of conscientious objection to war prior to the Second World War.

59. John Kellam has been acknowledged as a conscientious objector in two books about other matters principally: First, UPHILL FOR PEACE by E. Raymond Wilson, in which he wrote of John's service on the original staff of the Friends' Committee on National Legislation, FCNL, during its first year (1943-1944).

Second, SINCE YOU WENT AWAY: WORLD WAR II LETTERS FROM AMERICAN WOMEN ON THE HOME FRONT by Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith.

John writes, "Judy was an active Providence Friend when they published the letters in 1991. Almost all of those letters were between military men of various ranks and their wives or fiancées, or other sweethearts left at home. She presented a balancing story of Carol's correspondence with me during the first few months of 1945 when I was at Milan, Michigan. I was glad that Carol's loyal helpfulness to me and her own sense of commitment for peace and against all warfare, got so well acknowledged by Litoff and Smith."



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Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Way back in childhood, my mother had mentioned the [American Friends Service Committee](#) which was doing relief work following World War I. And on that basis, regardless of the politics involved on either side of the recent war, she knew something of the Quakers and of the Church of the Brethren and she knew that they were two of the few historic peace churches in this country. And she showed considerable respect for that. I think I had heard that quite a few of their young men, as members, refused to do military duty, even in war time. They took various kinds of consequences for it. So that was a general background of knowledge. I also knew that the founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU, in 1920, Roger Baldwin, had been a conscientious objector in World War I, along with a few others, maybe a thousand or two at most, and had gotten into prison. I don't believe there was alternative service arranged the way it was for World War II. At least my memory for hearing about it doesn't go back that far. So I knew what most young Americans knew about alternatives to simply going into military service and taking whatever orders come in a war.

I had thoughtlessly gone into ROTC at the University of Minnesota, which, because they had contracted with the United States way back, maybe a hundred years before, was a land grant college. The United States government gave them a few thousand acres of land for a university, on condition that they let their male youth be trained for military service in case of war. It was Minnesota Territory on that side of the Mississippi River then, even before Minnesota was organized as a state. So they were a land grant college, and, being physically fit, I could not escape getting into the basic course of ROTC. That was two years. It was like an additional college course, except that there was a uniform involved, drilling on a drill field, learning how to handle weapons in the armory, and so on. And while I was in that basic course while taking a college course in architecture, a five year course, by the way, I learned that the advance corps of ROTC did a lot of mathematically analytical work in coast artillery gunnery. Rather heedlessly and thoughtlessly I got interested. I wondered how they dropped a projectile in a certain particular spot way out on the ocean from a coast artillery shore emplacement and it intrigued me in a technical sense. And I wasn't really thinking what kinds of destruction of people and property could be happening when the projectile blew up at the other end of the trajectory.

I entered the university when I was sixteen. Even though I may have been a little more of a thinking person than most people get to be by the age of sixteen, I was still very thoughtless, enough so that I went into ROTC with just plain curiosity as my attraction.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well I can see the connection between wondering how to make a projectile and how to make a



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skyscraper! [John became a city planner, by profession.]

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I was a little bit like Werner Von Braun. According to a musical comedian, Tom Lehrer, he put them up but who knows where they come down. "It's not my department," said Werner Von Braun. Ha-Ha-Ha! Anyway, I look back at those as my early days of indiscretion. And I came out of that, two years of advance corps, with a second lieutenant's commission from the Army. Even at the age of twenty I accepted that. I wasn't yet older than childhood, because young men weren't adults until their twenty-first birthday in this country. But I don't think that's much of an excuse.

Anyway, there was a raggle-taggle bunch of anti-war people on campus, and occasionally as we were marching to or from a parade ground through a neighborhood for maybe half a mile we would see some of these people holding signs that looked like labor organization picket signs. They were picketing ROTC and they wanted the university to get rid of ROTC. But of course the state was obligated to the United States to continue it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): What year was this?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I was at the university from 1933, in October, to 1938 in June. I guess it was September, and I was still sixteen for a month after I entered the university. But anyway, there was just a little glimmering of consciousness about the fact that war and militarism could possibly be refused, or at least protested openly.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It came to you, personally.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, but not very forcefully. I pretty much ignored it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, yes. It's pretty terrible. It goes against everything our family stands for, all our standards!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. One of the talking points our ROTC instructors used was that we had won World War I, we had downed the Kaiser, and militarism was going to be under check. And the assumption was that the League of Nations would be able to do its business. Besides that, there was the insurance that this country was giving ourselves that by continuing readiness for national emergency, we would probably inhibit any other countries from becoming overt enemies of ours and making attacks on us that would need to be repelled. So ROTC was part of a big insurance system to prevent our getting into any more wars, particularly world wars. Well, that sounded good to me. I could enjoy whatever the contents were of ROTC courses, feeling this



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kind of assurance that we were helping to prevent war in the world. That seemed like a good thing to do. I had seen several dramatic war movies depicting the bloody struggle that was intended to end all war.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, I remember sometime in the middle of the second world war, I was about ten years old, I asked my mother – I was shocked when she told me that there had been a world war before this one and I said “How could such a terrible thing happen a second time?” And she said, “Well, we didn’t think it ever would again.” But, anyway, this is your interview!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Apparently you followed me by about fifteen years.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I was born in 1935.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh yes, well mine was 1916, so that’s nineteen years. I was in graduate school as a city planner at MIT in 1939 to 1941. In the summer of 1940 I was at Southbridge, Massachusetts making a map of existing land uses and preparing a zoning ordinance and map for the town under the supervision of the Dean of City Planning at M.I.T. who had private contracts during the summers when classes weren’t in session. During that summer of 1940 World War II exploded forth. Germany overran part, or most, of Poland and came through the low countries into France. The Vichy government was being set up in France, a puppet government under Hitler, Mussolini was strutting around with macho militarism in Italy as the second part of the tri-partite group and Tojo was doing similarly in Japan as the third leg of that wobbly stool. Ha-ha! Anyway, I was horrified. Another World War blossoming out so rapidly. I had no idea of how the mistaken settlements after World War I had set the stage for a resumption of world war. That wasn’t in the propaganda I got from our country’s leadership. The League of Nations was supposed to be able to prevent that, we thought, and we hoped that the United Nations, or by whatever name it would be called, later on, after World War II, being somewhat better organized, would not have any fatal blunders in its set up to let more wars happen, here and there all over the world, even nuclear wars possibly. Well, that insurance concept flew right out of my mind. I was very frustrated and I thought that the whole public of America had been taken in by propagandists with false hopes engendered in almost all of us. Either they didn’t know what they were talking about or they didn’t know how to organize it. Or, there wasn’t the will and the war profiteers had worked their way into future profits they were poised for. And I felt that the whole public, not only of America, but of Central Europe, England, and many parts of the world were exploited for the sake of a few people who were getting extremely rich from being well poised to take advantage of wars. That was secondary to the idea that war itself



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is absolutely immoral. The way it causes suffering wholesale, whatever the weaponry, it was getting worse through the generations. It was wrong. And it forced everybody in by conscription and that also was wrong. Conscription was passed, I think, during that summer of 1940.

There was an isolationist group led by Charles Lindbergh and that was quite a strong controversy on the merits until he made his extremely blundering speech in which he revealed his basic anti-Semitism blaming American Jews for being one of three groups who were likely to get us into this war, to not allow us to be isolated from Europe for its duration. So, I was in the America First organization for a while, just simply as a loyal member corresponding and vibrating in my own way about things. But I was feeling more and more lonely because I didn't know much of other people anywhere who agreed with me. I didn't know that there was a Friends Meeting in Cambridge, a Quaker meeting. That was right up the road from MIT, near Harvard Square.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): America First, was that something that Lindbergh supported, patriots? I'm not sure what that was.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): He initiated it with a few close friends. They supported the idea of the war short of getting into it, without shooting. They were isolationists in the military sense. At the same time being friendly with Britain, because for all we knew, Hitler's legions might invade and conquer Britain and that would be an awful disaster that would take maybe hundreds of years to undo. The Third Reich was very confidently pointing to a thousand years of domination in world affairs from Europe. The Third Reich was to last at least that long. Pretty scary. Well, the more I thought about that, this seemed like a party that they were inviting all of us into and the more of us who said No, we wouldn't go, the less vicious, by little increments, the war would be. And the more people who said No, the fewer other people would get killed. I also worried a little about the fact that in my ROTC training at summer camp I had qualified as an expert with the pistol and as a marksman with a rifle having extremely high grades, good hand and eye coordination and very keen sight. So that I could put a bullet just about any place I wanted to, if I wanted to. I was aghast at the idea that I might be propagandized into wanting to.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That's a wonderful statement. That sounds like it crystallized in your mind, like a decision you made.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and a large part of that decision was made in the Southbridge Public Library where I was doing reading of newspapers, and of war history and whatever else I could find that would help me develop my own thinking about that. I was twenty-four then. Twenty-six had been the upper age limit



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to be called up in a draft. At least unless things got too desperate. And if America lost too much of its young population of males they might get to the point where they could be drafting, thirty, thirty-five and even forty year olds. There was no limit, apparently, to how ugly the war could get. Russia in World War I and also during this war was losing mightily and it was really cutting into their future population. Thinking about all their families and the suffering of survivors, all the misery of the injuries and the dying experience, it was just too horrible to join. I didn't know how much worse I would make it become with my expert marksmanship. One distinguished veteran who died here this summer killed more than one hundred "enemy" people with bullets and grenades and lived with regrets and bad memories into old age. His obituary was a good reminder about why I had to avoid doing anything like he had to do.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): You were quite a reader and you informed yourself in libraries and so forth. Were you alone in this thing or were you talking with anyone?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, I knew that there must be thousands of others but I didn't know any of them. So, in that sense I was lonely even while knowing that I wasn't by any means unique.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So, now you were twenty-four years old. What year would that be?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, that would be the summer of 1940 when I was almost twenty-four and felt that I was having moral discoveries, not merely determinations on moral grounds, but with logical, political, social inputs from all of my reading. It all seemed to feed my own attitude.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, your heart. It rang true.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, I felt quite integrated. My mind was following my heart. It helped me form the justifications I would need to express. My residence was then in Cambridge at MIT's Graduate House, an old hotel building overlooking the Charles River basin where Massachusetts Avenue crosses the river. In the summer I was in a boarding house in Southbridge, Massachusetts while doing summer work for Professor Adams of MIT in city planning. For my second year, the year after that summer, I had brought my mother East with me because she had been living with my brother and he was married in the summer. So after that she came East and I moved to Bexley Hall next door to the Harvard Coop, MIT branch, facing the School of Architecture across Massachusetts Avenue. We had a nice little studio apartment and it worked out fine.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Oh, my, I've never heard of



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anyone doing that in recent time, taking your Mom to college! That's wonderful. People did those kinds of things in those days.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): [Perusing Caroline's list of questions] I hadn't really had any real counseling on the subject of conscientious objection to war. As soon as I could I got a whole collection of pamphlets from the Government Printing Office, detailing all the workings of the Selective Service System that had been published, and they were available for purchase from the Government Printing Office by anybody who wanted them. So I saw what was in there about conscientious objectors and how they were supposed to be treated. I didn't really suspect that the actualities were very different from these rules.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So this information was within the Selective Service.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, as soon as the Selective Service got set up a set of books came out. Each of them was, oh, maybe an eighth of an inch thick, eight or nine volumes, telling just what all the local board procedures were, how they were to be set up, how they were to have registrants fill out personal histories on some forms. And, sandwiched in in various places were what they should do about men claiming to be conscientious objectors.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Sandwiched in?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, that was a minor part of the whole set-up. But, they were to consider every other possible classification, except 4-E, which is a CO's classification. 1-A was available for military service and there were all kinds of temporary deferments for certain family situations or in case of a family with several sons that had all but one son in the service, that one was to be deferred, and so forth, and I read all these details of procedure, and they were supposed to see if they could put a claimant CO into some other classification instead. If they couldn't fit him in anywhere else, then they might have to consider giving him 4-E. 4-F was for physical or mental defectives. 4-E was a person who was fit but they didn't put it that way. They thought he was so morally deficient that he wouldn't understand that his duty to his country was to offer himself to be killed. Or to do the killing. Ha-ha-ha!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): E for expendable.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes, and so was anybody else. We really find out how much freedom there is in our citizenship by what happens to us in wartime. How much control the government can assume over what we do and how we will respond to situations,



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how we will fail or accept to obey military orders. It isn't ourselves obligating ourselves in patriotism. It's the government telling us how we are obligated. My government presumes to define for me who or what I am. Our conscience belongs to the government. If we flinch about how many people we are getting to kill, if we don't like doing it, and have qualms of conscience about it, the government tells us well, let us worry about it and you do your job. You do what we tell you to do. You don't have a choice and so therefore your conscience should not hurt you. Ha-ha-ha!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): A Catch-22!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes! That's what American freedom amounts to in wartime.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): If anybody is free in wartime.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes. Everybody is conscripted in one way or another. People tilling freedom gardens, victory gardens, people patrolling their neighborhoods to make sure that the black blinds are down and no light is escaping into the streets from inside their houses, the people being organized to save all their bacon grease and all the fats from the kitchen, bring their cans full of fat into the grocery store to be recycled.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I remember that.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): It's amazing how much the whole American community is organized for war. Everything's changed for the war effort. Everybody has to contribute to the war effort. Buy liberty bonds, well, liberty bonds were World War I. War bonds were WWII.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, I had a war bond when I was just a little girl. My parents paid \$18.75 for it and ten years later I got \$25.00.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): That was a reasonable rate of inflation. I would rather throw money away than buy one of those. But on the other hand, the huge inflation that follows any big war deflates the value of every dollar so that the huge war debt gets repudiated.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So we're all duped.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): We're all duped, in every way more importantly than the financial. Oh, yes. Our treasury is in a subtle way confiscated by degrees – gradual confiscation. People



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supplying all the materials, as businesses do in a war, were able to make so much money hand over fist that the inflation doesn't begin to compensate for that profiteering. So those who are already rich get richer in real dollars while ordinary people get cheated out of theirs. It's part of the system. I think it's the real economic engine that promotes warfare and lets us send most of our male youth into slaughter every time when war can be contrived by the military/industrial complex.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It really must be studied.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Think of how many of our recent and future enemies we have sold war material to in huge quantities.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, one of the hardest things to do is to clean up your own portfolio. Most peoples' investments are, in one way or another, connected to war.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, it's very hard to have any wealth at all, any deferred spending, saved up without it getting into hurtful areas of misuse. I do as clean investing as I can while still realizing that any investing I do is still tainted very heavily with things I could be guilty about. I have one utility stock from my hometown and it's a good electric power utility, very well managed, very low rates compared with most of the country and yet it turns out a very good total return and about half of it comes in dividends.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): From the hometown of your boyhood, you mean?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, from Duluth, Minnesota. Minnesota Power and Light supplies electricity to all of northern Minnesota and part of Wisconsin, near Superior. They even have a mine mouth generating plant in the center of North Dakota, about four hundred thirty five miles west of Duluth. They built America's first high voltage direct current line to take energy from that mine mouth plant all the way into Duluth because direct current doesn't lose itself in the sky. The wires don't heat up and lose energy into the sky the way alternating current does in long transmission lines. Alternating is the way to go locally at low voltages, up to 300. For voltages up into three and four hundred thousands, towers are very tall and they reach about 700 feet in a span. The wire cables droop down within about thirty-five feet of the ground. They might make a farmer's hair stand on end sometimes.

So, I was saying that I didn't have any counseling. I did talk to some people. I talked a lot of the time trying to convince people that my attitude was better than theirs was. But the prevailing jingoism, patriotism had most people inhibited about



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considering any other viewpoint as being valid.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): You have to dig deep, the way you did.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. My boss in Boston city planning was Frank Malley. He was director of the planning organization there and I worked in that office for a while. One noon he and I were discussing my viewpoint and the usual one.

"Well," he said, "John, you've done a lot of thinking, a lot of it's very logical and you're trying to live a moral life, but just remember this: don't ever underestimate the power of propaganda." He said, "Most people feel they owe agreement to the prevailing sentiments all over the country and as the war gets tougher the non-conformist viewpoints become more vulnerable to the pressure of the propaganda. War hysteria gets to be so much that you may find yourself deeply penalized."

"Yes," I said, "I think that's another aspect, that's the evil in all warfare and it's making victims of different sorts of the whole population."

There are a thousand different ways people can become victims of war. So if I'm one kind of a victim that's sort of unusual, everybody else is some other kind of victim and some of them don't even realize it. And some families are told and told and told that they should take great pride in their sons or their uncles being killed in a war. The Gold Star Mothers are supposed to be proud of what their sons sacrificed. The truth is that they were sacrificed!

I think it was the winter of forty or forty one when I came to the idea that I couldn't any longer carry that military commission. It was out of character with everything I believed in. I thought I was going to be an increasing embarrassment to myself to have it. So I sent in my resignation to the War Department in Washington, to the highest ranking reserve officer corps person that I knew about. Nothing happened, so I went down to Washington a few months later. I went to the munitions building on Constitution Avenue -this was before the Pentagon was built- and I went from office to office trying to find out where my letter would be waiting for action. And as I suspected it was still down near the bottom of somebody's piled high inbox. As long as I carried a commission, I was not subject to the draft, because I could be called to active duty at any moment. So I found where it was and I talked to the officer who was holding it up. I asked him to consider how valuable I was from his point of view. Was I, in any sense, an asset to the Reserve Officer Corps or the Army? I had a viewpoint so strong that I could not kill anybody in a war, or ruin anybody's property in a war or in peace time either, for that matter, and I would have to say No!



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I said, "Is there any advantage to the Army of your not getting this resignation letter considered and accepted and my commission as a Second Lieutenant cancelled? How much am I useful to you? I'm in this attitude and I'm pretty certain it's a lifetime one. I'm not going to be coerced come what may."

"Well," he said, "you are no doubt of no use to us at all!" He had picked my letter (it was dated April 4, 1941) out of his box before that and had scanned it while we were talking. He said, "I think I can get this acted on within a week or ten days and you'll hear from us."

I said, "Thank you very much, Sir!" And I turned and walked out, but I didn't salute him! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

Not long after that I was back in Cambridge. This was during my second year in graduate school. I received the letter accepting my resignation of the army commission and the letter reminded me that now I would have to register with Selective Service. So I went over to the Selective Service office in Cambridge and asked what Conscientious Objectors do to get properly certified in the correct classification. Well, he said, fill out this special form 47. So I filled that out and turned it in. As I was leaving the building, just going around the corner of that little brick building, I saw two cars come together one block away right in front of me. So I trotted down there. Somebody ran through the stop sign and hit the side of another car. They were both still in the middle of the intersection. By and by while waiting for the police to come, traffic began to pile up. The car wouldn't operate, the one that had been hit on its side. So a group of us pushed the car over to the nearby curb and then its brake having been disarranged, the man tried to pull his emergency brake on and it didn't work and the car went with one wheel over the curb, just a couple of feet and stopped. We let it rest there and a rear wheel was right against the curb so it wasn't going to go anywhere. Pretty soon the police came and I watched them and one of the police officers knew the fellow who had run the stop sign, the one who was at fault. They greeted each other in a friendly fashion and then pretty soon I saw someone who had also been in the neighborhood who said he had also seen this accident happen, but when he started to tell the police officer, the officer cut him off saying, Ah, that's just your opinion! And I thought, Oh-oh! There's bias working here. The wrong man's going to lose his license maybe. So I kept observing everything and then this car was taken off to a garage that was only about a block away around the corner to get fixed. So I followed it over there and I talked to this driver, a Mr. Linehan.

I said, "I saw what happened back there and it looks like you're in for getting an undeserved penalty because the other driver and one of the police officers are buddy-buddy."



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I said I wished that I could take some photographs of that intersection to show what had happened, while evidence was still there, now that the crowd has gone away. He said, "Well, I've got a camera here." And he showed me his camera and it was just a duplicate of my own camera, a Jiffy Kodak. So I went back to that corner which was beside a three story tenement house and I got on its roof and took photographs showing very clearly the skid marks and identifying buildings. So I went home and wrote the whole thing up and when the case came up in court, I was a witness. Since I had been studying traffic, and traffic lighting and stop sign systems and so on, it's part of my city planning, I did a real technical job of this. So when we got into court and I was testifying and the man who was friendly with the crooked cop was trying to get the wrong side to win, I was giving him real trouble because of what I said. So he tried to discredit me in every way possible.

He said, "How did you happen to be where you were when this accident occurred?" "Well," I said, "I'd been just inside the draft board and had come around that corner..." And he said, "What were you in the draft board for?" "Oh, I went in to fill out a form." "What form?" I said, "Oh, this is as far as I will go because everything that happens between a registrant and the draft board is confidential by law. I don't have to tell you anything more than I have, but the draft board people can confirm that I was there if you need that."

Well, the judge declared a lunch recess, a little early I thought, and when he came back and reconvened the court, along towards one o'clock, he made an announcement saying, "I'm prepared to qualify Mr. Kellam as an expert witness in this case and I should warn everybody that I believe everything he says." It turned out he was the chairman of that draft board. He had made his own inquiries of the office. Ha-ha-ha-ha! And he understood perfectly that I was a credible witness and that I realized my right to have my information kept in confidence by that board. So this all came out correctly. Mr. Linehan qualified for no penalty and his insurance company was not the one to pay for the damage. The fellow who caused the accident took his own consequences for running through the stop sign. I would have done a lot better with that draft board if I hadn't moved away from Cambridge to a job down in Washington for three years and then moved to Toledo to a new job in planning.

The Toledo draft board was very much otherwise inclined. They didn't want any CO to be on their record. So they reclassified me to 1A. Oh, I had been reclassified about eight different times, different kinds of classifications, by various boards by then.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Why was that?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, they were trying to see if I could



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fit into any other of these classifications to avoid 4E if possible. And at one point my mother's physical condition – she had Parkinson's Disease and she had had it for several years and it was causing her gait to shuffle almost to a stop and she was having a lot of trouble controlling her hands and her head was wobbling and all that. So, at one induction station there was a psychiatrist, Dr. Stanley Rioch of Rockville, Maryland, who had discovered that I was a CO and he asked me if there was any condition that I knew of, or any circumstance, that might prevent me from giving dependable service to the United States Army. I'd passed the physical part of the exam and I said, "Well, I'm physically O.K. but I've got an attitude about war that makes it absolutely impossible at all to be of any value to any army. As a matter of fact it's the cause of my having resigned and insisted on the acceptance of that resignation of a commission in the US Army which I got from ROTC in my earlier days in college. I hadn't done much thinking and I really didn't know myself back then."

He tried to get me rejected on that account. He had asked me about allergies and so what it came back to was that I had had a little prune juice and banana vapor allergy when I was much younger but it had disappeared, as I told him, but he wanted to take that very seriously. I asked him why. He said, "That combined with your attitude of firm conscientious objection means to me that you should not be taken into the army. They shouldn't want you."

"Well," I said, "That sounds pretty good to me!" ha-ha-ha!

My mother was physically dependent upon me. She couldn't drive a car. She couldn't walk without assistance. She was to have a wheelchair sometime in the future and there was no treatment effectively in those days. My brother was already by that time into dental corps in the army. He had been given a first lieutenant's commission when he finished dental school at the university. We graduated together, by the way, even though he was four years older than I, but he had been two years ahead of me in school. He had been out for a while. Anyway, there was no one in the family for our mother to live with except me. So for a time I had an administrative deferment which wasn't stated to be based upon her physical dependency. But I was told that I would probably not be bothered any more by the draft for the duration and anyway I was getting over age.

At 26 I had had a lot of arguments with all kinds of draft boards by that time, transfer boards. My registration in Cambridge had been given my Duluth, Minnesota address as my permanent address because I thought possibly I would be going back there after finishing my graduate work. That's where I was before I went there. Or I might go somewhere else. I didn't know, but anyway I thought the Duluth draft board was likely to be made of the people who knew me best and knew that I'd grown up there. They knew a number of people I'd given as references including one



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particular man who had been the teacher of my Sunday School class when I was, oh, twelve or fourteen. And of all the people who influenced me in ethics and logic and had some knowledge of law, Frank Crassweller was, I think, my strongest influence. He was an attorney in town in one of the most venerable law firms. He probably was a fairly old person by now. But Frank Crassweller was the strongest influence on my ethical thinking and I wish I had taken his ethical constructs more seriously than I did at the time because I'd come to feel that he had been very influential in the way I had put my own attitudes together.

Much later when I was appealing my 1A classification, which had been given to me erroneously at Silver Spring, Maryland, when I was living in Silver Spring, they were my transfer board while I was attending the Florida Avenue Meeting in Washington, I had tried to convince that draft board chairman that he should stop being in a position where he was sending young men into the huge fray to be killing and injuring and getting injured and killed themselves.

I said, "That's a huge party that none of these young men should be in! It would be great if the young men of the whole world would tell their own governments NO! And I'm doing my little bit toward that."

Well, I appealed the 1A classification and so automatically my file went to the FBI and they did a big survey of my background. They even went to Frank Crassweller, my old Sunday School teacher, and asked him about me. And where did they find him? In the Duluth draft board office being their chairman! My chum had been, all through school from fifth grade on, a nephew of his, Robert Crassweller. But I found my FBI file later on - I had access to it. I could see who said what about me. I saw a summary of the whole FBI file, written by a hearing officer, John H. Skeen of the US Attorney's office, Maryland district, in Baltimore. I copied every word of it. I have it upstairs, in the back end of a file drawer. When I found out that Frank Crassweller was chairman of that draft board, I wrote to my chum, Robert Crassweller, who was by then working for the State Department in Washington.

I wrote, "What in the world has ever gotten into your Uncle Frank, who was such a wonderful teacher of Christian ethics in that Sunday School, Presbyterian Church of Duluth, of our neighborhood? How could he possibly accept the duties of a draft board member, let alone be chairman? I just don't understand how he could do it! It seems to me that a lot of the things that he said to us in Sunday School would mean that he would have had to decline any commission if it were offered for him to do that kind of a thing."

Bob's only reply was, "Well, there are quite a number of things about Uncle Frank that are beyond understanding."



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Ha-ha-ha! And Bob's own father was a lawyer, too.

When the FBI asked Frank Crassweller what he thought of my claim of being a conscientious objector, filing this form 47, and trying to justify it, he stated, according to the hearing officer's summary, "that registrant is definitely a conscientious objector and he believes the registrant should be classified in this grouping. He pointed out that registrant was registered with Local Board No. 1 in Duluth before moving to Silver Spring, Maryland, and at that time he and other members of the Duluth Draft Board considered registrant to be a conscientious objector. He considers registrant to be trustworthy, sincere and highly reliable."

Now that was an interesting thing to read! That FBI report. Ha ha! He remembered me very well, as he said he did. I made a deep impression! Ha-ha-ha-ha! So that's all I ever found out about his Uncle Frank. I haven't thought about a lot of these things for a long time – they're just sort of tumbling out now!

There are lots of funny things that happen in the middle of a world disaster. There are all kinds of plays on words and saying logical things in a humorously twisting way. During that time there were quite a few people who would have been greatly inconvenienced if they had just forgotten about my existence. If they had tried to just consider me a non-person, as if I'd never walked into their presence, they could have saved themselves a lot of time and effort because they never won their objective with me, trying to get me into that war, or any future war.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): But they kept trying.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, the last draft board that ever considered me reclassified me correctly in 4-E, as a conscientious objector – at last! I never met any of them, but they were the three top officers in the Milan, Michigan, minimum security prison that I went to first from Toledo, just north of Detroit, maybe fifty or sixty miles north of Toledo. That was before I was transferred to Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, I did the rest of the time until I was released. That draft board offered me release from prison if I would go into the Civilian Public Service, the CPS. But I explained why I declined to the person who came to me about it, after they had decided to make this offer. I think it was the assistant warden who came to talk to me about it. He was one of the three on the draft board, along with the warden and some senior officer.

I said that I had been a visitor to quite a few Civilian Public Service camps. I saw some of the young men who were satisfied to sit out the war doing whatever they were asked to do. I saw a number of others who were very dissatisfied because the fact that they were there made it possible for those agencies of government, the weather service and other agencies, to discharge



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some of their regular employees so that the army could draft them. And if those COs weren't there to take their place, those boys might well have stayed in their useful government service but not in war duty. So it was a source of extreme dismay to those COs to feel that they had made it possible for somebody else to be sent out to join the killing. Quite a few of them left the CPS camps and they went to the camps that were run directly by the military, government camps, without the peace churches being in charge. Some of the COs in the other camps run by Quaker, or Brethren, or Mennonite service committees were feeling very bitterly critical of the churches for doing the government's bidding by having charge of concentration camps for slave labor by COs. They didn't even get the tiny army wages because the attitude of the country wouldn't have stood for it. So, it was even worse than military slavery because churches were in between as the delegated slave masters. Boys from the peace churches were conscripted. I used to see Mennonites come through Silver Spring on a bus and they were on the way to draft board offices to get processed and some of them were simply put in spurious classifications and sent home to wait it out. In terms of warfare, the Mennonites were sometimes considered to be more of a lost cause to the Army than young Quakers. The military attitude about the Quakers was that because some of them were willing to go into war, then the rest of them ought to be also willing.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So you were in more than one prison. How many prisons were you in?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): After one night in the Cleveland jail, and awaiting trial in the horrible Toledo jail, just the two – Milan, Michigan, from the beginning of 1945 until about May. It was a minimum security facility. It wasn't called a penitentiary.

I was transferred from there to Lewisburg Penitentiary in Pennsylvania, maximum security. They didn't really know how to handle me at Milan. I wasn't willing to do war work in their shop and their jobs were all geared to the war effort and any inmate was interchangeable at the will of the administration of the prison from one job to another. Even if I were only a janitor, or was in the kitchen, I'd be replacing someone who was in the shops to do war work. They tried to find some kind of work that I might find acceptable and maybe even interesting – something that wouldn't appear to be connected too closely to the war effort that all prison shops were engaged in. But this interchangeability of inmates meant that I was in an organization where everyone possible was supposed to be in war work and whatever I did, somebody else wouldn't be needed for because I was doing it. So it just became quite obvious to me that I could not accept any kind of occupational duty in that institution or in any prison, for that matter. If I could do war work, I might as well do it in the army! I was there because I



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wouldn't! Ha-ha-ha! Well, and they couldn't get me out of there to go into Civilian Public Service for the same reason, that I would feel wrongfully engaged in any CPS camp run by churches, by government or anybody at all as part of the whole war system. I didn't belong in the war system in any capacity whatsoever. Any job considered essential during that time would be helping to kill people. So I was labeled as an absolutist. I was sent to administrative segregation.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Now this is still in Milan. Were you the only conscientious objector?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Before segregation I met only two or three other COs there, but there were a dozen or two others in the general population. There were two others in that segregation row at the top of that cell block; one, Leroy Shafer, was two cells to my right, as I would look out through the bars. On my left was a young Quaker, John Stokes, who came from an old Philadelphia area family. He was very quiet, in contemplation of his inclination to join the Roman Catholic Church. I remember his describing all of the major religions as built essentially of legends and symbolism, none much more or less productive of pacifist ideals carried into action. Another, Wally Nelson, was in the second cell to my left, next to a man to be executed. We had cinderblock walls between us.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): How did you know about each other?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): We talked because the bars were open and we could hear each other. To my right, between Leroy and me, there was a German prisoner of war, Gerhard Gutzat, a tank corps sergeant from Rommel's army. He'd been captured by the Americans or the British as they were chasing the Germans and being chased by them, alternately back and forth along the north rim of Africa. Gerhard was a graduate of Hitler's youth corps before he got drafted into their army and assigned to duty in the Afrika Korps.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Did you make a CO out of him?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, I tried, but moderately, as I didn't want to upset him. He was not enjoying his incarceration any more than we were so I let him find out as much as he was pleased to find out about me. LeRoy Schafer who was on the other side of him in the next cell at the end, a young Brethren from Durand, Michigan, did the same. LeRoy was a different kind of a CO in some ways than I was. We were all different! Ha-ha! But thoroughly respecting each other and glad that each other had stayed out of all the killing.



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Well, this tank corps officer was a little bit younger than I and he'd been through a lot of combat. He'd seen terrible things. I think he was being perfectly loyal, understanding what he did and the way he was raised so that he really couldn't pretend to understand our viewpoint. But he was personally friendly and he could speak English just well enough so that we got along fine. Then one day that awful copy of LIFE Magazine came through. Every week we had been passing that magazine along with all the pictures and so on. The old kind of LIFE Magazine full of pictures. This was the issue that announced to all Americans and others wherever LIFE Magazine went, abroad, the concentration/extermination camps discovered in Germany, Austria and Poland and with pictures of mounds of dead bodies and of fewer survivors in pitiful condition. This was 1945. It was January 1945, before I reached Milan, having been tried in Toledo for having refused induction in Cleveland. The war with Japan went on until August, 1946, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki were demolished by two nuclear bombs. I was by that time in Lewisburg. I was there until just after Thanksgiving, 1946.

So this was in the winter and early spring of '45 that I got to know Gerhard Gutzat, the tank corps officer who was a POW. He'd been in British war prison and then was transferred over here and was put into any opening that they had in our prison system. The COs in prison didn't help with making space available for POWs! (Ha-ha-ha!) But anyway, that was interesting. I saw this LIFE Magazine that came down the row, which first was given to the condemned prisoner who was on death row. He was three cells to my left, two other guys in between, including one I never did get to know very well. Wally Nelson was pretty quiet. The other one was one of the angry, uneducated criminal types that had been in violence. I guess it was because they didn't know any better. They weren't having any of this nonsense from anybody who was in jail for trying to be good! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! That was out of their world too far!

Anyway, when I saw this LIFE Magazine, I kept thinking as I read about all this horrible concentration camp system, what's Gerhard going to think when he sees this? Does he know anything about this going on? I wonder, I wonder, I wonder. So, before I gave it to him, I said, "Gerhard, I have the new LIFE Magazine, which I have seen and I'm ready to pass it to you but I should warn you first, it's unlike any previous issue that was ever printed by LIFE Magazine. You've seen a variety of them already, but this tells a terrible story and I warn you it's pretty rough to look at." "Well," he said, "from what I've seen in the war, there's nothing very rough that I could be surprised about." "All right, Gerhard," I said, "but I think you're going to be surprised about this." So I handed it to him. I said, "If you don't want to talk to me about this, that's all right and maybe you'd prefer that, but if you would like to talk to me at all about it, I'm willing and it's been shocking to me. So, we'll see what you think." There was silence for a long time, much longer than any previous time when he'd been passing a magazine



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over to the CO, Leroy, in the far cell. Then he said, "John?"

"Yes, Gerhard?"

He said, "There is something about this war that I never realized." I said, "I'm glad you didn't know anything about this before but I'm sorry you have to know about it now."

He said, "That isn't what I meant. Until now, I didn't think any military organization in the world was as skillful at concocting propaganda as it shows the American military organization has been to get all of this into LIFE Magazine. I don't know how they did it, these piles of bodies. They've gotta be fake!"

"Well," I said, "Gerhard, I'm afraid they are not. I don't think it would be possible for any organization ever to become skillful enough to create this kind of a humbug propaganda. This can't be false."

For one thing, I thought, if this is a false story, LIFE Magazine is dead! But they want to keep on publishing. It's a lucrative publication. They make a lot of money through subscriptions. I told him, "They'll probably get a few people cancelling their subscriptions because it's too rough and they don't want their children to see it, or they don't believe it, just as you don't believe it. You don't think it really happened, do you?"

He said, "No! It couldn't have happened!"

So, after a while I said to him, "Gerhard, I would be interested if you would care to tell me why you think it could not have happened."

"That's simple enough," he said. "If anybody in Germany, or occupied areas in Central Europe, had tried to organize this kind of a crime of exterminating a whole big group of people, Hitler wouldn't have stood for it! Such a person or group would have been put down immediately. Their career in any organization run by the Third Reich would be over! They would have completely discredited themselves. Nothing like this could happen in Germany! Or any occupied area controlled by Germany!"

I said, "Gerhard, I wish it could be true the way you believe but the way this is presented it's an awfully hard thing for me not to believe. The world's never seen anything like this, although there was a big killing of a whole group by starvation in Armenia shortly after World War I." (long pause)

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, the forced march of nearly two million Armenians in 1915 at the outbreak of the First World War. Six hundred thousand died.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and we were worried here and not



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doing much about the starving Armenians when I was three or four years old, as a beginner in Sunday school. I can remember people talking about the starving Armenians. And other people here were saying we should be careful not to waste food because millions of people were starving to death in other parts of the world.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I remember that. My mother was still saying, "Remember the starving Armenians. Eat everything on your plate!"



Friend [John R. Kellam](#): My mother was saying the same thing exactly. I was not to take onto my plate any more than I could eat. She hoped I would eat plenty, but there shouldn't be any wasted.

Well, Gerhard lived for one purpose, and this isn't about me now, but it's part of my experience. His family in the free city of Danzig in the metropolitan area east of Pomerania in Poland had been overrun by the Russians, and many of the German people in the small towns were killed. The Russians wanted that area to develop as vacant land would be developed. They were absolutely ruthless and had no respect for civilians.

"So," he said, "My family all got murdered. I'm the only one left that I know of. Since before I went into the army, having been in the part of Poland that the Russians didn't get to control, I was not in that and I am the only survivor as far as I know. After this whole war is over, if I ever get repatriated back to Germany, I'm going to make it the business of my life for as long as it takes to find out who it was, probably among the Russians, that are responsible for my family all having been killed. I'm going to get revenge for that if it's the last thing I ever do."



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I said, "Gerhard, it's an awful thing to live for, just to get that done. In a big war, even in a little one, there are all kinds of hateful things that happen. If people spent the rest of their lives still fighting that war in one way or another, it would never be possible for wars to cease. We've got to forget any vengeful feelings we might have had after the awful things that happen. Because otherwise there's no way out of this for the world."

Well, I didn't convince him. But I did take note, gratefully, of his volunteered acknowledgement that such a genocidal program would, if real, have been most grossly criminal as an act going far beyond "legitimate" warfare. After his eventual repatriation, he would have much to learn about his idol, Hitler's, insane degree of criminality, and his approval of the deliberate murder of so many millions of innocent civilians in his own country and in his own name as its "fuehrer." It might occur to Gerhard, also, that vicious enemies tend to grow more similar to each other, morally, over the time they are engaged in war campaigns.

