

## GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

**“THINKING MORE OF THE WINE THAN THE BRINE”**

**AS WE SUSPECT THAT SOME DO AT NEWPORT**

CAPE COD: The time must come when this coast will be a place of resort for those New-Englanders who really wish to visit the seaside. At present it is wholly unknown to the fashionable world, and probably it will never be agreeable to them. If it is merely a ten-pin alley, or a circular railway, or an ocean of mint-julep, that the visitor is in search of, -if he thinks more of the wine than the brine, as I suspect some do at Newport,- I trust that for a long time he will be disappointed here. But this shore will never be more attractive than it is now. Such beaches as are fashionable are here made and unmade in a day, I may almost say, by the sea shifting its sands. Lynn and Nantasket! this bare and bended arm it is that makes the bay in which they lie so snugly. What are springs and waterfalls? Here is the spring of springs, the waterfall of waterfalls. A storm in the fall or winter is the tide to visit it; a light-house or a fisherman's hut the true hotel. A man may stand there and put all America behind him.



**AQUIDNECK AT THE BEGINNING**



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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**1700**

Three [Rhode Island](#) vessels sailed from [Newport](#) to Africa, and then to Barbados with cargos of [slaves](#).

A minister of the Church of England in [Newport](#) was pulling together the 1st public library to be found in [Rhode Island](#). This was the Reverend Thomas Bray, and the library amounted to approximately a hundred volumes, 57 of which were of a theological character useful only for preachers. The other volumes were also of a generally religious bent, and over and above these there were on file about a hundred pastoral letters. We can probably guess –guess safely– that nowhere in these religious volumes, and nowhere in these pastoral letters, would we have been able to encounter any troubling thoughts about the iniquity of the [international slave trade](#).

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

August 17, Saturday (Old Style): [Friend Daniel Gould](#) reported on the death watch of an infant in [Newport, Rhode Island](#):

In an assemblage of people, sitting together in silence, in a house by the corpse of a dead infant ready for Burial & being a silence, comes in the High mosier (a papist Preacher,) and sett [sic] it may a minute or two, but silence in an assemblage being a strange thing unto him, he soon spoke to y<sup>e</sup> purpose & saying, "here is silence; and though in silence many have a good meditation yet meditation edifies not the people." "There must be Doctrine of spirit to edify y<sup>e</sup> church" as if meditation was not profitable for Doctrine, ffor [sic] without meditation man runs a great hazard in his Doctrine of words, confusedly along, as indeed did he at that very time. Solomon saith "a fools mouth is his own destruction, and his lips a snare to soulls" Pro. 18. 7. But the Psalmist saith – "I will meditate of all thy works and talk of y<sup>e</sup> doings" Psa. 77-12. So here is meditation before talking.

**ANTI-CATHOLICISM**



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**1702**

William Clark commented that in this year “every man in [Newport](#) is either a [pirate](#) or [privateerman](#).”

**RHODE ISLAND**

William Mayes received a license to sell strong drink in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). When his estate would be inventoried upon his death shortly afterward, nothing would appear to remain of any [pirate](#) treasure trove accumulated by his brigantine *Pearl*.

The petition of 1699 by, among others, former [pirate](#) Captain [Thomas Paine](#), for an Anglican church in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), was successful, and Trinity Church was founded.<sup>1</sup>

The Reverend Cotton Mather had some choice remarks to put on the record about [Rhode Island](#) in his *MAGNALIA CHRISTI AMERICANA: OR, THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF NEW-ENGLAND, FROM ITS FIRST PLANTING IN THE YEAR 1620, UNTO THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1698*, published in this year in London.

**REVEREND COTTON MATHER**

September 17, Thursday (Old Style): Governor Joseph Dudley of Massachusetts, in his military capacity, also exercised considerable authority over the colony of [Rhode Island](#).

**GOVERNOR JOSEPH DUDLEY**

He visited [Newport](#) during this month to assume his command.

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

1. Episcopal worship had begun in [Rhode Island](#) in 1635 with the arrival in what is now [Cumberland](#) of the Reverend [William Blaxton](#) (or Blackstone), an Anglican priest. He had preached regularly to native Americans and to white settlers beneath the “Catholic Oak” in Lonsdale but had created no church edifices. He had simply ridden his white bull from settlement to settlement, preaching and administering the sacraments. This first edifice, in Newport, would be followed in 1707 by St. Paul’s of Narragansett, in 1720 by St. Michael’s of Bristol, and in 1722 by King’s Church, which is now St. John’s Cathedral, in Providence. The American Revolution would bring hard times to the four Rhode Island parishes of the Church of England. In [Wickford](#) and [Providence](#), when the congregations would seek to remove prayers for the king and royal family from their services, Rector Samuel Fayerweather and the Reverend John Graves would deconsecrate the church buildings. The Wickford church building would become a barracks for Continental soldiers who were watching the British in occupied Newport. In 1778, British warships would bombard and burn St. Michael’s in Bristol by mistake, because they had been informed that the town’s Congregational Church was being used as a store for gunpowder. After the Revolution, with the Loyalists departed, Trinity Church in [Newport](#) would be occupied for awhile by a [Baptist](#) congregation. On November 18, 1790, the Reverend William Smith of Trinity Church in Newport and the Reverend Moses Badger of St. John’s in Providence would meet in Newport to unite their various churches under the Reverend Samuel Seabury, D.D., Episcopal Bishop of Connecticut.



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1703

February: A [Jew](#) died in [Boston](#). Because the tenets of this religion were understood to require burial within 24 hours, the corpse was dispatched posthaste (or, one might say, postchaise) to Bristol, and then conveyed by ferry to the Jewish cemetery at [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

During this month there was another death in Boston:

*“[Ebenezer Franklin](#) of the South Church, a male-Infant of 16 months old, was drown’d in a Tub of Suds.”*

1st 4th mo.: The records of the [Rhode-Island](#) quarterly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) indicate that by June 4th construction had begun near [Providence](#) on a meetinghouse for the Friends, on a house lot in the vicinity of the dwelling of Eleazer Arnold:

As to what relates to Providence meeting-house, some of the Friends appointed having been there, and it seems, could not fully resolve what the last quarterly meeting requested, by reason of the land given to set a meeting-house on was so nigh the common road, so that the subscribers desired that it might be exchanged for some higher up; it might be so this meeting might judge it convenient, that those Friends that the meeting appointed before, be yet continued to make a further progress in the premises, answerable to the meeting’s request, and make return of what they do therein, at the next monthly men’s meeting at Portsmouth, on Rhode-Island, if may, without too much difficulty, or at furtherest, at the next men’s meeting at [Newport](#), about 21st 5th mo., so that one of these meetings, in behalf of the quarterly meeting, may act and transact, as near as may be, to what the precedent quarterly meeting hath proposed in the premises, which monthly meeting, we also desire, to acquaint the next quarterly meeting what they do in the premises.

...

Inasmuch as the monthly men’s meeting of Rhode-Island at Portsmouth, the 27th of the 2d mo. 1703, did encourage, upon their request, the Providence Friends getting their meeting house proposed to be built near Eleazer Arnold’s, the major part collecting thereto being willing, the which matter is also approved by this meeting, understanding also, that it is generally agreed on amongst themselves, and now that the Rhode-Island monthly meeting takes notice and encourages the subscription in behalf and until the next quarterly meeting, &c.



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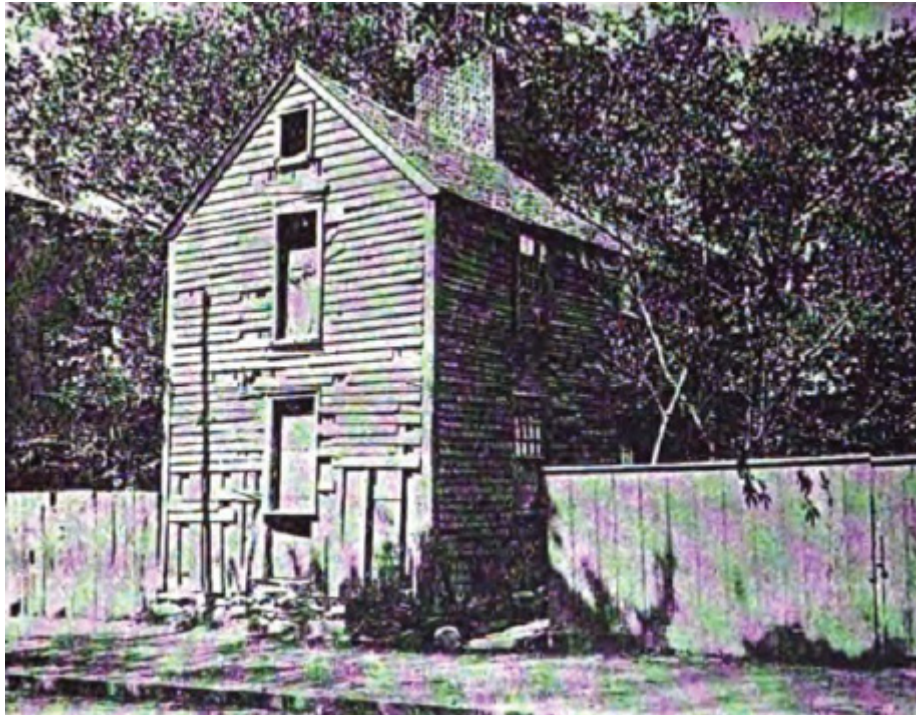
**1704**

[Palsgrave Williams](#) became a freeman of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

**1705**

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

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



**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**



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**1706**

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

**GREAT MEETINGHOUSE**

June: When a French [privateer](#) captured a [Rhode Island](#) sloop off Block Island, the governor of the colony sent Captain John Wanton with two sloops “against Her Majesty’s enemies” and they recaptured the prize vessel and overcame the privateer and brought both ships into [Newport](#).

**1707**

Spring: In [Rhode Island](#), after the wife of a [slaveholder](#) of [Kingstown](#), Thomas Mumford, was found murdered, one of the family’s slaves was found dead on the shore at Little Compton. It was presumed that this black man had thrown himself into the bay “by reason he would not be taken alive.” When the body was brought into the harbor of [Newport](#), the assembly ordered that the head, legs, and arms be cut from the torso and the parts “hung up in some public place, near to town, to public view and his body to be burnt to ashes that it may, if it please God, be something of a terror to others from perpetrating the like barbarity for the future.”

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**





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1708

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

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

COLONEL ROBERT QUARY

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

GOV. SAMUEL CRANSTON

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



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



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

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

Then we went to Bristol together and appeared before



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

JOHN TUCKER  
WILLIAM WOOD  
JOHN LAPHAM, JR.  
DELIVERANCE SMITH

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

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

**VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES**



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The population of [Rhode Island](#) at this point, its first census, was 7,181. Of the 426 black people in the colony, 220 were in [Newport](#) (folks there would become so worried that the local black population was too numerous, that they would put a special tax on every new black [slave](#) imported!<sup>2</sup>)

THE TRAFFIC IN MAN-BODY

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In 1652 Rhode Island passed a law designed to prohibit life slavery in the colony. It declared that "Whereas, there is a common course practised amongst English men to buy negers, to that end they may have them for service or slaves forever; for the preventing 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 assignes longer than ten yeares, or untill they come to bee twentie four yeares of age, if they bee taken in under fourteen, from the time of their coming within the liberties of this Collonie. And at the end or terme of ten yeares to sett them free, as the manner is with the English servants. And that man that will not let them goe free, or shall sell them away elsewhere, to that end that they may bee enslaved to others for a long time, hee or they shall forfeit to the Collonie forty pounds."<sup>3</sup>

This law was for a time enforced,<sup>4</sup> but by the beginning of the eighteenth century it had either been repealed or become a dead letter; for the Act of 1708 recognized perpetual slavery, and laid an impost of £3 on Negroes imported.<sup>5</sup> This duty was really a tax on the transport trade, and produced a steady income for twenty years.<sup>6</sup> From the year 1700 on, the citizens of this State engaged more and more in the carrying trade, until Rhode Island became the greatest slave-trader in America. Although she did not import many slaves for her own use, she became the clearing-house for the trade of other colonies. Governor Cranston, as early as 1708, reported that between 1698 and 1708 one hundred and three vessels were built in the State, all of which were trading to the West Indies and the Southern colonies.<sup>7</sup> They took out lumber and brought back molasses, in most cases making a slave voyage in between. From this, the trade grew. Samuel Hopkins, about 1770, was shocked at the state of the trade: more than thirty distilleries were running in the colony, and one hundred and fifty vessels were in the slave-trade.<sup>8</sup> "Rhode Island," said he, "has been more deeply interested in the slave-trade, and has enslaved more Africans than any other colony in New England." Later, in 1787, he wrote: "The inhabitants of Rhode Island, especially those of Newport, have had by far the

2. Notice, if you please: this fact of prior taxation to interfere with the addition of new slaves, motivated not by any desire to purge the earth of the iniquity of the international slave trade but by a simple, self-serving fear of large numbers of black people, or a distaste for blackness (a "Negrophobia"), offers an interesting new perspective on the later banning of the [international slave trade](#). Said banning **may or may not** have been motivated by the fine motivations that would be being offered in self-justification!

3. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, I. 240.

4. Cf. letter written in 1681: NEW ENGLAND REGISTER, XXXI. 75-6. Cf. also Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, I. 240.

5. The text of this act is lost (COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 34; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 31). The Acts of Rhode Island were not well preserved, the first being published in Boston in 1719. Perhaps other whole acts are lost.

6. E.g., it was expended to pave the streets of Newport, to build bridges, etc.: RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 191-3, 225.

7. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 55-60.

8. Patten, REMINISCENCES OF SAMUEL HOPKINS (1843), page 80.



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greater share in this traffic, of all these United States. This trade in human species has been the first wheel of commerce in Newport, on which every other movement in business has chiefly depended. That town has been built up, and flourished in times past, at the expense of the blood, the liberty, and happiness of the poor Africans; and the inhabitants have lived on this, and by it have gotten most of their wealth and riches."<sup>9</sup> The Act of 1708 was poorly enforced. The "good intentions" of its framers "were wholly frustrated" by the clandestine "hiding and conveying said negroes out of the town [Newport] into the country, where they lie concealed."<sup>10</sup> The act was accordingly strengthened by the Acts of 1712 and 1715, and made to apply to importations by land as well as by sea.<sup>11</sup> The Act of 1715, however, favored the trade by admitting African Negroes free of duty. The chaotic state of Rhode Island did not allow England often to review her legislation; but as soon as the Act of 1712 came to notice it was disallowed, and accordingly repealed in 1732.<sup>12</sup> Whether the Act of 1715 remained, or whether any other duty act was passed, is not clear. While the foreign trade was flourishing, the influence of the Friends and of other causes eventually led to a movement against slavery as a local institution. Abolition societies multiplied, and in 1770 an abolition bill was ordered by the Assembly, but it was never passed.<sup>13</sup> Four years later the city of Providence resolved that "as personal liberty is an essential part of the natural rights of mankind," the importation of slaves and the system of slavery should cease in the colony.<sup>14</sup> This movement finally resulted, in 1774, in an act "prohibiting the importation of Negroes into this Colony," – a law which curiously illustrated the attitude of Rhode Island toward the slave-trade. The preamble of the act declared: "Whereas, the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which, that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; – Therefore," etc. The statute then proceeded to enact "that for the future, no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free...." The logical ending of such an act would have been a clause prohibiting the participation of Rhode Island citizens in the slave-trade. Not only was such a clause omitted, but the following was inserted instead: "Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro

9. Hopkins, WORKS (1854), II. 615.

10. Preamble of the Act of 1712.

11. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 131-5, 138, 143, 191-3.

12. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 471.

13. Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 304, 321, 337. For a probable copy of the bill, see NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 299.

14. A man dying intestate left slaves, who became thus the property of the city; they were freed, and the town made the above resolve, May 17, 1774, in town meeting: Staples, ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE (1843), page 236.



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or mulatto slave brought from the coast of Africa, into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this colony, and which negro or mulatto slave could not be disposed of in the West Indies, but shall be brought into this colony. Provided, that the owner of such negro or mulatto slave give bond ... that such negro or mulatto slave shall be exported out of the colony, within one year from the date of such bond; if such negro or mulatto be alive, and in a condition to be removed.”<sup>15</sup>

In 1779 an act to prevent the sale of slaves out of the State was passed,<sup>16</sup> and in 1784, an act gradually to abolish slavery.<sup>17</sup> Not until 1787 did an act pass to forbid participation in the slave-trade. This law laid a penalty of £100 for every slave transported and £1000 for every vessel so engaged.<sup>18</sup>

1710

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

GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

15. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 251-2.

16. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 329; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 444; RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VIII. 618.

17. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, X. 7-8; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 506.

18. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 333; NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 298-9. The number of slaves in Rhode Island has been estimated as follows: —

In 1708, 426. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 59.

In 1730, 1,648. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL TRACTS, No. 19, pt. 2, page 99.

In 1749, 3,077. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1756, 4,697. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1774, 3,761. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 253.



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1711

Nathaniel Brown was granted land to establish a shipyard on Webosset Neck (now downtown [Providence](#)), and in this year the 1st ship was constructed.

RHODE ISLAND



Initially, the sort of ship to be constructed in this new shipyard would be the small sloop of shallow draft — the sort of vessel needed to transport local cargoes down to [Newport](#) for loading there onto ocean-going craft.

The [Religious Society of Friends](#) in Pennsylvania agreed with the righteousness of, and agreed to implement, the petition “against the traffic of menbody” with which they had been being struggling since 1688.<sup>19</sup>

“... the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, on a representation from the Quarterly Meeting of Chester, that the buying and encouraging the importation of negroes was still practised by some of the members of the society, again repeated and enforced the observance of the advice issued in 1696, and further directed all merchants and factors to write to their correspondents and discourage their sending any more negroes.” Bettle, “Notices of Negro Slavery,” in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM. (1864), I. 386.



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Two of the original four signers were still alive<sup>20</sup> and as far as the people of Pennsylvania were concerned, the days of [international slave trade](#) and of [slave](#) trading in general were **over**. Done done done. Been there done that got the T-shirt!

### 1712

This year's map of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) identified the [Jewish](#) cemetery as being on "Jew Street."

In this year the colony of [Rhode Island](#) was able, potentially, to field a force of approximately 2,500 fighting men. John Wanton (1672-1740), who had been born into a [Quaker](#) family but had rebelled and become a colonel in the militia, in this year repented of his rebellion. He would become active, and in the future would minister, in the [Newport](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#):

This John Wanton had been a valiant colonel:  
But now he has ceased from carnal wars and is employed  
in Christ's service against the devil and his works.

### READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

19. Unfortunately, the [Quakers](#) of [Rhode Island](#) would not initially be in accord with this new sentiment against the traffic in menbody. Below appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#):



20. Refer to the poem "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim" by Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) about one of the four original signers of this petition, Francis Daniel Pastorius: "The world forgets, but the wise angels know."



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[Abraham Redwood](#), the father, arrived on the North American continent. We don't know whether he initially settled his family in Newport, in Salem, or somewhere between these two towns. However, we know that [Friend Abraham Redwood](#), the son, would grow up in [Newport](#) on [Rhode Island](#)'s [Aquidneck Island](#). As a young man may well have gotten his education in Philadelphia. Following the death of his father and his older siblings, he would come into immense wealth as the owner of the sugar plantation "Cassada Garden" in Antigua and its large population of [slaves](#).

February 27, Wednesday (1711, Old Style): At [Newport, Rhode Island](#) the General Assembly laid a duty upon the import of negro [slaves](#). (Several decades later, His Majesty the King of England would order them to repeal this duty on the import of negro slaves into the colony — and they would obediently render this revenue act of theirs null and void.)

**INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE**

**1713**

David Leed's [almanac](#) for the year 1713: THE AMERICAN ALMANACK FOR THE YEAR OF CHRISTIAN ACCOUNT, 1713. Despite being produced in the New-York colony, by William Bradford, this almanac was also being retailed by the bookseller Elkana Pembroke of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

Daniel Leed's almanacs had been printed annually by William Bradford at Philadelphia or New York from 1689 to 1713. On some of the 1713 edition the imprint was omitted and the name of the bookseller was put in its place. Pembroke was perhaps one of the common class of itinerant booksellers who moved about from town to town at that time. At any rate I have not found his name in any contemporary list of Newport inhabitants. This 1713 almanac was the last one by Daniel Leeds. His son, Titan Leeds, continued the series annually from 1714 to 1744.

On [Nantucket Island](#), [Friend](#) Tabitha Trott Frost incautiously married again, to a Dr. Joseph Brown, despite the fact that her previous husband, a [privateer](#), had been considered lost at sea for only a few years. The absent husband, John Frost, would turn up shortly, leading to a charge of bigamy against the wife. Friend Tabitha had not been disowned when her husband became a privateer in defiance of the Peace Testimony and had not been disowned for marrying a non-Quaker, but this was her third strike and she was out! She would be [disowned](#) by the Nantucket monthly meeting, and would move with her new husband the doctor to [Newport, Rhode Island](#). This is on record as the first disownment ever, in the Nantucket meeting. Tabitha's mother would in shame no longer seat herself on the special bench for the meeting's elders.

**QUAKER DISOWNMENT**



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

July 13, Monday (Old Style): On this day a treaty was arranged between red and white in New England, following Queen Anne's War. At [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the military stores of gunpowder were given over to the charge of the treasurer and the cannon were all coated in tar for preservation, and laid out in long rows upon logs along Governor's Wharf.

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

The native headmen and the British negotiators signed these papers at Portsmouth, New Hampshire (see following). This treaty may well have spawned the world's-record longest book title! A history, by Samuel Penhallow, would be entitled THE HISTORY OF THE WARS OF NEW-ENGLAND, WITH THE EASTERN INDIANS. OR, A NARRATIVE OF THEIR CONTINUED PERFIDY AND CRUELTY, FROM THE 10TH OF AUGUST, 1703. TO THE PEACE RENEWED 13TH OF JULY, 1713. AND FROM THE 25TH OF JULY, 1722. TO THEIR SUBMISSION 15TH DECEMBER, 1725. WHICH WAS RATIFIED AUGUST 5TH 1726. BY SAMUEL PENHALLOW, ESQR.; [TWO LINES OF LATIN TEXT].

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM





NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

The Treaty of Utrecht between Great Britain and Spain.

"Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the most serene and most potent princess Anne, by the grace of God, Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. and the most serene and most potent Prince Philip V the Catholick King of Spain, concluded at Utrecht, the 2/13 Day of July, 1713."

Art. XII. "The Catholick King doth furthermore hereby give and grant to her Britannick majesty, and to the company of her subjects appointed for that purpose, as well the subjects of Spain, as all others, being excluded, the contract for introducing negroes into several parts of the dominions of his Catholick Majesty in America, commonly called *el Pacto de el Assiento de Negros*, for the space of thirty years successively, beginning from the first day of the month of May, in the year 1713, with the same conditions on which the French enjoyed it, or at any time might or ought to enjoy the same, together with a tract or tracts of Land to be allotted by the said Catholick King, and to be granted to the company aforesaid, commonly called *la Compania de el Assiento*, in some convenient place on the river of Plata, (no duties or revenues being payable by the said company on that account, during the time of the abovementioned contract, and no longer) and this settlement of the said society, or those tracts of land, shall be proper and sufficient for planting, and sowing, and for feeding cattle for the subsistence of those who are in the service of the said company, and of their negroes; and that the said negroes may be there kept in safety till they are sold; and moreover, that the ships belonging to the said company may come close to land, and be secure from any danger. But it shall always be lawful for the Catholick King, to appoint an officer in the said place or settlement, who may take care that nothing be done or practised contrary to his royal interests. And all who manage the affairs of the said company there, or belong to it, shall be subject to the inspection of the aforesaid officer, as to all matters relating to the tracts of land abovementioned. But if any doubts, difficulties, or controversies, should arise between the said officer and the managers for the said company, they shall be referred to the determination of the governor of Buenos Ayres. The Catholick King has been likewise pleased to grant to the said company, several other extraordinary advantages, which are more fully and amply explained in the contract of the Assiento, which was made and concluded at Madrid, the 26th day of the month of March, of this present year 1713. Which contract, or *Assiento de Negros*, and all the clauses, conditions, privileges and immunities contained therein, and which are not contrary to this article, are and shall be deemed, and taken to be, part of this treaty, in the same manner as if they had been here inserted word for word." John Almon, TREATIES OF PEACE, ALLIANCE, AND COMMERCE, BETWEEN GREAT-BRITAIN AND OTHER POWERS, I. 168-80.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

SLAVERY



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1714

By the end of Queen Anne's War, the government of [Rhode Island](#) was firmly committed to the eradication of [piracy](#).

1715

[Rhode Island](#) land banks begin issuing bills of credit on loan. According to the historian John MacInnes, "The key to understanding Rhode Island's currency policy up to 1750 is that it was in fact a parasitical device."

It would have been in about this year that [Palsgrave Williams](#) got married with Damaris Carr Williams, a *Mayflower* descendant who was related to the [Rhode Island pirate](#) Thomas Paine (this [Newport](#) couple would have a son also named Palsgrave Williams — but no pirate stuff attaches to the namesake son).

1716

The [Quaker](#) meetinghouse on [Nantucket Island](#), erected in 1711, was expanded at this point so that it would seat the more than 300 [Friends](#) who desired to take part in silent worship. At this point some Quakers of the [Newport, Rhode Island](#) community were engaging in the "[triangular trade](#)," involving as one of its legs the bulk manufacture of rum and as another of its legs the [international slave trade](#),<sup>21</sup> and some black [slaves](#) were present on Nantucket, where at least one Quaker, Friend Stephen Hussey, was a [slaveholder](#). During this year an Englishman, Friend [John Farmer](#), was making a missionary tour of the colonies attempting to persuade us that chattel slavery was "not in agreement with Truth." Winning the support of Friend Priscilla Starbuck Coleman, Friend John was able to persuade the monthly meeting on the island into a minute depicting enslavement as immoral. It was "not agreeable to Truth for Friends to purchase slaves and keep them for a term of life."<sup>22</sup> This declaration made the Nantucket monthly meeting the 1st group of Friends anywhere in the world to disavow human enslavement, but it would seem that the island's Quakers would fall back somewhat from their commitment to racial fairness, for some sixteen years, while Friend John's success on the island



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

would not be matched by any great success on the mainland of the American colonies — in fact, in the Philadelphia meeting, he would be put under dealing (visited by an official committee and struggled with), and he would, eventually, be publicly disowned by the Friends. Furthermore, the Friends in England would honor the American disownment, so that Friend John would come to be regarded as troublesome on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Flushing Quakers who would speak out against slavery would include Friend Horseman Mullenix and Friend Matthew Franklin, who would come with another antislavery Friend John, an American one, Friend John Woolman (not yet born), when he would travel on Paumanok Long Island and visit their monthly meeting to

21. Below appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near Newport on Aquidneck Island:



22. Refer to Friend Henry J. Cadbury's JOHN FARMER'S FIRST AMERICAN JOURNEY, published in Worcester in 1944.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

speaking against [slavery](#).



Costumes of Philadelphia Quakers

26th of 1st month (that would be March, in the non-Quaker calendar): Daniel Gould died in his home in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) at an age of about 90. His body would be buried in the Friends Burying Ground near the Great Meeting House.

1717

The [Newport, Rhode Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) expressed concern over the importing and keeping of [slaves](#) from the West Indies and elsewhere.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

September 5, Thursday (Old Style): An “Act of Grace” was proclaimed, under which [pirates](#) could come in from the seas and not be prosecuted. One of the seamen who “came in” during this amnesty was the [Newport, Rhode Island](#) pirate Captain [Palsgrave Williams](#). Other pirates fled from their base in the Bahamas to Madagascar.

A List of such Pirates as Surrenderd themselves at Providence to Captain Vincent Pearse Commander of His Majesty’s Ship Phenix and accepted of his Majesties most Gracious Pardon and had Certificates from the said Commander to carry them to some Government



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Note those that are marked with a cross X before their names are gone out Pirating againe.

Packer ADAMS	Thomas LAMB	Richard TAYLOR
Arthur ALLEN	John ALLEN	Martin TOWNSEND
James COATES	Martin CARRILL	[x]Michael SWEMSTONE
Jno DALRIMPLE	Thomas CLIES	Samuel RICHARDSON
Benjamin HORNOGOLD	Jno HIPPERSON	Robert BROWN
Josiah BURGESS	Jno CHARLTON	Henry CHICK
Francis LESLEY	Francis CHARNOCK	Robert HUNTER
Thomas NICHOLS	[x]David MERREDITH	James MOODEY
Palsgrave WILLIAMS	[x]Edward NORLAND	Richard KAINÉ
John LEWIS	[x]James GOODSIR	Thomas BIRDSELL
Richard NOWLAND	Dennis McCARTHY	Robert DRYBRO
John MARTIN	Rowland HARBIN	[x]Daniel CARMAN
William CONNER	George GATER	[x]John DUNKIN
Thomas GRAHAME	George MANN	George FEVERSHAM
Thomas TERRILL	Richard RICHARDS	John BARKER
John EALLING	Anthony JACOBS	Thomas CODD
Robert WISHART	Nabel CLARKE	William ROBERTS
James GATRICKS	Henry HAWKINS	John WATERS
Edward STACEY	Daniel WHITE	William AUSTIN
John TENNET	Edward SAVORY	Francis ROPER
John HUNT	Peter MARSHALL	Griffith WILLIAMS
John PEARSE	[x]Archibald MURRY	Edward GORMAN
James BRYAN	Daniel HILL	John CLARKE
Henry BERRY	William SAVOY	[x]Richard BISHOP

1718

8th of 5th month: The widowed Wait Coggeshall Gould died at the age of 84 years. Her body would be buried by the side of her husband in the Friends Burying Ground near the Great Meeting House of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1719**

Captain Benjamin Norton sailed from [Providence](#) to the West Indies. John Menzies, then New England’s Royal Secretary of the Admiralty, wrote that “Norton’s vessel by observation is more suited for [piracy](#) than trade.” Norton joined notorious pirate chief [Bartholomew Roberts](#) AKA “[Black Bart](#)” in the West Indies, and together they raided shipping.<sup>23</sup>



The owner of Norton’s ship, Joseph Whipple, would later become Deputy Governor of [Rhode Island](#). Both Whipple and Norton, wrote Admiral Menzies, “carried off rich cargo, with other traders of [Newport](#), in sloops to Providence ... yet when I went to the Governor of Rhode Island, he would not give up the goods.”

**1720**

Fall: Captain Benjamin Norton of [Newport](#) and Joseph Whipple of [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#) fitted out a brigantine for trade with the West Indies.

23. This Welsh [pirate](#) from Pembrokeshire, ranging in a 2-year freebooting career from the African coast to South America and from the West Indies to Newfoundland, had seized more than 400 ships. “[Black Bart](#)” had been a teetotalter, drinking nothing but tea, had ordered his musicians to play hymns on a Sunday, and had sported a great diamond cross he had looted from a Portuguese man-of-war. His personal pennant had him attired in his fighting costume made entirely of red silk, holding in his right hand a flaming sword and in his left an hourglass, standing atop the severed heads of residents of the islands of Barbados (ABH=“A Barbadian’s Head”) and Martinique (AMH=“A Marinican’s Head”):





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1721

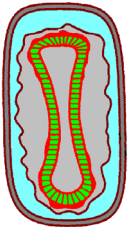
A Huguenot, Gabriel Bernon, settled at Providence, Rhode Island after trying out Boston and then Newport. He would help a bunch of wealthy retired pirates there found Trinity Church.

August 1, Tuesday (Old Style): Captain Benjamin Norton of Newport visited Governor John Cranston. He was a successful pirate, yes, and Rhode Island was becoming hostile to pirates, yes, but he was also a Rhode Islander –he was one of our own –and money is money.<sup>24</sup>

1722

March 30, Friday (Old Style): A report from Newport, Rhode Island:

There has been lately a surprizing Appearance been seen at Narraganset, which is the Occasion of much Discourse here, and is variously represented; but for the Substance of it, it is a matter of Fact beyond Dispute, it having been seen by Abundance of People, and one Night about 20 Persons at the same time, who came together for that Purpose. The Truth as near as we can gather from the Relations of several Persons, is as follows: This last Winter there was a Woman died at Narraganset of the Small Pox, and since she was buried there has happened upon her Grave chiefly, in various other Places, a bright Light as the appearance of Fire. This Appearance commonly begins about 9 or 10 of the Clock at Night, and sometimes as soon as it is dark. It Appears variously as to Time, Place, Shape and Magnitude but commonly on or above the Grave, and sometimes about and upon the Barn and Trees adjacent; sometimes in several Parts, but commonly in one entire Body. The first Appearance is commonly small, but increases to a great Bigness and Brightness so that in a dark Night They can see the Grass and Barque of the trees very plainly; and when it is at its Heighth they can see Sparks fly from the Appearance like Sparks of Fire, and the likeness of a Person in the midst wrapt in a Sheet with its Arms folded. This Appearance moves with incredible Swiftness sometimes the Distance of Half a Mile from one Place to another in the Twinkling of an eye. It commonly appears every Night, and continues till Break of Day. A Woman in the Neighbourhood says she has seen it every Night for these six Weeks past.



24. Pecunia non olet.



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1723**

Spring: Two [pirate](#) vessels that had been capturing ships off the Atlantic coast were intercepted when they mistakenly attempted to attack the HMS *Greyhound* under Captain Peter Solgard, supposing this to be just another merchant vessel. 36 of the pirates, including Edward Law and Charles Harris, were taken to [Newport](#) to be tried. In a 2-day trial, 26 of the 36 were sentenced to hang (2 were recommended for royal pardon and 8 were acquitted). Although 3 of the condemned 26 managed an escape from the jail, they were recaptured. For the very first time in [Rhode Island](#), a conviction was obtained in a case of [piracy](#) and the condemned pirates were [hanged](#). When the 26 men were hanged, on Gravelly Point below the highwater mark, their pirate “Blew Flag” was nailed to their scaffold. This pirate flag was described as depicting on its blue background “an Anatomy with an Hour-Glass in one hand and a dart in the heart with 3 drops of Blood proceeding from it, in the other” (an “Anatomy” was not exactly a depiction of a human skeleton, but filled approximately the same iconic function).



(It is a lot easier to hang strangers, than it is to hang one’s friends and neighbors! Despite the fact that Newport had been for like generations a pirate community, or at least a community in cahoots with pirates –a community with its hands deep in the pockets of pirates– only one of these 26 [hanged](#) men, 28-year-old William Blades, had been a [Rhode Island](#) native.)<sup>25</sup>

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

25. There is a great similarity between this Rhode Island hanging of 26 pirates and a hanging of seven [pirates](#) that had occurred in 1718 on New Providence Island in the Bahamas. That hanging of seven had once and for all destroyed piracy as based on islands in the Caribbean. This hanging of twenty-six would once and for all destroy piracy as based in the Narragansett Bay of New England.



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October: The indentured apprentice Benjamin Franklin, beginning a lifetime of free thinking and of thinly disguised or quite blatant opportunism, walked away from his obligations to his elder half-brother James Franklin in Boston, moving to the city where brothers love one another, called Philadelphia. (In this year he also abandoned his vegetarian principles.)

Thus it was that in the pages of the New England Courant there appeared the following famous advertisement:

James Franklin, printer in Queen's Street, wants a likely lad for an apprentice.



Along the way, the ship stopped off in Newport, Rhode Island and picked up more passengers, some of whom were Quakers who would proffer to young Ben some gratis but valuable counsel.

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impress'd her I suppose with a degree of good will toward me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appear'd to encourage, she took me aside, and said: "Young man, I am concern'd for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is expos'd to; depend upon it, those are very bad women; I can see it in all their actions; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seem'd at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observ'd and heard that had escap'd my notice, but now convinc'd me she was right. I thank'd her for her kind advice, and promis'd to follow it. When we arriv'd at New York, they told me where they liv'd, and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain miss'd a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and, knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punish'd. So, tho' we had escap'd a sunken rock, which we scrap'd upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

Since Ben was only dealing with women during this period of his life for the purposes known as health and hygiene (otherwise known as purposes of venery), he confessed, of course this was the sort of advice he was prepared to pay attention to. Just use them, Ben, don't let them use you!

In Philadelphia he obtaining remunerative employment in a Mr. Keimer's printing-office, after encountering



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

some local [Quakers](#) whom, he noticed, also behaved considerably toward him:

### **Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"**

*Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and ask'd for bisket, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I made him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surpriz'd at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walk'd off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, corning round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.*

*Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy thro' labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.*

*Walking down again toward the river, and, looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I lik'd, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. Here I got a dinner; and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.*

Yeah, Quaker, don't try to out-sly young Ben the runaway, you're playing that game with an expert here!

**1724**

May 10, Sunday (Old Style): George Wanton was born in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



**NEWPORT**

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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

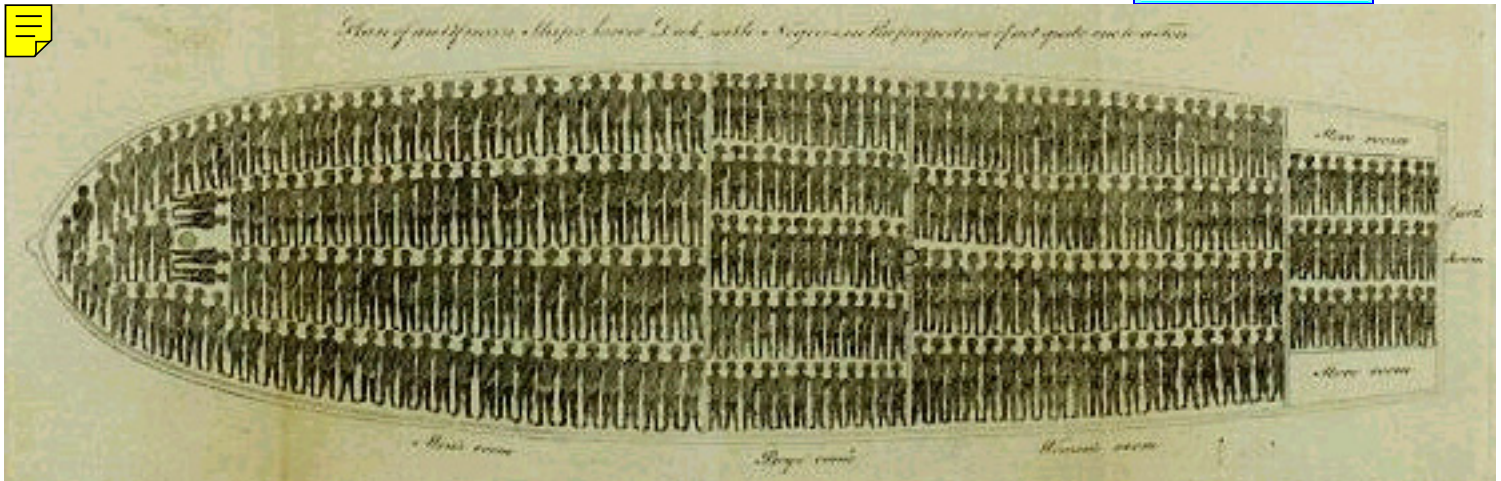
**1725**

[John Comer](#) relieved his redemption anxieties by having himself re-baptized, and was admitted to the [Baptist](#) church in Boston. He was invited to teach school at Swanzy in the Bay Colony, and moved there. He began preaching there, only to find himself becoming involved in a doctrinal dispute with elders of the congregation. He extricated himself from this situation by accepting an invitation to preach at [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#).

**SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY**

January 7, Thursday (1724, Old Style): Captain James Hester sailed his vessel from [Rhode Island](#) toward Africa. He was up to no good.

**MIDDLE PASSAGE**



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

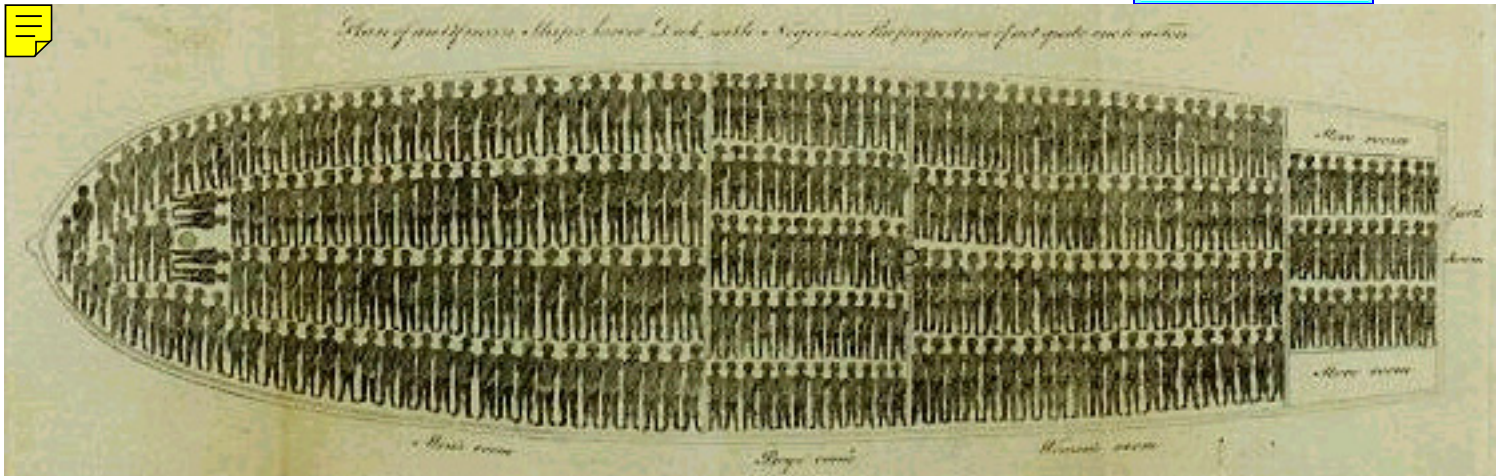
September 30, Thursday (Old Style): Captain James Hester brought his negrero, which had just been on a trip to the Guinea coast of Africa for slaves, into the safe harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

MIDDLE PASSAGE



December 28, Tuesday (Old Style): Captain Thurston sailed from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) toward Guinea. He was up to no good.

MIDDLE PASSAGE





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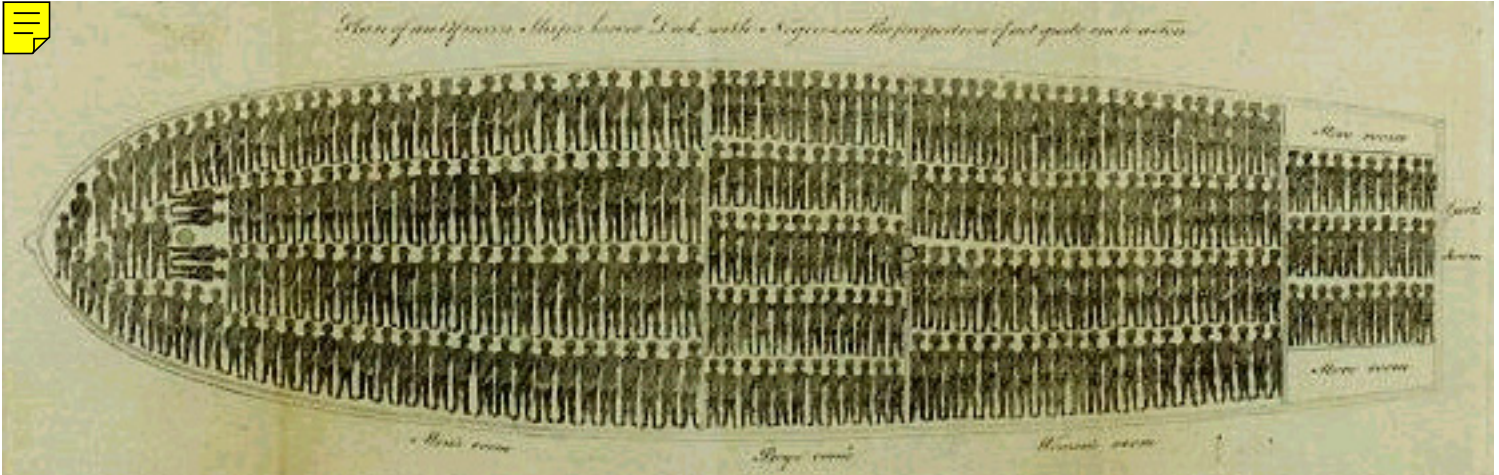
1726

John Comer and Mrs. Sarah Rogers of Newport, Rhode Island were married. He was ordained as a Baptist minister by William Peckom and Samuel Maxwell. In his diary, he declared the articles of his faith. Also, he prepared a listing of the other churches and pastors in Newport. Also, he described a murder, a suicide, and a remarkable rainbow of this year.

John Comer

SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY

In Rhode Island harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, two negros were being fitted out for the international slave trade. If an average cargo of slaves was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of something more than 200 souls would have been being transported over the dread Middle Passage during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.





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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1727

The [New England Courant](#) ceased publication. With his Boston printing press relocated to [Newport, Rhode Island](#), [James Franklin](#) produced a 17-page pamphlet entitled JOHN HAMMETT'S VINDICATION AND RELATION, and a 574-page volume entitled AN APOLOGY FOR THE TRUE CHRISTIAN DIVINITY, AS THE SAME IS HELD FORTH, AND PREACHED, BY THE PEOPLES CALLED IN SCORN [QUAKERS](#): &C. BY ROBERT BARCLAY. THE SIXTH EDITION IN ENGLISH.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

In [Rhode Island](#), Joseph Jenckes of [Providence](#) was elected as Governor. Since all his predecessors in that office had resided in [Newport](#), he removed with his family to that town.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

The Reverend [John Comer](#) described, in his diary, an attempted arson of "ye old Church" in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). He described the worst hurricane ever to strike there in historic memory. He described an earthquake, drownings, and a suicide.

SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY

February 28, Tuesday (1726, Old Style): Friend [Abraham Redwood](#) got married with Martha Coggeshall of [Newport](#). Soon after their marriage, the couple would build their town house on the west side of Thames Street, across from Fair Street, where Salas's Restaurant is now located. They would have their entire plot, including its gardens, enclosed by brick walls fitted with ornamental wrought iron gates they would import from London in 1731. The private wharf for the family's sailing vessels, a distribution point for the sugar produced on his [slave](#) plantation "Cassada Garden" on the island of Antigua, was located behind this house, in what is now referred to as the Perry Mill Wharf Area. In addition to their town house, the family owned an estate of more than 140 acres on West Main Road across from Union Street in [Portsmouth](#), extending down to the Narragansett Bay, which they purchased from Martha Coggeshall Redwood's father, Daniel Coggeshall. There they would build their summer house in 1743. They would develop one of the first [botanical](#) gardens in America and introduce all sorts of tropical fruits and flowers. They would live the good life.

Presumably, since they had beaucoup black slaves down on the island of Antigua –chopping cane for them in the tropical sun– they would have had black servants around their home, there in [Rhode Island](#) as well.



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

December 22, Friday (Old Style): [William Ellery](#)<sup>26</sup> was born at [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#), a son of Elizabeth Almy Ellery and the merchant [William Ellery](#), Sr., who among other activities engaged in the [international slave trade](#). The father, a product of [Harvard College](#), would provide substantially all of his namesake son's early education:

In regard both to the Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) and to the poet [Ellery Channing](#) of Thoreau's time period in Concord, bear in mind, as everyone else did during this period, that this name was a most famous name, for regardless of whoever gets credit for creating the [Declaration of Independence](#), a [William Ellery](#) (1727-1820) later cosigned it on behalf of [Rhode Island](#):

**New Hampshire:** *Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton*

**Massachusetts:** *John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry*

**Rhode Island:** *Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery*

**Connecticut:** *Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott*

**New York:** *William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris*

**New Jersey:** *Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark*

**Pennsylvania:** *Robert Morris, Dr. Benjamin Rush, [Benjamin Franklin](#), John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross*

**Delaware:** *Caesar Rodney, George Read, Thomas McKean*

**Maryland:** *Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton*

**Virginia:** *George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton*

**North Carolina:** *William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn*

**South Carolina:** *Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Thomas Lynch, Jr., Arthur Middleton*

**Georgia:** *Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton*

26. [William Ellery](#), grandfather both of the Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) and of Richard Henry Dana, Sr.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1728**

The initial series of [James Franklin's almanacs](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) –up to James Senior's death in 1735 and the assumption of control of the shop by the Widow Franklin and Joseph Stafford's relocation from Newport to Boston– would be being written by Stafford.

These early [almanacs](#) competed with each other on the basis of the accuracy of their calendrical calculations, but Franklin, and then a number of years later Nathaniel Ames, in [Newport](#), would change the name of the game when they began to include short paragraphs on current events and on morality, and when Franklin coined a character “Poor Robin” who might offer to his readership various humorous comments (nowadays we find this sort of added material used as brief column-filler paragraphs by the [Reader's Digest](#) and [The New Yorker](#) magazines). [Benjamin Franklin](#) would then go one better on his elder half-brother, when he would alter “Poor Robin” into “Poor Richard” and in addition predicted the death of his prime competitor, Philadelphia almanac maker Titan Leeds.<sup>27</sup>

MDCCXXVIII. THE RHODE-ISLAND ALMANACK, FOR THE YEAR, 1728. By “Poor Robin.”

In 1911 a facsimile reprint of this almanac would be issued at Providence by George Parker Winship on the basis of the only copy known still to be extant. There would be 2 editions of this fac-simile with notes and additions, the one “without the Sensible Alteration,” being limited to sixty copies. The only items of local interest that are given are the Baptist and Quaker meetings.

In his diary, the Reverend [John Comer](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) wrote of the “murder” of “Mary Dye.”

**DYER OR DYRE**

**SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY**

The Reverend described a small earthquake, a shipwreck, the ordination of John Adams, the apparent precognition of Deborah Grinman of Narragansett of her own death by lightning, a dispute between the Reverend Mr. Daniel White and his congregation, the pursuit of a pirate schooner by Captains Clark and Elliot, the appearance of an aurora borealis, and the drowning of William Gardner, Stephen Mumford, David Mumford, Peter Ayrault, and two unnamed negroes while smuggling in prohibited goods from Holland. Memorable phrase:

*“There was no Publick Singing till I came and by ye blefsing of heaven Introduced it.”*

27. [Franklin](#), in doing this, was repeating a jokish trick that Jonathan Swift had played at the expense of his chief competitor in almanac-making in London, John Partridge, in 1708.

HDT

WHAT?

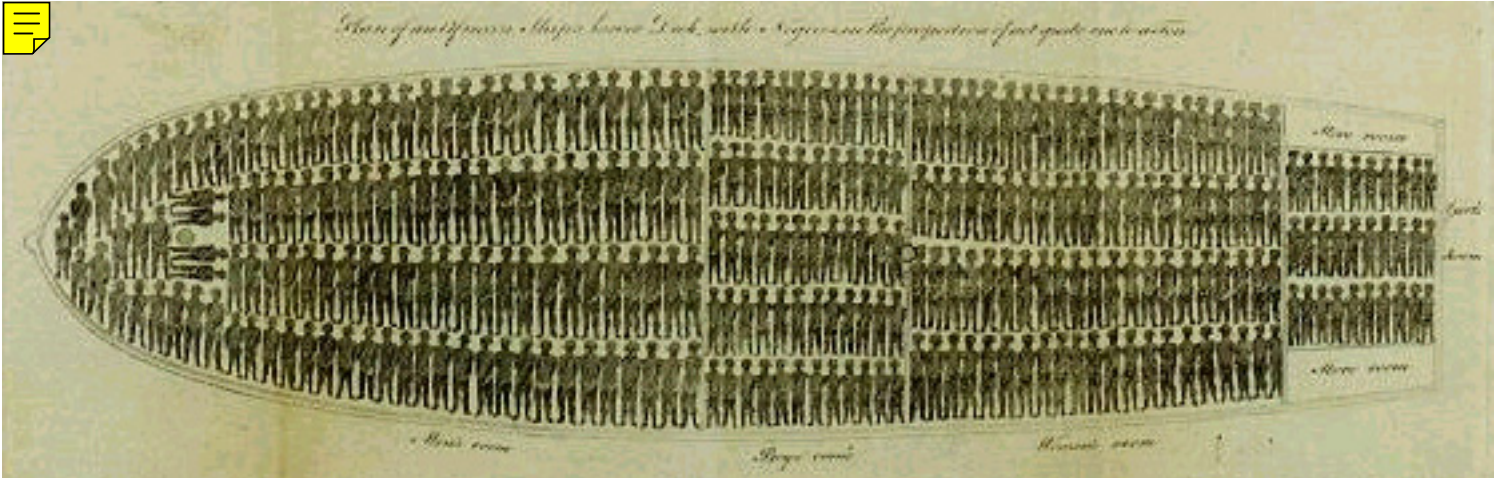
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August: Captain George Scott arrived in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) with a cargo from the African coast.



MIDDLE PASSAGE



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Mid-September: [George Berkeley](#) of the Church of England embarked for America, where he would land at [Newport](#) in the [Rhode Island](#) colony as the mainland port most convenient to the island of Bermuda, attempting to induce the course of empire westward to wend its weary way to that Shakespearean isle. On arrival he would purchase farmland near Newport and build “Whitehall,” named grandiloquently after the English palace.<sup>28</sup> The shoreline about a mile from the house had a cleft in the rocks which would become his retreat for writing and reflection. Either while aboard ship on his way here, or at some point previous to 1726, the peripatetic coal-tar philosopher/theologian penned his famous poem “On the Prospects of Planting Arts and Learning in America.” A great university in Bermuda he would not succeed in founding, nor would he make it across the isthmus of Panama or around the Horn to Berkeley in California, which anyway didn’t exist yet, but while here in Rhode Island, marking time until into the year 1731, waiting for royally promised funds, waiting for his ship to come in, he would help to form a philosophical (which is to say, scientific) society at Newport<sup>29</sup> and would preach regularly in the old wooden Trinity Church that had been established by, among others, the former

28. You can visit this building to see a portrait of the personage. You can visit only from July 1 to Labor Day; the structure is that the structure is presently being utilized by the National “Help, I’ve descended and can’t get up!” Society of the Colonial Dames.

29. [Newport, Rhode Island](#)’s [Redwood Library](#) at 50 Bellevue Avenue, the oldest library building in continuous use in the USA, would be a legacy of this Philosophical Society.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

pirate Captain Thomas Paine.

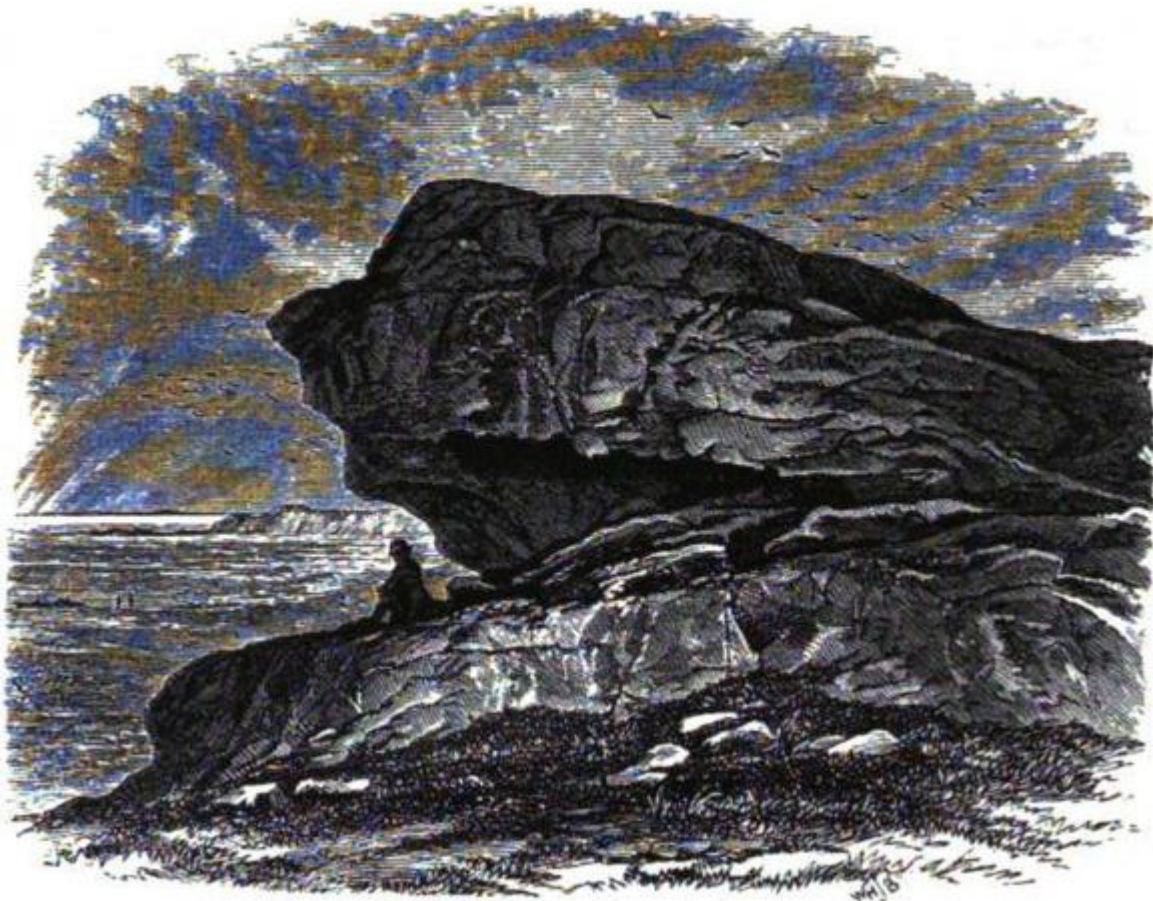


Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The first four acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.



A LIFE OF GEORGE BERKELEY

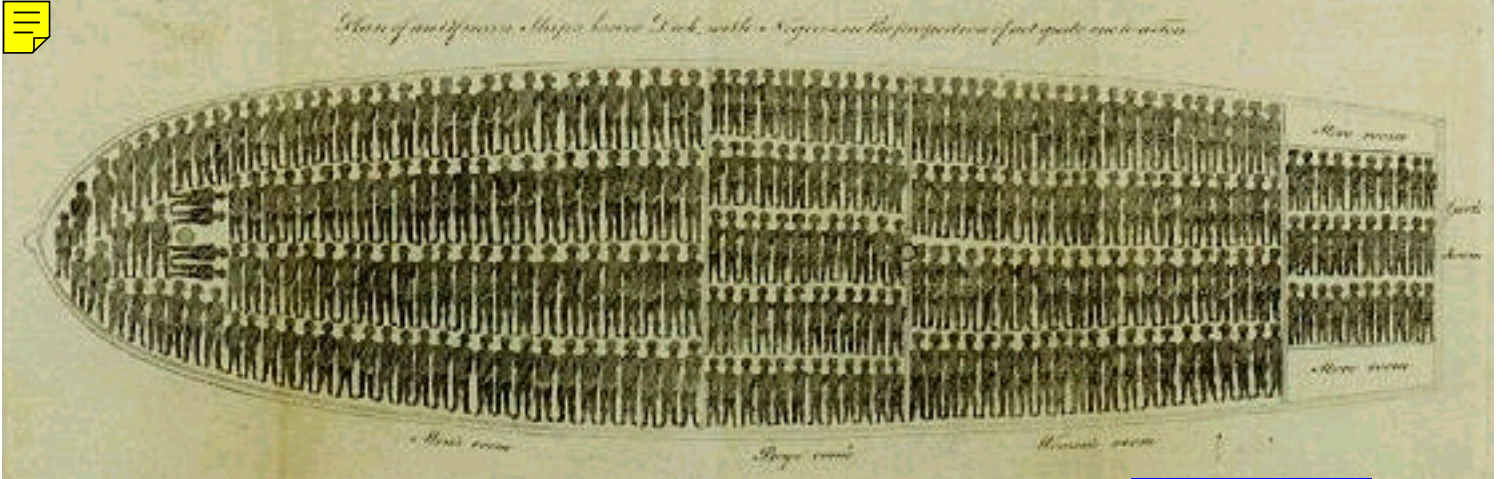
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



Bishop George Berkeley in his alcove by the Rhode Island shore

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December: Captain George Scott sailed out of the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) — off to collect another human cargo along the African coast, tra-la.



MIDDLE PASSAGE

1729

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1729. By "Poor Robin." [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

A copy recently sold by Dodd, Mead & Co. has not been located. A statement in the almanac of 1730 seems to show that this one was not by Poor Robin.

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



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

In his diary, the [Baptist](#) Reverend [John Comer](#) of [Newport](#) indicated that he had been visited by [George Berkeley](#).

*John Comer*

**A REPORT OF THE VISIT**



**SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY**

He also provided an account of the experience of Captain Robert Gardner, who while on a voyage to Antigua had been led by a dream to rescue some shipwrecked sailors.

Over the following years, the Reverend Berkeley would be preaching a number of sermons in [Rhode Island](#), and he did keep notes of his subject matter.

**REVEREND BERKELEY**

The inhabitants are of a mixed kind consisting of many sorts and subdivisions of sects. There are four sorts of Anabaptists, besides Presbyterians, Quakers, Independents and many of no profession at all. Notwithstanding so many differences here are fewer quarrels about religion than elsewhere, the people living peaceably with their neighbors of whatever profession. The climate is like that of Italy and not at all colder in winter than I have known it everywhere north of Rome. The town of Newport contains about 6,000 souls and is the most thriving, flourishing place in all America for its bigness. It is very pretty and pleasantly situated. I was never more agreeably surprised than at the sight of the town and its harbor.

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

March: At [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#), there was an appearance of the [Aurora Borealis](#).

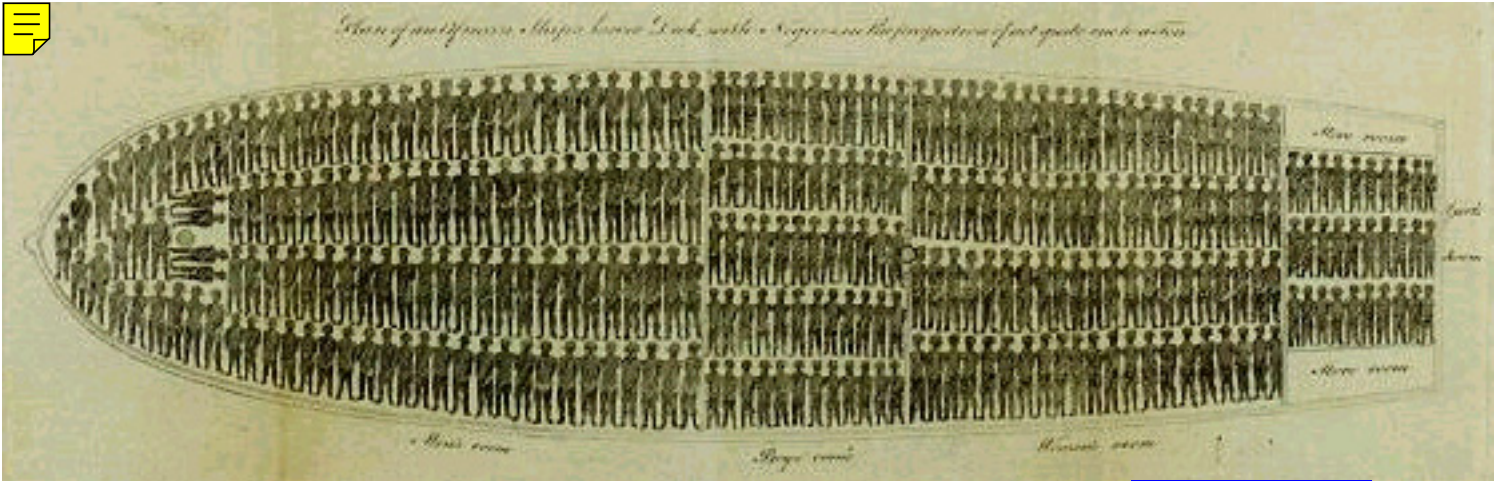
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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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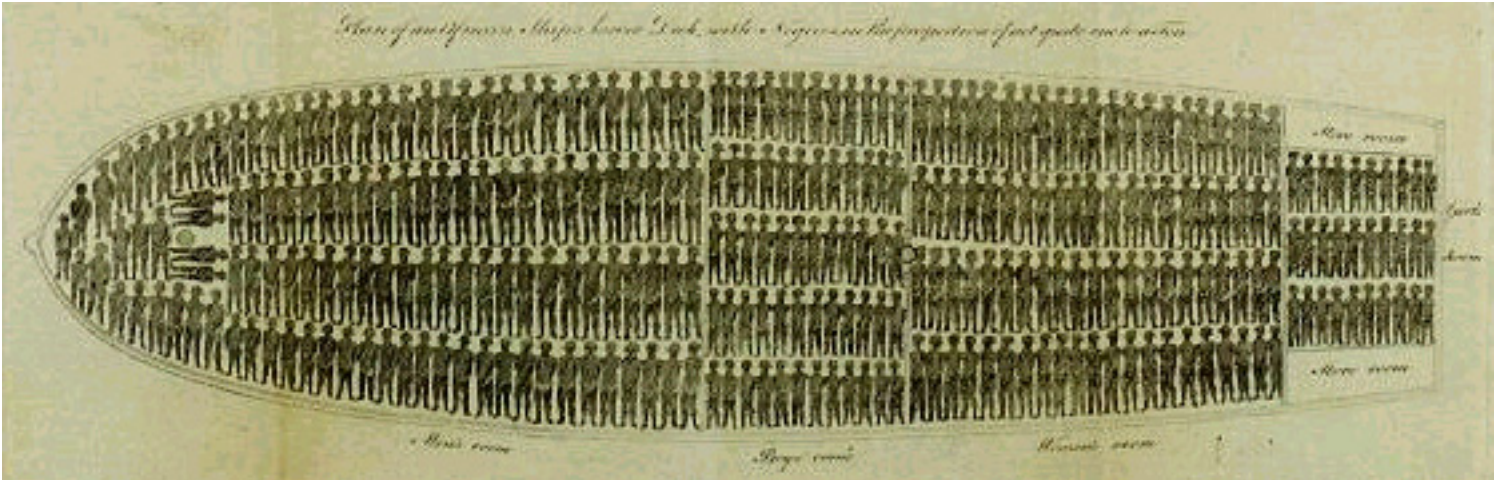
March: In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the Reverend Joseph O'Hara was jailed for having broken into his church after being expelled from it by his former congregation.

July: Captain George Scott arrived in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) with yet another cargo of human flesh fresh from the African coast.



MIDDLE PASSAGE

October: Captain George Scott sailed out of the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) — off to collect another human cargo along the African coast, tra-la.



MIDDLE PASSAGE



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1730

MDCCLXXX. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1730. By “Poor Robin.” [Newport, Rhode Island: James Franklin.](#)

At [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was seen an [Aurora Borealis](#).

ASTRONOMY

After a death due to the [small pox](#), citizens exhibiting symptoms were quarantined on an island in Coasters Harbor.

A mob attempted to tear apart the local jail.

On Long Island the Reverend Henry Loveall, also known as “Desolate Baker,” was exposed and disgraced.

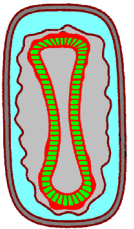
June 1, Monday (Old Style): Captain George Scott, just turned 24 years of age, set out in his *Little George* for a [Middle Passage](#) across the Atlantic Ocean. Crammed beneath the decks of his sloop was a cargo of 35 black men and 61 black women and black children, on their way to [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and to a market for human flesh.

English society placed a high value on appropriate conduct. For instance, on this day at the Tyburn [gallows](#) outside London, John Doyle and John Young were paying a price for their crimes as highwaymen.<sup>30</sup>

When once men have plunged themselves so far into sensual pleasures as to lose all sense of any other delight than that arises from the gratification of the senses, there is no great cause of wonder if they addict themselves to illegal methods of gaining wherewith to purchase such enjoyments; since the want of virtue easily draws on the loss of all other principles, nor can it be hoped from a man who has delivered himself over to the dominion of these vices that he should stop short at the lawful means of obtaining money by which alone he can be enabled to possess them.

Common women are usually the first bane of those unhappy persons who forfeit their lives to the Law as the just punishment of their offences; these women, I say, are so far from having the least concern whether their paramours run any unhappy courses to obtain the sums necessary to supply their mutual extravagance, that on the contrary they are ever ready, by oblique hints and insinuations, to put them upon such dangerous exploits which as they are sure to reap the fruits of, so sometimes when they grow weary of them, they find it an easy method to get rid of them and at the same time put money in their own pockets. Yet so blind are these unhappy wretches, that

30. LIVES OF THE MOST REMARKABLE CRIMINALS WHO HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED AND EXECUTED FOR MURDER, THE HIGHWAY, HOUSEBREAKING, STREET ROBBERIES, COINING OR OTHER OFFENCES / COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL PAPERS AND AUTHENTIC MEMOIRS, AND PUBLISHED IN 1735 / Edited by Arthur L. Hayward





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although such things fall out yearly, yet they are never to be warned, but run into the snare with as much readiness as if they were going unto the possession of certain and lasting happiness. But to come to the adventures of the unhappy person whose life we are going to relate. John Doyle was born in the town of Carrough, in Ireland, and of very honest parents who gave him as good education as could be expected in that country, instructing him in writing and accounts, and made some progress in Latin. When he was fit for a trade, his friends agreed to put him out, and not thinking they should find a master good enough for him in a country place, they sent him to Dublin, and bound him to a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler in St. Thomas's Street, whom he faithfully served seven years, and his master gave him a good character. Being out of his time, his master prevailed with him to work journey-work for him, which he did for nine months; but having got acquainted by that time with some of the town ladies and pretending to his friends that he was in hopes of better business, his friends remitted him fifty pounds to help him forward.

He lived well while that money lasted, but when it was almost spent, he knew not what to turn himself to, for working did not agree with him. He took a resolution to come to England, and on the 19th of April, 1715, he came over in a packet-boat. Having no more money left than three pounds ten shillings, and not seeing which way he could get a further supply unless he went to work, which he could not endure, he resolved to rob on the highway; and to fit him for it, he bought a pair of pistols at West Chester which cost him forty shillings. He continued in that city till the Chester coach was to go for London. At four miles distant from the town he attacked it, and robbed four passengers that were in it of fourteen pounds, six shillings and ninepence, two silver watches and a mourning ring, which was the first attempt of that kind that ever he made in his life; then he went off a by-way undiscovered.

Having got a pretty good booty, he travelled across the country to Shrewsbury, and having stayed there about two days, he happened to meet a man that had been formerly a collector on the road, who had a horse to sell. He bought the horse for seven guineas, though indeed it was worth twenty, as it proved afterwards; no man soever was master of a better bred horse for the highway. He was not willing to stay long at Shrewsbury, so he went from thence and going along the country, met two ladies in a small chaise, with only one servant and a pair of horses. He robbed them of a purse with twenty-nine half guineas, nine shillings in silver and twopence brass, and two gold watches. The servant who rode by had a case of pistols which he took from him, and then made off undiscovered. His horse at that time was much better acquainted with coming up to a coach door than he was. Sometime afterwards he passed across the country, and came to Newbury, in Berkshire, where he remained for about fourteen days, during which time he was very reserved and kept no company. But growing weary, he departed from that place the same morning



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that the Newbury coach was to set out for London: and when it was about five miles distant from the town of Newbury, he came up to the coach door, and making a ceremony, as became a man of business, demanded their all, which they very readily consented to deliver, which proved to be about twenty-nine pounds in money, a silver watch, a plain wedding ring, a tortoiseshell snuff box, and a very good whip.

There was also a family ring which a gentleman begged very hard for, whereupon by his earnest application he gave it back, and the man assured him he would never appear against him. He was a man of honour, for he happened to meet him some time after at the Rummer and Horseshoe in Drury Lane, where he treated Doyle handsomely, and showed him the ring, and withal declared that he would not be his enemy on any account whatsoever.

Doyle being at this time a young beginner, thought what he got for the preceding time to be very well, and in a few days after this arrived at Windsor, where he stayed one night, and there being a gentleman's family bound for London, that lay that night at the Mermaid Inn in the town, he changed his lodging and removed to the inn; and having stayed there that night, he minded where they put their valuable baggage up. The next morning he paid his reckoning and came away, and got about four miles out of the town before them; then coming up and making the usual ceremony, he demanded their money, watches and rings. The gentleman in the coach pulled out a blunderbuss, but Doyle soon quelled him by clapping a pistol to his nose, telling him that if he stirred hand or foot he was a dead man. Then he made him give his blunderbuss first, then his money which was fifty guineas, fifteen shillings in silver, and five-pence in brass, a woman's gold watch and a pocket book in which were seven bank-notes, which the gentleman said he took that day in order to pay his servants' wages. After this he made the best of his way to London and got into James's Street, Westminster, where he drank a pint of wine, and then crossed over to Lambeth, and put up his horse at the Red Lion Inn, and stayed there that night.

The next morning he came to the Coach and Horses in Old Palace Yard, Westminster, where he dined, and about seven at night departed from thence and went to the Phoenix gaming-house in the Haymarket, to which place, he said, he believed a great many owe their ruin. He remained some time at the Phoenix, and seeing them gaming hard, he had a mind to have a touch at it; when coming into the ring he took the box in his turn, and in about thirty minutes lost thirty-seven pounds, which broke him. But having some watches about him, he went immediately to the Three Bowls in Market Lane, St. James, and pawned a gold watch for sixteen guineas; and returning back to the Phoenix went to gaming a second time, and in less than an hour recovered his money and forty-three pounds more. And seeing an acquaintance there he took him to the Cardigan's Head tavern, Charing Cross, and made merry. That night he lay at the White Bear in Piccadilly, and stayed there until the next evening, after which, having paid his reckoning, he went to Lambeth to his



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landlord who had his horse in his care, and remained there that night. The next morning he went away having discharged the house.

Having then a pretty sum of money about him, he had an inclination to see the country of Kent, and accordingly went that day to Greenwich, and put up his horse while he went to see the Hospital; and having baited the horse he parted from thence, and going over Blackheath, he happened to meet a gentleman, who proved to be Sir Gregory Page. Doyle took what money he had about him, which was about seventy guineas in a green purse, a watch, two gold seals and eighteen pence in silver. That night he rode away to Maidstone, and from thence to Canterbury.

In a few days he returned to London, and was for a long time silent, even for about six months, and never robbed or made an attempt to rob any man, but kept his horse in a very good order, and commonly went in an afternoon to Hampstead, sometimes to Richmond, or to Hackney. In short, he knew all the roads about London in less than six months as well as any man in England. His money beginning now to grow short, not having turned out so long, and the keeping his horse on the other hand being costly, he resolved that his horse should pay for his own keeping, and turned out one evening and robbed a Jew of seventy-five pounds, and of his and his lady's watches, a gold box and some silver, and returned to town undiscovered. The next day Doyle went Brentford way, and coming to Turnham Green stayed some time at the Pack Horse, where he saw two Quakers on horseback. He rode gently after them till they got to Hounslow Heath, where he secured what money they had, which was something above a hundred pounds. They begged hard for some money back, when he gave them a guinea, taking from them their spurs and whips, and at some distance threw them away. Those two men, as he found some days after by the papers, were two meal factors that were going to High Wycombe market in Buckinghamshire, to buy either wheat or flour.

This last being a pretty good booty, he had a mind afterwards to go for Ireland and accordingly set out for his journey thither. He took shipping at King's Road near Bristol, on board a small vessel bound to Waterford, where he arrived and stayed at the Eagle in Waterford three days, and from thence went directly to Dublin. Doyle was not long in Dublin before he became acquainted with his wife, whom he courted for some time and was extravagant in spending his money on her. He also soon got acquainted with one N. B., a man now alive, and they turned out together. None was able to stand against them, for they had everything that came in their way, and in plain terms, there was not a man that carried money about him, within eight miles of Dublin, but if they met him they were sure to get what he had. Being grown so wicked Doyle was at length taken for a robber and committed to Newgate, then kept by one Mr. Hawkins, who used him so barbarously that he wished himself out of his hands. Accordingly he got his irons off and broke out of the gaol. Hawkins knowing all the bums<sup>31</sup> in Dublin, sent them up and down



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the city to take him, but to no purpose. However, they rooted him fairly out of that neighbourhood.

Then he returned to Waterford, where he appointed his wife and friend should meet him, which they did; and in about four hours after he came there he found them out, and there being a ship bound for Bristol, he sent them on board, agreed with the captain and went himself on board the same night. They hoisted their sails and got down to the Passage near Waterford, but the wind proving contrary, they were obliged to return back, and then concluded it was determined for Doyle to be taken; which he had been had he kept on board, but he luckily got on shore, when it was agreed to go to Cork. There they met with an honest cock of a landlord, and he kept himself very private, making the poor man believe that his companion and he were two that were raising men for the Chevalier's<sup>32</sup> service, and that their keeping so private proceeded from a fear of being discovered. The poor man had then a double regard for them, he being a lover in his heart of —. Doyle then sent his wife to seek for a ship; but Hawkins having pursued him from Dublin, happened to see her, and dogged her to the ship where she went on board, sending officers to search, for he was sure he should find him there. He was mistaken, but they took his poor wife up to see if they could make her discover where he was, and ordered a strong guard to bring her to Cork gaol. A boat was provided to bring her on shore, but she telling the men some plausible stories that her husband was not the man they represented him to be, one of the watermen having stripped off his clothes in order to row, and there being a great many honest fellows in the boat, they assisted her in putting on waterman's clothes, which as soon as done, she fairly got away from them, and came and acquainted Doyle that Hawkins was in town, and how she had been in danger. They then concluded on leaving Cork, hired horses that night, and came to a place called Mallow, within ten miles of Cork. The next day they travelled to Limerick, where Doyle bought a horse, bridle, etc., and went towards Galloway, and in all his journey round about got but two prizes, which did not amount to above fifteen pounds.

Sometime after, his wife was transported, which gave him a great deal of concern, and he could not be in any way content without her. So getting some money together he went to Virginia, and having arrived there soon met with her, having had intelligence where to enquire for her. The first house he came into was one William Dalton's, who had some days before bought the late noted James Dalton,<sup>33</sup> who was then his servant, whom he very often used to send along with Doyle in his boat to put him on board a ship. Then he thought it his best way to buy his wife's liberty, which he did, paying fifteen pounds for it.

He had then a considerable deal of money about him, and removed from that part of the country where she was known and went to New York. Being arrived there he soon got acquainted with some

31. i.e., bailiffs, informers and spies.

32. The Pretender, whose name was only to be mentioned with baited breath.

33. See page 533.



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of his countrymen, with whom he had used to go a-hunting and to the horse races; so he spent some time in seeing the country. By chance he came to hear of a namesake of his, that lived in an island a little distant from New York, and being willing to see any of his name, he sent for him, and according to Doyle's request, he wrote to him that he would come the next day, which he did, and proved to be his uncle. The old man was overjoyed to see Doyle, and carried him home with him, where he stayed a long time, and spent a great deal of money.

His uncle was very much affronted at Doyle's ill-treatment of the natives, whom he severely beat, insomuch that the whole place was afraid of him, and all intended to join and take the Law of him. Soon after he departed from New York and went to Boston, where he remained some time, and at length he resolved within himself to settle and work at his trade, thinking it better to do so than to spend all his money, and be obliged to return to England or Ireland without a penny in his pocket. He did so, and having agreed with a master he went to work, and was very saving and frugal.

He remained with that man till by his wife's industry he had got, including what was his own, about two hundred pounds English money. Then he advised his wife to go for Ireland in the first ship that was bound that way, laying all her money out to twenty pounds, and shipped the goods which he had brought on board for her account. She then went to Ireland and Doyle for England, promising to go over to her as soon as he could get some money, for he had then an inclination to leave off his old trade of collecting.

Being arrived at London, he met with a certain person with whom he joined, and as he himself terms it, never had man a braver companion, for let him push at what he would, his new companion never flinched one inch. They turned out about London for some time, and got a great deal of money, for nothing hardly missed them. They used a long time the roads about Hounslow, Hampstead, and places adjacent, until the papers began to describe them, on which they went into Essex, and robbed several graziers, farmers and others. Then they went to Bishop's Stortford, in Hertfordshire, where they robbed one man in particular who had his money tied up under his arm in a great purse. Doyle says that he had some intelligence from a friend that the man had money about him, he made him strip in buff, and then found out where he lodged it, and took it, but he did not use him in any way ill, for he says it was the man's business to conceal it, as much as his to discover it.

Doyle and his partner hearing of a certain fair which was to be held a few days after, they resolved to go to it, and coming there took notice who took most money. In the evening they took their horses, and about three miles distant from the town there was a green, over which the people were obliged to come from the fair. There came a great many graziers and farmers, whom they robbed of upwards of eight hundred pounds. At this time Doyle had in money and valuable things, such as diamonds, rings,



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watches, to the amount of about sixteen hundred pounds. His partner had also a great deal of money, but not so much as Doyle, by reason that he (D) had got some very often which he had no right to have a share of.

Doyle went again for Ireland, and carried all his money with him, and having a great many poor relations, distributed part of it amongst them; some he lent, which he could never get again, and in a little his money grew short, having frequented horse races and all public places. However, before all was spent he returned to England. Following his old course of life, he happened into several broils, with which a little money and a few friends he got over. In a short space of time he became acquainted with Benjamin Wileman. They two, with another person concerned with them, committed several robberies. At length they were discovered, apprehended and committed to Newgate. Wileman, it seems, had an itching to become an evidence against Doyle and W. G. But Doyle made himself an evidence, being really, as he said, for his own preservation and not for the sake of any reward.

Doyle's wife being for a second time transported, he went with her in the same ship, and having arrived in Virginia, slaved there some time, until he began to grow weary of the place. But as he was always too indulgent to her, he bought her her liberty, and shipped her and himself on board the first ship that came to England, when in seven weeks time they arrived in the Downs. Soon after they came up to England, but were not long in town before his wife was taken up for returning from transportation, and committed to Newgate, where she remained until the sessions following, and being brought upon her trial, pleaded guilty. When they came to pass sentence upon her, she produced his Majesty's most gracious pardon, and was admitted to bail to plead the same, and thereupon discharged. Doyle, a short time after, went to the West of England, where he slaved some time, following his old way of life; and associating himself with a certain companion, got a considerable sum of money, and came to Marlborough. And having continued some time in that neighbourhood, they usually kept the markets, where they commonly cleared five pounds a day. Going from Marlborough they came to Hungerford, and put up their horses at the George Inn; and having ordered something for dinner, saw some graziers on the road, but one of them being an old sportsman, and a brother tradesman of Doyle's formerly, he knew the said Doyle immediately, by the description given of him, and very honestly came to him, and told him that he had a charge of money about him, and withal begged that he would not hurt him, since he had made so ingenuous a confession, desiring Doyle to make the best of his way to another part of the country, telling him at the same time where he lived in London, and that if he should act honourably by him, he would put a thousand pounds in his pocket in a month's time. According to the grazier's directions, Doyle and his companions departed, but having met, as Doyle phrases it, with a running chase in their cross way, which they had taken



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for safety, they were obliged to return back into the main road again, and by accident put up at the same inn where the grazier and his companions were that evening. The grazier, as soon as he saw Doyle, came in and drank a bottle with him, and then retired to his companions, without taking any manner of notice of him.

As they came for London, they took everything that came into their net, and in three days time Doyle paid his brother sportsman, the grazier, a visit, who received him handsomely, and appointed him to meet him the next market day at the Greyhound in Smithfield, in order to make good part of his promise to him. Doyle and his companion went to him, put up their horses at the same inn and passed for country farmers. This grazier, who formerly had been one of the same profession being now grown honest and bred a butcher, was then turned salesman in Smithfield, and sold cattle for country graziers, and sent them their money back by their servants who had brought the cattle to town. Having drunk a glass of wine together, they began to talk about business, and the grazier being obliged to go into the market to sell some beasts, desired Doyle and his companion to stay there until he returned. When he came he gave them some little instructions how they should proceed in an affair he had then in view to serve them in, and having taken his advice, they rode out of town; and it being a West Country fair they rode Turnham Green way.

They had not time to drink a pint of wine before the West Country chapman came ajogging along. They took two hundred and forty pounds from him, making (as D. terms it) a much quicker bargain with him than he had done with the butcher at Smithfield. The chapman begged hard for some money to carry him home to his family, and after they had given him two guineas, he said to them that he had often travelled that road with five hundred pounds about him, and never had been stopped. To which Doyle replied, that half the highwaymen who frequented the road were but mere old women, otherwise he would never have had that to brag of, and then parted. Doyle says that the honest man at Smithfield had poundage of him as well as from the grazier, so that he acted in a double capacity.

That night they came to London, and having put up their horses, put on other clothes and went to Smithfield, where not finding the butcher at home, they write a note and left it for an appointment to meet him at the Horn Tavern in Fleet Street, where they had not stayed long before he came. After taking a cheerful glass they talked the story over, and out of the booty Doyle gave turn fifty guineas, after which the butcher promised to be his friend upon a better affair. After paying the reckoning they parted and appointed to meet the next market day at Smithfield. They went at the time appointed, and having drank a morning glass, stepped into the market and stayed some time. Their brother sportsman being very busy, he made excuse to Doyle and his companion, telling them there was nothing to be done in their way till the evening, desiring them to be patient. They remained



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in and about Smithfield till then, and market being entirely over, their friend came up to the place appointed, and showed them a man on horseback to whom he had just paid fifty pounds. Doyle and his companion immediately called for their horses, took leave of their friend, and kept in sight of the countryman until he was out of town. And when he was got near the Adam and Eve, at Kensington, they came up to him, and made a ceremony, as became men of their profession. He was very unwilling to part from his money, making an attempt to ride away, but they soon overtook him, and after some dispute took every penny that he received in Smithfield, and for his residing gave him back only a crown to bear his charges home. In his memoirs Doyle makes this observation, that they always robbed between sun and sun, so that the persons robbed might make the county pay them that money back if they thought fit to sue them for it.<sup>34</sup> Next morning Doyle and his companion came to the place appointed, and not meeting with their brother sportsman sent for him, where they drank together, and talked as usual about business, paying him poundage out of what money they had collected on his information (for they usually dealt with him as a custom-house officer does by an informer); after which they parted for that time, and did not meet for a month after.

Afterwards they went up and down Hertfordshire, but got scarce money enough to bear their expenses; but where there were small gettings they lived the more frugally, for Doyle observed that if the country did not bear their expenses wherever he travelled, he thought it very hard, and that if he failed of gaming one day, he commonly got as much the next as he could well destroy.

Hitherto we have kept very close to those memoirs which Mr. Doyle left behind him, which I did with this view, that my readers might have some idea of what these people think of themselves. I shall now bring you to the conclusion of his story, by informing you that finding himself beset at the several lodgings which he kept by way of precaution, he for some days behaved himself with much circumspection; but happening to forget his pistols, he was seized, coming out of an inn in Drury Lane, and though he made as much resistance as he was able, yet they forced him unto a coach and conveyed him to Newgate. It is hard to say what expectations he entertained after he was once apprehended, but it is reasonable to believe that he had strong hopes of life, notwithstanding his pleading guilty at his trial, for he dissembled until the time of the coming down of a death warrant, and then declared he was a Roman [Catholic](#), and not a member of the Church of England, as he had hitherto pretended.

He seemed to be a tolerably good-natured man, but excessively vicious at the same time that he was extravagantly fond of the woman he called his wife. He took no little pleasure in the relations of those adventures which happened to him in his exploits on the highway, and expressed himself with much seeming satisfaction, because as he said, he had never been guilty of

34. Passengers robbed on the highway between sunrise and sunset, could sue the county for the amount of their loss, it being the duty of the officials to keep the roads safe.



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beating or using passengers ill, much less of wounding or attempting to murder them. In general terms, he pretended to much penitence, but whether it was that he could not get over the natural vivacity of his own temper, or that the principles of the Church of Rome, as is too common a case, proved a strong opiate in his conscience, however it was, I say, Doyle did not seem to have any true contrition for his great and manifold offences. On the contrary, he appeared with some levity, even when on the very point of death.

He went to execution in a mourning coach; all the way he read with much seeming attention in a little Popish manual, which had been given him by one of his friends. At the tree he spoke a little to the people, told them that his wife had been a very good wife to him, let her character in other respects be what it would. Then he declared he had left behind him memoirs of his life and conduct, to which he had nothing to add there, and from which I have taken verbatim a great part of what I have related. And then, having nothing more to offer to the world, he submitted to death on the first of June, 1730, but in what year of his age I cannot say.

However, before I make an end of what relates to Mr. Doyle, it would be proper to acquaint the public that the vanity of his wife extended so far as to make a pompous funeral for him at St. Sepulchre's church, whereat she, as chief mourner assisted, and was led by a gentleman whom the world suspected to be of her husband's employment.



I have more than once remarked in the course of these memoirs that of all crimes, cruelty makes men the most generally hated, and that from this reasonable cause, that they seem to have taken up an aversion to their own kind. This was remarkably the case of the unhappy man of whom we are now speaking.

He was, it seems, the son of very honest and industrious parents, his father being a gardener at Kensington. From him he received as good an education as it was in his power to give him, and was treated with all the indulgence that could be expected from a tender parent; and it seems that after five years' stay at school, he was qualified for any business whatsoever. So after consulting his own inclinations he was put out apprentice to a coach-maker in Long Acre, where he stayed not long; but finding all work disagreeable to him, he therefore resolved to be gone,

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let the consequence be what it would. When this resolve was once  
The IDLE 'PRENTICE Executed at Tyburn.



taken, it was but a very short time before it was put into execution. Living now at large, and not knowing how to gain money enough to support himself, and therefore being in very great straits, he complied with the solicitations of some hackney-coachmen, who advised him to learn their trade. They took some pains to instruct him, employed him often, and in about six months time he became perfect master of his business, and drove for Mr. Blunt, in Piccadilly. His behaviour here was so honest that Mr. Blunt gave him a good character, and he thereby obtained the place of a gentleman's coachmen. In a short time he saved money and began to have some relish for an honest life; and continuing industriously to hoard up what he received either in wages or vales [tips] at last by these methods he drew together



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a very considerable sum of money.

And then it came into his head to settle himself in an honest way of life, in which design his father gave him all the encouragement that was in his power, telling him in order to do it, he should marry an honest, virtuous woman. Whereupon, with the advice and consent of his parents, he married a young woman of a reputable family from Kentish Town, who, as to fortune, brought him a pretty little addition to his own savings, so that altogether he had, according to his own account, a very pretty competency wherewith to begin the world.

For some time after his marriage he indulged himself in living without employment, but finding such a course wasted his little stock very fast, he began to apply his thoughts to the consideration of what course was the most likely to get his bread in. After beating his brains for some little time on this subject he at last resolved on keeping a public-house; which agreeing very well with his father's and relations' notions, he thereupon immediately took the King's Arms, in Red Lion Street, where for some time he continued to have very good business. In all, he remained there about five years, and might in that time have got a very pretty sum of money if he had not been so unhappy as to grow proud, as soon as he had anything in his pocket. It was not long, therefore, before he gave way to his own roving disposition, going over to Ireland, where he remained for a considerable space, living by his wits as he expresses it, or, in the language of honest people, by defrauding others.

But Ireland is a country where such sort of people are not likely to support themselves long; money is far from being plentiful, and though the common people are credulous in their nature, yet tradesmen and the folks of middling ranks are as suspicious as any nation in the world. The county of West Meath was the place where he had fixed his residence for the greatest part of the time he continued in the island, but at last it grew too hot for him. The inhabitants became sensible of his way of living, and gave him such disturbance that he found himself under an indispensable necessity of quitting that place as soon as possibly he could; and so having picked up as much money as would pay for his passage, he came over again into England, out of humour with rambling while he felt the uneasiness it had brought upon him, but ready to take it up again as soon as ever his circumstances were made a little easy, which in his present condition was not likely to happen in haste.

His friends received him very coldly, his parents had it not in their power to do more for him. In a word, the countenance of the world frowned upon him, and everybody treated him with that disdain and contempt which his foolish behaviour deserved. However, instead of reclaiming him, this forced him upon worse courses. His wife, it seems, either died in his absence, or was dead before he went abroad, and soon after his return he contracted an acquaintance with a woman, who was at that time cook in the family of a certain bishop; her he courted and a short time after, married. She brought him not only some ready



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money, but also goods to a pretty large value. Young being not a bit mended by his misfortunes, squandered away the first in a very short time, and turned the last into ready money. However, these supplies were of not very long continuance, and with much importunity his friends, in order, if it were possible, to keep him honest, got him in a small place in the Revenue, and he was put in as one of the officers to survey candles. In this post he continued for about a twelvemonth, and then relapsing into his former idle and profligate courses, he was quickly suspected and thereby put to his shifts again, though his wife at that time was in place, and helped him very frequently with money. This, it seems, was too servile a course for a man of Mr. Young's spirit to take, so that he picked up as much as bought him a pair of pistols, and then went upon the highway, to which it seems the foolish pride of not being dependant upon his wife did at that time not a little contribute. In his first adventure in this new employment, he got fifteen guineas, but being in a very great apprehension of a pursuit, his fears engaged him to fly down to Bristol, in order, if it were possible, to avoid them. After staying there some considerable time, he began at last to take heart, and to fancy he might be forgotten. Upon these hopes he resolved with himself to come up towards London again; and taking advantage of a person travelling with him to Uxbridge, he made use of every method in his power to insinuate himself into his fellow traveller's good graces. This he effected, insomuch that at High Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire, as Young himself told the story, he prevailed on him to lend him three half-crowns to defray his expenses, pretending that he had some friend or relation hard by who would repay him. But unfortunately for the man, he had talked too freely of a sum of money which he pretended to have about him. It thereupon raised an inclination in Young to strip him and rob him of this supposed great prize; for which purpose he attacked him in a lone place, and not only threatened him with shooting him, but as he pretended, by his hand shaking, was as good as his word, and actually wounded him in such a manner as he in all probability at that time took to be mortal; but taking advantage of the condition in which the poor man was, he made the best of his way off, and was so lucky as to escape for the present, although that crime brought him afterwards to his execution.

When he had considered a little the nature of the fact which he had committed, it appeared even to himself of so black and barbarous a nature that he resolved to fly to the West of England, in order to remain there for some time. But from this he was deterred by looking into a newspaper and finding himself advertised there; the man whom he had shot being also said to be dead, this put him into such a consternation that he returned directly to London, and going to a place hard by where his wife lived, he sent for her, and told her that he was threatened with an unfortunate affair which might be of the greatest ill-consequence to him if he should be discovered. She seemed to be extremely moved at his misfortunes, and gave him what money she



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could spare, which was not a little, insomuch that Young at last began to suspect she made bold now and then to borrow of her mistress; but if she did, that was a practice he could forgive her. At last he proposed taking a lodging for himself at Horsely Down,<sup>35</sup> as a place the likeliest for him to be concealed in. There his wife continued to supply him, until one Sunday morning she came in a great hurry and brought with her a pretty handsome parcel of guineas. Young could not help suspecting she did not come very honestly by them. However, if he had the money he troubled not his head much which way he came by it, and he had so good a knack of wheedling her that he got twenty pounds out of her that Sunday.

A very few days after, intelligence was got of his retreat, and the man whom he had robbed and shot made so indefatigable a search after him, that he was taken up and committed to the New Gaol, and his wife, a very little time after, was committed to Newgate for breaking open her lady's escrutoire, and robbing her of a hundred guineas. This was what Young said himself and I repeat it because I have his memoirs before me. Yet in respect to truth, I shall be obliged to say something of another nature in its due place; but to go on with our narration according to the time in which facts happened.

A *Habeas Corpus* was directed to the sheriff of Surrey, whereupon Young was brought to Newgate, and at the next sessions of the Old Bailey was indicted for the aforesaid robbery, which was committed in the county of Middlesex. The charge against him was for assaulting Thomas Stinton, in a field or open place near the Highway, and taking from him a mare of the value of seven pounds, a bridle value one shilling and sixpence, a saddle value twelve shillings, three broad-pieces of gold and nine shillings in silver, at the same time putting the said Thomas Stinton in fear of his life.

Upon this indictment the prosecutor deposed that meeting with the prisoner about seven miles on this side of Bristol, and being glad of each other's company, they continued and lodged together till they came to Oxford; where the prisoner complaining that he was short of money, the prosecutor lent him a crown out of his pocket, and at Loudwater, the place where they lodged next night, he lent him half a crown more. The next morning they came for London, and being a little on this side of Uxbridge, Young said he had a friend in Hounslow who would advance him the money which he had borrowed from the prosecutor, and thereupon desired Mr. Stinton to go with him thither, to which he agreed; and Young thereupon persuaded him to go by a nearer way, and under that pretence after making him leap hedges and ditches, at last brought him to a place by the river side, where on a sudden he knocked him off his horse, and that with such force that he made the blood gush out of his nose and mouth.

As soon as Young perceived that the prosecutor had recovered his senses a little, he demanded his money, to which Mr. Stinton replied, *Is this the manner in which you treat your friend? You*

35. This district, at the Dockhead end of Tooley Street, was at that time a sort of No Man's Land, where horses were grazed and a few poverty-stricken wretches lived in sheds and holes in the ground.



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*see, I have not strength to give you anything.* Whereupon Young took from him his pocket-book and money. And Mr. Stinton earnestly entreating that he would give him somewhat to bear his expenses home, in answer thereto Young said, *Ay, I'll give you what shall carry you home straight,* and then shot him in the neck, and pushing him down into the ditch, said, *Lie there.* Some time after with much ado, Mr. Stinton crawled out and got to a house, but saw no more of the prisoner, or of either of their mares.

George Hartwell deposed that he helped both the prisoner and the prosecutor to the inn where they lay at Oxford. Sarah Howard deposed that she kept the inn or house where they lodged at Loudwater the night before the robbery was committed. And all the witnesses, as well as the prosecutor being positive to the person of the prisoner, the charge seemed to be as fully proved as it was possible for a thing of that nature to admit.

The prisoner in his defence did not pretend to deny the fact, but as much as he was able endeavoured to extenuate it. He said, that for his part he did not know anything of the mare; that the going off the pistol was merely accidental; that he did, indeed, take the money, and therefore, did not expect any other than to suffer death, but that it would be a great satisfaction to him, even in his last moments, that he neither had or ever intended to commit any murder. But those words in the prosecutor's evidence, *I'll give you something to carry you home,* and *Lie there* (that is in the ditch) being mentioned in summing up the evidence to the jury, Young, with great warmth and many asseverations, denied that he made use of them. The jury, after a very short consideration, being full satisfied with the evidence which had been offered, found him guilty.

The very same day his wife was indicted for the robbery of her mistress, when the fact was charged upon her thus: that she on a Sunday, conveyed Young secretly upstairs in her mistress's house, where she passed for a single woman; that he took an opportunity to break open a closet and to steal from thence ninety guineas, and ten pounds in silver; a satin petticoat value thirty shillings, and an orange crepe petticoat were also carried off; and she asking leave of her lady to go out in the afternoon, took that opportunity to go quite away, not being heard of for a long time. Upon her husband being apprehended for the fact for which he died, somebody remembered her and the story of her robbing her mistress, caused her thereupon to be apprehended. Not being able to prove her marriage at the time of her trial, she was convicted, and ordered for transportation. This was a very different story from that which Young told in his relations of his wife's adventure, but when it came to be mentioned to that unhappy man and pressed upon him, though he could not be brought to acknowledge it, yet he never denied it; which the Ordinary says, was a method of proceeding he took up, because unwilling to confess the truth, and afraid when so near death to tell a lie.