There was one particularly notable conscientious objector at Milan just then and his name was Corbett Bishop. He was from Alabama and he didn't cooperate at all with any draft board or any war official of any kind. He'd been in and out of prison several times, cat and mouse, and he had thought his way through so thoroughly that he didn't feel that he should pick up his food and put it in him. He also didn't take care of his own excrement so they tied a diaper on him. He was certainly a much more thoroughgoing absolutist than I ever dreamed of being. We were aware that he was in the prison hospital in a little single patient cell. He was being fed by tubes through his nose, into his stomach, a thick kind of grainy food substance, not too unlike a malted milk except that it wasn't cold, it wasn't ice-creamy, but it was nourishing enough. So they were keeping him alive for quite a long while. He had been transferred to Milan in a sedan with two officers, he was in the back seat, and he wouldn't agree not to run away, so they had leg irons on him and handcuffs, ha-ha-ha! And there was an accident. Their car went out of control and down a ditch and up into a field, a cultivated farm field and it had rolled over. The two guards who were taking him to another prison were bruised up a little bit, but they got out of the car. There weren't any seatbelts in those days.

Corbett was jammed down between the back seat and the back side of the front seat, a one bench front seat, and it had jammed back on him so he was pretty tightly squeezed in there. Maybe that's why he wasn't any more injured than he was. They came over and asked him if he was all right. He didn't answer. He just looked at them, but he wasn't communicating with them before. They had even offered to take the leg irons and handcuffs off if he'd walk in to have lunch with them at the stop, but he wasn't giving any cooperation to them or to anyone whatsoever in any position of authority over him. He didn't recognize that



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authority at all but they were demanding information from him as to how his body felt. When he kept on this non-cooperative basis, as before, they said, "Oh come on for God's sake, Corbett, answer us will you please? We're concerned about you! You're not supposed to get banged up while you're in our charge. If you are we've got to get you to a hospital and get you attended to. So will you please let us know how you are?"

So he said, "All right, fellas, don't worry, I'm O.K."

They let him out of that jammed position and he sat up and the bruises, if there were any, were very slight. But, he went right back into his regular completely passive role and they somehow got back on the road and got the car fixed up and continued the trip. He was duly delivered. Ha-ha-ha-ha!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): And you knew Lee Stern in the prison at Milan.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes. He was a very tender soul. During my brief time in the population at Milan, before I had decided not to participate in any of the work program, he and I had some very nice conversations. While we were talking one time, a big cockroach came across the floor and I stepped over there and raised my foot. Lee Stern said, "Oh, please!"

I put my foot down and looked at him and I said, "Well, what do you think we should do with this cockroach? In view of their spreading disease like crazy –"

His answer was, "Well, we could play with him."

He didn't want any living thing to be destroyed. I had never given a second thought to it. But he had an extremely thoroughgoing respect for every kind of life.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I remember him from my very first entrance into a Quaker meeting. He was the one who was instantly aware of a newcomer and he would take you under his wing and nurture you in the way of Friends. He spent time with me in Rockland Meeting, explaining everything and he took me into their meeting library and showed me which books I should start out reading to learn about Quakerism. He told me above all I should read Rufus Jones.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes. Well, Dr. Henry Hitt Crane was a minister in Detroit, Michigan. He had heard there were a bunch of COs at Milan. He had a great big church and he was well known as a powerful minister. He decided one time that he'd go and see what COs they had in that prison at Milan – it wasn't too far from Detroit – and see what he could do to be of service to those inmates. Also he'd see how the officers in charge were doing



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about COs. So he wrote to the bureau of prisons saying that he was going to drive over to Milan, Michigan, and talk to all the COs they had there. A slow letter came a week or two later that if you desire to visit the prison, you first have to make application on the required forms and we will consult the bureau's head office in Washington to see if you would be allowed to do this. Well, he fired back a letter saying that he was not to be told by them what he could and could not do.

"I'm telling you that I'm going to do it on that date. Please be ready." He said that he would want to meet with all of the COs there, assembled together in whatever conference room would be available. He gave the time of his expected arrival. Well, whatever flurry of correspondence there was within the bureau of prisons, he was told that they would be ready for him to come. They gave him the red carpet treatment. They set up a conference room and they gave him a list of the COs that they had and with a few exceptions he could have them all come. I was not in segregation yet because they were still trying to see if there was something they could find for me to do that I'd be willing to do, that they could call a work station. So, I was in that conference and Dr. Crane learned a lot about all the COs, what their various statuses were and where their families were. He got a lot of addresses and he wrote letters to families who were close enough to visit and others who were not close enough to visit. He was very friendly and serviceable. As for Corbett Bishop, he had to go up to Corbett's hospital cell where he was being force-fed through the tube. Corbett later told me about this Dr. Crane. It was just before Corbett went into not functioning to take care of his own output. But he was just about ready to do that. Dr. Crane asked him how soon this was likely to happen. Well, Corbett said it might be a few hours, it might be a few days, he didn't know yet.

"Whenever the spirit leads me I'm going to follow the spirit," said Corbett. Then he lapsed into his Alabama accent and he said,

"As a matter of fact, my back teeth are floating right now!"

Well, before long Corbett and I were in close proximity, separated by just maybe one vacant cell between, and I got kind of acquainted with him after I'd been taken down to that hospital during a fast. Locked in cells, we never did get to see each other's faces.

I could not reach a shower, so I was taken by wheelchair to the one near a ward room, and set on a chair within the curtain. After I got soaked, the water turned suddenly scalding hot as someone turned the cold valve shut. I heard my voice ring out once before my feet lifted to the wall and propelled me and the curtain out backward to the open tiled floor. One or more inmates were being yelled at by a supervisor. I got towelled dry, and was not put into the shower stall again. A practical joke, probably.



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I got into the fast shortly after a prison censor had taken offense at some of the things I wrote to my wife who was still living in Toledo before moving to Washington DC, back home to live with her mother some more. After Roosevelt died I wrote to Carol saying a number of things I had respected him for as he did whatever he could to get this country out of the awful depression. I didn't know yet that he had made things a lot worse deliberately during Hoover's lame duck days, after the election and before the March 4th inauguration. It wasn't January 20th then. It was March 4th and that was a pretty long time in which Roosevelt and his banking friends did some maneuvers that got the country into worse condition so that this charging knight in armor could come in and save the whole country from the "Hoover depression." What he did was to adopt a lot of the policies that Hoover had tried to get Congress to help with, but they wouldn't do it for him. But they did it right away for Roosevelt. Anyway, Roosevelt used ruses in getting this country into the shooting war by plotting with Churchill, since before Churchill was prime minister, using the heads of state code both ways; he gave that privilege to Churchill when he shouldn't have. And he was figuring out how best to induce Japan to attack us in some outpost or other, like Guam or the Philippines or some other island base, not dreaming that Japan could come as far as past Midway and all the way down to Honolulu with the big attack.

Well, there was a code clerk in the London embassy under John F. Kennedy's father, Ambassador Joseph Patrick Kennedy. This code clerk, Tyler Kent, felt resentful of the perfidious nature of these communications between Roosevelt and Churchill about how to get Japan to mount some kind of an attack on us. They figured out how to do it together, by building up the US trade with Japan over a year and a half of time so that Japan would have about 90% of all its foreign trade with us, the United States. And that would balance an unusually large proportion, around 10%, of all our foreign trade. Previously, Japan had much less of its foreign trade with us. A necessary balance of currency could be maintained. We could get Japan heavily dependent on us, without our becoming too heavily involved with Japan. Then, all of that trade could be shut off suddenly, like turning a faucet quickly enough to cause a water hammer in the pipes. Japan's economy could receive a very serious jolt, insulting them for their tripartite link with Germany and Italy, bringing up revengeful reactions. Hopefully, this would provoke them to retaliate by some military attack, probably on a minor outpost of the US in the western Pacific. Then, with public approval, Congress could be persuaded to declare war on Japan, and in short order FDR expected a quick victory to take Japan out of the "axis powers." But, more immediately, our declaration would obligate Germany and Italy to declare war on us which is exactly what Roosevelt and Churchill wanted. Until that happened, any US declaration against Germany would be too hard to win from Congress. We couldn't do more than be a mere supplier



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of weapons and war materials in convoys to Britain. And at the same time Roosevelt was assuring the parents of young Americans that they would not be sent to fight in foreign wars, "except in case of attack." Tyler Kent was incensed at this secret deception in direct violation of the American public's strong desire to stay out of war. A powerful determination arose in him, by hindsight somewhat recklessly, to see if he could "blow the whistle" on Franklin Roosevelt.

Tyler arranged that, on his annual stateside furlough, he would be seeing the chairman, Tom Connolly, of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. They were the leaders for setting foreign policy for the United States which the State Department, under the president, would be implementing. That's the way things were in those days. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee did have that power to design our foreign policies. So this young coding clerk thought this was the most perfidious thing he could imagine happening, worse than anything he'd ever heard of. He resented having to translate through the codes machine, the messages both ways between these two leaders. He could easily understand that Churchill was loyally defending his own homeland from Hitler's forces by every possible means, fair or foul, as his proper duty. But FDR was deceiving all America against this nation's determination to stay isolated from direct military action far away from the Western Hemisphere and our homeland. Therefore, Tyler considered one of these leaders corrupt and infuriating. He assumed, mistakenly, that Connolly would not have been informed about Roosevelt's crooked deal with Churchill.

So, Connolly blew the whistle back at Tyler Kent. He told Roosevelt about it. Roosevelt told Churchill that he wanted Kent arrested and tried in secret by a British tribunal and sent away long enough so that the war would probably be over before he ever saw daylight again outside that prison. So he was secretly tried and sentenced to prison on the Isle of Wight for seven years. He did about five years of his sentence. Tyler's mother, Mrs. Anne H.P. Kent, noticed that the publicity about it was squelched in the American press almost as soon as it began in June 1940, and was distraught and wanted to get her son out of that British prison and brought over to this side because, as an embassy employee, he was supposed to have immunity under British law. If he did anything that violated British law, he was supposed to be brought over here and tried in our courts for it. After all, we were buddies with Britain! But she wanted him tried in open court so that his reasons for doing what he did, even without statutory protection for whistleblowers, could be exposed. He had a conscientious reason for doing what he was doing. Well, Roosevelt and Churchill weren't going to allow that. She came, Tyler Kent's mother, to the Florida Avenue (Quaker) Meetinghouse to a specially called meeting sometime in 1942, to see if there was anybody there -she'd been meeting with various church groups all around the Washington area- anybody there who might have an idea on how she could get her son tried



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as he should have been under American law in open court. This is supposed to be a democracy and she thought it could be a democracy even in wartime. Of course what she didn't realize was that it wasn't one. The people are supposed to believe that they are still in one, but as a practical matter, when the chips are down, there isn't any such thing in America. It's a conversational democracy. That's about all it can be during the war effort.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Now your wife, Carol, was there at that time, at the Florida Avenue Meeting?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, so this is before I ever got into the toils of the draft. We got the whole story of how Mrs. Kent's son had gotten into this terrible trouble and how he had been betrayed and how Roosevelt had been so perfidious, plotting to get us into war and at the same time assuring every American parent that he wasn't going to send their sons into any foreign war, "except in case of attack." He gave himself that little out, while he was arranging for us to be attacked. He was calculating how to get Japan to do it. Well, when foreign trade with Japan between July 1941 and September 1941 went from a bustling trade to a tiny trickle within just two months, that threw the Japanese empire's whole financial system into such a chaos that they suddenly had only about 10% of their world trade left and they had a war in China to feed with it. So they felt that we had been pretty sneaky. Japanese concepts of revenge were strong. So they outdid themselves by sinking so many of our ships at Pearl Harbor. They had phenomenal luck, and the Americans not dreaming that anything like that could be done by Japan, didn't defend. They didn't really keep track, although there was some important information from decoded Japanese messages that Admiral Kimmel and General Short were sacrificed for not using. Naturally, they were underinformed about those intercepted messages indicating the preparations for the attack.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That was December 7, 1941. Pearl

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Harbor.



Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. That was three years before I got finished with all my arguing with Selective Service and my eight or nine different classification actions.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): When did you become a Quaker?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, I became a member early in 1943. I started meeting at Florida Avenue in the District of Columbia, in September 1941, three months before Pearl Harbor. I was on



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my way to one of the Young Friends' meetings Sunday evening at about seven o'clock when the news of Pearl Harbor came over my car radio. Only a few others arriving there had heard it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It's amazing. Even I remember where I was.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): So, suddenly we were in the war. Completely. Well, there were various other details that I could remember and I could probably go on for hours. So let's get back on track.

In 1945 I had been transferred to Lewisburg Penitentiary and I was approached and asked if I would be interested in applying for parole. I had looked up the practice of paroling prisoners and essentially it seemed like a system where you take the inmate's word as binding that he's going to be a good person and keep out of trouble and you take a chance on him and let him out and see if he can fly right and not do any more crimes but, I thought that certainly didn't fit this present situation.

I said, "I got into trouble trying to be a good man, trying not to destroy people or property. And that's why I'm here. It seems ridiculous for me to promise to be a good boy now! We might have another war! It's not up to me! I'll keep on trying to be a good person, regardless! But, as to applying for the privilege of freedom by giving you my word to be good, being good is what got me in here." All this I was telling the Warden of Lewisburg Penitentiary.

"So, I figure that whenever the political situation is such that the people over you have no more reason to keep me here, they might decide to let me go." I thought, I haven't heard that we have turned into bad Germans and are destroying useless people, like maybe me, and unless the government does that kind of thing, I'll be free sometime.

After the war ended, I spent the last fifteen months of my sentence, which was originally five years, at Lewisburg. The only library books I saw at Lewisburg were ones a former Merchant Marine sea captain, Laurent Brackx, had brought me, THE AMERICAN EPHEMERIS AND NAUTICAL ALMANAC because he had discovered -he was an orderly in the hospital ward, and he found out- that I was doing some exercises in math so he brought me these books full of tables, astronomical tables, which delighted me and I spent a lot of time - I even figured out all of the elements of the orbit for a fictitious planet, which I called Imp, for Impossible. I think I put it somewhere between Venus and Earth in order to have its own orbit. I wasn't particularly concerned about perturbations of the orbits of either Venus or Earth but just to see how it would rotate around, or revolve around the Sun, what its own year would be and how large it was likely to be and how much gravitation it probably would have in that position and



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so forth. I made a lot of assumptions which were not factually based but anyway it was an instructive sort of fiddling around.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Wasn't the original idea of a penitentiary to be for the penitents, for them to improve their minds, to be sheltered and protected from their otherwise difficult life of crime and to be raised up to a higher level where they could have the leisure of an experience of scholarship?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, penitent. They were exposed to a quietude of separated existence, to contemplate their evil deeds, to get a handle on why they were evil and why it was a good idea to live a better life. Solitary confinement was the logical end of that kind of philosophy helping people to be penitent. Quakers, I think, innocently but disastrously found a lot of jailbirds going crazy or berserk because of the extreme isolation that turned out to be a form of torture in the jail houses of Pennsylvania.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Am I right that it was a Quaker idea in history to set aside these penitentiaries for the penitents to improve themselves while being protected?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, the later Quakers who wrote it up decided that the early Quakers who had that idea were horribly mistaken. They didn't know their psychology at all.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): They thought there's that of God in everyone and that God will come forth!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I guess there are some Quakers who are so wholly devoted that they think our whole concentration should be on God and what God wants of us and to listen to the inner voice only and principally, twenty-four hours a day.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Quakers are very devoted no matter what concern they focus on. They were very devoted to the Peace Testimony. Now it turns out that the Peace Testimony is not upheld to a huge degree and even back in the times of the Second World War, the Peace Committee of New England [Yearly Meeting](#) was really quite weak. The Committee did not have a report to the Yearly Meeting in those years. Here is what I was reading yesterday in the New England Quaker archives. In 1943 the annual report of the Peace Committee of New England Yearly Meeting stated:

"The Peace Committee is still in an exploratory, preparatory mode and has no major project to report. They feel the burden of the challenge presented in the morning by the honest account,



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as Rufus Jones calls it, of the state of our society which reveals the fact that few of our Quaker youth maintain the Peace Testimony of our society. There are five times as many of our [Quaker] boys in armed service as there are conscientious objectors."

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I had the impression that there was a larger proportion of the Friends in the two Baltimore Yearly Meetings, and the Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) than that and maybe New England was concentrating on other aspects of Quakerism. It was June 21, 1945 that the New England Yearly Meeting coalesced from previous groups and became one Yearly Meeting.

My Washington Friends Meeting was one of the so called New and United Meetings that sprang up not within any Yearly Meeting, but wanting to be warmly affiliated with all Friends everywhere. We didn't mind whether they were pastoral Friends or Friends without paid ministers, speaking out of the silence in meetings for worship, as ours does here; so both Baltimore Yearly Meetings, having an area which included Washington DC, kept asking us occasionally whether we would join one of their meetings. We said thanks very much for thinking of us, for inviting us, but we would rather be equally related to all Friends and not to any one group. That would tend to separate us from any of the others. The Society of Friends was still divided and we didn't want it to be divided. Well, both Baltimore Yearly Meetings got wise one year. It was reported in both their meetings that we had declined and why, and some bright Friend got up and said, well, in that case, if they would like to be related to all of us, and this is their territory within ours, both Baltimore Yearly Meetings, why don't we send somebody from our Yearly Meeting to travel with somebody else from the other Baltimore Yearly Meeting and go to Washington together and ask that meeting to join both simultaneously and have half their number assigned to one meeting and half to the other, but without designation, just in a statistical way, so that each Baltimore Yearly Meeting would be a little bigger according to how much half of their membership is. So they did that and they came to us together and they gave us a double invitation and we said, why yes, certainly, of course! And it was done. And then later on, Baltimore Yearly Meeting figured that since they were happily inclusive of all of us and of several other meetings of the sort, that the old division didn't make much sense any more and so why not have one Yearly Meeting? So, it was one Baltimore Yearly Meeting a few years after we joined. We were delighted.

One day at Lewisburg, the Catholic chaplain came into the hospital ward. There were about twenty-two beds, eleven on each side, a large open space in the middle, and he looked around and he asked something of somebody and then he looked at me and he came straight over to me. He introduced himself as the Catholic chaplain at Lewisburg and revealed his simplified understanding



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of my status in that place. Then he said that before he was at Lewisburg, he was a chaplain in the army. I felt my interest rising a bit at that. So we talked, generally, and there were some other fellows who sauntered over nearby and stood around. This wasn't a private setting so they were welcome to listen and they didn't seem to make much comment but they listened very carefully to what this priest and I were talking about. And then this priest began to become a little pointed. By degrees he got to his point: "I understand you're here for refusing military service. You must be missing the importance of putting down those Godless dictators who are threatening the whole Christian world."

I replied to the effect that, "They are succeeding, perhaps, in making most Christians abandon the whole message of Jesus about how to deal with our enemies. We are returning all kinds of evil for evil, as war causes everyone on both sides to resemble each other closely. What do you think Jesus would be telling us, and them, just now?"

So then I asked him, "What is there in Christian ethics that would possibly justify a bunch of priests telling a larger bunch of very young men not to be morally concerned about killing each other wholesale? What was there in Jesus' teachings that would justify that? Don't you suppose that Jesus Christ would be opposed to our doing that to each other?"

We had just a little more give and take before he suddenly decided that his watch told him that he was late, or almost late, to his next appointment, so he got out of there pretty fast. As soon as he was out of hearing, some of these men, convicts all, standing around, were beginning to laugh and oh, they thought that was a great show! They congratulated me for having given this so and so a good argument because he deserves it. I asked,

"What's the matter with him? Why were you so glad that maybe he was embarrassed over what we talked about?"

And they told me, "What a devil he is in priest's robes!" They said that there wasn't an inmate in this whole place that hasn't been warned against confessing anything to him because he'll trot up to the warden and tell him about it. He will violate his own priestly duties doing that. Oh, they called him all kinds of dirty names and they were so pleased that I had apparently sort of put him down, but gently. Ha-ha! I'd asked him questions that he didn't try to answer!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, there must be many more like him. Did anyone ever put your employment at risk for your CO stand?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, but there was only one time. I was still at work for the Maryland National Capital Park and



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Planning Commission at Silver Springs, Maryland. A politician, E. Brooke Lee, had become its chairman after he was the only Democrat in Montgomery County to suffer a defeat in the 1942 election, although he was the "county boss" there. So his friends appointed him as our agency chairman. One day he surprised me with a generous compliment for my technical work on a design for a traffic re-routing in an area near his property. I had thought myself out of his notice, being so very non-political. Then, a week or two later, in the spring of 1943, a political flunky appeared at my home a few minutes after I returned home from work one Friday evening, with a terse letter of termination signed by Mr. Lee, citing that this was "for the good of the service." The Director of Planning, Fred W. Tuemmler, knew nothing of it but soon called me back to say the chairman had learned from the Silver Spring draft board chairman that I was registered as a CO, and that was the only reason. But Selective Service regulations required all information about registrants to be kept confidential by draft boards, so my betrayal was perfectly illegal. I was ordered to clean out my desk immediately. On Monday morning I learned that Fred was still feeling stunned and angry – he confided that he had almost talked himself out of his own job, protesting my abusive termination. Mr. Lee, however, had enough political power to avoid any penalty, and his close friend in the draft board chairmanship didn't have to be right either. My sudden, unprincipled firing threw me for a loop, and it was quite a few days later that I decided to complete writing my Master's thesis for M.I.T., taking advantage of unemployment freedom. I never lost a job except that once, so on balance I guess I've been pretty lucky.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That's quite something to remember Silver Spring for.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): There was one more thing, much worse, that made that place even more memorable. Occasionally I would take public transportation, by bus and streetcar down Georgia Avenue to downtown Washington DC, and at a transfer point at the District line, I noticed, to my acute discomfort, a variety of injured military men on crutches or in wheelchairs, taking the same streetcars between a convalescent facility in a former Women's College in Maryland, and Walter Reed Hospital in DC for treatment. Many of their injuries were very serious – faces badly disfigured, limbs lost or useless, permanent paralysis in some cases. I had to keep outwardly quiet but inwardly I was furious about their victimization by a war supposed to be so "glorious." My mantra was a silent phrase, "And for WHAT?" They had been forced to do similar wrongs to soldiers on the other side, similarly forced. At times, when out of anyone's hearing, I had to let myself explode with angry language about it. I was, moreover, liable to be thrown into prison for refusing to kill or produce such injuries to German, Italian, or Japanese kids who had no other reason to be fighting against me. What could possibly be more rotten in this kind of a world? War victimizes



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everyone.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): The official view was no doubt that your reaction should have been revengeful against the enemies who did that to your countrymen. Were the ex-GIs you met in prison much different in their attitudes about war than your fellow students in graduate school?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): My reactions are not what any military government would dictate, as my guidance comes from another direction higher up. The inmates who in a few cases had been in military service, were not in general hostile to me, as they had felt that was a strange environment. I met no ex-GI who wanted to trade prison for more military service. Evidently prison is a much lesser hell. They had many stories about bizarre happenings in service. One man had been working with aircraft ammunition, feeding it to machine gunners and bombardiers over targets or in defense of their plane from attack. An order came out during training missions over the US farmlands of Texas and nearby states, that they were not to return to base with any unspent ammo on board. But the day didn't last long enough to shoot it all off or drop all the bombs before they had to return on deadline. Impossible! Until one bright guy found the only solution for the problem. When they started back, all remaining ammo still in crates and boxes could be pushed out the open side door in hopes it would land in fields and not on farmhouses or barns. So, lying on their backs with shoulders braced against bolsters they would kick all unopened crates out the door! What happened below was the responsibility of whoever sent out that order. This procedure was described to me as a daily one for many months. No crewman with an idea for loading less ammo each morning had enough rank to send the idea up the line of command, toward the author of that absurd order.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Could he have had some reason to favor the makers or sellers of such ammunition?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Perhaps he had money invested in a plant making ammunition for the Army Air Force. War profiteers had very few political opponents. One of them had been Senator Harry Truman, who, long before becoming president, chaired a Senate Investigation Committee probing the Electric Boat Company for getting orders to build attack submarines during the 1930s for the governments of both Argentina and Chile, while at the same time telling each of them what orders for subs the others had placed with E.B. A two-sided fear was thus exploited to promote more E.B. contracts and profits. Truman had exposed that commercial racketeering, but had kept his high opinion of warfare as a patriotic method of settling international problems. To me it was murderous nonsense on a very great scale.

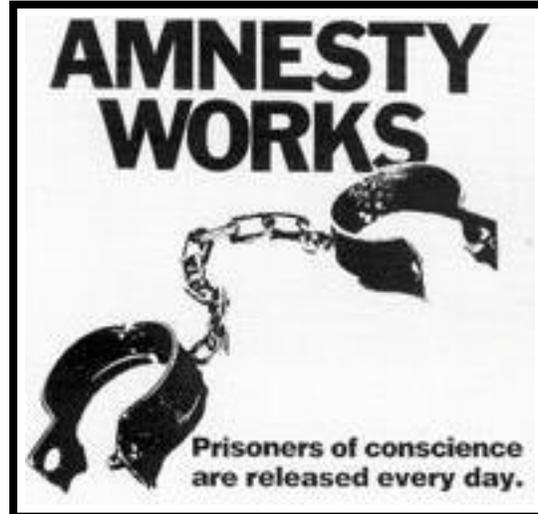
Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): After the First World War an



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amnesty for COs was declared to excuse them. Has anything like that occurred for your generation of war refusers?



Friend [John R. Kellam](#): A few years after the "good war" ended, a group of well-known religious leaders from peace churches and several major religious denominations got an appointment with President Truman to see if he would be willing to declare an amnesty for WWII conscientious objectors who had been criminalized because they could not kill or destroy in war. The meeting began with a presentation by one of them, but that was interrupted when Truman said (according to someone who heard it) that he could save time for everyone present by saying that in his opinion, any son of a bitch who wouldn't fight for his country ought to be in jail. After some hesitation, someone said, "Thank you, Mr. President," and they all filed out of the Oval Office. I could believe that, as Truman's reputation for salty language dates from his World War I combat days, so this agreed with his outspoken character. But it sounded to me, when I heard about that meeting, more like what an organized crime leader might say about an underling who would refuse to kill the leader of a rival gang.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He was considered a loyal hero after the First World War ended, and a model for others to emulate. How soon after your anti-war attitude developed did you meet other COs?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): About two or three years. I hadn't known other young men resisting the draft until I got among the company of Young Friends in the meeting in Washington and in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Then COs began to flock together to some extent. And young women who had the same opinions.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Had there been any Quakers or COs in your family?



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Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I didn't have any Quaker ancestors that I knew of; yet, I was convinced before I ever met any Friends so I recognized that we had a lot of feelings in common. But I might have had Quakers in my family because we did come from England and Germany, way back in the 1800s, maybe 1860 or 1870, and a few of them earlier. It may be that most Americans had war avoiders among their immigrating forebears.

My father had orthodox views about patriotism. He'd been in the Navy four years and he had tremendous pride in this country and most of that pride came from the fact that we were a big middle class society in this country. He forgot about the Indians and he forgot about the black people. He was uncertain whether other races were equal to us mentally, morally and in other ways. He once asked me, very seriously, if I thought that black people were as good as white people. I said that I didn't know enough of them to be sure but I'd not heard of any reason that convinced me that they were any different on a general level. They might have different traits of character. They might have different capabilities, but as citizens of this country, their rights would have to be perfectly equal. No group should be getting after any other group to deal out disadvantage. So I looked to see what my dad had to say about that. Well, he started to walk away and I asked him what about his ideas. He said that he just wanted to know how I felt about it! Then he just walked away.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He had to think about it.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I don't know. He didn't say why. It was a one-sided conversation. But I was prepared to do whatever amount of give and take he wanted! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

Now my mother felt on principle that I was right. But she was concerned about whether I might possibly, by taking a contrary stand to the general public, be getting myself into greater hazard and be less likely to live out a good life than if I had different views and were willing to go along. All she wanted me to be was as safe as possible. But I told Mom that there's an important principle involved here! If we only just go along to keep ourselves safe, the world can keep on going to hell! And we won't be doing anything to prevent it! But she was sort of consumed by her potential fears about my consequences. So I was ignorant enough to feel a little disappointment with her. But I realized better where she was coming from later, when I found out as a parent why she felt that way.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): When did your parents die?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): My father died in 1935. He was fifty-three years old. That was a good five years before I began to understand myself with respect to war and peace. My mother lived



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until 1951, a year after I moved to Providence here. I had just gotten back into my own profession where I had taken technical training. Her health was generally breaking down. Parkinson's disease was taking all her energy. She was weakened by that so that her immune system was affected. Then her medications were not doing her enough good and probably some harm and she had stomach ulcers. She weakened and weakened until she finally died at age sixty-five. She was born in 1886 in the Dakota Territory. They didn't get statehood until a few years later.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): She was really a pioneer!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. She was in a town that had one of the very first railroads that made it across the country: Plankinton, South Dakota. Then she moved to the southwest corner of Minnesota. In Jackson County there's a little town called Heron Lake with two thousand people, including all the farmers in the township. She and my father knew each other. He was three years ahead of her in high school. My father then was in the navy from 1903 to 1907, having graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Pharmacy. He became a chief hospital steward in the navy. He had charge of the sick bay on any ship that he was sailing on. But he refused to participate in drilling exercises. He said his duty was to be in charge of the sick bay, which was much more important. He didn't see any patriotic purpose in drilling. If he had, he would have done it! He didn't see how that would help him do his job any better for the navy. So, he was very conscientious! He'd gone through four years of pharmacy school in about two and a half years. He worked in college and earned his way mostly. He went around the world. He said he'd seen one less sunrise than anybody else he knew in Minnesota.

The last time I saw Corbett Bishop was in Washington. He came to the FCNL office in order to tell me that he was out and he wasn't likely to have any more trouble from Selective Service because they had washed their hands of him and he was too old for them to be interested in him anymore. They'd harassed him enough so they were satisfied. Cat and mouse harassment. And climbing around on his shoulders was a great big raccoon. He was on a chain leash and was thoroughly domesticated and was interested in meeting other people, anybody that Corbett was willing to have him meet was fine with him! Ha-ha-ha! It was wonderful getting acquainted with an animal that was different than I'd ever known before. Later on, oh maybe five or so years after that meeting, I learned that Corbett Bishop was dead. Some kind of a quarrel had happened and somebody down in Alabama had been offended by somebody else and in the melee Corbett was mortally injured. He died. I think he was maybe ten years older than I. That would mean that he would be ninety-five by now, but chances were that he would not have been still surviving.



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Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Did he have no family?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): No. Just the raccoon. That's the only family I ever heard of.

Anyway, at Milan, Michigan, I had declined a haircut. I had been letting my hair grow. I didn't think I should ask for or accept any unnecessary services from the prison. I wasn't offering the prison any of my energies and I didn't want to take from the prison any more energies than I had to. But somebody decided I needed a haircut. It was offered to me and I declined and it was offered to me another time or two! I still declined. So one of the guards decided he'd had enough nonsense with this fella. He said to me, "Come on, you're getting a haircut!"

"I didn't ask for one and I don't feel entitled to it."

"Well, but you are. Are you coming?"

"No."

So he took hold of my shoulder and I went down on the floor. He grabbed my hair and dragged me out by the hair, out of the doorway of the cell, down the corridor and into the little anteroom beyond the big lever that closed all the doors at once. He sat on me and another guard appeared and did a very quick job with the clippers and pretty soon there was a pile of hair on the floor. So they swept those up and said that I could stay here if I wanted to or go back to my cell. Anyway, they were beginning to let the inmates out to go up the stairs to the roof for an exercise period. So I picked myself up and I don't remember if I went up on the roof or back to my cell.

After recreation we were all expected to close our own cell doors. A CO named Wally Nelson walked in to his cell and we heard various doors clanging and then the guard at the end, where the big lever was, yelled down to cell number eight,

"Shut the door!" Quick as a wink Wally said, "I don't close cell doors! I wouldn't close them on anybody else and I won't close them on myself."

So the guard came down and flung his door shut. I thought it was going to break the door. With all that heavy steel it made a terrible noise. So Wally didn't go up for recreation until they said he was going to agree to close his own cell door first. I don't know what the ultimate outcome was of all that. But you could just feel the principle crackling.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, Wally Nelson is living down the road from Woolman Hill. When was the last time you saw him?



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Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Ah, so you know him then! I saw him here at Providence Meeting, oh, maybe fifteen years ago. If I remember right, he was just on my side of the cell that was occupied by the man on death row.

The condemned man had had two or three execution dates set and then postponed. One day when his case had been in court, but they didn't take him on that appeal, two guards came in and shouted his name and marched over to the front of his cell and started talking smart about his having lost his appeal and making cracks about how they were probably going to "fry" him after all. They brought with them a length of chain and very noisily they wound this chain up and around his door, through the bars various ways, and put a padlock on it. Well, this condemned prisoner was telling the guards how absolutely ridiculous they were being with this phony security chain and he asked if the warden knew that they were cutting up like this. So he and the guards had a very strong dislike of each other which seemed to be very personal. I wonder if Wally Nelson would remember this incident. I remember it as if it was yesterday. It's amazing how some experiences don't fade at all.

Well, there was another hair-dragging that I saw. The CO's name was Larry Gara. He was at Lewisburg and he had had a tooth infection for several days that kept on getting worse. He had asked to see the dentist and they put him off. It got even worse so he was pretty miserable with pain in the jaw. So on the way to breakfast he decided that he was hurting too much to enjoy any breakfast anyway. The route that they took, being marched through the halls, went right past the dentist office so he stepped out of line and sat down on the waiting bench outside the dentist office. The guards were immediately alarmed at anything out of the way. They tried to pick him up off the bench and get him marching again. His legs went limp to jelly and he slid to the floor and one of the guards who had quite a reputation for roughing up inmates, grabbed his hair and yanked him along the floor, terrazzo floors that were pretty well polished, it must have been a good two hundred feet down the long corridor, and dropped his head in front of the elevator and pushed the button.

I was taking a walk around the center area between the two rows of beds in the hospital ward that I was in, so I walked out there to the hall to watch what was going on, just out of ordinary curiosity, and this guard who had been dragging Larry came over to me and barked at me that I should get back in the ward. As far as he could tell, I didn't hear a word of it. I just stood there mildly looking on, so he grabbed me by an elbow, pulled it up tight and I went down on the floor. My feet weren't obeying him and neither did the rest of me. So he suddenly flipped around there and yelled to another guard who was with him, "See what they give us?" – as though he were the one being harassed by me. I just stayed there listening, not moving, and then the elevator door opened and he grabbed Larry somehow, maybe by the collar



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or something, threw him into the elevator and the door closed. The action was all over and nothing else was happening so I picked myself up and continued walking around the ward.

That guard's name was Steininger. He was the one who was assigned to come to my cell on the day that I was released and get me prepared to go out. So he put all my clothes on me after telling me that I was on my way out. So I guess I acknowledged in some way that I wasn't very excited.

He said, "Don't you believe me?"

I said, "I'll believe you if I see the outside first."

So he realized then that he had to do everything between here and there. So he put me in a wheelchair after he'd put my clothes on. It was winter, almost winter, in late November, after Thanksgiving. We didn't go through the usual signing out. He had a box that I found out later on was my own personal belongings that I'd taken into there. I had a small shoebox with a few things in it that I had been working on as a tentative hobby in prison and that's here. I found myself with these things in my lap sitting in a wheelchair outside the front of the prison.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So this was your final departure.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and I was willing to go home as soon as I found myself at liberty to go but I wasn't going to put my family in jeopardy by trying to escape.

Well, this guard had a passenger car there and he said, "I'm going into Lewisburg town on some errands. I could drop you off at the train station. You've got a train ticket to Washington DC in your pocket."

I was to go back to Washington DC to my family. But he said, "As far as I'm concerned you can sit here overnight or you can walk to town or you can accept a ride from me. Whatever you want to do, you're a free man now." So I said, "In that case I'd be glad of a ride into town. Thank you very much."

And on the way I said, "Mr. Steininger, I've been wondering about you over the last year or so, particularly since I saw Larry Gara sliding down the hall lying down with his hair in your hand. You seem like a reasonable fellow but I find it hard to put that together with what you were doing that day!"

"Oh," he said, "that happened after I had taken this job here. I left Byberry in Philadelphia, Byberry Hospital, it's a mental hospital, it was originally called the Hospital for the Insane, I think, and that was a good job. But I had more money if I took this job. So I took it. I realized right away, almost, that this was a terrible job for me to have. It didn't suit me at all. So



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I was just about to quit when the President in Washington issued an executive order freezing us in our essential occupations and a lot of other people in hundreds of other occupations all over the country. And I was stuck. I couldn't legally leave my job unless the prison officials were willing to let me go. But they could hold me and they did. So, I was trying desperately to get fired."

He said he went AWOL one time and went back to work at Byberry, but soon the FBI came to tell him that his choice was to go back to Lewisburg as a guard, or else be sent to be a prisoner there. One of the easiest ways to get any guard fired was to have him abusing prisoners. So, he said, "I figured if I got tough enough, not doing any real damage, but insulting prisoners and musing them up enough they'd decide I was no good as a guard and they'd fire me. I'd have been happy to go back to Byberry and have been an orderly there as an assistant for patient care. I loved that job!"

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): So, Larry was one of those who got in the way and the opportunity to misbehave was right in front of him. He was trying to lose his job! And they allowed it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): There's a lot of exploitation in the workplace. It does a lot of damage.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, I'm sure. Lots of serious sabotage. In a way it cries out for compassion, and in another way it seems in extremely bad taste. Officials in government do all kinds of crazy, immoral things. It gets covered up more usually than it's exposed and some of it's very clever but you wonder how any of it gets by. The FBI had a perfectly easy job to get me convicted. They didn't have to lift a finger outside of the truth. I'd signed the whole statement acknowledging what I'd refused to do when they'd offered me the oath of induction into the army and they knew before that, it was on the record on file. My whole Selective Service file was full of it. I knew exactly who and what I was and they'd even interviewed a whole lot of people about me and found out that it was all hanging together. So, my having admitted exactly what I did and setting things straight in context in an order of time, they didn't have to lie in court, under oath to the judge in order to win their case. It wasn't their case anyway. Selective Service was insulted by my behavior in refusing.