When under sentence of death, this unfortunate person began to



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have a true sense of his own miserable condition; he was very far from denying the crime for which he suffered, although he still continued to deny some of the circumstances of it. The judgment which had been pronounced upon him, he acknowledged to be very just and reasonable, and was so far from being either angry or affrighted at the death he was to die that on the contrary he said it was the only thing that gave his thoughts ease. To say truth, the force of religion was never more visible in any man than it was in this unfortunate malefactor. He was sensible of his repentance being both forced and late, which made him attend to the duties thereof with an extraordinary fervour and application. He said that the thoughts of his dissolution had no other effect upon him than to quicken his diligence in imploring God for pardon. To all those who visited him either from their knowledge of him in former circumstances, or, as too many do, from the curiosity of observing how he would behave under those melancholy circumstances in which he then was, he discoursed of nothing but death, eternity, and future judgment. The gravity of his temper and the serious turn of his thoughts was never interrupted in any respect throughout the whole space of time in which he lay under condemnation; on the contrary, he every day appeared to have more and more improved from his meditations and almost continual devotions, appearing frequently when at chapel wrapped up as it were in ecstasy at the thoughts of heaven and future felicity, humbling himself, however, for the numberless sins he had committed, and omitting nothing which could serve to show the greatness of his sorrow and the sincerity of his contrition.

The day he was to die, the unfortunate old man his father, then upwards of seventy years of age, came to visit him, and saw him haltered as he went out to execution. Words are too feeble to express that impetuosity of grief which overwhelmed both the miserable father and the dying son. However, the old man, bedewing him with a flood of tears, exhorted him not to let go on his hopes in Christ, even in that miserable conjuncture; but that he should remember the mercy of God was over all his works, and in an especial manner was promised to those who were penitent for their sins, which Christ had especially confirmed in sealing the pardon of the repenting thief, even upon the cross.

At the place of execution he appeared scarce without any appearance of terror, much less of obstinacy or contempt of death. Being asked what he did with the pocket-book which he took from Mr. Stinton, and which contained in it things of very great use to him, Young replied ingeniously that he had burnt it, for which he was heartily sorry, but that he did not look into or make himself acquainted with its contents. Just before the cart drew away, he arose and spoke to the people, and said, *The love of idleness, being too much addicted to company, and a too greedy love of strong liquors has brought me to this unhappy end. The Law intends my death for an example unto others; let it be so, let my follies prevent others from falling into the like, and let the shame which you see me suffer, deter all of*



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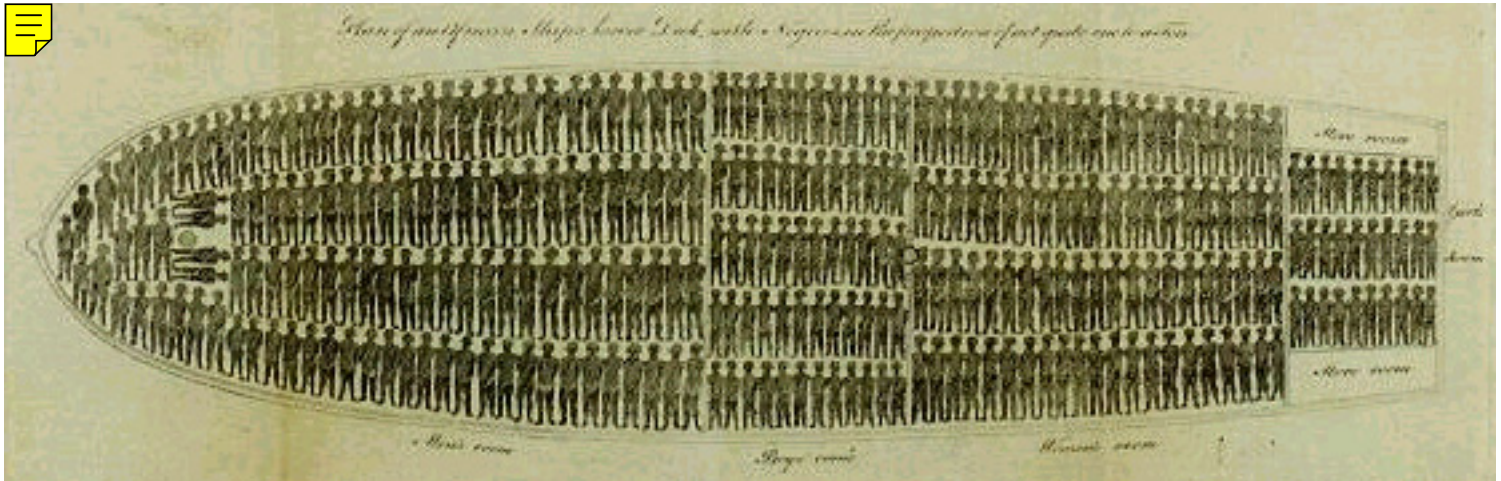
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*you from the commission of such sins as may bring you to the like fatal end. My sentence is just, but pray, ye good people, for my soul, that though I die ignominiously here, I may not perish everlastingly.*

He was executed the first of June, 1730, being at the time about thirty-nine years of age.

June 6, Saturday (Old Style), before dawn: Captain George Scott was 100 leagues from the coast of Africa on his way to the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), five days out on the [Middle Passage](#) with yet another cargo of human flesh packed into his sloop *Little George* — when allofasudden black men began to pour out from beneath the decks.



The slaves emerging on deck in the predawn darkness found a watch crew of three, killed them, and threw their bodies overboard. The other crew members, four men and a boy, were below, sheltered behind the after hatch. These survivors set to work to fabricate for themselves pipe bombs which they planned to throw among the slaves, but while they were at this work one of the devices blew up, severely burning the man who was holding it. The slaves loaded a carriage gun and fired it into the hatchway, and began to sail the ship back toward the African shore. The crewmembers bored holes in the ship's bottom and let in about three feet of seawater. There was a negotiation, and the cargo agreed that if the crew would not scuttle the sloop, they would depart as soon as they were able to reach shore. Eventually the ship grounded several leagues up the Sierra Leone River and the Africans waded ashore. The surviving crewmembers managed to get the ship's boat lowered on the other side of the grounded sloop, and rowed downstream to the safety of a vessel from Montserrat, British West Indies.



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On April 29, 1731 a Boston gazette would report this uprising: “We hear from [Rhode Island](#) that Captain George Scott of that place, who sometime since went from thence to Guinea, and was returning with a cargo of Negroes, they rose upon the said commander and company, and barbarously murdered three of his men, the said captain and the rest of his company made their escape, tho tis said they are all since dead except the captain and a boy; The Negroes we are informed were afterwards taken and made slaves by those other nation.”

(This negrero captain, undaunted, would each year for the following five years sail out of [Newport](#) for the coast of Africa to collect more human raw material.)



**1731**

AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1731. By Samuel Maxwell, [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

This is the first Rhode Island almanac to add the court sessions to its local items.



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This Samuel Maxwell was 22 years of age, something we know by virtue of an entry he made in the almanack under the date of May 30, 1731: "The Author's Birthday 1708." In the preface he wrote "Although I be young in Years, yet I give not my Pen a Latitude beyond my Beard; for I always keep one parallel with the other: And my Almanack is in such an easy plain Form, and regular Method, that I hope there will be no Fault found by any of my Antagonists."

[George Berkeley](#) was painted by Alfred Hart:



**A LIFE OF GEORGE BERKELEY**

His new residence near [Newport, Rhode Island](#), which he designated "Whitehall":



**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

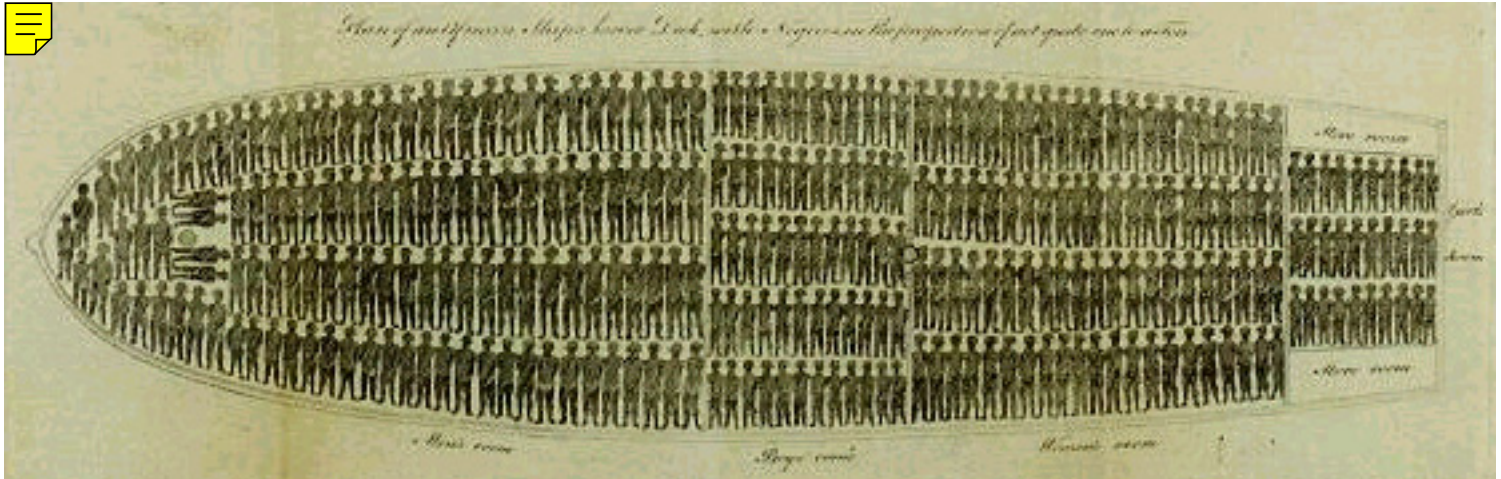
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

The Reverend [John Comer](#), a [Baptist](#) minister of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), visited New-York, and at the request of the disgraced Reverend Henry Loveall, preached at Piscataqua. Giving up his church in [Newport](#), the Reverend Comer moved to [Rehoboth](#).

*John Comer*

SOME PAGES OF THE DIARY

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 4 [negros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of something like 436 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



Captain George Scott of [Rhode Island](#) was returning from Guinea with a cargo of [slaves](#) when they rose up killing three of the crewmembers. Soon all the white crewmembers would die, except the captain and the ship's boy.

SERVILE INSURRECTION

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[Aaron Lopez](#) was born in Portugal. A Marrano,<sup>36</sup> he would live in Lisbon under the Christian name Duarte Lopez, and would be able to acknowledge his Jewish name only after he emigrated to the relative security of [Newport](#) in [Rhode Island](#).

JUDAISM

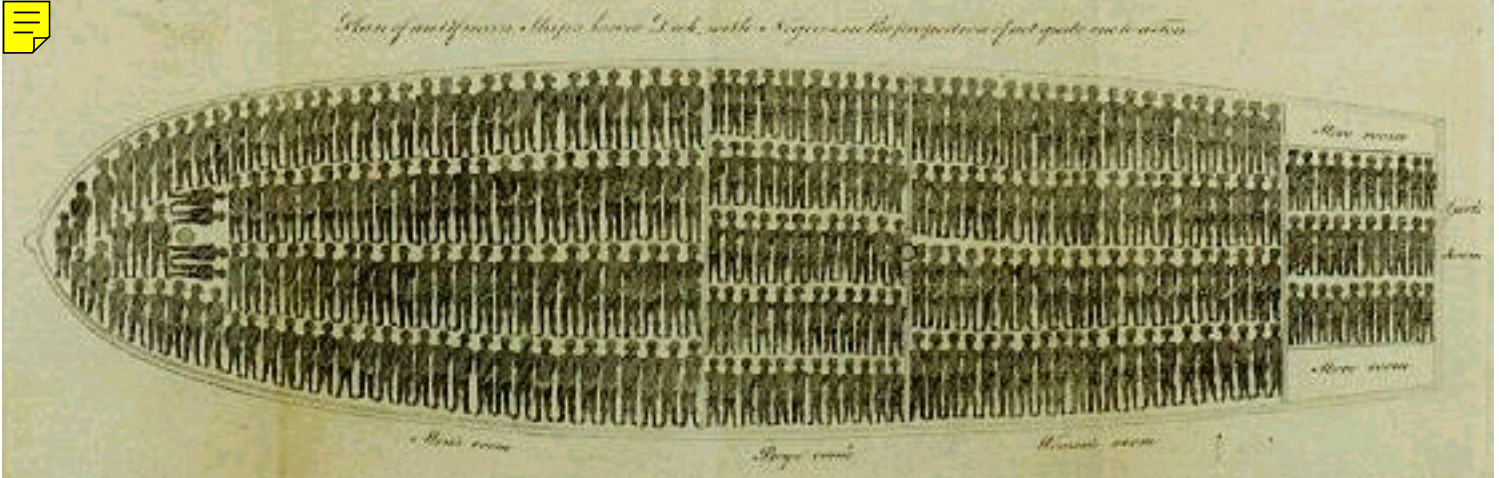


As an adult, he would participate in the [international slave trade](#), which is to say, he would make money out of the misery of other human beings.

36. Marrano = a Spanish or Portuguese Jew of the late Middle Ages who converted to Christianity, especially one forcibly converted but adhering secretly to Judaism.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

April 29, Thursday (Old Style): According to a report in a Boston gazette, in the previous year Captain George Scott of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) had been 100 leagues from the coast of Africa on his way home with yet another cargo of human flesh packed into his sloop *Little George* — when allofasudden there had been an uprising.



MIDDLE PASSAGE

“We hear from [Rhode Island](#) that Captain George Scott of that place, who sometime since went from thence to Guinea, and was returning with a cargo of Negroes, they rose upon the said commander and company, and barbarously murdered three of his men, the said captain and the rest of his company made their escape, tho tis said they are all since dead except the captain and a boy; The Negroes we are informed were afterwards taken and made slaves by those other nation.”

SERVILE INSURRECTION

(The slaver captain, undaunted by this setback, would sail out of [Newport](#) for the coast of Africa to collect more human raw material, each year for the following five years.)

1732

MDCCXXXII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1732. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

In [Rhode Island](#), William Wanton was in charge.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

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February: Finally having become aware that his quest for funding for a New World university was pointless, [George Berkeley](#) returned from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) to London, where he would preach before the society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts a sermon entitled VERSES ON THE PROSPECT OF PLANTING ARTS AND LEARNING IN AMERICA.

**ABOUT RHODE ISLAND**

Later in this year he would produce a pseudo-Platonic dialog entitled, *ALCIPHRON OR THE MINUTE PHILOSOPHER*, as a polemic against deistic free-thinkers — whom he identified with atheists, libertines, enthusiasts, scorners, critics, metaphysicians, fatalists, and sceptics, and designated as “minute philosophers”



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

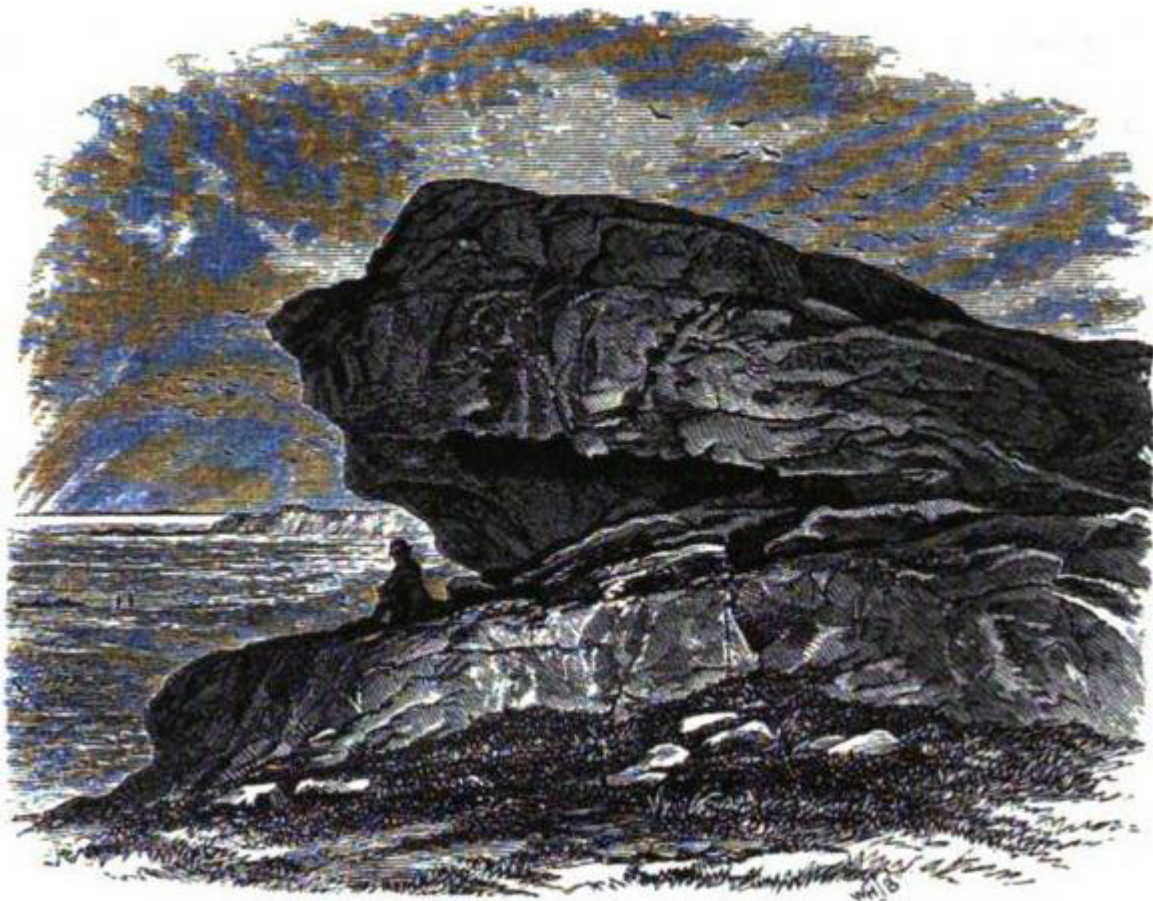
because of their inability to take large views of things.



The Berkeley residence in Rhode Island, "Whitehall"

**BERKELEY'S *ALCIPHON***

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



Bishop George Berkeley in his alcove by the Rhode Island shore

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OR, THE  
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.  
IN  
SEVEN DIALOGUES.  
*Containing an APOLOGY for the Christian Religion,  
against those who are called Free-thinkers.*

---

VOLUME *the* FIRST.

---



*They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them  
out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jerem. ii. 13.  
Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam,  
non vercor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant.  
Cicero.*

---


L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. TONSON in the Strand, 1732.

*ALCIPHRON:*  
OR, THE  
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.  
IN  
SEVEN DIALOGUES.  
*Containing an APOLOGY for the Christian Religion,  
against those who are called Free-thinkers.*

---

VOLUME *the* SECOND.

---



*The Scales of Deceit are in his Hand. Hosea xii. 7.  
Τὸ Ἐξαπατᾶν αὐτὸν ὑφ' αὐτοῦ, πάντων χαλιπώτατος. Plato.*

---

L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. TONSON in the Strand, 1732.



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 27, Wednesday (Old Style): [James Franklin](#) had brought a Ramage press and a small quantity of type over from England and had established himself in [Boston](#), with as apprentice his younger half-brother [Benjamin Franklin](#). He had, however, made some criticisms of the conduct of public affairs that had brought him into disfavor with the Massachusetts authorities, and young Ben had run away to Philadelphia. Finally, in constant fear of arrest, James had allowed himself to be persuaded by another Franklin brother, John, a resident of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), to remove thither. He had been publishing books and pamphlets. On this day the first issue of his new newspaper appeared, the [Rhode Island Gazette](#), 4th newspaper in New England but the 1st in Rhode Island. It was on 8 1/2 by 12 inch sheets and the logo stated that it was "Newport, Rhode-Island: Printed and sold by James Franklin at his Printing-House under the Town-School-House, where Advertisements and Letters to the Author are taken in." The last issue would be dated May 24, 1733, and there would be interruptions within that seven months.



READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December: In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), [James Franklin](#)'s [Rhode Island Gazette](#) ceased publication.



1733

MDCCLXXXIII. THE RHODE ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1733. By "Poor Robin." [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#). Sold also by T. Fleet, Boston.

1734

MDCCLXXXIV. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1734. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).



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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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1735

February 4, Monday (1734, Old Style): James [Franklin](#), elder half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#), died. No almanac would be issued for the year 1736. The printing business in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) would be carried on by Ann Smith Franklin as “Widow Franklin,” aided by two daughters and her son [James Franklin](#). For 1737 and 1738 she would rely on Joseph Stafford to prepare the [almanacs](#), but then he would move to Boston to put out his own almanac and she would herself prepare the materials from 1737 to 1741.

MDCCXXXV. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1735. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#). Sold also by T. Fleet, Boston.

The copy in the Library of Congress is interleaved with manuscript notes. It belonged to Daniel Rogers, a tutor at Harvard in 1732.

1737

MDCCXXXVII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1737, BY POOR ROBIN. By Joseph Stafford, [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

1738

MDCCXXXVIII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1738, BY POOR ROBIN. By Joseph Stafford. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

Some sailors were [hanged](#) at [Newport, Rhode Island](#) for having been guilty of a mutiny at sea.



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The Reverend John Callender of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), a classy white man, placed on display standard racial, cultural and class presumptions in regard to the [Narragansett](#) tribespeople, in his AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE, ON THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND:

*After the war, they [the [Narragansett](#) tribespeople] were soon reduced to the condition of the laboring poor, without property, hewers of wood and drawers of water; and there is no more reason to expect religion should, by human means, thrive among such people, than among the lazy and abandoned poor in London. The few that have lived much together, on Ninigret's lands, have had several offers of the gospel, as the Narragansetts had before; and at present the Congregational minister at [Westerly](#) [the Reverend Joseph Park] is a missionary to them, and encouraged by an exhibition from the Scotch Society for propagating Christian knowledge... The strange destruction of this people now since the wars ceased, and within memory, is very remarkable. Their insuperable aversion to English industry, and way of life, the alteration from the Indian method of living, their laziness, and their universal love of strong drink, have swept them away in a wonderful manner. So that there are now above twenty English to one Indian in the Colony.*

October 6, Friday (Old Style): The *Charming Susannah*, under Captain James Collingwood of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), departed for an unspecified part of Africa, where it would purchase and load itself with about 91 African [slaves](#). Its 1st and principal port of disembarkation for this [Middle Passage](#) cargo would be Barbados, where it would begin to disembark 74 African slaves on August 23, 1739 (from the Slave Trade Voyage database of Eltis et al, based on Coughtry, pages 241-85 and CO 28/25).

1739

MDCCXXXIX. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1739. By "Poor Robin." [Newport, Rhode Island: Widow Franklin](#)

James Franklin having died in 1735, and Stafford having moved to Boston, Widow Franklin issued the almanac this year and subsequently, under the pseudonym formerly used by her husband.

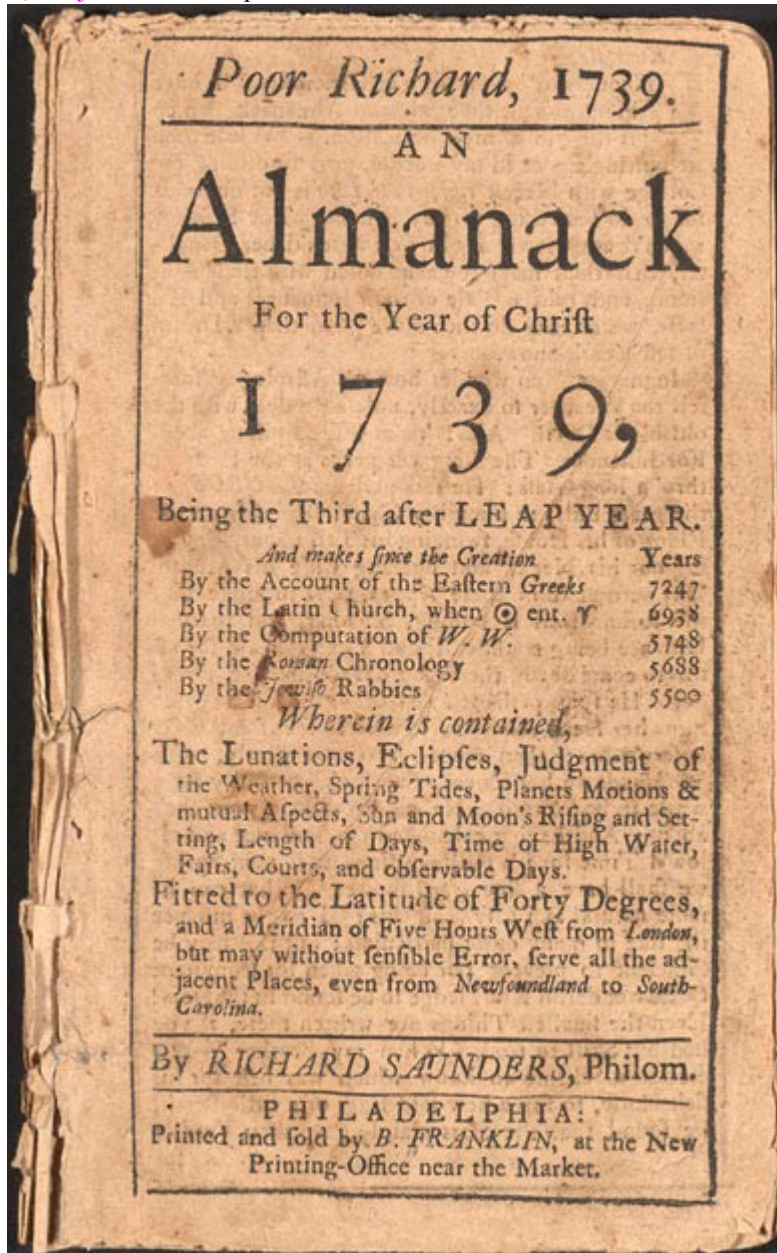


NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In Philadelphia, [Benjamin Franklin](#) put out a “Poor Richard” [ALMANACK](#):



August 23, Thursday (Old Style): The *Charming Susannah*, under Captain James Collingwood of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), begin to disembark 74 [slaves](#) from an unspecified part of Africa at Barbados after a [Middle Passage](#) (from the Slave Trade Voyage database of Eltis et al, based on Coughtry, pages 241-85 and CO 28/25).



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

September 1, Saturday (Old Style): During King George's War, otherwise known as the War of the Austrian Succession, against the Spanish, [Newport, Rhode Island](#) initially sent out the [privateer](#) vessels *Virgin Queen*, *Revenge*, and *Charming Betty* and then fitted out five more vessels as privateers and sent them out against Spanish shipping. (On this day the *Revenge* sailed from Newport.) It seems that in 1741 and 1742 there would be five such privateers in operation out of Newport, while in 1743 there would be ten and in 1744 eleven. Rhode Island was probably more active in [privateering](#) than any other colony along the American seaboard, since in 1744 when Rhode Island had 11 privateers at sea, Massachusetts had 7, New York 7, and Pennsylvania 8. (Other names of Rhode Island privateering vessels were *Fame*, *Victory*, *St. Andrew*, *Cason*, *Pollux*, *King George*, *Queen of Hungary*, *Duke of Marlborough*, *Prince Charles of Lorraine*, *Success*, *Defiance*, and *Reprisal*.)

October 23, Tuesday (Old Style): Great Britain declared war on Spain.

War was declared by Great Britain against Spain in Oct. 23, 1739, and the next year the expedition against Cuba was undertaken. The inhabitants of the colonies were invited to embark in it. In presenting the subject to the General Court, and urging preparations to be made for 1,000 men, Governor [Jonathan] Belcher said, "it would open a more extensive, rich, and beneficial trade for ourselves in the West Indies than we have yet enjoyed." This, and the promise of booty and lands in Cuba, as bounties to individual soldiers and expectations of being settled there, were the most plausible reasons for engaging in this most unfortunate enterprise. Though the General Court treated the wishes of the governor rather coolly, yet five companies of 100 men each were raised and put under the command of Captains John Prescott of [Concord](#), David Goffe, Thomas Phillips, George Stuart and John Winslow. The Governor himself paid the expenses of one company and Winslow paid that of his own. They embarked Sept. 23, 1740. Hon. Wm. Gouch of Virginia was Colonel of the regiment; Hon. Henry Cope, Lt. Colonel; Wm. Blakeley, Adj. General. General Thomas Wentworth commanded the land forces at Cuba; and Admiral Edward Vernon [Mount Vernon, Washington's residence, was named for him], the fleet. The whole expedition was under Lord Cathcart.

Arriving at Cuba, several unsuccessful attempts to accomplish the objects of the expedition were made. Many of the Americans were taken sick and died. They were placed on board Vernon's fleet and received such treatment as called forth complaints. They were separated into different vessels and compelled to sail among the West India islands; 468 were on board July 6, 1742. It was not long before the remnant, who had not fallen a sacrifice to the climate and other hardships, returned to this country, without accomplishing any of their original intentions. They were paid off and dismissed October 24, 1742. The expedition cost the province £37,500 currency, equal to £7,000 sterling. Of the 500 men from Massachusetts, 50 only returned. Fifteen, beside Capt. Prescott, went from [Concord](#); three only returned, — Jonathan Heywood, Eben. Lampson, and Henry Yours. Tradition says that Thomas Barnes, Zachariah Blood, Nathaniel Monroe, Sergeant Benjamin Pollard, Aaron Lyon, and Darius

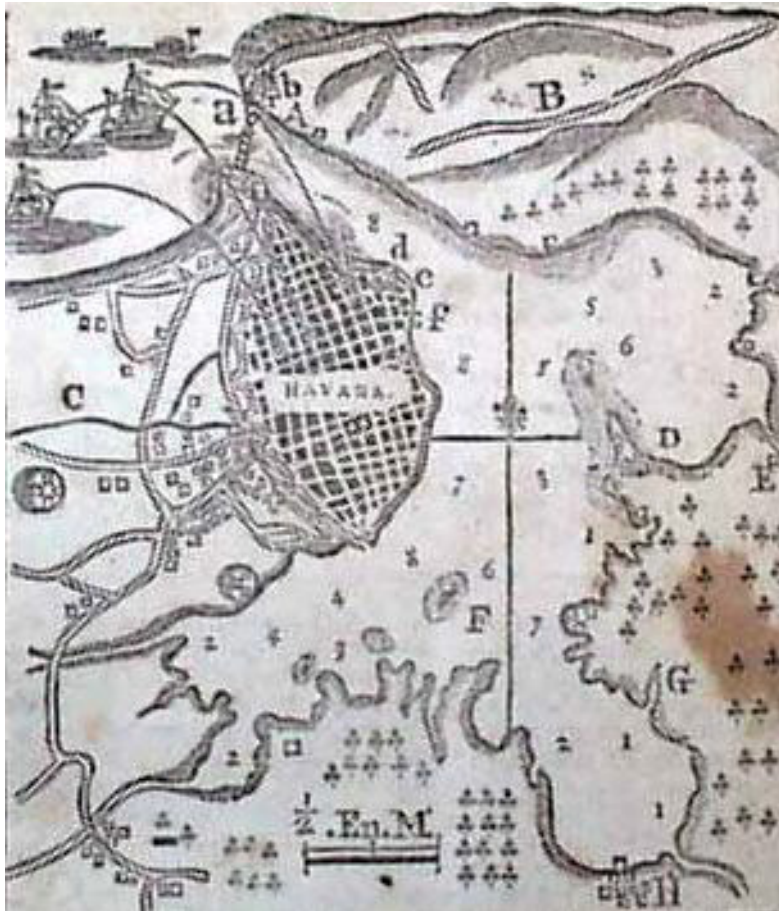
[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**NEWPORT****AQUIDNECK ISLAND****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Wheeler, were among those who died there.<sup>37</sup>

On [Aquidneck Island, Rhode Island](#), these hostilities would lead to the erection of watchtowers with beacons along the coast. The colony would be sending several hundred of its men under Admiral Edward Vernon against the Spanish West Indies — and precious few of these men would ever return.

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

Here is a map of the port of Havana that would be published during the year of this invasion, depicting a naval bombardment:



37. [Lemuel Shattuck's 1835 A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)  
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



**NEWPORT**

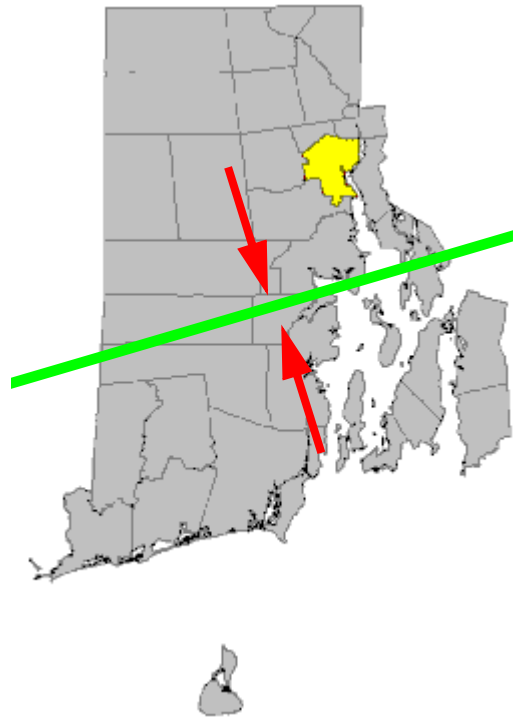
**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1740**

MDCCXL. 1740. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, BY POOR ROBIN. [Newport, Rhode Island: Widow Franklin.](#)

During this decade a partisan struggle in the [Rhode Island](#) colony would pit the merchants and farmers of [Newport](#) and South County (the “Rhode Island” of “Rhode Island and Providence Plantations”), led by Samuel Ward, against the merchants and farmers of the environs of [Providence](#) (the “Providence Plantations” of “Rhode Island and Providence Plantations”), who would come to be led by [Friend Stephen Hopkins](#).

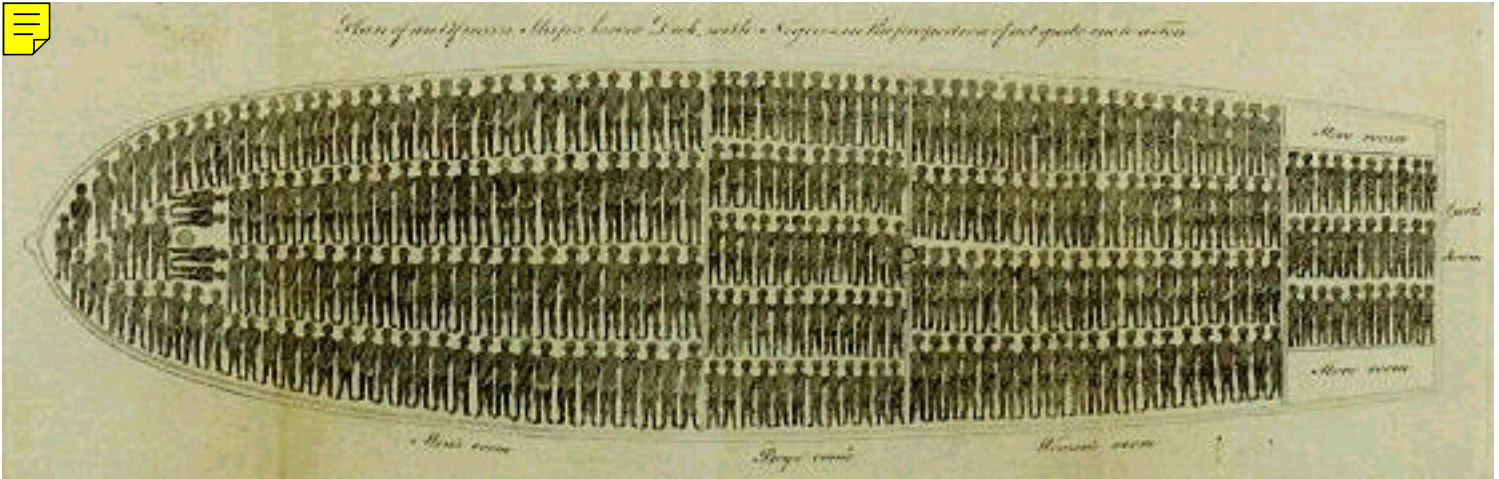


5 day 5 mo: The [Quaker](#) meeting in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) recorded in its table of deaths that “John Wanton Governour of the Colony of Rhode Island Aged 68 years and Departed this Life the 5th Day of the 5th mo. 1740 being the 7th Day of the week, and he was carried to the meeting Houfe & after Meeting was Buried in Coddington’s Burying places — — [after this has been added in some blank space underneath in a different hand and ink, as if there had been some lingering doubt that needed to be put to rest: “for many years he was a valuable public friend”]

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1741

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 7 [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of more than 760 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



In this year of King George's War, five [privateer](#) vessels were attacking the shipping of the Spanish enemies of the British crown out of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

MDCCXLI. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1741. By "Poor Robin." [Newport: Widow Franklin.](#)

There would be a gap in the issuance of [Rhode Island](#) almanacs until 1750 when [James Franklin](#)'s son [James Franklin](#), rejoining his mother after serving an apprenticeship in Philadelphia with his uncle [Benjamin Franklin](#), would begin to publish "Poor Job's almanac."

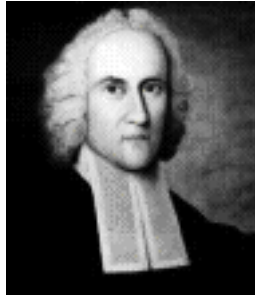


# NEWPORT

# AQUIDNECK ISLAND

## GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

After hearing the Reverend [Jonathan Edwards](#) deliver “The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of a Spirit of



God,” and graduating from Yale College, [Samuel Hopkins](#) continued his studies with the Reverend [Edwards](#) at [Northampton](#), Massachusetts. He would become a Calvinist pastor, first in Great Barrington, Massachusetts and later in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

June 5, Friday (Old Style): The sloop *Revenge*, owned by Commander Benjamin Norton and John Freebody of [Newport](#), again sailed from Newport as a [privateer](#).

Here is the number of such [Rhode Island](#) privateer vessels at sea against Spanish shipping, by year:

1741	5
1742	5
1743	10
1744	11
1745	13-15



“In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to [privateering](#) in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace.”

– [Thomas Jefferson](#), 1812



“If [privateering](#) had not been already well established in the British Empire when [Rhode Island](#) first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>38</sup>



38. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF [RHODE ISLAND](#). Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999



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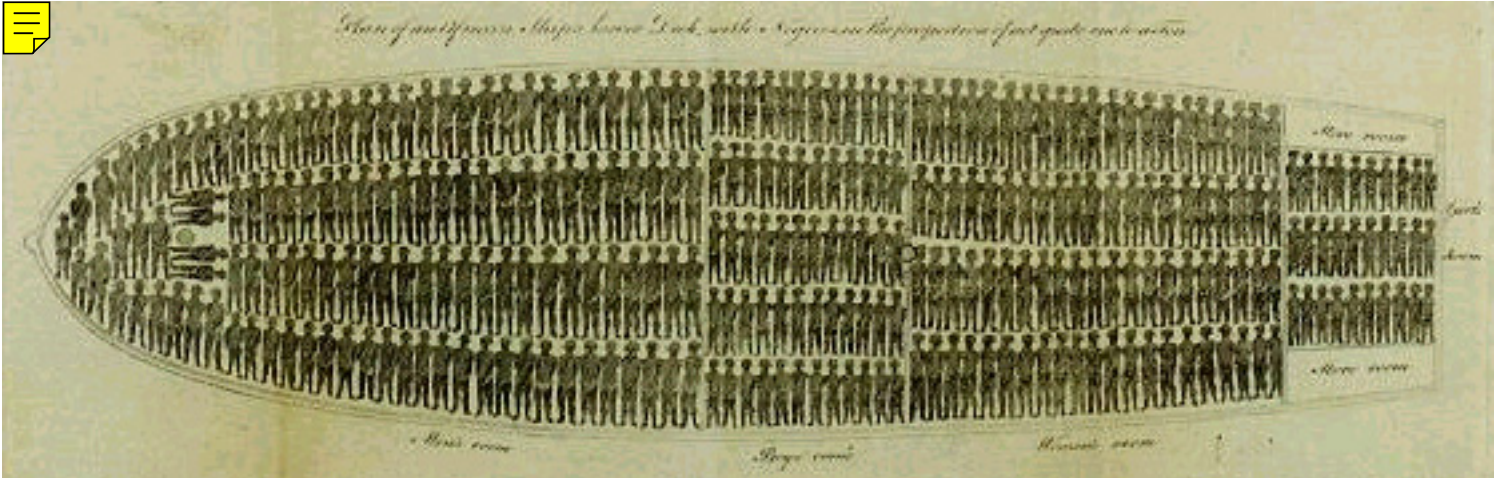
**1742**

The Reverend [Jonathan Edwards](#) published his credo, SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE PRESENT REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN NEW ENGLAND. The next year the Reverend Charles Chauncy of the Presbyterian First Church of [Boston](#) would publish a censorious rebuttal, SEASONABLE THOUGHTS ON THE STATE OF RELIGION IN NEW ENGLAND, which would lengthily disapprove of shepherds such as the Reverend Edwards who, in dealing with their flock, “aimed at putting their Passions into a Ferment.”

**READ A BIOGRAPHY**

After studying with the Reverend [Edwards](#) at [Northampton](#), Massachusetts, [Samuel Hopkins](#) was licensed to preach. He would become a Calvinist pastor, first in Great Barrington, Massachusetts and later in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 8 [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of more than 870 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



In this year of King George’s War, five [privateer](#) vessels were in operation against Spanish shipping out of [Newport, Rhode Island](#):

1741	5
1742	5
1743	10
1744	11



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

1745 | 13-15



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to [privateering](#) in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

— [Thomas Jefferson](#), 1812



"If [privateering](#) had not been already well established in the British Empire when [Rhode Island](#) first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

— Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>39</sup>



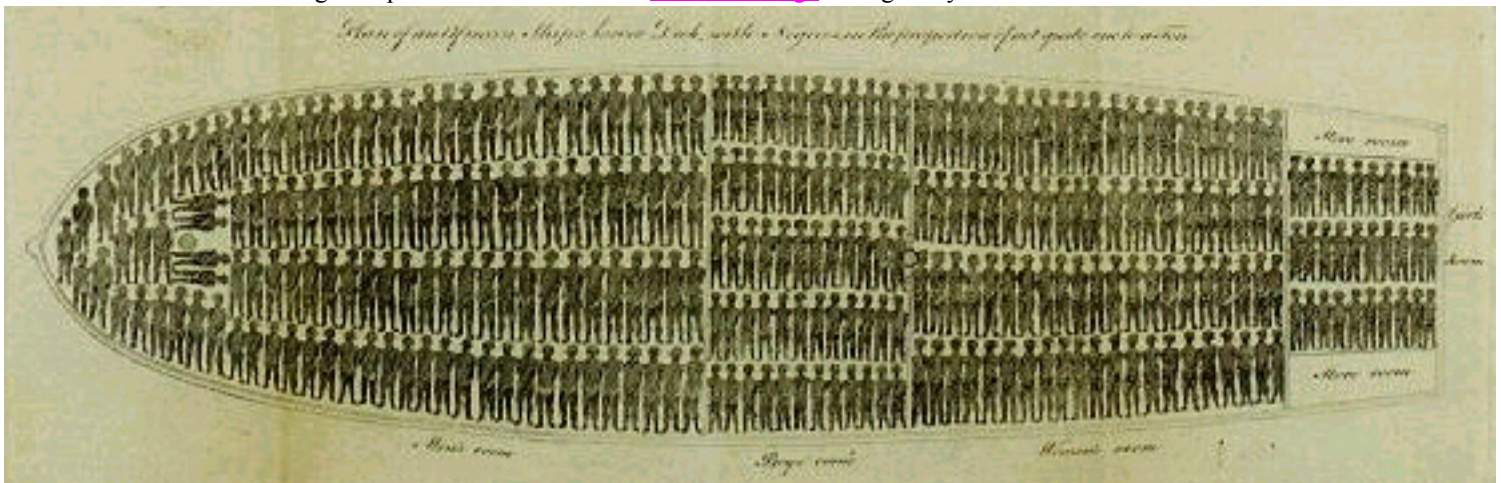
August 7, Saturday (July 27, Tuesday, Old Style; 27th day of 5th month, 3d day, Quaker style): [Nathanael Greene](#) was born in Potowomut, [Rhode Island](#). His mother was Mary Motte Greene and his father Nathanael Greene was a prosperous farmer and ironmaster, and a public Friend (Quaker preacher). (Note that General Nathanael Greene was not closely related to the other Greene from Rhode Island to achieve fame during the Revolution, Colonel [Christopher Greene](#).) From boyhood, Nathanael would work at his father's mills and forge, making primarily anchors. From his childhood forward, he would walk with a noticeable limp. He would make miniature anchors and other toys for sale in [Newport](#), and use part of the proceeds to purchase books. He would become self-educated under the guidance of the grammarian Lindley Murray, a young lawyer working for John Jay's law firm in New-York, and of [Ezra Stiles](#), who would become president of Yale College. He was a birthright Quaker member of the East Greenwich Monthly Meeting. After observing a military parade in Connecticut he would become an avid peruser of military works — something which would be of significant concern for the [Peace Testimony](#) of his meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

39. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF [RHODE ISLAND](#). Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1743

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 5 [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of something like 545 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



Of course, the international trade in new [slaves](#) was not being exclusively monopolized by slavers operating out of tiny [Rhode Island](#). In Nürnberg in this year, Homann Hereditors issued its very nice hand-colored engraved map of *GUINEA PROPIA, NEC NON NIGRITIAE VEL TERRAE NIGRORUM MAXIMA PARS . . .* indicating just which sections of the African coast were being patronized by the English [negreros](#), the Dutch [negreros](#), the French [negreros](#), and the Danish [negreros](#):



In this year of King George’s War, ten [privateer](#) vessels were in operation against Spanish shipping out of [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#):

1741	5
1742	5
1743	10
1744	11



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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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1745 13-15



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to [privateering](#) in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

– [Thomas Jefferson](#), 1812



"If [privateering](#) had not been already well established in the British Empire when [Rhode Island](#) first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>40</sup>



1744

Dr. Alexander Hamilton of Annapolis, [Maryland](#) visited [Kingston](#) and [Newport](#) on his way to [Boston](#), and would chat about this visit in his GENTLEMANS PROGRESS: THE ITINERARIUM OF DR. ALEXANDER HAMILTON 1744 (a trivial publication which the [Redwood Library](#) would of course be eager to add to its accumulation).

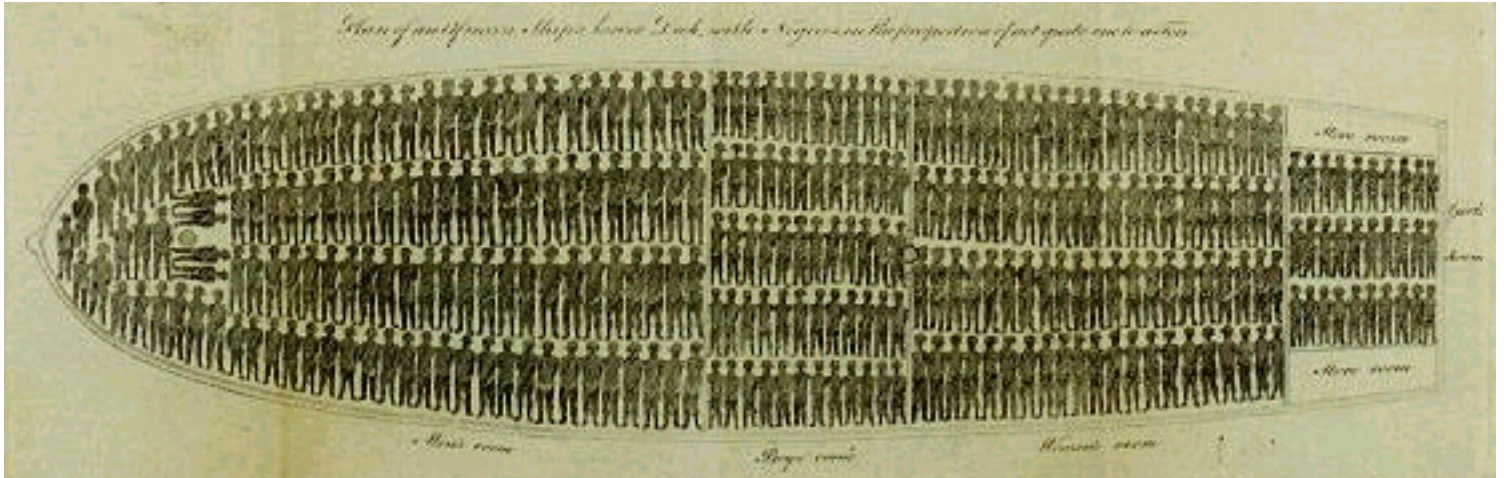
CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

A local innkeeper having explained to this swell that he might get his ass in a sling if he attempted to travel in [Rhode Island](#) on the Sabbath –there being nothing in [Kingston](#) he considered worthy of his attention– he hung around all day “having nothing to do and no books to read, except it was a curious HISTORY OF THE NINE WORTHIES (which we found in Case’s library) a book worthy of that worthy author Mr. Burton, the diligent compiler and historian of Grub Street.” Yawn.

40. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF [RHODE ISLAND](#). Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, two [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of something more than 200 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



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



At the beginning of King George’s War between Britain and France, eleven [privateer](#) vessels were in operation against Spanish shipping out of [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#) and the number was still increasing, while by way of contrast, at this point Massachusetts had seven commissioned privateers at sea, New York seven, and Pennsylvania eight. For example, in this year Captain Simeon Potter of [Bristol](#) sailed out from [Newport](#) in his sloop *Prince Charles of Lorraine* with a commission as a [privateer](#) against the vessels of France and Spain, but instead raided a Jesuit mission at the mouth of the Oyapoc River of Guiana, torching a Catholic school there, capturing its priest, looting its silver and vestments, and pillaging houses of the settlement. In privateering, which amounted to a sanctioned form of high-seas [piracy](#), Rogue Island always led the way!



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

- Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

- Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>41</sup>



The New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends advised against the further importing of slaves.<sup>42</sup>



INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

41. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999



# NEWPORT

# AQUIDNECK ISLAND

## GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 7, Thursday (Old Style): John Brown's and Thomas Cogeshall's sloop *King George* sailed as a [privateer](#) from [Newport](#) harbor of [Rhode Island](#), where four other new [privateering](#) vessels were in preparation:

1741	5
1742	5
1743	10
1744	11
1745	13-15



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to [privateering](#) in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

— [Thomas Jefferson](#), 1812



"If [privateering](#) had not been already well established in the British Empire when [Rhode Island](#) first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

— Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>43</sup>



42. Below appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#):

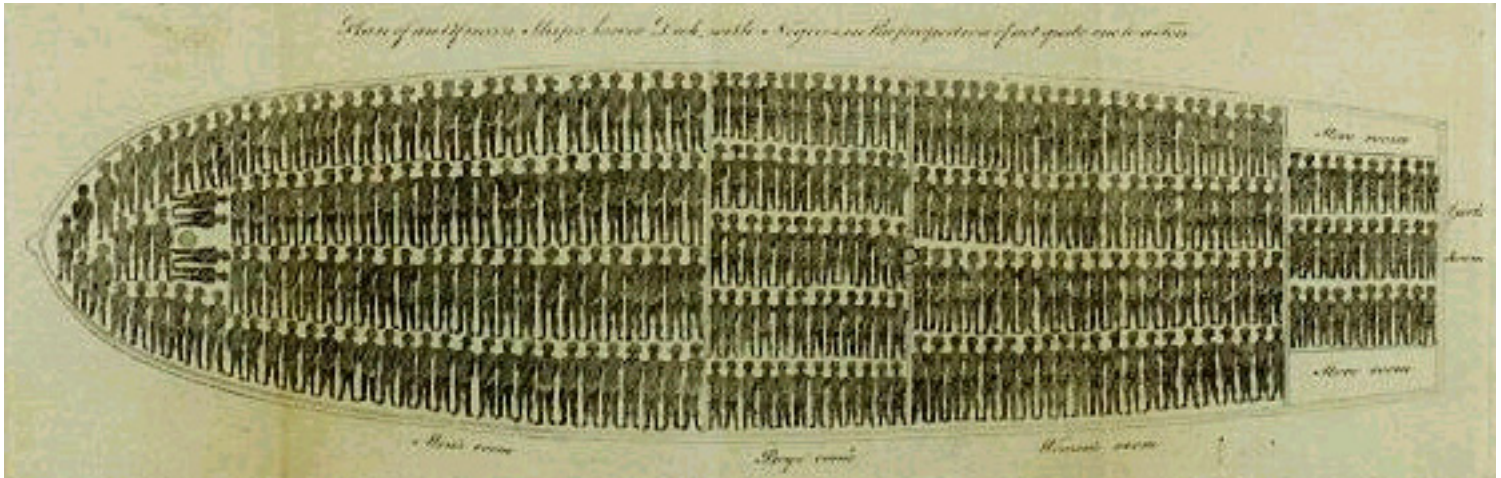


43. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF [RHODE ISLAND](#). Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1745

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, a couple of [negreros](#) were being fitted out in this year for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of more than 200 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



By this point in King George’s War, at least 13 to 15 [privateer](#) vessels out of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) were upon the seas, seeking the Spanish enemies of the crown and their shipping:

1741	5
1742	5
1743	10
1744	11
1745	13-15



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

- Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

- Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>44</sup>



Christmas Eve: At Rhode Island, Godfrey Malbone, had constructed and fitted out two privateers, the Duke of Cumberland and the Prince of Wales, each with a crew of 130.<sup>45</sup> Having a horoscope cast for him, Malbone learned that the stars said he would capture valuable prizes and make lots of money if he sailed on the lucky date, Christmas Eve. In the teeth of a building nor'easter, he ordered his two ships to set sail out of Newport harbor. Some couple of hundred of Newport wives would be widowed, as the two ships he sent out into the storm this day would never be heard of again.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

- Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

- Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>46</sup>



44. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

45. Privateers required very large crews, since each ship they would capture would need to be given an adequate crew, in order to sail it back to a safe port to sell it for profit

46. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999



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1746

Captains John Dennis and Robert Morris, [privateers](#) out of [Rhode Island](#), captured a French vessel near Cape Tiburon and brought it to [Newport](#), where its black crewmembers were sold into [slavery](#) in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York. This brought a protest from the Governor of Cuba, that these particular black seamen had in Cuba been not slaves but free men. Learning of this, the Rhode Island General Assembly voted that an apology be tendered, and that the black sailors be purchased from their purchasers –who were to be fully reimbursed– and the seamen set free and allowed to depart at will. Of course, no consideration was given to the paying of back wages for services rendered, but a message was sent to Cuba: this adventure into the [international slave trade](#) had been a mere inadvertent error (RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORDS, V. 170, 176-7; [Dawson's Historical Magazine](#), XVIII. 98).

1747

Timothy Minott of [Concord](#), son of Timothy Minott, graduated from [Harvard College](#). He would become a physician in Concord.

Timothy Minott was born June 18, 1692, a son of James Minott, Esq., and grad. in 1718. He studied divinity, and was licensed to preach the gospel and in that capacity was accustomed to officiate for the Rev. Messrs. Whiting, Bliss and Emerson - in Concord and in many neighbouring churches. He was never ordained but spent most of his life in the more humble, but not less important office of a teacher of youth. His first introduction to this employment was in 1712, before he left college, in the public grammar-school in Concord. He was then engaged at the rate of £20 per year on condition, say the town records, "if any thing should exceed his abilities his father should assist him." He taught occasionally till 1721 and from that time constantly for above 40 years. According to the town records, for many years, it appears as a condition on which money should be raised to support the grammar school, that "Mr. Timothy Minott undertake the work." This vote of the town shows that his services were held in high estimation, an opinion which is fully confirmed by tradition. His occupation gave him the title of Master Minott and enabled him to be a very useful man. He was more distinguished, however, for the excellence of his principles and character as a man, and for his faculties as a schoolmaster, than for any peculiar force or elegance as a preacher. He died November 30, 1778 aged 86.<sup>47</sup>



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[William Ellery](#) graduated (like his father before him) from [Harvard College](#), and returned to [Newport, Rhode Island](#) in order to study for the law.

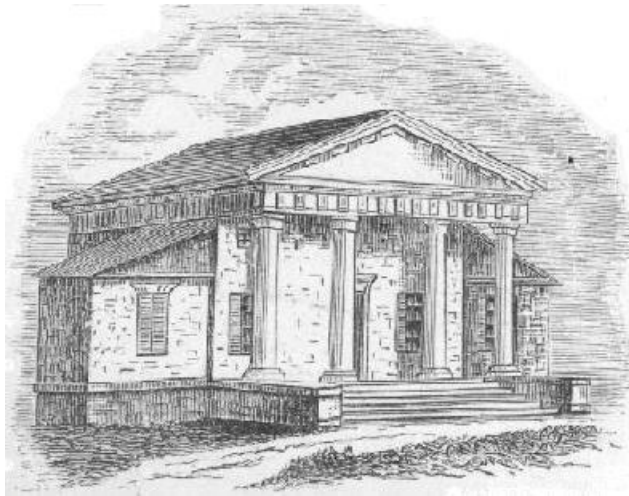
47. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD;...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)



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There were a number of donations of books and a number of cash contributions to the [Redwood Library](#) that was being formed in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). A number of the Jews of the local synagogue would contribute, including [Aaron Lopez](#).



(Presumably this contribution would come somewhat later than the establishment of the library, since it is said that Aaron, then known as Duarte, would still be in Lisbon until 1750.)

The largest initial contribution would be from a [Quaker slaveholder](#) and philanthropist, Friend [Abraham Redwood](#), who donated £500 sterling for the purchase of “a collection of useful Books suitable for a Publick

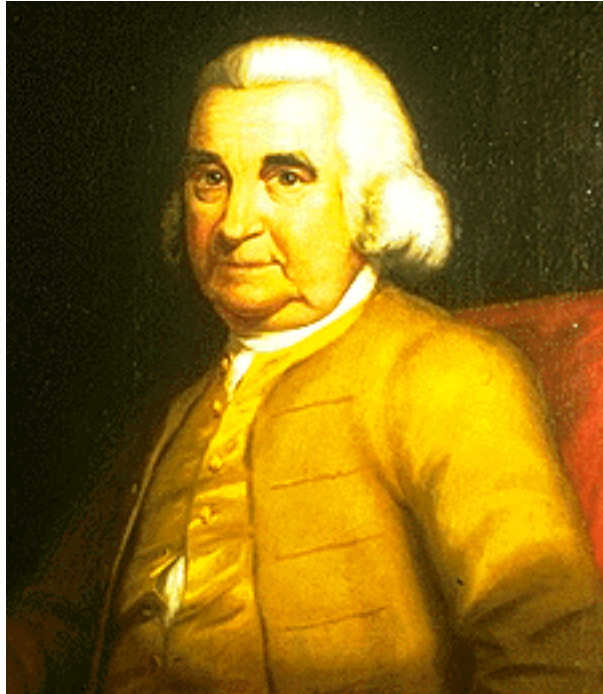


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Library.” The library would therefore be named in Friend Abraham’s honor:



So, if we pose for ourselves the question, whether the expensive books that provided the basis for the Redwood Library had the sweat of unpaid labor on their pages, the answer would not be “No, for the donation of the Jewish slavetrader Lopez came somewhat later,” but would instead be “Yes, because the donation of the Quaker slaveholder Redwood was wealth extracted from the sweat of unpaid labor.”<sup>48</sup>

48. In case you haven’t noticed, in the American popular mind [Quakerism](#) has been closely associated with antislavery righteousness, while the Jewish faith has been, at least in some circles, closely associated with enslavement iniquity. –It is, therefore, worth paying attention to information that complicates such popular perceptions.



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The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#) of [Rhode Island](#), seating a thousand worshippers, was at this point enlarged to include a second-floor youth gallery seating an additional 500. A moveable wooden divider was created, so that the meeting could be separated on occasions into a men’s meeting and a women’s meeting.<sup>49</sup>



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

**1748**

Jacob Rodriguez Rivera, of a Marrano<sup>50</sup> family of Seville, Spain, arrived in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) from Curacao to introduce the manufacture of spermaceti candles. His daughter Sarah Rivera would marry with his nephew [Aaron Lopez](#) and his son Jacob Rivera would build a grand mansion on the Parade (today the site is 8 Washington Square). Jacob Rodriguez Rivera would be second only to his son-in-law in the commercial, religious, and social life of Newport’s [Jewish](#) community.

**TOURO SYNAGOGUE**

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the printer Widow Franklin (Ann Smith Franklin) took as her partner her son [James Franklin](#), who had served a printing apprenticeship with his uncle Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia.

**James Franklin’s Indenture**

Witnessst, That James Franklin late of Newport in Rhode island, And now of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania Hath put himself, and by these Presents, doth voluntarily, and of his own Will and Accord, put himself Apprentice to Benjamin Franklin of the City of Philadelphia, Printer ——to learn his Art, Trade, and Mystery, and after the Manner of an Apprentice to serve the said

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

50. Marrano = a Spanish or Portuguese Jew of the late Middle Ages who converted to Christianity, especially one forcibly converted but adhering secretly to Judaism.

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*James B. Rivera*

*From the original painting by Gilbert Stuart*



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Benjamin Franklin from the Day of the Date herof, for, and during, and unto the full End and Term of Seven Years —next ensuing. During all which Term, the said Apprentice his said Master faithfully shall serve, his Secrets keep, his lawfull Commands everywhere readily obey. He shall do no Damage to his said Master, nor see it to be done by others without letting or giving Notice thereof to his said Master. He shall not waste his said Master's Goods, nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not commit Fornication, nor contract Matrimony within the said Term. At Cards, Dice, or any other unlawful Game, he shall not play, whereby his said Master may have Damage. With his own Goods, nor the Goods of others, without Licence from his said Master, he shall neither buy nor sell. He shall not absent himself Day nor Night from his said Master's Service, without his Leave: Nor haunt Ale-houses, Taverns, or Play-houses; but in all Things behave himself as a faithful Apprentice ought to do, during the said Term. And the said Master shall use the utmost of his Endeavour to teach or cause to be taught or instructed the said Apprentice in the Trade or Mystery of Printing and procure and provide for him sufficient Meat, Drink, Cloaths— Lodging and Washing fitting to an Apprentice, during the said Term of Seven Years and at the Expiration thereof shall give him one good new Suit of Cloaths, besides his common Apparel.

AND for the true Performance of all and singular the Covenants and Agreements aforesaid, the said Parties bind themselves each unto the other firmly by these Pretents. IN WITNESS whereof, the said Parties have interchangeably set their Hands and Seals hereunto. Dated the Fifth Day of November in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the second King o Great-Britain, &c. Annoque Domini One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty.

Sealed and delivered in  
the presence of us  
[Signatures of Christopher Thompson, James Franklin, and Richard Ferguson]

Beginning at about this point, [Henry Marchant](#) of [Martha's Vineyard](#) would have been attending school in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



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February: The first of [Rhode Island's privateering](#) expeditions to sail from [Providence](#) rather than from [Newport](#).

According to Edgar S. Maclay's A HISTORY OF AMERICAN PRIVATEERS, 1899, it was the success of American [privateers](#) in the destruction of England's overseas commerce that "struck the mortal blows to British supremacy in America," not the famous land battles such as those at Saratoga and Yorktown, because these depredations caused the interest of the powerful British mercantile class to end the hostilities to be in conflict with the interest of the government of King George III to continue the hostilities. Here, therefore, is the number of Rhode Island privateer vessels, by year (compared with number of Rhode Island vessels taken by the French during England's period of hostilities with that nation):

	<b>RHODE ISLAND PRIVATEERS</b>	<b>RI VESSELS TAKEN BY FRENCH</b>
1741	5	
1742	5	
1743	10	
1744	11	
1745	13-15	
1753	1	
1754	0	
1755	1	
1756	5	5
1757	10	5
1758	16	11
1759	2	5
1760	8	0
1761	3	14
1762	22	11
1763	?	1
1776	57	
1777	17	
1778	17	
1779	39	
1780	13	



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	RHODE ISLAND PRIVATEERS	RI VESSELS TAKEN BY FRENCH
1781	9	
1782	26	
1783	17	



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

– Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>51</sup>



1750

[POOR JOB, 1750. AN ALMANACK FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1750. By "Job Shepherd." Newport, Rhode Island: James Franklin.]

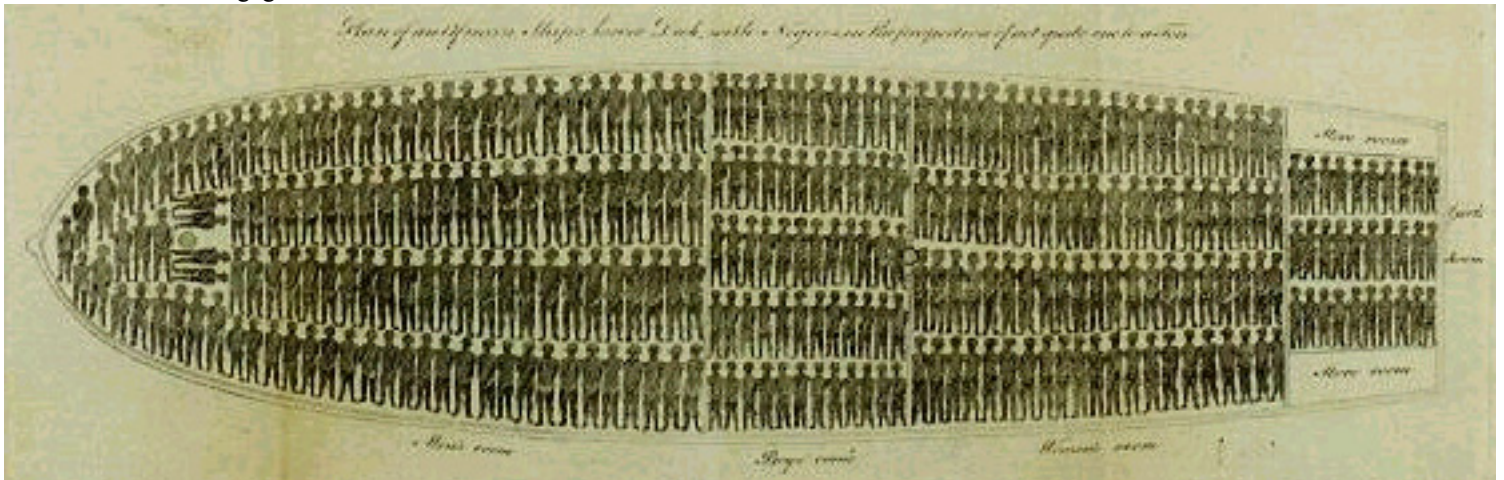
This is the first of the second series of Franklin's almanacs. They were issued by James Franklin's son James under the pen name of Job Shepherd. The only known copy lacks six leaves.

In the preface to his 1751 almanac this pseudonymous "Job Shepherd" would write "And now, Reader, after having made this Publick Appearance, it must, on mature Consideration, appear very odd, what some think, and others affirm, that there is not, nor ever was, such a Person as I am living."

51. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

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A [Quaker](#) in [Newport](#), one of the two major [slave](#) importing centers of the USA, was put under dealing by the elders of his monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), on account of his firm's continuing to engage in the [international slave trade](#).<sup>52</sup>



[Aaron Lopez](#), who would be known as the “Merchant Prince” of early American commerce, and his family, at this point arrived in [Newport](#) from Lisbon, Portugal, where as a Marrano<sup>53</sup> he had been being required to use the Christian name “Don Duarte Lopez.”

52. So, exactly **who, by name**, was this interesting Friend? We know that Friend [Abraham Redwood](#) needed to be dealt with by the elders of his meeting, on account of his refusal to give up the ownership of beaucoup black slaves on his sugar plantation in Antigua, but I have not heard that this Friend Abraham was engaged in any trade other than the sugar trade — so presumably this [Quaker](#) slavetrader of unspecified name was some **other** Newport Quaker. Below, for your interest, appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#):



53. Marrano = a Spanish or Portuguese Jew of the late Middle Ages who converted to Christianity, especially one forcibly converted but adhering secretly to [Judaism](#).



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(Probably, the family came to the port of New-York first and then went on up to [Rhode Island](#).)



The father of the family immediately underwent ritual [circumcision](#). Within twenty years he would own or have interests in nearly a hundred sailing vessels. Aaron and his nephew Moses would wholly own 27 square-rigged vessels, including whale-ships — although they would lose nearly all of these during the Revolutionary War. Like the aforementioned Newport [Quaker](#), he would be heavily involved in the international slave trade. He would be one of the original founders of and contributors to [Touro Synagogue](#).

**1751**

POOR JOB, 1751. AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1751. By “Job Shepherd.” [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

This almanac contains a cut of the man of signs, a geographical description of the world, a list of the Kings of England, and an ephemeris. This is the first almanac printed in Rhode Island that contains these things as far as we actually know, but it is probable that they were on the missing pages of the 1750

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almanac which has only come down to us in a mutilated condition.



In the preface this pseudonymous “Job Shepherd” wrote “And now, Reader, after having made this Publick Appearance, it must, on mature Consideration, appear very odd, what some think, and others affirm, that there is not, nor ever was, such a Person as I am living.”



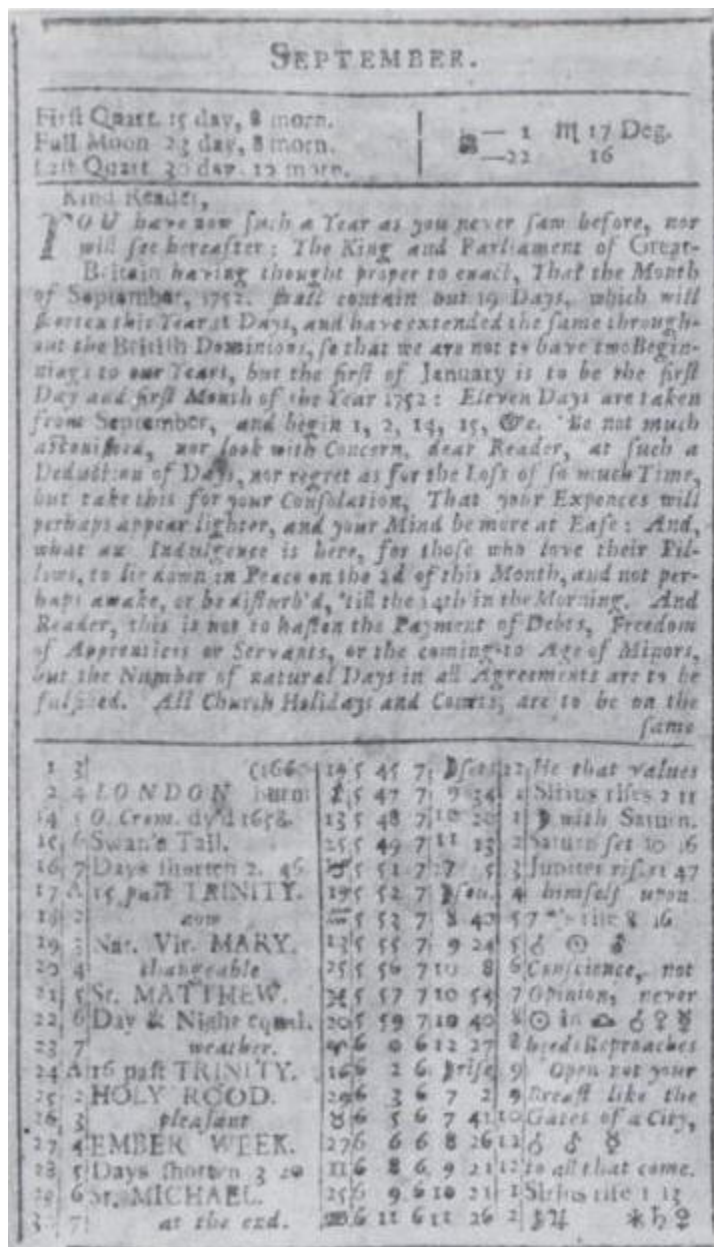
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1752

POOR JOB, 1752. AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1752. By Job Shepherd, Philom. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#). This was the almanac that had the unenviable task of explaining to the people at large, that in this year the month of September was going to have only 19 days — but no, nobody was going to get cheated:





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Nathaniel Ames's AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1753 was in this year prepared for printing in Boston by J. Draper for the Booksellers. At the foot of the second page was a diagram and explanation of the transit of Mercury across the sun: "On Sunday, May 6, the Sun will rise with Mercury making a black Spot in his Body..." The ending was an explanation of the correction of the calendar that had just occurred: "striking off the Eleven Days between the 2d and 14th of September, A.D. 1752 ... to produce an Uniformity in the Computation of Time throughout the christian Part of the World..."



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May: The negrero *Abigail* was fitted out by Captain Freedman, carrying the appropriate numbers of pistols and swords, the appropriate number of kegs of gunpowder, and (with the greatest difficulty, the demand for this commodity being so great among the numerous negrero vessels) 9,000 gallons of rum, along with other trade commodities. A large supply of hand and foot irons went along for the ride, in order properly to confine the vessel's human cargo of 56 black slaves during its return passage. The crew consisted of two leading seamen and six ordinary sailors. This voyage to West Africa would consume 3 1/2 months.



It would bring [Aaron Lopez](#), Moses Levy, and Jacob Franks, the vessel's owners, a net profit of \$6,621 (which



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was a significant amount of pocket change, since their penny was worth, roughly, one of today's greenbacks).



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Here are some of the other [negreros](#) of which we have record:

- The *La Fortuna* transported approximately 217 slaves on each trip. The owner cleared not less than \$41,438 from such a trip.
- The *Crown* owned by Isaac Levy and Nathan Simpson
- The *Nassau* owned by Moses Levy
- The *Four Sisters* owned by Moses Levy
- The *Anne & Eliza* owned by Justus Bosch and John Abrams
- The *Prudent Betty* owned by Henry Cruger and Jacob Phoenix
- The *Hester* owned by Mordecai Gomez and David Gomez
- The *Elizabeth* owned by Mordecai Gomez and David Gomez
- The *Antigua* owned by Nathan Marston and Abram Lyell
- The *Betsy* owned by William DeWoolf
- The *Polly* owned by James DeWoolf
- The *White Horse* owned by Jan de Sweevts
- The *Expedition* owned by John Rosevelt and Jacob Rosevelt
- The *Charlotte* owned by Moses Levy, Samuel Levy, and Jacob Franks
- The *Caracoa* owned by Moses Levy and Samuel Levy
- Coastal slave-runners: the *La Fortuna*, the *Hannah*, the *Sally*, and the *Venue*
- The *Sanderson*, trading to Africa and the West Indies (AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 315-9, 338-42)

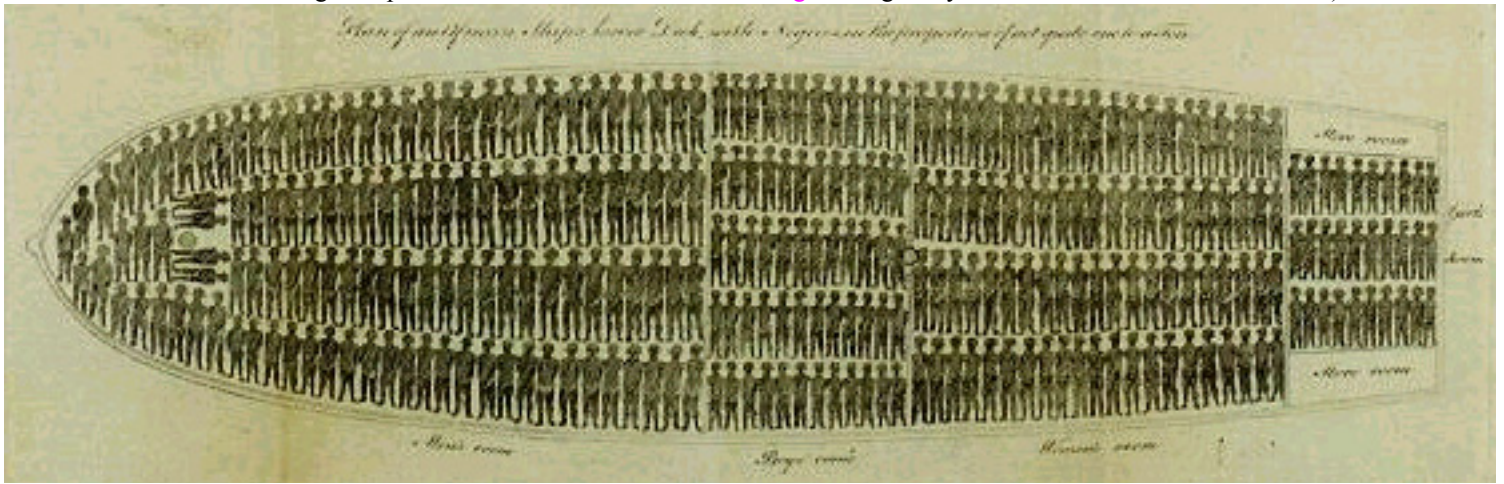


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(In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 14 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of more than 1,500 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.)<sup>54</sup>



W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: Vessels from Massachusetts,<sup>55</sup> Rhode Island,<sup>56</sup> Connecticut,<sup>57</sup> and, to a less extent, from New Hampshire,<sup>58</sup> were early and largely engaged in the carrying slave-trade. “We know,” said Thomas Pemberton in 1795, “that a large trade to Guinea was carried on for many years by the

54. Clearly, there’s a terminology problem here. In an effort to resolve this terminology issue, at the Republican National Convention in New-York during August 2004 –at which the Republican Party would for four days make an effort to strip from its face its mask of hostility to the plight of the downtrodden and reveal its true countenance of benevolent conservatism and concern—these people would be sensitively referred to by a Hoosier Republican running for the US Senate as “involuntary immigrants.”

So, perhaps, this is a good point at which to insert a story about involuntary immigrants that has been passed on to us by Ram Varmha, a retired IBM engineer whose father had briefly served as Maharaja after the independence of Cochin. He relates the story as narrated to him by his paternal grandmother who lived in Thripoonithura, Cochin: “When my grandmother (born 1882) was a young girl she would go with the elder ladies of the family to the Pazhayannur Devi Temple in Fort Cochin, next to the Cochin Lantha Palace built by the Dutch (Landers = Lantha), which was an early establishment of the Cochin royal family before the administration moved to Thripoonithura. My grandmother often told us that in the basement of the Lantha Palace, in a confined area, a family of Africans had been kept locked up, as in a zoo! By my Grandmother’s time all the Africans had died. But, some of the elder ladies had narrated the story to her of ‘Kappiries’ (Africans) kept in captivity there. It seems visitors would give them fruits and bananas. They were well cared for but always kept in confinement. My grandmother did not know all the details but according to her, ‘many’ years earlier, a ship having broken its mast drifted into the old Cochin harbor. When the locals climbed aboard, they found a crewless ship, but in the hold there were some chained ‘Kappiries’ still alive; others having perished. The locals did not know what to do with them. Not understanding their language and finding the Africans in chains, the locals thought that these were dangerous to set free. So they herded the poor Africans into the basement of the Cochin Fort, and held them in captivity, for many, many years! I have no idea when the initial incident happened, but I presume it took place in the late 1700s or early 1800s. This points to the possibility that it was, in fact, a slave ship carrying human cargo from East Africa to either the USA or the West Indies. An amazing and rather bizarre story. Incidentally, this is not an ‘old woman’s tale’! Its quite reliable. My grandmother would identify some of the older ladies who had actually seen the surviving Kappiries.”

55. Cf. Weeden, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND, II. 449-72; G.H. Moore, SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS; Charles Deane, CONNECTION OF MASSACHUSETTS WITH SLAVERY.

56. Cf. AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 311, 338.

57. Cf. W.C. Fowler, LOCAL LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT, etc., pages 122-6.

58. Cf. W.C. Fowler, LOCAL LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT, etc., page 124.



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citizens of Massachusetts Colony, who were the proprietors of the vessels and their cargoes, out and home. Some of the slaves purchased in Guinea, and I suppose the greatest part of them, were sold in the West Indies."<sup>59</sup> Dr. John Eliot asserted that "it made a considerable branch of our commerce.... It declined very little till the Revolution."<sup>60</sup> Yet the trade of this colony was said not to equal that of Rhode Island. Newport was the mart for slaves offered for sale in the North, and a point of reshipment for all slaves. It was principally this trade that raised Newport to her commercial importance in the eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup> Connecticut, too, was an important slave-trader, sending large numbers of horses and other commodities to the West Indies in exchange for slaves, and selling the slaves in other colonies.

This trade formed a perfect circle. Owners of slavers carried slaves to South Carolina, and brought home naval stores for their ship-building; or to the West Indies, and brought home molasses; or to other colonies, and brought home hogsheads. The molasses was made into the highly prized New England rum, and shipped in these hogsheads to Africa for more slaves.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the rum-distilling industry indicates to some extent the activity of New England in the slave-trade. In May, 1752, one Captain Freeman found so many slavers fitting out that, in spite of the large importations of molasses, he could get no rum for his vessel.<sup>63</sup> In Newport alone twenty-two stills were at one time running continuously;<sup>64</sup> and Massachusetts annually distilled 15,000 hogsheads of molasses into this "chief manufacture."<sup>65</sup> Turning now to restrictive measures, we must first note the measures of the slave-consuming colonies which tended to limit the trade. These measures, however, came comparatively late, were enforced with varying degrees of efficiency, and did not seriously affect the slave-trade before the Revolution. The moral sentiment of New England put some check upon the trade. Although in earlier times the most respectable people took ventures in slave-trading voyages, yet there gradually arose a moral sentiment which tended to make the business somewhat disreputable.<sup>66</sup> In the line, however, of definite legal

59. Deane, LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS, in MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLL., 5th Ser., III. 392.

60. Deane, LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS, in MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLL., 5th Ser., III. 382.

61. Weeden, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND, II. 454.

62. A typical voyage is that of the brigantine "Sanderson" of Newport. She was fitted out in March, 1752, and carried, beside the captain, two mates and six men, and a cargo of 8,220 gallons of rum, together with "African" iron, flour, pots, tar, sugar, and provisions, shackles, shirts, and water. Proceeding to Africa, the captain after some difficulty sold his cargo for slaves, and in April, 1753, he is expected in Barbadoes, as the consignees write. They also state that slaves are selling at £33 to £56 per head in lots. After a stormy and dangerous voyage, Captain Lindsay arrived, June 17, 1753, with fifty-six slaves, "all in helth & fatt." He also had 40 oz. of gold dust, and 8 or 9 cwt. of pepper. The net proceeds of the sale of all this was £1,324 3d. The captain then took on board 55 hhd. of molasses and 3 hhd. 27 bbl. of sugar, amounting to £911 77s. 2½d., received bills on Liverpool for the balance, and returned in safety to Rhode Island. He had done so well that he was immediately given a new ship and sent to Africa again. AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 315-9, 338-42.

63. AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 316.

64. AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 317.

65. AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORD, I. 344; cf. Weeden, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND, II. 459.

66. Cf. NEW ENGLAND REGISTER, XXXI. 75-6, letter of John Saffin *et al.* to Welstead. Cf. also Sewall, PROTEST, etc.



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enactments to stop New England citizens from carrying slaves from Africa to any place in the world, there were, before the Revolution, none. Indeed, not until the years 1787-1788 was slave-trading in itself an indictable offence in any New England State.

**1753**

POOR JOB, 1753. AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1753 by Job Shepherd, Philom. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

[Benjamin West](#) moved to [Providence](#) and opened a school. Unable to make enough money this way, he would open a dry-goods store and bookstore.

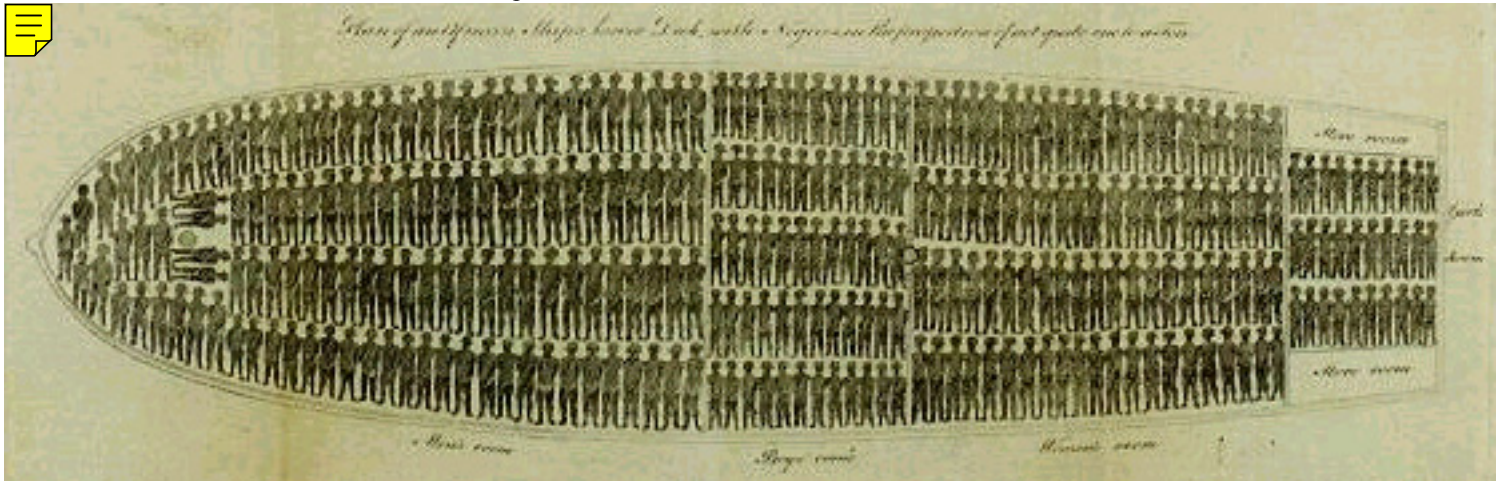
**1754**

POOR JOB, 1754. AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1754. By Job Shepherd, Philom. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

Many local items appear as for instance against May 2.  
"G. Elect. Newport."

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 16 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of 1,744 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. For instance, on June 19, 1754, the sailing orders were issued for the schooner *Sierra Leone* under Captain David Lindsay, and on January 8, 1755, an unidentified ship would leave the coast of Africa under Captain Buffam.



The Jews of [Newport](#) appealed for financial assistance to the London Sephardim, in the construction of a synagogue in which they might worship, but the Treasurer (gabay) of that group, Moses de Jacob Franco, was able to respond at first only by sending them his blessings. (Five years later, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera and two Ashkenazim, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, would purchase a small parcel of land for £1500 [Rhode Island](#) currency, and the Jews of New-York would be able to contribute £150, and there would be some money arriving from the Sephardic communities of Jamaica, Curaçao, Surinam, and London, so, finally, in 1763, the synagogue of K.K. Yeshuat Israel, the Holy Congregation of the Salvation of Israel, would be dedicated.)

JUDAISM

1755

POOR JOB, 1755. AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1755. By Job Shepherd, Philom. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

This almanac contains a curious tide table calculated for Rhode Island, but with variations given for other places, sailing directions for entering the harbor of Newport and the bearing of the Rhode Island Lighthouse on Beaver-Tail.

**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

The population of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) amounted to, in the categories of the day: 747 men, 741 women, 655 boys, 754 girls, 262 blacks, 275 men able to bear arms, and 406 enlisted soldiers.

John Green's Map of the Most Inhabited Part of New England was based largely upon the previously published map by Dr. William Douglass. Dr. Douglass (1700-1752) had been a Scottish physician practicing in Boston who had studied in Edinburgh, Leyden, and Paris. Here are two details from his earlier map:



- EAST GREENWICH RI
- MOUNT HOPE
- PORTSMOUTH
- TIVERTON
- WARWICK RI
- REHOBOTH
- BRISTOL
- WARREN
- SWANSEA

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



CONCORD

(In the lower right corner of this new 1855 offering we are offered the First Comers at Plymouth — being met on the shore by an Indian holding a pole with a liberty cap atop it!)

CARTOGRAPHY

Also in this year, a map by Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville:

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Also in this year, a map by Thomas Kitchin:



October 22, Wednesday: [Ezra Stiles](#) was called to [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and on this day ordained as the pastor of the Second Congregational Church.

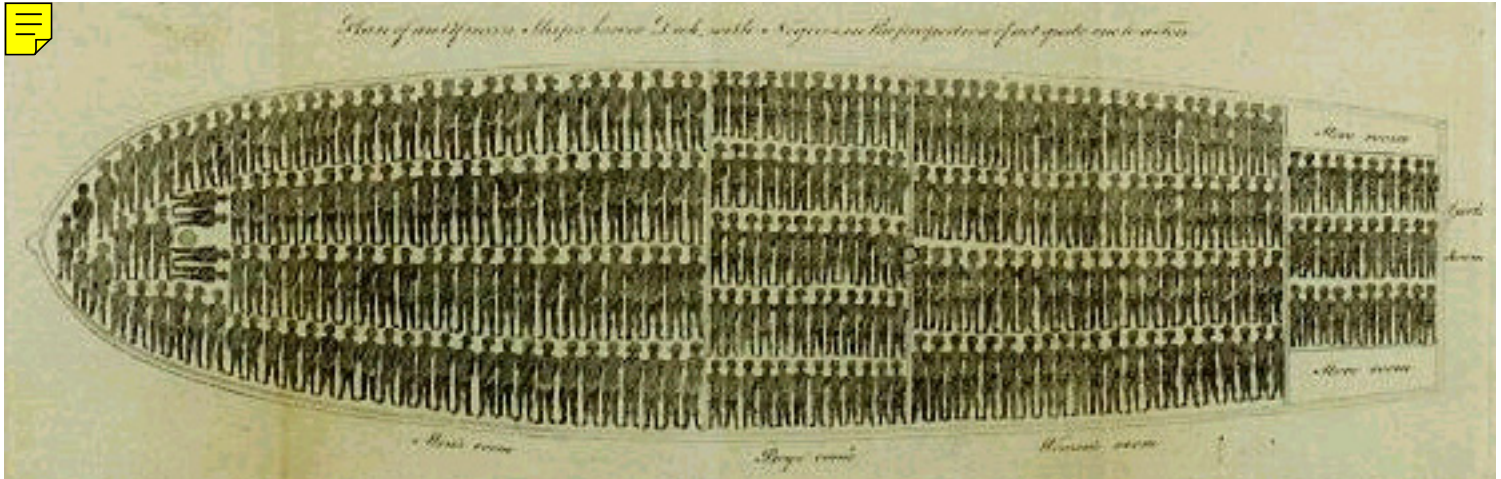


GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1756

In this year a census was taken in [Rhode Island](#). The document bears the title “Whites & Blacks & Arms & Ammunition, 1756.”

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 11 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of more than 1,150 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. For instance, on April 4, 1756, the *Hawke* of Captain Owen Morris was captured. On June 19, 1756, the *Marigold* of Captain William Taylor was captured. On June 29, 1756, Captain Caleb Godfrey’s sloop *Hare* began selling a cargo of slaves in Charleston SC. During this year the Rhode Island brigantine *Wydah* carried a slave cargo of 80 souls and the sloop *Young Bachelor* a cargo of 140 souls. According to a preserved letter from William Pinnegar to Vernon, other Rhode Island slaver captains with him at Anamaboe were John James, Hammond, Clarke, and Rodman.



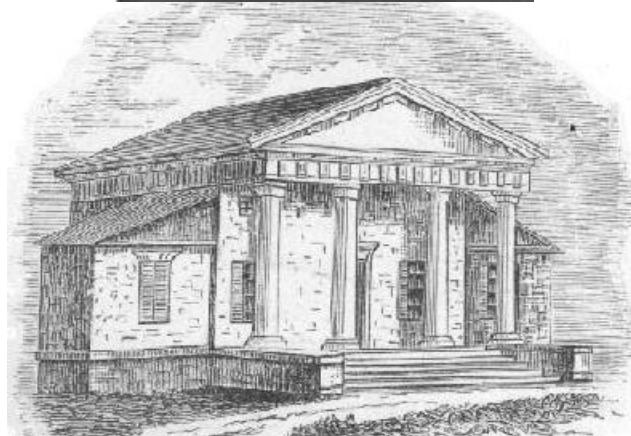


**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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The Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) became librarian of the [Redwood Library](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

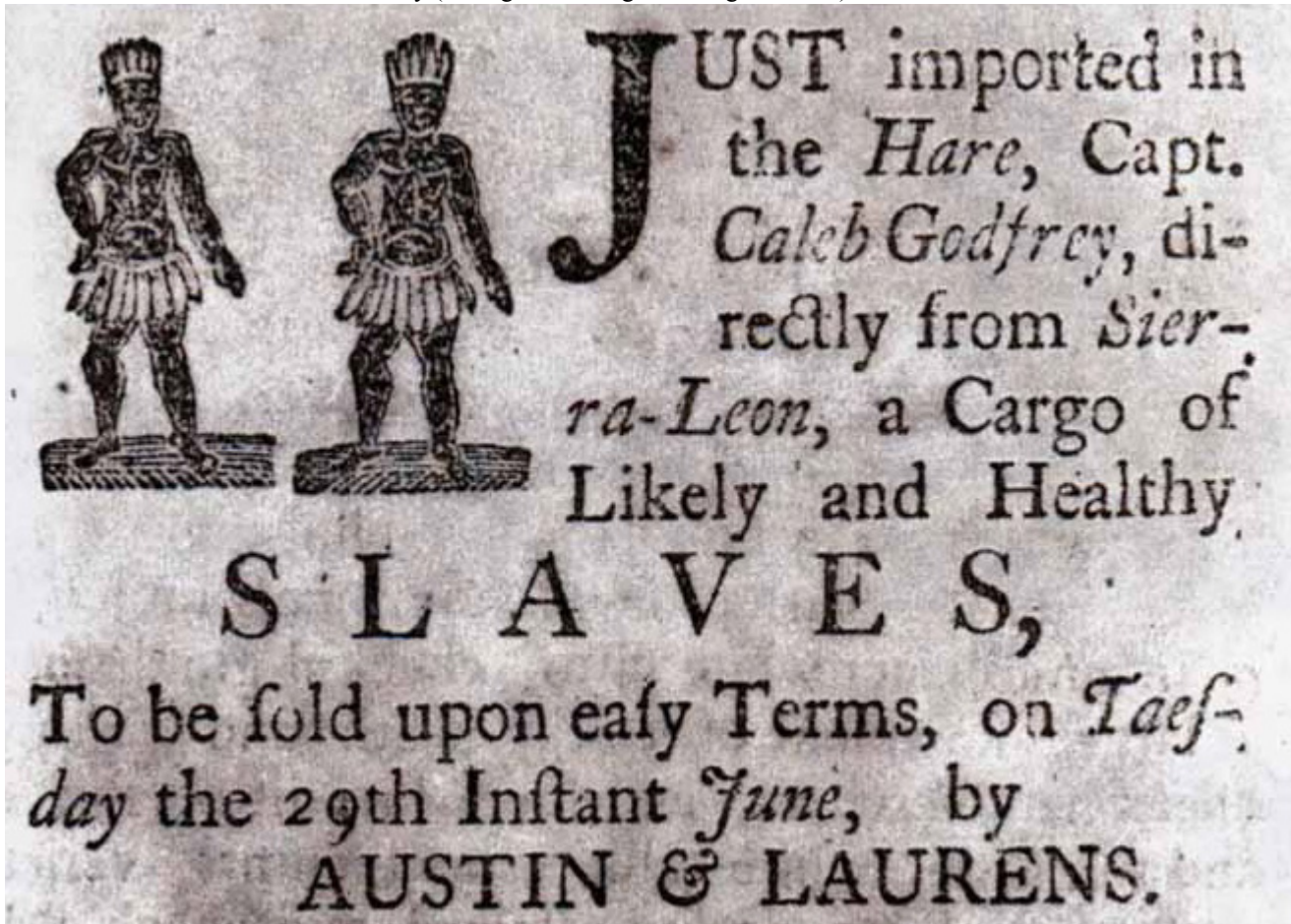


The beginning of the end, for bundling:

The Indians, who had this method of courtship when the English arrived among them, are the most chaste set of people in the world.... Bundling takes place only in the cold seasons of the year – the sofa in summer is more dangerous than the bed in winter. About 1756, Boston, Salem, [Newport](#), and New York, resolving to be more polite than their ancestors, forbade their daughters bundling on the bed with any young men whatever, and introduced a sofa to render courtship more palatable and Turkish. In 1776 a clergyman from one of the polite towns went into the country, and preached against the unchristian custom of young men and maidens lying together on a bed.... [and received as response from the country people that] “experience has told us that city folks send more children into the country without fathers or mothers than are born among us. Therefore you see a sofa is more dangerous than a bed.”

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June 29, Tuesday: "Just imported in the *Hare*, Capt. *Caleb Godfrey*, directly from *Sierra-Leon*, a Cargo of Likely and Healthy SLAVES, To be sold upon easy Terms on *Tuesday* the 29th Instant *June*, by AUSTIN & [Henry] LAURENS." Which is to say (among other things that might be said) that Priscilla was for sale:



Priscilla was a 10-year-old who had been brought on the negrero *Hare* as part of its [international slave trade](#) to Charleston, South Carolina. She had been purchased by Captain Caleb Godfrey in the vicinity of the mouth of the Sierra-Leone River on the coast of Africa near Freetown, or perhaps as far north as the Rio Pongo region in what is now the Republic of Guinea, sometime earlier this year (the ship had put to sea on April 9th with a cargo of 84 [slaves](#) and had cast anchor on June 17th at the notorious "Sullivans Island" depot with 68 slaves remaining alive, and remaining healthy enough to be put on the auction block).

The negrero *Hare* was the property of Samuel and William Vernon of [Newport](#). Negroes from the Sierra-Leone, a region in which rice was cultivated, were particularly desired in South Carolina because rice was one of its prime plantation cash crops. Such [Rhode Island](#) vessels which conveyed new slaves to Charleston commonly conveyed their proceeds back to Rhode Island in the form of bulk rice.