So, I began to wonder seriously about the FBI. Was it the organization I had thought was so very respectable? I had heard a long lecture by J. Edgar Hoover at the University of Minnesota in 1933 and he was new in the job. He was full of what a wonderful organization that was and he was seeing to it that it was increasing in efficiency and effectiveness, catching only the bad guys, only doing that when their evidence was straight and



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true and sufficient for convictions. If you were innocent, you'd



welcome the FBI coming to ask about anything. If you were guilty, you'd better not see the FBI. And all that was blown away the day of my trial in Toledo federal district court. Judge Klobe had an animus. He had one week earlier been bawled out in his own courtroom, before he could stop the guy, by a Jehovah's Witness person who didn't claim to be conscientiously opposed to all war. Let the war of Armageddon come around and he would have been the best warrior in the world! But he was a minister of the Gospel and therefore, by law, he claimed to be exempt from the draft. But all of Jehovah's Witnesses are ministers, even their kids. So the government wasn't having any of what sounded like nonsense. Anyway Judge Klobe was still smarting from that incident. He didn't let me open my mouth for one word. When he and his prosecutors had scared out my attorney who was all prepared to defend me as well as possible in court – the attorney, by the way, was the chairman of the Toledo City Planning Commission, and he liked my work! – I was getting nicely settled in the job, assistant city planning engineer. He thought that my work was fine. They were very dismayed when the draft caught up with me and sent me to Cleveland and I had to refuse. I'd given them as much warning of it as I could.

Arthur Kline was his name, the attorney who was there to defend me. But through the court system, the federal court system there, they said that if he tried to defend this draft dodger, they'd see to it that he got mighty few bits of lawyering to do in Toledo anymore. And he knew they could do it so he called me to let me know that he had his law practice to defend. So I went to my boss, the city planning engineer, the head of the staff, and I told him what Arthur Kline had said.



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"Well," he said, "Arthur has been a close friend of mine for all the years I've been in this job, maybe a dozen years, and I think he should keep on being the man of principle I always thought he was. Don't you let him off the hook! He doesn't have an ethical right to abandon you just because he's been threatened by some monsters in prosecution uniforms."

So he wanted his very good friend to be held to his duty for me. But I didn't feel all right about that. I was very appreciative of Arthur Kline's willingness to defend me. He was one of the better known lawyers in town. When I couldn't have him and I had no way of finding anybody else, I didn't want to hang him with all that kind of responsibility that had been ripped away from him really by some ruthless people who were in a position to know better about ethics and law.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So you didn't go back to him? You just let it drop?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, I may have had one or two more conversations with him about strategy and how I can attempt to be my own counsel since I couldn't have him do it. Of course you know what the old saying is about anybody who tries to be his own lawyer?

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I don't think I've heard this one.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): He has a fool for a client! Ha-ha-ha! So anyway, the Toledo jail was dark and damp. Nobody was spending a dime more for electrical energy than they could get away with. The food was horrible and everything was as bad as you would expect in the middle ages. People visiting couldn't even see the inmates through all the dark screening and hardware cloths and dense black, that old screening with tiny holes in those screens – I don't think a flea could have gotten through there. I got up early one morning and I heard a fellow grumbling and moaning and I thought the fellow was sick or something. So before I could inquire, at the risk of waking up other inmates, I heard him say, "How come some folks neva goes to jail and others allus lands in jail? That's me."

Then there was a silent period and a deep sigh and I heard the same voice saying, "If I would of knew what I know now I wouldn't of did what I done."

Well, I wondered how he had gotten himself into jail. It didn't seem as if he had enough intellect to pull off any caper that was clever. So I visited him later in the day and we got to talking. I said, "Everybody in here is different and in for a completely different kind of a thing."



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I told him what I was in there for.

"Oh, geez," he said, "that's tough."

He recognized that I was in there for trying to be good. He said,

"I'm not very smart. I thought I could make some dollar bills and pass 'em off. I never had a good job but this might get me a few bucks."

So he was counterfeiting currency but he didn't have plates that were worth anything and I don't know what kind of pictures he was drawing to try to make them look like dollar bills, but it was, I gathered, a very crude job of counterfeiting. He didn't have any real plates to print from, they didn't have very good machines in those days, but then I didn't see any of his work! But he never got started more than a few days before he'd get grabbed. And it had happened repeatedly.

"I've been spending half my life in places like this. I don't even get started before they grab me."

Apparently he just wasn't smart enough to get by with any quantity at all before he'd get caught.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He'd learned one thing. Johnny-one-note.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yeah. Ha-ha-ha! He was epileptic too. He'd had some grand mal damage to his brain. He'd been uncontrolled too long.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He could have been one of these idiot savants.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): But not very savant. He was a crude artist with the currency.

There was one old man who'd been in the Lewisburg prison hospital occasionally for some minor illnesses. He was up in years. He must have been somewhere around sixty or sixty-five and he came in seeming more depressed than I'd seen him before. Each time he came in he seemed more depressed so I asked the sea captain who brought me the books from the library, "What's the matter with this tall, thin fellow? He seems to be down in the dumps more than ever. Every time he comes in here he looks worse."

"Oh, he's getting short. His sentence is almost up."

So he would be going out pretty soon. Well, the day came when he went out. We saw him from the hospital windows going out from



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the front door of the building, to the gatehouse in the thirty-foot wall. The way he was trudging looked as if he was on his way to his execution instead of on his way to freedom. But he had spent so much of his life in prisons and jails of all kinds and he'd gotten so old that he didn't know how he was going to cope with the outside world. It scared him and depressed him to think that he was going to be on his own responsibility and he didn't have a sense of responsibility or how to take care of himself on the outside. So out he went and about ten days later in he came! Some marshal was conducting him to the building's front door again and we soon found out, because everybody saw him come in and everyone in the whole place knew through the grapevine that he was back. Well, they all expected him to be a lot happier than he had been. He seemed to have a big burden lifted off his back.

What had happened was that as soon as he was out, he had a ticket to somewhere, he got off at a city that had a sister city on the other side of a river, in another state, like Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas, across the state line, and as soon as he got there he left the bus station and looked at every car and as soon as he found a car with the keys in the ignition, he got in it. He could remember just enough about driving that he got it to the bridge and went over the river into the other state and if he happened to know where the police station was, he parked that car in front of the police station and sat in it. Pretty soon the theft of that car went out on the wire services and some policeman going out on his beat happened to see the license plate, took out his police sheet and saw that the plates fit. So he went over to the guy and said, "Is this your car?"

He said, "No, I stole it!"

"Where'd you steal it from?"

"The other side of the bridge."

He mentioned the name of the state over there. The policeman asked, "Well, why'd you steal it and what's it here for?"

Well, he didn't profess to know why and just let the officer do what he wanted to do and he took him into the station. So some other policeman took the car back. It wasn't damaged, but they charged him with stealing an automobile and taking it across a state line. And that was a federal offense, so they had him up in federal court and he was sentenced. He didn't object and he didn't try to defend himself at all. They looked up his record and learned that he'd just come out of Lewisburg. They considered his age and they said, "Looks like you're going back to Lewisburg."

"O.K."

Well they said that maybe they ought to send him to some other



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place, and he didn't look as pleased about that! Lewisburg was his home and he didn't like to be put out, so they accommodated him again. Poor guy! He just couldn't make it on the outside.

There was another prisoner named Gene McCann. He had been called The Boy Wonder of Wall Street in his day. He was some kind of a broker for stocks. He was also some kind of a manipulator and he made an awful lot of money using other people's money without their consent. So, he made quite a pile in a hurry. Back in the thirties it wasn't as easy, maybe, and he got caught for securities and exchange violations. He got put in Lewisburg. He felt that he was only trying to do what the country had permitted all the robber barons to do. To get rich quick was the epitome of American success so why were they bothering him? He felt put upon. It got to be pretty strong paranoia. He began to wonder if all the people in the beds and all the orderlies who came in and the people with the food carts that came in three times a day were really looking for ways of getting him. So he took to the underside of his bed and on the floor he'd keep on writing writs to Judge Learned Hand of the Supreme Court of New York. But he didn't have good handwriting, so before he had retreated into his hole under his bed he'd been socializing some with us, and he'd seen that I had been re-establishing my handwriting. College had been pretty hard on it, taking notes! Ha-ha! So, I had relearned the alphabet and I was writing very neatly. Well, he got the idea that maybe I could go about practicing while copying his scrawls to make his writs legible. At one time some of his writs had been in Judge Learned Hand's court and the Judge said that he wasn't going to wear out his eyes trying to read this awful scrawl. Unless he could learn how to write, or get his manuscripts made legible, he wasn't going to read another thing from him. So I wrote maybe half a dozen in three or four months and they all got into Judge Learned Hand's possession and he denied almost all of them, but he gave partial relief in one or two. So, it felt as if I was getting to be a jailhouse lawyer! Ha-ha! But all I was doing was a copying job, just as if I'd had a typewriter, making things legible. So I didn't know whether Gene McCann had anything really convincing to offer the Judge, but if he had the right to get the Judge to read something, then I shouldn't refuse to help him exercise that right.

Carol and I corresponded quite frequently until it was shut off by censorship, when they didn't like what I said about the President. The President's war was still going on and I was sounding to them almost treasonous. Some of the guards, when they didn't have other things to do, would set up a table in a hallway and one of those tables was often in front of our cages. They would go through inmate letters to make sure there wasn't something in them about other inmates or about the prison system, criticizing it, and some of the guards even took offense at political ideas that were contrary to their own. They would report through channels to the warden that so-and-so's correspondence has these things in it. There were five letters that got returned to me at one time and those were letters going



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on three or four weeks. They were all addressed to my wife and I was writing them as freely as if there was no censorship. I didn't recognize their right to censor what she wrote or what I wrote. I felt that I had been kidnapped from home and family and friends for reasons which were connected with a war which was as rotten as any other war in its effect on people. I didn't want to recognize the validity of my incarceration. Carol and I had talked about the idea that maybe our correspondence might not be agreeable to some people in the official hierarchy in the prison.

I went to the Bureau of Prisons in Washington one time after I had been transferred to the Silver Spring draft board and they had started to lean on me. I went to ask a number of questions. When they found out what I was there for and what kinds of feelings I had, they sent me to the supervisor of classifications of the whole prison system. So in his office I got the answers to all these questions about how jobs are doled out to the various kinds of inmates, who has control and how is it exercised, which inmate does which job, and how much choice does any of the inmates have about what he does, and so forth. He was very obliging and he became aware that I was really casing the place in advance, trying to understand as much as possible of what I was getting into. So he asked me a few questions and I didn't mind. I would just as soon avoid leading him to any conclusions about me, but I wasn't sure I was going to be able to because I knew what I was trying to stand for and not stand for and it was up to the government to make up its mind as to what to do about it. So learning as much as possible about the prisons would mean that I might be better able to calculate what my appropriate activities should include and which ones excluded. He seemed to be affably amused and wished me luck as I was leaving him. I thanked him for all the information I'd gotten and he invited me to put in more questions to him if I thought of anything that I still hadn't asked about. He was very obliging. This was a full year or two before I was tried for refusing induction. I think I went in there just about the right time.

There was an FBI man who came to Penn Craft where I was working later on after I had been out of prison a couple of years. He showed his badge and I recognized FBI on it and he asked me if we could talk in some place that wasn't as open as at this barn where some fellow homesteaders were using materials and equipment. So we went up to the house. On the way I told him that with respect to his own official duties there was nothing I could say that could help him. The only thing that I could think of to say that would be constructive and helpful was that I felt he would be a lot happier if he would quit that kind of a job and get into something useful where he wouldn't be adversarial with people, or bothering them as they were trying to live their lives, as if they were criminals. It seemed to me that he would be much better off in any other kind of occupation. I said, "Weren't you ever interested in something else almost



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as much as you are in this?"

"I'd studied a while for the ministry."

"Oh, that would have been wonderful! Why settle for so much less?"

Maybe he wasn't too good at it! According to the congregation!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Maybe it wouldn't pay him enough money.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, maybe this was paying him more. Anyway, as an official of the FBI, ever since I became aware of how outrageously the FBI could go astray from the truth, under oath, in court, to lie about a defendant, there hasn't been an FBI man since that has been worth the time of day off my watch. But as a person, I said, "I respect you and I wish you could have a happier life than you could possibly have had with this job."

I still didn't know the worst about J. Edgar Hoover. When the whole press of the country acknowledges the sort of a defective guy he was, even in that position, and how he had lists of enemies and people he'd like to find a way of putting in jail, without caring in advance what they might have done that was contrary to law, I couldn't have respect for that kind of official so corrupted. Hoover wasn't so much of a misfit during the war as he was in peacetime, because the first casualty of war is the truth. One of the best tools in warfare is deception. You're trying to deceive the enemy even if it means deceiving your friends first, having them unwittingly tell the enemy things that are not so.

I remember seeing one man at Lewisburg. He'd brought in his pocket three or four strawberries. When he got inside, and I guess they trusted him enough not to search him, he distributed these strawberries, one to each of a few other inmate friends in the prison. They were ripe, luscious looking strawberries. They must have tasted wonderfully. But for that, either some guard saw or heard, or some snitch went to a guard and the guy was thrown in the hole. It was a bare cell, sometimes with padding around the walls, a concrete floor with a little hole in the middle of it and not even a toilet in there. The hole would be used for that. There was no light coming through the door at all. That was "the hole," so he spent a while in solitary, supposedly thinking how wrong he'd been to do whatever the officials took offense at. For dealing out a few strawberries to friends, and he was a farmworker on the outside of the walls, but anything he brought in that wasn't officially sanctioned was, by definition, contraband. He was being punished as though he'd brought in a bag full of heroin. Ha-ha-ha-ha!



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There was one sweet little guy, a virgin and looking very innocent. He was a Jehovah's Witness, I guess upper teens, and he'd gotten into prison somehow. I think he wasn't a CO but I'm not sure. Well, anyway, he'd gotten gang raped by a bunch of old, hardened convicts one day and really injured. He was in the hospital for awhile getting treated for the roughness of that. And then he had the duty to testify against those guys in court. They were still in the population in the prison. So he was really beset with fears. He didn't know who these guys had as confederates in other departments or in the hospital or wherever, so he was extremely vulnerable. It was so worrisome that he became ill from it. I think eventually he was released because he was simply going to pieces in there. If he hadn't really done anything wrong except to claim what his religious leadership said he was, they were punishing the innocent, by any common sense way of looking at it. But he was one of these "pretty boys." These old guys I guess must have pretended that he was female. George Bernard Shaw said that in schools no child was protected from the others as he would have been in prison. But prison protection wasn't always effective either.

William H. Hiatt was the name of the Lewisburg warden. The Milan warden was Lemuel F. Fox, and he chaired the prison draft board there. The place where I got put in Lewisburg first was a segregation section where I met Bayard Rustin and other notable war resisters and other types of COs. From there I was transferred to what they called the Blue Room, the Psychiatric Ward. There was quite a motley bunch of prisoners in there and some orderlies. One poor guy of maybe eighteen or twenty who was in pretty bad condition, didn't have normal responses to anybody else. The man in charge of that part of Lewisburg was Robert M. Lindner, Ph.D. Do you remember the book, *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE*? He was the author, a psychologist, not a psychiatrist. But he was running a ward that was supposed to be the nearest thing to a psychiatric ward that the hospital had. But you'd wonder why a psychologist would be in charge of it. He didn't have enough credentials for that. It's like saying that an optometrist is able to do the delicate eye surgery for cataracts! Well, anyway, one day I heard outside of the room I had, the door was ajar, and out in the center space around which were a lot of little rooms, instead of having the beds all in the center space, I heard the noisiest shouting. I thought that young fellow was going berserk, except that his voice was not that low. So I wandered out through the door and looked out and there in the doorway of this poor guy's room was Robert M. Lindner. His shoulders were hunched down and his jaw was jutting out. He was bawling this young guy out and it looked as though Robert M. Lindner was feeling personally insulted.

In the next few days I learned from a prison inmate psychiatrist, a Jewish German refugee who was really qualified but who was in for income tax evasion (ha-ha-ha-ha!), and he was in a white coat, and he had a little rubber triangle inside a stainless steel rod hooked around his neck so he looked like a doctor



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equipped to examine reflexes. From him I learned that Lindner had taken offense at this kid who had been grossly mistreated sexually as a child by his mother. He was psychologically, thoroughly, all messed up. Well, Lindner had caught him masturbating. But why Lindner had to take offense at that, you wouldn't expect a professional to have it grate on his nerves at all. He should have seen everything. I had watched Lindner after he halfway calmed down and went out. As he went through the outer door of the "Blue Room" into the hospital general hallway, I could hear Lindner muttering some awfully angry things under his breath. So he was really personally disturbed by this young kid. So I wondered, how does he get off writing such a book that was supposed to be so authentic? And the public sees it as a best seller.

He came in one time and tried to convince me that Jesus was a simpering pseudo-mystic, an epileptic, and he gave a number of quick diagnostic terms that were supposed to mean that Jesus was not the kind of a person you'd trust with any veracity at all, that he was a completely addled person of no consequence.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It sounds like he was a rebel without a cause.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I wondered about that! And I asked him from what source came his knowledge of the historic Jesus. I said, "Did you get it through your own religious affiliations, if you have any?" And he said, "I'm Jewish, but that's not a part of Judaism."

"Well," I said, "any real knowledge of Jesus should have a lot of Judaism in it because Jesus was a Jew. He came to help all Jews be better Jews."

Lindner decided he didn't want to go on with that conversation.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Was he a practicing Jew?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I have no idea. On that we never conferred. In fact at this I just wrote him off and didn't ask anybody about him.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I wouldn't wonder. He sounds like a case himself.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I just thought of a very interesting fellow I met in the "Blue Room." He had been a naval petty officer and his work was shoreside. He had been on vessels before but he had a desk job in the Navy Department. One day after I had played chess with him quite a few times – he was very grateful to find someone who would play the game with him –



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although I had rarely played it and didn't really know much about it except that the knights go two up and one over and the bishop goes on his own color diagonally across the board as far as he wants to or as far as he can and the king and queen have their small motions and that was about as much as I knew about it. But anyway, it seemed to help him that someone even of my meager ability could move pieces because that let him think about the game. That day he said he needed to think about something as interesting as chess because otherwise he was going crazy thinking about the way he got in there. Another navy officer who was a good close friend of his had come to his desk and he said, "I've got a problem at home. My son is not willing to think of a military career. I'm not too happy about that and I would be happy if he would come into the navy but he says he's opposed to war and he's going to register as a conscientious objector. I've tried to talk him out of it but I don't want to be too heavy on him and I'm wondering how he could do what he feels he has to do with the least amount of damage to his future life."

So this navy officer with whom I'd gotten acquainted, hearing that, told his friend, well maybe his son had better get himself copies of all the Selective Service regulations and see what might be in the minds of the Selective Service people he meets. It might tell him what their responsibilities are and he knows what he feels his responsibilities are and maybe he could soften whatever blow is going to come to him because of his attitudes. He said, "Everybody is entitled to this. We don't have to agree with him, in fact I don't, but he had better look things up and make himself as aware as possible."

So his friend got the boy to go over to the government printing office and get himself copies of those regulations. The boy went to his draft board and they found out that he was extremely knowledgeable about their business. He was a bright guy – a quick study! So they asked him, "Who told you this was the way it was supposed to be done?"

And they got him to blurt out that he'd read it in Book 4 of the regulations, which is correct. Some of them knew enough of their own regulations to verify it. Ha-ha! So they said, "Where'd you get those?"

He said, "Over at the printing office."

"Who told you that they'd be there?"

"My father learned about it from another fellow at the navy department."

Well they looked that all up and they got those two officers and they trumped up charges about their doing illegal kinds of draft counseling. The FBI decided to claim that there was a ring of draft dodger counselors working and these two were the ring leaders. They concocted this big cock and bull story about it



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and they got these two officers fired by the navy, discredited, their pensions rescinded and cancelled. They were middle aged men, well on their way towards a pension. Besides they charged them in federal court and he was imprisoned in Lewisburg. There was maximum publicity about it so their families felt ruined. And here this guy was. His friend had gone somewhere else. They were far separated and he was left wondering how in the world he'd gone so far astray as to disgrace himself so utterly. He really didn't understand. So in between chess games when we were talking I said, "The war makes victims out of everybody on this side and on the opposite sides. Everybody is forced to do things they wouldn't have chosen. We are pressured by propaganda into professing kinds of patriotism whether we feel them or not and once in a while they need a big scapegoat. By your friend innocently coming to you, that set the cards up so that the FBI could use you as a handy scapegoat. For the sake of the war, you have been imprisoned, in order to inhibit other people from exercising the freedoms they're used to. The army guys get traumatized by everything they have to go through even when they are not injured. The families of killed veterans are told that their boys were very glorious for what they 'gave.' Even the Gold Star Mothers are propagandized into accepting their loss with pride. Can you think of any way in which people are not victimized by war? It's just the roll of the dice. If it hadn't been you this guy had gone to, it would have been somebody else. Or it might have been someone else's son who discovered that he was a conscientious objector. I look around at the Bureau of Prisons. They are having to cope with all kinds of COs of every sort. There seems to be no common denominator among us. They can't count on what we can do and what we can't do. We are all different just as people on the outside are different. So you caught a particularly fast foul ball that was batted into your corner, it was just a matter of chance and you just weren't as lucky as everybody else around. It could have hit anybody."

Explaining it that way as just a way that war operates, to hit everybody in various ways, he seemed to understand that kind of an explanation and he calmed down a good deal.

Well, when I finally got out, a year and a half later, Carol said that she had had a letter from a woman somewhere who said that her husband had met me at Lewisburg. We had had some talks that settled him into having enough strength to last the war out and seemed to clear him of all the mystery of how he got in there. And he says that he probably would have killed himself. She credited me with having helped him to cope with his fear. That was amazing. I told Carol I remembered the fellow's personality. I even have a mental picture of his face, but I can't remember his name. I guess I thought I'd never see him again. Now, why isn't it that way with Dr. Lindner or Warden Hiatt or the guard named Steininger? And a lot of others!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, a while back you told me



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you couldn't remember their names either. So maybe the guy whose face you have will soon come to the surface.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): It is possible. My file that has Carol's name on upstairs would still have that letter that she got from that man's wife. There was a lot of time spent in my observing his state of extreme consternation and unjustified guilt – he felt that he had betrayed his whole family by being idiotic in some way. He couldn't quite figure out why it happened. But I think that the military people thought they needed some kind of a *cause célèbre*, somebody who could plausibly have been hung with guilt even though in normal times what he did would be considered perfectly reasonable and not at all disloyal. After all, the Congress had set up the system so that it could be regulated in a way that would work.

From my point of view, the whole Selective Service system was totally wrong. Conscription, I think, is never justified. People should be free to do right things, instead of forced to do wrong things. I don't mind regulation if it's for some benign purpose, but as a tool for doing the greatest possible damage to people and their property, that's what makes it horrible. Now from time to time we get an administration in Washington devoted to the task of helping the richest people become much richer and leaving the poorest people forgotten and behind as though they are supposed to fade away and not bother us anymore.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): And these people are so angry that the intensification of the level of violence that we have come to now with children shooting each other in schools is all part of the high stress from the speed up of society. Everything has gone faster and faster and children feel abandoned by their parents.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and it's easy to see ten murders a night on the TV.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): We're numb to it. We've become a numb culture!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): But the young kids think that looks pretty real. They don't always distinguish between reality and somebody's imagination.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It makes me wonder about these boys who did go to Europe in the '40s and they did kill people. They must have done it in sort of a numb state, I think, that some of those boys really were not just thrilled to kill these people. They might have done it sort of like in a dream. They had to do it and so they did it as though it were not real. And then these movies were made that gave them the impression that



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it was right, and so the thing just perpetuates itself.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Isn't it amazing that some people can go through great adversity and great injury, suffer awful losses and they seem to have their souls refined in the process.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): The Refiner's Fire!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): There are other people who might endure important losses of a relatively minor sort and they become bitterly angry over it, full of feelings of revenge, trying to get even, several times over. Why is this great contrast between the ways adversities affect people and cause different responses?

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, I like to think it can all be helped. I like to think it came from somewhere way in the beginning and there was loneliness and isolation for a child who then didn't learn, didn't get socialized in good ways and it got worse and worse. Then a child grows up to be so self-centered and selfish, but they could be brought out of it in a community that understood.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I think it may be an opportunity for some people like Gerhard Gutzat, if they can realize that war itself was the enemy of all of us together. That might let him do some useful work towards the ending of all wars.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I imagine that what you said to him that day really might have planted a seed. It's too bad, but that is probably someone you would like to have heard from somehow.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, I'm getting so old now that a lot of these people are dead, if they weren't quite a bit younger than I. I will soon be gone so I won't get that chance. I was beyond twenty-six before the draft began to get tough.

Selective Service registration lists were kept all during the later [Korean](#) and [Vietnam](#) wars. I knew several young people who didn't register at all, including one son-in-law. And my second wife's sister's grandson when I was visiting out there in Michigan, where they lived, having been told a little of my own history, he came to me at breakfast one morning and said, "Could we take a walk together? There are some things I'd like to ask you about." So I said, "Well, sure." So we took a nice long walk for four or five miles maybe and he drew me out as to why some people are COs and why some other people are not COs and what does the government do about them. We went through a lot of the philosophical and the practical aspects of consequences and all that. And I guess he decided that he wouldn't even register. He



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would see if he needed to do anything particular to get lost. So he was glad to have whatever information I could give him because he was already at a fairly young age, fifteen or sixteen, and was already feeling concerned. His family, my second wife, were part of the Church of the Brethren so they had some peace background. They had family histories so they had the kind of thinking opened for them before they got even to an age to do it. They are luckier than most of us.

I sort of got into it belatedly, but as soon as I realized how I was about war, I wondered why it took so awfully long for me to realize these things that are obvious. I felt foolish for having taken overly long.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes. I did draft counseling during the [Vietnam](#) War and I wondered how did it take me so long but thank God I found the Friends. And that was all I knew, nothing about the other peace churches, the Brethren or the Mennonites. But I met Lee Stern right away and that was a good person to meet, so I got off to a fast start!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): And Lynn Dodge, also at Milan, was another. I saw his name as a surviving relative in an obituary here in Providence. He was a tender soul too. A few weeks later I called the family and I learned that he was still considered a "black sheep" by many in his family and he had stayed away from that funeral.

There was a band leader named Bratcher⁶⁰ who had the next bed to mine for a while. I don't remember his first name, but he had the nickname of Washie because his band played late at night to entertain people who came to hear his band at the Washington Hotel, just across the street from the Treasury Department, where you turn the corner to the left to go down Pennsylvania Avenue towards the Capitol Building. The Treasury is close to the White House. It's on the back of one of our currency bills. On the corner of 14th Street.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Oh yes.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): You know Washington well enough to visualize that?

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Oh, yes, I do.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, he was the leader of a little band he had organized. They were entertaining people in the hotel, evenings. These were very late—they went on from nine or ten o'clock to one or two o'clock in the morning—so he slept all the rest of the morning. They would work on their music during

60. Everett Malcolm Bratcher, as later research revealed.



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the afternoon and get to the hotel in the middle of the evening and start entertaining folks. A lot of government officials would go there, sometimes with their wives and families and it was a kind of a nightclub. He used patriotic themes of one kind or another, but he didn't bore people too much with that. He thought they were doing pretty good music but he had a hard time staying awake sometimes in order to perform adequately in leading his band. So, he took some Benadryl tablets sometimes, under doctor's prescription, and I don't know whether it was always with legitimate access, but there was enough officialdom participating in this entertainment, the audience crowd, so that it was considered to be helping the morale of the government. So, he was given some deferments because they felt that this was an essential occupation.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Was he black?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): No, he was a white fellow, sandy-haired, short man, wore glasses and his beard wouldn't grow much. It was a kind of a brindly beard. Anyway, on somebody's representation he came under suspicion. Somebody who knew that he was using "bennies" to keep awake with said that he was taking it in order to show certain symptoms that might make him unacceptable for military duty. So the suspicion was that he was a draft dodger. If you wanted to get a drug addict, anybody had to say that he was doing drugs in order to escape from the draft. He would immediately be under suspicion and anything could happen to him. So, he was brought up on charges and he tried to defend himself. He had a pretty good income so he had a good lawyer, but the lawyer didn't prevail, so he found himself in the federal penitentiary. And he was mad! He was terribly provoked. He had a good thing going and it was earning him a lot of money and now they took it all away. It cost him a lot for legal fees besides. He was extremely angry about that. He came into that hospital with some real ailments. I don't know whether he had some withdrawal symptoms or what, but he was almost eating himself up with his own anger. All the other inmates quickly realized that he had this terrible chip on his shoulder and unless they really enjoyed tangling with somebody like that they had best let him alone. He and I tangled only once, but he was tangling repeatedly with some of the others. Others kept out of his way completely. He would get a sudden impulse that he was uncomfortable in some way.

One cold night he got up and flipped around his desk into the little aisle about this wide between the heads of our beds and the little side tables we had between each bed and the next and the window wall. And he went to the window right behind his bed and he threw it up, all the way to the half sash. Well, in streamed the bitter winter weather. This was just about a year before I was released and the weather was already cold at the beginning of that winter. The room cooled down in a hurry. He wasn't saying anything or doing anything in his bed so about



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fifteen or twenty minutes later people were starting to grouse around the room. I slipped out of bed and went around and put the window halfway down, quietly, thinking that if I slammed it all the way down, Washie might go into a tizzy. I didn't know why he wasn't freezing to death in his own bed! He was that close to the same window. I hadn't even reached my bed again, having gone around the other end of the row, when he bounded out of bed, yelled at me and punched me in the stomach and I went down. All of a sudden two guys came up from the other side of the room and started banging him around, slammed him in his bed and told him to stay there or he'd be beaten up a lot worse. Then they came over to me and got me up and checked me out to see if I was hurt any worse than being out of breath. He was threatened with a whole lot more if he ever did anything like that again. I could see that he was not prison wise at all and he'd better wise up or he might get himself killed in there.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, he had a little power problem there!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, well, one night, a couple of weeks later, after things had simmered down and he seemed to get a little more reasonable, I suddenly lost my vision from the center line to the left, both eyes at once. Everything was clear from the center to the right but everything was a blue-grey haze from the center to the left. It was the same in both eyes. I realized that I had had that once before, about two hours before I had a migraine headache. It was bothering me during the evening and when the doctor made his last rounds he came past my bed. Somebody else had told him he'd better see me and mentioned this peculiar vision problem. So he came over and said, "Is something ailing you?"

I said, "I had this loss of vision on the left side of each eye about a half hour or so ago and now I've got this very strong headache and I think it's migraine and if it is I'm going to have a tough time trying to sleep tonight. It's pretty strong and I've had it before."

"Well," he said, "What have you been taking for it?"

I said, "I had some Cafergot."

They were tablets containing caffeine and ergotamine, a tartrate combination in a tablet. "They don't have any of that here, he said, but I know one thing that will let you sleep and by the morning you'll be all over it because migraines are that short. I'll give you one."

The prison doctor substituted codeine most effectively. It was in a tiny pill, very small, and I said that I didn't know if I should take that. "Isn't that addictive?"



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"Oh," he said, "one won't do it. You won't have another migraine for a long time probably. It's only occasional with most people."

It was so with me. I don't think I've had it more than four or five times in my life.

So he gave me this one little tablet and I downed it with some water, being assured by the doctor that it's the repeated taking of this that gets people hooked. He said that I wouldn't have any tendency for that. So I took it and I didn't remember much more before I was out and waking up in the morning. As I woke up I realized that Washie Bratcher was staring at me from his bed and as soon as he saw that I was definitely awake he swung his legs over and he leaned over and he said,

"John, were you pretending to be asleep last night?"

"No!" I said, "I really had a good night's sleep!"

He said, "No, I don't mean that. Right after you had that pill, two minutes later I called your name to see if you were pretending to be asleep and you didn't respond at all! I can't believe it works that fast!"

Well, the result was so swift that Washie was intrigued to the point of exasperation, poor guy! I thought, he must know something about these addictive drugs if he knows that it takes a lot more than that to put you out. I'd never had it before so it would probably hit me a whole lot faster and harder than it would hit him. I think he may have abused himself with illicit drugs to the point that gave him a high tolerance, so he couldn't believe that a tiny narcotic tablet could give anyone such quick relief, into sound sleep, from a fully developed migraine headache. He must have been experimenting with a whole lot more than these bennies. Ha-ha-ha! There was something of a drug culture even that long ago. Ha-ha!

Well, after I left Lewisburg and he had meanwhile gone somewhere else, I'd lost sight of him, somehow he found out where I was. I was in Washington for a while after my release. I lived in a house that our Friends' Meeting owned on Kalorama Road, not far from Florida Avenue. I got some kind of a card from him that had some handwriting on it that was normal but there was just one sentence that sounded like a bit of his old bitterness. He had been trying to get re-established somehow in life and something had bothered him intensely. So I wrote to him and I said, "I've been thinking about you from time to time ever since we were adjacent to each other at Lewisburg some time back. If you sometimes are in the same frame of mind as you seemed to be very strongly while you were there, it might be a very nice idea if you would find somebody you can really trust who has some technical knowledge of these things to help you with whatever is bothering you. If it's circumstances around here that seem



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to go bad and you react very strongly more than most people would, well that's one thing. Or if you're taking anything that ought to be under prescription you might get some really good help but make sure that it isn't somebody who will rat on you to the authorities. Some people might be able to tell you the name of somebody who is really good along this line. Then once you're sure of who it is and a person of really fine reputation, you might really need to trust that person thoroughly and let him help you to a better life."

I got one letter from him acknowledging mine and saying that it sounded like very wise advice, and he was going to take it. But I never had any other feedback from him later. He was a handy scapegoat but not without possibly some real guilt on his part for being a "druggie."

We meet an awful lot of people in one lifetime. They become near, then they are far away and sometimes they return and sometimes they don't.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Most of it can't be helped.

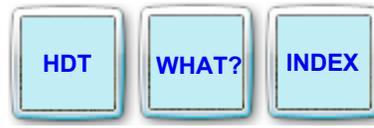
Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, it's all a matter of mostly chance. But there's a lot that people can make of opportunities, but good opportunities and a firm insight into one's own character and the rest seems to be just plain luck!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, you have to know what you're doing and do what you can!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I conceive of humanity as a whole bunch of little molecules from a gas, occasionally colliding but most of the time passing each other.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Maybe that's a definition of mysticism.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I read a very interesting book a couple of weeks ago – "Surfing the Himalayas." The book is about a young man who started surfboarding on snow, snowboarding, and he goes into the mountains, the biggest mountains, and then he goes overseas and looks for even bigger mountains and winds up in the Himalayas. Sometimes he gets just perfect powder snow and sometimes it isn't so good. But he's living it up on snow with his snowboard. All of a sudden he's coming down a slope real fast and there's an orange saffron-robed monk standing just ahead of him. He's so surprised that he forgets to put his snowboard sideways and brake with his feet and turn away, and he runs into this monk. It's not full force as he's almost stopped and he just has enough momentum left to knock the monk over. The monk picks himself up and dusts the snow off himself,



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and then shows that he's interested in this snowboarder, not for his athletic experience, but as a person who is worth talking with. He proceeds to tell him about the concepts that enlightened monks are aware of. This book develops the whole of Tantric Buddhism, by this monk taking a snowboarder to school, on frequent meetings. In between, the snowboarder is up in the mountains doing his thing. But there is apparently nothing of importance in Tantric Buddhism that this book doesn't mention and describe. Some of their mysticism resembles what we can learn about in Quaker history.

In the Fall of 1940, while at the MIT Graduate School, I attended church oftentimes, a Congregational Church, the head minister of which was a Reverend Carl Heath Kopf. One Sunday before the service, I heard a conversation about his assisting intern minister named Keith Kanaga and how he was a pacifist and that because of this he was not going to be continued as the student minister. So I spoke to the senior minister at the door on my way out, saying that I would very strongly prefer to have the young man continue, having taken a similar stand myself. He suggested that I write Dr. Kopf a letter. So I wrote the letter telling Dr. Kopf how much I valued the service we had been getting from his assisting minister, and how sorry I was to learn he was dismissed. Also, I concurred with Dr. Kopf's expressed sorrow about it during the service. Dr. Kopf wrote back immediately, saying that my letter had reached him in the early mail on a day when he was in a "blue funk," and that it made him feel ever so much better to hear from someone in the congregation of the young man's service and his own appreciation for the young man's stand about war. He asked for us to make an appointment to get together, which we did. When he visited me he seemed to be concerned principally about how firmly I was committed in spite of whatever might befall me as a consequence. When I told him that I didn't know what the consequences might be, but I was in it on a come-what-may basis, and that I didn't think that I was likely to be deterred by any authorities, he seemed relieved. He said that he had similar feelings of reassurance about the assistant minister and the strength of his convictions. So that's another story that precedes my imprisonment that has some bearing on it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): What year would this have been?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): This would have been in 1940, after my summer in Southbridge when I had come to realize that I wasn't properly part of any war.

There was a man who had lost his power to walk because of feeling very oppressed and violated. This was an Indian, an American Indian, another inmate at Lewisburg, who had resisted routine inoculation for whatever disease, inoculations that were given to any inmate whose history wasn't firm that he had had such an inoculation recently enough. He resisted on the basis that his



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Indian religious faith was very strong against taking anything into his body that was not generated inside his body from normal food. Anything injected would be a poison and would have dire side-effects. It was not to be permitted, but the prison authorities had insisted and against his most strenuous physical resistance they had injected some kind of vaccine into one of his buttocks where it would be absorbed in a way that medical science says is proper. He was so violated in opposition to his conscience and his religious spirituality that he lost all power in that leg on that side and he simply could not walk. He had no strength left. The doctors dismissed this as so much hysteria and of course every prisoner is supposed to conform to whatever demands are made by the authorities over all the inmates. We should not presume to question their judgment because they were in control and virtually owned us for the duration of our sentences. Now this man was in a private room at the time and he soon was thrown out into the ward. He was bedridden so his food was brought to him on a tray and put on his little side table. There didn't seem to be any other disability but he was absolutely convinced that he could not walk. To me this indicated the complete insensitivity of the prison officials to any matters of religious conscience. They were completely indifferent to him as they were to me. It all fit.

About a month or two after I was transferred to Lewisburg, I was out of the private room and out of the "Blue Room" of the regular hospital and in the ward, in one of the rows of beds, I became aware that one of the inmates in a private room was middle-aged, or perhaps even elderly, a black man who had a very heavy torso and very spindly legs, showing atrophy from disuse. The only way he ever moved out of that room was by wheelchair. It became his turn for me to visit him, as I did, occasionally, visit everybody in sight. I learned what he was willing to volunteer to me. Among those things was the fact that he had been injured at some point in his criminal activities in a way that had almost destroyed the nerves passing through one shoulder. Those nerves were held in place, he said, by metal clips because otherwise they were vulnerable to more injury. He had to be careful how he slept at night and he had to warn people how to move him and how not to move him because he would get terrible spasms as those nerves might be affected by certain motions. While I was getting somewhat acquainted with him, I noticed that his bare arms and lower legs were very scaly with whitish grey scales that seemed to be very loose so I asked him if that was part of the condition.