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

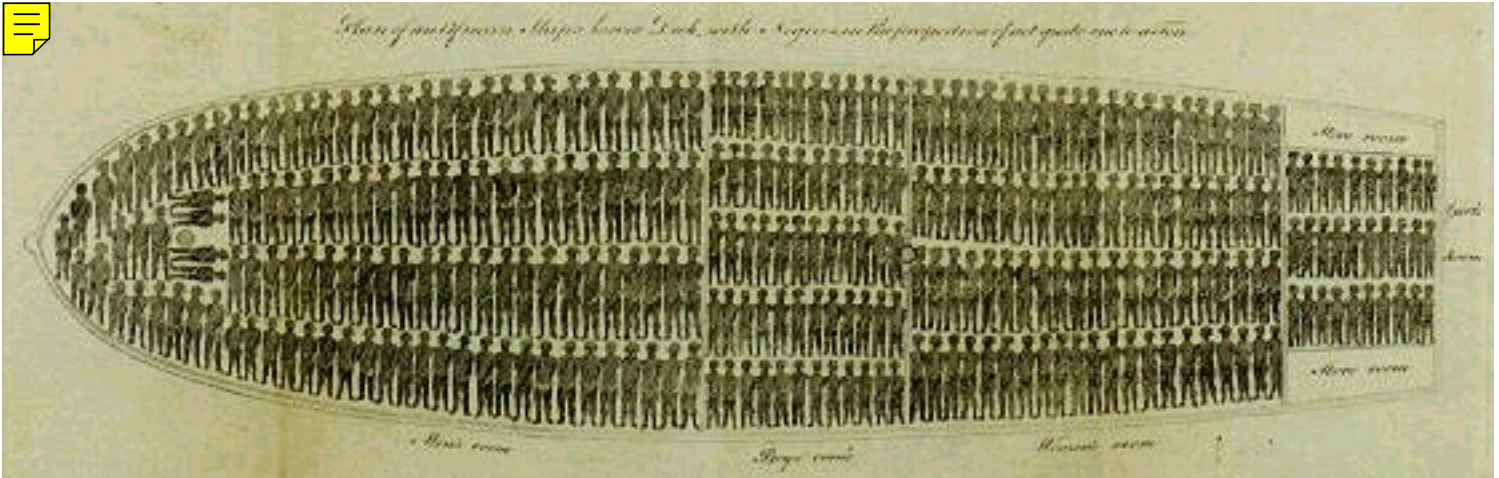
**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

(Priscilla and another young miss, and three lads, would be purchased by Elias Ball for his Comingtee plantation near Charleston. It would be he who would assign to her the name “Priscilla.” As a plantation slave she would marry with a “Jeffrey” and, before dying in 1811 at an age of approximately 65, would create for their owner a new generation of ten enslaved children.)

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1757

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 8 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of 872 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island sloop *Dolphin*,<sup>67</sup> carrying a cargo of 80 slaves, the sloop *Gambia*, carrying a cargo of 140, the schooner *Sierra-Leone*, carrying 70, the snow *Two Brothers*, carrying 150, and a brig of unknown name, carrying 70.



A Quaker clerk turned over the blank volume in which the Friends Monthly Meeting of [South Kingstown](#) had been keeping since 1740 a record of its white births, white deaths, white marriages, and white removals, and upside down and backward in the back, began something very different from all that white stuff. What was begun upside down and backward at the end of the volume was — a record of the [manumissions](#) of the black slaves of these white [Rhode Island](#) Quakers. We learn that the 1st local [Quaker](#) to manumit a slave was Friend

67. Thomas Robinson was part owner of the  *ero Dolphin*. He was a [Quaker](#) in good standing, of [Newport](#).



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Richard Smith of Groton, Connecticut, who in this year manumitted an 18-year-old named Jane.

Name of slave	Owned by	Date of emancipation
Jane	Richard Smith	1757
Pegg	Stephen Richmond	27th 12th mo 1773
Phillis and her two children Casper and Judith	John Knowles	1st 11th mo 1773
Richard	Jeremiah Browning	27th 9th mo 1773
Israel	William Robinson	15th 1st mo 1780
Dick	John Congdon	29th 12th mo 1783
Luce } Jack } Fan }	William Congdon	29th 3d mo 1784
Cuff, otherwise Cuff Knowles	Barshebe Knowles	24th 7th mo 1783
	Robert Knowles	
	Joseph Knowles	
	John Congdon	
	Charles Congdon	
Job	William Peckham	4th 8th mo 1786
Rose	William Peckham	24th 8th mo 1786



Friend Richard explained that the “Negrow Girl” in question had been become the property of his wife, Friend Abigail Gardner Smith, by the will of her father Stephen Gardner, “in Order to be a Slave all her Days According to the common Cuftom of Slavery.” The document is so totally eloquent in its lengthy expression of antislavery sentiments that I will copy it all here:

*I Richard Smith of Groton<sup>68</sup> in the County of New London and Colony of Connecticut upon Confederation and Knowing it Required of me I have written this in Order to Shew the reafon and make it manifest to mankind why that I Difcharge & Sett free my Negrow Girl named Jane at Eighteen Years of Age Daughter of Sarah which is now in Slavery with her Other Children among the Heirs of Stephen Gardnor of Norwich Deceafed this Girl Jane was Given to my Wife Abigail<sup>69</sup> by her Father Stephen Gardnor by will in order to be a Slave all her Days According to the common Cuftom of Slavery. But the falling into my hand by my Wife and the Lord by his free Goodnefs having Given me a clear Sight of the Cruelty of making a Slave of one that was by Nature as free as my Own Children and no ways by any Evil She had Committed brought her Self into Bondage and Slavery and therefore can no ways be Gilty of Slavery, and to argue because her Mother was made a Slave being by force and Violence brought Out of her Own Land against her mind and Will and Deprived of What She had there & made a Slave of her Should be a Sufficient Reafon that her posterity Should be oprest in bondage with Slavery. I see no Justice for*

68. Friend Richard Smith of Groton deceased 28 of 8 mo 1800 “in the 96th year of his age.”

69. Friend Abigail Smith of Groton deceased 15 of 6 mo 1799.



GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

it nor mercy in so Doing but Vi<sup>o</sup>lent Opprefsing the  
Inocent without Cause For this thing of Servants it hath  
pleased God to Sett before me in a Clear manner the case  
of Servants and Especially the Unreasonablenefs of thefe  
matters and miftrefses who profefs to be the followers of  
Christ how they will buy & Sell and be pertakers in  
making marchandize in Great Babylon of the Slaves that  
in the bodys of men and womon and of thefe Strangers as  
Indians & Negrows that are taken Out of their Own  
Country  
[page]  
Country or taken in War one among a nother and Sent  
out which when brought here [word marked out] in Sed of being  
Released  
are Sold into Slavery all there Days and their Pofterity  
after them they being never so Innoferent in Ronging of  
any and thefe matters and miftrefses that buy them  
or other ways by their parents have them, all this while  
profefs them selves to be the followers of Christ or  
Chrifians and yet how they will plead the Reafonables  
of Keeping them in Slavery and their pofterity after them  
But when they have pleaded all they can and used the  
befst arguments they have, it is Only to have there work  
done with eafe & they to be great and to be Lord over  
there fellow Creatures, Because they have power & authority  
to opprefs the helples by a Cuftomary Law of the Nations  
to keep them in Bondage under Slavery, Quite Renounfing  
and Rejecting and Hating to obey the Law & command  
of there great Lord and Mafter Christ as they call him  
who charge them saying Therefore all things whatfoever  
Ye would that man fhould do to You do ye even so  
to them for this if the Law and the prophets said  
Our Great Lord Matt. 7 & 12. Now if it fhould be afked  
of any of thefe matters or miftrefses if they in like  
Mannor with these Children fhould be carried away  
unto any Strange People in the world and be fold into  
Slavery whether they would be willing to serve a strange  
nation in Slavery & their Children after them and be  
Deprived of what they Injoyed in there own Country  
(for this is the Case) I fuppofe there anfwer would  
be no nor any of our Children upon any acc<sup>t</sup>: no  
not if it were in a Christian Land as they call this  
well then how can any of them plead the Reafonables  
of Keeping of any of them in Slavery with there  
Pofterity and would set<sup>them</sup> free in a Reafonable Time  
as they themfelves with their Children would be  
willing to be done by according to Chrifts words  
above mentioned for by Nature all nations are  
free one from the other and the apoftle Saith  
God is no Refpecter of perfons, the apoftle Likewife  
Saith that God hath made of one Blood all Nations  
of men to Dwell on all the face of the Earth Acts 17 & 26



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

So

[new page]

*So that by Nature & blood wee are no better in Gods Sight than they and it is plain that Chrifft taught a Doctrine that was to Releive Opprefsed and to Unbind heavy Burdens and let the Innofernt prifoner go free, and hath commanded us to love our Enemy, and to entertain Stranger, & not to opprefs them in Bondage with Slavery and said, he came not to Defstroy mens Lives but to save them Luke 9 & 56 So that the way that brings them into Slavery is forbidden by Chrifft for by war violence & stealth and tradeing in them is the way by which they are first Ordered to go into Slavery, and they that buy them or other ways have them and keep them in Slavery as they do there Beafts, for to do there Labour & not to Releive them and set them free, are partakers of the same evil, Therefore I Leave this as a faithfull Teftimony in the fear of the living God againft all such wicked proceedings, and upon true Confideration of what is above written I hereby Declare that now at this Time that my Negrow Girl Jane hath arrived to Eighteen Years of Age that fhe Shall now go out Free from Bondage and Slavery as free as if she had been free born and that my Heirs Executors or Administrators fhall have no power over her to make a Slave of Her or her pofterity no more than if she had been [word lined out] free born, for I freely give her her freedom now at the arrival of the afores<sup>d</sup> age which is now fullfilled in this prefent Year 1757 as witnefs my hand*

Richard Smith

*Some time after I had written this Discharge I had it in Confideration which way was proper to make it manifest & secure and it appeared to me very proper to lay it before Friends at the preparative meeting, as buifinefs to the Monthly Meeting, to see if the Monthly Meeting would think proper that it might be put on Record or would forward Untill I might Know what might be done by Friends on this acc<sup>t</sup> for this thing hath had weight on my mind ever since this*

Girl

[new page]

*Girl was put into my hands to prove me in this part of Self Denial whether I would be faithfull or not [flourish] Now my Friends to tell you plainly some Years before this my Intent was to have bought some negrow Slaves for to have done my work to have saved hireing of help But when I was about buying them I was forbidden by the same power that now caufes me to set this Girl at Liberty for the matter was set before me in a Clear manner more Clear than what mortal man Could have done, and Therefore I believe it is not write for me to Think or hide in a thing of so*



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*great Concernment as to give my Confent to do to others  
Contrary to what we our selves would be willing to be  
done unto our selves if we were in Slavery as many of  
them are at this dayh & under such mafters and  
miftrefses too as would be willing to be called Chrifts  
true followers and make a large profefsion of some  
of his Truths but if we truly Confider God will have  
no part kept back for he call for Juftice and mercy  
and his Soul Loathes the Oppressing of the Inocent  
and poor & helples and such as have none to help  
and will afsuredly avenge their caufe in Righeoufnefs  
These things I have found on my mind to lay before  
Friends as a matter worth due [word lined out] Confideration  
and so lay it before this meeting as Buifinefs [flourish]  
Richard Smith [flourish]*

We note that the 1st draft of the [Declaration of Independence](#), in taking the King of England to task for having insisted on the continuation of the international slave trade (“He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, capturing and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur a miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce.”<sup>70</sup>), may be better understood by referring back to the debate in this year over banning the importation of [slaves](#) into Virginia. In this year, the question of a ban on the further importation of new slaves did come before the House of Burgesses, and it was not a debate over benevolence or over human rights. The primary sponsors of such a ban were the large planters of the Northern Neck region of Virginia, including the family of Richard Henry Lee, while the main opposition to it came primarily from smaller planters closer to the frontier, many of them affiliated with the John Robinson faction. Not long after this debate began, the legislators abandoned the possibility of a total ban and the discussion turned toward imposing a 10% tariff or head tax on newly imported Africans as a means of raising revenue to defray Virginia’s expenses for the Seven Years’ War. We do have some evidence that this situation in Virginia was then discussed with the British government, for after Francis Fauquier would become governor of Virginia, the topic would come up in his correspondence with the Board of Trade. Fauquier would on June 2, 1760 mention that this proposal had been made by some “old settlers who have bred large quantities of slaves and who would make a monopoly of them by a duty which they hoped would amount to a prohibition.” In council on December 10, 1770, [King George III of England](#) would direct them not to thus interfere with the importation of new slaves from Africa — but this was not cruelty offsetting a colonial benevolence, for in this debate, the first consideration had been the business of making money, the second consideration had been the business of making money, and the third consideration had been the business of making money.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

70. Although the sentences in question are confidently asserted to have been authored by [Jefferson](#), and confidently asserted to have been stricken from the draft by others, I know of no evidence to support any such speculation.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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**1758**

POOR JOB'S COUNTRY AND TOWNSMAN'S [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1758. By Job Shepherd. [Newport, Rhode Island: James Franklin.](#)

It was in about this year that [Isaac Touro](#) came to [Newport, Rhode Island](#) from Amsterdam, Holland.

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

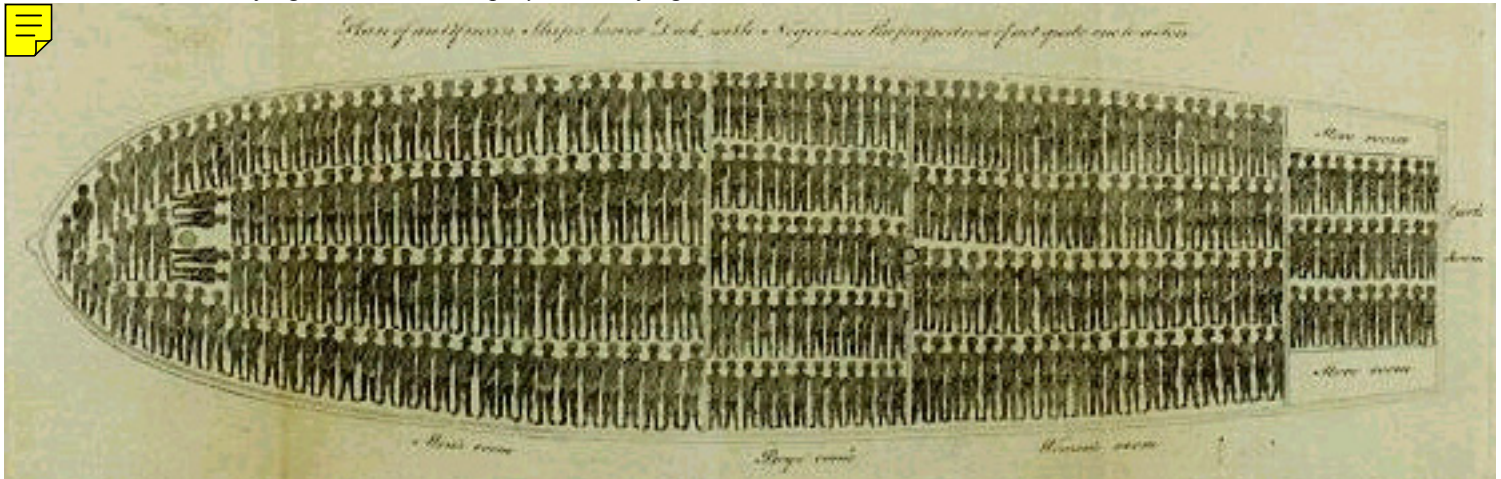


This map indicates that there were substantial buildings on Farewell Street, Marlborough Street, and Tanner Street surrounding the [Friends'](#) meetinghouse. A sampling of the accounts of the Proprietors of Easton's Point indicates that the Quakers were benefitting from making the grounds available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

**GREAT MEETINGHOUSE**

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 6 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of 636 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island sloop *Dolphin*,<sup>71</sup> carrying a cargo of 145 slaves, the sloop *Dove*, carrying a cargo of 110, the brig *Prince George*, carrying 170, the snow *Venus*, carrying 150, and the sloop *Wydah*, carrying 60.



In this year, in Pennsylvania, at Yearly Meeting, [Friends](#) were deciding that if “any professing with us should persist to vindicate it, and be concerned in importing, selling or purchasing slaves, the respective Monthly Meetings to which they belong should manifest their disunion with such persons.”

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: One of the first American protests against the slave-trade came from certain German Friends, in 1688, at a Weekly Meeting held in Germantown, Pennsylvania. “These are the reasons,” wrote “Garret henderich, derick up de graeff, Francis daniell Pastorius, and Abraham up Den graef,” “why we are against the traffick of men-body, as followeth: Is there any that would be done or handled at this manner?... Now, tho they are black, we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying, that we shall doe to all men like as we will be done ourselves; making no difference of what generation, descent or colour they are. And those who steal or robb men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alike?”<sup>72</sup> This little leaven helped slowly to work a revolution in the attitude of this great sect toward slavery and the slave-trade. The Yearly Meeting at first postponed the matter, “It having so General a Relation to many other Parts.”<sup>73</sup> Eventually, however, in 1696, the Yearly Meeting advised “That Friends be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more Negroes.”<sup>74</sup> This advice

71. Friend Thomas Robinson was part owner of the [Mero Dolphin](#), and Friend Isaac Howland was the vessel’s captain. These men were [Quakers](#) in good standing, of [Newport](#). [Newport](#) was looking the other way, it was simply that it hadn’t occurred to any who was white, as yet, that there was anything wrong with the buying and selling of black human beings. For instance, you can’t find anything in the BIBLE about the wickedness of this.

72. From fac-simile copy, published at Germantown in 1880. Cf. Whittier’s poem, “Pennsylvania Hall” (POETICAL WORKS, Riverside ed., III. 62); and Proud, HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA (1797), I. 219.

73. From fac-simile copy, published at Germantown in 1880.

74. Bettle, NOTICES OF NEGRO SLAVERY, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM. (1864), I. 383.



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was repeated in stronger terms for a quarter-century,<sup>75</sup> and by that time Sandiford, Benezet, Lay, and Woolman had begun their crusade. In 1754 the Friends took a step farther and made the purchase of slaves a matter of discipline.<sup>76</sup> Four years later the Yearly Meeting expressed itself clearly as "against every branch of this practice," and declared that if "any professing with us should persist to vindicate it, and be concerned in importing, selling or purchasing slaves, the respective Monthly Meetings to which they belong should manifest their disunion with such persons."<sup>77</sup> Further, manumission was recommended, and in 1776 made compulsory.<sup>78</sup> The effect of this attitude of the Friends was early manifested in the legislation of all the colonies where the sect was influential, and particularly in Pennsylvania.

One of the first duty acts (1710) laid a restrictive duty of 40s. on slaves, and was eventually disallowed.<sup>79</sup> In 1712 William Southeby petitioned the Assembly totally to abolish slavery. This the Assembly naturally refused to attempt; but the same year, in response to another petition "signed by many hands," they passed an "Act to prevent the Importation of Negroes and Indians,"<sup>80</sup> – the first enactment of its kind in America. This act was inspired largely by the general fear of insurrection which succeeded the "Negro-plot" of 1712 in New York. It declared: "Whereas, divers Plots and Insurrections have frequently happened, not only in the Islands but on the Main Land of *America*, by Negroes, which have been carried on so far that several of the inhabitants have been barbarously Murthered, an Instance whereof we have lately had in our Neighboring Colony of *New York*,"<sup>81</sup> etc. It then proceeded to lay a prohibitive duty of £20 on all slaves imported. These acts were quickly disposed of in England. Three duty acts affecting Negroes, including the prohibitory act, were in 1713 disallowed, and it was directed that "the Dep<sup>ty</sup> Gov<sup>r</sup> Council and Assembly of Pensilvania, be & they are hereby Strictly Enjoynd & required not to permit the said Laws ... to be from henceforward put in Execution."<sup>82</sup> The Assembly repealed these laws, but in 1715 passed another laying a duty of £5, which was also eventually disallowed.<sup>83</sup> Other acts, the provisions of which are not clear, were passed in 1720 and 1722,<sup>84</sup> and in 1725-1726 the duty on Negroes was raised to the restrictive figure of £10.<sup>85</sup> This duty, for some reason not

75. Cf. Bettle, NOTICES OF NEGRO SLAVERY, PASSIM.

76. Janney, HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS, III. 315-7.

77. HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS, III. 317.

78. Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 395.

79. PENN. COL. REC. (1852), II. 530; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 415.

80. LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, COLLECTED, etc., 1714, page 165; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 387.

81. See preamble of the act.

82. The Pennsylvanians did not allow their laws to reach England until long after they were passed: PENN. ARCHIVES, I. 161-2; COL. REC., II. 572-3. These acts were disallowed Feb. 20, 1713. Another duty act was passed in 1712, supplementary to the Act of 1710 (COL. REC., II. 553). The contents are unknown.

83. ACTS AND LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1715, page 270; Chalmers, OPINIONS, II. 118. Before the disallowance was known, the act had been continued by the Act of 1718: Carey and Bioren, LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1700-1802, I. 118; PENN. COL. REC., III. 38.

84. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 165; PENN. COL. REC., III. 171; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 389, note.

85. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 214; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 388. Possibly there were two acts this year.



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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apparent, was lowered to £2 in 1729,<sup>86</sup> but restored again in 1761.<sup>87</sup> A struggle occurred over this last measure, the Friends petitioning for it, and the Philadelphia merchants against it, declaring that "We, the subscribers, ever desirous to extend the Trade of this Province, have seen, for some time past, the many inconveniencys the Inhabitants have suffer'd for want of Labourers and artificers, ... have for some time encouraged the importation of Negroes;" they prayed therefore at least for a delay in passing the measure.<sup>88</sup> The law, nevertheless, after much debate and altercation with the governor, finally passed.

These repeated acts nearly stopped the trade, and the manumission or sale of Negroes by the Friends decreased the number of slaves in the province. The rising spirit of independence enabled the colony, in 1773, to restore the prohibitive duty of £20 and make it perpetual.<sup>89</sup> After the Revolution unpaid duties on slaves were collected and the slaves registered,<sup>90</sup> and in 1780 an "Act for the gradual Abolition of Slavery" was passed.<sup>91</sup> As there were probably at no time before the war more than 11,000 slaves in Pennsylvania,<sup>92</sup> the task thus accomplished was not so formidable as in many other States. As it was, participation in the slave-trade outside the colony was not prohibited until 1788.<sup>93</sup>

It seems probable that in the original Swedish settlements along the Delaware slavery was prohibited.<sup>94</sup> This measure had, however, little practical effect; for as soon as the Dutch got control the slave-trade was opened, although, as it appears, to no large extent. After the fall of the Dutch Delaware came into English hands. Not until 1775 do we find any legislation on the slave-trade. In that year the colony attempted to prohibit the importation of slaves, but the governor vetoed the bill.<sup>95</sup> Finally, in 1776 by the Constitution, and in 1787 by law, importation and exportation were both prohibited.<sup>96</sup>

86. LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA (ed. 1742), page 354, ch. 287. Possibly some change in the currency made this change appear greater than it was.

87. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 371; ACTS OF ASSEMBLY (ed. 1782), page 149; Dallas, LAWS, I. 406, ch. 379. This act was renewed in 1768: Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 451; PENN. COL. REC., IX. 472, 637, 641.

88. PENN. COL. REC., VIII. 576.

89. A large petition called for this bill. Much altercation ensued with the governor: Dallas, LAWS, I. 671, ch. 692; PENN. COL. REC., X. 77; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 388-9.

90. Dallas, LAWS, I. 782, ch. 810.

91. LAWS, I. 838, ch. 881.

92. There exist but few estimates of the number of slaves in this colony: —

In 1721, 2,500-5,000. DOC. REL. COL. HIST. NEW YORK, V. 604.

In 1754, 11,000. Bancroft, HIST. OF UNITED STATES (1883), II. 391.

In 1760, very few. Reverend Andrew Burnaby, TRAVELS THROUGH THE MIDDLE SETTLEMENTS IN NORTH-AMERICA, IN THE YEARS 1759 AND 1760 ... (2d ed.), page 81.

In 1775, 2,000. PENN. ARCHIVES, IV 597.

93. Dallas, LAWS, II. 586.

94. Cf. ARGONAUTICA GUSTAVIANA, pages 21-3; DEL. HIST. SOC. PAPERS, III. 10; HAZARD'S REGISTER, IV. 221, §§ 23, 24; HAZARD'S ANNALS, page 372; Armstrong, RECORD OF UPLAND COURT, pages 29-30, and notes.

95. Force, AMERICAN ARCHIVES, 4th Ser., II. 128-9.

96. AMERICAN ARCHIVES, 5th Ser., I. 1178; LAWS OF DELAWARE, 1797 (Newcastle ed.), page 884, ch. 145 b.



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June 12, Monday: The firm of [Widow Franklin](#) and journeyman printer son [James Franklin](#) began to publish the [Newport Mercury](#) (in addition to the many legal documents and the paper currency of the [Rhode Island](#) colony).



The initial frontispiece of this newspaper was an illustration of a ship leaving the harbor where a fortification displayed the British flag, with a speeding figure of Mercury holding a package in hand.



**1759**

The Reverend Andrew Burnaby passed through [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

**REV. ANDREW BURNABY**

(He found the common people among the Rhode Islanders to be “cunning, deceitful, and selfish,” and noted that “they live almost entirely by unfair and illicit trading.”)



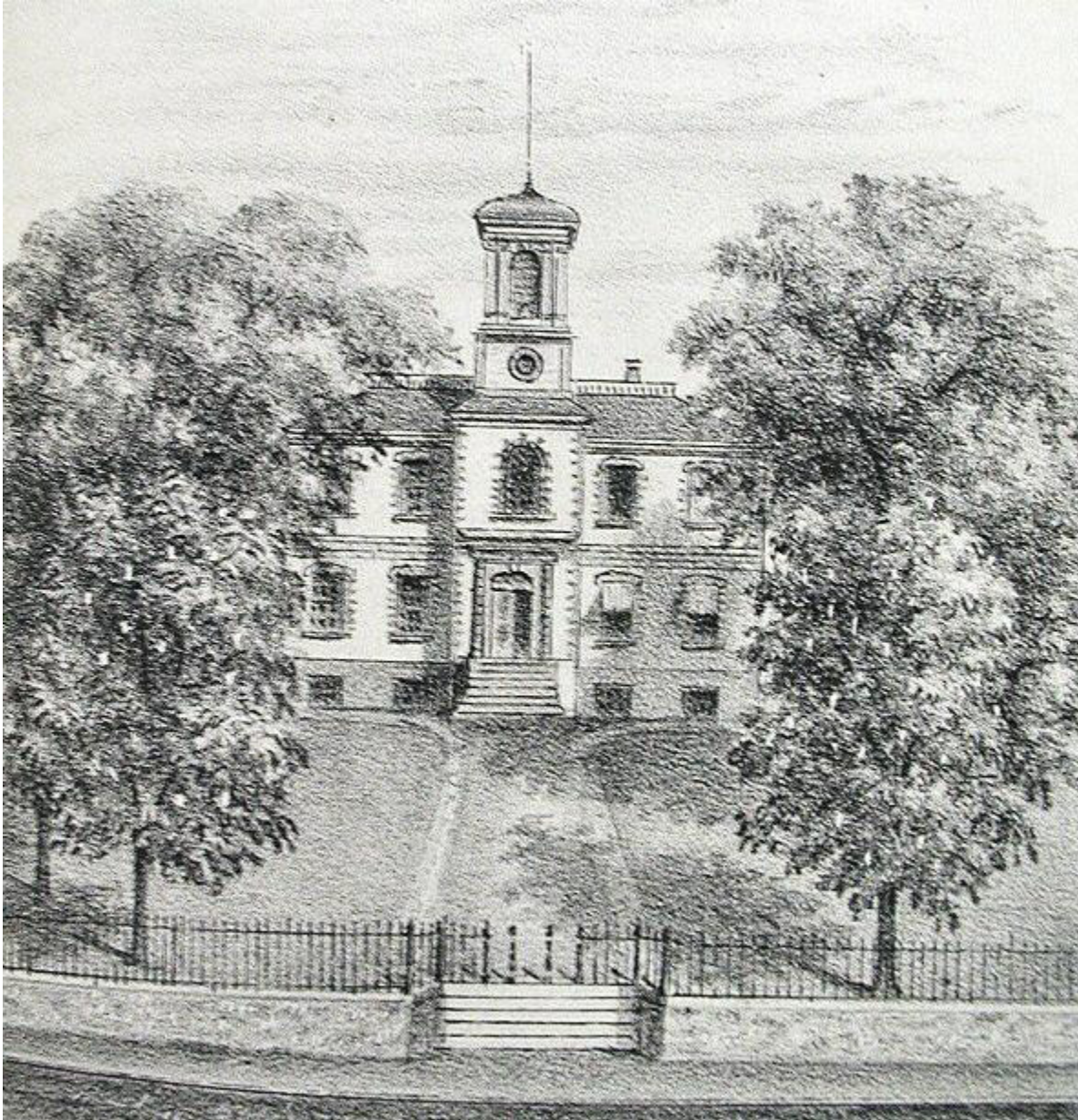
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**CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**

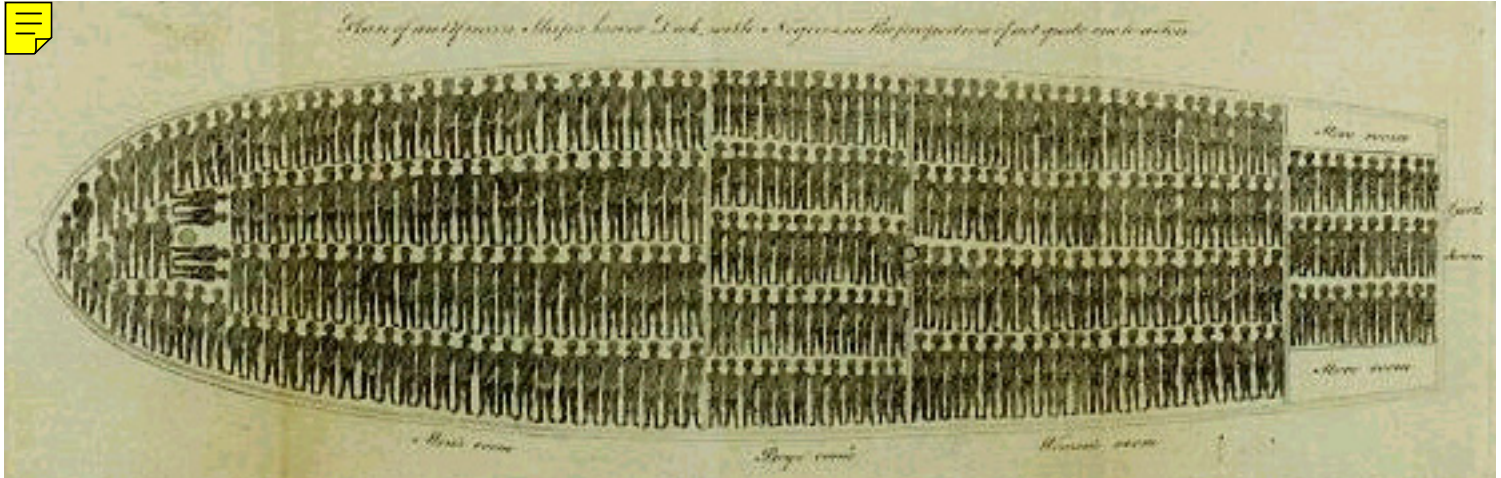
A new “County House” was erected on Benefit Street in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), to replace the one on Meeting Street that had burned down in the previous year.



(This new construction would be paid for with a lottery, and through the issuance of municipal bonds.)

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In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 7 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of 763 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island sloop *Abigail*, carrying a cargo of 40 slaves, the brig *Charming Betty*, carrying a cargo of 117, the sloop *Dolphin*,<sup>97</sup> carrying 145, the snow *Industry*, carrying 150, the brig *Marygold*, carrying 135, the sloop *Three Friends*, carrying 78, and the snow *Two Brothers*, carrying 150.



97. Thomas Robinson was part owner of the [negrero](#) *Dolphin*. He was a [Quaker](#) in good standing, of [Newport](#). (How could he have been in good standing? –Well, he was.)

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This is what was going on for the [Quaker](#) opponent of [slavery](#), Friend [John Woolman](#):



**1758, 1759**

**Visit to the Quarterly Meetings in Chester County – Joins Daniel Stanton and John Scarborough in a Visit to such as kept Slaves there – Some Observations on the Conduct which those should maintain who speak in Meetings for Discipline – More Visits to such as kept Slaves, and to Friends near Salem – Account of the Yearly Meeting in the Year 1759, and of the increasing Concern in Divers Provinces to Labour against Buying and Keeping Slaves – The Yearly Meeting Epistle – Thoughts on the Small-pox spreading, and on Inoculation.**

ELEVENTH of Eleventh Month, 1758. – This day I set out for Concord; the Quarterly Meeting heretofore held there was now, by reason of a great increase of members, divided into two by the agreement of Friends at our last Yearly Meeting. Here I met with our beloved friends Samuel Spavold and Mary Kirby from England, and with Joseph White from Bucks County; the latter had taken leave of his family in order to go on a religious visit to Friends in England, and, through divine goodness, we were favoured with a strengthening opportunity together. After this meeting I joined with my friends, Daniel Stanton and



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John Scarborough, in visiting Friends who had slaves. At night we had a family meeting at William Trimble's, many young people being there; and it was a precious, reviving opportunity. Next morning we had a comfortable sitting with a sick neighbour, and thence to the burial of the corpse of a Friend at Uwchland Meeting, at which were many people, and it was a time of divine favour, after which we visited some who had slaves. In the evening we had a family meeting at a Friend's house, where the channel of the gospel love was opened, and my mind was comforted after a hard day's labour. The next day we were at Goshen Monthly Meeting, and on the 18th attended the Quarterly Meeting at London Grove, it being first held at that place. Here we met again with all the before-mentioned Friends, and had some edifying meetings.

Near the conclusion of the meeting for business, Friends were incited to constancy in supporting the testimony of truth, and reminded of the necessity which the disciples of Christ are under to attend principally to His business as He is pleased to open it to us, and to be particularly careful to have our minds redeemed from the love of wealth, and our outward affairs in as little room as may be, that no temporal concerns may entangle our affections, or hinder us from diligently following the dictates of truth in labouring to promote the pure spirit of meekness and heavenly-mindedness amongst the children of men in these days of calamity and distress, wherein God is visiting our land with His just judgments.

Each of these Quarterly Meetings was large and sat near eight hours. I had occasion to consider that it is a weighty thing to speak much in large meetings for business, for except our minds are rightly prepared, and we clearly understand the case we speak to, instead of forwarding we hinder business, and make more labour for those on whom the burden of the work is laid. If selfish views or a partial spirit have any room in our minds, we are unfit for the Lord's work; if we have a clear prospect of the business, and proper weight on our minds to speak, we should avoid useless apologies and repetitions. Where people are gathered from far, and adjourning a meeting of business is attended with great difficulty, it behoves all to be cautious how they detain a meeting, especially when they have sat six or seven hours, and have a great distance to ride home. After this meeting I rode home.

In the beginning of the twelfth month I joined in company with my friends John Sykes and Daniel Stanton, in visiting such as had slaves. Some whose hearts were rightly exercised about them appeared to be glad of our visit, but in some places our way was more difficult. I often saw the necessity of keeping down to that root from whence our concern proceeded, and have cause in reverent thankfulness humbly to bow down before the Lord, who was near to me, and preserved my mind in calmness under some sharp conflicts, and begat a spirit of sympathy and tenderness in me towards some who were grievously entangled by the spirit of this world.



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First Month, 1759. – Having found my mind drawn to visit some of the more active members in our Society at Philadelphia, who had slaves, I met my friend John Churchman there by agreement, and we continued about a week in the city. We visited some that were sick, and some widows and their families, and the other part of our time was mostly employed in visiting such as had slaves. It was a time of deep exercise, but, looking often to the Lord for His assistance, He in unspeakable kindness favoured us with the influence of that Spirit which crucifies to the greatness and splendour of this world, and enabled us to go through some heavy labours, in which we found peace.

Twenty-fourth of Third Month, 1759. – After attending our general Spring Meeting at Philadelphia I again joined with John Churchman on a visit to some who had slaves in Philadelphia, and with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father I may say that divine love and a true sympathizing tenderness of heart prevailed at times in this service.

Having at times perceived a shyness in some Friends of considerable note towards me, I found an engagement in gospel love to pay a visit to one of them; and as I dwelt under the exercise, I felt a resignedness in my mind to go and tell him privately that I had a desire to have an opportunity with him alone; to this proposal he readily agreed, and then, in the fear of the Lord, things relating to that shyness were searched to the bottom, and we had a large conference, which, I believe was of use to both of us, and I am thankful that way was opened for it.

Fourteenth of Sixth Month. – Having felt drawings in my mind to visit Friends about Salem, and having the approbation of our Monthly Meeting, I attended their Quarterly Meeting, and was out seven days, and attended seven meetings; in some of them I was chiefly silent; in others, through the baptizing power of truth, my heart was enlarged in heavenly love, and I found a near fellowship with the brethren and sisters, in the manifold trials attending their Christian progress through this world.

Seventh Month. – I have found an increasing concern on my mind to visit some active members in our Society who have slaves, and having no opportunity of the company of such as were named in the minutes of the Yearly Meeting, I went alone to their houses, and, in the fear of the Lord, acquainted them with the exercise I was under; and thus, sometimes by a few words, I found myself discharged from a heavy burden. After this, our friend John Churchman coming into our province with a view to be at some meetings, and to join again in the visit to those who had slaves, I bore him company in the said visit to some active members, and found inward satisfaction.

At our Yearly Meeting this year, we had some weighty seasons, in which the power of truth was largely extended, to the strengthening of the honest-minded. As the epistles which were to be sent to the Yearly Meetings on this continent were read, I observed that in most of them, both this year and the last, it was recommended to Friends to labour against buying and



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keeping slaves, and in some of them the subject was closely treated upon. As this practice hath long been a heavy exercise to me, and I have often waded through mortifying labours on that account, and at times in some meetings have been almost alone therein, I was humbly bowed in thankfulness in observing the increasing concern in our religious society, and seeing how the Lord was raising up and qualifying servants for His work, not only in this respect, but for promoting the cause of truth in general.

This meeting continued near a week. For several days, in the fore part of it, my mind was drawn into a deep inward stillness, and being at times covered with the spirit of supplication, my heart was secretly poured out before the Lord. Near the conclusion of the meeting for business, way opened in the pure flowings of divine love for me to express what lay upon me, which, as it then arose in my mind, was first to show how deep answers to deep in the hearts of the sincere and upright; though, in their different growths, they may not all have attained to the same clearness in some points relating to our testimony. And I was then led to mention the integrity and constancy of many martyrs who gave their lives for the testimony of Jesus, and yet, in some points they held doctrines distinguishable from some which we hold, that, in all ages, where people were faithful to the light and understanding which the Most High afforded them, they found acceptance with Him, and though there may be different ways of thinking amongst us in some particulars, yet, if we mutually keep to that spirit and power which crucifies to the world, which teaches us to be content with things really needful, and to avoid all superfluities, and give up our hearts to fear and serve the Lord, true unity may still be preserved amongst us; that, if those who were at times under sufferings on account of some scruples of conscience kept low and humble, and in their conduct in life manifested a spirit of true charity, it would be more likely to reach the witness in others, and be of more service in the Church, than if their sufferings were attended with a contrary spirit and conduct. In this exercise I was drawn into a sympathizing tenderness with the sheep of Christ, however distinguished one from another in this world, and the like disposition appeared to spread over others in the meeting. Great is the goodness of the Lord towards His poor creatures.

An epistle went forth from this Yearly Meeting which I think good to give a place in this Journal. It is as follows: -

From the Yearly Meeting, held at Philadelphia, for Pennsylvania and New Jersey, from the 22nd day of the Ninth Month to the 28th of the same, inclusive, 1759.

TO THE QUARTERLY AND MONTHLY MEETINGS OF FRIENDS BELONGING TO THE SAID YEARLY MEETING: -

DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS AND BRETHREN, - In an awful sense of the wisdom and goodness of the Lord our God, whose tender mercies have been continued to us in this land,



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we affectionately salute you, with sincere and fervent desires that we may reverently regard the dispensations of His providence, and improve under them.

The empires and kingdoms of the earth are subject to His almighty power. He is the God of the spirits of all flesh, and deals with His people agreeably to that wisdom, the depth whereof is to us unsearchable. We in these provinces may say, He hath, as a gracious and tender parent, dealt bountifully with us, even from the days of our fathers. It was He who strengthened them to labour through the difficulties attending the improvement of a wilderness, and made way for them in the hearts of the natives, so that by them they were comforted in times of want and distress. It was by the gracious influences of His Holy Spirit that they were disposed to work righteousness, and walk uprightly towards each other and towards the natives; in life and conversation to manifest the excellency of the principles and doctrines of the Christian religion, whereby they retain their esteem and friendship. Whilst they were labouring for the necessaries of life, many of them were fervently engaged to promote pity and virtue in the earth, and to educate their children in the fear of the Lord.

If we carefully consider the peaceable measures pursued in the first settlement of land, and that freedom from the desolations of wars which for a long time we enjoyed, we shall find ourselves under strong obligations to the Almighty, who, when the earth is so generally polluted with wickedness, gives us a being in a part so signally favoured with tranquillity and plenty, and in which the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ are so freely published, that we may justly say with the Psalmist, "What shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits?"

Our own real good and the good of our posterity in some measure depends on the part we act, and it nearly concerns us to try our foundations impartially. Such are the different rewards of the just and unjust in a future state, that to attend diligently to the dictates of the spirit of Christ, to devote ourselves to His service, and to engage fervently in His cause, during our short stay in this world, is a choice well becoming a free, intelligent creature. We shall thus clearly see and consider that the dealings of God with mankind, in a national capacity, as recorded in Holy Writ, do sufficiently evidence the truth of that saying, "It is righteousness which exalteth a nation"; and though He doth not at all times suddenly execute His judgments on a sinful people in this life, yet we see in many instances that when "men follow lying vanities they forsake their own mercies"; and as a proud, selfish



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spirit prevails and spreads among a people, so partial judgment, oppression, discord, envy, and confusions increase, and provinces and kingdoms are made to drink the cup of adversity as a reward of their own doing. Thus the inspired prophet, reasoning with the degenerated Jews, saith, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backsliding shall reprove thee; know, therefore, that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts" (JEREMIAH 2:19).

The God of our fathers, who hath bestowed on us many benefits, furnished a table for us in the wilderness, and made the deserts and solitary places to rejoice. He doth now mercifully call upon us to serve Him more faithfully. We may truly say with the Prophet, "It is His voice which crieth to the city, and men of wisdom see His name. They regard the rod, and Him who hath appointed it." People who look chiefly at things outward, too little consider the original cause of the present troubles; but they who fear the Lord and think often upon His name, see and feel that a wrong spirit is spreading amongst the inhabitants of our country; that the hearts of many are waxed fat, and their ears dull of hearing; that the Most High, in His visitations to us, instead of calling, lifteth up His voice and crieth: He crieth to our country, and His voice waxeth louder and louder. In former wars between the English and other nations, since the settlement of our provinces, the calamities attending them have fallen chiefly on other places, but now of late they have reached to our borders; many of our fellow-subjects have suffered on and near our frontiers, some have been slain in battle, some killed in their houses, and some in their fields, some wounded and left in great misery, and others separated from their wives and little children, who have been carried captives among the Indians.

We have seen men and women who have been witnesses of these scenes of sorrow, and, being reduced to want, have come to our houses asking relief. It is not long since many young men in one of these provinces were drafted, in order to be taken as soldiers; some were at that time in great distress, and had occasion to consider that their lives had been too little conformable to the purity and spirituality of that religion which we profess, and found themselves too little acquainted with that inward humility, in which true fortitude to endure hardness for the truth's sake is experienced. Many parents were concerned for their children, and in that time of trial were led to consider that their care to get outward treasure for them had been greater than their care for their settlement in that religion which



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crucifieth to the world, and enableth to bear testimony to the peaceable government of the Messiah. These troubles are removed, and for a time we are released from them.

Let us not forget that "The Most High hath His way in the deep, in clouds, and in thick darkness"; that it is His voice which crieth to the city and to the country, and oh that these loud and awakening cries may have a proper effect upon us, that heavier chastisement may not become necessary! For though things, as to the outward, may for a short time afford a pleasing prospect, yet, while a selfish spirit, that is not subject to the cross of Christ, continueth to spread and prevail, there can be no long continuance in outward peace and tranquillity. If we desire an inheritance incorruptible, and to be at rest in that state of peace and happiness which ever continues; if we desire in this life to dwell under the favour and protection of that Almighty Being whose habitation is in holiness, whose ways are all equal, and whose anger is now kindled because of our backslidings, – let us then awfully regard these beginnings of His sore judgments, and with abasement and humiliation turn to Him whom we have offended.

Contending with one equal in strength is an uneasy exercise; but if the Lord is become our enemy, if we persist in contending with Him who is omnipotent, our overthrow will be unavoidable.

Do we feel an affectionate regard to posterity? and are we employed to promote their happiness? Do our minds, in things outward, look beyond our own dissolution? and are we contriving for the prosperity of our children after us? Let us then, like wise builders, lay the foundation deep, and by our constant uniform regard to an inward piety and virtue let them see that we really value it. Let us labour in the fear of the Lord that their innocent minds, while young and tender, may be preserved from corruptions; that as they advance in age they may rightly understand their true interest, may consider the uncertainty of temporal things, and, above all, have their hope and confidence firmly settled in the blessing of that Almighty Being who inhabits eternity and preserves and supports the world.

In all our cares about worldly treasures, let us steadily bear in mind that riches possessed by children who do not truly serve God, are likely to prove snares that may more grievously entangle them in that spirit of selfishness and exaltation which stands in opposition to real peace and happiness, and renders those who submit to the influence of it enemies to the cause of Christ.

To keep a watchful eye towards real objects of charity,



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to visit the poor in their lonesome dwelling-places, to comfort those who, through the dispensations of divine Providence, are in strait and painful circumstances in this life, and steadily to endeavour to honour God with our substance, from a real sense of the love of Christ influencing our minds, is more likely to bring a blessing to our children, and will afford more satisfaction to a Christian favoured with plenty, than an earnest desire to collect much wealth to leave behind us; for, "here we have no continuing city"; may we therefore diligently "seek one that is to come, whose builder and maker is God."

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things, and do them, and the God of peace shall be with you."

(Signed by appointment, and on behalf of said meeting.)

Twenty-eighth of Eleventh Month. – This day I attended the Quarterly Meeting in Bucks County. In the meeting of ministers and elders my heart was enlarged in the love of Jesus Christ, and the favour of the Most High was extended to us in that and the ensuing meeting.

I had conversation at my lodging with my beloved friend Samuel Eastburn, who expressed a concern to join in a visit to some Friends in that county who had negroes, and as I had felt a drawing in my mind to the said work, I came home and put things in order. On the 11th of Twelfth Month I went over the river, and on the next day was at Buckingham Meeting, where, through the descendings of heavenly dew, my mind was comforted and drawn into a near unity with the flock of Jesus Christ.

Entering upon this business appeared weighty, and before I left home my mind was often sad, under which exercise I felt at times the Holy Spirit which helps our infirmities, and through which my prayers were at times put up to God in private that He would be pleased to purge me from all selfishness, that I might be strengthened to discharge my duty faithfully, how hard soever to the natural part. We proceeded on the visit in a weighty frame of spirit, and went to the houses of the most active members who had negroes throughout the county. Through the goodness of the Lord my mind was preserved in resignation in times of trial, and though the work was hard to nature, yet, through the strength of that love which is stronger than death, tenderness of heart was often felt amongst us in our visits, and we parted from several families with greater satisfaction than we expected.

We visited Joseph White's family, he being in England; we had also a family sitting at the house of an elder who bore us company, and were at Makefield on a First-day: at all which times my heart was truly thankful to the Lord who was graciously pleased to renew His loving-kindness to us, His poor servants, uniting us together in His work.



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In the winter of this year, the smallpox being in our town, and many being inoculated, of whom a few died, some things were opened in my mind, which I wrote as follows: –

The more fully our lives are conformable to the will of God, the better it is for us; I have looked on the smallpox as a messenger from the Almighty, to be an assistant in the cause of virtue, and to incite us to consider whether we employ our time only in such things as are consistent with perfect wisdom and goodness. Building houses suitable to dwell in, for ourselves and our creatures; preparing clothing suitable for the climate and season, and food convenient, are all duties incumbent on us. And under these general heads are many branches of business in which we may venture health and life, as necessity may require.

This disease being in a house, and my business calling me to go near it, incites me to consider whether this is a real indispensable duty; whether it is not in conformity to some custom which would be better laid aside, or whether it does not proceed from too eager a pursuit after some outward treasure. If the business before me springs not from a clear understanding and a regard to that use of things which perfect wisdom approves, to be brought to a sense of it and stopped in my pursuit is a kindness, for when I proceed to business without some evidence of duty, I have found by experience that it tends to weakness. If I am so situated that there appears no probability of missing the infection, it tends to make me think whether my manner of life in things outward has nothing in it which may unfit my body to receive this messenger in a way the most favourable to me. Do I use food and drink in no other sort and in no other degree than was designed by Him who gave these creatures for our sustenance? Do I never abuse my body by inordinate labour, striving to accomplish some end which I have unwisely proposed? Do I use action enough in some useful employ, or do I sit too much idle while some persons who labour to support me have too great a share of it? If in any of these things I am deficient, to be incited to consider it is a favour to me. Employment is necessary in social life, and this infection, which often proves mortal, incites me to think whether these social acts of mine are real duties. If I go on a visit to the widows and fatherless, do I go purely on a principle of charity, free from any selfish views? If I go to a religious meeting it puts me on thinking whether I go in sincerity and in a clear sense of duty, or whether it is not partly in conformity to custom, or partly from a sensible delight which my animal spirits feel in the company of other people, and whether to support my reputation as a religious man has no share in it.

Do affairs relating to civil society call me near this infection? If I go, it is at the hazard of my health and life, and it becomes me to think seriously whether love to truth and righteousness is the motive of my attending; whether the manner of proceeding is altogether equitable, or whether aught of narrowness, party interest, respect to outward dignities, names, or distinctions among men, do not stain the beauty of those



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assemblies, and render it doubtful; in point of duty, whether a disciple of Christ ought to attend as a member united to the body or not. Whenever there are blemishes which for a series of time remain such, that which is a means of stirring us up to look attentively on these blemishes, and to labour according to our capacities to have health and soundness restored in our country, we may justly account a kindness from our gracious Father, who appointed that means.

The care of a wise and good man for his only son is inferior to the regard of the great Parent of the universe for His creatures. He hath the command of all the powers and operations in nature, and "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Chastisement is intended for instruction, and instruction being received by gentle chastisement, greater calamities are prevented. By an earthquake hundreds of houses are sometimes shaken down in a few minutes, multitudes of people perish suddenly, and many more, being crushed and bruised in the ruins of the buildings, pine away and die in great misery.

By the breaking in of enraged merciless armies, flourishing countries have been laid waste, great numbers of people have perished in a short time, and many more have been pressed with poverty and grief. By the pestilence, people have died so fast in a city, that, through fear, grief, and confusion, those in health have found great difficulty in burying the dead, even without coffins. By famine, great numbers of people in some places have been brought to the utmost distress, and have pined away from want of the necessaries of life. Thus, when the kind invitations and gentle chastisements of a gracious God have not been attended to, his sore judgments have at times been poured out upon people.

While some rules approved in civil society and conformable to human policy, so called, are distinguishable from the purity of truth and righteousness, - while many professing the truth are declining from that ardent love and heavenly-mindedness which was amongst the primitive followers of Jesus Christ, it is time for us to attend diligently to the intent of every chastisement, and to consider the most deep and inward design of them.

The Most High doth not often speak with an outward voice to our outward ears, but, if we humbly meditate on His perfections, consider that He is perfect wisdom and goodness, and that to afflict His creatures to no purpose would be utterly averse to His nature, we shall hear and understand His language both in His gentle and more heavy chastisements, and shall take heed that we do not, in the wisdom of this world, endeavour to escape His hand by means too powerful for us.

Had he endowed men with understanding to prevent this disease (the smallpox) by means which had never proved hurtful nor mortal, such a discovery might be considered as the period of chastisement by this distemper, where that knowledge extended.<sup>98</sup>

But as life and health are His gifts, and are not to be disposed

98. Whatever may be thought of these scruples of John Woolman in regard to inoculation, his objections can scarcely be considered valid against vaccination, which, since his time, has so greatly mitigated the disease. He almost seems to have anticipated some such preventive.



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of in our own wills, to take upon us by inoculation when in health a disorder of which some die, requires great clearness of knowledge that it is our duty to do so.



March 21, Wednesday: The Marrano Jews who had settled at [Newport, Rhode Island](#), wherever they had come from (perhaps Holland, perhaps New-York, more likely than not Curacao in the West Indies), had been on Aquidneck Island at this point for more than a century but had only for about five years been attempting to create for themselves a synagogue. The delay may have been due to the fact that a Marrano (I am instructed that, in Spanish, this means “pig,” and is thus a record of abusive treatment) is a Jew who has pretended to convert to Christianity, and is “passing,” in the manner in which a person with a black or red ancestor, if their skin is light enough, may “pass” as white and thus avoid certain life difficulties.

**ANTISEMITISM**

However, on this day they again circulated a letter asking for contributions, this time citing that it was toward the procurement of proper facilities for educational purposes. The Jews of New-York would in response be able to contribute £150, and there would be some money arriving from the Sephardic communities of Jamaica, Curaçao, Surinam, and London, so, finally, in 1763, the synagogue of K.K. Yeshuat Israel, the Holy Congregation of the Salvation of Israel, would be dedicated.

This was also the year during which [Isaac Touro](#) arrived in from Amsterdam via the West Indies at the age of 20, already trained in Holland for the [Jewish](#) ministry. He would reside at 42 Division Street. It would be he who would provide, from memory, for the construction of the [Touro Synagogue](#), elements of the design of the Sephardic Synagogue which had been built in 1675 in Amsterdam. The design of the structure was to render it appropriate not only for worship, but also for the education of the young in the traditions of the group. It is an open question whether the function of ceremonial worship or the function of appropriate education was intended at this point to be primary, and whether at first this young man Touro performed functions primarily as a rabbi, for all, or primarily as a teacher, for the young males.



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June 30, Saturday: Colonel John Prideaux and Sir William Johnson left Fort Oswego by boat to prepare the invasion of [Fort Niagara](#).

The Marrano<sup>99</sup> Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, and two Ashkenazi Jews, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, of [Newport](#), purchased a small parcel of land for £1500 in [Rhode Island](#) currency, on what was then Griffin Street, from Ebenezer Allen of Sandwich, Massachusetts.

**TOURO SYNAGOGUE**

**1760**

Naphtali Hart Myers donated a candelabrum that eventually would be used as one of a set of almost-matching four hanging in the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

The 2d meetinghouse of [Aquidneck Island](#) was built. It would be used for [Quaker](#) worship until 1792. The burial grounds contains thousands of unmarked graves, of orthodox Friends who regarded the use of grave stones as a part of the idolatry which they had totally eschewed. (This burial ground does have, however, a few markers, placed by [Hicksites](#) and Gurneyite Quakers, who were known among the orthodox as “Heretical Friends.”)

**RHODE ISLAND**

99. Marrano = a Spanish or Portuguese Jew of the late Middle Ages who converted to Christianity, especially one forcibly converted but adhering secretly to Judaism.

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At the press of Kneeland and Green in Boston, Nathaniel Ames's [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1760 (for fifty years George Washington would keep a daily dairy in a succession of interleaved almanacs such as this).

HISTORY OF THE PRESS

A pirated edition of Ames's AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY, OR, AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR...1760...IID EDITION... was also being retailed in Boston. A bold note on the title page of this pirated edition created verisimilitude by warning its purchaser that unauthorized almanacs were being sold bearing Dr. Ames's name "that differ in a scandalous manner, and can by no means be depended on...." The title-page woodcut was of the four seasons surrounding the signs of the Zodiac. The last three pages provided the reader with a heroic poem "On the Reduction of QUEBEC, Sept. 18. 1759. by General Wolfe and brave Troops under his Command, &c."



At the press of [James Franklin](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), WHITEFIELD'S [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1760 by Nathaniel Whitefield:

This almanac is of larger size than the earlier Franklin almanacs, being over 6" x 3 1/2". It contains a table for calculating interest upon the Lawful Money of the Colonies of Rhode-Island and Connecticut, and many medical remedies. This



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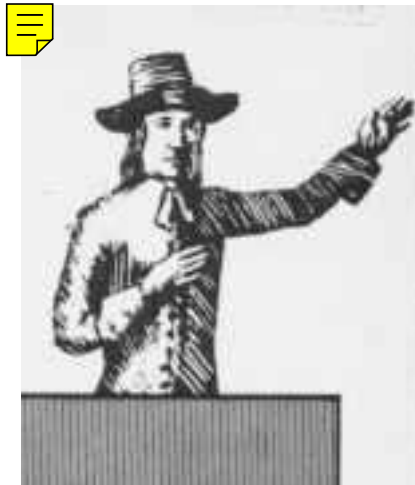
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is the last almanac published by the Franklins.

In the preface this Whitefield writes, "It is expected, and the Public is never satisfied, 'till they receive an Account of the Life and Writings of an Author, when and where he was born, and who was his Patron, with many other Particulars. I shall only say in general, that I was born in the Reign of George King of England, and am a near relative of George Whitefield." The vagueness of this, combined with the fact that we have no other record of the existence of such a person, would appear to indicate that "Nathaniel Whitefield," like "Job Shepherd" before him, had been a fiction.

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), some sailors were [hanged](#) for having been guilty of a mutiny at sea.

Some of the [Quaker](#) group in [Newport](#), including some of the elders and some of the ministers, were, however little superior in morality to such condemned persons, for they were not only slavemasters but also were still entangled in the [international slave trade](#). For instance, at this point the Wanton family that would produce [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) was still engaging in this trade. Friend [John Woolman](#) wrote that he and his companions "in bowedness of spirit went to the [Yearly Meeting](#) at Newport, where I understood that a large number of slaves were imported from Africa and then on sale by a member of our Society.... At this time I had a feeling of the condition of Habakkuk as thus expressed: 'When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, my appetite failed, and I grew outwardly weak. I trembled in myself that I might rest in the day of trouble.' I had many cogitations and was sorely distressed." Habakkuk 3:16 is of course a graphic description of the wrath of God; the verse concluding with "I sigh for the day of distress to dawn over my assailants."



Friend John engaged in a successful effort to read in [Yearly Meeting](#) session a petition to the [Rhode Island](#) legislature to discourage the importation of [slaves](#). Apparently he got through this with his customary delicate, compassionate, and forceful persuasion. Having been able to read the petition aloud in the hearing of Friends, he "felt easy to leave the essay amongst Friends, for them to proceed on it as they believed best."



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Then, however, the [Yearly Meeting](#) took up the question of lotteries, and Friend John evidently was not able to maintain his temperance. He reports that “The matter was zealously handled by some on both sides.... And in the heat of zeal, I once made reply to what an ancient Friend said, which when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity, and after this I spake no more on the subject. ...Some time after ... I, remaining uneasy with the manner of my speaking ... could not see my way clear to conceal my uneasiness, but was concerned that I might say nothing to weaken the cause in which I had laboured. And then after some close exercise and hearty repentance for that I had not attended closely to the safe guide, I stood up and ... acquainted Friends that though I dare not go from what I had said as to the matter, yet I was uneasy with the manner of my speaking, as believing milder language would have been better. As this was uttered in some degree of creaturely abasement, it appeared to have a good savor amongst us, after a warm debate.” Woolman had managed to rein in his anger and distress during his careful and skillful management of his antislavery petition, using the emotional energy to power his compassion, discernment, and charity toward the [slaveholders](#) themselves, but then during the discussion of lotteries his anger had slipped out. Following the general Meeting, however Woolman was able to meet with a number of slaveholding ministers, elders, overseers, and others, and was able to report that “My exercise was heavy and I was deeply bowed in spirit before the Lord, who was pleased to favour with the seasoning virtue of Truth, which wrought a tenderness amongst us, and the subject was mutually handled in a calm and peaceable spirit.”

**Visit, in Company with Samuel Eastburn, to Long Island, Rhode Island, Boston, etc. – Remarks on the Slave-Trade at Newport; also on Lotteries – Some Observations on the Island of Nantucket.**

FOURTH Month, 1760. – Having for some time past felt a sympathy in my mind with Friends eastward, I opened my concern in our Monthly Meeting, and, obtaining a certificate, set forward on the 17th of this month, in company with my beloved friend Samuel Eastburn. We had meetings at Woodbridge, Rahway, and Plainfield, and were at their Monthly Meeting of ministers and elders in Rahway. We laboured under some discouragement, but through the invisible power of truth our visit was made reviving to the lowly-minded, with whom I felt a near unity of spirit, being much reduced in my mind. We passed on and visited most of the meetings on Long Island. It was my concern from day to day, to say neither more nor less than what the Spirit of truth opened in me, being jealous over myself lest I should say anything to make my testimony look agreeable to that mind in people which is not in pure obedience to the cross of Christ.

The spring of the ministry was often low, and through the subjecting power of truth we were kept low with it; from place to place they whose hearts were truly concerned for the cause of Christ appeared to be comforted in our labours, and though it was in general a time of abasement of the creature, yet, through His goodness who is a helper of the poor, we had some truly edifying seasons both in meetings and in families where we tarried. Sometimes we found strength to labour earnestly with the unfaithful, especially with those whose station in families or in the Society was such that their example had a powerful tendency to open the way for others to go aside from the purity and soundness of the blessed truth.

At Jericho, on Long Island, I wrote home as follows: –

24th of the Fourth Month, 1760.



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DEARLY BELOVED WIFE, – We are favoured with health; have been at sundry meetings in East Jersey and on this island. My mind hath been much in an inward, watchful frame since I left thee, greatly desiring that our proceedings may be singly in the will of our Heavenly Father.

As the present appearance of things is not joyous, I have been much shut up from outward cheerfulness, remembering that promise, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord"; as this from day to day has been revived in my memory, I have considered that His internal presence in our minds is a delight of all others the most pure, and that the honest-hearted not only delight in this, but in the effect of it upon them. He regards the helpless and distressed, and reveals His love to His children under affliction, who delight in beholding His benevolence, and in feeling divine charity moving in them. Of this I may speak a little, for, though since I left you I have often an engaging love and affection towards thee and my daughter and friends about home, and going out at this time, when sickness is so great amongst you, is a trial upon me; yet I often remember there are many widows and fatherless, many who have poor tutors, many who have evil examples before them, and many whose minds are in captivity; for whose sake my heart is at times moved with compassion, so that I feel my mind resigned to leave you for a season, to exercise that gift which the Lord hath bestowed on me, which though small compared with some, yet in this I rejoice that I feel love unfeigned towards my fellow-creatures. I recommend you to the Almighty, who, I trust, cares for you, and under a sense of His heavenly love remain,  
Thy loving husband, J. W.

We crossed from the east end of Long Island to New London, about thirty miles, in a large open boat; while we were out, the wind rising high, the waves several times beat over us, so that to me it appeared dangerous, but my mind was at that time turned to Him who made and governs the deep, and my life was resigned to Him; as He was mercifully pleased to preserve us, I had fresh occasion to consider every day as a day lent to me, and felt a renewed engagement to devote my time, and all I had, to Him who gave it.

We had five meetings in Narraganset, and went thence to Newport on Rhode Island. Our gracious Father preserved us in an humble dependence on Him through deep exercises that were mortifying to the creaturely will. In several families in the country where we lodged, I felt an engagement on my mind to have a conference with them in private, concerning their slaves; and through divine aid I was favoured to give up thereto. Though in this concern I differ from many whose service in travelling is, I believe, greater than mine, yet I do not think hardly of them



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for omitting it; I do not repine at having so unpleasant a task assigned me, but look with awfulness to Him who appoints to His servants their respective employments, and is good to all who serve Him sincerely.

We got to Newport in the evening, and on the next day visited two sick persons, with whom we had comfortable sittings, and in the afternoon attended the burial of a Friend. The next day we were at meetings at Newport, in the forenoon and afternoon; the spring of the ministry was opened, and strength was given to declare the Word of Life to the people.

The day following we went on our journey, but the great number of slaves in these parts, and the continuance of that trade from thence to Guinea, made a deep impression on me, and my cries were often put up to my Heavenly Father in secret, that He would enable me to discharge my duty faithfully in such way as He might be pleased to point out to me.

We took Swansea, Freetown, and Taunton in our way to Boston, where also we had a meeting; our exercise was deep, and the love of truth prevailed, for which I bless the Lord. We went eastward about eighty miles beyond Boston, taking meetings, and were in a good degree preserved in an humble dependence on that arm which drew us out; and though we had some hard labour with the disobedient, by laying things home and close to such as were stout against the truth, yet through the goodness of God we had at times to partake of heavenly comfort with those who were meek, and were often favoured to part with Friends in the nearness of true gospel fellowship. We returned to Boston and had another comfortable opportunity with Friends there, and thence rode back a day's journey eastward of Boston. Our guide being a heavy man, and the weather hot, my companion and I expressed our freedom to go on without him, to which he consented, and we respectfully took our leave of him; this we did as believing the journey would have been hard to him and his horse.

In visiting the meetings in those parts we were measurably baptized into a feeling of the state of the Society, and in bowedness of spirit went to the Yearly Meeting at Newport, where we met with John Storer from England, Elizabeth Shipley, Ann Gaunt, Hannah Foster, and Mercy Redman, from our parts, all ministers of the gospel, of whose company I was glad. Understanding that a large number of slaves had been imported from Africa into that town, and were then on sale by a member of our Society, my appetite failed, and I grew outwardly weak, and had a feeling of the condition of Habakkuk, as thus expressed: "When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." I had many cogitations, and was sorely distressed. I was desirous that Friends might petition the Legislature to use their endeavours to discourage the future importation of slaves, for I saw that this trade was a great evil, and tended to multiply troubles, and to bring distresses on the people for whose welfare my heart was deeply concerned. But I perceived several difficulties in regard to petitioning, and such was the



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exercise of my mind that I thought of endeavouring to get an opportunity to speak a few words in the House of Assembly then sitting in town.

This exercise came upon me in the afternoon on the second day of the Yearly Meeting, and on going to bed I got no sleep till my mind was wholly resigned thereto. In the morning I inquired of a Friend how long the Assembly was likely to continue sitting, who told me it was expected to be prorogued that day or the next. As I was desirous to attend the business of the meeting, and perceived the Assembly was likely to separate before the business was over, after considerable exercise, humbly seeking to the Lord for instruction, my mind settled to attend on the business of the meeting; on the last day of which I had prepared a short essay of a petition to be presented to the Legislature, if way opened. And being informed that there were some appointed by that Yearly Meeting to speak with those in authority on cases relating to the Society, I opened my mind to several of them, and showed them the essay I had made, and afterwards I opened the case in the meeting for business, in substance as follows: –

I have been under a concern for some time on account of the great number of slaves which are imported into this colony. I am aware that it is a tender point to speak to, but apprehend I am not clear in the sight of Heaven without doing so. I have prepared an essay of a petition to be presented to the Legislature, if way open; and what I have to propose to this meeting is that some Friends may be named to withdraw and look over it, and report whether they believe it suitable to be read in the meeting. If they should think well of reading it, it will remain for the meeting to consider whether to take any further notice of it, as a meeting, or not.

After a short conference some Friends went out, and, looking over it, expressed their willingness to have it read, which being done, many expressed their unity with the proposal, and some signified that to have the subjects of the petition enlarged upon, and signed out of meeting by such as were free, would be more suitable than to do it there. Though I expected at first that if it was done it would be in that way, yet such was the exercise of my mind that to move it in the hearing of Friends when assembled appeared to me as a duty, for my heart yearned towards the inhabitants of these parts, believing that by this trade there had been an increase of inquietude amongst them, and way had been made for the spreading of a spirit opposite to that meekness and humility which is a sure resting-place for the soul; and that the continuance of this trade would not only render their healing more difficult, but would increase their malady.

Having proceeded thus far, I felt easy to leave the essay amongst Friends, for them to proceed in it as they believed best. And now an exercise revived in my mind in relation to lotteries, which were common in those parts. I had mentioned the subject in a former sitting of this meeting, when arguments were used



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in favour of Friends being held excused who were only concerned in such lotteries as were agreeable to law. And now, on moving it again, it was opposed as before; but the hearts of some solid Friends appeared to be united to discourage the practice amongst their members, and the matter was zealously handled by some on both sides. In this debate it appeared very clear to me that the spirit of lotteries was a spirit of selfishness, which tended to confuse and darken the understanding, and that pleading for it in our meetings, which were set apart for the Lord's work, was not right. In the heat of zeal, I made reply to what an ancient Friend said, and when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity. After this I spoke no more on the subject. At length a minute was made, a copy of which was to be sent to their several Quarterly Meetings, inciting Friends to labour to discourage the practice amongst all professing with us.

Some time after this minute was made I remained uneasy with the manner of my speaking to the ancient Friend, and could not see my way clear to conceal my uneasiness, though I was concerned that I might say nothing to weaken the cause in which I had laboured. After some close exercise and hearty repentance for not having attended closely to the safe guide, I stood up, and, reciting the passage, acquainted Friends that though I durst not go from what I had said as to the matter, yet I was uneasy with the manner of my speaking, believing milder language would have been better. As this was uttered in some degree of creaturely abasement after a warm debate, it appeared to have a good savour amongst us.

The Yearly Meeting being now over, there yet remained on my mind a secret though heavy exercise, in regard to some leading active members about Newport, who were in the practice of keeping slaves. This I mentioned to two ancient Friends who came out of the country, and proposed to them, if way opened, to have some conversation with those members. One of them and I, having consulted one of the most noted elders who had slaves, he, in a respectful manner, encouraged me to proceed to clear myself of what lay upon me. Near the beginning of the Yearly Meeting, I had had a private conference with this said elder and his wife concerning their slaves, so that the way seemed clear to me to advise with him about the manner of proceeding.

I told him I was free to have a conference with them all together in a private house; or, if he thought they would take it unkind to be asked to come together, and to be spoken with in the hearing of one another, I was free to spend some time amongst them, and to visit them all in their own houses. He expressed his liking to the first proposal, not doubting their willingness to come together; and, as I proposed a visit to only ministers, elders, and overseers, he named some others whom he desired might also be present. A careful messenger being wanted to acquaint them in a proper manner, he offered to go to all their houses, to open the matter to them, - and did so. About the eighth hour the next morning we met in the meeting-house



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chamber, the last-mentioned country Friend, my companion, and John Storer being with us. After a short time of retirement, I acquainted them with the steps I had taken in procuring that meeting, and opened the concern I was under, and we then proceeded to a free conference upon the subject. My exercise was heavy, and I was deeply bowed in spirit before the Lord, who was pleased to favour with the seasoning virtue of truth, which wrought a tenderness amongst us; and the subject was mutually handled in a calm and peaceable spirit. At length, feeling my mind released from the burden which I had been under, I took my leave of them in a good degree of satisfaction; and by the tenderness they manifested in regard to the practice, and the concern several of them expressed in relation to the manner of disposing of their negroes after their decease, I believed that a good exercise was spreading amongst them: and I am humbly thankful to God, who supported my mind and preserved me in a good degree of resignation through these trials.

Thou who sometimes travellest in the work of the ministry, and art made very welcome by thy friends, seest many tokens of their satisfaction in having thee for their guest. It is good for thee to dwell deep, that thou mayest feel and understand the spirits of people. If we believe truth points towards a conference on some subjects in a private way, it is needful for us to take heed that their kindness, their freedom and affability, do not hinder us from the Lord's work. I have experienced that, in the midst of kindness and smooth conduct, to speak close and home to them who entertain us, on points that relate to outward interest, is hard labour. Sometimes, when I have felt truth lead towards it, I have found myself disqualified by a superficial friendship; and as the sense thereof hath abased me and my cries have been to the Lord, so I have been humbled and made content to appear weak, or as a fool for His sake; and thus a door hath been opened to enter upon it. To attempt to do the Lord's work in our own way, and to speak of that which is the burden of the Word in a way easy to the natural part, doth not reach the bottom of the disorder. To see the failings of our friends, and think hard of them, without opening that which we ought to open, and still carry a face of friendship, tends to undermine the foundation of true unity. The office of a minister of Christ is weighty, and they who now go forth as watchmen have need to be steadily on their guard against the snares of prosperity and an outside friendship.

After the Yearly Meeting we were at meetings at Newtown, Cushnet, Long Plain, Rochester, and Dartmouth. From thence we sailed for Nantucket, in company with Ann Gaunt, Mercy Redman, and several other Friends. The wind being slack we only reached Tarpawling Cove the first day; where, going on shore, we found room in a public-house, and beds for a few of us, – the rest slept on the floor. We went on board again about break of day, and though the wind was small, we were favoured to come within about four miles of Nantucket; and then about ten of us got into our boat and rowed to the harbour before dark; a large boat went



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off and brought in the rest of the passengers about midnight. The next day but one was their Yearly Meeting, which held four days, the last of which was their Monthly Meeting for business. We had a labourious time amongst them; our minds were closely exercised, and I believe it was a time of great searching of heart. The longer I was on the island the more I became sensible that there was a considerable number of valuable Friends there, though an evil spirit, tending to strife, had been at work amongst them. I was cautious of making any visits except as my mind was particularly drawn to them; and in that way we had some sittings in Friends' houses, where the heavenly wing was at times spread over us, to our mutual comfort. My beloved companion had very acceptable service on this island.

When meeting was over, we all agreed to sail the next day if the weather was suitable and we were well; and being called up the latter part of the night, about fifty of us went on board a vessel; but, the wind changing, the seamen thought best to stay in the harbour till it altered, so we returned on shore. Feeling clear as to any further visits, I spent my time in my chamber, chiefly alone; and after some hours, my heart being filled with the spirit of supplication, my prayers and tears were poured out before my Heavenly Father for His help and instruction in the manifold difficulties which attended me in life. While I was waiting upon the Lord, there came a messenger from the women Friends who lodged at another house, desiring to confer with us about appointing a meeting, which to me appeared weighty, as we had been at so many before; but after a short conference, and advising with some elderly Friends, a meeting was appointed, in which the Friend who first moved it, and who had been much shut up before, was largely opened in the love of the gospel. The next morning about break of day going again on board the vessel, we reached Falmouth on the Main before night, where our horses being brought, we proceeded towards Sandwich Quarterly Meeting. Being two days in going to Nantucket, and having been there once before, I observed many shoals in their bay, which make sailing more dangerous, especially in stormy nights; also, that a great shoal which encloses their harbour prevents the entrance of sloops except when the tide is up. Waiting without for the rising of the tide is sometimes hazardous in storms, and by waiting within they sometimes miss a fair wind. I took notice that there was on that small island a great number of inhabitants, and the soil not very fertile, the timber being so gone that for vessels, fences, and firewood, they depend chiefly on buying from the Main, for the cost whereof, with most of their other expenses, they depend principally upon the whale fishery.<sup>100</sup>

I also encouraged the young women to continue their neat, decent way of attending themselves on the affairs of the house; showing, as the way opened, that where people were truly humble, used themselves to business, and were content with a plain way of life, they had ever had more true peace and calmness of mind than they who, aspiring to greatness and outward show, have grasped hard for an income to support themselves therein. And



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as I observed they had so few or no slaves, I had to encourage them to be content without them, making mention of the numerous troubles and vexations which frequently attended the minds of the people who depend on slaves to do their labour.

We attended the Quarterly Meeting at Sandwich, in company with Ann Gaunt and Mercy Redman, which was preceded by a Monthly Meeting, and in the whole held three days. We were in various ways exercised amongst them, in gospel love, according to the several gifts bestowed on us, and were at times overshadowed with the virtue of truth, to the comfort of the sincere and stirring up of the negligent. Here we parted with Ann and Mercy, and went to Rhode Island, taking one meeting in our way, which was a satisfactory time. Reaching Newport the evening before their Quarterly Meeting, we attended it, and after that had a meeting with our young people, separated from those of other societies. We went through much labour in this town; and now, in taking leave of it, though I felt close inward exercise to the last, I found inward peace, and was in some degree comforted in a belief that a good number remain in that place who retain a sense of truth, and that there are some young people attentive to the voice of the Heavenly Shepherd. The last meeting, in which Friends from the several parts of the quarter came together, was a select meeting, and through the renewed manifestation of the Father's love the hearts of the sincere were united together.<sup>101</sup> From Newport we went to Greenwich, Shanticut, and Warwick, and were helped to labour amongst Friends in the love of our gracious Redeemer. Afterwards, accompanied by our friend John Casey from Newport, we rode through Connecticut to Oblong, visited the meetings in those parts, and thence proceeded to the Quarterly Meeting at Ryewoods. Through the gracious extendings of divine help, we had some seasoning opportunities in those places. We also visited Friends at New York and Flushing, and thence to Rahway. Here our roads parting, I took leave of my beloved companion and true yokemate Samuel Eastburn, and reached home the 10th of Eighth Month, where I found my family well. For the favours and protection of the Lord, both inward and outward, extended to me in this journey, my heart is humbled in grateful acknowledgments, and I find renewed desires to dwell and walk

100. I considered that as towns grew larger, and lands near navigable waters were more cleared, it would require more labour to get timber and wood. I understood that the whales, being much hunted and sometimes wounded and not killed, grow more shy and difficult to come at. I considered that the formation of the earth, the seas, the islands, bays, and rivers, the motions of the winds and great waters, which cause bars and shoals in particular places, were all the works of Him who is perfect wisdom and goodness; and as people attend to His heavenly instruction, and put their trust in Him, He provides for them in all parts where he gives them a being; and as in this visit to these people I felt a strong desire for their firm establishment on the sure foundation, besides what was said more publicly, I was concerned to speak with the women Friends in their Monthly Meeting of business, many being present, and in the fresh spring of pure love to open before them the advantage, both inwardly and outwardly, of attending singly to the pure guidance of the Holy Spirit, and therein to educate their children in true humility and the disuse of all superfluities. I reminded them of the difficulties their husbands and sons were frequently exposed to at sea, and that the more plain and simple their way of living was the less need there would be of running great hazards to support them.

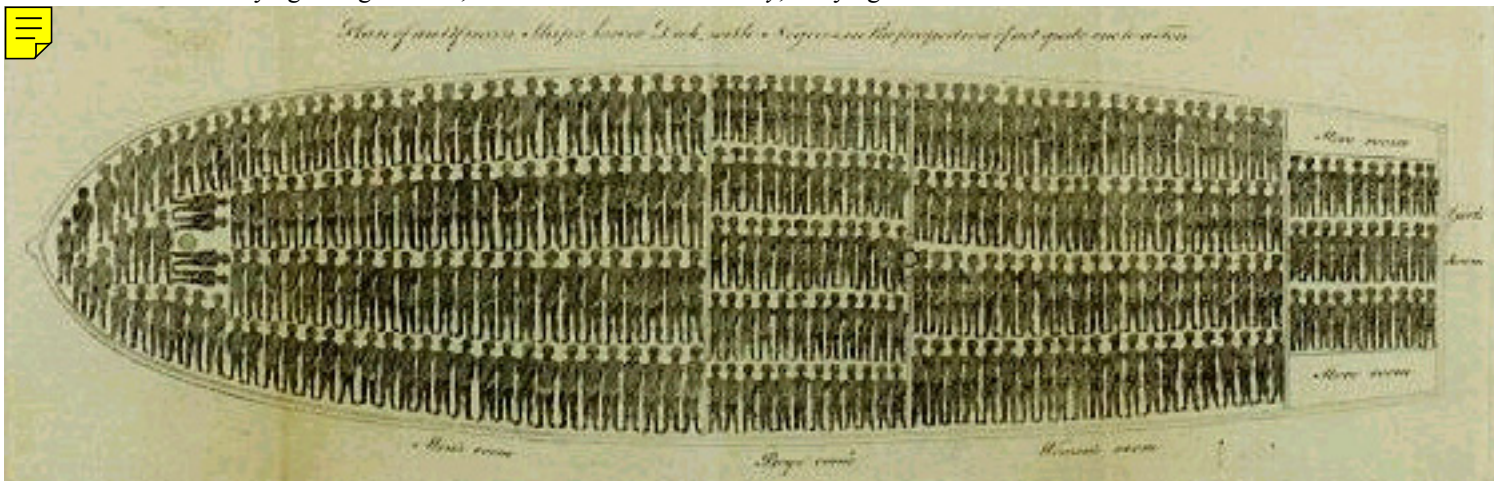
101. The poverty of spirit and inward weakness, with which I was much tried the fore part of this journey, has of late appeared to me a dispensation of kindness. Appointing meetings never appeared more weighty to me, and I was led into a deep search whether in all things my mind was resigned to the will of God; often querying with myself what should be the cause of such inward poverty, and greatly desiring that no secret reserve in my heart might hinder my access to the divine fountain. In these humbling times I was made watchful, and excited to attend to the secret movings of the heavenly principle in my mind, which prepared the way to some duties, that, in more easy and prosperous times as to the outward, I believe I should have been in danger of omitting.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

in resignedness before Him.



In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, 3 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of 327 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples of [negreros](#) being fitted out in Rhode Island for departure this year to engage in the international slave trade include the brig *Abigail*, carrying a cargo of 125 slaves, the sloop *Industry*, carrying a cargo of 104, and the schooner *Little Polly*, carrying 100.



Departure is different from arrival, of course, across the Middle Passage, and during this year the schooner *Little Becky* would be arriving in the harbor of [Newport](#) with a cargo of 96 –or, making no assumptions, what remained of an original cargo of 96– and although we do not know the name of the vessel or the number of human beings in its cargo, the vessel of Captain Carpenter also would be arriving in the harbor of Newport with slaves from the coast of Africa.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In the individual efforts of the various colonies to suppress the African slave-trade there may be traced certain general movements. First, from 1638 to 1664, there was a tendency to take a high moral stand against the traffic. This is illustrated in the laws of New England, in the plans for the settlement of Delaware and, later, that of Georgia, and in the protest of the German Friends. The second period, from about 1664 to 1760, has no general unity, but is marked by statutes laying duties varying in design from encouragement to absolute prohibition, by some cases of moral opposition, and by the slow but steady growth of a spirit unfavorable to the long continuance of the trade. The last colonial period, from about 1760 to 1787, is one of pronounced effort to regulate, limit, or totally prohibit the traffic. Beside these general movements, there are many waves of legislation, easily distinguishable, which rolled over several or all of the colonies at various times, such as the series of high duties following the Assiento, and the acts inspired by various Negro "plots."

Notwithstanding this, the laws of the colonies before 1774 had no national unity, the peculiar circumstances of each colony determining its legislation. With the outbreak of the Revolution came unison in action with regard to the slave-trade, as with regard to other matters, which may justly be called national. It was, of course, a critical period, — a period when, in the rapid upheaval of a few years, the complicated and diverse forces of decades meet, combine, act, and react, until the resultant seems almost the work of chance. In the settlement of the fate of slavery and the slave-trade, however, the real crisis came in the calm that succeeded the storm, in that day when, in the opinion of most men, the question seemed already settled. And indeed it needed an exceptionally clear and discerning mind, in 1787, to deny that slavery and the slave-trade in the United States of America were doomed to early annihilation. It seemed certainly a legitimate deduction from the history of the preceding century to conclude that, as the system had risen, flourished, and fallen in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, and as South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland were apparently following in the same legislative path, the next generation would in all probability witness the last throes of the system on our soil.

To be sure, the problem had its uncertain quantities. The motives of the law-makers in South Carolina and Pennsylvania were dangerously different; the century of industrial expansion was slowly dawning and awakening that vast economic revolution in which American slavery was to play so prominent and fatal a rôle; and, finally, there were already in the South faint signs of a changing moral attitude toward slavery, which would no longer regard the system as a temporary makeshift, but rather as a permanent though perhaps unfortunate necessity. With regard to the slave-trade, however, there appeared to be substantial unity of opinion; and there were, in 1787, few things to indicate that a cargo of five hundred African slaves would openly be



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

landed in Georgia in 1860.

February: At Cape Coast Road on the coast of Africa, Captain Peter James's *Little Becky* was being loaded with 96 Gold Coast [slaves](#), purchased to be retailed by Peleg Thurston of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).<sup>102</sup>

**INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE**

Early June: His consignment of 96 new [slaves](#) from the Gold Coast having arrived safe and sound aboard the *Little Becky*, Peleg Thurston proceeded to retail them from his wharf in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). This was being advertised as far away as [Boston](#). It must have been quite a sight.



July 3, Tuesday: The [Newport, Rhode Island](#) gazette [The Mercury](#) announced the arrival of Captain Carpenter with a cargo of [slaves](#) from the coast of Africa.

**INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE**

[Silas Lee](#) was born in [Concord](#), brother of Samuel Lee and the Reverend Joseph Lee, sons of the physician Joseph Lee.

**1761**

It is always instructive to evaluate what particular events of a period a later era came to regard as of significance. For example, these were the particular events of 1761 in [Rhode Island](#) that the Rhode Islanders of 1844 would consider to have been worthy of recording:

1761. Weybosset bridge was destroyed by a heavy gale of wind and the highest tide ever known before that time. To rebuild it, the General Assembly made a grant, and authorized a lottery. It was rebuilt with a draw to admit the passage of vessels, as many were built then as far north as St. John's church, and West India cargoes were unladen at wharves in that vicinity. [Newport](#) was still much ahead of [Providence](#) in the valuation of taxable property, as appears by a State tax assessed this year, Newport paying £3,200, and Providence £972.

102. An African record indicates somewhat more slaves than this, and the difference may reflect a number of privileged slaves taken along to assist in the management and care of the cargo slaves. (Although today we can afford to have rather simplified notions of the condition, slavery was in its reality a complex institution which involved a number of levels.)



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

January 19, Monday: In [Newport, Rhode Island](#) the death of King George II and the accession of King George III were proclaimed.



June 23, Tuesday: According to [The Mercury of Newport, Rhode Island](#), there was a consignment of [slaves](#) “just imported from Africa” at the wharf of Captain Samuel Holmes — just waiting for good white families in good colonial homes to realize how very much they would benefit from their services.

[INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE](#)

### 1762

August 22, Sunday: When her printer son [James Franklin](#) died, Ann Smith Franklin, the [Widow Franklin](#), became overtly what she had presumably been all along, the 1st woman editor of an American newspaper, [The Mercury of Newport, Rhode Island](#).



“The modern man’s daily prayer is reading the daily newspaper.”

— [G.W.F. Hegel](#)



### 1763

June 16, Thursday: According to [The Mercury of Newport, Rhode Island](#), the brig *Royal Charlotte* was in port with a consignment of [slaves](#) from the Gold Coast of Africa, men, women, boys, and girls currently being offered for sale to the discerning customer.<sup>103</sup>

[INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE](#)

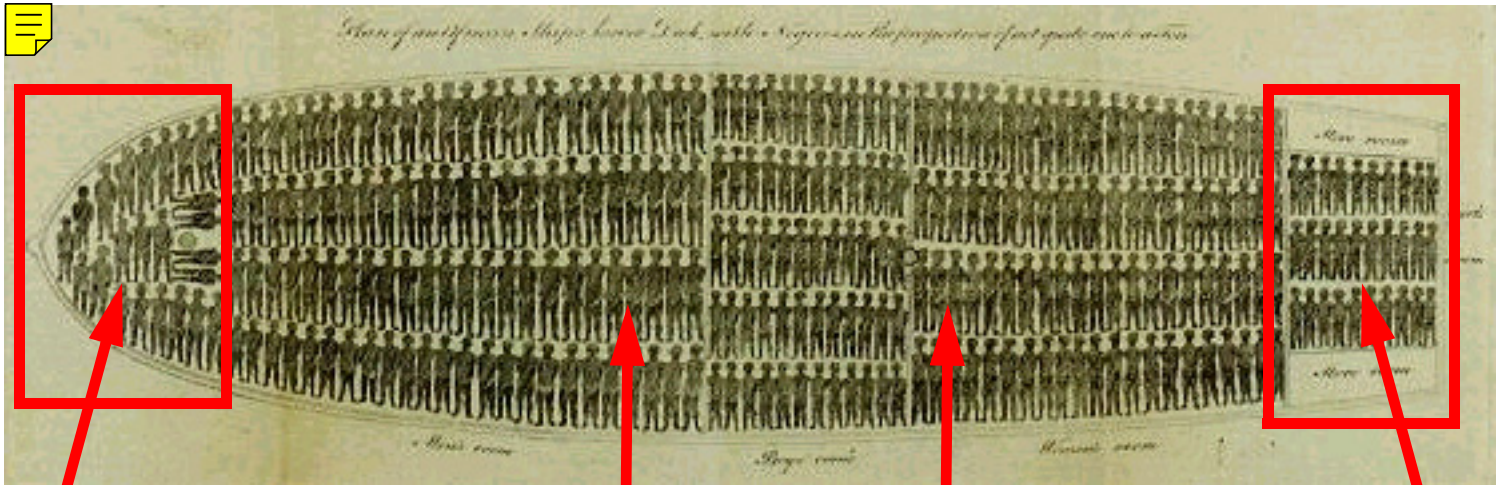
On Thursday last arriv’d from the Coast of AFRICA, the Brig *Royal Charlotte*, with a Parcel of extremely fine, healthy, well-limb’d Gold Coast SLAVES. Men, Women, Boys, and Girls. Gentlemen in Town and Country have now an Opportunity to furnish themselves with

103. I bet you’ve looked at this idealized master plan for the benevolent negrero ship a thousand times and never realized what it had to tell you about gender segregation aboard such a vessel!

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

such as will suit them. Those that want, are desired to apply very speedily, or they will lose the Advantage of supplying themselves. They are to be seen on board the Vessel at Taylor's Wharf.

Apply to Thomas Teekle Taylor Samuel and William Vernon.  
N.B. Those that remain on Hand will be shipt off very soon.



Boys, stored coincidentally near the crew's sleeping quarters.

Men Women  
(kept carefully separate)

Girls, stored coincidentally near the officers' sleeping quarters.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

July: The Reverend [James Manning](#) arrived in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) with a plan for a “liberal and catholic”



**A Man with a Plan**

institution of higher education: the [College of Rhode Island](#). Rhode Island’s leading citizens had previously heard a similar plan presented by the Congregationalist Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#). He, assisted by the attorney



William Ellery, Jr., drew up a charter based on the Reverend Manning’s draft and this was presented to the General Assembly. This charter’s “catholic” plan was to divide the Corporation’s power about equally among [Baptists](#) (who would make up a majority of the Trustees) and Presbyterians, while allowing a few seats to Quakers and Anglicans (no actual Roman Catholics or Jews or, Heaven forbid, Moslems or Buddhists or Hindus need apply). (Long afterward, this would be regarded as the genesis of [Brown University](#).)

Interestingly, although no provision whatever was being made for any Jewish involvement in higher education, it was at the Jacob Rivera mansion on the Parade in Newport, then being used as the residence of Deputy Governor John Gardiner, that the meeting was held in which the plan was announced to interested citizens.

September 19, Monday: The brig *Royal Charlotte* departed from the port of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) with some portion of its consignment of [enslaved](#) men, women, boys, and girls from the Gold Coast of Africa, still not as yet disposed of to the discerning final consumer. The destination of the vessel was the upper James River.



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 2, Friday, Chanukah: Dedication of the 1st synagogue in New England, the [Touro Synagogue](#) of congregation K.K. Yeshuat Israel, the Holy Congregation of the Salvation of Israel, in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) (this congregation had actually been in existence on [Aquidneck Island](#) since 1658).<sup>104</sup>



The Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) noticed that the only furniture in the place was the wainscoting, but that this was adequate seating since there were only about eighty in the congregation. Presumably by “wainscoting” the Congregational reverend was referring to the wooden bench structures built into the walls.

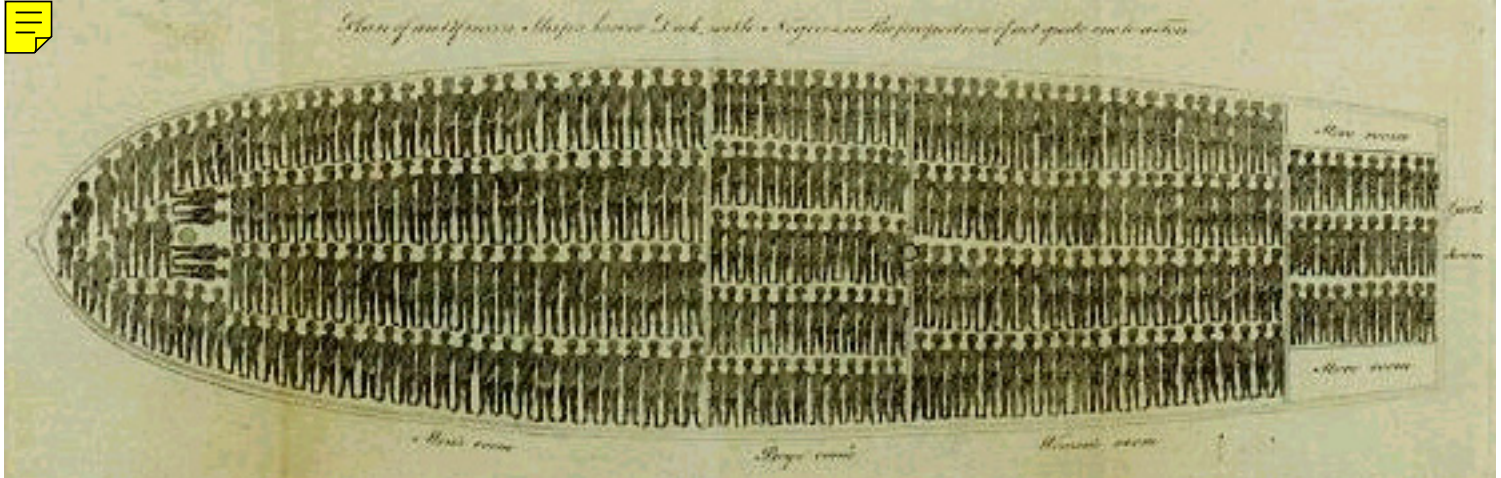


(Some of the Jews of this synagogue, like some of their Christian neighbors such as the [Quakers](#), next door up the hill, engaged in the [international slave trade](#). In general, in [Rhode Island](#) harbors as a whole during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 17-20 vessels were being fitted out for the coast of Africa. For instance, Captain Ferguson arrived on that coast some time before September. If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of more than 1,850 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island snow *Adventure* carrying a cargo of 150 slaves, the brig *Diamond* carrying a cargo

104. It would not, until a much later timeframe, be referred to as the Touro Synagogue. After their synagogue building, in what had become the bad part of town, had been deconsecrated, the dilapidated empty structure, under a caretaker who was a [Quaker](#), would **perhaps** find use occasionally, surreptitiously, as free temporary accommodations for escaping slaves as a station on the Underground Railroad (the word “perhaps” is used because no evidence whatever has ever been produced and, most likely, this has been pious wishful thinking). The edifice would be designated a national historical site in 1946. —When you visit, and are proudly shown the must-see secret hiding hole underneath the lectern, try to be discrete and polite and do not complicate matters (Boo!) by inquiring about participation in the [international slave trade](#).

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

of 120, the schooner *Kitty* carrying 70, the schooner *Little Sally* carrying 60, the sloop *Salisbury* carrying 90, the sloop *Three Friends* carrying 78, the sloop *Wydah* carrying 60, a schooner of unknown name carrying 120, a schooner of unknown name carrying 72, a schooner of unknown name carrying 90, and a schooner of unknown name carrying 90.)



Isaac Touro (“de Toro”) was officiating as Cantor.

He would be the first *rabbi*. It had been he, presumably, who had provided, from memory, the design of the Portuguese Sephardic Synagogue of Amsterdam. The structure had been faced so that the congregation as it turned toward the Aron Kodesh would be turning toward Mizrah. The main floor was for men and the gallery for women.

JUDAISM



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1764**

[Aaron Lopez](#), President (Parnas) of The Holy Congregation Dispersed Ones of Israel (Kahal Kodesh Nephutsay Israel) appealed for funds with which the [Jewish](#) congregation might pay off the mortgage and interest due for the building of their synagogue in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



**TOURO SYNAGOGUE**

The structure had been created out of red brick imported from England.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1764, and THE NEW ENGLAND ALMANACK FOR 1764. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence, Rhode Island](#): William Goddard.

Nathaniel Ames, Senior's final almanac: AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1764. Boston: Printed and Sold by R. & S. Draper ... Edes & Gill ... Green & Russell ... T. & J. Fleet.... The introductory essay defended astrology as having a "philosophical foundation." Mention was made of the glassicord "Musical Instrument of Glass invented by Mr. Franklin." This publication offered health advice, "some hints concerning the Sanatorian Doctrine [Santorio Santorio, 1561-1636, an Italian physician] of Perspiration, a Discharge from our Bodies, tho' insensibly made, that is greater than all the sensible Evacuations put together, since Health in all Persons every Moment depends upon a right Discharge of this Matter...."

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1764. By Nathaniel Ames. [Newport](#): Re-printed and sold by Samuel Hall.

A reprint of Ames's Boston Almanac.  
This Newport series of Ames's continued several years.



## NEWPORT

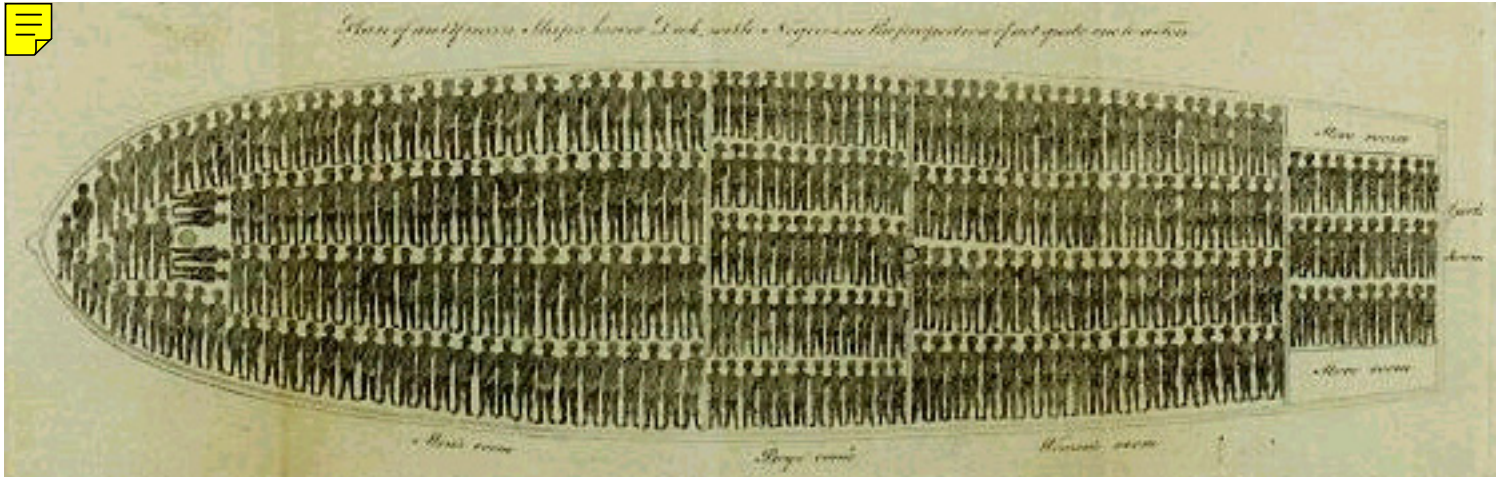
## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Summer: Captain [Esek Hopkins](#), who would become the 1st Commodore of the US Navy, on behalf of the firm of [Nicholas Brown](#) and Company of [Providence](#), was fitting out the square-rigged brigantine [Sally](#) at [Newport](#) for a slaving voyage to the Guinea coast of Africa. Enormous profits were being anticipated, for if a big cargo of a couple of hundred healthy young human beings could be delivered from the slave castles on the coast of Africa, where they could be obtained on the cheap in exchange for [Rhode Island](#) rum, to the sugar plantations of the West Indies, the profit for a single voyage might run up toward several hundred thousand pounds.