"Oh," he said, "no, that's because they haven't felt as though they dared to give me a bath. For a long time - I haven't had a bath in months! I'm filthy."

Well we talked about other matters and later on we returned to that.

I said, "Well, it's not healthy for you. You've got to bathe



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occasionally, but maybe you don't need it as often as the rest of us because you're not as active, but you shouldn't have a lot of dead skin simply floating on the surface of your body and you need to be really clean once in a while!"

He said, "Oh, don't I know it!"

So maybe the second or third time I visited him was when we gravitated to that again. Not only did he appear that way, but he was quite odorous, as you might expect!

I said, "Do you suppose, since nobody else is available, it might be possible for us together to be careful enough so that you could get in and out of the shower. If you have enough strength in your legs to keep standing in there without collapsing, why don't we try it and see if you really can get yourself clean, with or without any help from me."

So that did get attempted and we were successful. The only part he needed me to reach was the middle of his back. He could take care of everything else. We got him very carefully back into his wheelchair and back into his room. We did it again after two or three weeks and that time I had enough presence of mind to get his wheelchair cleaned up so that he wouldn't be sitting in his own dead skin particles! He was very appreciative that he had found somebody who was willing to take that much helpful interest in him, by doing something that even the doctor didn't ask any of the inmate orderlies to help with. He was moved out of the hospital after a while and I don't know whether he was transferred elsewhere and went into the general population, but as an invalid in a wheelchair, I don't see where else they could have put him at Lewisburg. What happened to him is only a matter of speculation because the grapevine wasn't forthcoming.

There was one occasion when I was told that a certain inmate wanted to meet me and had something to talk to me about. I found out which room he was in and it was one of the private rooms in that wing of the hospital. When I went in there, it turned out that he was a tall, wiry black man of maybe thirty-five or forty who had had a pretty rough life outside pursuing whatever crimes he was in and he had noticed me as a young man of somewhere around thirty and it had occurred to him what fun it would be to have sex with me.

"Well," I said, "I don't think that's going to happen!"

He said, "What would you do if I decided to insist on it?"

I said, "Well, I think this meeting is just about over, but I can tell you that I have no idea what I would do or what would happen but I have half an idea that whatever happens is probably not going to be very pleasant for either of us."

I just waited to see what next he would say and he didn't seem



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to get his thoughts together about that so I said, "O.K, so long. I might see you sometime and maybe not."

I didn't feel I owed anything to the administration of the prison any more than on any other occasion, so I never mentioned that to anybody. Apparently he appreciated my not ratting on him right away. I didn't get him into any trouble. He got whatever he was there for attended to and then went back out into the general population and I never saw him again or heard from him again. So that was that.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): How can you explain the wisdom that came to you? That was a real traumatic situation that to my way of thinking would have made me go just numb, or have a panic attack! I would have been speechless! I would have had to be fortified with learned creative responses to violence. Had you had any kind of clues or warning that something of this kind could happen?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I didn't have a chance to think about how wise or how foolish it was. I was in prison, mostly not in my own control. I didn't decide what I was going to eat, or decide much else. I still had kept more responsibilities than Corbett Bishop had. But I was in for whatever the duration was, doing the best I could and I had accepted the fact that anything could happen that could not be anticipated. So as each situation happened, I did whatever I felt able and meant to do with the expectation that I would have to do my best and let it go at that. Whatever happened. And that was a kind of mode that I was in. So when he came at me with this idea, I just continued as previously, as I would have if some guard had threatened me one way or another. I just said what came to me, hoped for the best, and for a while wondered if there was any more going to happen connected to that. But it was still "come what may" and I was hoping, not only for my own sake, but also for his, that he wouldn't get us into a real fix.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That's the key, that you considered him as well as you. You had a love for him, as a love for the enemy, rather than a feeling that he was an obnoxious creep. You felt for him as another human being and you felt with compassion.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): One thing that I was aware of was that he was no different from a white man who might be threatening me in the same fashion. He was hung up by his own urges in prison and no decent way of satisfying his strong feelings of masculinity, no women around, so here's a pretty boy. A lot of white prisoners are under those same feelings that they were under overwhelming pressure. It's odd that so many more men than women feel driven by their gonads!



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Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, the male is different from the female.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, somehow it seems unfair. That's only part of the whole background of the experience, and it makes me wonder about that.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, you wonder if it's all part of the Divine Plan.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): It seems a part of the Plan that's a little less than Divine!

In a way, I saw myself in a role representing principles and truths of religious spirituality in a world that had gone so berserk and violent. I had that strongest feeling that no matter how many others there were, doing the same kind of thing generally, or similar things, there needed to be one more (role). And this role had better be carried off the very best way I knew. Perhaps with luck and guidance it would be better than my best.

Getting out was very traumatic. Suddenly there were cars whizzing around in a way that I didn't remember. Traffic was much heavier. People had quicker tempers and shorter patience. All the friends we had in Washington, and in the Friends Committee on National Legislation, where I worked for the first year of its life, 1943, accompanied and brought my wife and daughter to the railway station to meet me. They had been told, somehow, probably by the warden's office, which train they thought I would be on. There must have been fifteen or twenty people. So we had quite a party that evening. Raymond Wilson had his group and Jeanette Hadley was with us. Sam Levering was down in Virginia so he wasn't among them. There were just the four of us in FCNL at that time. All four names are signed on that poster at the far end of the room. I'm the only survivor among the four. There are only four posters signed. We each got one of them.

It was interesting that no one since then, until yourself, has ever systematically drawn me out on my wartime experience. The war was in many ways so awful that I think the whole world would like to forget it. I can understand that. It's like pulling teeth for the Holocaust Museum staff and Sam Spielberg to be interviewing the few survivors of the extermination camps to tell their stories. They are collecting them and it's almost too late because in another ten or twenty years the last of them will be gone.

There's one reason why I'm not more impressed with the unusualness of this kind of sacrifice, and that is that I've grown up in a country that is chock full of windfalls and



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wipeouts. I had a wipeout there and I had to recover from it. It took quite a few years before I was on my feet again and even able to support a family and do a little saving in order to prevent becoming either a public charge or an expense to my own descendants, if I ever reached old age. The judge who had sentenced me announced that he was going to give me the absolute maximum penalty because he felt that I was one of the worst of all the draft dodgers. So he prescribed five years of imprisonment and in addition, he said, a fine of one thousand dollars. Looking back, I think he probably kicked himself all over the next day or two when he reviewed and found out that he could have said ten thousand. The other nine I wouldn't have had because I didn't own that much. But if he was trying to make a greater example of me he could have said more. He had been bawled out by a Jehovah's Witness one week earlier in his own courtroom. Jehovah's Witnesses were mostly considered to be spurious ministers because the whole congregation claimed to be ministers. Judges were not likely to credit that, especially since those ministers had decided that they were to be exempted as much as anybody who had done doctorate work in ministry before taking a congregation. Ha-ha! Anyway, this Jehovah's Witness got up and declared himself a minister and that he was entitled to be exempt from any war, except Armageddon. He said, "If Armageddon comes you'll see how much of a soldier I'll be - I'll be one of the best fighters in the country! But not for any other kind of a war!"

Well, by definition he wasn't a CO because he wasn't opposed to all wars! Ha-ha-ha! To get legalistic about it, that is! Ha-ha-ha! Anyway, he said some things that were very upsetting to the judge. It characterized the judge's authority as being nonexistent. Now, you don't do that to judges without consequences! So the judge threw the book at him and I guess from what my lawyer who wanted to defend me told me, that judge probably decided that any other draft dodger who came before him was going to get the book too. Ha-Ha-Ha! The judge was super patriotic for one additional reason and that was because of the J.W.'s tirade! The war makes victims of all of us including that judge. He had to suffer the indignity of being called down by some young whippersnapper claiming to be a minister of the Gospel. Ha-ha! Poor guy! Some people just haven't any respect for the black robes of a judge! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

Well, the fine was partly collected. They got the car which I had told Carol belonged to her because I wasn't going to be able to use it probably for the rest of its life as a five year sentence was possible and seemed likely. And it did come. So, she should have the car's title transferred to her and use it for as long as she might be able to support a car and gain any convenience from it. Well, the judge gave the FBI the duty to go collect it and I don't know whether they got the key to it from Carol or whether they simply hot-wired it and drove it away. They could probably have gotten the Pontiac company to give them a key for that car. Anyhow, we never saw it again. Oh, let's



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see, that was an eight year old car at the time so it only had maybe three or four hundred of those days' valued dollars left in it. The car, in 1936, had cost my mother nine hundred and thirty-six dollars. We had been all the way out west and back and when she was not going to be able to keep a car anymore, she gave it to us when Carol and I were married. So it went to the government as part payment on the thousand dollar fine. Then they went after my checking and savings account at the Co-Op Credit Union in Toledo. I think they may have gotten a hundred dollars out of that checking account. The savings account they didn't tap and the credit union went broke. It failed and it wasn't decided how much they could pay per dollar to all their depositors. The federal government was not able to collect any of that money because it was all in escrow, in other court proceedings. They never did get any of it. Eventually, after several more years when I got out, and while I was at PennCraft, working for the [American Friends Service Committee](#), the Credit Union paid something like seventy-five or eighty cents on the dollar to all depositors. So we got most of that back and the federal government never got a dime. Ha-ha-ha! I never thought they were entitled to my contributing! I didn't think they were entitled to the possession of my body during those twenty-two and a half months. They were another kind of a kidnapper and if they had left the way open, I would have felt free to take to my heels and get back to my family, ignoring the fact that they might pick me up again. I felt no responsibility whatever to a war-corrupted court or a war-corrupted law enforcement machinery, especially one whose officers were willing to lie about me outrageously under oath in a courtroom. Justice was stood on its tail. So the courts, the public, the COs, the GIs, GI parents and friends, and all the other people in the country and in a way even the profiteers who were avariciously gathering up the dollars from the war material procurement machinery were corrupted and therefore in a way victimized by the war. I don't think the country had anybody in it who wasn't victimized in some fashion. The whole world suffered.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That's a very key point. You transformed yourself into being someone who was not a victim. It's about not being a victim.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, but the consequences that happened to me, the wipeout, where I was broke and owing whereas I had some savings before – I had saved about a thousand dollars from my work as a child in my father's drugstore, delivering at five cents per delivery, whether it was half a block or a dozen blocks away, medications and many other things. And later on I worked for thirty-five cents an hour, then forty or forty-five, I had saved up a whole thousand dollars, having spent very little of it. My mother sometimes worried that I didn't know the value of money because I didn't ever spend any! Ha-ha-ha-ha! Anyway, that was gone at the war's end, by the time I was released, about fifteen months later. The war ended in August and at the end of



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November, 1946, the last day of November, I was released, broke and owing.

The first time I drove a car, I wondered if I would even remember enough about it not to make horrible blunders in this terrible press of traffic. I was astonished to find out within the first day or two that I could accommodate. I was still in my earliest thirties and so I found it was like riding a bicycle, you never really lose the knack! But I did have to watch a whole lot more carefully and I was very nervous for quite a while until I was more confident that I could do it without some terrible blunders of inattention. I remember the first time I went out from a friend's home, somewhere in the Northwest section of Washington, walking about three blocks to pick up a newspaper and some little items like toothpaste or maybe some ice cream, the things that you'd get in a drugstore, and paid some money that Carol gave me for that trip, and to get the proper change and bring it back to the house seemed very strange to be doing that under nobody's supervision! Freedom is almost traumatically strange after being out of circulation for even less than two years!

But I was relatively fortunate. I had a sense of mission to support and sustain me. That was extremely important. Carol and I had discussed in advance a lot of the "what ifs" and "what might happens" – what if they don't let us correspond freely? A tight censorship might even cut us off from each other in every way. If they refuse to let us have our letters delivered to each other, we might have to give it up and not keep kicking against the bricks of misfortune that that involves. Her mother didn't understand that at all. She became extremely critical of me – and Carol was living with her.

We live in a country where freedom and democracy is believed to be real by our public but when we are experienced enough we find out that sometimes it isn't so real. Even presidents after a short time in office find out who their real bosses are, and it's not the electorate. So some of freedom and democracy, even in this country, is illusion. We have a lot of work to do to perfect it.

I had worked for the Friends Committee on National Legislation for more than a year, from 1943 up until I was married, in August 1944, and I think FCNL continues to be just as faithful and just as strong in speaking truth to power as it ever has been. They have a larger staff, they are speaking with a stronger voice and under the same kind of special guidance as they began with. I think FCNL has not become any weaker even though the other lobbying powers that beset government people, elected and appointed, have become even stronger than they were back when FCNL started. They are strong in rough proportion to the money involved and Congress bows abjectly before the power of money.

The Reverend Thomas E. Ahlburn, of the Benevolent Congregation Church in Providence, now retired, is a minister friend of mine



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who was very much with me and others in the equal housing opportunity legislative movement in Rhode Island. One day Tom picked me up and gave me a ride downtown. We talked a bit and somehow the subject came up of church and state separation, and shouldn't that work both ways. I said that I think this may be one of the very few ways in which communication isn't and shouldn't be a two-way street. I think religious bodies and other kinds of civic groups should always be telling government—just as individuals should—how they think government ought to behave. Government should be very careful never to tell the religious groups how they should behave. This means it's a one-way street of attempted influence. That is properly a one-way street. Well, Tom said, that's the first time I've ever heard it explained like that. He said, there's something in this for me to think about. He had heard something he hadn't expected to and he thought maybe it was right.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): This is the very argument pertaining to the current president's Faith Based Initiatives. That's the FCNL issue that I am concentrating on at this time.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes. There's never any government money without strings.

Those strings, I think, would very soon, if not from the very beginning, be violating the whole principle of separating church from state influence, while leaving the reverse wide open.

It's been interesting to see the progression of FCNL since Raymond Wilson retired. He wrote a couple of books. One of them mentions me because it's historical, about the FCNL's work. With a couple of minor errors, it says things that are mostly correct about me! Anyway, I guess he enjoyed having me working for him and I very much enjoyed being with him and, most of the time, with Jeanette Hadley. She was very quick and I was more deliberate. We sort of grated on each other in ways because of a difference in pace. There were times when she was quite impatient with me in ways that I didn't feel were quite justified. I spoke to him only once about that.

I said, "Raymond, you're a deliberate and thoughtful person. You don't flip around with ideas. What you say has a lot of good sense and logic to it and it's very persuasive. It seems to me that Jeanette Hadley has a very different kind of personality than yours as well as than mine. How do you get along so very well with her, and everybody else I know of?"

Raymond said that he'd tried all his life to get along well with a great variety of people, if he was willing to listen to whoever it is and to cope as well as he could with some of those who seemed kind of difficult. I thought that was a wonderful answer.

A few years later, I was working for the [American Friends Service](#)



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[Committee](#) in its subsidiary called Friends Service, Incorporated, helping coal miners who wanted to build their own homes in their spare time, when they were only partly employed (they had been completely unemployed earlier). Their fathers built a group of stone houses in the farm adjoining the one that I had gone out to manage. I had only eight homesteaders building their houses, homesteading families. There were fifty in the original group, six and a half times as many. It was a place called PennCraft, in Southwest Pennsylvania.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): What year was this?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I went out there in 1947 and stayed there until 1950. Then I put out my resume and was looking around for a position wanting to get back into my profession of city planning. I worked at PennCraft for subsistence wages and I did truck driving, materials delivering, building techniques teaching, technical and administrative accounting, and later on some land subdivision surveying. I was accounting for dollars spent on materials and manhours of labor that were exchanged by the various homesteaders working on each others' houses at times, keeping two sets of books. Manhours and dollars. The capital for that whole project had been originally contributed by the owners of the big idle coal mines and the mine workers' union. They put in equal amounts and the [American Friends Service Committee](#) made this project out of it where the miners borrowed the cost of the materials, did their own labor, built their own houses and paid off for the materials over time on a contract per deed basis. Eventually when they made their last payment, we delivered their deed, meaning that they were the sole owners of the property that they had created.

Well, fresh out of prison, after a very short time with the National Council for Prevention of War, I was told that the [American Friends Service Committee](#) was looking for a new project manager at PennCraft. They had a young fellow just starting who within two or three weeks felt overwhelmed by his job so much that even with just a suitcase to carry, leaving a small trunkfull of stuff behind, he went out on the highway and hitchhiked all the way to his home in Minnesota, without notice to anybody. He was made almost sick by his job because it was just too much. I had more technical information about building included in my architectural training, even though I had never had any responsibility on a building job. The only practical experience I had ever had was from climbing all over new construction and watching the workmen, talking with them and seeing how they did things. This, along with talking sometime with the designing architect, was the only practical supplement to my theoretical design, mathematics and mechanical studies in college.

Anyway, I went to PennCraft knowing that this other fellow had left that way. When they hired me, they got in contact with him



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and said that his successor had been acquired and would show up at a certain date. Would he, therefore, knowing that he would not be expected to continue, with that assurance, would he then be willing to come back for a week or two and help to break me in to the job? I would be otherwise just as ignorant of what I was facing as he had been. With his help, I would be more likely to be able to continue for as long as needed at PennCraft. So he did come back and, incidentally, he did pick up his trunk! He stayed with me for just one week. It was the minimum time that he'd had to promise! Maybe ten days, maybe two weeks, but he wasn't sure of that. So I had to learn as fast as possible how to pick up his loose ends. Just as he had, as soon as I realized what was pending, what was facing me, I felt as if I was forty days behind in my work on the first day! He had had that same feeling, so I wondered whether I would really be able to stick to it. But then I had my whole family out there so I had to stick with it no matter how difficult it was. Also I knew that I could go through a difficult experience.

I had more self confidence than I had before prison. But I had been so physically indolent, except for just the walking around daily, and that wasn't overall exercise. Real exercise was the kind of work I had to do, filling that truck full of materials, delivering it, most of it not being dumped on site. It was a dump truck and I could only dump sand and gravel and other bulk things. I couldn't even dump cinder blocks without their breaking, so I had to lift them onto the tailgate and then get down and lift them off the tailgateful and stack the blocks. I found myself doing physical work far beyond my ability to manage and I got exhausted every day. Sometimes I just had to give up, go back into the office and resume bringing man-hours up to date in the accounting books.

Homesteaders were trading labor with each other, working on each other's houses part of the time, whenever there needed to be more hands involved than just one or two, a man and his wife, usually, or an older son. Sometimes I came back to get caught up on my dollar accounting in another set of books and to do some planning and calling to arrange for supplies to pick up, because I just could not do any more physical work that morning, or that whole day, and I had to hope I'd have more strength in the morning.

There was one time I remember when I was in the basement of the big barn that held some of our stock of materials. The whole job just felt so utterly overwhelming that I broke down and cried. Loudly! Thank goodness there wasn't anybody to hear me! If any homesteader had happened by, he would have thought I'd gone crazy. Agh! After that outburst, in which I just spent it all, I just sat there a while, very quietly, and just thought and thought. All the alternatives were bad, even worse than staying on and struggling. I hadn't had time yet to feel any stronger. I felt as if I was becoming weaker instead of stronger, because of my exhaustion. So I thought, well, if I'm going to live



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through this, I'm going to do a little less so that I might be able to gather a little strength. As soon as I might feel a little bit stronger than I did last week, I'd be on my way up and that would give me a glimmer of light at the end of this tunnel. The basement of that barn was absolutely dark way back in and I had picked the darkest spot of all to do my wailing! I thought my mood should have been as black as my surroundings, or vice versa.

Well, I became stronger, but these coal miners were very strong fellows. There was only one of them that had left coal mining to do teaching because he had the right combination of strength and intellect to teach school. But these other fellows were real burly types. Some of them had been descendants of Welsh coal miners and their fathers and grandfathers had been in the coal mines of western Pennsylvania. Those were soft coal mines. They were a rough lot. They could size up a little weakling pretty quickly, and that's what I felt like. Ha-ha-ha! One of these fellows had been in to see me about something or other and he saw some boards that had been in the barn. He thought very suddenly that I had stolen them from the project stock for my personal use, and he said so.

I said, "Come into my office, Jim. I will show you that I have charged these materials out to myself, three boards, ten footers and a couple of dozen bricks. You can count them if you want to. They're all here on the invoice. The invoices are all serially numbered. Any auditor from Philadelphia would know whether I had stolen ten cents worth or not."

Well, he went away as if he was frustrated, so I felt that he had set his cap against me somehow.

One evening a short time later I was in a little sawmill shed preparing some other lumber for use somewhere on the project for one of the other homesteaders who had a full time job and he didn't have very much time left, so I was helping him out a bit. In walked this young coal miner, the son of an older homesteader on the previous project of fifty houses - I had only 14 being built, plus the rehabilitation of the old farmhouse I was living in, a house that had been built in 1812. He came in with a couple of personal friends of his. I didn't recognize them and I don't think I ever saw them later. But he started to bawl me out in front of them. I felt that he was grandstanding to them to show them how tough he could talk. I don't think I should tell you exactly what he said! He was more colorful than anything I'd heard in prison! Anyway, I let him wind down. Ha-ha! James Shaw was his name, and he had a brother building a house next door to him, on the next lot.

I said, "Jim, I've never heard any expression like that one and I've heard quite a bit! (I didn't tell him where!) I've really got to admire a fellow that can put language together that way! You certainly told me where I stand, in your opinion. I've heard



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you completely and I don't think I'll ever forget the kind of language you know how to speak."

Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! It sort of non-plussed him. He didn't know what to make of a guy who would take the worst insults he could deliver without calling him all kinds of names in return. He'd never met anybody like me.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So did anybody at PennCraft know that you had been in prison?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): No. Well, the assumption that I made – and I was never guided on this by anyone else – not even by Hurford Crosman, who was my boss in Philadelphia – I just assumed that this rough bunch of coal miners would be completely following the conventional wisdom about the patriotic duty of people in war. I really didn't want to knock my function in the head by declaring myself openly to this bunch of fellows. It wouldn't help them. It certainly would make my job worse than if they accidentally found out about this. So I didn't say a word about where I had been. Lewisburg was the other side of the world as far as they knew. I don't think they ever knew anybody who had been in a federal prison. They would do petty things that they might occasionally have been jailed for, if the sheriff had known about it, but they weren't into any anti-patriotic crime. I think this would have shocked them.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): They probably would not have believed it!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I think Jim Shaw might have found something even worse to say about me or to me than he did that evening.

I was there three years before I got the position I had in Providence in urban renewal, redevelopment and a little later, back in long range city planning. I retired from that after thirty-one and one half years with a pretty nice pension, more than seventy percent of the average of my final three years' salary rate. I arrived in Providence in 1950, with my family, having completed my work at PennCraft. Meanwhile, one of the mayors in the middle years of my career had so put a threatening fright into the city employees that most of them were anteing up handsomely toward the mayor's re-election campaign. The union suddenly found itself able to sign up on the first day over eight hundred of us. Eventually they had about three quarters of the three thousand city employees signed up. Under the labor laws they became our representatives. One of their agreements with the city, working from a position of power, was that the city would buy back our time, back to the day we were each hired, as if we had each been contributing union dues ever since. So, we were full fledged members of the union and we had the regular



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schedule of pensions due us whenever eventually we retired, with minimum age for such retirement. If we retired earlier there would be shavings off that rate, the union kind of standard contract. But this was a big windfall. I think it was enough that it ultimately compensated for the wipe-out I'd had during the war. I was compensated in another way. The effective tax rate for me in the early years was about ten percent income tax. There was no Rhode Island income tax then. The federal income tax took about ten percent of my gross pay and there was no recompense for that. The government was buying bombs all the time and fighting the cold war. I felt that tax was being taken from me for purposes that I could not agree with. If I had decided to, that could have given me a feeling of quite a lot of guilt. I understood very well those people who were in occupations that gave them an income so low that although they could subsist on it, they wouldn't owe any federal taxes going for warfare and planning for future wars threatening everybody else on earth if they didn't do our bidding. If we got mad enough we could annihilate whole countries. We were not that much different from the Germans. A lot of us had the same backgrounds in countries that were chronically at war.

Europe was a big crossword puzzle of ethnic types that had been displaced by war as survivors of greater and smaller holocausts. Well, along came the lottery and Rhode Island looked forward officially to getting about half of its tax money from the lotteries. Some of it was given to the cities. I remember a bumper sticker that said, - "I'm for the lottery - let the fools pay my taxes!" So I thought of a rationalization that was handy. Maybe a tenth of my salary comes federally and state, through city, from taxes that I don't approve of, paid to the federal government that does warfare, but maybe the same tenth of my salary gets paid by this awful, socially destructive state lottery. So maybe my dirty money intake goes to dirty money outgo. The lottery is paying my war taxes! What a handy thought! Ha-ha-ha! True rationalization! But I could live on the clean part of my money and my family wouldn't be suffering any longer on account of my principles. Maybe I really didn't need to knock my future in the head by doing my job well, getting paid in clean and dirty money and letting the dirty part of that money get confiscated by federal taxation that I wished didn't have to go there to buy bombs.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That sounds like Eastern philosophy.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I don't know where it came from.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Where did it lead to?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, I had an interesting career. I put aside enough to pay Social Security and my medical expenses



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through Medicare, and that percentage was rising all the time, from two and a half or three percent to eight percent by the time I was done, in spite of federal income tax rates that were still pretty high even though we weren't fighting any war except the cold war. We were trying to break the whole financial structure of the Soviet Union by going half broke ourselves during those cold war years, wasting an awful lot of our resources in military hardware and other supplies. I put aside enough, even so, to be building equity and beginning to invest. In 1952, only two years later, I got a family windfall when my mother died; and what money was left out of her inheritance from my father came to me and to my brother in equal portions. I received some sixty shares of Norwest Corporation worth then thirty-six dollars a share, and there was about a six thousand dollar cash settlement of her estate. I put that six thousand into buying half of this house, almost. I bought it for a little over thirteen thousand. Now the assessment is one hundred forty-six thousand, seven hundred. Twelve times as many smaller dollars, but they're not that small. When I married Ann, she suggested that we invest in Pax World Fund and that has been the cleanest investment I've had.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): This detail is all very important because people will want to understand about your character, what kind of a person you are, especially any reader who starts out judging you stereotypically as an irresponsible "draft dodger." This is so important for people to know that it was people like you who did what you did.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yeah, I'd rather not be seen as a simple-minded iconoclast.

I had two very long fasting periods. One was after communication had been cut off and no more mail could go between me and Carol unless I agreed to write about only what the prison authorities would approve of. I was force-fed for some time, just as Corbett Bishop was. The gunk that they poured into us was extremely constipating. So there were some trials involved in that. He was either released or transferred out of there so I didn't see him anymore. Then I was ultimately transferred to Lewisburg because Milan didn't want to monkey with me anymore. Ha-ha! I was a pretty strange egg in Milan. They considered me a bad influence because the whole population knew that there was a guy who wasn't working and he's not eating, that they're force feeding him, and that kind of thing gets mentioned all over the place because there were inmate orderlies even in that section of Milan. So they thought as long as I was there, I wasn't a very good influence on the population that had all kinds of speculations about me and about the officials' frustration over me. For a while, I was getting some scuttlebutt out of inmates saying that I was likely to be sent to Leavenworth or to some extreme medical center near there in the midwest, from which I might never emerge alive. Those were the inmate rumors. Of course inmate rumors are



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sometimes on the button and sometimes very wild mythology. I had to accept all of it with that kind of a grain of salt.

So I finally got sent to Lewisburg, and I told you about the way the travel was. I was in the back seat of a car with leg irons on, from Milan, Michigan to half-way across Pennsylvania – it was almost five hundred miles, whatever it is, and it took all of a long day. There were no freeways then so we slogged through the middle of every city and town. They only took one break and that was for lunch. And they asked me if I'd like to go in and have a good lunch with them. They were allowed to treat me at government expense for a lunch that I'd be otherwise missing.

I said, "Well I'll be willing to consider it, maybe."

They said, "We'd have to have your assurance that without any leg or hand restraints you would not try to escape. We don't want to chase you or shoot you or have an escape attempt on our hands. But we know what you're in for. We know that whatever the prison authorities have had by way of inconvenience, it hasn't been by any means, a bad or perfidious action on your part. So if you give us your word, we'll take you in. You are not wearing prison garb so you will not stand out in a crowd. As far as they're aware, we're just three guys coming in to have some lunch. We'll get back in the car and resume our trip afterward. We'd be able and we are authorized to trust you that far. Would you agree?"

"Well," I said, "I don't think that I belong under your authority as your captive. I have never acknowledged the validity of the system that has kidnapped me and is still holding me. I don't think that I should give you any such word, because if I did, I'd have to live up to it. But if I saw an opportunity to run back to my family, I would feel morally free to take it."

"Well," they said, "All right, we're going to have to leave you in the car with the leg irons on and we'll have to handcuff you too. We'll have to lock the car in a way that you could not get out of even with hobbling. One of us is going to have to go in to lunch and bring a lunch out to the other because you're far more likely to escape from one of us than from two. But we don't particularly like it that we can't go in to enjoy a lunch together, the two of us, if not the three."

"Well, I'm sorry about that but that's the way I feel."

Eventually we got to Lewisburg and I was processed in without cooperating in that process either. Ha-ha!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Of course the noble tradition is that the first duty of the prisoner is to escape.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): For prisoners of war, certainly. Gerhard



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Gutzat was supposed to escape if he could, and our GIs in German prisons would give name, rank and serial number only and then be looking for an opportunity to sneak out of there.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, and you were a prisoner of war in your own country!

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and I felt I had been abducted. I felt there was an invisible rubber band between me and home and home wasn't going to move. I would snap back as though the rubber band was pulling me.

You seem impressed with the details of my memory about things.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes. The details in the story are important.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): A lot of people don't have this sharp and clear and crisp a memory halfway through their eighties. So I'm pretty lucky. On the other hand what we're talking about was an experience which in every detail was so important a part of my living then that the details burned themselves into my memory as a very clear record. It's interesting to have as many old memories as I have in that kind of detail because I think it may be a little unusual at my age. Even in people who don't have any diagnosable mental defects in old age –no dementia– brains do tend to shrink from old age on, in men more than in women, and that's a physical fact. So we lose a little more cognitive sense because of this and slightly more than women do at advanced ages. But some are unusually lucky and some are unusually unlucky. Aside from this particular experience during the war being so etched as a record in my mind I have a pretty good memory for things of long, long ago anyway.

My first memory was for something that happened when I was about three and a half weeks more than two years old. Shortly after I was two years old, and that birthday was in late October 1918, the original Armistice Day occurred. Now I wouldn't have been able to understand the first thing about Armistice Day. But in our neighborhood there was some excitement and something happened so that my father called upstairs from the drugstore – we lived in a flat above– and said that the front of the train is off the tracks over at the station. That was only a half a block away. Lester Park Station in Duluth. This was the train headed up toward the Iron Range in Minnesota. Some wheels were off the track.

My father said, "Let's go over and watch it. They're trying to get it back on."

That's all he had heard. So we all went across the street, down half a block and into the railroad station and beyond and the



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train was off the track. The two little wheels under the front cowcatcher of this old steam train had somehow gotten dislodged and this train with extra cars on it full of people was waiting for people working, trying to get this pair of wheels, heavily weighted down by the springs under this cowcatcher, back on the rails. They had iron wedges and iron poles with wedged tips, curved, working. They'd get to a certain place and the engineer would back up a little bit, slowly, and then there'd be a cracking sound and the wheels would slip off of whatever they were on and down on the ties again. Then they'd try it again a different way. I was fascinated by this. Trains were something that always stayed on the tracks, of course! So this was really odd. In my short memory it even seemed unusual, in view of what little I knew about trains. Well, they finally got the flange of one wheel across the rail and the other flange still up enough so that a tire went **flack!** right into place on top of the rail, both sides at once. After all that struggling they had done, then they were ready to make it go. There was no damage to the railroad, the engine, or any other cars and so they were free to go. The track was all right. There were some ties that had been marked, but pretty soon they got the engine heated up, the steam started to flow and the engine pulled and chugged away until the train was a little speck on the horizon and disappeared.

Well, I guess I didn't think about that very many times, but when I was somewhere around seven or eight years old, we always had dinner together in the evening, with a relief man taking over the drugstore, and this was above the new drugstore that we built a mile away, we were talking about this and that.

I said, "I remember a train that went off the track! They were putting it back on!"

My dad said, "John, where was that?"

I said, "Oh, that was out at the Lester Park station before we moved here." Dad said, "Well, that's right! What more do you remember?"

I said, "There were so many people watching the workmen trying to get this train back on and so I told you I couldn't see. So you lifted me up over your head so I was sitting on the back of your neck with my knees along side your ears. I had my hands clasped in front of your forehead. Way up there, where it was higher than you were, Daddy, I was able to see everything! It was wonderful!"

(I wouldn't have been able to see a thing in between the people – I would have moved in too close and been taken away.)

"Well," he said, "John, are you sure you remember this or did somebody tell you about it later?"



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I said, "I haven't heard anybody say anything about that. I saw it. I was right there!"

He said, "The reason why I'm finding it so hard to realize that it's really your own memory is that that train full of people with wheels off the rails and back on again was on their way to the Iron Range for celebrations of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, when you were too young, I thought, to have remembered the derailling incident."

I have a number of frivolous little stories that I can get to but I'd like to tell you about a serious dream I had at Milan, Michigan. It was a couple of months before Franklin Roosevelt died. I was thinking over what I knew of Tyler Kent's story. The dream was about my being a visitor in a long line of visitors to the White House. We were given the usual tour. It wasn't until decades later that I would really go through the White House. But in my dream, it was while the war was still going on, Roosevelt was still president and we had actually been ushered into the Oval Office for a few minutes and Roosevelt made some pretty little speech to us. Then we were ushered out. I was in the tail end of the procession going out and I hesitated in the doorway. Roosevelt said, "Do you have something you wanted to say to me?"

I said, "Well, I'm not sure I want to say this to you but I feel extremely critical of you for what I know of your messages to and from Churchill trying to get this country attacked by Japan so that we could declare war on them and then war against Germany could begin, they being part of the tripartite."

I proceeded to tell him exactly what I thought of the kind of perfidious performance that I was aware of on his part. I told him how it confirmed very strongly and deeply my own determination not to be a part of any war whatever, for any government, under any pretext. That dream was so vivid through my waking that it has stayed with me ever since. What I welcomed it for most of all was that it reconfirmed for me the depth of my own commitment, my own convictions about war and peace. I knew that it wasn't some contrived surface attitude and this really was a welcome revelation for me. I have the same attitude precisely even in my dreams, despite all the rest that dreaming does in terms of crazy fantasy! But this was not crazy at all.

I met a beekeeper, or a student of beekeeping I should say, at Lewisburg, by the name of Bernard Royals. He had taken advantage of his access through the administration at Lewisburg to a correspondence school. Many prisoners are students through the International Correspondence Schools, ICS. He was in there, having been implicated in a murder. There were two or three other companions. He was from one of the Carolinas, I believe. As he put it to me, he shouldn't have been with these fellows and he had had warnings about their being bad fellows, but he was somewhat younger than they were and he thought they were pretty



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jolly and adventuresome but he had no idea that they would be stupid enough to commit a murder. Just for the sake of robbing a few things out of a convenience store somewhere on the roadside. Well, they were challenged by the owner and one of them pulled out a gun that nobody else knew he had and shot the owner, who was also a sheriff, and killed him. All four were sent up for murder because they were all involved in this death of the storekeeper. Royals was only the driver of the car. Another one was also horror-struck at what his friend had done. Anyway, he had been studying beekeeping. He was going to be a farmer after he got out. He was going to find some out of the way place that was big enough so that he could have a number of hives and be harvesting honey and selling it. He thought maybe he could make a living doing that if he had enough hives. What he knew about beekeeping, he was glad to have a listener like me to tell his new understandings to, about how they behave, how you use smoke to keep them gentle and do things that you have to do with a hive, even while it's occupied.

There was one fellow who was small and wiry but looked like he had been greatly weakened and I got acquainted with him at the hospital in Lewisburg. He had been broken up in a motorcycle accident. He had flown over the handlebars in a very awkward way and he had lost an eye, had skull concussions, fractures, had broken some of his limbs and had a large damage in his crotch area. So he had had some expert surgery to put various delicate things back together again. Telling me about it, he even offered to let me see the surgeon's handiwork. I told him that I didn't need that and I'd just as well not remember seeing it. I didn't have strong enough clinical interest to be any less than horrified at what I'd probably be seeing! He was having difficulty having the right shape of glass eye put in that side. He was quite a fellow, an interesting fellow of very low intellect and very low education, but struggling along, trying to live as well as he could in spite of being very missing in some departments of his thinking.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Had he come close to death?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes. He must have been very close to it. He had been put back together in so many different ways all over his frame, but he still had a certain amount of old spunk left in him. He was very grateful really that, in spite of his criminal behavior, the prison system was still handling his medical difficulties in a way that was more fortunate for him than he felt he had ever deserved.

One of the fellows came into the prison hospital having a peculiar kind of alcohol poisoning. There was no alcohol available to inmates and the whole prison system didn't have any alcohol inside it, not even in the warden's own house. So how did this fellow get so drunk? It turned out that while he was in the hospital, the investigation showed that he had been doing



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some painting work and some surfaces needed to be shellacked. So he had gone into a closet and had been breathing in the fumes from his shellac, which has alcohol as a thinner. He was painting various surfaces in that closet and keeping the door closed because he was really an alcoholic craving that smell. They shouldn't have had him painting with shellac at all! He had passed out before they found him. So he was needing hospital service for a while!

There was one great big fellow, an orderly in the prison hospital. All the inmates called him "Tiny." They had to make his clothes specially for him out of large pieces of cloth. I don't think I ever saw a fellow with that big and long a belt. If he leaned over, his shirt tail would come completely out. I didn't learn until later just how much he weighed when he came into that hospital, but he came in in order to go under medical control for losing weight. He wanted to get down to some reasonable level. So he was there for most of a year. He was on a regimen with controlled diet. His doctor's goal was one pound per day, which is pretty rapid. Finally he came to the point where he was boasting and so was his doctor of his having lost two hundred pounds in exactly two hundred days. He was a tall, big framed fellow and he still weighed about two hundred forty. That meant he was almost too big to walk when he first came in. He had to watch his mental attitude and his emotional instabilities because it was costing him something to lose that. He had a feeling of anxiety all the time. The doctor had warned him about that. So he kept himself right side up and he made it.