[THE MIDDLE PASSAGE](#)  
[TRIANGULAR TRADE](#)

In general, in [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 20 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of 2,180 souls were transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island brig *Betsey* carrying a cargo of 120 slaves, the *Friendship* carrying a cargo of 180, the brig *Osprey* carrying 100, and the *Polly* carrying 160.



July: When they found the activities of Lieutenant Hill’s schooner HMS *St. John* to be giving “offense,” two of the magistrates of [Newport](#) had Fort St. George fire its cannon at it.

[RHODE ISLAND](#)



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

July 6, Wednesday: A preserved gazette advertisement tells us that the sloop *Elizabeth* had just arrived at the port of [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#) in the colony of [Rhode Island and Providence Plantations](#), from the coast of *Africa*, bearing a number of healthy Negro boys and girls, who would be offered for sale by John Miller at his house or store:

*Newport, July 6, 1764.*  
Just imported in the Sloop *Elizabeth*,  
from *Africa*, and to be sold, by  
**John Miller,**  
At his House, or Store ;  
**A Number of healthy**  
Negro Boys and Girls,  
Likewise to be sold,—*Tillock's* and *Kip-  
per's* Snuff, by the Cask or Dozen.

**TRIANGULAR TRADE**

Likewise available to be sold at the house or store of John Miller was a consignment of snuff.

The Middle Passage of this vessel, from the coast of Africa to the coast of America, had required 55 days.

(Was there any difference between selling boys and girls, and selling snuff? Well, yes, there was, there was for instance the issue of the health, which is to say, the varying quality, of boys and girls, an issue which seems not to arise in the case of the snuff, and there was the issue of quantity of sale, in that the snuff was to be wholesaled either by the cask or by the dozen whereas human beings would of course be vended individually.)

**SLAVES**



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September: At [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#) occurred the first meeting of the new governing body for the proposed new [Rhode Island](#) institution of higher education. Among the 24 officials was Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#), later to become a signer of the [Declaration of Independence](#), who was named as the institution's first chancellor, his political opponent Samuel Ward, who would serve several terms as the state governor, and [Nicholas Brown](#) (grandfather of the [Nicholas Brown, Jr.](#) after whom the [College of Rhode Island](#) eventually would be renamed [Brown University](#)). The Reverend [James Manning](#), the originator of the idea, was settling in as pastor of a new [Baptist](#) church in [Warren](#), and opening a Latin school there.



Since there is a story floating around to the effect that Rhode Island College was founded “by an assorted group of Revivalist Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Anglicans,” I will mention that not only was the first college president and sole instructor a Baptist minister, but also, later on, when one of his successors as college president would come to be suspected of not believing in each and every tenet of the Baptist faith — the man would be driven out.

1765

Naphtali Hart Myers had in 1760 donated a candelabrum that was being used in the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#). In this year Abraham Rodriguez Mendez donated two more, more or less like it, and Samuel Judah of New-York donated a Ner Tamid or Eternal Light, a wick lamp filled with oil.<sup>105</sup>

THE NEW ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1765. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence, Rhode Island](#): William Goddard.

It contains an advertisement about paper manufacturing in Rhode Island, as do some of the subsequent almanacks.

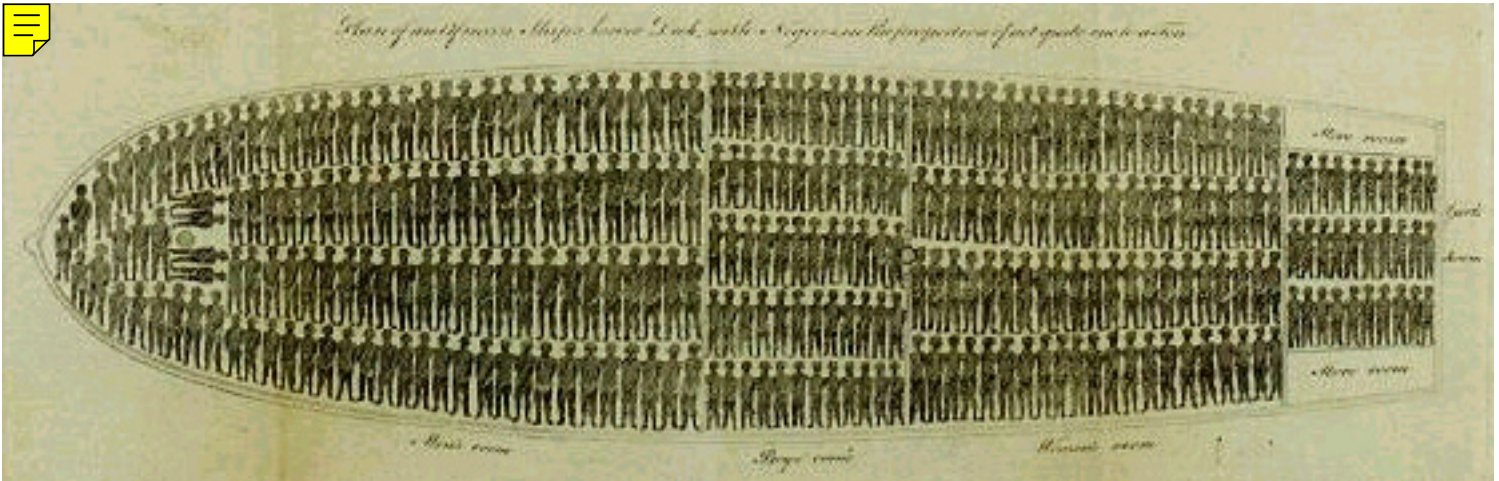
105. Electricity would come to [Newport](#) in 1882, and someone would soon insert a little low-wattage bulb into this Eternal Light so they wouldn't need to clean it and keep an eye on its oil level and continually trim its wick. We believe that the bulb in this lamp now is still the original bulb, not burned out even after it has glowed without interruption for quite a bit more than a century — low voltage can account for part of this longevity, and then, this bulb's filament has never been shocked by the electromagnetic pulses that we induce when we snap wall switches off and on.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1765. By Nathaniel Ames (the younger). [Boston](#): Printed and Sold by R. & S. Draper, Edes & Gill, Green & Russell, T. & J. Fleet, etc. Two pages were devoted to “Some Practical Rules for Husbandry.” This was the first almanac produced by the son after the death of his father, and in a Note to the Reader, the young man writes of his being “forced as it were, to make my unexpected, premature Appearance in Public....” The publication included “An Elogy on the Death of the late Dr. Ames.” Sold also by B. Hall at [Newport](#).

Hammett gives the imprint “Newport: Samuel Ball” but doubtless intended to describe this almanac.

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors during this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 19 vessels were fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of more than 2,000 souls were being transported during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island ship *King George*, carrying a cargo of 200 slaves, the brig *Othello*,<sup>106</sup> carrying a cargo of 56, and a brig of unknown name carrying 100.



In addition, three vessels brought in slaves, evidently for sale in [Newport](#). They were the sloop *Hope* (I hope they don't sell me to some nasty white man!), captained by Nathaniel Mumford, the sloop *Three Friends*, captained by Captain Toman, and the sloop *Fanny*, captained by Owen Morris.

106. *Othello*, what a strange name for a [negrero](#) vessel during an era in which, in presentations of Shakespeare's play, the title role was of necessity being performed by an American white man wearing dark body makeup! –Obviously, some Shakespeare nut in Rhode Island had a considerable sense of humor! –What's next, the brigantine *Gen. Nat Turner*?



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

(We know that during September of this year, Captain Scofield was reported as having his ship in the vicinity of Cape Mount.)

Meanwhile, someone who had once upon a time been brought over on a Rhode Island ship, at the age of 36, after an African boyhood followed by almost 30 years as an American [slave](#), [Venture Smith](#) managed to complete enough of the £85 series of payments to his free black friend, by earning money on outside jobs and by selling produce he grew, so that Colonel Oliver Smith agreed to “eat” the remaining balance and settle for £71 2s. He relocated from Stonington, Connecticut to *Paumanok* Long Island, New York. He would make his living on Long Island primarily by chopping and cording wood, transporting some of this wood to [Rhode Island](#) (his ax is said to have been a large one, weighing nine pounds, appropriately sized for such a large man).

Being 36 years old, I left Colonel Smith. My wife and children were yet in bondage. I spent [my next four years on Long Island,] working for various people. In [these] years, what wood I cut amounted to several thousand cords, and the money which I earned I laid up carefully. I bought nothing which I did not absolutely want. Expensive gatherings of my mates I shunned, and all kinds of luxuries I was a stranger to.

May: The HMS *Maidstone* came into [Newport](#) harbor and for several weeks took seamen off of arriving vessels to impress into the royal navy.

**RHODE ISLAND  
IMPRESSMENT**

Early June: When an unsuspecting brig came into [Newport](#) harbor after its voyage to Africa, it was boarded from the HMS *Maidstone* and its entire crew was impressed into the royal navy. There was a public protest that evening, in which [Rhode Island](#) citizens dragged one of the *Maidstone*'s boats up onto the town common and burned it.

**CRIMPING**

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

August 14, Wednesday: The first group of Bostonians to make public protest against the Stamp Act assembled beneath the large elm on the Boston Common.<sup>107</sup>



They hung effigies of their stamp collector, Andrew Oliver, and of a hellish figure poking at him with its pitchfork, from the branches of this “Liberty Tree.” A poster attached to the Oliver effigy read:

FAIR FREEDOM’S GLORIOUS CAUSE  
I’VE MEANLY QUITTED  
FOR THE SAKE OF SELF;  
BUT AH! THE DEVIL HAD ME OUTWITTED,  
AND INSTEAD OF STAMPING OTHERS,  
I’VE HANG’D MYSELF.



Governor Bernard would need to arrange for the controversial stamped paper that was the basis of the new English tax scheme for the colonies to be stored under guard on Castle Island.

107. At roughly the same time, in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), [William Ellery](#) and William Vernon and Henry Marchant were leading in another “Stamp Act Riot.”

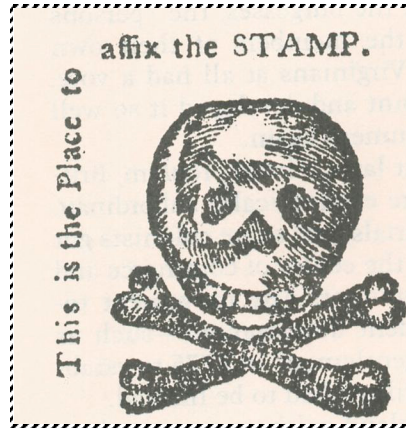


**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Meanwhile, American venders of blank paper for official documents were helpfully instructing the public as to the exact location on the sheet at which this official British colonial tax stamp was to be positioned:



September: In [Rhode Island](#) occurred the second annual meeting of the new board of governors for their institution of higher education. As expected, the Reverend [James Manning](#) became the institution’s first president, and the Latin school he was setting up in his parsonage in [Warren](#) would become the first home of the [College of Rhode Island](#).



Professor Manning was to teach languages, and in addition was to teach all the “other Branches of Learning.” The mountain labored, and brought forth a mouse: a 14-year-old named William Rogers, of [Newport](#), would for the first nine months of its existence be this new school’s sole pupil.

**BROWN UNIVERSITY**  
**BAPTISTS**

**1766**

[Friend Abraham Redwood](#) had another, smaller summer house built on his estate on the shore of Narragansett Bay in [Portsmouth](#). This is the building that would be moved to [Newport, Rhode Island](#), in 1917.



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY, FOR 1766. By [Benjamin West](#), Philomath. [Providence](#): Sarah and William Goddard.

Contains chronology of French and Indian War, and "a short view of the present State of the American Colonies."

(These "Lady's and Gentleman's Diaries" would have an enviable publication run of a total of 118 consecutive years.)

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1766. By Nathaniel Ames. [Newport](#): Reprinted and sold by Samuel Hall.

AMES'S [ALMANACK](#) REVIVED AND IMPROVED: OR, AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY FOR 1766. BY A LATE STUDENT AT HARVARD COLLEGE. [Boston](#): R. & S. Draper; Edes & Gill; Green & Russell; T. & J. Fleet; S. Hall in [Rhode Island](#).

A pirated edition because of failure of Ames to agree with printers. (Nichols) Printed in Boston, not in Newport.

August 25, Monday: An earthquake table lists the quake on this day in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) as "1766AUG25 41.50 71.30 4 RI NEWPORT."

1767

[Henry Marchant](#) was admitted to the bar and commenced law practice in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

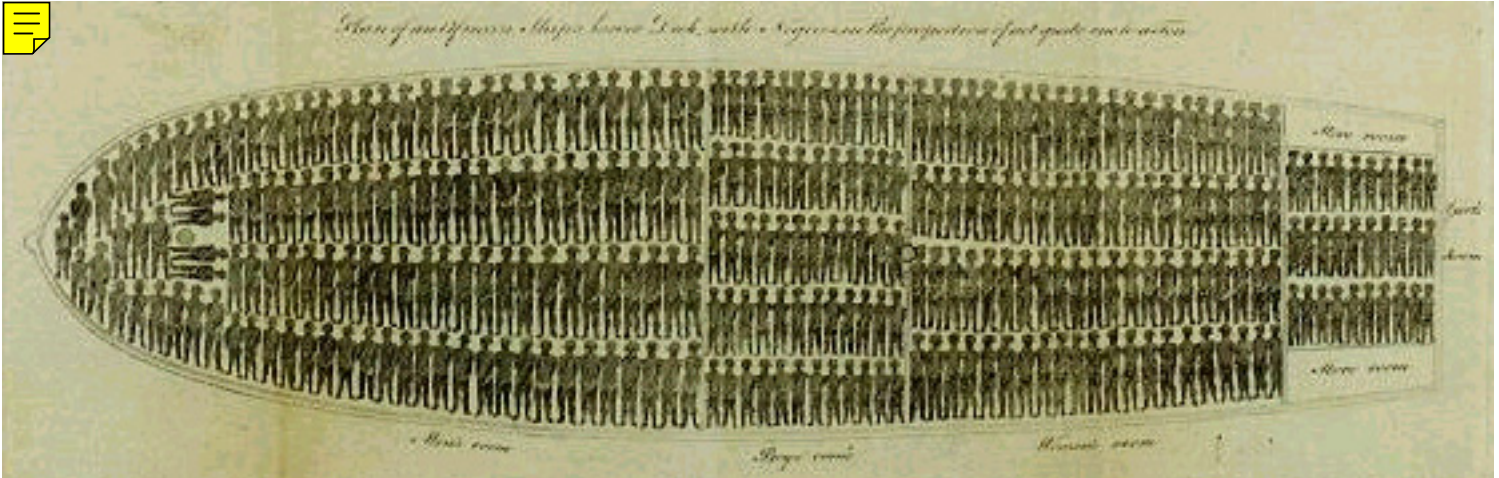
The following declaration was made to the Narragansett monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), by a [Rhode Island](#) farmer who had become involved in an altercation:

A man came to me in my field and tho' I desired him to keep off, yet [he] made an attempt to beat or abuse me. To prevent which I suddenly and with too much warmth pushed him from me with the rake I was leaning on, which act of mine as it did not manifest to that Christian patience and example in suffering trials becoming my profession I thereby freely condemn it and desire that I may be enabled for the future to suffer patiently any abuse or whatever else I may be tried with and also desire Friends to continue their watchful care over me.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

November 29, Sunday: Abraham Pereira Mendez wrote from Charleston, where he had journeyed to better control his cargo of human beings, to the international slavetrader [Aaron Lopez](#) at [Newport, Rhode Island](#): “These Negroes, which Captain Abraham All delivered to me, were in such poor condition due to the poor transportation, that I was forced to sell 8 boys and girls for a mere 27, 2 other for 45 and two women each for 35.”

Presumably the damaged-goods-sale amounts mentioned for the [slaves](#) are in pounds sterling. Boys and girls aren’t worth much if they aren’t in perfect condition — as anyone who deals in human flesh can tell you. (During this year, in [Rhode Island](#) harbors, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some dozen vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of slaves was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos— then a total of more than 1,300 souls were being transported in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island brig *Benjamin* carrying a cargo of 115 slaves, the ship *Black Prince* carrying a cargo of 190, the sloop *Isabella* carrying 100, the brig *Polly* carrying 130, the ship *Polly* carrying 180, the snow *Polly* carrying 100, the brig *Royal Charlotte* carrying 105, and the square-rigged brigantine *Sally* carrying 120.)





NEWPORT

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 21, Monday: [Phillis Wheatley](#)'s poetry first appeared in print, in the [Newport, Rhode Island, Mercury](#). Her contribution was "On Messrs. Hussey and Coffin."



6 3/4 inches, \$75, on the internet

The town of Acton voted to encourage local manufacture over the purchase of British goods.

As early as the 21st of December, 1767, the town [of Acton] voted to "comply with the proposals, by the town of [Boston](#), relating to the encouraging of manufactures among ourselves, and not purchasing of superfluities from abroad." On the 5th of March, 1770, the town entered into a covenant not to purchase nor use foreign merchandise, nor tea.

The state of public affairs was again brought before the town on the 21st of December, 1772, and referred to a committee, consisting of Capt. Daniel Fletcher, Francis Faulkner, Deacon Jonathan Hosmer, Deacon John Brooks, Josiah Hayward, Ephraim Hapgood, Captain Samuel Hayward, Simon Tuttle, and Daniel Brooks. Their report was made on the 18th of the following month, and expresses the general sentiments of the people in this vicinity.

At this time the town had no representative in the General Court, and a vote was passed recommending to the representatives of the people, that they use every constitutional measure in their power to obtain a redress of all their grievances.<sup>108</sup>

108. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:....](#) Boston MA: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#), 1835  
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1768**

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY’S AND GENTLEMAN’S DIARY, FOR 1768. By [Benjamin West](#), Philomath. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): Sarah Goddard and John Carter.

It contains a cut explaining the eclipse.



In addition to his annual almanac for Rhode Island, [Benjamin West](#) anonymously published one at the print shop of Mein And Fleming in Boston labeled BICKERSTAFF’S BOSTON [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1768. Its title page woodcut was of “the giants lately discovered in South America.” A full-page woodcut illustrated “A Sachem of the Abenakee Nation, rescuing an English Officer from the Indians.” It included a 4-page gazetteer of the world and a 5-page “Chronological Table of the Discoveries of the Arts and Sciences, interspersed with remarkable Events, since the Deluge.” This was the first of his “Bickerstaff’s” publications.



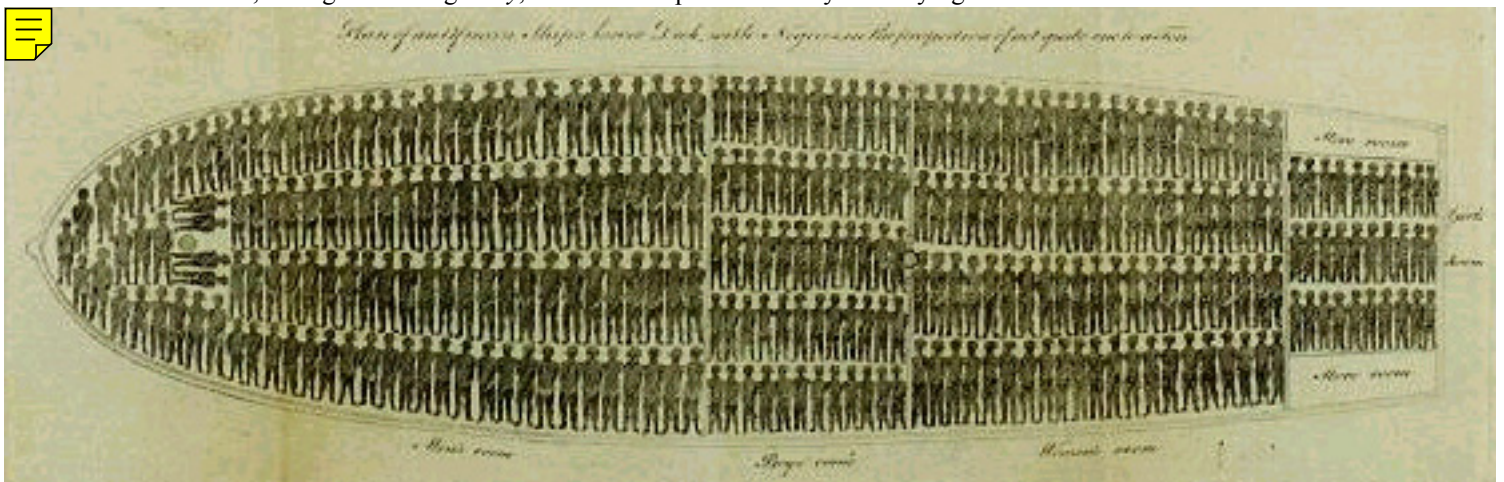
AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1768. By Nathaniel Ames. [Newport](#): Reprinted and sold by Samuel Hall.

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

One member of the Jewish congregation in [Newport](#), [Aaron Lopez](#), owned some 30 oceangoing vessels and more than 100 coastal schooners. He had the honor of occupying the special raised President’s Seat at the side of the [Touro Synagogue](#), separate from the other worshipers inside a railing. He and his family involved themselves heavily in the molasses, rum and [slave](#) trade.<sup>109</sup> The other major American hub of their trading ring was in Charleston, South Carolina.



In [Rhode Island](#) harbors in this year, it is estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 18 vessels were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of slaves was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of well over 1,950 souls were being transported in Rhode Island bottoms alone. Examples from this year include the Rhode Island brig *Hannah*, carrying a cargo of 165 slaves, the ship *King George*, carrying a cargo of 230, the sloop *Patty*, carrying 130, the brig *Polly*, carrying 154, and again the brig *Polly*, on another trip in the same year carrying 130.



Captain John Wilson, of General Gage’s 59th regiment in [Boston](#), attempted to incite [servile insurrection](#) among some 300 black [slaves](#) in that metropolis by assuring them that the military had seized the port in an attempt to secure their freedom and that if they would fight for their freedom in conjunction with the military, “they would be able to drive the Liberty Boys to the devil.”

109. We immediately recollect that in the BIBLE, this man’s namesake had led people **out of** slavery.



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1769**

Judah Jacobs of London, England provided a wall clock for the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#). (Or did this happen in 1767? The brass works of this clock still keep time, more or less. Here's a question: does a clock in a structure that is used for worship and for education primarily pertain to the structure's worship function, or to its educational function? — Is my guess correct, that such a clock would have been helpful to keep class times, rather than having a function in assistance to worship?) Jacob Pollock donated a central candelabrum with twelve branches for twelve candles. An interesting detail is that the four heads to be seen around its stem appear to represent not [Jewish](#) religious figures but instead Christian monks. (It is unlikely that whoever originally fabricated this piece would have been aware, that it would wind up as the central lighting fixture of a synagogue. The structure now has electric lighting of sorts — but its candelabra have not been altered.)

Moses Michael Hays and his wife Rachel relocated from New-York to [Newport, Rhode Island](#). Hays was the son of Judah Hays, one of the early Sephardic [Jews](#) to arrive in the New World via Holland. He would be one of the first to introduce Masonry (King David's Lodge) to Rhode Island and later Massachusetts. The Hays family would also be one of the original benefactors of Newport's [Touro Synagogue](#). Because of the British occupation during the Revolution, the family would remove first to Kingston, Jamaica and then to [Boston](#), where it would be joined by his widowed sister [Reyna Touro](#) and her young children [Abraham Touro](#), [Judah Touro](#), and [Rebecca Touro](#). This extended family of Hays and Touro would reside in the North end of [Boston](#) on fashionable Middle Street (now Hanover). [Judah](#) would be born in Newport while the Battle of Bunker Hill was raging. Judah's father, [Isaac Touro](#), died when he was eight and his Uncle Moses Michael Hays in [Boston](#) raised him. Hays raised his children, nephews and niece as practicing Jews even though they were the only Jewish family in all of [Boston](#) at the time. The Hays' [Boston](#) home also included close associations with Thomas Paine, Paul Revere, and future abolitionist leader Samuel J. May. Judah would relocate from [Boston](#) to New Orleans in 1801 to seek his fortune.

June 12, Monday: Captain Gordon's armed revenue sloop *HMS Victory* arrived in [Rhode Island](#), from the coast of Africa.

June 17, Saturday: Captain Gordon's armed revenue sloop *HMS Victory* was scuttled in the harbor of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1770

In 1760 Naphtali Hart Myers had donated a candelabrum that was being used in the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#). In 1765 Abraham Rodriguez Mendez had donated two more, more or less like it. At this point the international slavetrader and commodity trader [Aaron Lopez](#), the President of the synagogue, donated a fourth candelabrum inscribed with his own name, making up an almost matching set of four.<sup>110</sup>

JUDAISM



(According to Samuel Greene Arnold’s HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND published in 1859, Volume II, pages 304, 321, and 337, during this year the legislature of Rhode Island considered, but rejected, a bill to prohibit importation of [slaves](#). Since such a bill would have substantially damaged the business activities of Aaron Lopez, it seems at least remotely possible that this fourth candelabrum was donated to the synagogue as a way of petitioning the Deity that the bill in the colonial legislature be defeated, or in expression of gratitude for the defeat of the bill. I interrogated the tour guide as to what would cause a person to donate something inscribed with his own name, to be placed on public view in a public place, and she responded that she simply couldn’t speculate as to motives. –Actually, what I was doing was causing her to focus in on the inscribed name “Aaron Lopez,” because I wanted to find out whether she would take advantage of an opportunity like that to segue into some remarks about the [international slave trade](#). It was my little good-cop interrogation trick — I wanting

110. Where did the money come from, with which to purchase this nice inscribed candelabrum? Was it blood money? In this year, it is estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, [Rhode Island](#) fitted out 16 [negreros](#) for the coast of the continent of Africa to obtain fresh bodies for the [international slave trade](#). Do I have information that any one of these 16 slave ships belonged to or was being fitted out by [Aaron Lopez](#) of [Newport](#)? I do not. It is very likely that not all 16 of these bottoms were owned by or were being fitted out by Rhode Island Jews. It is rather more than possible, that some of these 16 were owned by or were being fitted out by Rhode Island Quakers. We can estimate roughly that at least 1,700 black Africans were taken over the ocean on the dreaded Middle Passage in this year by these vessels.





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to see what she would say and what she wouldn't.



She didn't seize this opportunity — which adequately answered the actual question I had been refraining from asking. —She and I agreed, however, that such a circumstance is quite different from the usual sort of inscription, in which something given as a memorial to a deceased loved one is inscribed with “in memory of,” followed by a name.)

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In 1652 Rhode Island passed a law designed to prohibit life slavery in the colony. It declared that “Whereas, there is a common course practised amongst English men to buy negers, to that end they may have them for service or slaves forever; for the preventing 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 assignes longer than ten yeares, or untill they come to bee twentie four yeares of age, if they bee taken in under fourteen, from the time of their cominge within the liberties of this Collonie. And at the end or terme of ten yeares to sett them free, as the manner is with the English servants. And that man that will not let them goe free, or shall sell them away elsewhere, to that end that they may bee enslaved to others for a long time, hee or they shall forfeit to the Collonie forty pounds.”<sup>111</sup>

This law was for a time enforced,<sup>112</sup> but by the beginning of the

111. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, I. 240.

112. Cf. letter written in 1681: NEW ENGLAND REGISTER, XXXI. 75-6. Cf. also Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, I. 240.



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eighteenth century it had either been repealed or become a dead letter; for the Act of 1708 recognized perpetual slavery, and laid an impost of £3 on Negroes imported.<sup>113</sup> This duty was really a tax on the transport trade, and produced a steady income for twenty years.<sup>114</sup> From the year 1700 on, the citizens of this State engaged more and more in the carrying trade, until Rhode Island became the greatest slave-trader in America. Although she did not import many slaves for her own use, she became the clearing-house for the trade of other colonies. Governor Cranston, as early as 1708, reported that between 1698 and 1708 one hundred and three vessels were built in the State, all of which were trading to the West Indies and the Southern colonies.<sup>115</sup> They took out lumber and brought back molasses, in most cases making a slave voyage in between. From this, the trade grew. Samuel Hopkins, about 1770, was shocked at the state of the trade: more than thirty distilleries were running in the colony, and one hundred and fifty vessels were in the slave-trade.<sup>116</sup> "Rhode Island," said he, "has been more deeply interested in the slave-trade, and has enslaved more Africans than any other colony in New England." Later, in 1787, he wrote: "The inhabitants of Rhode Island, especially those of Newport, have had by far the greater share in this traffic, of all these United States. This trade in human species has been the first wheel of commerce in Newport, on which every other movement in business has chiefly depended. That town has been built up, and flourished in times past, at the expense of the blood, the liberty, and happiness of the poor Africans; and the inhabitants have lived on this, and by it have gotten most of their wealth and riches."<sup>117</sup>

The Act of 1708 was poorly enforced. The "good intentions" of its framers "were wholly frustrated" by the clandestine "hiding and conveying said negroes out of the town [Newport] into the country, where they lie concealed."<sup>118</sup> The act was accordingly strengthened by the Acts of 1712 and 1715, and made to apply to importations by land as well as by sea.<sup>119</sup> The Act of 1715, however, favored the trade by admitting African Negroes free of duty. The chaotic state of Rhode Island did not allow England often to review her legislation; but as soon as the Act of 1712 came to notice it was disallowed, and accordingly repealed in 1732.<sup>120</sup> Whether the Act of 1715 remained, or whether any other duty act was passed, is not clear.

While the foreign trade was flourishing, the influence of the Friends and of other causes eventually led to a movement against slavery as a local institution. Abolition societies multiplied,

113. The text of this act is lost (COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 34; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 31). The Acts of Rhode Island were not well preserved, the first being published in Boston in 1719. Perhaps other whole acts are lost.

114. E.g., it was expended to pave the streets of Newport, to build bridges, etc.: RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 191-3, 225.

115. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 55-60.

116. Patten, REMINISCENCES OF SAMUEL HOPKINS (1843), page 80.

117. Hopkins, WORKS (1854), II. 615.

118. Preamble of the Act of 1712.

119. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 131-5, 138, 143, 191-3.

120. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 471.



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and in 1770 an abolition bill was ordered by the Assembly, but it was never passed.<sup>121</sup> Four years later the city of Providence resolved that "as personal liberty is an essential part of the natural rights of mankind," the importation of slaves and the system of slavery should cease in the colony.<sup>122</sup> This movement finally resulted, in 1774, in an act "prohibiting the importation of Negroes into this Colony," – a law which curiously illustrated the attitude of Rhode Island toward the slave-trade. The preamble of the act declared: "Whereas, the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which, that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; – Therefore," etc. The statute then proceeded to enact "that for the future, no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free...." The logical ending of such an act would have been a clause prohibiting the participation of Rhode Island citizens in the slave-trade. Not only was such a clause omitted, but the following was inserted instead: "Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave brought from the coast of Africa, into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this colony, and which negro or mulatto slave could not be disposed of in the West Indies, but shall be brought into this colony. Provided, that the owner of such negro or mulatto slave give bond ... that such negro or mulatto slave shall be exported out of the colony, within one year from the date of such bond; if such negro or mulatto be alive, and in a condition to be removed."<sup>123</sup> In 1779 an act to prevent the sale of slaves out of the State was passed,<sup>124</sup> and in 1784, an act gradually to abolish slavery.<sup>125</sup> Not until 1787 did an act pass to forbid participation in the slave-trade. This law laid a penalty of £100 for every slave transported and £1000 for every vessel so engaged.<sup>126</sup>

121. Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 304, 321, 337. For a probable copy of the bill, see NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 299.

122. A man dying intestate left slaves, who became thus the property of the city; they were freed, and the town made the above resolve, May 17, 1774, in town meeting: Staples, ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE (1843), page 236.

123. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 251-2.

124. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 329; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 444; RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VIII. 618.

125. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, X. 7-8; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 506.

126. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 333; NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 298-9. The number of slaves in Rhode Island has been estimated as follows: –

In 1708, 426. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 59.

In 1730, 1,648. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL TRACTS, No. 19, pt. 2, page 99.

In 1749, 3,077. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1756, 4,697. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1774, 3,761. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 253.



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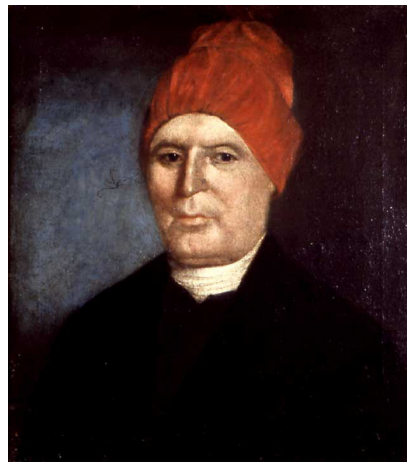
**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

February: The town and county of Warren having subscribed a total of £4,200 toward the erection of a college building, the [Rhode Island](#) College Corporation settled on [Providence](#), rather than upon [Warren](#) or [Newport](#), as the permanent home of their [Baptist](#) institution of higher education, and during the course of this year the building now known as University Hall would be erected by the contractor, [Nicholas Brown](#) & Company, in part by the use of slave labor. The pastor of the First Baptist Church of Providence desired to retire from the duties of his office, and that church invited President Manning to preach provisionally for them. Therefore the Reverend [James Manning](#) relocated from Warren to preach provisionally at Providence's 1st [Baptist](#) Church as well as



to continue to lead his Latin School. (During this year the Reverend was [manumitting](#) his only black [slave](#). His Warren Latin School, which would soon eventuate as the Providence "University Grammar-School," and is now known as [Brown University](#), now admits black Americans as students: as I write this, a case is pending in regard to three white male students, accused of manhandling a black female student in front of a dorm while informing her that "You're just a quota." The black female student had, it would appear, attracted their ire because allegedly she had neglected to hold the door open for another student who was entering the dorm — these three white male students having decided, it would seem, upon an "open door" policy all of their own.)

April: The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) became the minister of the 1st Congregational Church at [Newport, Rhode Island](#).



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



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

July 3, Tuesday: [Moses Brown](#) alleged, in a report to the British government, that damages reported to the properties of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) Tories during three days of rioting in 1765 over the Stamp Act had been greatly exaggerated. The colony shouldn't be required, therefore, to pay the reparations that had been demanded:



Moses was, then and in the years after, a true believer. He always felt compelled to act from a morally righteous position, to the point that he would bend the facts if they didn't agree.

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

**1771**

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY, FOR ... 1771. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): Printed and Sold, Wholesale and Retail, by John Carter. Three pages of this are devoted to distinguishing between "the folly and absurdity of astrology" and the "advantages and satisfaction derived from astronomy."

WEST'S SHEET [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR 1771.

Broadside. No copy located. Advertised in [Providence Gazette](#). The earliest sheet almanac for [Rhode Island](#).

Nathanael Low's AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR ... 1771. PRINTED AND SOLD BY KNEELAND AND ADAMS ... BOSTON. CREATED ABOUT SEVEN MONTHS AFTER THE BOSTON MASSACRE, THIS LEADS OFF WITH A FIERY 2-1/2 PAGE PATRIOTIC ESSAY ABOUT HOW WE "ESTEEM FREEDOM AS OUR NATIVE RIGHT; LIKE FREE-BORN SONS OF LIBERTY THEREFORE LET US ACT" AND THEN FOOTNOTES THE DATE MARCH 5, 1771 WITH "AN HORRID MASSACRE MOST INHUMANLY AND BARBAROUSLY COMMITTED BY BRITISH TROOPS ON THE INHABITANTS OF BOSTON, 5TH DAY, 1770." CITING THE NON-IMPORTATION AGREEMENTS, THE PUBLICATION SUGGESTS "IN A PARTICULAR MANNER LET US ABSTAIN FROM THE USE OF FOREIGN TEA. THERE IS NO ONE ARTICLE IMPORTED SO FATAL TO THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AS THIS...." THERE ARE ALSO "SOME NECESSARY RULES TO BE OBSERVED WITH REGARD TO HEALTH, CHIEFLY FROM DR. CHYNE."

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1771. By Nathaniel Ames. [Newport](#). Printed and Sold by the Printers and Booksellers.... Boston. This almanac contained the first appearance in print of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s famous self-composed epitaph.

HDT

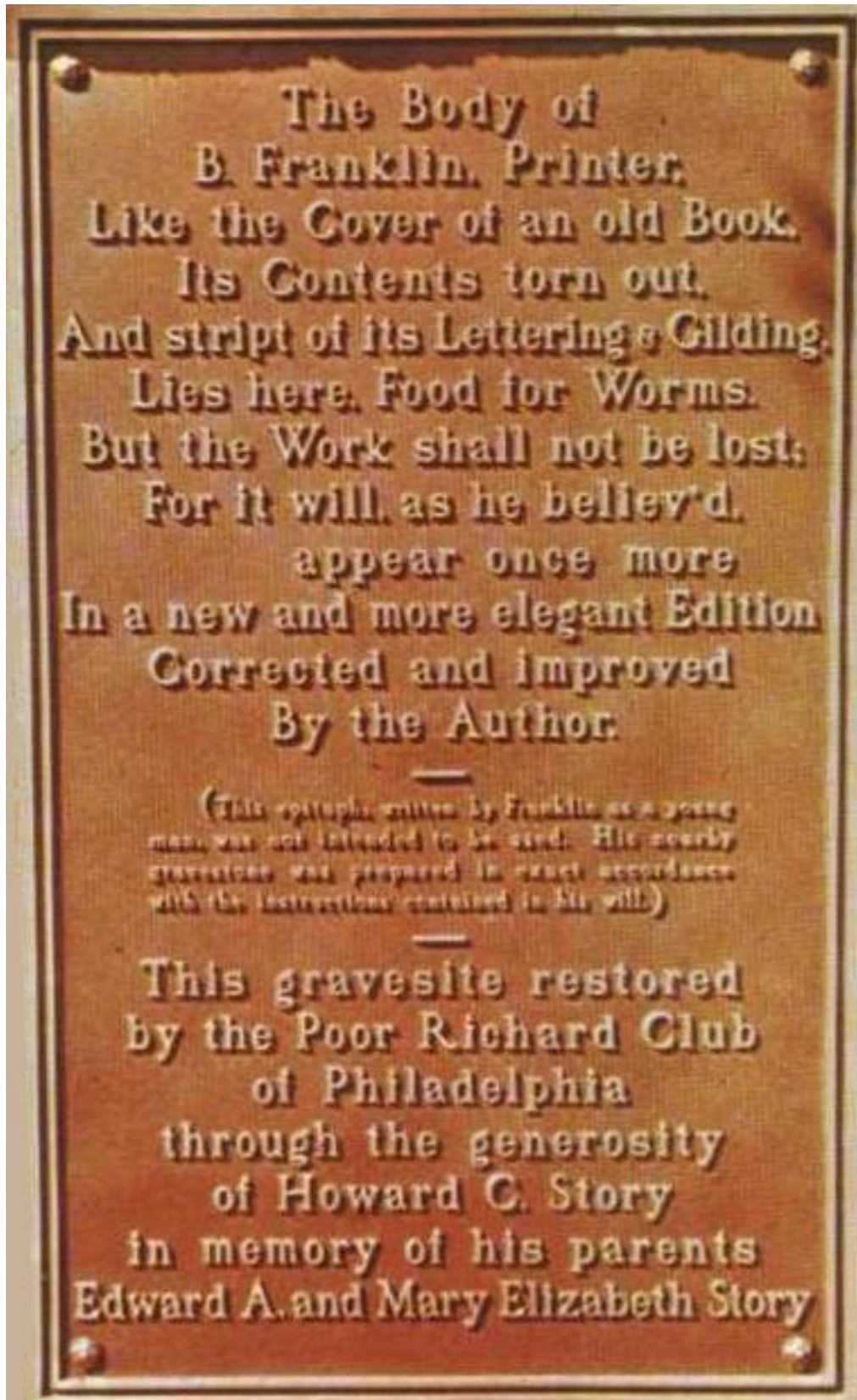
WHAT?

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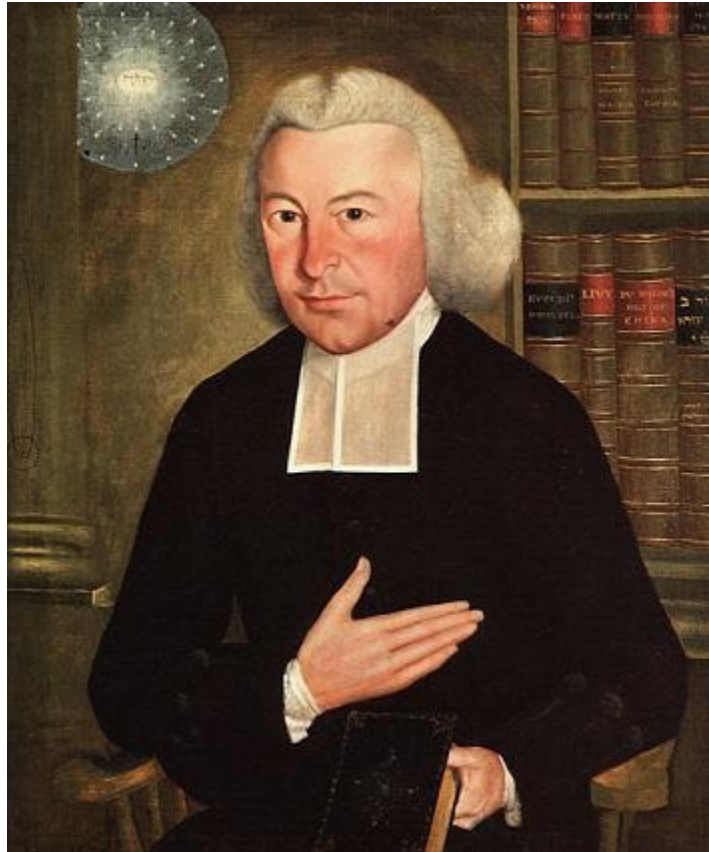
**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

November 17, Sunday: The Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) estimated in his journal that “The town of [Providence](#) is 500 dwelling-houses and about 4000 inhabitants, or half as big as [Newport](#).”

**RHODE ISLAND**

The Reverend Stiles, by Samuel King:



**1772**

A building was constructed on Meeting Street in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) that would be known as Shakespeares Head. This building would serve as a meeting place for the local Anti-Slavery Society and would house an abolitionist print shop.<sup>127</sup>

[Benjamin West](#) was awarded an honorary degree by [Dartmouth College](#).

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1772. By [Benjamin West](#), Philomath. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

It contains account of the compass variation for Providence and



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### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

a table to calculate the number of days from any day of one month to the same day of any other month.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1772. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): Ebenezer Campbell.

WEST'S SHEET ALMANACK, FOR THE YEAR 1772.

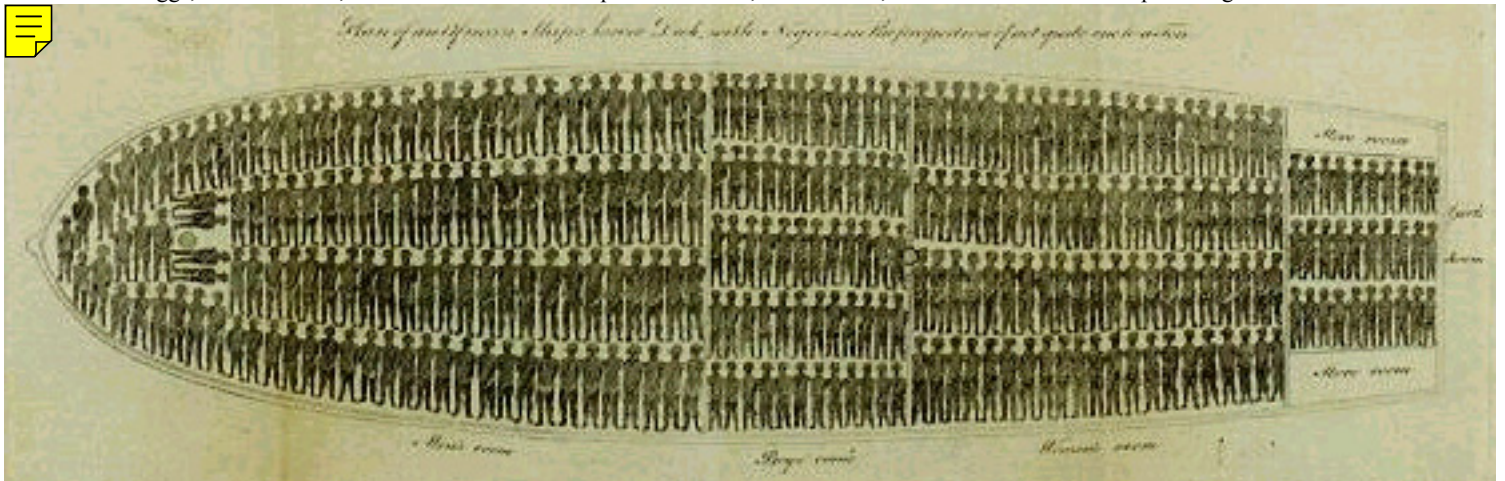
Broadside. No copy located. Advertised in [Providence Gazette](#).

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR ASTRONOMICAL DIARY, 1772. By John Anderson,<sup>128</sup> [Philomath, Newport, Rhode Island](#): Solomon Southwick.

This is the first of the series of Anderson Almanacs.

June 8, Monday: In [Narragansett Bay](#), the HMS *Gaspee* gave chase to Captain Lindsey's sloop *Hannah* as it sailed from [Newport](#) toward [Providence](#). Captain Lindsey deliberately sailed across the shoals off Namquitt Point, which he understood that with the tide on the ebb, he would be able to clear but the *Gaspee* would not. As hoped, the British revenue vessel ran hard aground.

127. In this year, it is reported by Alexander Boyd Hawes, [Aaron Lopez](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) owned or was loading the following ships to sail from Rhode Island for the coast of the continent of Africa to obtain fresh bodies for the [international slave trade](#): the *Royal Charlotte*, under the command of Captain Benjamin Wright, the *Cleopatra*, under the command of Captain Briggs, the *Charlotte*, under the command of Captain Shearman, and the *Ann*, under the command of Captain English.



128. Since in fact there is no record of any "John Anderson" living at [Newport](#), and since in the preface of the 1773 almanac we notice the question being raised "Who is this John Anderson?," we are probably safe in putting this identity down as yet another pseudonym.



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## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 9, Tuesday-10, Wednesday: A troop of men from [Rhode Island](#) led by Abraham Whipple burned the British 8-gun revenue cutter *Gaspee* — which had run aground off Namquit Point south of [Providence](#).<sup>129</sup> [John Brown](#) or his slave Aaron Briggs shot and wounded Lieutenant William Dudingston (1740-1817), the ship's captain. Arnold states in his account of the destruction of the *Gaspee* that this skipper “had practiced every arrogance upon vessels in the bay, detaining them often without a colorable pretext, stopping even market boats, and in some cases plundering people on shore.” Despite the offer of a huge reward for information, there would of course be no local people arrested.

Although the taking of the *Gaspee* has been held to be the first assault by the American colonists against the crown, actually this was much the same sort of thing as the [Newport](#) locals having fired a cannon at the *St. John* in July 1764,<sup>130</sup> having seized and burned a boat of the *Maidstone* in May 1765,<sup>131</sup> and having scuttled the British armed revenue sloop *Liberty* in 1769.<sup>132</sup>



All the hostilities against naval vessels bearing the king's colors occurred because of specific problems the specific vessels had been creating, and nothing in the action taken in June 1772 makes it differ remarkably from these previous resistances.

Karl W. Doerflinger, an illustrator of East Providence, has recently created an over-the-gun-cabinet-in-the-living-room version of the burning of the *Gaspee*:



129. Arnold's HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, page 309.  
130. Arnold's HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, page 252.  
131. Arnold's HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, page 255.  
132. Arnold's HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, page 297.