There was a young Friend in the Washington DC Friends' Meeting at Florida Avenue named Milan Lambertson. I think he came from Kansas. He had registered as a Conscientious Objector and he hadn't known anybody who was, so I knew how that was! I went about three years alone after deciding how I felt about war and to keep out of it. At least at first I was just keeping out of the shooting end of it. Later on I became more thorough about it. But he had come to the same general feeling that he just couldn't help in the killing and destruction of war. The trouble was that his father was Congressman Lambertson of that state and when his father learned about it, he was personally affronted by any son of his who took such a "draft dodging" stand. He looked at his son almost violently saying that, if his son persisted in this, a congressman couldn't run for dog catcher back home with any chance of winning. Milan was plucky enough, so I believe that he did tell his father that the whole family had been less happy since his father had gone into politics than they ever were before that. Life had changed since the move to Washington particularly in ways that weren't good for the whole family. So he, Milan, wouldn't be too sorry if his father couldn't be elected dog catcher anywhere! Well, Milan came under a lot of pressure and he swerved from his determination just enough so that with his father influencing he got his draft board to assign him to 1AO, which means you are in the army but as an objector to the combat. He was going to be a noncombatant. So



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he got sent into a medical infirmary in the army down in Florida or it may have been Georgia. He, being new, was put on the night shift. In charge of the infirmary he had to pass out medications as authorized even though he wasn't a pharmacist. One night, he had been whiling away the time in the infirmary when everything was quiet learning how to use the typewriter. He wrote to me occasionally. He typed out various things like "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party." He found himself typing this phrase: "Yours are the hands that heal the hands that go out to kill another man." He was helping the army to get people back into combat. It embarrassed him and disgusted him. Seeing this on the typewriter paper showed him that he had gone too far. He shouldn't have allowed himself to be sent into the army even for noncombatant duty. Knowing that story from him in the letter had a strengthening effect. I was very glad he wrote that.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It seems the truth comes to individuals.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Spontaneous revelation, if you work for it.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): These are not group decisions to become conscientious objectors. The group may be behind it, but it's the individual who feels the call. Narrow is the gate and few are chosen.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I see that as very significant.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I see that as the communion of two saints.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): He spent his whole life in the ministry after he was out of the army. He had first one church and then another. He was assigned to be a pastor in many churches. He had a family and he was adequately supported. Not too many people in his congregations differed with him to the point where it ever became much of an issue anymore, so I was glad for that.

My brother, whom I think I've already mentioned, was sent to Carlyle Barracks, Pennsylvania. When I visited him there once I noticed that on one of the buildings was mounted, in large metal letters, the motto of the army medical corps: To Preserve Fighting Strength. Not to save lives, not to prevent the injured GIs from dying, but to patch them up so they could go out and do some more killing. I suppose for some younger COs who hadn't done as much thinking as I'd been through, it was possible for them to let themselves be drawn into the Army Corps on the promises that they wouldn't be asked to do the killing directly. But there it was, in bold relief! The only and official reason



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for having an army medical corps is to prevent the loss of fighting strength where possible.

I mentioned a chess player, a former Navy petty officer. There was another chess player I found who was very interesting. I think his name was Gruber, or perhaps Grober. He was a man from New York City, I forget what borough he came from, but I think he got into federal prison for tax evasion. There were a number of people who were white collar criminals and sometimes they claimed, maybe correctly, that their accountants had gotten them into such trouble. Sometimes they hired crooked accountants so they could take those chances, and lost. Well, Mr. Gruber had another problem and that's why I met him in the hospital at Lewisburg. He had multiple sclerosis. He was in a wheelchair but he sometimes walked very uncertainly on a couple of canes. They didn't have the elbow canes yet in those days so he was in danger of falling on the hard terrazzo floors. He usually stayed in his wheelchair whenever he had to go more than just a very few steps. He played chess with others. He was an intellectual who failed to get a real education. He only had business training for whatever business he had been in. It might have been wholesaling of some sort. I can't remember any thing more specific than that. He thought he'd gotten multiple sclerosis from somebody, a woman that he had had an affair with—the one and only time, he said, that he had ever cheated on his wife— and he found out later that that woman had MS and hadn't told him or maybe didn't know it but anyway he got it. After a few years of its incubation it hit him so he was going to be downhill sooner or later. It might in some cases take three or four years and in some cases it might be ten or fifteen years. So he certainly rued the day when he did a little cheating on the side. He didn't believe specifically enough in God as wrathful like some fundamentalist Christians would. He was Jewish so it wasn't that personal and that wrathful a God that was in his own religious viewpoints. I think Judaism doesn't actively teach personal retribution from God for our sins in living dangerously.

The draft board was looking for a way to classify me any way except 4E. They didn't want to have a conscientious objector in their list. This is when I saw, in Baltimore, John H. Skeen, at the hearing in September 1943. He took notes all during this hearing and then he sent me a copy of his notes, his own transcript of his notes. He wouldn't have been encouraged to do anything other than what he was legally bound to do because they weren't supposed to give any registrant any more advantage against the government than necessary.

The Friends Meeting in Washington DC at Florida Avenue were always very encouraging and they were delighted to have any CO come in and be among the Young Friends, attending Meeting, and so on. In fact they were probably getting quite a few new Friends during a war. People were looking for a religious group that agreed with their own individual convictions, so it was a mutual advantage and that's I think why I was so warmly received as



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many other young friends who would occasionally ask for membership later on. One of the young friends, a young woman who later married one of my other friends there, came down the hall while I was looking at the bulletin board and she said, "John, I haven't asked you yet but are you a pacifist?"

"Yes."

"Oh, fine," she said, "I was hoping you would be!"

Ha-ha-ha! That was Elizabeth Wetherald, and the Wetherald family were from Berwyn, Maryland. They had lived in that area doing farming for a very long time and that was becoming suburban and they had retired from farming. Her parents were elderly, fifty-five or sixty, which in those days was elderly. Ha-ha-ha! I can remember back when people over forty were considered to be "over the hill." By forty my father had lost most of his teeth and by forty-five he'd lost the last of them and had full upper and lower plates. My parents didn't think it was so unusual. Here I am eighty five this Fall and I have yet to lose my first permanent tooth. Ha-ha-ha-ha!

When Carol came back from Toledo, to Washington to live with her mother up on River Road NW, she returned to attend Friends Meeting in Washington. As soon as they knew she was back, they welcomed her very warmly and asked her what she needed and so on. The baby was imminent, due in August, which was almost eight months after I went into prison. She didn't have a crib yet, and suddenly a crib appeared, having been shipped in for her by various younger and older Friends from Florida Avenue Meeting who chipped in. There were many other ways in which Friends helped Carol all the way through that period and beyond and until I got home. Even beyond that, they helped to get me settled. They found that another member, Frederick Libby, could use another employee in the National Council for Prevention of War. He was one of the most active members in the ministry to that meeting. In fact he spoke too often! He was just full of feelings and ideas and ways of trying further to get wars put into the background of history. His office had been right across Eighteenth Street from the State Department Office which is now the Executive Office Building of the President. So they had several big posters displayed in rotation in the windows and new ones coming out with lettering large enough to be read from the windows of the US Department of State. The staff realized that even with the war going on, here was this little pacifist agency continuing to work to get some improvements in the world that would let wars be less likely or obsolete. There were some hotheads who would take various means and occasionally destructive means, letting that organization know that they didn't approve because everybody had to be for the war. While we were in the war it was only the people with adverse political ideas that would be so stubborn as to say that the war was bad. And such a "good war" was going on!



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Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): And anybody who objected was reviled.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes, as though he were a bosom buddy of Hitler!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I remember little children in my neighborhood speaking of the evils of Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo. We knew these names. Little kids learned the worst insults, to call each other "Little Jap!"

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): It was interesting to see how much more easily and quickly little kids could be jerked into war propaganda. It was the thing to do, the thing to be and the thing to parrot. Anyway, Florida Avenue was a very warm family meeting.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): What year did you come to New England?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): In 1950. One of the reasons I came to Providence was that Hurford Crosman had told me that the Providence Meeting, of which he had been a member years before, was in many ways very similar to the Florida Avenue group of Friends. He thought I would like it here. There was a job opening here a few years later on, in 1950. Hurford had been my boss for three years when I was working at Friends' Service Incorporated, out at PennCraft, near East Millford, Pennsylvania. So when he said that, I was further confirmed in my inclination to take this job offer here in Providence. The man who was hiring me knew all about my having been a war objector. He knew there was a Friends' Meeting here. He was a member of the Episcopal Church. Episcopalians were reputed to be the best people around here! Ha-ha-ha-ha! But the vice chairman of our Providence Redevelopment Agency was an architect who had a lot of Quakers in his own ancestry. So my hiring boss told me that if my war history were somehow to become known, and I didn't need to spread it on the record, he thought it might even improve my standing with the vice chairman; and other people might think it only interesting. Shortly before that I had applied for a planning job in Lexington, Kentucky but when I asked if it would make any difference that I was a war objector, the man who talked to me said he would have to ask around. He got the contrary viewpoint – no we don't want any draft dodgers in here. So he thought it might be better for me to look elsewhere.

Albert Harkness, the architect who was vice chairman of the Providence Redevelopment Agency hiring me, turned out to be the architect who designed our meetinghouse here later on in 1952. I was able to get for him quite a bit of detailed information and specifications for that meetinghouse in Washington. So this Friends Meeting did turn out to be the same kind of warm family



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for Carol and me, and by that time, our two children Susan and Wendy. When we were about to send the girls into the nearest public school, down at India Point on Ives Street, Friends were kind of dismayed because they thought that school had kind of a tough reputation. It was a very old, nineteenth century school building with extremely high ceilings and tall windows. It was built somewhere around half way between the Civil War and the turn of the twentieth century. It was on a plate of asphalt and not a blade of grass anywhere on the playground. There were quite a number of tough kids who bullied little kids. So they thought that we ought to send our older girl to pre-kindergarten, or nursery school, in Lincoln School here, which was then owned by the [Yearly Meeting](#). Friends in our monthly meeting were very much involved with their children at Lincoln School, their daughters. That was a girls' school then. Moses Brown School was by that time no longer co-educational, but had just boys. So, with very substantial scholarship aid from the school, our older daughter, Susan, and her younger sister, Wendy, after a couple of years, went in there. They had almost all of their education at Lincoln. When they were getting into the upper grades in high school, they decided they would like to attend Classical High School in Providence, which has a good academic reputation. So that's where they graduated.

Then there was a period in the mid-1950s when Carol had needed extended hospital care and I was becoming exhausted trying to cope with the parenting and the home. So one day Henry Foster, one of the old Quaker family Friends, came to me and said,

"John, some of us have become alarmed at your looking pretty tired and we think that you are trying to shoulder too much of this alone. Even with some help you've been getting from the Perrys and others, you don't have any help at home. We think you should get yourself either a full time or at least a part time housekeeper. Full time would probably need to be a live-in housekeeper. Part time would be afternoon and evening. But we think that if you don't do that, you are doing yourself some harm physically."

"Well," I said, "I'm just hoping that Carol can be home again before too long and strong enough to do what she would like to do in taking care of her family."

"Well, it looks as if it may be a considerable time longer, and if the cost of housekeeping help is bothering you, there are a number of us who would be happy to chip in together and help you with at least part of that cost."

So I thought, if they are alarmed enough to be chipping in to help us, I'd better consider it very seriously. I can do it for a while and if it doesn't turn out to be too long, I might be able not to call on them for financial assistance. I'd had one or two raises by that time and was hopeful of further advancement, and maybe even promotions in my work. So I got



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myself a part time housekeeper and eventually switched to a full time housekeeper. It wasn't too many months after that that Carol did get home. But we kept that housekeeper for a while until Carol said that her life would be simplified if we let her go. Eventually that worked out. There were other examples of helpfulness that we received from this meeting and from the meeting in Washington earlier.

Over the years in public service, working for the government, and that was what my whole training was for, it was always a sensitive thing to know when it was safe to let anybody know, incidental to other things, about my war experience, and when not to. I tried to keep it out of my work environment as much as I could. And yet, Friends in the Meeting and attenders – casual people – would probably find out from time to time. There was always a possibility that somebody would say it in the wrong context and, who knows, my job might even blow up in my face and I would suddenly be unable to take care of raising and financing a family. It's remarkable that in all of those thirty-one and a half years that I was working as a planner for the city of Providence, nobody once outed me in any way to put my job in jeopardy. People were so kind, so sensitive and careful to never compromise me. It confirmed the wisdom of what my first city planning boss, way back in Duluth, Minnesota in the 1930's, had told me, about ten years later.

The advice of that first planning boss, Aaron B. Horwitz, was against putting any mention of my wartime prison experience into my resume. After prison, when I had a professional job again, I was beginning to send out my resume to various planning agencies, people who might hire me, and ingenuously, I filled in all the blanks. There were no gaps in the calendar record of me on my resume. I sent one to Aaron Horwitz back in Duluth because I was wondering if he might know of some planning opening where I might fit in. Well, he wrote back to me, horrified, that I had put something in my resume that would be a real stopper for a lot of potential employers. He said, It's good to tell only things that are true, of course, but there are situations and many different kinds of lives of people where the whole truth does not need to be stated. This is one of them. He said, My Jewish world community knows of hundreds of others. In some cases life depends upon not letting out more of the truth than is necessary. It's usually possible, while saying only truth, to judiciously leave other things out that don't need to be said. He was, incidentally, a very active Zionist. He was working for a new homeland for world Jewry to have as a country of their own. He was completely dedicated to that need to be answered. Eventually, in 1948, the State of Israel was born. I was working for him from 1938 to 1940. Later on, he and his wife emigrated to Israel and he taught city planning at the University of Tel Aviv, Jaffa. They visited back home here and every time they went back to Israel again they would take a houseful of furniture that they had bought here because wood was in such short supply that furniture was just too expensive. He and his wife, Bertha,



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contributed mightily, as many other Jews did helping the people who were going to be the future citizens of Israel. He was a very wise man and he had a deliberate way of talking. You could just see him sifting through all the angles before he would decide what was appropriate to say. He did this in his professional work and he did it in his personal life. He was probably the most thoughtful person I've ever known. All the time I was in contact with him and in occasional letters later, I always had the feeling that I would like to be as much as possible like him.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He was a role model for you.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and of all the role models I ever had, outside of my own parents, he and Frank Crassweller, my Sunday school teacher, were two of the best.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): For how many years were you Frank Crassweller's pupil?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I would think it was at least for three years. Then after I came home from the University of Minnesota, in 1938, I became a Sunday school teacher in that same church. Then I went on East fifteen months later to MIT in the Fall of '39. Frank Crassweller's class met in the choir loft alongside of the organ and there were just enough of us to fill all the seats in that space. He kept us interested and thinking and he would challenge us to guess in a certain situation what would be the best thing to do. It was a working class in Christian ethics.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): And later you had to write to his nephew and say how amazed you were that this man had taken a position that was really opposite to conscientious objection to war. Did anyone ever put your employment at risk for your CO status?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes, there was one time, only one. I was still working for the National Capital Park and Planning Commission at Silver Spring, Maryland. A politician, E. Brooke Lee, had become its chairman after being the only candidate of his party to be defeated for an elected job, so his friends appointed him our chairman. One day he surprised me by a generous compliment about my technical work on a design for revised traffic routing in a neighborhood near some property of his. I had thought myself outside of his notice, being very non-political as I was. Then, a week or two later, a political flunky appeared at my home a few minutes after I had returned from work one Friday evening, with a terse letter signed by the chairman notifying me that I had been terminated "for the good of the service." The Director of Planning, Fred W. Tuemmler, knew



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nothing of it but soon called me back to say the chairman had learned from the Silver Spring draft board chairman that I was registered as a CO, and that was the only reason. Well, Selective Service regulations required all information about registrants to be kept confidential by draft boards, so my betrayal was perfectly illegal. My boss, Mr. Tuemmler, was stunned and angry, and told me he had very nearly talked himself out of his own job, protesting that abusive termination. But Mr. Lee had enough political power so that he didn't need to be legally right, and his close friendship with the draft board chairman extended that principle to him as well. My sudden firing threw me for a loop, and it was quite a few days before I decided to take advantage of unemployment to complete the writing of my Master's thesis for MIT. I never lost a job except that once, so on balance I guess I've been pretty lucky.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): That's quite something to remember Silver Spring for.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): There was one more thing, even worse, that made that place even more memorable. Occasionally I would take public transportation, by bus and streetcar to downtown Washington DC, and at a transfer point at the District Line, I noticed, to my acute discomfort, a variety of injured military men on crutches or in wheelchairs, taking the same transit vehicles between the former Women's College in Maryland, to Walter Reed Hospital in DC for treatment. Many of their injuries were very serious – faces badly disfigured, limbs lost or useless, permanent paralysis in some cases. I had to keep outwardly quiet but inwardly I was furious about their victimization by a war supposed to be so "glorious." My mantra was a silent phrase, "And for WHAT?" And they had been forced to do similar wrongs to soldiers on the other side, similarly forced to injure these boys. At times, when out of anyone's hearing, I had to let myself explode with angry language about it. I was, moreover, liable to be thrown into prison for refusing to kill or produce such injuries to German, Italian, or Japanese kids who had no other reason to be fighting against me. What could possibly be more rotten than this kind of world? War victimizes everyone.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): The official view was no doubt that your reaction should have been revengeful against the enemies who did that to your countrymen.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): My reactions are not what any military government would dictate, as my guidance comes from another direction higher up. The inmates who in a few cases have been in military service, were not in general hostile to me, as they had felt that was a strange environment. I met no ex-GI who wanted to trade prison for more military service. They had many stories about bizarre happenings in service. One man had been



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working with aircraft ammunition, feeding it to machine gunners and bombardiers over targets or in defense of their plane from attack. An order came out during training missions over the US farmlands of Texas and nearby states, that they were not to land back at their bases with any unspent ammo on board. But the day didn't last long enough to shoot it all off or drop all the bombs, before they had to return on deadline. Impossible! Until one bright guy found the only solution for the problem. When they started back, all remaining ammo still in the crates and boxes could be pushed out the open side door in hopes it would almost always land in fields instead of on farmhouses and barns. So, lying on their backs and with shoulders against bolsters they would kick all the unopened crates out the door! What happened below was the responsibility of whoever sent out that order. This procedure went on for many months at a time, daily. Apparently no crewman who had the idea that a smaller load might be put aboard each morning, had a high enough rank to pass the idea up the line of command toward the officer who had written the absurd order.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Could he have had some reason to favor the makers or sellers of such ammunition? Were the ex-GIs you met in prison much different in their attitudes about war than your fellow students in graduate school?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, at MIT I didn't find any of my fellow students, male or female, in the planning school able to agree with me on my stand to be opposed to war and a non-participant. However, I didn't meet with any enmity among my fellow students. The only two hot arguments I had with anybody in that student body were with people who were not my own classmates in the planning school. One was an undergraduate architectural student there at MIT, Judith Turner, who seemed to be in pretty strong but partial agreement as long as it was fashionable to be an isolationist, trying to keep America out of war for political purposes. She was also a member of a communist cell in Cambridge, centered mostly in Harvard University. People who had, for very idealistic reasons, the idea that Communism was, in the longest run, the best thing for the world. After September 1939, when Poland was overrun by Hitler from the West and by Stalin from the East, those people were all following one communist line – to keep America out of the war. 1939 to 1941 were the years when I was acquainted with her. I went with her just once to a meeting, but very suddenly, when Russia was invaded by the German army in June 1941, she switched and she was all for America getting into the war right away, quick! Her change of mind from being apparently in agreement with me, although it wasn't completely spelled out between us, to being urgently in opposition to my views –because I was still a pacifist!– she couldn't understand this because circumstances had changed. It's only intelligent, she thought. You change with the circumstances. So I told her that the basis of my own pacifism was different from the basis she had had, which was political.



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Mine was religious. I said that I think killing people, injuring them, destroying property or damaging it is always regrettable and in all or most cases, wrong. No amount of political shifting about is going to change that. Well, we had one very long conversation one evening in the winter of 1940-1941. She tried desperately to change my mind, or to convince me that I ought to change my mind, but I was hoping pretty much to get her to see the rest of it, to see why morality is stronger than mere politics.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Were you in love?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, not really yet. I felt attracted, but I didn't consider myself eligible yet to take on starting a family.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): You were wary!

Friend John R. Kellam: Well, yes, I couldn't let myself pursue an active interest until I was ready to face the responsibilities it would entail.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Ah, the days when young men were so noble!

Friend John R. Kellam: Well, yes, but young people don't have the experience and the frame of reference to deal with it yet. Well, finally it broke off. We had come to the point where it looked as if we simply had different visions, philosophically, religiously, and in her case, politically. Well, she was absent for a few minutes. I think she wanted a release from our discussion. It was just too strongly earnest. When she came back she said, "John, we are going to have to break off. This could go on all night. It could go forever. On your basis you're right, of course. In fact, you're too damned right! On my basis, I simply can't agree with it. It would be a bother to us and I think we shouldn't bother each other any more."

"Well," I protested, "couldn't we still be good friends?"

She said, "It would be an irritation to me!"

I said, "Well, I still find you very attractive! I wish we could be good friends, even though ... I understand that not everybody can agree on these things. The whole world is full of people who can't agree with me! I can't condemn them all!" I have lots of friends for the rest of my life who don't agree with me as well as some very dear ones that do. Ha-ha-ha!

Well, she just didn't have time to spare for trying to convince somebody who can't be convinced of her own political make-up.



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She needed to be working in concert with others who were really in her family, politically. So, I said, "In that case, I won't impose myself but I hope you'll always think kindly of me even though I couldn't come along with you."

Communism isn't my bag! Ha-ha-ha-ha! Her mother was a card carrying adult Communist from when my friend was just a little girl. I visited them at home one time. They lived just outside New York City, on Long Island.

In a war it's important to get the young men in before they've thought too much. If they kept on drafting for new wars into the ages of thirty and thirty-five, I think there would be a larger proportion of conscientious objectors, having thought enough about it to realize more things.

The other hot argument was with a visiting MIT student from Britain, sent over to study some militarily connected courses. He thought my attitudes quite sadly impractical; his country was simply determined to survive, and so had no alternative but to get on with "this dirty job" of defeating the Third Reich. He could therefore give no consideration to longer range theories of ultimate pacifist morality. "After all," he said, "we're already in this war, completely committed. Your country is already in it with us, and I think you should realize this and turn quickly cooperative, however dirty this job is." I could only say I recognized his reasons for having such a different philosophy than my own.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yup, they get 'em young and uneducated.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yes, and poor, disadvantaged over all. I remember in Shakespeare, in Julius Caesar, "Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look; He thinks too much: such men are dangerous." They might even be conscientious about some things! Political savants of the old school of faith don't like that.

From what you say about the importance of telling the details of this part of our history, I wish there were thousands of WWII COs still alive and able to tell of their experiences. Hobart Mitchell was a CO, a Connecticut Friend, somewhere between here and Madison who was pretty close to my age, but he's gone now. He wrote a book, I think the name of it was WE COULD NOT KILL. It was a very small book, maybe only a hundred and fifty pages. It's in some meetinghouse libraries. I don't remember whether it was privately published.

I have from my files a letter that I wrote to Carol two months after I arrived in Milan, Michigan. "My Dearest Cary, This handwriting will be a bit worse than my usual because of having sprained my right thumb catching a softball on the roof yesterday afternoon. Perhaps I'll be able to make this legible



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holding the pencil between two fingers and going slowly." Then this next letter looks quite a bit different, because I had broken the end phalange of the thumb of my right hand, catching a ball up on the roof of the cellblock during recreation. I reached up to get the ball and it somehow hit the end of my thumb and bent it backward. So it wasn't just a sprain. The end bone was broken, and so I had to have my thumb put way back as far as it would go so that the bone fragments would be together and then cast in there. So with my hand in that kind of a cast, I couldn't write, so I had to write with my left hand. I did that for six weeks. After the six weeks when my hand could come out of its shell, my thumb was still very straight and I could not bend it very much and I couldn't even hold a pen for a while. I tried to write another letter with my left hand and it wouldn't! It seemed to have a will of its own, as if saying, Well, now you've got the right thumb out of its cast and you'll have to go back to it because I'm tired! Ha-ha! So even though it was a great strain at first, I had to write the next letter with my right hand, even though it was so stiff and unhandy! But Carol wrote to me on a typewriter. She was doing stenographic work in the office of the U.S. News and World Report magazine in Washington while I was in Milan and Lewisburg.

Tyler Kent was arrested May 20, 1940. The British police arrested him. He was released and brought back to this country in very late November, 1945. That was almost exactly one year before I was released from Lewisburg, on November 30, 1946. I didn't hear anything about Tyler Kent then, because he had had just a day or so of publicity before it dried up again. The American press didn't want to hear anything more about Tyler Kent because they were all loyal to the official explanation of how the war had started and they didn't want any "revisionism." Poor Tyler Kent was really a broken man when he came back from almost five and a half years in the Isle of Wight prison in England. That's the island just below England at the edge of the English Channel, the island around which the America's Cup contenders used to race, a very large diamond-shaped island. Anyway, when he came back he was still hoping to get his real story out but the press went into quietus mode again after beginning what they thought was some new publicity about this notorious young man. So he and his mother went back to, I think it was, Savannah, Georgia. He had terrible animus in his mind against Joseph Patrick Kennedy, the father of the later President. He had been the ambassador to Britain at the time Tyler was trying to get his story to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairperson. (It was John Connolly.) He wanted to blow the whistle on Franklin Roosevelt for being two-faced about getting into war or not getting into war. The elder Kennedy had waived Tyler Kent's diplomatic immunity so that he could be caught and tried under British law, for mishandling the Prime Minister's secret mail. He had no standing of immunity so that he could be brought back to this country and tried for whatever the President might think he had done wrong by revealing or trying to reveal the correspondence to Connolly. The Senator



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betrayed him, and then the Ambassador, Kennedy, had cancelled his right to diplomatic immunity. That was so unfairly political, done for propagandistic reasons, that Tyler was permanently outraged.

They had an appointment stateside for when Tyler would have his furlough. Well, during a demonstration a few years later, for which I had traveled from Providence down to Washington, a walking demonstration which started at the Florida Avenue Friends Meetinghouse and ended up with a silent vigil at the White House, I took a little time out and went to the office of the Evening Star to see if they had a file on Tyler Kent. And they did. They brought it out and let me look at it. I couldn't touch it. As soon as I was through with one leaf, they'd turn it over for me to read the other leaf. It told something about his political work from Georgia, in which he was writing, editing and publishing a hate sheet against not only Joseph Patrick Kennedy but the entire Kennedy clan. There was nobody in that family who wasn't hated by Kent. So the hate sheet came out and there were samples of it that I saw in that file. I was very dismayed because I was hoping that Tyler Kent might still be a whole person and not so full of hate that he couldn't maybe win his way over decades to get his story understood by everybody. Turning so bitter meant that he discredited himself and almost nobody would listen to a hothead like that. He was just so sore at everybody. So eventually he and his mother felt so rejected by the whole political system of America and so frustrated that truth could not be told anywhere important. They went to Mexico City and lived out their lives down there.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I wonder if they went to the Friends' Center there, La Casa de los Amigos.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I don't know. She came to our Friends Meeting that time in 1942 only because she was going to all kinds of churches to try to find somebody who might be able to help her to get her son brought back to this country to get him tried on this side rather than tried in secret by a British tribunal. He was still in his twenties, a young fellow.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): How did you find out that the Kents went to Mexico?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I found out all this in the clipping files of the Washington newspaper, the Evening Star. He was sentenced to seven years and I had thought until I just looked here in my records, that he had done the whole seven years then, but he was released after about five and a half years. He came back here in late November of 1945. I think possibly he might have been useful in many ways if he hadn't been so consumed by bitter hatred. He must have had some touch of megalomania in him, expecting to be influential for what he thought was the only



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truth that people should pay attention to in the matter. They all turned him down. War propaganda does that to people so that they can't handle another side of such an important story. FDR really did win the American people over. He was a terrifically skillful politician. I felt critical of him, but I just took him at what I knew his face value was. He just thought it was important to do certain things even if it meant lying to people about it. Governments are full of such people. The book that included a mention of Tyler Kent was *INFAMY: PEARL HARBOR AND ITS AFTERMATH*, by John Toland, 1982. It's far enough away in time from World War II so that some things could be said without Toland getting into the ranks of the would-be revisionists. So he wasn't blowing his own reputation, but in getting ready to write this book, Toland actually went down to Mexico City and interviewed Tyler Kent and his mother before either one of them died. Kent's story Toland took out of the Washington Times Herald December 5, 1945, the New York Post, December 4, 1945, and the New York World Telegram, December 4, 1945. And then another paragraph came from an interview with Kent. I wrote to Toland and told him briefly my story from having met Mrs. Kent and asked him if the Kents were still around. He wrote back saying that they were out of the country but if I wanted to write to Kent I could send a sealed letter to John Toland and he would relay it because he did know their address in Mexico City. That was about ten years ago but I failed to follow up on it any more.

My mother was not political enough to have her own philosophy of pacifism. She was a very intelligent woman, a school teacher in Oregon before she was married to my father. She loved children and served their education needs before she began to raise me and my older brother. She was strongly in favor of the vote for women. But as for my being a soldier, she thought that maybe I would be under still more hazards than if I were somewhere tucked away in the army and not in the front line somewhere. That was the flavor of her interest. I would guess that most of the Gold Star Mothers and the mothers of sons who came home with or without some serious injury would feel the same, that they would prefer their sons not get involved in foreign wars.

World War I began just fifty years after the end of the Civil War. That seemed like ancient history to me when I was a young person. The past is prologue. To a young kid, all of the past before his birth date is prologue, just academic. There were people in those times and they traveled around doing things that they thought were important, but it's all past. Even the Holocaust isn't real to a lot of young Germans.

If people see something violent that's going on, and then something non-violent, which one will they choose to watch? I certainly saw my share of WWI movies during the twenties and thirties. There are lots of well constructed movie plots and while they show to some extent the horrors of combat life and death, they still leave, explicitly or impliedly, justifications for the warfare that was going on and the idealistic propaganda



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that the public accepted for sending their young men into these wars. They left out the similar viewpoints of justification of any other side. Even the Civil War movies which had to be imagined because there was nobody old enough to remember it first hand, in movie making, was all dramatized from one side's point of view for the Northerners, and maybe from the other side's point of view for a few stories, about how it seemed for the South. Quite a few of these movies had quite a lot of content in them glorifying the favored side of this war or that war. That way the culture of war got transmitted to younger and younger generations in this new, very powerful motion picture industry. Their products were very persuasive. War movies could have been used for, what I would consider, real educational value to show us not only the raw horrors of war, but the spurious justifications that are used to get publics into war by their own leaderships working against them and against their natural inclination to shrink from doing that kind of damage to other humans. Very few people nowadays ever see the statements made by General, and then President, Eisenhower shortly before he finished his presidency, about the dangers of the military/industrial complex. To get more personal, on behalf of the whole public together he made the stunning statement that sooner or later the leaders of this world, the political leaders, are going to have to get out of the way and let the people of the world have the peace that they so strongly yearn for. General Eisenhower had his belly full of war, before he finished his military career and before he became president. He was an extremely effective person and he was a terrific hero. They made him president for that. But then the military/industrial complex were very greatly dismayed to be reading what he was stating publicly. I think that anytime where a choice is presented whether someone might continue living or die, there's only one choice for me. That is to help life to continue.

I have had four different situations in my lifetime in which I was called upon either to prevent or help to prevent a suicide. I didn't have to think twice. I found out that I was willing to struggle a lot to prevent one, anyhow, any old time. I just hate to see life ending unless there is absolutely no way of preventing more suffering. Even then I don't like it and won't permit it if there's any alternative. I've known several other people with whom I was not engaged in any such confrontation, who had attempted suicide. They had a lot of good living following that event. My closest chum in middle age, who worked with me on the equal housing opportunity legislative campaign in Rhode Island, was a man who, maybe fifteen years earlier, or twenty, had tried to do himself in because he was so depressed about himself and about the world and the community that he just didn't want to see any more of it. But for him, working with me and all the rest of us who were in that movement, we might not have succeeded in getting the legislation passed, setting up the legal standard for equality of opportunity that all people should have in the housing market. There was a big campaign here, a very hard, intense struggle. The newspaper said that it was



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the most intense and prolonged single political struggle in the history of the state, at least up to that time.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): What were those dates?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): That was all during the 1960's here until we won in 1968. Other people, with medical assistance, got back from suicide attempts into lives that never were that forlorn again, until old age took them. I've had time to see this. So, you never know how much real good living you might be letting happen if you stop a suicide. A person might be perfectly convinced in the blackest despair and depression that nothing good is ever likely to happen again, in that lifetime. They can be perfectly wrong. If they're right, and they succeed, you never will know.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Hopefully, there's something in such a person that they have what it takes to respond to the new call to live – and it's like a call and a re-birth, and having been so close to death – at least in their thoughts, that if they can turn around, they're on their way up again.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. I never heard of anyone ever trying to commit suicide, or making it, who had ever expressed the belief that reincarnation happens and therefore they want the next one. That's never in their mind. They're just in too much pain and they can't suffer any more, so they think.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, and some lives are very hard. The one person I can say I knew who committed suicide, he was saying "I've lost all my friends." It can be the friends who make the difference.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Maybe some very elderly person who didn't keep making younger friends.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): And that's a tragedy.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): We have to strive to be happy, don't we?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): If we follow our noses with enough sense of curiosity, that keeps leading us forever as long as we have a body meant to walk or ride around in, or even to lie down in.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, but I guess bad health can be overwhelming. I haven't been there, so far. But I know people



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who have been, have terrible struggles.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): The human race is learning more about everything at a pace that beggars all previous decades – we are learning as much in any ten year period as it took twenty five or forty years to learn earlier. So that rate increasing so much, we live another five years and we'll learn as much as our parents took an awful long time to learn.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Well, that's a positive way to think of it! That affirms the increase in the speed with which we are living now that's causing all the stress and tension and violence ...

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, maybe we're approaching speeds that are faster than we've ever seen before, to the time when we have gotten wise to ourselves as a human race, enough to quit spoiling the rest of the world, doing each other in by the millions, as we have the power to do technically ...

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): It can go either way.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, yeah. But the story isn't ended yet – there's no use walking out five minutes before the end of the movie! And I don't want to see anybody else walking out before the end of their time because they might be surprised, to their delight! But if it were only a movie, I wouldn't get out in the aisle and block their way. Ha-ha-ha-ha!

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Ha-ha-ha! You'd sit down again, right?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): If there's a life there at stake, I'll put in a terrific effort if I have to. But, in contrast to that, the huge amount of wholesale killing that goes on in a war, destroying each other's right to exist for the rest of a lifetime – multiply that by the millions – why is it taking so long before everybody gets smarter than that?

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): A lot of things distract us away from thinking about such important things.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): "Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers; Little we see in nature that is ours."

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Oh, that's Wordsworth, "The World Is too Much with Us."

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): My mother and father were very strong



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characters. They knew absolutely what they thought was right and what they thought was wrong. If new situations came up it didn't take them very long to figure out which side of the line they fell in. Of course life was simpler in respect to moral dilemmas than it is now. One thing they had to agree on before they decided they were willing to put their lives together and make a family, for his previous family was broken by his wife's death, since they both were very strong emotionally –they had lively tempers at times and things could make them very indignant– they decided that they'd better have a lifetime compact together, that when either one of them was upset, very angry about anything, the other was going to remind himself or herself not to become angry at the same time – to be patient and be soft and be quiet, to try to be helpful without insisting, but to let it blow over, as everything usually does.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Did they read the Bible? Where did their wisdom come from?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Well, they were both raised in the same Presbyterian church in the hometown in Heron Lake, Minnesota.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Yes, I found it on the map.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, did you? In Jackson County. And Plankinton is only about forty or sixty miles west of there in South Dakota.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): I found that too.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Oh, did you? It's on one of the earliest railroad lines. A whole bunch of grain elevators sprang up along it where the harvest could be gathered and shipped east. I think it's south of the one that goes out to Center, North Dakota to the coal mine where Minnesota Power gets unit trains running back and forth, empty going out to Center and full coming back to Duluth. They never uncouple them.

My father's parents used to go to the Chautauquas in New York State. It was a long way from Duluth, Minnesota. They went by train. It was a camp for religious groups. Then occasionally there would be some fire and brimstone orators and religionists at a camp outside of Heron Lake, Minnesota. There were revival meetings in a big tent. The parents would go to the revival meeting in the evening and the children were supposed to stay home and be quiet and behave themselves. The older kids were supposed to put the younger kids to bed and then go to bed at their bedtime while the parents were out at the revival. My father remembered getting up after his folks thought he was sound asleep and getting out of the window onto the front porch



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roof, and going down the rain leader. He wasn't too heavy for the rain leader so he must have been a rather small boy but wiry enough because he could shinny back up again. The house would be locked. He and a brother would go out to the end of town, which was only three or four blocks from anywhere, and they'd find this great big tent. They knew earlier that that tent was being raised because the whole town knew it by the grapevine. They would lift the edge of the tent and they'd find themselves under the seats, indoor bleachers. So they'd be very quiet in that darkness and they could see between the peoples' legs to the stage where the orator would be talking about the evils of the day and the hell to which all the sinners were going to go and the brimstone that they would be suffering along the way. I guess that was some kind of a salty mix of material that people would be sitting in. These kids would listen to all this fiery oratory and then when the prayer meeting was starting to reach the end, the kids would sneak out of the tent and away before the grownups began coming out. They went home and climbed up the rain leader, crossed the porch roof, into the window and crept into bed. Pretty soon they realized that the images that formed in their minds from the fire and brimstone oratory on the stage was keeping them awake. If they went to sleep, they soon had a nightmare and had to wake up – but they didn't dare scream. They didn't want the folks to know that they had been out there listening to the same stuff! Ha-ha-ha!

This was before my father met my mother. Later when he was in high school, he was already in the last year when she was just in the first year. She knew who he was but at that time was not very impressed with him! But later on she thought he was one of the smartest people in her world and she was glad to be in harness with him, running the store and running the home. They were real good helpmates. I think she had more of a personal religion than he did. He had studied one of the scientific professions, pharmacy. He thought probably a larger proportion of all truths was going to come through science. She felt that the feeling side of religion was more important for her. My father and my brother were outdoorsmen.

My brother, being four years and four months older than I, was able to take to it a lot earlier than I could, so they had lots of good times together and I usually stayed in town. But occasionally all four of us, our mother included, would go out camping somewhere. My Dad and brother did a lot of fishing and they also went hunting for small game, but eventually graduated to deer hunting. Along the way in those years I would occasionally go with them, after I had long enough legs to keep up with them. Sometimes we would stop and have some target practice because my father had a twenty-two rifle, a twenty-two pistol and a thirty-thirty deer rifle. We did target practice with small arms. A twenty-two has a shell less than a quarter of an inch in diameter. Lo and behold, I was, by quite a margin, the best shot of the three of us on the targets. I could much more neatly go through the middle of a target when they didn't



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come close!

They were good shots, but I was very good. I had a steady hand and I had very good eyesight. I could let the bead be right on and steady and squeeze off the shot without disturbing the alignment of the rifle, or even a pistol, much at all. Oh, I could put a 22 calibre bullet right through the middle of a pop bottle cap at maybe fifty or sixty feet. We'd find a convenient fence and set up little pop bottle cap targets across the top of it.

They were very interested in how good a shot I was because I wasn't really interested in hunting at all. But I enjoyed target practice so long as there was assuredly nothing alive beyond it. We'd have very thick brush or an earthen high bank in back of our targets so that there was no danger of shots carrying a long way. Well, and they were very careful with guns, too. They never had an accident.

One time we were out in the woods when there was still snow on the ground and we came across a rabbit in a trap. The trap had caught its foot and the rabbit had done a lot of thrashing around. It had mangled its leg very badly and the rabbit was suffering. Death by freezing is slow so the obvious thing to do was to put the poor creature out of his misery. Thinking that this might be a way of introducing me to hunting, they let me have a chance to do this little act of mercy myself. For this I had a twenty-two rifle. It couldn't have been farther away than the end of this room. It took me something like seven or eight shots before I could hit that rabbit at all. I could either aim straight but couldn't fire off the shot, or if I was shooting, it missed. This seemed peculiar both to me and to them. Finally it became so ridiculous that I sort of grabbed mental hold of myself and said, This is stupid! Get done with it. So I went right for the rabbit's head and he flopped and that was the end of it. He was out of his misery. I was relieved and at the same time I was disgusted because I had caused the end of a life, and I revolted from it. I thought that was a rotten feeling to have, but not quite as rotten as if the rabbit had been a nice, uninjured, healthy one. But even so, it kind of bothered me from time to time as I thought back at that. When I was old enough to go out deer hunting, I said, No thank you, I'm not going to touch that. They could bring home a deer apiece and feel very unalloyed happiness about it. I couldn't understand how different I was. That's a story that relates to the next one.

When I was at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, North of Chicago, about half way to Milwaukee, I suppose, at Highland Park, past Ravinia, I was in the advance corps ROTC at the University. Our battalion was a coast artillery gunnery battalion at the University, but they didn't have any coast artillery at Fort Sheridan, no big offshore guns. But they did have anti-aircraft guns. They used a shell that was somewhere between three and a half and four inches in diameter and maybe eighteen inches long.



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It was about as hefty as a young man could easily throw into the breach of a gun. We shot these guns at towed targets, towed far behind aircraft. We had pistol and rifle marksmanship also on two different ranges. The pistol range was on the beach.

The background of that was all the expanse of Lake Michigan. We had spotters to make sure there were no boats coming anywhere near that range. So it was perfectly safe as far as that goes unless somebody accidentally put out a shot with careless aiming of a pistol maybe. These were I think nine millimeters if I remember right, ammunition. That's heavy enough to kill a man pretty easily. Of course a twenty-two pistol can do the same thing if it hits a vital area. It can easily go through a head, but nine millimeters can put a big hole in anybody.

We had these targets which were at first simply round circles, concentric circles, some of them blacked in with white circles instead of black line circles on a buff background. Well, they were easy and I still was a good shot like I had been in childhood even though there had been maybe a dozen years since I had held any kind of a gun in my hand. I was getting eights and nines. Ten is the perfect bullseye. The circles go all the way out to one. So that went easily.

Then they had – suddenly there were man-shaped targets with a little man-shaped head and shoulder, and a blob in the middle representing a crude heart in the center of the man. They were stylized, just geometric shapes vaguely resembling a human. Well, suddenly it hit me. They're getting us ready to kill humans. What'll I do? I don't want to balk, especially because these are really just cardboard and paper and some small wooden slats to hold the things rigid. If any human were ever in a target under any circumstances, I just could not possibly do any shooting. So I put that off, thinking maybe it will never happen.

I was still very young, I was still eighteen that summer, so all right, I did it and I got a very, very high score. I passed it off as so much paper and wood I was putting holes in. When it came time for the actual qualifying round, it was a different day. I had a different pistol and I noticed that when I was squeezing off the first shot, it was very stiff. The trigger seemed to take a lot of pulling, but I got a nine and I thought that was good enough, not perfect, but maybe I could do better on the rest of them. The second shot I had a hard time squeezing off because it took so much pressure on my finger that my whole hand and my forearm started to get tired all of a sudden, real quick. So I think I got eight that time. I told the sergeant who was overseeing us,

"There's something wrong with this gun. I squeezed it off and only got an eight and a nine. I can do much better than that. I don't think I can get the third shot off because my finger is too tired."



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He sort of pooh-poohed it.

He said, "Well, if you don't want to – here, I'll try it for you – but you're gonna have to accept whatever score I make! Even if it's a four or five!"

"Well," I said, "the alternative is just to quit and not qualify at all! I don't think either one of us wants that."

"All right, if you want me to I'll test it myself this way, but you're going to have to accept any luck it has."

He aimed and he pulled and after a while, like with my hand, his hand started to shake from the effort. He put the pistol down, cocked its safety on, and said,

"You're right! There's something wrong with this gun! I'll get you another one. But, you're going have to go ahead from here and it's not a gun you've ever shot before, so you wouldn't have quite as good a chance of making a good score."

I said, "Is there any alternative?"

"No," he said, "That's the only way I can let you do it."

"O.K."

I got nines and tens the rest of the time. They all squeezed off easily. That's the way I got my expert rating in pistol and I have a little medal that I had to hang on my uniform. In rifle I didn't have any mechanical trouble, so I got to be a sharpshooter in rifle, which is next to expert. What it was worth to me, I was still a good target shooter, but I knew inside of me that I was no good whatsoever at shooting any live animal, let alone a person.

Later on, when Hitler started to get pretty rough over in Europe, I had this idea recur time and again – what if I let my commission go on and I had finished my fourth year in ROTC, a second lieutenant, and I got into a war, I'd be in a lot of legal trouble if I told them then that I couldn't. Then the thought occurred to me, Maybe if I got into some supply system, it would get me out of ever going into combat. Maybe I could set it up that way. Ha-ha! Later on that became a rationalization that I refused and rejected after all. I thought, how stupid it is for me to approach the real answer in such little degrees. It's like cropping a puppy dog's tail one inch at a time. I might as well resign my commission, not think about the quartermaster corps, or any other backwater unit of the army just to try to escape. I might as well bite the whole bullet and tell them, "Nothing doing!"

My earlier experience with that trapped rabbit was completely forgotten or ignored all the way through ROTC. If I had really



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known myself, I would not have gone to that college. There were some other schools of architecture that were not in land grant colleges. When I finally came to the full realization of what I had to do, I thought back and I said to myself, How stupid I have been to go tiptoeing up to the issues so hesitantly. Why did it take me so long to get wise to myself? I was opening my eyes so very slowly, almost afraid of what I was going to see. It wasn't easy. At the same time, when I fully realized, I felt kind of dumb to have refused to recognize the whole truth when it was staring me in the face.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): But what a paradox! Trying to build your career while also having these fearful doubts that you could continue to be a law abiding citizen. There was such a lot at stake. You might be programming yourself to fail. You must have been torn.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. I wished that I, and everyone else, had been raised to be pacifists. Conscientious objection should have been the only alternative to consider.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): At least there might have been more support for the idea.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): While I was at Lewisburg, there was a fellow from Tunbridge, Vermont who came to visit me. He was a medium large fellow with a bushy beard and a very deep voice. He had a whole air of self confidence and he was happy to be himself. He had refused military service. I don't recall that he was a member of any church, or at least any of the peace churches, but he looked like a fellow who always knew precisely where he stood and didn't have to think very much about how to react to situations. He seemed to have been born wise. I liked him as soon as he introduced himself and we sat and talked together. He seemed to be finding out how firm and settled I was. I don't know if he had any early struggles at all. He just looked like someone who never had.

Probably about five or six years ago I was going through Tunbridge, Vermont and I remembered that this fellow had said that he had spent all of his childhood there. I wondered if he was still alive, so I tried to look him up. When I found a librarian there, she told me who would likely know his name – the sheriff. So I found the sheriff in town and told him that I had met the man in Lewisburg Penitentiary as another conscientious objector to the war. He knew right away who I was talking about and so I found that he had lived a good life and that his latter years were spent down in Nicaragua on some kind of a service mission to a community. Then he had returned to Tunbridge and eventually died somewhere in his seventies. I always wished that I had looked him up earlier. I would like to have met him again.



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Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): He sounds like he was well connected with liberationists between Vermont and Nicaragua.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes, and still thoroughly well connected with his group up there.

Another inmate, who grew up in Iceland, impressed me most favorably. His name, Austvaldur Bragi Brynjolffson, was Danish, I would guess. In his late twenties, probably, he was imprisoned as an army combat veteran who got into trouble as a suspected murderer in a Paris hotel after he had been in continuous daily combat for between 45 and 50 days across northern France from the landing onto the Normandy coast almost to Belgium. So exhausted that he was given R&R (rest and recreation) in Paris, he could remember quite a wild time until he got awakened with a terrible hangover by a French gendarme who demanded to know why a dead woman had been found in the adjoining hotel room. He could remember nothing at all about the previous day or two; so he was turned over to army officers for summary court-martial and convicted by circumstantial evidence. He hoped he wasn't guilty, but feared the gendarmes' guesses might be correct. After some time in a very cruel British P.O.W. camp he was transferred into the US to get medical treatment and to do some years in prison at Lewisburg. In our adjoining hospital ward beds, we soon got acquainted. Openly friendly he was, although deeply preoccupied with the possibility that he may have disgraced himself as the only Icelander who ever committed a murder, in their thousand-year history since the island was first settled or its parliament (the "Althing") was formed in 930 AD.

Austvaldur requested a visit by another Icelander who was a religious minister of a church in Cleveland; and that man came to offer counsel and emotional support for him in such desperate circumstances, and perhaps later to help facilitate the young man's eventual repatriation and rehabilitation after the war. I hope his brief visit and friendship with me may have been helpful, and I have often thought of him and wondered whether he ever recovered enough to have a good life again, back home. I have long been interested in Iceland for other reasons, so perhaps opportunity might open to learn what may have become of him.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): In the 1930s and early 1940s, what was there that counted as an anti-war press? Was there an underground press?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): There was the Friends Peace Testimony supported in our BOOK OF DISCIPLINE and also the [Friends Intelligencer](#), an old magazine that preceded [Quaker Life](#) or [Friends Journal](#).



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Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): But wasn't there any pacifist newspaper or periodical that circulated in the general population?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I didn't know of any, back then, but the Pendle Hill pamphlets included some that dealt with pacifism. Once I wrote an article, "Can Pacifists Cooperate?" that got published, late 1943, in two Quaker magazines, The Friend and (I guess) The American Friend. I was concerned that some COs were urging others toward conformity with one kind of consistent witness despite their normal individuality in response to the war.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): So you had to work very hard to confirm your anti-war stance.

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Yes. It was not a completely constructed philosophy orchestrated with any logical framework that I could just read and say, "Oh, yeah, that's what I believe!" I put together everything that I had ever learned and could remember that was significant to the decision that I was confronted with having to make. MIT was a technical school devoted to helping the government every time a war came along. I had avocations, intellectually. For instance, one time I spent a while in the MIT library with census information on the ratio of male to female live births in various populations. I found out that during a war the predominance, slightly, of females turns into a predominance, slightly, of males born, at least in this country. Instead of 100 females to 96.5 males, it turned around so that males predominated, about 104 to 100 females. It was curious; what could there possibly be about a war that could let the ratio of males to females at conception or at full term switch over?

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): How many wars did you look into?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): I think it was two or three big wars where this had happened. It happened in World War I, and the Civil War era showed that. I don't recall looking at the Spanish-American War, which was a relatively minor war, although from 1898 to 1902, it did bridge the 1900 US Census.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Do you think that during the second World War there was the problem of violence on the screen stimulating young people? Did pictures of the war have an adverse influence on the imaginations of young men in civilian life causing violent behavior?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): By the time I was nine or ten years old,



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one of my third or fourth grade classmates, Ellsworth Blood, enjoyed war games. He had little toy soldiers and a few little tanks and artillery pieces. He arranged them in a battle ground, but he couldn't get me interested and so he was frustrated. Outdoors he would put two laths together and make swords. He got the neighborhood kids to play war in the back yard. So maybe there was an insidious influence among certain kids, but I don't know if there's any such effect on young men twice that age or older.

The other conscientious objectors to all war that I have met include generally three groups: first, most of the Young Friends who met regularly at the Friends Meeting in Washington DC; second, the COs in the two prisons whom I met during the brief periods when I was in the general population, not in administrative segregation or hospital wards; and third, the few that I have been in contact with in my local and regional Friends organizations since regaining my freedom after the war. I call them "groups," but the individual COs I have known anywhere have been without exception of separately developed views, of diverse backgrounds and different levels of education and even of intellectual capacity. Some had supportive parents and others had embarrassed and even defensively hostile parents feeling threatened somehow that their sons would refuse to yield to the political and patriotic pressure of the larger communities they lived in. Yet somehow they had come to sense that warfare is in the purest opposition to our basically constructive and friendly humanness, and that accepting as "duty" the propaganda demanding our willingness to take other lives away under military orders would be an impossibility out of character for themselves. It wasn't so much that we would not forget our respect for other people whose leaders had decided to war against our leaders; but rather that we *could* not do so and then go on enjoying the lives our Creator (or the natural order) had given us, without an intolerable burden of guilt. We would have abandoned our highest responsibility to conscience, or God, or our fellow humans. To our question of how COs justified their unusual stance and decisions, there could be a thousand different answers from them, and I would feel obligated to agree with every one of them.

I must remind myself that the entire ministry for world peace, that I was caught up in, involved thousands of people fully or partially committed in principle, and perhaps many were as uncertain about how to participate as I was. Together, but with individual responses as varied as were our challenges facing us, we must have had some kind of impact upon our warlike cultures, known perhaps only to God, perhaps also to historians and their later readers.

It seems that all of Nature tries to ignore what humans do to the planet, but yielding silently to our gross misbehaviors where necessary. But here on this beautiful Spring day, every tree and plant responds with generous beauty to life forces bringing leaves and blossoms to grace the environment,



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regardless of our appreciation.

Friend [Caroline Besse Webster](#): Other than the draft boards in your home city and in the prison, did any other government authority ever validate your position about that war or wars in general?

Friend [John R. Kellam](#): Only once that I can recall. When our [Vietnamese](#) refugee son, Tuoc Q. Phan, became eligible after five years to apply for his citizenship, the form he was filling in asked if he promised to give military service in defense of America, and at first he was stumped and doubted if he could ever become a citizen. He is faithful to his Buddhist upbringing that teaches kindness instead of cruelty to other people, animals, Nature's Earth, and to avoid doing harm anywhere or to anyone. Also he was instructed in a Catholic high school to be similarly a peacemaker; and beside all that, he lived agreeably with a Quaker pacifist family for a few years in our home. An immigration lawyer in Boston told us that the law provides for a different oath of citizenship he could take that would not compromise these principles. So he studied hard and passed his requirements, and was one of 45 people being naturalized one morning in the courtroom of District Court Judge Ronald Lagueux in Providence. The judge called 44 names and administered the usual oath which they swore to. And then the judge said there was one more applicant who would take a somewhat different oath as a conscientious objector to all war on account of religious training and belief. Then the judge said that this young man is "no less welcome" as he becomes a citizen here than any of the others are! Suddenly I felt immensely grateful that Judge Lagueux had said that, because for about 37 years since Judge Klobe had condemned my character for having claimed to be a CO, I had felt quite a bit less welcome in the country of my birth.



More than he knew, Judge Lagueux validated me as well as the federal law that, before World War II, had legitimized the religious basis for a man's declining to destroy people and property with weapons of warfare. However, reading carefully the text of the revised oath of citizenship as supplied by a friend



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recently,⁶¹ it does not sound like what Judge Lagueux read to our son then being naturalized. Its wording obligates a new citizen to accept whatever judgment may be reached by a draft board or other authority administering a law about military service, however that judgment may violate his dictates of moral conscience or his religious beliefs. It is a clever wording of the “monkey’s paw” type; that is, it appears to grant the recognition and respect a person of faith needs, but it does so in a form that may be useful when the need arises.

2002

When I, Austin Meredith, had come to [Providence, Rhode Island](#) from Southern California as a retired person, and as a member of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), as part of making this move, I had promised my spouse that I wouldn’t just hang around our new townhouse on Providence’s East Side — but would find a way to get out there in our new community and make myself useful. Since the [Moses Brown School](#) was a Quaker institution, and since it was just down the street from our new digs, and next door to our Friends meetinghouse in Providence, I had begun to plan that I would be able to fill in the slack hours of my retirement by providing volunteer services for the school.

I had no awareness at that time, that the Permanent Board of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Friends, which supposedly had oversight over the school as an arm of the religion, was at this point setting up an ad hoc Committee on Corporate Restructure, that would be contemplating an abandonment of the responsibility.

The first thing I had attempted, to be of service to the school, was to write up a biography of Friend Moses Brown, founder of the school, and a history of the legacy that he left to provide for the institution that he had founded. When I offered this manuscript to them, suggesting that they could take my name off it and put their own names on it, and change it in any manner they saw fit and use it in their publicity, however, they had unexpectedly become hostile.

I didn’t understand at the time, the source of this hostility, because I was still thinking of the school as a Quaker school.⁶² I was supposing that they were in need of Quaker instructional goodies, to offer to their kiddies. So I persisted. I created more and more of these Quaker biographies, about Friend John Greenleaf Whittier the Quaker poet, about Friend Lucretia Coffin Mott the antislavery activist, about Friend [Paul Cuffe](#) the black and Native American sea captain — electronic stuff that they could use in their teaching if they chose, stuff that the computer-savvy kids could relate to a whole lot better than dusty old yellowed falling-apart Quaker paper publications. And, relations kept on getting inexplicably worse and worse. After months and months of my finangling and their stalling, I was allowed to make a presentation of my materials to their “History Department” staff, in a classroom at the Moses Brown School. When I arrived to give my presentation, I found that they were refusing to initialize their classroom’s presentation equipment. I was unable to use their

61. “I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God. In acknowledgement whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature.”



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overhead projector or other tools, and instead needed to stand in front of them holding up my laptop so they could see the screen, while attempting to explain this Kouroo Contexture I had created by use of the FrameMaker tool, and how it worked to display Quaker biographies and general Rhode Island history. The teachers were politely unimpressed and uncommunicative, but they did grant me permission to load the database I had created into their History Department computer, a computer which they kept in a locked conference room not normally accessible to their students.

I then went home and waited for the other shoe to drop — but it did not drop. There was no feedback. After a few months of this silence, I started phoning them with the proposal that I drop by to refresh and update the copy of my database that I had loaded onto their machine. They never returned any of my phonecalls. Never. Not once ever.

I have no sense that any of these “History Department” staff people ever so much as glanced at the materials I had loaded onto their computer for their use. They presumably merely erased what I had gone to the trouble to load for their inspection. I found myself faced with the necessity of explaining, to my spouse, why it was that I was not keeping the promise that I had made to her in moving to Providence, to get out of our East Side townhouse from time to time, and make myself useful during my retirement.

ASSLEY



“Autobiography is only to be trusted when it reveals something disgraceful. A man who gives a good account of himself is probably lying, since any life when viewed from the inside is simply a series of defeats.”



— Eric Arthur “[George Orwell](#)” Blair
(Although “[Benefit of Clergy: Some Notes on Salvador Dali](#)” was printed in THE SATURDAY BOOK FOR 1944, the publisher Hutchinson in its wisdom then cut the review physically from all copies prior to distribution).

March 31, Sunday: A reparations lawsuit was filed, to obtain compensation for human slavery on behalf of the descendants of American slaves, from the inheritors of American corporations that historically had profited from the uncompensated labors of slaves or from the slave trade’s dealings in human beings:

March 31, 2002

Lawsuit maintains slavery extended past plantations

62. More recently, I went swimming at the Brown University pool and afterward a professor and I who had been sharing a lap lane found ourselves chatting in the locker room as we got dressed. He pulled on an old T-shirt with a “Moses Brown 1784” logo, and so I asked him about this. He said “I spent a zillion bucks sending my son to Moses Brown and then to a classy college.” I asked him what his son had thought of the Quakerism class at the [Moses Brown School](#) and he went “Well, they made him go over and sit in silence in the meetinghouse one in awhile but he never seemed to mind — they weren’t pushy or anything.”

I said “No, I meant to ask about the **required Senior class** in Quakerism that he took in his senior year. What was that like? What year did he graduate in?” This teenager had graduated in the year 2002, but the father didn’t know anything about any such Quakerism class. He drew a complete blank. I explained that it was a mandatory thing for every graduating senior. He went “Well, that’s the first time I **ever** heard about **anything** like that!”

I asked what his religion was and he said “Nothing, but my son, he’s become an Episcopalian.”

(This is not, by any stretch of the imagination, the first time I have been told a story of this sort. Such experiences have caused me to wonder whether, when the Quakers who are on the payroll of that school insist to me so vehemently and with such sincerity that every child is required to attend a full year’s class in Quakerism, they are not deluded, but perhaps are lying through their teeth.)



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Action on behalf of descendants claims companies profited unfairly

By JEFF DONN

Associated Press

BOSTON – Imagine slavery, and you’ll likely picture black workers stooped over rows of cotton in the South.

Yet lawyers who recently filed a federal lawsuit seeking corporate reparations for slavery named three companies far removed from farming, two of them based in New England.

The lawyers, suing on behalf of millions of slave descendants, may eventually name more than 1,000 companies.

But the initial defendants are FleetBoston Financial Corp., of Boston; insurer Aetna, of Hartford, Conn., and railway operator CSX Corp., of Richmond, Va.

How can this be?

Historians say the lawsuit, whatever its merits, serves as a reminder that slavery also extended into the Northern economy and, in the Old South, touched many industries beyond the plantations.

Lawyers for slave descendants picked FleetBoston because [Rhode Island](#) slave trader [John Brown](#) was a founder of its 18th century predecessor, [Providence](#) Bank.

The bank financed Brown’s slave voyages and profited from them, the lawsuit says.

Brown was born in 1736 into an influential merchant family with holdings that would eventually extend into salt, meat, lumber, bricks, iron and even chocolate.

He helped charter what became [Brown University](#) (though it is named for his nephew, [Nicholas Brown, Jr.](#)).

John Brown owned or co-owned at least six ships with inspirational names like the Hope and the Providence, according to Rachel Chernos Lin, a Brown University graduate student researching the history of the area’s slave trade.

Brown’s boats would load up with local rum, sell it in West Africa, pick up slaves, sell them in the Caribbean or the South, and often fill up with sugar or molasses for the journey home. They would carry 200 slaves or more on a trip.

Other local merchants did the same sort of trade, but it didn’t always go unchallenged. Brown’s own brother, [Moses Brown](#), was an ardent abolitionist.

He helped the Abolition Society successfully sue his brother under the U.S. Slave Trade Act of 1794, an early anti-slavery law that banned outfitting ships to carry slaves.

John Brown had to forfeit the Hope, according to Jay Coughtry, a historian at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

From 1709 to 1807, Rhode Island merchants invested in more than 930 slaving trips to Africa, Coughtry estimates. They wrested more than 105,000 Africans from their homeland.

Brown eventually dropped that kind of business – “not because it was immoral, but because it wasn’t profitable,” says Norman Fiering, a library administrator at Brown University.

FleetBoston has declined comment.

CSX wants the lawsuit thrown out. In a statement, the rail line said the impacts of slavery “cannot be attributed to any single



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company or industry."

Railway historians say slaves virtually built the rail network of the South from the 1830s to the 1850s.

Of nearly 120 railroads, at least 90 -and probably more- used slave labor for construction, maintenance or other jobs, says historian Ted Kornweibel at San Diego State University.

In the peak years before the Civil War, he says, about 15,000 slaves labored annually for Southern railroads.

The companies that eventually folded into CSX are no exception. At least 37 of them used slave labor, Kornweibel says, based on his research. Sometimes they owned the slaves; sometimes they rented them from seasonal surpluses at plantations.

A contract signed Feb. 12, 1862, is typical. P.V. Daniel Jr., president of CSX's Virginia predecessor, the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac railroad, promised to pay \$160 to Mrs. B.B. Wright.

Her two rented slaves were identified only as John Henry and Reuben. They were to be returned clothed as when they arrived. Some years, individual slaves, often worth more than \$1,000 in a sale, cost up to \$200 to rent for a season.

Some railroad contracts of that era specified that they must be properly fed. If a rented slave ran away, the owner often paid for lost job time.

Slaves remained valuable economic commodities into the Civil War years. Insurers, including Aetna, began selling a new product, life insurance, to compensate owners for the loss of slaves.

In its response to the reparations lawsuit, Aetna said the "events -however regrettable- occurred hundreds of years ago" and "in no way reflect Aetna today."

Still, the company, founded in 1853, has acknowledged that it holds records of five Aetna life insurance policies on slaves and knows of at least two others. Together, they insured the lives of 16 slaves in Virginia and South Carolina. In one policy, a slave was identified simply as "James, 23, a blacksmith."

The slave owners who took out the policies agreed to pay \$5 to \$10 for a term of one-to-three months, perhaps to insure against loss during a planting season. "From their perspective at the time, they really needed that labor," says Aetna spokesman Fred Laberge.

Plantation owners mostly sought out such policies, beginning the business with other insurance companies in the 1840s. Sometimes railroads, canal builders, and others with dangerous work also insured the lives of slaves.

"Slaves were involved in almost all aspects of Southern industries," said historian Charles Dew, at Williams College, in Williamstown, Mass.

As with some policies today, the insured person had to be healthy. Slaves were rejected for coverage for such reasons as a hernia or simply being "unsound," according to Todd Savitt, a historian at East Carolina University, in Greenville, N.C.

In a review of 1,693 life policies for slaves in 1856, Savitt calculated the average payout on death at \$665. The average payout on 500 policies insuring whites during the same period was \$3,500.



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Summer: Convicted of organizing a criminal conspiracy to loot the city government, the Mayor of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), [Vincent Albert “Buddy” Cianci, Jr.](#), a graduate of [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), would not seek re-election. Instead he would go to federal penitentiary, and then host a local radio talk show.



When the administration of the [Moses Brown School](#) suggested in this year that it had liability concerns that could only be met by a transfer of ownership of the school property away from the [Religious Society of Friends](#), a number of Friends denounced this expressed concern as a spurious cover for other less savory motives, pointing out that the normal manner in which an entity handled such concerns was through the purchase of liability insurance (this proposal by the school administration would come to be referred to as the “Buddy Technique for Asset Management”).

2004

May 13, Thursday: An attorney’s advice, that of Parish Lentz, was received by the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) in regard to the current proposal that the [Religious Society of Friends](#) abandon its historical role in regard to the [Moses Brown School](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), and allow this school—which has over the years been transforming itself into basically a secular hoity-toity college preparatory academy with a student body made up almost totally of non-Quaker residents of Providence, a teaching staff made up mostly of non-Quakers, an administration made up almost totally of non-Quakers, and a governing board made up mostly of non-Quakers, with, it must be allowed, a football team named “The Quakers”— to manage its own affairs in its own way without any interference:

The original deed from Moses Brown (the individual) to certain trustees which was recorded in the Providence Land Records April 24, 1819 grants the property “In trust and to their successors and assigns forever to have and to hold and for the intentions and purpose of the aforesaid People, Friends or Quakers of the Yearly Meeting for New England to erect suitable buildings thereon for a School House or Houses for the purpose of



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instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or Houses for the purpose of instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or schools according to the original minutes of the intentions of the said Yearly Meeting and hereafter set forth for the most effectual government thereof by the grantor and grantees herein expressed." This deed further recites: "It being always hereafter to be understood that the whole of the said granted premises is and are to be at the sole disposal of the said meeting best in such manner that the said interest property, rents, profits, income and use is to be forever hereafter held and proved by the said meeting for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining a School or Schools for the education of the rising generation as aforesaid and is never at any time hereafter to be divested or applied to any other use or purpose whatsoever." The trustees then transferred the property to the newly incorporated (by act of Rhode Island Legislature) Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England by deed recorded August 15, 1828. This transfer was subject to the restrictions of the deed from Moses Brown.

I personally reviewed these deeds in the Providence City Archives and have discussed the language with John Murphy who is the attorney who helped us on the title work for the bond issue. Although this is not a formal opinion, our initial conclusion is that the restrictions recited in these deeds limited the use of the property primarily and would not serve as an impediment to transferring it to a separately incorporated subsidiary of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends. The deed from the trustees to the newly incorporated Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England convey the property to the said "incorporated society of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England and to their successors forever". The fact that the property was also transferred from the original trustees to the newly incorporated entity is also an indication that the restriction runs primarily to the use of the property as a school in the tradition of the Friends.

June: During New England [Yearly Meeting](#), advice was received from a Boston attorney in regard to the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#):

I will be very interested in a Rhode Island attorney's interpretation of the 1819 deed. If I were interpreting this deed under Massachusetts law relating to the creation of charitable trusts, I would advise that the deed created a trust whereby the NEYM must both hold the property forever and use it forever "for the purpose of instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or schools according to the original [circa 1819] minutes of the intentions of the said Yearly Meeting." I also think it is significant that, according to the quotation from Parish Lentz's memorandum in the minutes, the 1819 deed from Moses Brown to the original trustees was to the trustees and their successors and assigns but the



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1828 deed from the trustees to NEYM was to NEYM and its successors (the omission of "assigns" is, to me, significant). It was stated in one of our committee meetings that a portion of the property was sold, but I presume that was in accordance with the further language of the deed "that the whole of the said granted premises is and are to be at the sole disposal of the said meeting best in such manner that the said interest property, rents, profits, income and use is to be forever hereafter held and provided by the said meeting for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining a School" if it was determined that the sale of some of the property was necessary for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining the school. it is not clear to me how the change from a boarding school to a day school was justified under this deed – was there a court order allowing the change? Regarding the present proposal for a transfer to a new MBS corporation, if NEYM decides it is no longer practicable for NEYM to hold the property, if this were under Massachusetts law I would recommend a so-called "cy pres" petition to the court, which must name the state Attorney General as a defendant in his capacity as overseer of charitable trusts, praying that the court permit a change in the trust, to be as close as possible to the donor's original intent under the changed circumstances, whereby NEYM would be permitted to convey the property to the MBS corporation subject to a reworded trust approved by the court as practicable under the circumstances.

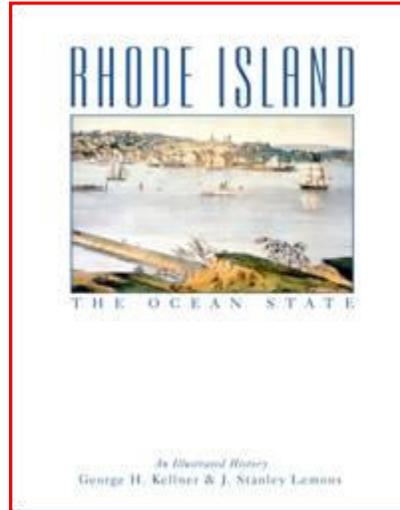
Jeanne S. McKnight, Esq.
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31 St. James Avenue
Boston, MA 02116



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August: Professor J. Stanley Lemons's and Dr. George Kellner's [RHODE ISLAND](#), THE INDEPENDENT STATE, THE 350TH ANNIVERSARY HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND (commissioned by the Rhode Island Historical Society).



2006

March 12, Sunday: Paul Davis's column about the days of [slavery](#) and the [international slave trade](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s "ProJo," the [Providence Journal](#):

Buying and Selling the Human Species: Newport and the Slave Trade

For more than 75 years, Rhode Island ruled the American slave trade. On sloops and ships called Endeavor, Success and Wheel of Fortune, slave captains made more than 1,000 voyages to Africa from 1725 to 1807. They chained their human cargo and forced more than 100,000 men, women and children into slavery in the West Indies, Havana and the American colonies. The traffic was so lucrative that nearly half the ships that sailed to Africa did so after 1787 – the year Rhode Island outlawed the trade. Rum fueled the business. The colony had nearly 30 distilleries where molasses was boiled into rum. Rhode Island ships carried barrels of it to buy African slaves, who were then traded for more molasses in the West Indies which was returned to Rhode Island. By the mid-18th century, 114 years after Roger Williams founded the tiny Colony of Rhode Island, slaves lived in every port and village. In 1755, 11.5 percent of all Rhode Islanders, or about 4,700 people, were black, nearly all of them slaves. In [Newport](#), [Bristol](#) and [Providence](#), the slave economy provided thousands of jobs for captains, seamen, coopers, sail makers, dock workers, and shop owners, and helped merchants build banks, wharves and mansions. But it was only a small part of a much larger international trade, which historians call the first global economy.



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Pollipus Hammond was dying. As a young man in Newport he had sailed wooden sloops and brigs across the roiling Atlantic. Now, at 72, he was curled up in agony. The Rev. [Ezra Stiles](#) was surprised. He had heard that dying men often stretched out. Shortly before midnight in the winter of 1773, Hammond died. Stiles, a pastor for nearly 20 years at the Second Congregational Church on Clarke Street, closed the dead man's eyes. Physically, Hammond was short and thin. But spiritually, he had been a pillar in the congregation, a sober churchgoer for nearly 34 years. A boat builder, mechanic and father of five, Hammond could have turned "his hand to any Thing," Stiles wrote in his daily journal. For a quarter of century, Hammond had turned his hand to the slave trade. Sailing from Newport's crowded harbor, he purchased hundreds of slaves from the west coast of Africa and chained them aboard ships owned by some of the town's wealthiest merchants. Hammond belonged to a group of captains who depended on the slave trade for a living. He quit the business in the 1750s, when he was in his mid-50s. He became a devout Congregationalist; he even offered his home for monthly meetings. But he never stopped telling stories about danger, even exaggerating what he had seen and heard on his African voyages along what slavers called the Guinea Coast. It was, Stiles wrote, the only "blemish in his character." "He was many years a Guinea Captain; he had then no doubt of the Slave Trade," Stiles wrote. "But I have reason to think that if he had his life to live over again, he would not choose to spend it in buying and selling the human species." If Hammond regretted his life as a slave captain, he left no record of it. When Hammond died on Feb. 5, 1773, Newport's slave trade was booming. Nearly 30 captains had sailed to Africa the year before, ferrying away nearly 3,500 Africans to slave ports in the Americas and the Caribbean. "Our orders to you are, that you Embrace the first fair wind and make the best of your way to the coast of Africa," wrote merchant [Aaron Lopez](#) to Capt. William English. "When please God you arrive there ... Convert your cargo into good Slaves" and sell them "on the best terms you can," ordered Lopez, who outfitted four slave ships that year. The first recorded departure of a Newport slave ship was in 1709, and regular voyages from Newport to Africa were recorded beginning in 1725. "There's no Newport without slavery," says James Garman, a professor of historic preservation at Salve Regina University in Newport. "The sheer accumulation of wealth is astonishing and it has everything to do with the African trade...." It's unclear when Pollipus Hammond, born in 1701, boarded his first slave ship, but Hammond and the trade matured together. By the time Hammond turned 21, more than 600 ships a year passed through Rhode Island's busy ports. Many carried New England goods – mackerel, pork, beef, cider, beer, onions, flour, butter, candles, apples, cheese and staves – to other colonies along the Atlantic Coast. Others carried goods directly to the slave plantations in the Caribbean or in South America. These ships returned to Newport with sugar and barrels of molasses, which distillers turned into rum. Some of it was sold in New England. But Rhode Islanders soon discovered a new market for their rum:



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tribal leaders and European traders along the African coast, in regions known as the Slave, Gold and Windward Coasts. In all, Rhode Island ships carried nearly 11 million gallons of rum to Africa during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Tribal leaders were willing to dicker with Newport captains, turning over prisoners from rival tribes and other natives in exchange for Rhode Island rum. The African captives were then sold in the Caribbean or in the southern colonies for cash or for more sugar and molasses, creating what was known as the Triangular Trade. Rhode Islanders distilled an especially potent liquor that was referred to as Guinea rum, spirits which quickly displaced French brandy in the slave trade. As a result, slavers from Rhode Island were often called "rum men." By his mid-30s, Hammond was a rum man. In 1733, he sailed the Dispatch, owned by merchant Godfrey Malbone, to Africa. Six years later Malbone, who owned a house in Newport, a country estate and several slaves, hired Hammond again, this time to take 55 slaves to the West Indies aboard the sloop Diamond. Already, the slave trade was competitive. In 1736, Capt. John Cahoon told Newport merchant Stephen Ayrault that seven Rhode Island captains and 12 other slavers were anchored off the coast of Africa, "ready to devour one another for the chance to trade" for slaves being held at a handful of British ports. Never "was so much rum on the Coast at one time before...." Four years later, the colony's fleet of 120 ships was "constantly employed in trade, some on the coast of Africa, others in the neighboring colonies, many in the West Indies and a few in Europe," Gov. Richard Ward told the Board of Trade in 1740. The sugar and slave plantations especially benefited from Rhode Island's exports. Plantation owners – too busy growing sugar cane to grow their own food – "reaped great advantage from our trade, by being supplied with lumber of all sorts, suitable for building houses, sugar works and making casks," Governor Ward noted. The West Indies slave owners dined on beef, port, flour and other provisions "we are daily carrying to them." Rhode Island horses hauled their cane and turned their sugar mills. And "our African trade often furnishes 'em with slaves for their plantations." For Pollipus Hammond and other slave captains, African voyages posed many risks. The voyages were filthy, laborious and dangerous. "Few men are fit for those voyages but them that are bred up to it," Dalby Thomas, an agent for the Royal African Company, told his superiors in London in the early 1700s. These captains must be ready to "do the meanest office," he wrote. Africa teemed with killers – river blindness, yellow fever, malaria. One or two captains died each year from disease, violent storms or slave uprisings. Capt. George Scott barely escaped a slave revolt in 1730, when several Africans aboard the Little George murdered three of his men in their sleep. Caleb Godfrey jumped into a longboat after lightning struck his ship, and he once was mauled by a leopard. If a captain survived –and many did not– he "had nothing to lose and a great deal to gain from a slaving venture," says historian Sarah Deutsch. In addition to a monthly wage, captains received a 5 percent commission on every slave sold. Many also received a bonus, or "privilege," of four or more slaves per 104 Africans



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aboard. The captains were free to sell them or keep them. Some made enough to invest in later trips to Africa. Many joined the Fellowship Club, a mutual aid society, established in Newport in 1752. When the club received a charter from the Rhode Island legislature, 17 of the 88 members had made at least one voyage to Africa. By the time Hammond died, slaving captains formed a third of the society. While some captains made enough money to quit the trade and move up socially, Hammond "never left the wheel," says Jay Coughtry in *THE NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE*. "Lack of capital, ambition, or, perhaps, the lure of the sea" prevented men like Hammond "from rising into the ranks of the merchant class," he says.

The Rev. Ezra Stiles arrived in Newport to assume the pulpit of the Second Congregational Church in 1755, about the time Pollipus Hammond quit the slave trade. A bookish man who studied Latin and physics at Yale, Stiles declared Newport "an agreeable Town," a place of "leisure and books," and a choice spot to continue "my Love of preaching." He drank cider, tea and claret, and planned future books, including a history of the world. In 1761, six years after he arrived in Newport, the minister paced off its streets to map the town. Evidence of the town's booming sea and slave trade was everywhere. He counted 888 houses, 16 rum distilleries and 61 shops near the waterfront. Some of the town's biggest slave traders belonged to Stiles' Clarke Street church. Eleven members were either slave traders or captains, including Caleb Gardner, William Ellery and William and Samuel Vernon. Newport was a far cry from New Haven, where Stiles grew up and attended Yale. While New Haven had been settled by strict religious leaders, Newport had been settled by "men who chafed at the economic, as well as religious, restrictions of Puritan society," says historian Lynne Withey. They "wanted to build prosperous towns and personal fortunes out of the wilderness." Those attracted to Newport included the Quaker merchant Thomas Richardson, who had moved from Boston in 1712; Daniel Ayrault, a French Huguenot, who arrived around 1700, and Godfrey Malbone, who moved from Virginia at about the same time. William and John Wanton, shipbuilders from Massachusetts, arrived a few years later. These entrepreneurs – or their sons or in-laws – added slave trading to their business ventures. Yet another group of investors arrived between 1746 and 1757, among them Ellery, the Champlins and Lopez. Stiles read the **BIBLE** in the morning and visited some of the slave traders as their pastor in the afternoon. He socialized with them, too. He dined often with William Vernon, who bought a mansion three doors down on Clarke Street. An ardent gardener, Stiles wrote his name on an aloe leaf on Abraham Redwood's country estate. Eventually, the pastor was named librarian of the new Redwood Library. While he talked philosophy with Newport's slave merchants, he also ministered to the town's slaves. By the mid-1770s, he was preaching to dozens of slaves. Often, he preached to them in small groups in his home. "I directed the Negroes to come to me this Evening," he wrote in 1771. "I discoursed with them on the great Things of the divine Life and eternal Salvation...." Three days after Pollipus Hammond died, the temperature plunged to 5 degrees. Ice



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clogged the harbor. That winter, the spindly trees above the waterfront were “full of crystals or frozen sleet or icy horror,” noted Stiles. It was so cold his window had frozen shut. “I can not come at my thermometer which is usually left abroad all night,” he complained. Head down, his long nose poking forward, Stiles trudged through Newport’s icy streets to attend Hammond’s burial in the Common Burying Ground, on a hill near the edge of town. A prominent stone mason had carved a final thought for the slave captain. His headstone, topped with an angel, said, “Here Lieth the Body of the Ingenious Capt. Pollipus Hammond.” It was Stiles’s habit to visit his church members and their families at least four times a year. Stiles had visited Hammond 10 times before his death. If the two men discussed slavery, Stiles did not note it in his diary. Then again, the pastor had written little about his own ties to the slave trade. His father, Isaac, had purchased an African couple to work in the fields of the family’s 100-acre farm in North Haven. And a year after he became pastor of the Second Congregational Church, Stiles put a hogshead of rum – 106 gallons – aboard a ship bound for the coast of Africa. The captain, William Pinnegar, returned with a 10-year-old African boy. Stiles kept the slave for 22 years, and freed him only after he accepted a job as president of Yale in 1777. In 1756, Stiles gave the boy a name. He called him Newport.

March 13, Monday: The ice went on Walden Pond. Although the pond had frozen over in mid-January, this winter the ice had never become thick enough to support anyone’s weight.

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#)’s “ProJo,” the [Providence Journal](#), Paul Davis’s series about the days of [slavery](#) and the [international slave trade](#) continued:

Plantations in the North: The Narragansett Planters

While [Newport](#) merchants profited by trafficking in slaves, colonists across [Narragansett Bay](#) found another way to grow rich. They used slaves to grow crops and raise livestock on small plantations throughout South County.

For 50 years, Newport’s merchants loaded the surplus farm products onto ships bound for slave plantations in the West Indies where they were traded mostly for sugar and molasses.

By 1730, the southern part of [Rhode Island](#) was one-third black, nearly all of them slaves.

The Narragansett Planters thrived from the early 1700s to just before the American Revolution, which brought trade to a standstill.

* * *

From his counting house above Newport harbor, [Aaron Lopez](#) fretted about the future.

The Portuguese immigrant had sold soap in New York, candles in Philadelphia and whale oil in Boston. But a plan to trade goods with England failed because the market was glutted. Now, heavily in debt to an English creditor, Lopez sought a new market.

He chose Capt. Benjamin Wright, a savvy New England trader, as



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his agent in Jamaica. From the tropics, Wright acted as a middleman between Lopez and his new buyers – slave owners too busy making sugar to grow their own food.

Don't worry, Wright told Lopez in 1768. "Yankey Dodle will do verry well here." Yankee Doodle did.

His chief suppliers were just across the Bay.

There, amid the rolling hills and fertile fields, hundreds of enslaved Africans worked for a group of wealthy farmers in [South Kingstown](#), [North Kingstown](#), Narragansett, [Westerly](#), Exeter and Charlestown.

Relying on slave labor, the so-called Narragansett Planters raised livestock and produced surplus crops and cheese for Newport's growing sea trade.

As the Newport slave merchants prospered in the early 1700s, the Narragansett Planters had success selling their crops and horses to slave plantations in the West Indies.

The slaves, brought by Newport merchants from the West Indies and later Africa, cut wheat, picked peas, milked cows, husked corn, cleaned homes and built the waist-high walls that bisected the fields and hemmed them in.

So many blacks worked along the coast that, by the mid-1700s, southern [Rhode Island](#) boasted the densest slave population in New England after Boston and Newport.

While most New England communities were organized in compact villages with small farms, southern [Rhode Island](#) evolved into a plantation society. "South County was unique in New England," says author Christian M. McBurney. Cheap land made it possible, he says.

The [Narragansett](#) Indians had once ruled the region, but Colonial wars and disease had greatly reduced their number, leaving huge tracts of vacant land up for grabs. A territory dispute between Connecticut and [Rhode Island](#) scared off some timid settlers.

Investors, many of them from Newport and [Portsmouth](#), "scrambled to the top," says McBurney. They bought land on credit, sold the unwanted lots to generate cash and started farms.

By 1730, the most successful planters –including the Robinson, Hazard, Gardiner, Potter, Niles, Watson, Perry, Brown and Babcock families– owned thousands of acres. In [Westerly](#), Col. Joseph Stanton owned a 5,760-acre estate that stretched more than four miles long.

A typical farm had 300 sheep, 100 bulls and cows and 20 horses. "The most considerable farms are in the Narragansett Country," concluded William Douglas who, in 1753, surveyed the English settlements in North America for the Mother Country. The region's rich grazing and farm lands benefited from warm winters and "a sea vapour which fertilizeth the soil," he wrote.

The owners sometimes relied on family members and indentured Indians for help, but slaves did most of the work. The largest planters –families like the Robinsons, Updikes and Hazards– owned between 5 and 20 slaves.

Although their plantations were much smaller than those in the southern Colonies, an early historian described the area as "a bit of Virginia set down in New England."

Made rich from their exports, the planters built big homes, sent



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their children to private schools and carved the hillsides into apple orchards and gardens. North Kingstown planter Daniel Updike kept peacocks on his 3,000-acre farm. Framed by deep blue feathers, the exotic peafowl screeched and strutted in their New World home.

* * *

Rowland Robinson, a third-generation planter and slave holder, was one of the region's most successful planters.

In 1700, his grandfather purchased 700 acres on Boston Neck, "east by the salt water." By the time he died, the elder Robinson owned 629 sheep, 131 cows and bulls, 64 horses and eight slaves. His son, William, the colony's lieutenant governor, increased the family fortune by acquiring more land. William, who owned 19 slaves, died in 1751, and Rowland, one of six sons, settled on the family estate.

Tall and handsome, with "an imperious carriage," the younger Robinson rode a black horse and owned more than 1,000 acres and a private wharf. His farm, a mile from the Bay, gave him easy access to the Newport market. During a two-year period in the 1760s, he delivered more than 6,000 pounds of cheese, 100 sheep, 72 bundles of hay, 51 bushels of oats, 30 horses and 10 barrels of skim milk to Aaron Lopez who then shipped them to the West Indies and other markets. Most planters relied on public ferries. They hauled their cheese, beef, sheep and grains along muddy Post Road to South Ferry, the public port that was a vital link between Newport and the Narragansett country, also called King's County.

In 1748, Boston Neck planter John Gardiner urged legislators to expand the busy port at South Ferry. The current boats, he complained, are "crowded with men, women, children" along with "horses, hogs, sheep and cattle to the intolerable inconvenience, annoyance and delay of men and business."

* * *

According to one account, Rowland Robinson owned 28 slaves. Tradition says he abandoned the slave trade after a boatload of dejected Africans arrived at his dock.

But the region's planters bought slaves until the American Revolution. Even small farmers, like the Rev. James MacSparran, owned field hands and domestic servants. "My two Negroes are threshing rye," wrote MacSparran, who owned 100 acres, on July 29, 1751.

Their work had a profound effect on the economy, says historian Joanne Pope Melish.

Freed from domestic chores, white masters were able to pursue other opportunities, jobs or training. Some learned new trades, became lawyers or judges, or sought public office.

In the end, slave labor helped [Rhode Island](#) move from a household-based economy to a market-based economy, says Melish. "Slaves contributed to the expansion and diversification of the New England economy," she says.

Plantation owners, merchants, importers and retailers prospered on both sides of the Bay.

From his home on Thames Street, Aaron Lopez could walk to his private pier and a warehouse next to the town wharf. In a loft



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above his office, sail makers stitched sheets of canvas. His Thames Street shop supplied Newport's residents with everything from Bibles and bottled beer to looking glasses and violins. Lopez, one of the founders of [Touro Synagogue](#), and his father-in-law, Jacob Rivera, owned more than a dozen slaves between them, and sometimes rented them to other merchants.

Lopez became Newport's top taxpayer. He owned or had interest in 30 ships, which sailed to a dozen ports.

He wasn't alone. By 1772, nearly half of Newport's richest residents had an interest in the slave trade.

"The stratification of wealth was astonishing," says James Garman, a professor at Salve Regina University. "And it had everything to do with the African trade."

Although the Narragansett Planters weren't as well off as their monied counterparts across the Bay, they took their cues from Newport's merchants and the English gentry.

Their large houses —Hopewell Lodge in Kingston, Fodderring Place at Pt. Judith— often stood more than a mile apart.

John Potter's "Greate House" in Matunuck included elegant woodwork and a carved open arch. Rowland Robinson's house featured gouged flower designs, classical pilasters and built-in cupboards adorned with the heads of cherubs.

The Reverend MacSparran described a typical day of socializing: "I visited George Hazard's wife, crossed ye Narrow River, went to see Sister Robinson, called at Esq. Mumford's, got home by moon light and found Billy Gibbs here." So much company, he confessed, "fatigues me."

Their wealth "brought social pretensions and political influence ... all without parallel in rural [Rhode Island](#) and New England," says McBurney. The elegant lifestyle did not last.

During the Revolutionary War, the British burned Newport's waterfront. Many merchants fled, and trade stalled. Lopez moved to Leicester, Mass. In 1782, he drowned when his horse plunged into a pond.

The Narragansett Planters did not recover from the loss of the Newport market. The sons of the big planters chopped the plantations into small farms. Some freed their slaves.

But before the Revolution, they lived a carefree life.

In the spring, they traveled to Hartford to "luxuriate on bloated salmon." In the summer, they raced horses on the beach and roasted shellfish, says Wilkins Updike in a history of the Episcopal Church in Narragansett.

During corn-husking festivals, men and women gathered for "expensive entertainments" in the large halls of "spacious mansions," says Updike. The men wore silk stockings, shoes with shiny buckles and "scarlet coats and swords, with laced ruffles over their hands." Their hair was "turned back from the forehead and curled and frizzled" and "highly powdered."

The women, dressed in brocade and high-heeled shoes, "performed the formal minuet with its thirty-six different positions and changes. These festivities would sometimes continue for days ... These seasons of hilarity and festivity were as gratifying to the slaves as to their masters," Updike says.

In the 18th century, Yankee Doodle did all right.



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On the farms and on the wharfs he made money – sometimes as a slave owner, sometimes as a slave trader, sometimes as both.

Summer: On a Sunday during the summer a curious incident happened to me, Austin Meredith. I went over to the Friends meetinghouse for [Providence, Rhode Island](#), adjacent to the [Moses Brown School](#) campus, as was my wont, an hour before our silent First Day meeting for worship was scheduled to begin, in order to unlock the doors and open the windows and pick up the mail and turn on the sound-amplification-for-the-hearing-impaired system in the attic, and generally get stale air out of the place. A young lady with a big dog on a leash approached. She walked around inside the meetinghouse and told me that she had once been there, because she was a former student at the Moses Brown School. I asked her, “In what year did you graduate?” She told me that she had graduated with the class of 2000. I asked her what the class on Quakerism had been like that year. She responded that she knew nothing about any such class. I asked her “Wasn’t Betsy Zimmerman teaching such a class?” and she responded, “No, Betsy Zimmerman was my arts teacher.” I commented that I had been told that that class was mandatory for all graduating seniors, and asked her if she could, in general terms, tell me what she knew about Quakerism. She said that of course she had been in and out of this building during her four years at MB, and remembered having to sit in the big meeting room in silence, but she said, nobody ever explained to her what this was about. She had no idea what Quakerism was, what it was about. Moses Brown was a Quaker institution, she knew, but what did that mean? She said “I don’t have a clue.” She added “It was a good school.” At this point she thought also to assure me that Quakers were OK, because we don’t proselytize: although she had attended a Quaker school, she summarized, “You never made me feel put upon.” I told her that Meeting for Worship began in an hour, at 10AM. She wandered away and I wandered away, and I thought no more of this until it was time for Meeting for Worship and I noticed that she had not stayed for worship. –She had, it would seem, just been looking around and reminiscing while walking her dog. At this point I began to reflect on the theory of “regulatory capture,” a doctrine in regard to which I have recently been brought up to speed by a Professor of Sociology. It seems that this is a frequent occurrence in all sorts of venues: it is through such “capture” that agencies that are supposed to be controlling become controlled by the entities that they are intended to control. For instance, as I was already aware as a veteran of the [atomic power industry](#), the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of the federal government over time came to be controlled by the industry, rather than continuing to have a controlling power over that industry.⁶³ I had watched over a period of years, as General Electric executives left to take important jobs in the NRC, and then a few years later came back to take even more important jobs again with GE. I had watched loyalty to the industry and disloyalty to the government be rewarded and rewarded. It seems to me now, having had this conversation with this sociologist, that what has happened is that the Moses Brown School sent its teachers to the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), where they managed to qualify themselves as Quakers in good standing and then volunteered themselves for the committees that were regulating the school from which they were receiving their paychecks. In that way, the Quaker committees that are supposed to be in control of the school are actually now controlled by the school and do only their master’s bidding. When I made a request last year that anyone who had a potential “conflict of interest” (financial ties, etc.) recuse themselves, and no longer take part in the proceedings, I had been greeted with outraged

63. From the Wikipedia we learn that in the United States, the most notorious historical examples of regulatory capture are the Civil Aeronautics Board which protected airlines from competition, the Interstate Commerce Commission which restricted competition in transportation, and the Department of Agriculture which implements policies that are alleged to favor the interests of large corporate farming concerns over those of consumers and family farmers. The term is central in a stream of research that is often referred to as the economics of regulation, which is critical of earlier conceptualizations of regulatory intervention by governments as being motivated to protect public goods. Two cited references, which I have not yet consulted, are M.E. Levine and Forrence, J.L.’s 1990 paper “Regulatory capture, public interest, and the public agenda. Toward a synthesis” in the [Journal of Law Economics & Organization](#), 6: 167-198, and J.J. Laffont and Tirole, J.’s 1991 paper “The politics of government decision making. A theory of regulatory capture” in the [Quarterly Journal of Economics](#), 106(4): 1089-1127.

Outside the United States government apparatus, the most notorious current example of regulatory capture happens to be the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. That agency is presently paralyzed because the most vicious nations have insisted upon having seats there and influence there, and are using their seats and their influence to ensure that the Commission not do its job.



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stonewalling from the very people who have these conflicts of interest.⁶⁴ They were in control and had every intention of staying in control. They even have it set up now so that they have veto power over any new nominations for their committees: nobody can even get nominated, let alone appointed, without the existing committee's explicit prior approval. My request that these individuals who had conflicts of interest identify themselves was met with the response that I was trying to pry into people's private affairs, something which I had no right to do. I was informed that although previously I had been considered to be a member of the Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, and therefore a member of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, I was not any longer to be considered to be a member. Reclassified as a non-member, I had sacrificed any right to interfere in the proceedings. I was to be a mere visitor, a mere attender.

ASSLEY



"Autobiography is only to be trusted when it reveals something disgraceful. A man who gives a good account of himself is probably lying, since any life when viewed from the inside is simply a series of defeats."



– Eric Arthur "[George Orwell](#)" Blair
(Although "[Benefit of Clergy: Some Notes on Salvador Dali](#)" was printed in THE SATURDAY BOOK FOR 1944, the publisher Hutchinson in its wisdom then cut the review physically from all copies prior to distribution).

September 5, Tuesday: The [Providence, Rhode Island](#) newspaper, the "[ProJo](#)," published a column by Dave McCarthy entitled "Westerly trust acquires cemetery" which seriously misrepresented the history of the Quaker faith. McCarthy claimed in this article that:

Quakers signed the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, pushing issues of equality, tolerance, religious freedom and separation of church and state.

64. It is actually not difficult to demonstrate that these people have a conflict of interest which is determining their conduct. Whenever a proposal is considered, that the Moses Brown bequest not be treated as a valueless "externality" but instead be appraised for its current market value, and that the Yearly Meeting then provide an annual invoice to the School for its year's rented use of this valuable real estate commodity, these people begin to howl with outrage and interrupt every deliberation. –However, such a process of quantification and internalization of costs onto a balance sheet is at the very basis of unchallenged accounting practice and could be objected to only by a thief and a liar.



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I have since corresponded with the Providence Journal, pointing out that our “[Declaration of Independence](#),” so called, was in fact a declaration of war, and that no matter how one chops one’s logic, declaring war on someone is usually considered to be counterindicated per [the Quaker Peace Testimony](#). I pointed out to this newspaper that we Quakers had, during the revolutionary period, been seriously persecuted for our total unwillingness to participate in these hostilities. I pointed out that George Clymer of Pennsylvania, John Dickinson of Delaware, and Joseph Hewes of [North Carolina](#), who signed the Declaration of Independence or



[the federal Constitution](#), although said to have been Quakers, are also being said by historians to have been Episcopalians.⁶⁵ I pointed out that Thomas Mifflin of Pennsylvania, who signed the Constitution, was a disowned Quaker who had become a Lutheran, and that he had signed the Constitution not as a Quaker but as a Lutheran. (I did not point out to these people how little “equality” for women or blacks or redskins was to be found in our original constitutional document, and I did not point out to these people that the idea that the document contained “separation of church and state” was an idea that could at best be said to have come along years afterward, through a process of reinterpretation.) I pointed out that the supposed Rhode Island Quaker who signed the Declaration of Independence, Friend [Stephen Hopkins](#), the governor of this state, was subsequently disowned by the Providence monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), a group which was then meeting in [Smithfield](#). I pointed out that this man had talked the talk but hadn’t walked the walk, and that they should therefore be listing him as what he in fact was, an Episcopalian slavemaster of Baptist ancestry. I pointed out that he had been his century’s version of Friend Richard Nixon, in the sense that he wore the cloth but dishonored the testimony. I summarized:

This sort of remark, in your newspaper, is simply false, and is simply offensive.

There has been, of course, no response, either in private or in public. This newspaper apparently does not care about the truth, nor care overmuch if its lies are offensive to someone’s religion.

This information has been brought to the attention of the Meeting for Business of the Providence, Rhode Island Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. They have made no attempt to contact this newspaper to set the record straight as to the Peace Testimony of their Quaker ancestors.

65. Hewes, as a case in point, had indeed been the product of a New Jersey Quaker family of origin — but he had become a Mason (which would have been entirely impossible because as a general rule any Quaker who was caught mingling with non-Quakers in such a grouping was always immediately disowned), and he was a lifelong slavemaster (which would have been entirely impossible because meetinghouse discipline had required that all Quakers divest themselves of their slaves), and he was a warmonger, demanding war with Britain (which would have been entirely impossible because of the Quaker Peace Testimony). Eleven days from Sunday, this guy was not a Friend.



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October 18, Wednesday: A panel created by President Ruth Simmons of [Brown University](#) has suggested that the institution should atone for its ties to [slavery](#):

By PAM BELLUCK

BOSTON, Oct. 18 — Extensively documenting Brown University's 18th-century ties to slavery, a university committee called Wednesday for the institution to make amends by building a memorial, creating a center for the study of slavery and injustice and increasing efforts to recruit minority students, particularly from Africa and the West Indies.

The Committee on Slavery and Justice, appointed three years ago by Brown's president, Ruth J. Simmons, a great-granddaughter of slaves who is the first black president of an Ivy League institution, said in a report: "We cannot change the past. But an institution can hold itself accountable for the past, accepting its burdens and responsibilities along with its benefits and privileges."

The report added, "In the present instance this means acknowledging and taking responsibility for Brown's part in grievous crimes."

The committee did not call for outright reparations, an idea that has support among some African-Americans and was a controversial issue at Brown several years ago. But the committee's chairman, James T. Campbell, a history professor at Brown, said he believed the recommendations "are substantive and do indeed represent a form of repair."

The committee also recommended that the university publicly and persistently acknowledge its slave ties, including during freshmen orientation. Dr. Campbell said he believed that the recommendations, if carried out, would represent a more concrete effort than that of any other American university to make amends for ties to slavery.

"I think it is unprecedented," Dr. Campbell said, adding that a few other universities and colleges have established memorials, study programs or issued apologies, but not on the scale of the Brown recommendations. It was not clear how much the committee's recommendations would cost to carry out.

"We're not making a claim that somehow Brown is uniquely guilty," Dr. Campbell said. "I think we're making a claim that this is an aspect of our history that not anyone has fully come to terms with. This is a critical step in allowing an institution to move forward."

Even in the North, a number of universities have ties to slavery. Harvard Law School was endowed by money its founder earned selling slaves for the sugar cane fields of Antigua. And at Yale, three scholars reported in 2001 that the university relied on slave-trading money for its first scholarships, endowed professorship and library endowment.

Dr. Simmons issued a letter in response to the report, soliciting comments from the Brown community and saying she had asked for the findings to be discussed at an open forum. She declined to give her own reaction, saying, "When it is appropriate to do so, I will issue a university response to the recommendations and suggest what we might do."



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She said "the committee deserves praise for demonstrating so steadfastly that there is no subject so controversial that it should not be submitted to serious study and debate."

Initial reaction to the recommendations seemed to be appreciative.

"It sounds to me like this makes sense," said Rhett S. Jones, a longtime professor of history and Africana studies at Brown. "I did not expect the committee would emerge saying, Well, you know, Brown should write a check.

"I never thought that was in the cards. I'm not sure I think it's even appropriate that a university write a check, even though it's pretty widely agreed on that Brown would not be where it is if it were not for slave money. These recommendations seem to me to be appropriate undertakings for the university."

Brown's ties to slavery are clear but also complex. The university's founder, the Rev. [James Manning](#), freed his only slave, but accepted donations from slave owners and traders, including the Brown family of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). At least one of the Brown brothers, [John Brown](#), a treasurer of the college, was an active slave trader, but another brother, [Moses Brown](#), became a Quaker abolitionist, although he ran a textile factory that used cotton grown with slave labor.

University Hall, which houses Dr. Simmons's office, was built by a crew with at least two slaves.

"Any institution in the United States that existed prior to 1865 was entangled in slavery, but the entanglements are particularly dense in Rhode Island," Dr. Campbell said, noting that the state was the hub through which many slave ships traveled.

The issue caused friction at Brown in 2001, when the student newspaper, the Brown Daily Herald, printed a full-page advertisement produced by a conservative writer, listing "Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery Is a Bad Idea And Racist Too."

The advertisement, also run by other college newspapers, prompted protests by students who demanded that the paper pay "reparations" by donating its advertising fee or giving free advertising space to advocates of reparations.

The Brown committee was made up of 16 faculty members, students and administrators, and its research was extensive.

"The official history of Brown will have to be rewritten, entirely scrapped," said Omer Bartov, a professor on the committee who specializes in studying the Holocaust and genocide.

The report cites examples of steps taken by other universities: a memorial unveiled last year by the University of North Carolina, a five-year program of workshops and activities at Emory University, and a 2004 vote by the faculty senate of the University of Alabama to apologize for previous faculty members having whipped slaves on campus.

Katie Zezima contributed reporting.



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November 3, Friday morning: During our own lifetimes, on November 2, 1965 outside the Pentagon in Washington DC, making a personal protest against war in [Vietnam](#), [Friend](#) Norman Morrison immolated himself, and, on this day almost 41 years to the day later, there was another such self-immolation, this one at the Millennium Flame sculpture on the Kennedy Expressway near downtown [Chicago](#). This time it was peace activist Malachi Ritscher and this time the self-immolator's protest was against war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Perhaps we need to use this occasion take a look at the origins of [Quaker](#) self-martyrdom, something which goes way, way back –all the way back at least to Boston– for when [Friend](#) [Mary Dyer](#) traveled there from the safety of her [Aquidneck Island](#) home in the [Narragansett Bay](#) to preach yet again, after once already having been excused and warned by the Puritans only at the foot of the hanging tree on Boston Common, she had well known what fate she was choosing for herself.

While preparing to sacrifice himself Malachi put up the following Love-Is-Anti-Entropy message at <http://www.savagesound.com/gallery99.htm>:

- mission statement -

My actions should be self-explanatory, and since in our self-obsessed culture words seldom match the deed, writing a mission statement would seem questionable. So judge me by my actions. Maybe some will be scared enough to wake from their walking dream state – am I therefore a martyr or terrorist? I would prefer to be thought of as a "spiritual warrior." Our so-called leaders are the real terrorists in the world today, responsible for more deaths than Osama bin Laden.

I have had a wonderful life, both full and full of wonder. I have experienced love and the joy and heartache of raising a child. I have jumped out of an airplane, and escaped a burning building. I have spent the night in jail, and dropped acid during the sixties. I have been privileged to have met many supremely talented musicians and writers, most of whom were extremely generous and gracious.

Even during the hard times, I felt charmed. Even the difficult lessons have been like blessed gifts.

When I hear about our young men and women who are sent off to war in the name of God and Country, and who give up their lives for no rational cause at all, my heart is crushed. What has happened to my country? We have become worse than the imagined enemy – killing civilians and calling it "collateral damage," torturing and trampling human rights inside and outside our own borders, violating our own Constitution whenever it seems convenient, lying and stealing right and left, more concerned with sports on television and ring-tones on cell-phones than the future of the world ... half the population is taking medication because they cannot face the daily stress of living in the richest nation in the world.

I too love God and Country, and feel called upon to serve. I can only hope my sacrifice is worth more than those brave lives thrown away when we attacked an Arab nation under the deception of "Weapons of Mass Destruction." Our interference completely destroyed that country, and destabilized the entire region. Everyone who pays taxes has blood on their hands.

I have had one previous opportunity to serve my country in a meaningful way – at 8:05 one morning in 2002, I passed Donald



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Rumsfeld on Delaware Avenue, and I was acutely aware that slashing his throat would spare the lives of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of innocent people. I had a knife clenched in my hand, and there were no bodyguards visible; to my deep shame I hesitated, and the moment was past.

The violent turmoil initiated by the United States military invasion of Iraq will beget future centuries of slaughter, if the human race lasts that long. First we spit on the United Nations, then we expect them to clean up our mess. Our elected representatives are supposed to find diplomatic and benevolent solutions to these situations. Anyone can lash out and retaliate, that is not leadership or vision. Where is the wisdom and honor of the people we delegate our trust to?

To the rest of the world we are cowards – demanding Iraq to disarm, and after they comply, we attack with remote-control high-tech video-game weapons. And then lie about our reasons for invading. We, the people, bear complete responsibility for all that will follow, and it won't be pretty.

It is strange that most if not all of this destruction is instigated by people who claim to believe in God, or Allah. Many sane people turn away from religion, faced with the insanity of the "true believers." There is a lot of confusion: many people think that God is like Santa Claus, rewarding good little girls with presents and punishing bad little boys with lumps of coal; actually God functions more like the Easter Bunny, hiding surprises in plain sight. God does not choose the Lottery numbers, God does not make the weather, God does not endorse military actions by the self-righteous, God does not sit on a cloud listening to your prayers for prosperity. God does not smite anybody. If God watches the sparrow fall, you notice that it continues to drop, even to its death. Face the truth folks, God doesn't care, that's not what God is or does. If the human race drives itself to extinction, God will be there for another couple million years, "watching" as a new species rises and falls to replace us. It is time to let go of primitive and magical beliefs, and enter the age of personal responsibility. Not telling others what is right for them, but making our own choices, and accepting consequences.

"Who would Jesus bomb?" This question is primarily addressing a Christian audience, but the same issues face the Muslims and the Jews: God's message is tolerance and love, not self-righteousness and hatred. Please consider "Thou shalt not kill" and "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Not a lot of ambiguity there. What is God? God is the force of life – the spark of creation. We each carry it within us, we share it with each other. Whether we are conscious of the life-force is a choice we make, every minute of every day. If you choose to ignore it, nothing will happen – you are just "less conscious." Maybe you are less happy (maybe not). Maybe you grow able to tap into the universal force, and increase the creativity in the universe. Love is anti-entropy. Please notice that "conscious" and "conscience" are related concepts.

Why God – what is the value? Whether committee consensus of a benevolent power that works through humans, or giant fungus



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under Oregon, the value of opening up to the concept of God is in coming to the realization that we are not alone, establishing a connection to the universe, the experience of finding completion. As individuals we may exist alone, but we are all alone together as a people. Faith is the answer to fear. Fear opposes love. To manipulate through fear is a betrayal of trust. What does God want? No big mystery – simply that we try to help each other. We decide to make God-like decisions, rescuing falling sparrows, or putting the poor things out of their misery. Tolerance, giving, acceptance, forgiveness.

If this sounds a lot like pop psychology, that is my exact goal. Never underestimate the value of a pep-talk and a pat on the ass. That is basically all we give to our brave soldiers heading over to Iraq, and more than they receive when they return. I want to state these ideas in their simplest form, reducing all complexity, because each of us has to find our own answers anyway. Start from here....

I am amazed how many people think they know me, even people who I have never talked with. Many people will think that I should not be able to choose the time and manner of my own death. My position is that I only get one death, I want it to be a good one. Wouldn't it be better to stand for something or make a statement, rather than a fiery collision with some drunk driver? Are not smokers choosing death by lung cancer? Where is the dignity there? Are not the people who disregard the environment killing themselves and future generations?

Here is the statement I want to make: if I am required to pay for your barbaric war, I choose not to live in your world. I refuse to finance the mass murder of innocent civilians, who did nothing to threaten our country. I will not participate in your charade – my conscience will not allow me to be a part of your crusade. There might be some who say "it's a coward's way out" – that opinion is so idiotic that it requires no response. From my point of view, I am opening a new door.

What is one more life thrown away in this sad and useless national tragedy? If one death can atone for anything, in any small way, to say to the world: I apologize for what we have done to you, I am ashamed for the mayhem and turmoil caused by my country. I was alive when John F. Kennedy instilled hope into a generation, and I was a sorry witness to the final crushing of hope by Dick Cheney's puppet, himself a pawn of the real rulers, the financial plunderers and looters who profit from every calamity; following the template of Reagan's idiocracy.

The upcoming elections are not a solution – our two party system is a failure of democracy. Our government has lost its way since our founders tried to build a structure which allowed people to practice their own beliefs, as far as it did not negatively affect others. In this regard, the separation of church and state needs to be reviewed. This is a large part of the way that the world has gone wrong, the endless defining and dividing of things, micro-sub-categorization, sectarianism. The direction we need is a process of unification, integrating all people into a world body, respecting each individual. Business and industry have more power than ever before, and individuals have less.



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Clearly, the function of government is to protect the individual, from hardship and disease, from zealots, from the exploitation, from monopoly, even from itself. Our leaders are not wise persons with integrity and vision – they are actors reading from teleprompters, whose highest goal is to stir up the mob. Our country slaughters Arabs, abandons New Orleanians, and ignores the dying environment. Our economy is a house of cards, as hollow and fragile as our reputation around the world. We, as a nation, face the abyss of our own design.

A coalition system which includes a Green Party would be an obvious better approach than our winner-take-all system. Direct electronic debate and balloting would be an improvement over our non-representative congress. Consider that the French people actually have a voice, because they are willing to riot when the government doesn't listen to them.

"Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up, and shake off the existing government ..."
– Abraham Lincoln

With regard to those few who crossed my path carrying the extreme and unnecessary weight of animosity: they seemed by their efforts to be punishing themselves. As they acted out the misery of their lives it is now difficult to feel anything other than pity for them.

Without fear, I go now to God – your future is what you will choose today.

Malachi had also put his own "blogobituary" on the internet, at <http://www.savagesound.com/gallery100.htm>:

Malachi Ritscher

- out of time -

Chicago resident Malachi Ritscher passed away last (day of week), a (tragic, baffling, mundane) death at the age of (subtract 1954 from current year). He was the modern day version of a "renaissance man," except instead of attaining success in several fields, he consistently failed, and didn't really worry too much about it. For example, his boxing record in Golden Gloves. The eldest son of Richard C. Ritscher, a music educator, he collected and played many exotic instruments, without mastering any. Most recently, he had been playing a vintage Conn C-Melody saxophone that once belonged to free-spirit Hal Russell. Malachi was best known for his live concert recordings, mostly of local jazz groups who couldn't afford expensive studios. His license plates said AKG C 414, after his favorite microphones. Upwards of fifty recordings were eventually released commercially, with some acclaim for their natural sound. His archive of live recordings he had documented exceeded 2000 shows. Mostly he was just a big fan.

Also he was a film photographer, with a picture of a peregrine falcon chick published in a local Audubon magazine, and related video footage shown on local television news. He wrote poetry that was not published, painted watercolors in a quirky naive style, and participated passionately in the anti-war and free



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speech movement. He was arrested at a protest on March 20, 2003 and spent the night in jail, then became a member of the pending class-action suit against the City of Chicago. Arrested again two years later, he successfully sued the City of Chicago for false arrest on 1st Amendment/free speech grounds. One of his proudest achievements was an ultra-searing hot sauce recipe, which he registered under the name "Undead Sauce – re-animate yourself!" It was a blend of tropical peppers, which he grew indoors in 5-gallon buckets, and a few secret ingredients that gave it a unique flavor (pomegranate, pistachio, and cinnamon). Born Mark David Ritscher in Dickinson, North Dakota on January 13, 1954, he lived most of his life in the mid-west, ranging from small-town Madison, South Dakota to Chicago, where he moved in 1981, changing his first name to Malachi. As a child, he was intensely afraid of many things, especially heights; he spent the rest of his life trying to face his fears, without ever coming to terms with his fear of people. He dropped out of high school and married at the age of 17, a union that lasted almost 10 years. He became an ordained minister with the Missionaries of the New Truth in 1972, and had performed several weddings. He provided for his family with a variety of trade positions, eventually reaching Journeyman High-Voltage Technician status with the electric utility in Lincoln, Nebraska. He became a Licensed Stationary Engineer in 1987. He was a member of several unions throughout his career, including IBEW, IUOE, and SEIU. He was proud to be a dues-paying proletariat intellectual. After getting divorced, he relocated to Chicago to work with friends in an art-rock band, which inevitably led to forming a trio called "wantnot," recording and releasing a CD in 1990, with Malachi on bass and vocals, Mike Mansfield on guitar, and Janna Brooks on drums. The cover design received an award from the American Center for Design, which didn't increase sales. He also designed skateboard decks, flyers, and t-shirts, with similar commercial results.

He was a collector of several things: books, records, meteorites, butterfly knives, keris, glass eyes, fossil tully monsters, microphones, medium-base lightbulbs, and instruments, especially snare drums. He was a man of strong contrasts, and fierce loyalties. There was a joy of life, which balanced a suspicious misanthropy. Endless pondering of existential gray areas could be interrupted by a totally spontaneous act: jumping in his car to drive downtown and participate in the Sears Tower stair-climb (2003). When he read Goethe's words "Nowhere but in his own Montserrat will a man find happiness and peace," his first thought was to find out where it is, and then book a flight there. He had memorized Pi to the 1101 decimal place, and would recite it at will. He could shave with a straight razor. He loved cinnamon rolls. He loved the smell of turpentine. He also loved motorcycles, which he wisely avoided. In the words of Stephen Wright, he was a "peripheral visionary." His sense of humor was droll – he theorized that surprise and not tragedy was the most important element of comedy. His favorite joke was to walk into a room, sniff the air, and observe "it smells like snot in here." His favorite word was "ominous." His favorite two words were



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"Tahitian hiatus." He always carried his passport with him. He owned and maintained several web-sites:

<http://www.savagesound.com>

<http://www.unwinnablewar.net>

<http://www.killthepresident.net>

<http://www.warwhores.us>

In addition, he was preparing

<http://www.publicparkingparty.org>

... to promote protection of residents' rights in Chicago.

A lover of literature, even more than music, he had always dreamed of being a writer. The handwritten manuscript of his "fictional autobiography," titled "Farewell Tour," was under consideration by publishers. It had a general theme of shared universal aloneness, and was controversial for seeming to endorse suicide after the age of fifty. His favorite classic authors were Proust and Shakespeare.

The metaphor for his life was winning the lottery, but losing the ticket. In the end, the loneliness was overwhelming. He was deeply appreciative for everything that had been given to him, but acutely aware that the greater the present, the higher the price. He was a member of Mensa, and of Alcoholics Anonymous since 1990. For him, sobriety was virtually getting a second chance at life. He practiced a personal and private spirituality, seeking to connect across the illusion that separates us from each other. Reportedly, his last words were "rosebud ... oops."

Near his end, he was purchasing real estate in Vancouver with the intention of eventual emigration, unable to reconcile his conscience with his tax dollars financing an unjust war. He frequently took short trips to New York City and New Orleans, where he made more recordings of concerts. Europe seemed more civilized to him, and he experienced Paris and Amsterdam, Germany and Switzerland, as well as Madrid and Barcelona.

His family was far-flung, surviving parents Richard and Betty Ann, older sisters Carol and Susan, younger siblings Paul, Jon, and Ellen; nieces Laurel, Carol, Julia, Jessica, Marissa, and nephew Aaron. He had a son, from whom he was estranged (at the son's request), and two grandchildren. He had many acquaintances, but few friends; and wrote his own obituary, because no one else really knew him. He has a plot at Calvary Cemetery in Evanston, Illinois; and the epithet he chose is "I Dreamt That I Was Dreaming."

Bruno Johnson of Okkadisk will have the dubious honor of maintaining archives and dispersing collections.



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One First Day in January: We had a couple of neatly-attired ladies attend our silent worship in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), one First Day in January. After the service they stood up and introduced themselves. They were representatives, they told us, of the local “Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#) Society.” The occasion for their visit to the Quaker worship service in town was that they were planning to stage a 300th Birthday Celebration for local hero Stephen Hopkins, who had been governor of the state nine times and had signed the Declaration of Independence, and who, they asserted, had been a Quaker and a member of our Providence Monthly Meeting. Their picture of Governor Hopkins depicted him as attired in a Quaker-grey hat and clothing, and, as we all know, it is attire that makes a Quaker recognizably a Quaker. They invited us to send one of our contemporary members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) to speak at their celebration and I volunteered to do so. They gave me an engraved invitation card to be used to gain admission into their ceremony, which was to begin, the invitation averred, at 2PM at the local cemetery.

February: One First Day in January, our monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) had been visited by a couple of neatly-attired ladies who had stood up after our silent worship and introduced themselves. They had said that they were there on behalf of the local “Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#) Society.” The occasion was that their society was staging a 300th Birthday Celebration for local hero Stephen Hopkins, who had been governor of the state nine times and had signed the Declaration of Independence, and who, they asserted, had been a Quaker and a member of our Providence Monthly Meeting. Their picture of Governor Hopkins depicted him as attired in a Quaker-grey hat and clothing, and, as we all know, it is attire that makes a Quaker recognizably a Quaker. They had invited us to send a Quaker to speak at their celebration and I had volunteered to do so. They had given me an engraved invitation card to be used to gain admission into their ceremony, which was to begin, the invitation averred, at 2PM at the local cemetery.

Our February issue of our “The Provident FRIEND” meeting newsletter of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) therefore positioned all this information at the top of its page 1, complete with a description of the [Pawtuxet](#) Rangers and the color guard and flags and muskets that were to add a flavor to the occasion.

March: I had volunteered as a contemporary member of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) and as a historian to address the crowd at the North Main Street burial site in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) of Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#), on the occasion of his 300th birthday. The local Governor Stephen Hopkins Society had given me an engraved invitation card to be used to gain admission into their ceremony, which was to begin, the invitation averred, at 2PM at the local cemetery. Over the course of the days prior to their celebration, evidently they had found some reason to become suspicious of me, and they began to call me at home and discuss with me what in particular it was that I planned to tell them. I acquired a distinct sense that they had been spoken to privately by someone else.

What they were able to establish through repeated rounds of this telephone interrogation was that what I was planning to tell them was the truth, to wit, that this 18th-Century politician Stephen Hopkins had been a Quaker only in the manner in which the 20th-Century politician Richard Nixon had been a Quaker, that he had put it out that he was a Quaker in order to gain votes in a largely Quaker state but in fact had never applied for membership and had never had a Clearness Committee — and that far from ever being considered a member of the Providence Monthly Meeting, the meeting had issued a public statement declaring that he was not a Friend. —That the picture which they so proudly displayed, which showed Governor Stephen Hopkins in



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Quaker garb, was not a picture of Hopkins at all, and that in fact there were **no** authentic depictions whatever, of this man's appearance or attire. —That being a Quaker was inconsistent with signing a declaration of war, which was what this “Declaration of Independence” document actually was, a declaration of war. —That being a Quaker was also inconsistent with the owning of slaves, and that this politician had owned a number of slaves and that this had been the case after each and every actual Quaker in the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations had cleared themselves of the ownership of slaves. —That although their “Governor Stephen Hopkins Society” was putting it out that Hopkins had kindly manumitted all his slaves, I had personally inspected all the manumission records maintained by the City of Providence, and there was in this historical record in fact **zero evidence** for any such manumissions — that their historical society had simply made this manumission stuff up out of whole cloth.

This negotiation went through a series of stages, in one of which I was warned over the phone that I would not be able to speak for longer than three minutes — due of course not to the fact that I was planning to tell the truth but to the large number of speakers who each needed to take their place at the podium. I assured them that I would rehearse my speech to fit within a three-minute timeframe, and promised not to exceed my allotted time.

(Finally, just before the event, they would call a final time and inform me that because of the extreme length of their program, they were going to be forced against their will to defer my opportunity to speak. They said, however, that they were of course extremely interested in what I had to tell them about the Governor, and promised that there would be occasions for me to address their society at other of their events at some indefinite point in the future.)

March 8, Thursday: Several articles about Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#) appeared in the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) newspaper, the “[ProJo](#).” One illustration, an oil by John Philip Hagen, has a caption saying “Hopkins, despite his accomplishments, lived an unpretentious Quaker lifestyle and never sat for a portrait.”



Yes, this 1999 oil is not based on any record of the actual appearance of Hopkins, the artist having based the painting upon the appearance of descendants. However, the allegation that Hopkins lived according to an unpretentious Quaker lifestyle seems not to be at all an accurate record of this man’s flamboyance and zest.

This newspaper didn’t quite make Governor Hopkins out to be a Friend, but it quoted Brown curator Robert Emlen as saying, “It’s not surprising that Hopkins would not have had a painting of himself done in life ... He was by all accounts a modest person. Later in life, he became a Quaker, so his values would have been ‘to shun vanity and to speak from the heart.’” That cited remark, which the newspaper made no attempt to evaluate, does claim as definite fact that Hopkins’s membership in the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was official and documented, but this, of course, is not accurate since in fact we have no historical record whatever of any application by this man to any monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends for membership, or of any acceptance of him by the Religious Society of Friends (the only record we have is that this man did get married with a Quaker woman and then did begin to wear Quaker-type clothing, and that the Friends dealt gently with the resultant situation).

Perhaps the reason the 18th-Century Quakers dealt gently with the situation was, that by their own standards they should have disowned the Quaker woman who married him, for “marrying out” was in that period a standard cause of such disownment. Clearly the Providence Quakers didn’t want to disown her if there was a way to stall and wait for the situation to mature. Apparently, the curator Emlen is not aware that local Friends here were sufficiently annoyed by Hopkins’ reluctance to free his slaves that they publicly disassociated themselves from him. (It would not be accurate to say that they read him out of his Meeting’s roster of members. This would be saying too much, for three reasons. The first of the three reasons is that we have no record of his ever either applying or being accepted by any monthly meeting as a member of the Friends. The second of the three reasons is that there simply never was any such thing in that period in this locality as a monthly meeting’s roster of members. I think I can safely say that the lists of names and addresses that we currently take for granted are a phenomenon of our present era, and that they do not extend back into the past. I have never seen a roster of members dating to the 19th Century or earlier, for **any** Quaker meeting. None whatever. The third of the three reasons is, the function of the disownment procedure that they followed in this case was **not** to “read someone out of his Meeting’s roster of members.” It was very different from that. It was a notification to the greater local community, that they should not consider this person to be in fellowship with the Friends, and it was a permission in the Meeting for Business to disregard this person’s objections. This is of importance because, in the case of Stephen Hopkins, uniquely, we **kept his disownment a secret** for about one year after thus disowning him. Keeping it a deep dark secret of course destroyed one of the two purposes that disownment fills!)

In this issue of the [ProJo](#) newspaper, in regard to John Greenwood’s oil-on-bed-ticking painting “Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam” painted between 1752 and 1758 and now in the Saint Louis art museum in Missouri, the caption writer speculated on whether a man seated next to Captain [Esek Hopkins](#), Stephen’s brother, asleep with his head on his hand in the middle of the “raucous party” might be Stephen himself.



However, the article’s author, Journal Staff Writer Katherine Imbrie, points out that Stephen in 1757 spent September in Worcester suing a political enemy for slander, and then was campaigning for election in March 1758 to be governor, and thus wouldn’t have had time to sail to Surinam in South America and return. (This would be presuming that the painting was made in Surinam or that the painter visited Surinam and I do not have such evidence — I think it is quite likely to the contrary that the painting was done right here in New England.)

In the timeframe in question Hopkins was elected to his third one-year term as Governor during his total of nine years in that office and was deeply entangled in said lawsuit (the lawsuit was against his archrival, Samuel Ward, who twice unseated Hopkins before Hopkins finally succeeded Ward in 1767). Emlen says that Professor Robert Kenney decided that Stephen Hopkins was not only not a mariner, but not the sleeping drunkard in the painting, and that the drunkard must therefore have been another Hopkins brother, William. That seems to me to be likely.

The newspaper article credits Hopkins for freeing his slaves without indicating when that was supposed to



have happened. Hopkins, in his will, did express a **desire** that his slaves, plural, be set free after his death. However, the will made no provisions for the costs of this and the slaves were part of the estate. It was not an easy thing, to grant [manumission](#) to a slave: for one thing, the town needed to consent (because there might be public costs for later care) and we have no record that the town did consent in this case. Since, in a probate proceeding, the settlement of debts comes **first** before the disposition of any remaining assets, the slaves **could not** have been set free unless assets were available to do so. We therefore need to verify, before we draw any conclusions from this provision in this will, that the decedent's estate was large enough, and unencumbered enough, to leave sufficient funds to set these slaves free. I myself suspect that they were **not** set free, simply because there is no record of any manumission documents for them down at the town real-estate office where such manumission documents were stored. There is only one manumission record in that office, and it is a record in which his adopted daughter after his death took **one** man to the town office, Toney, testified that Toney "had been free for a long time" but that his manumission document had been "lost or misplaced," and obtained for him a new "copy." This action, of course, would have been unnecessary, had Hopkins's slaves indeed been freed in accordance with his will, because the office to which the daughter took the man would have possessed a written record of any such previous manumission. Also, except for this one person named "Toney," we don't even know the names of these Hopkins slaves. The conclusion I have to come to is that Hopkins's slaves, plural, with the single except of this one person Toney, **did not ever** become free.

Note well that in a parallel situation, George Washington would express the same sentiment in his will, about freeing the estate's slaves after his death and the death of his wife Martha — and we know, in the case of Washington, that despite this sentiment, these slaves **did not ever** become free (the widow Martha would be dead set against any of them becoming free, and they would merely become the property of her heirs).

The newspaper article says Hopkins had acquired those slaves through marriage, perhaps indicating his first marriage rather than his second; and says that although Hopkins was a merchant he was never involved in the slave trade. It is curious that the article makes that assertion, since nobody has ever suggested that Hopkins ever himself personally went on any of the slaving voyages. Before making such a historical assertion, however, we ought to have investigated whether he might have been a silent partner in some of Captain Esek Hopkins's slaving voyages—since he and Esek were thick as thieves—and I do not have assurance that this has in fact already been investigated.

Gov. Stephen Hopkins slept here

March 8, 2007

DAVID BRUSSAT

GEORGE WASHINGTON slept in the Stephen Hopkins House. Twice. We know the neat little wine-dark house in Providence where Stephen Hopkins lived, probably even better than we know the history of Hopkins himself. Yesterday was the 300th anniversary of his birth, on March 7, 1707.

The oldest part of the house that sits on the street that now bears his name was built in the same year he was born, although he did not move into it until they both were 36 years old.

By the time he bought the house from John Field, Hopkins had held several official posts in Scituate, where he was raised. While its representative in the General Assembly, he was elected speaker in 1742. That year he moved to Providence and bought the house at the corner of the Town Street and Bank Lane, now South Main and Hopkins. He added four rooms to Field's two (now the rear el). The house is still becomingly modest by today's standards.

General Washington's first visit was on April 5, 1776. He was



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on his way to take command of the Continental Army in Boston. Hopkins himself was in Philadelphia, at the Continental Congress. His daughter-in-law served as host. Her family wanted to lend her better china for the occasion. "What's good enough for my father," she is said to have replied, "is good enough for General Washington." Modesty fit the Providence of the era, but Hopkins worked to change all that. He helped to start the Providence Library Company, a precursor to the Providence Athenaeum, and the Providence Gazetteer & Country Journal. In 1764 he was named the first chancellor of Brown University, then called Rhode Island College. He was elected governor nine times between 1755 and 1767. In the colonial politics of the era, he led Providence in the competition with Newport for civic and commercial supremacy.

Only after he left the governor's office did Hopkins begin his famous career as a founder and patriot. In 1772, as chief justice of the Superior Court, Hopkins directed the cover-up of the burning of the H.M.S. Gaspee, America's first major violent act against the crown. The tavern where the conspirators met, led by the town's richest merchant, John Brown, was a block south of the Hopkins house. Everyone knew who was involved, but Hopkins could find no one to indict. The whole town kept the secret from the enemy. (Imagine that today!)

Stephen Hopkins later served in the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence. In penning his shaky signature, he had to hold his right hand steady with his left. Aged 69 and in poor health, he is said to have declared to his fellow Rhode Island delegate, William Ellery: "My hand trembles but my heart does not."

Hopkins himself hosted General Washington in 1781. Moses Brown wrote: "I sat some time viewing the simple and friendly and pleasant manner in which these two great men met and conversed with each other on various subjects." Stop the presses!

Hopkins died in 1785 and was laid to rest in the North Burial Ground in Providence. This Saturday at 2 p.m., the Rhode Island chapter of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America will hold a procession to the gravesite, led by the [Pawtuxet Rangers](#), the Newport Artillery and the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment, and a ceremony to commemorate his life. The Hopkins House will be open 1-4 p.m. that day. The Dames run the house as a museum on behalf of its owner, the State of Rhode Island. In 1804, the house, already of obvious historical status, was relocated half a block uphill, doubtless to save it from "progress." In 1927, this time to make way for a new Providence County Court House, it was moved even farther up the hill to where it sits today, at the corner of Hopkins and Benefit.

After the move, the house was restored by Norman Isham, the famous Rhode Island architectural historian. I toured the house last Thursday with Kiki Anderson, of the Rhode Island Colonial Dames, who showed me some old Journal clippings about Isham's work. One was about Isham's reaction to interference from the Women's Christian Temperance Union: "Isham Waxes Wroth Over W.C.T.U. 'No Bottles' Edict - Noted Authority on Colonial Architecture Irately Says He is in Mind to Put Some 'Good Old



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Stuff' in Every Room of Hopkins House."

No doubt Hopkins would be amused. He was portrayed in the 1972 film 1776 as the cranky old drunkard who kept a fractious Continental Congress's nose to the grindstone. This put the local bluenoses out of joint. A column by Journal art critic Bradford F. Swann was headlined "Stephen Hopkins a drunken buffoon? We should say not." Today, the "Good Old Stuff" is not in evidence. No matter. With or without the assistance of spirits, few houses can say, "George Washington slept here twice." Because of that, however, it is one of the few houses that can also say, "I was moved to a new location twice." You could say the house lives up to the exploits of its heroic resident.

Happy 300th, Stephen Hopkins

03/08/2007

By Katherine Imbrie
Journal Staff Writer

When the Founding Fathers of the country are mentioned, few people think first of Stephen Hopkins of Providence. But Hopkins was one of two signers of the Declaration of Independence from Rhode Island, and he had already had a long career in Colonial government by the time he put his signature to the Declaration at age 69.

The Hopkins signature on the most famous American document is not as bold as that of the better-known John Hancock. Hopkins' shaky hand was due to a medical condition that is now supposed to have been either Parkinson's Disease or another type of palsy. (For this reason, Hopkins earned a bad rap in the 1969 musical and 1972 musical, 1776, in which he was portrayed as a cantankerous drunkard – a characterization not based in fact.) Hopkins' most famous quote acknowledges his disability while at the same time testifying to his strength of purpose in signing the Declaration: "My hand trembles, but my heart does not." He made the statement when his fellow Rhode Island signer, William Ellery of Newport, seemed to look askance at his shakiness while signing.

Hopkins was born in Providence 300 years ago yesterday, and on Saturday he will get his due with a birthday celebration. A free three-hour open house – complete with cider, cookies and ginger cake – will be held at his home to mark the occasion, and there will be a ceremonial procession and plaque dedication at his gravesite.

The open house is a good opportunity to see the inside of the 1707 Stephen Hopkins House, normally open four days a week in summer, or by appointment. The little red house, set in its small formal garden overlooking the Financial District, is a beloved landmark of the historic East Side. For Saturday's event, its tiny Colonial rooms will be enlivened by the presence of a costumed actor portraying Hopkins, David Ely.

A flawed person

Ely, who teaches theater at Lincoln School in Providence, has



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made a sideline of portraying famous historical characters of Rhode Island for a couple of decades, since he began by playing Roger Williams and Samuel Slater in a Rhode Island school program called "Legacy Plays." For the past five years, he's made a specialty of portraying Hopkins for 4th- and 5th-grade Rhode Island school programs about the Revolutionary War, and he also steps into the role on occasions such as Saturday's, for which he's hired by the Rhode Island Chapter of the Colonial Dames of America, the society that operates the historic Hopkins house.

Besides donning his Hopkins costume (which consists of black slip-on shoes, Colonial-style knickers and white hose, and a dark-blue coat and vest), Ely says he gets into the role of the Colonial leader by trying to integrate the good and the bad things he's learned by reading about Hopkins over the years: "He was a flawed person. He had a long-term nasty dispute with his archrival in state politics, Samuel Ward. In governor's races of the time, Ward tended to be backed by the southern landholders in the state, while Hopkins had the backing of the merchant Brown brothers. There was a certain amount of political goings-on, such as an accusation of having paid voters likely to support Ward to stay home."

But on the positive side, says Ely, "Once the two rivals became united in the bigger fight against Britain, they stopped squabbling and even became friends.

Hopkins was always a big supporter of public education – he helped establish the first library and the first college in Rhode Island," Brown.

"He freed his slaves, which he had acquired through marriage, and although he was a merchant, never was involved in the slave trade. He was a highly educated person at a time when not many people were."

For Saturday's event, Ely will not present a performance on Hopkins, but will be in period costume, along with Kim Clark portraying his wife, Sarah.

Famously modest

Besides his house, few artifacts have come down through history from Hopkins, who was famously a modest person, according to Brown University curator and senior lecturer in American Civilization Robert Emlen.

"Among the stories I like about Hopkins is that when George Washington came to stay in Providence, he chose to stay in the Hopkinses' very small and modest house, rather than at a more imposing house such as John Brown's. At the time of the visit, Hopkins was away at the Continental Congress, and someone is said to have urged his wife to at least get in some better china dishes in honor of Washington's arrival. But she said no, what was good enough for her husband to dine on was good enough for anyone."

Besides being a nine-times-elected governor of Rhode Island, a state chief justice and a delegate to the Colonial and Continental Congresses, Hopkins was the first chancellor of



Brown University, which owns a portrait of him similar to one that hangs in the Rhode Island State House.

Emlen explains that, although the portraits are intended to represent Hopkins, they both are actually 1999 simulations made by Newport artist John Hagen. Hagen worked from a sketch made by John Trumbull in 1793 for his famous group portrait of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, the painting that hangs in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.

"By the time Trumbull got to Rhode Island to make his sketches, Hopkins had been dead several years," says Emlen. "But everyone told him that Hopkins' nephew looked exactly like him, so Trumbull painted the nephew as a stand-in for Hopkins.

"Brown (University) had never had a portrait of its first chancellor, so we had Hagen work from the Trumbull sketch. So in fact, the so-called Hopkins portrait is not actually him, but is a 1999 rendering of a 1793 sketch of Hopkins' nephew."

"He kept the chair"

It's not surprising that Hopkins would not have had a painting of himself done in life, says Emlen. "He was by all accounts a modest person. Later in life, he became a Quaker, so his values would have been 'to shun vanity and to speak from the heart.'

"Hopkins didn't make a public spectacle of himself the way his contemporary Benjamin Franklin did. He didn't need to show off, but he had a good reputation, and from the number of times he was elected and served in public offices, he was trusted and well-respected by the people of Rhode Island."

He had a sense of humor, too.

A historic Spanish leather chair that is the official chair used for public occasions by presidents of Brown University was a gift to the university from a Hopkins descendant, says Emlen.

"The story is that Hopkins, who was a merchant, had a share in a privateer during one of the 18th-century wars with Spain. When the privateer captured a Spanish ship, some of Hopkins' friends got him this chair, telling him that it was one that he 'couldn't be unseated from' – a reference to the fact that Hopkins had been in and out of the Rhode Island governorship so often. "So he kept the chair, and his grandson gave it to Brown, which allows us to describe the presidential chair as pirate loot."

The 300th Birthday Celebration of Stephen Hopkins will be held Saturday at the Stephen Hopkins House, 15 Hopkins St. at the corner of Benefit Street in Providence. Admission is free. The house will be open from 1 to 4 p.m., with costumed actors portraying Stephen and Sarah Hopkins. Cider, cookies, and ginger cake will be served. At 2 p.m., a commemoration ceremony will be held at the Hopkins gravesite in North Burial Ground, 5 Branch Ave. at the corner of North Main Street. Members of the Newport Artillery Company, the [Pawtuxet](#) Rangers, the Colonial Dames, the Society of Colonial Wars, and the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment will march from the cemetery gates to the gravesite beginning at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call the Colonial Dames, (401) 421-0694.



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Although at the last minute I had been disinvited as a speaker at the 300th Birthday Celebration for Governor Stephen Hopkins at his gravesite, since I still had my engraved invitation card, I did attend that ceremony at 2PM as the card stated. Quite frankly, I was expecting to be turned away at the gate in the high iron fence that surrounds this graveyard. What I found, however, when I arrived at big gate, was that the guard accepted my invitation card and allowed me to enter the grounds. However, when I reached the gravesite at the top of the hill just prior to 2PM, what I discovered was that all the speechmaking at the podium had been already completed. (Imagine that: a public event that, instead of beginning ten minutes later than announced, is already over and done with by the time that they had advertised it to begin! –You don't suppose, do you, that they were doing things this way in order to make certain that I would have no opportunity for telling them truths they did not need to hear?) The only thing remaining for me to witness in the ceremony at the gravesite was the ragged volleys of black-powder musket fire by uniformed re-enactors, and the resultant clouds of acrid gunsmoke. I stood there and endured this and then listened as a guy who clearly was not part of the ceremonies stepped forward and volunteered to inform all onlookers that he was proud to be himself personally a descendant of Stephen Hopkins. He added that his ancestor had been a Quaker “although,” he added, “I'm not sure what that meant, I don't know much about the Quakers.”

Back at Providence Monthly Meeting, later, there was no channel by which I could express any of this to any other Friend — since this was not an approved-by-Ministry-and-Counsel topic on which to report at the monthly meeting for business, and was not an approved-by-Ministry-and-Counsel topic “relating to the life of the community” on which I might be allowed to report during the announcements period after meeting for worship. And, since the “Media Committee” has already informed me (in writing) that no submission would be accepted for publication in the meeting newsletter –if they suspected it to be written by me– there had been no way whatever for me to respond to their war-celebratory front page center entry in the February 2007 issue of our meeting newsletter, “The Provident FRIEND.”

(I think that a lot of this has to do with Friends in our meeting who have been “silently uncomfortable” with the Quaker Peace Testimony, in the same manner in which some of them are known to be “silently uncomfortable” with gay marriage. I suspect that, because this situation has been obtaining for me ever since I helped aged Friend John R. Kellam, a WWII prisoner of conscience, write his autobiography about his years in federal maximum security prison as a Conscientious Objector, <http://www.kouroo.info/RSOF/FriendJohnKellam.pdf>. We had copies printed and bound at Kinko's, and he had presented one of these bound Kinko's copies to the library of the Moses Brown School. Almost all the kiddies at this school are now non-Quaker, and I don't think they want them or their parents to have their noses rubbed in the fact that the Quakers are traitors.)

Spring: Hasbro, a [Pawtucket, Rhode Island](#) firm which had come to own the [Milton Bradley](#) Company, re-revised its “The Game of Life” as “The Game of Life: Twists and Turns.”



Like all earlier spiral race games, the Game of Life is essentially about fate, but it's so relentlessly amoral and cash-conscious that a nineties redesign team, eager to make it less so, pretty much gave up. The new Twists & Turns game has no goal. In it, life is aimless, and each player receives a Life-Visa brand “credit card” to keep track of Life Points.



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June 6, Wednesday: An attorney for a title company, Jeffrey A. St. Sauveur of the Pilgrim Title Insurance Company of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), advised the [Moses Brown School](#) that it “may want to consider a full title search ... to determine the exact status of the real estate from a title perspective.” He explained that it did appear from the chain of title deeds that title to the subject real estate is vested in Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England, a corporation established by an act of the General Assembly of Rhode Island in October, 1823, subject to the restrictions and covenants set forth and referenced in the Deeds recorded in Book 43 at Page 400 and in Book 54 at Page 455 of the Land Evidence Records of the City of Providence. He commented that if the Yearly Meeting conveyed the subject property to a new School entity established for purposes of holding the real estate and operating such School in accordance with the Quaker tradition, this would not require any “Cy Pres” action, but that the conveyance would need to be treated as a Trust conveyance subject to Rhode Island General Laws §34-4-27, governing Trust conveyances: “This section provides for a simple statutory form of Memorandum of Trust; in this instance, I would anticipate the need to (i) confirm within the Memo that the Yearly Meeting has the authority to convey and (ii) attach the minutes/resolutions from the meeting authorizing the transfer. As we discussed, the new entity would own the real estate subject to the restrictions, covenants and conditions set forth in the Deed instruments.”

This legal opinion from a title attorney had been sought by the [Moses Brown School](#) in its ongoing effort to separate itself from any control by Quakers. It is apparently their presumption, that under this new School entity separate from the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), it would be easier for them to continue their ongoing fraud in which an entirely lay college preparatory academy is being fronted as offering a Quaker education simply because it is making use of Quaker money, squatting upon Quaker property, without information as to this religion being integrated in any major manner into the school’s entirely vanilla instructional curriculum. Perhaps their conceit is that it will prove to be easier for them to “pack” this new entity with their moles, people who surreptitiously do their bidding while posing as [Quakers](#). Perhaps their conceit is that their “regulatory capture” and control of the board that is supposed to regulate them will under this new structure be more complete, and less likely to fall out of bed.

July: According to Minute 29 of the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), when Head of School Joanne Hoffman, accompanied by staff members, alumni and overseers, presented the annual oral report of the [Moses Brown School](#) in [Rhode Island](#), she indicated that the institution had re-written its Mission Statement so that it now read, in its entirety, as follows:

Moses Brown, a Friends school, exists to inspire the promise of each student and to instill the utmost care for learning, people, and place.

According to Minute 30 of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, the Permanent Board ad hoc Committee on Corporate Restructure, formed in 2002, had in 2006 appointed a small committee known as “The Project” to look into the relationship between the Yearly Meeting and the Moses Brown School, and this committee having met together over a period of ten months facilitated by Arthur Larrabee, currently General Secretary of the Pacific Yearly Meeting, had arrived at the following four recommendations to be presented to the Yearly Meeting:

- That the New England Yearly Meeting and Moses Brown School establish a caring and nurturing relationship.
- That the title to all real estate used by the school be transferred into a new corporate entity.
- That the expectations of the roles and policies of the Overseers be clarified.



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- That the school and the yearly meeting undertake to address the concerns of Providence Monthly Meeting with respect to these recommendations.

According to Minute 60 of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Richard Frechette (Smith), the incoming clerk of the Permanent Board, reported on a threshing session recently held on concerns over the proposed recommendations for the relationship of the New England Yearly Meeting with the Moses Brown School, put forward by the Permanent Board based on the work of the small committee known as “The Project.” It became clear that the recommendations put forward by the Permanent Board did not speak to the condition of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends as a body. A strong desire was expressed, to do something to improve or alter this relationship, and “to carefully discern the responsibilities that have been laid on us by the initial trust from Friend Moses Brown, our own neglect as a body of our responsibilities to this trust, and to the present mix of passionate support, deep disappointment, and desire for a relationship that works for both NEYM and Moses Brown School.”

According to Minute 72 of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Nancy Haines reported on the work of a group of Friends who had met recently to continue discernment on the relationship between the New England Yearly Meeting and the Moses Brown School, that had made the following three recommendations (Friends approved):

- That NEYM appoint an ad hoc committee to examine the original deed of trust and to determine whether we are fulfilling the terms of that trust.
- That NEYM establish an ad hoc nurture and care committee consisting of 12 members: 6 appointed by NEYM; four appointed by the MBS Board of Overseers; the Head of School; and the School’s Friends Education Coordinator. The Clerk of the committee shall be appointed by the Yearly Meeting. This committee will continue the work of fostering understanding and appreciation between the school and the YM, and of building up the trust relationship between NEYM and Moses Brown School that has already begun.
- That NEYM and Moses Brown School undertake to address the concerns of [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting in order to strengthen the relationship between that meeting and the nearby school.

August 1, Wednesday: The Ad Hoc Moses Brown School Project delivered its report to the New England Yearly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#). This report contained a tendentious legal falsehood, to wit:

By transferring title to the MBS land and buildings to a new corporation, NEYM would not be giving up a valuable asset that it could otherwise sell or use to raise funds for the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting holds title to the Moses Brown School property pursuant to an 1827 deed from Moses Brown’s trustees. That deed conveys the property to the Yearly Meeting for the sole use and purpose of erecting buildings for a school and maintaining a school for the religious, moral, and literary education of the rising generation of Friends and other students. The income and profits of the property are to be used solely for that purpose. As a result, while the Moses Brown School property might be valuable for development or other purposes, such profitable uses could not be made without a breach of the deed and the Moses Brown trust. The proposed conveyance to a new School corporation would be subject to the same trust. It has been suggested Moses Brown School should pay NEYM for the property, thereby providing funds for the Yearly



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Meeting's use. This would be impermissible both legally and morally. It would divert funds from use for the educational purposes of Moses Brown's gift to use for other Yearly Meeting purposes, and would do so in plain violation of the deed and trust requirements that all income from the gifted property are to be used for school purposes "and for no other use or purpose whatever." In short, there is no prospect that the School property is an asset that the Yearly meeting could use to raise funds for any other purpose.

The tendentious legal falsehood that is contained in the above quotation from the project's report is, that it creates a false opposition between a [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) that is operating in fulfilment of the covenant established by Friend Moses Brown, to provide a guarded environment in which a Quaker education might be offered to Quaker youth, on the one hand, versus, on the other hand, a New England Yearly meeting that is seeking to dishonor that covenant by converting the estate entrusted to it by Friend Moses Brown to purposes other than that of providing a guarded environment in which a Quaker education is offered to Quaker youth. The facts are precisely the opposite. These words, in the above quotation, are magic words designed to confuse, and by confusion intercept the Quakers from doing precisely what it is their obligation to do. If there is anything "guarded" about the educational experience available at the School, it is that the lay students are presently being shielded from learning anything whatever about the history and trajectory of the Quakers (other than would be found in the educational curriculum of any lay college-preparatory academy). Quakerism in this school has effectively been ghettoized into, at most, one elective no-grade course offered when convenient to some graduating seniors. The Moses Brown School has been dishonoring the covenant by converting the estate entrusted to the New England Yearly Meeting by Friend Moses Brown, big time, long term, to purposes other than that of providing a guarded environment in which a Quaker education is offered to Quaker youth. It is the New England Yearly Meeting's obligation, therefore, to remove that trust from the control of the Moses Brown School in order finally to devote the assets of that trust to their intended purpose, that of providing a guarded environment in which a Quaker education is offered to Quaker youth. The objective might be accomplished in a number of ways:

1. The New England Yearly Meeting might evict the Moses Brown School from the premises as part of returning this collection of acreage and structures to its trust purpose.
2. The New England Yearly Meeting might invoice the Moses Brown School for the annual rent value on the open market of the premises, and use this rental money to fund the expenses of a new school located elsewhere, that would provide a guarded environment in which a Quaker education is offered to Quaker youth.
3. The Moses Brown School might elect to purchase the acreage and structures it presently occupies from their owner, the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, at its current fair value on the open market, so that the Quakers might set up a trust account of investments, the proceeds from which would be available exclusively for the sole purpose of providing a guarded environment in which a Quaker education is offered to Quaker youth.

The one thing that is legally impermissible is the only thing that the project's report regards as legally permissible, that the trust of Friend Moses Brown continue to be diverted to purposes other than its original intent.

The one thing that is legally mandatory is the very thing that the project's report regards as legally impermissible, that the New England Yearly Meeting belatedly begin to fulfil its pledge to devote these assets to their original intent.

You will note the term "tendentious" above. The report of the project is tendentious, very specifically, in that it offers that it would be legally impermissible to sell off the asset, whereas in fact as is well known, the Moses



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Brown School has in previous years already been selling off portions of the asset, to wit, dividing it into parcels along surrounding Hope Street, Olney Avenue, and Arlington Avenue, and selling off these parcels to the city of Providence or to the highest bidder. The report alleges, therefore, and alleges falsely and tendentiously, that it would be impermissible to do with the entire asset what the School has already been doing with portions of the asset. This is a fundamental and plain attempt at obfuscation—a pretense by people who have been converting property that does not belong to them that it would be impermissible for its owner to do precisely the same thing—and calls into question the honesty of this group’s recommendations.

There is a current question, of what happened to the money that they obtained from the sale of these peripheral portions of the trust estate along Hope, along Olney, and along Arlington. If this money was placed in a trust fund and preserved, with the income from this trust fund going to the support of the School, then the conversion may have been proper; if, however, this money has evaporated, then what has happened legally qualifies either as incompetence or as Grand Theft — although presumably the Statute of Limitations for Grand Theft would by now have rendered criminal penalties no longer an option, and civil penalties the only available mode of restitution.

2009

May 17, Sunday: There was an “informational session”⁶⁶ at 7PM at the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in regard to incorporation of the [Moses Brown School](#):

Fifth Month 2009

To: Friends in the New England Yearly Meeting family:

Re: Proposed Moses Brown School incorporation and invitation to 5/17/2009 Informational Session, 6:30pm Providence Meetinghouse

For several years, Yearly Meeting has discussed and prayed over its relationship with Moses Brown School (MBS). Many Friends recognized that corporate restructure was probably needed for the benefit of the School as well as of NEYM. The matter of liability has been an issue widely discussed, as have the legal and logistical problems presented because of the unusual corporate relationships of NEYM and its unincorporated operating divisions (including MBS, Friends Home and Friends Camp). At the same time, Friends recognized that Yearly Meeting may not have adequately lived up to its responsibility regarding the gift of deed of Moses Brown to NEYM.

At Sessions last year, Friends directed Permanent Board to “discern whether it is necessary to create a new corporate structure to ensure, as Friend Moses Brown mandated” the continued effective governance of the school, given the financial and legal realities of today. (Minute 57).

Permanent Board in turn determined that prospective by-laws of an incorporated School would serve as the principle tool to insure such effective governance. Hence, Permanent Board and

66. Notice, please, that what “informational session” means is “we’re not asking you, we’re telling you.”



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Moses Brown School Board of Overseers jointly created an ad hoc committee to draft said by-laws. The draft was presented to Permanent Board at our March 21 meeting, and the following minute resulted:

Minute 09-20: On behalf of the ad-hoc Moses Brown School by-laws committee (which consisted of Russell Carpenter, Richard Frechette, Habib Gorgi, Joanne Hoffman, Christopher McCandless, James Reavis and Betsy Zimmerman), Richard Frechette presented the latest draft of the by-laws, which address comments of Permanent Board members. These are a necessary part of a recommendation to incorporate the Moses Brown School. We approve the proposed by-laws. We will recommend to sessions that MBS become incorporated. We understand that these by-laws call us to a deeper nurture of and engagement with the school. They affirm our mutual goal of Quaker education for all, including Quaker children and poor children. We trust the Committee for Nurturing Friends Education at Moses Brown School will ensure continuing evaluation and growth.

It is the sense of the Permanent Board that the draft by-laws of the prospective Moses Brown School corporation:

- Continues and deepens the relationship of NEYM and Moses Brown School, both immediately and for the long term;
- Requires that Quaker process be followed in the conduct of business;
- Establishes a permanent mechanism jointly subscribe to by MBS and NEYM to continually evaluate how Moses Brown School will provide a Quaker Education.

While Permanent Board has discerned the appropriateness of this change, we recognize that the change is major and demands careful discernment on the part of our full Yearly Meeting family, and that such discernment should begin in advance of Sessions. Hence we are distributing the draft by-laws now for review, which can be downloaded from the Yearly Meeting website, neym.org <<http://neym.org/mbs/mbs-bylaws.html>>. For those unconnected to the internet and unable to obtain a copy from a f/Friend, please contact the Yearly Meeting office for a paper copy.

Permanent Board, jointly with the Moses Brown School administration, will sponsor a discussion session focused on the proposed change and the draft by-laws, to be held at the Providence Friends Meetinghouse, 99 Morris Ave. Providence on Sunday evening May 17. We will have refreshments and fellowship at 6:30PM, and begin formal discussion at 7:00PM.

In peace,
Richard Frechette, Clerk of Permanent Board



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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: September 17, 2013



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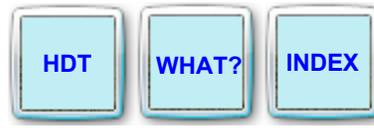
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ARRGH ATOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

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@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.