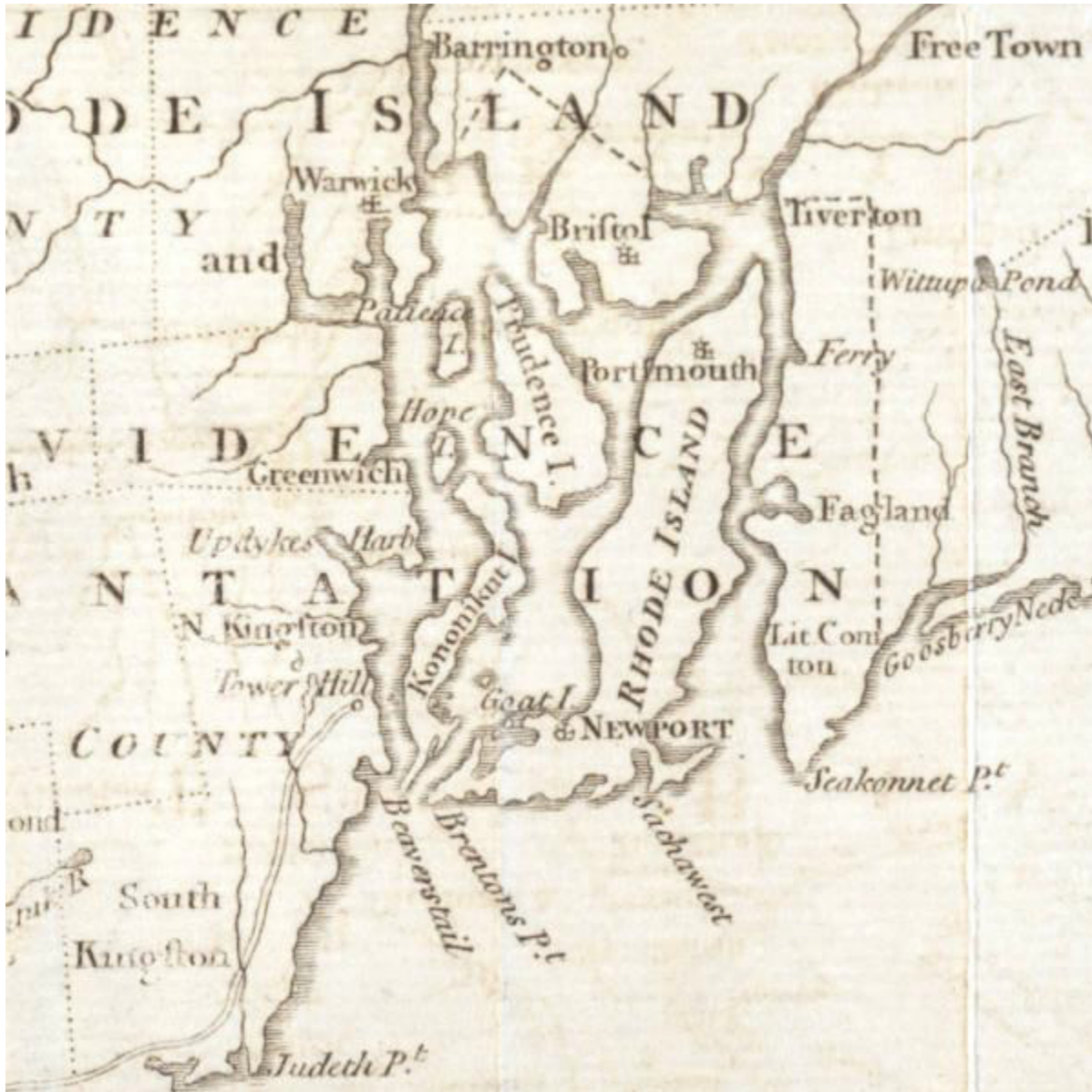
**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

October: Soon after the torching of the HMS *Gaspee*, the [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly directed the gunner of Fort George to fire royal salutes on the birthdays of the King and of the Queen, and in the days of the King’s accession and coronation.

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At some point Governor [Thomas Hutchinson](#) would write to Commodore Gambier: “Our last ships carried you the news of the burning of the *Gaspee* schooner, at Providence. I hope, if there should be another like attempt, some concerned in it may be taken prisoners, and carried directly to England. A few punished at execution dock, would be the only effectual preventive of any further attempts.”



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**1773**

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY, FOR 1773. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

ANDERSON IMPROVED: BEING AN [ALMANACK](#) AND EPHEMERIS FOR 1773. By John Anderson. [Newport](#): Solomon Southwick.

There is a large ornamental cut on the front page and the title page is page three. The Anderson series are arranged in this style. The man of signs also appears.





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February 5: In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Anna Brown, wife of [Moses Brown](#), who had collapsed some five months earlier, died.

In [Newport](#), Captain Pollipus Hammond died shortly before midnight. This 72-year-old's eyes were closed by his friend, the Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#). The gravestone of this negro skipper still stands for our edification in the Common Burying Ground:



“Here lieth the body of the ingenious Capt. Pollipus Hammond who died February 5, 1773.  
The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness.”

(His friend the Reverend Stiles, pastor of the 2d Congregational Church on Clarke Street in Newport, had invested in a slave trading voyage in 1756 that had returned him a 10-year-old boy. The Reverend would not free his slave until becoming president of Yale College in 1777. Noting that Hammond had disengaged himself from the [international slave trade](#) during his mid-50s, this [slaveholding](#) Reverend reassured himself with the conceit that had his dead friend “his Life to live over again, he would not choose to spend it in buying and selling the human species.”)

#### THE TRAFFIC IN MAN-BODY

8th day of 4th month: During this year the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of the 1st Congregational Church in [Newport](#) and President [Ezra Stiles](#) of Yale College were urging that freed Africans be resettled in West Africa. The [Rhode Island](#) Quarterly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) issued a query:

Are friends clear of Importing, Buying or any way purchasing disposing or holding of Mankind as Slaves, And are all those who



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### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

have been held in a State of Slavery discharged therefrom.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

SLAVERY

EMANCIPATION

June 29, Tuesday: The monthly preparatory meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) at [Newport, Rhode Island](#) recorded that it was continuing to labor with the consciences of members “who still have slaves.” No progress would be recorded in this during the remainder of the year. However, a committee was collecting the “names of those who still hold slaves” in order to “report same to each Monthly Meeting in New England,” and “Visitors” were delegated to make official visits of remonstrance to each such household.

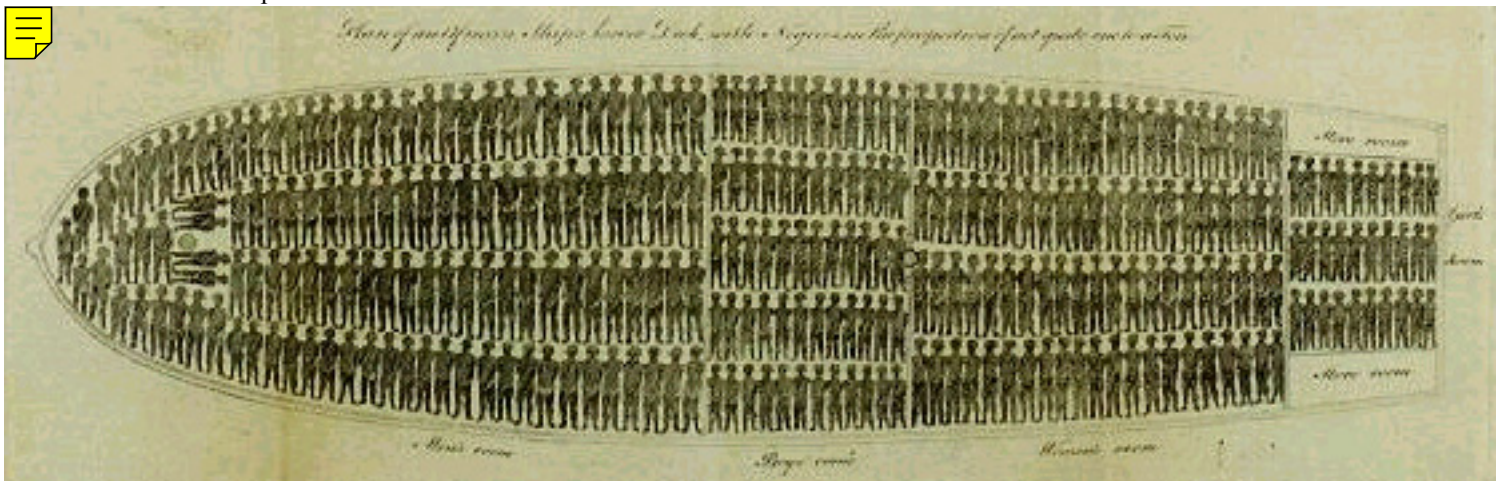
SLAVERY

Pentecost: Rabbi Isaac Karigal, a visitor from Hebron, Palestine, delivered a sermon in the [Touro Synagogue](#) that was then printed in [Newport](#). This is to our knowledge the first instance of a sermon delivered in a synagogue in America being printed.

RHODE ISLAND

JUDAISM

November 27, Saturday: Captain William Moore dispatched a piece of exceedingly good news to [Aaron Lopez](#) & Company of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) about his brigantine *Ann*: “I wish to advise you that your ship ‘Ann’ docked here night before last with 112 slaves, consisting of 35 men, 16 large youths, 21 small boys, 29 women, 2 grown girls, 9 small girls, and I assure you this is such a one rum-cargo [distilled spirits from the distilleries along the shore of Narragansett Bay in exchange for black [slaves](#) at one or another port along the west coast of Africa] which I have not yet encountered, among the entire group there may be five to which one could take exception.”<sup>133</sup>



TRIANGULAR TRADE



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1774**

By royal proclamation the importation of firearms from England by Americans was interdicted. At [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the fort was dismantled and the colonials took possession its 40 cannon.

The descendants of the native Americans who had been [enslaved](#) after “[King Phillip’s War](#)” were [manumitted](#) in Connecticut and [Rhode Island](#).<sup>134</sup>

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1774. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence, Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

It contains “A brief Historical Account of the Rise and Settlement of Rhode Island Government.” See also the almanac for 1778.

ANDERSON IMPROVED: BEING AN [ALMANACK](#) AND EPHEMERIS FOR 1774. By John Anderson, Philom. [Newport](#): Solomon Southwick.

A new and more elaborate man of signs out appears, and “the Stage from Newport to Hoosuck are inserted this Year, which were never

133. In this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, 17 ships sailed from Rhode Island for the coast of the continent of Africa to obtain fresh bodies for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of slaves was 109 –as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos– then a total of more than 1,850 souls were being transported in [Rhode Island](#) bottoms alone. In this year, Hawes reports, [Aaron Lopez](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) owned or loaded the following ships to sail from Rhode Island for the coast of the continent of Africa to obtain fresh bodies for the [international slave trade](#): the *Charlotte*, under the command of Captain Shearman, the *Active*, under the command of Captain Taggart.

Hawes indicates that the brigantine *Ann* in this year on this voyage carried only 104 slaves as its cargo from Africa, but that must be from its previous round trip. (The 112 indicated in the letter above are booked by Hawes for the year 1774.)

134. As of the Year of our Lord 1781, freedom would come to visit the descendants of the native Americans who had been [enslaved](#) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well. Work gangs of these race [slaves](#) had been utilized throughout New England to construct much of that attractive, mossy old stone walls, field fencing which today we fancy to have been constructed through the dedicated labor of “our” stereotypically sturdy and industrious –because white– Yankee-farmer forebears.



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in any other Almanack."



(The same.) The second edition.

The Connecticut and [Rhode Island](#) colonies prohibited further importation of [slaves](#). When [New Jersey's](#) assembly, however, proposed a prohibitive duty, its Council refused to go along.<sup>135</sup>

"A Bill for laying a Duty on Indian, Negroe and Molatto Slaves, imported into this Colony." Passed the Assembly, and was rejected by the Council as "plainly" intending "an intire Prohibition," etc. N.J. ARCHIVES, 1st Series, VI. 222.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: Connecticut, in common with the other colonies of this section, had a trade for many years with the West Indian slave markets; and though this trade was much smaller than that of the neighboring colonies, yet many of her citizens were engaged in it. A map of Middletown at the time of the Revolution gives, among one hundred families, three slave captains and "three notables" designated as "slave-dealers."<sup>136</sup> The actual importation was small,<sup>137</sup> and almost entirely unrestricted before the Revolution, save by a few light, general duty acts. In 1774 the further importation of slaves was prohibited, because "the increase of slaves in this Colony is injurious to the poor and inconvenient." The law prohibited

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

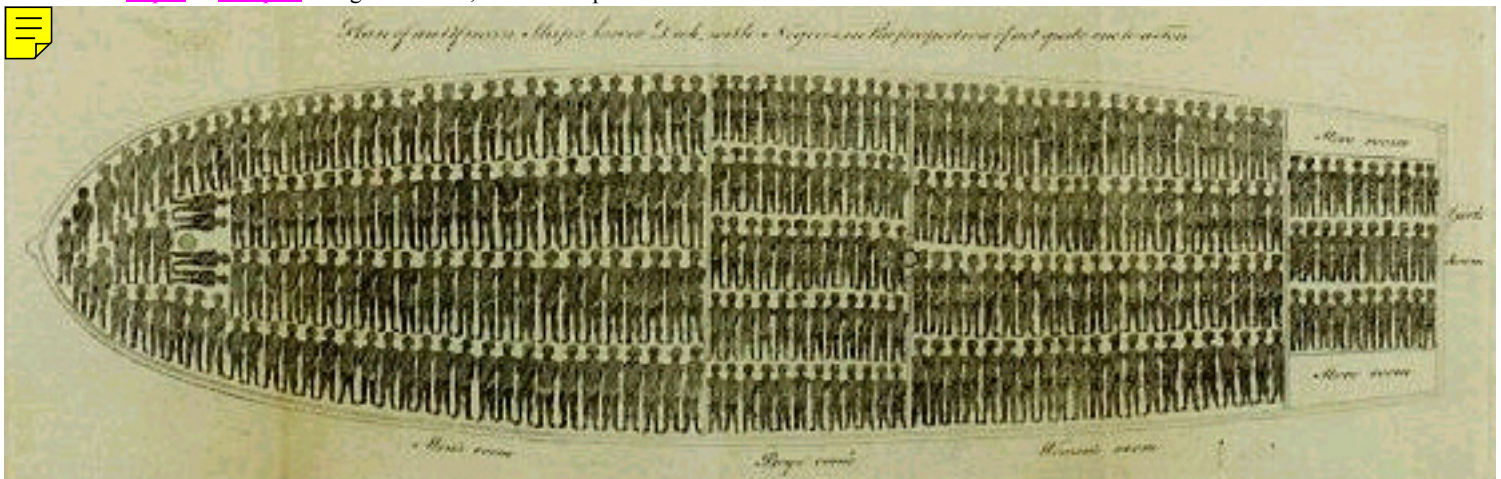
importation under any pretext by a penalty of £100 per slave.<sup>138</sup> This was re-enacted in 1784, and provisions were made for the abolition of slavery.<sup>139</sup> In 1788 participation in the trade was forbidden, and the penalty placed at £50 for each slave and £500 for each ship engaged.<sup>140</sup>

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In 1652 Rhode Island passed a law designed to prohibit life slavery in the colony. It declared that "Whereas, there is a common course practised amongst English men to buy negers, to that end they may have them for service or slaves forever; for the preventing 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 ten yeares, or untill they come to bee twentie four yeares of age, if they bee taken in under fourteen, from the time of their coming within the liberties of this Collonie. And at the end or terme of ten yeares to sett them free, as the manner is with the English servants. And that man that will not let them goe free, or shall sell them away elsewhere, to that end that they may bee enslaved to others for a long time, hee or they shall forfeit to the Collonie forty pounds."<sup>141</sup>

This law was for a time enforced,<sup>142</sup> but by the beginning of the eighteenth century it had either been repealed or become a dead

135. In this year, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, 24 ships sailed from [Rhode Island](#) for the coast of the continent of Africa to obtain fresh bodies for the international slave trade. If an average cargo of slaves was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos— then a total of more than 2,600 souls were being transported in Rhode Island bottoms alone. This, in fact, was nearly a record, as it was exceeded only in the year 1772 when 28 such Rhode Island vessels had been engaging in the [triangular trade](#).

Examples would be the [Rhode Island](#) brig *Othello*, which in this year is known to have transported a cargo of 52 souls, and [Aaron Lopez](#) of [Newport](#)'s brigantine *Ann*, which transported 112.



To be quite legal, after 1774 a Rhode Island vessel engaged in the international slave trade would need to dispose of all its cargo of new African slaves in the West Indies and along the American coastline, and be entirely clear of that business before coming to anchor in its home port. (However, until 1820, there would be no real need to be quite legal or to be entirely clear of that business before sailing into a Rhode Island port, as through the manipulations of John Brown of Providence and President Thomas Jefferson, the US Customs House in beautiful downtown [Bristol](#) would remain safely under the control of a DeWolf in-law who had significant investments in the illicit trade.)



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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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letter; for the Act of 1708 recognized perpetual slavery, and laid an impost of £3 on Negroes imported.<sup>143</sup> This duty was really a tax on the transport trade, and produced a steady income for twenty years.<sup>144</sup> From the year 1700 on, the citizens of this State engaged more and more in the carrying trade, until Rhode Island became the greatest slave-trader in America. Although she did not import many slaves for her own use, she became the clearing-house for the trade of other colonies. Governor Cranston, as early as 1708, reported that between 1698 and 1708 one hundred and three vessels were built in the State, all of which were trading to the West Indies and the Southern colonies.<sup>145</sup> They took out lumber and brought back molasses, in most cases making a slave voyage in between. From this, the trade grew. Samuel Hopkins, about 1770, was shocked at the state of the trade: more than thirty distilleries were running in the colony, and one hundred and fifty vessels were in the slave-trade.<sup>146</sup> "Rhode Island," said he, "has been more deeply interested in the slave-trade, and has enslaved more Africans than any other colony in New England." Later, in 1787, he wrote: "The inhabitants of Rhode Island, especially those of Newport, have had by far the greater share in this traffic, of all these United States. This trade in human species has been the first wheel of commerce in Newport, on which every other movement in business has chiefly depended. That town has been built up, and flourished in times past, at the expense of the blood, the liberty, and happiness of the poor Africans; and the inhabitants have lived on this, and by it have gotten most of their wealth and riches."<sup>147</sup>

The Act of 1708 was poorly enforced. The "good intentions" of its framers "were wholly frustrated" by the clandestine "hiding and conveying said negroes out of the town [Newport] into the country, where they lie concealed."<sup>148</sup> The act was accordingly

136. Fowler, LOCAL LAW, etc., page 124.

137. The number of slaves in Connecticut has been estimated as follows: —

In 1680, 30. CONNECTICUT COLONIAL RECORD, III. 298.

In 1730, 700. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 259.

In 1756, 3,636. Fowler, LOCAL LAW, etc., page 140.

In 1762, 4,590. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 260.

In 1774, 6,562. Fowler, LOCAL LAW, etc., page 140.

In 1782, 6,281. Fowler, LOCAL LAW, etc., page 140.

In 1800, 5,281. Fowler, LOCAL LAW, etc., page 141.

138. CONNECTICUT COLONIAL RECORD, XIV 329. Fowler (pages 125-6) says that the law was passed in 1769, as does Sanford (page 252). I find no proof of this. There was in Connecticut the same Biblical legislation on the trade as in Massachusetts. Cf. LAWS OF CONNECTICUT (repr. 1865), page 9; also COLONIAL RECORD, I. 77. For general duty acts, see COLONIAL RECORD, V 405; VIII. 22; IX. 283; XIII. 72, 125.

139. ACTS AND LAWS OF CONNECTICUT (ed. 1784), pages 233-4.

140. ACTS AND LAWS OF CONNECTICUT (ed. 1784), pages 368, 369, 388.

141. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, I. 240.

142. Cf. letter written in 1681: NEW ENGLAND REGISTER, XXXI. 75-6. Cf. also Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, I. 240.

143. The text of this act is lost (COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 34; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 31). The Acts of Rhode Island were not well preserved, the first being published in Boston in 1719. Perhaps other whole acts are lost.

144. E.g., it was expended to pave the streets of Newport, to build bridges, etc.: RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 191-3, 225.

145. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 55-60.

146. Patten, REMINISCENCES OF SAMUEL HOPKINS (1843), page 80.

147. Hopkins, WORKS (1854), II. 615.

148. Preamble of the Act of 1712.



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strengthened by the Acts of 1712 and 1715, and made to apply to importations by land as well as by sea.<sup>149</sup> The Act of 1715, however, favored the trade by admitting African Negroes free of duty. The chaotic state of Rhode Island did not allow England often to review her legislation; but as soon as the Act of 1712 came to notice it was disallowed, and accordingly repealed in 1732.<sup>150</sup> Whether the Act of 1715 remained, or whether any other duty act was passed, is not clear.

While the foreign trade was flourishing, the influence of the Friends and of other causes eventually led to a movement against slavery as a local institution. Abolition societies multiplied, and in 1770 an abolition bill was ordered by the Assembly, but it was never passed.<sup>151</sup> Four years later the city of Providence resolved that "as personal liberty is an essential part of the natural rights of mankind," the importation of slaves and the system of slavery should cease in the colony.<sup>152</sup> This movement finally resulted, in 1774, in an act "prohibiting the importation of Negroes into this Colony," – a law which curiously illustrated the attitude of Rhode Island toward the slave-trade. The preamble of the act declared: "Whereas, the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which, that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; – Therefore," etc. The statute then proceeded to enact "that for the future, no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free...." The logical ending of such an act would have been a clause prohibiting the participation of Rhode Island citizens in the slave-trade. Not only was such a clause omitted, but the following was inserted instead: "Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave brought from the coast of Africa, into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this colony, and which negro or mulatto slave could not be disposed of in the West Indies, but shall be brought into this colony. Provided, that the owner of such negro or mulatto slave give bond ... that such negro or mulatto slave shall be exported out of the colony, within one year from the date of such bond; if such negro or mulatto be alive, and in a condition to be removed."<sup>153</sup>

In 1779 an act to prevent the sale of slaves out of the State was passed,<sup>154</sup> and in 1784, an act gradually to abolish slavery.<sup>155</sup> Not until 1787 did an act pass to forbid

149. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 131-5, 138, 143, 191-3.

150. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 471.

151. Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 304, 321, 337. For a probable copy of the bill, see NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 299.

152. A man dying intestate left slaves, who became thus the property of the city; they were freed, and the town made the above resolve, May 17, 1774, in town meeting: Staples, ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE (1843), page 236.

153. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 251-2.

154. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 329; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 444; RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VIII. 618.



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participation in the slave-trade. This law laid a penalty of £100 for every slave transported and £1000 for every vessel so engaged.<sup>156</sup>

January 12, Wednesday: A second version of *Alessandro nelle Indie*, an opera seria by Niccolò Piccinni to words of Metastasio, was performed for the initial time, in the Teatro San Carlo of [Naples](#) to celebrate the birthday of King Ferdinando IV. This was a big success with press and public.

The citizens of [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#) boycotted all persons either buying or selling [tea](#).

February 11, Friday: Joseph Holloway sold Charles, a Negro man, to [Aaron Lopez](#), international slavetrader.

[NEWPORT](#)  
[RHODE ISLAND](#)  
[ENSLAVEMENT](#)

February 14, Monday: [Aaron Lopez](#), international slavetrader, transferred Charles, a Negro man whom he had three days earlier purchased from Joseph Holloway, to Captain Daniel Holloway, Mariner.<sup>157</sup>

[NEWPORT](#)

April 27, Wednesday: [John Brown](#) was setting sail in [Newport](#) harbor to take his *Diana* up to [Providence, Rhode Island](#), along with two freighters containing 300 barrels of flour, when he was hailed by the *Rose*, Captain James Wallace. The *Diana* was boarded and he was transferred to the *Swan*, where the British shut him up in the ship's brig.

In [Boston](#), the British military officers had offered that anyone who turned in their private firearms would be allowed through the picket lines to escape the hardship of the siege. More than 2,000 muskets, rifles, and pistols were being turned in at Faneuil Hall.

155. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, X. 7-8; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 506.

156. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 333; NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 298-9. The number of slaves in Rhode Island has been estimated as follows: —

In 1708, 426. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 59.

In 1730, 1,648. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL TRACTS, No. 19, pt. 2, page 99.

In 1749, 3,077. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1756, 4,697. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1774, 3,761. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 253.

157. We notice, of course, that in this year [Rhode Island](#) was forbidding the further importation of [slaves](#). There's nothing out of order here: export's not import, so get a clue — the exportation of slaves could remain perfectly legal.



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April 28, Thursday: [Moses Brown](#) and Joseph Brown rode from [Providence](#) to Roxbury, near [Boston](#). In the following week Joseph would travel from there west to [Concord](#), to bring his brother [John Brown](#)'s situation to the attention of the influential American insurgents who were centering there, while Moses would attempt to persuade the British military officers in the port to release their prize prisoner. Meanwhile, Governor Wanton of [Rhode Island](#) wrote Captain James Wallace, urging John's release. The British captain, however, was recording in his diary that the sloops he had seized in the [Newport](#) harbor were filled with cargo "bound to Providence for the rebel army" — clearly, he intended that not only that contraband but also the vessels themselves were going to be forfeit, and that he was going to treat his captive as in rebellion against the monarch, and that this privateering booty was going to make his personal fortune.

THE BROWN BROTHERS

May 1, Sunday: The [Newport Mercury](#) reported the arrest of [John Brown](#):

Mr. Brown was sent off in one of the Packets, to be carried to Admiral Graves, at Boston, without having a single reason given for his being thus violently seized and carried out of this colony, contrary to all law, equity and justice.

RHODE ISLAND

At [Boston](#), [Moses Brown](#) was attempting to obtain his brother's release:



When Moses attempted to enter Boston on Monday, no arrangements had yet been made for passage into town. But Moses was pragmatic by nature and simply ignored what must have seemed an intractable impasse. He first located the officers in charge of the rebel army, explained his business, and obtained a permit to pass through the lines. At dusk, leading his horse by the reins, Moses ventured into the no-man's-land between the opposing forces on the Neck. Before him stood elaborate earthworks, burnished brass cannon, and scowling, red-coated sentries. Stepping toward the British position, he "sent in some of my letters and got the promise of return from some of the officers," as he recalled the episode in a letter years later. As the minutes passed, darkness fell on the Neck, and Moses realized he could no longer wait for an answer. He saw an officer decked out in gold braid and approached him from behind. It was a rash step, Moses recounted. "When he turned and saw me near he was so angry that he gave me such a blast as I never had or heard before." But Moses answered with an exercise of Quaker principles that seems borrowed from the annals of some Oriental martial discipline. "I stood and felt in a humble state of mind and as soon as he had left room for a word I replied to him in such a manner and with information of my message that he came down in mind as low as he was high before and in a very kind and gentle manner offered and did take a message." This was certainly an unusual adaptation of Quaker orthodoxy, but also a deliberate one. As Moses put it to Nicholas a week later, "I have seldom seen a patient, humble mind more needed nor more useful and as in proportion I have found this to be my state way



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was made for success." Indeed, moments after calming the officer he had startled at the fortified gate, Moses was escorted to a meeting with General Gage, becoming "the first man that entered Boston after the Lexington battle." ... In fact, Gage was being less than candid with Moses. The general had already decided to release John Brown, and wrote that day in a reply to Governor Wanton that "I don't ... see any reason for his detention." But he didn't mention that to Moses just yet, apparently hoping to use John's arrest as leverage to guarantee his cooperation. Instead, Gage scheduled another meeting for the next morning and dispatched a guard as an escort. Moses rode through the iron gates of Province House that night feeling optimistic for his brother's release, and for his peace plan as well.

May 4, Wednesday: The good news was out, in [Rhode Island](#), that the brothers [Moses Brown](#) and Joseph Brown were back from Massachusetts, and that somehow they had managed to bring the captured leading citizen [John Brown](#) home with them. The Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) registered the news in his diary as "A humbling stroke for the Tories!"

**THE BROWN BROTHERS**

(Subsequent to these events, 16-year-old [Elkanah Watson](#) would become apprenticed to [John Brown](#).)

June: [Friend Moses Brown](#) and the recently disowned Quaker governor [Stephen Hopkins](#) took the language of their proposed slave-trade bill to the assembly in [Newport, Rhode Island](#): "Whereas the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties ... as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; Therefore, be it enacted ... that for the future, no Negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free."<sup>158</sup>

**THE TRAFFIC IN MAN-BODY**

**FREE PAPERS**

**SLAVERY**

"An Act prohibiting the importation of Negroes into this Colony."

"Whereas, the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which, that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; -

"Therefore, be it enacted ... that for the future, no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free, so far as respects personal freedom, and the enjoyment of private property, in the same

158. The bill would, of course, be gutted. Its practical import would be nil.



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manner as the native Indians."

"Provided that the slaves of settlers and travellers be excepted.

"Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave brought from the coast of Africa, into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this colony, and which negro or mulatto slave could not be disposed of in the West Indies, but shall be brought into this colony.

"Provided, that the owner of such negro or mulatto slave give bond to the general treasurer of the said colony, within ten days after such arrival in the sum of £100, lawful money, for each and every such negro or mulatto slave so brought in, that such negro or mulatto slave shall be exported out of the colony, within one year from the date of such bond; if such negro or mulatto be alive, and in a condition to be removed."

"Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave that may be on board any vessel belonging to this colony, now at sea, in her present voyage." Heavy penalties are laid for bringing in Negroes in order to free them. COLONIAL RECORDS, VII. 251-3.

[1784, February: "It is voted and resolved, that the whole of the clause contained in an act of this Assembly, passed at June session, A.D. 1774, permitting slaves brought from the coast of Africa into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this (then colony, now) state, and who could not be disposed of in the West Indies, &c., be, and the same is, hereby repealed." COLONIAL RECORDS, X. 8.]

Governor [Stephen Hopkins](#)'s biographer William Eaton Foster would in 1883 totally misconstrue this, perpetrating any number of blunders. In his "Appendix U" to STEPHEN HOPKINS, A RHODE ISLAND STATESMAN, entitled "Stephen Hopkins's Connection with the Society of Friends," on page 247, he would misrepresent Hopkins as the sole author of this legislation, misrepresent the enactment of the legislation as effective when in actuality it changed nothing, misrepresent the Religious Society of Friends as a group that had "membership" when in fact in this century there was never any such a thing as a membership list, misrepresent the Quaker process of disownment as a cancellation of membership (which it most decidedly never was), pretend there to be an equivalence between societal policymaking (freeing other white people's black slaves at these other people's expense) and personal estate planning (freeing one's own black slaves at one's own expense) when in fact there was never any such equivalence, and pretend that simply because the governor continued to call himself a Friend after his disownment, he could not have been struggling to free himself from religious influence in the sphere of political decisionmaking.

Stephen Hopkins was in 1774 the author of the humane act of legislation by which the enslaving of negroes for the future was prohibited in Rhode Island. In 1772, however, a strong pressure had been brought to bear on him to set at liberty one of his own slaves. He did not accede to this demand. Subsequent efforts, continued from month to month, appear to have been equally unavailing. Final action was taken by the Society of Friends, March 25, 1773, when his membership was cancelled. What may have been the ground for Stephen Hopkins's refusal is not easy to



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

determine. It was apparently not a disapproval of emancipation, as is seen by his action elsewhere. Nor can it be set down to a desire to break with the Friends, for he still continued to call himself a Friend.

This is almost, but not quite, as egregious as a lecture I went to in April 2007 at the Moses Brown School, offered by a Quaker genealogist who suggested that Hopkins's heart had been in the right place because 1.) allegedly at one time in his earlier life he had manumitted one of his slaves (providing no evidence whatever that this assertion was accurate, over and above offering no argument whatever that this actually demonstrated Hopkins's good-guy status), because 2.) allegedly Hopkins was refusing to manumit only one slave, who was a woman named Hannah (according to the census of 1774, he owned six), and refused freedom to her only because this would not have served the needs of her two small children (offering no evidence whatever that the number was singular rather than plural, or that the person was female, or that the name this genealogist assigned was accurate, or that said children actually existed), and because 3.) in Hopkins's will his slaves were to be set free upon his death (offering no evidence whatever that this will mentioning the liberation of an indefinite but plural number of slaves was effectively implemented, when we know very well that in the process known as probate no mere statement of intention could have manumitted a slave unless and until all creditors to the estate had previously been paid off, and paid off in full).

**1775**

In approximately this timeframe, [Benjamin West](#) closed his store in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) and began to make revolutionary war uniforms.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1775. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): John Carter.

It contains "A brief view of the present controversy between Great Britain and America, with some observations thereon."

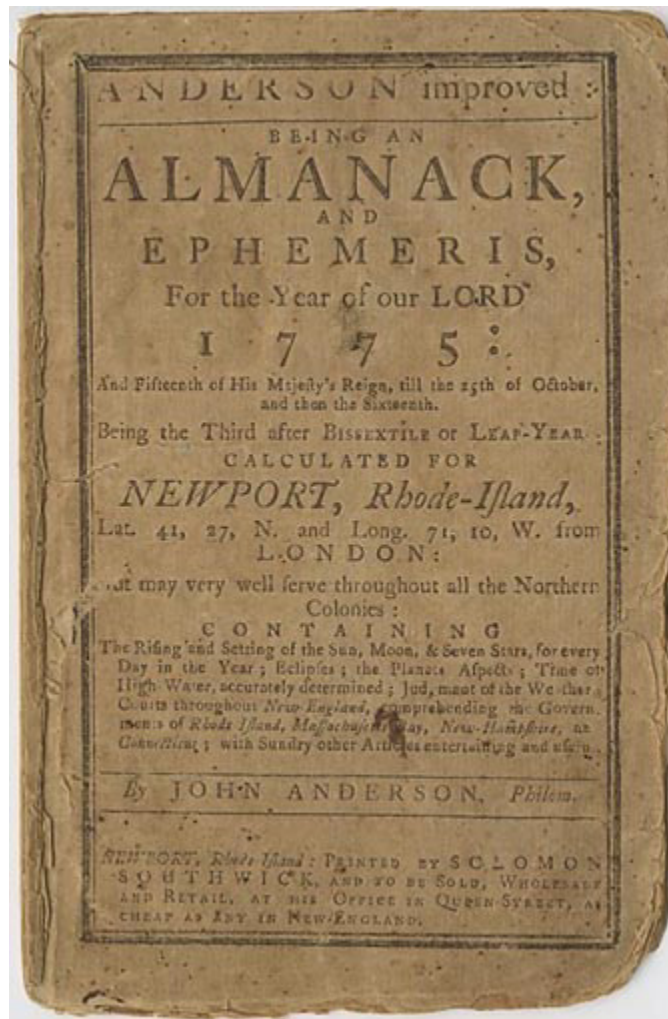


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ANDERSON IMPROVED: BEING AN [ALMANACK](#), AND EPHEMERIS FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1775. By John Anderson, Philom. [Newport](#): Printed by Solomon Southwick. The publication included verses on the history of astronomy. The (pseudonymous) author addressed his American public in these “troublesome times,” disclaiming any “gift of prophecy” but daring to offer his two cents worth so that we may “remain the freest and happiest people under Heaven.” Americans needed to “stop all trade with Great Britain till the Parliament shall recognize your right to carry on trade upon an equal footing with the people of England, till they withdraw all their useless creatures and tools from this country, and till they leave the sole government of yourselves to yourselves.” A tabulation of Britain’s exports makes a case that “America takes off more of the British manufactures, &c. than all the other parts of the world.”



Nathanael Low’s AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR, ALMANACK FOR...1775. Boston: Printed and Sold by John Kneeland, in Milk Street. Low also was determinedly fanning the flames of rebellion. His title-page woodcut depicted a “virtuous patriot at the hour of death.” His “Address to the Inhabitants of Boston” took up four pages and decried the Port Bill as well as the “British armament parading in your streets and harbour”: “My dear brethren, the destiny of America seems to be suspended on the present controversy; and it is on your fidelity,



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firmness and good conduct ... that a happy issue of it in a great measure depends....”

During the American Revolution there were some Americans who considered it necessary to guard the shoreline of the mainland, and [Nantucket Island](#), against seizure of property by British foraging parties based on [Aquidneck Island](#) in [Narragansett Bay](#). We don't know how effective this fighting was in protecting American property from the British, but Quakers of course refused to contribute to the cost of such protection, and therefore there were 496 cases of seizure of the goods of peace-testimony Quakers in [Rhode Island](#) by local revolutionary authorities. In 1778 the property thus distrained from members of New England [Yearly Meeting](#) by local American authorities amounted to £2,473, while in 1779 the total distraint rose to £3,453. For instance, here are some of the revolutionary seizures made of property of ancestors of [Quaker](#) families of [Providence](#) monthly meeting:

- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized a dictionary belonging to Friend Thomas Lapham, Jr. of [Smithfield](#).
- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized 5 pairs of women's shoes belonging to Friend Paul Green of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1776, local revolutionary authorities would seize the fire tongs of Friend Stephen Hoxsie of [South Kingstown](#), as he was the guardian of John Foster but John had not mustered during an alarm.
- Between 1777 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 7 cows, 5 heifers, and 2 table cloths belonging to Friend Simeon Perry of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize a mare worth £30 belonging to Friend John Foster of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize 3 felt hats belonging to Friend John Carey of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1780, local revolutionary authorities would seize a silver porringer belonging to Friend Isaac Lawton of [Portsmouth](#).
- Between 1780 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 29 boxes of spermaceti candles, 20 yards of white linen sheeting, 14 yards of kersey, 16 sides of sole leather, a 3-year-old heifer, and 2 stacks of hay belonging to Friend [Moses Brown](#) of [Providence](#).
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 9 sheep and 2 steers belonging to Friend Amos Collins of South Kingstown.
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 2 ox chains and an ax belonging to Friend George Kinyan of [Rhode Island](#), because he had not been appearing at militia trainings.

In addition to property seizures, in three cases a Quaker man who refused to participate in militia activities would be jailed. One of these men was Friend David Anthony of [East Greenwich](#). In each case the Friends would conduct an investigation to determine whether the person had acted in the spirit and manner of Friends, and if he had, would go to the General Assembly at [Providence](#) to petition the “tender consciences” of the lawgivers for his freedom.

Not all [Rhode Island](#) Quakers refused to participate in the civil unrest of the period but those who did participate in any way were always rigorously and promptly [disowned](#). Between 1775 and 1784, the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would disown a total of 147 Quakers who had become involved in one way or another with the civil disruption. Among those [disowned](#) was, upon his own request, Major General [Nathanael Greene](#). (Less tolerance, in fact, was shown for those who deviated from the Peace Testimony than for those Friends who continued to hold slaves.)

**THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY**



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The more devout and more racially unmixed of the [Narragansett](#) of [Rhode Island](#) went to the West in two moves, the first in 1775 to found Brothertown, New York and the second between 1783 and 1785 to join those already there, leaving their “monigs”<sup>159</sup> behind to survive as best they might. (They would move again in the 1830s for similar reasons, and that community of Christian New Englanders would finally come to abide at Brothertown, Wisconsin.)<sup>160</sup> The Reverent [Timothy Dwight](#) felt that “we” ought to “do good to this miserable people,” the Native Americans, and he held up the Stockbridge Indians of Massachusetts and the Brothertown Indians of the vicinity of Paris in New York State as emblems for imitation. He believed that the complexions of Indians and Negroes would “turn white” as their dispositions improved. However, he felt it was also quite important that dark people never be treated **too** well.<sup>161</sup>

The black population wherever it prevails instead of increasing the strength of this country only increases its weakness. Every black man in time of war would need a white man to watch him.

In the Reverend Samuel Peters’s A GENERAL HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT there appeared the following material dealing with an earlier shift in social convention, which at this point had come to its completion with the general abandonment of the practice that had been known as “bundling”:

The Indians, who had this method of courtship when the English arrived among them, are the most chaste set of people in the world.... Bundling takes place only in the cold seasons of the year – the sofa in summer is more dangerous than the bed in winter. About 1756, Boston, Salem, [Newport](#), and New York, resolving to be more polite than their ancestors, forbade their daughters bundling on the bed with any young men whatever, and introduced a sofa to render courtship more palatable and Turkish. In 1776 a clergyman from one of the polite towns went into the country, and preached against the unchristian custom of young men and maidens lying together on a bed.... [and received as response from the country people that] “experience has told us that city folks send more children into the country without fathers or mothers than are born among us. Therefore you see a sofa is more dangerous than a bed.”

159. Note well that this local term “monig” is not a pleasant one. Whether employed by a red person or by a white person, it is not only racist but also derogatory and offensive (it is a truncation of the description “more nigger than Indian”). It is a term used here in [Rhode Island](#) by racist Native Americans to describe other Native Americans with whom they do not wish to be associated, and by racist whites to describe people whom they consider to be “putting on as Indians when they ain’t nothin’ but a bunch of niggers with attitude.” The only appropriate use for such a term is as here, in the graphic depiction of the nastiness of the nasty attitude of anyone nasty enough to employ it.

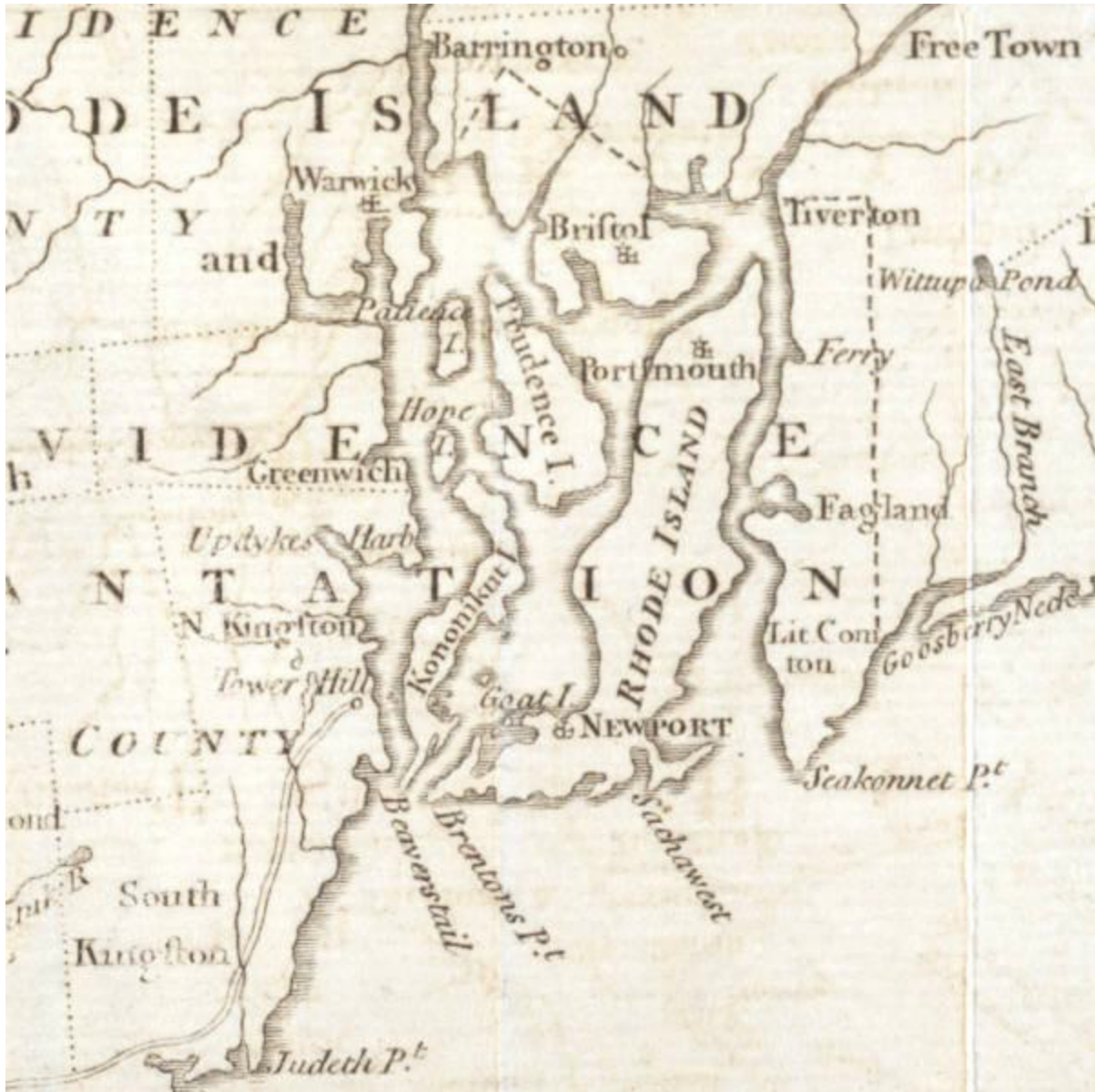
160. The saga of those Christian pureblood [Narragansett](#) who moved toward the West is well beyond the scope of this database, but you could consult Thomas Commuck’s SKETCH OF THE BROTHERTOWN INDIANS in the COLLECTIONS OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN IV:291-298.

161. Hey, Rev, wait ’till it gets so dark you can’t see ’em ’less they are grinning at you! Scary, huh?

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In [Rhode Island](#), [Elkanah Watson](#) was kicking around as a young man.

**ELKANAH WATSON'S YOUTH**

Nicholas Cooke was in charge of the colony. At this point in this roguish colony's trajectory, one person of every fourteen was a slave, the highest %age in New England. Yet [manumissions](#) were occurring (here's one from [Newport](#) for which I don't yet have a plain-text transcription):



25th, 4th Month: "The women [Friends](#) inform that Damaris Fowler of [Jamestown](#) being left in possession of a Negro, but is informed that as her husband left no will the property is not hers but her childrens and desires the advice of Friends, on consideration of which we appoint John Hadwen and Gould Marsh to enquire into said matter and make return to our next Monthly Meeting."





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## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

30th, 5th Month: At the previous monthly meeting of the [Jamestown Friends](#), a committee had been appointed to make a recommendation as to the standing of a [slave](#) belonging to the estate of a deceased man. Could the widow, Friend Damaris Fowler, [manumit](#) this slave? The committee had established that in accordance with “widow’s thirds” dower rights, “She hath no right to but one third of said Negro, for which (she) presented a bill of [manumission](#) to this Meeting which is ordered to be recorded on Friends Records.” The other 2/3ds of this person were (was?) the property of the widow Fowler’s children (who presumably were not treated of because they were not [Quakers?](#)).

Also, “The Preparative Meeting of [Portsmouth](#) informs this Meeting [the [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting held in [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#)] that P. Jonothan [*sic*] Brownell hath taken the place of a Captain in the Military and enlisted in for that service. And it appearing to this Meeting that he hath been laboured with on that account but still persists therein, wherefore for the Clearing of Truth and our Christian Testimony we do disown him to be any longer a member of our Society and order that a copy of this Minute be read at the close of a First Day Meeting at Portsmouth between this and our next monthly meeting. Jacob Mott, Jr. is directed to read said Minute and to report back to our next Monthly Meeting.”

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

30th (Saturday), 9th Month: “The Committee appointed to treat with those that claim [slaves](#) as their property inform that Elisabeth Thurston (widow of Edward Thurston) was possessed of some and refused to liberate them, which after being considered is directed to be sent to the Meeting of Women [Friends](#).”

RHODE ISLAND

MANUMISSION

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

People were trying to kill each other at Stonington, Connecticut.

10th Month: In order to travel from island to island in [Narragansett Bay](#), permission was needed from the military, permission which it was exceedingly difficult to obtain. The various [Quaker](#) meetings were almost totally isolated from one another. In this month the [Friends](#) of [Jamestown](#) on Conanicut Island left that island. Only later would the Friends on [Aquidneck Island](#) learn of this departure, and learn also that since their departure the meetinghouse on that island had “suffered considerably from them [the British soldiers], in which condition it still remains.”

RHODE ISLAND

20th, 11th Month: The [Quaker](#) women’s meeting at the [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting [held in [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#)] collected £4 1/2 because “The Overseers of the Poor have acquainted us that as the usual supplys [*sic*] of the Treasury are stopped by the general distress, it is necessary that some others should be provided, as the wants of the poor of the Society are great.”



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**1776**

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY FOR 1776. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

It contains a list of the Public offices of Rhode Island and an account of the Post service.

WEST'S [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR 1776. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): John Carter.

This was issued as a sheet almanac. The only known copy, now in the New York Public Library, has been cut up into twelve leaves and bound as a book. These leaves are printed on one side only. The title at the top and the notes about eclipses at the bottom of the original broadside, now continue across eight pages (four successive leaves). There is a photostat copy at the American Antiquarian Society.

AN [ALMANACK](#) AND EPHEMERIS FOR 1776. By John Anderson, Philom. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): Solomon Southwick.

(Same) Second edition.

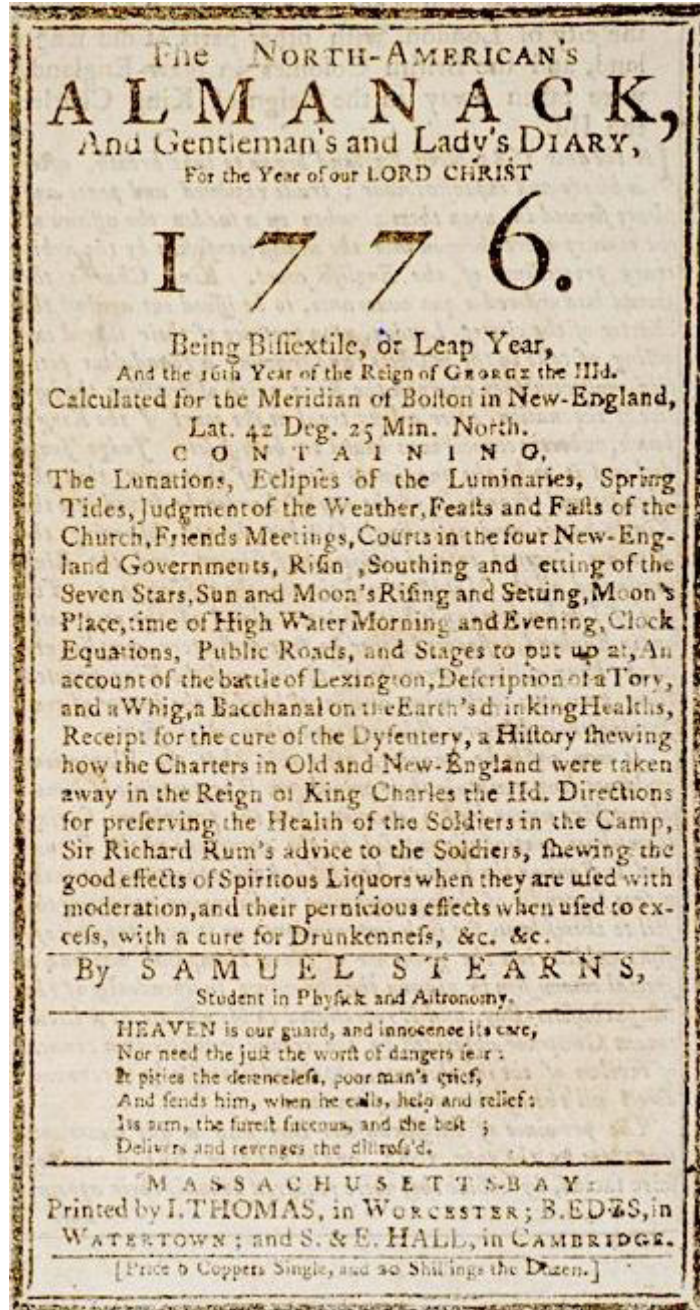


NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

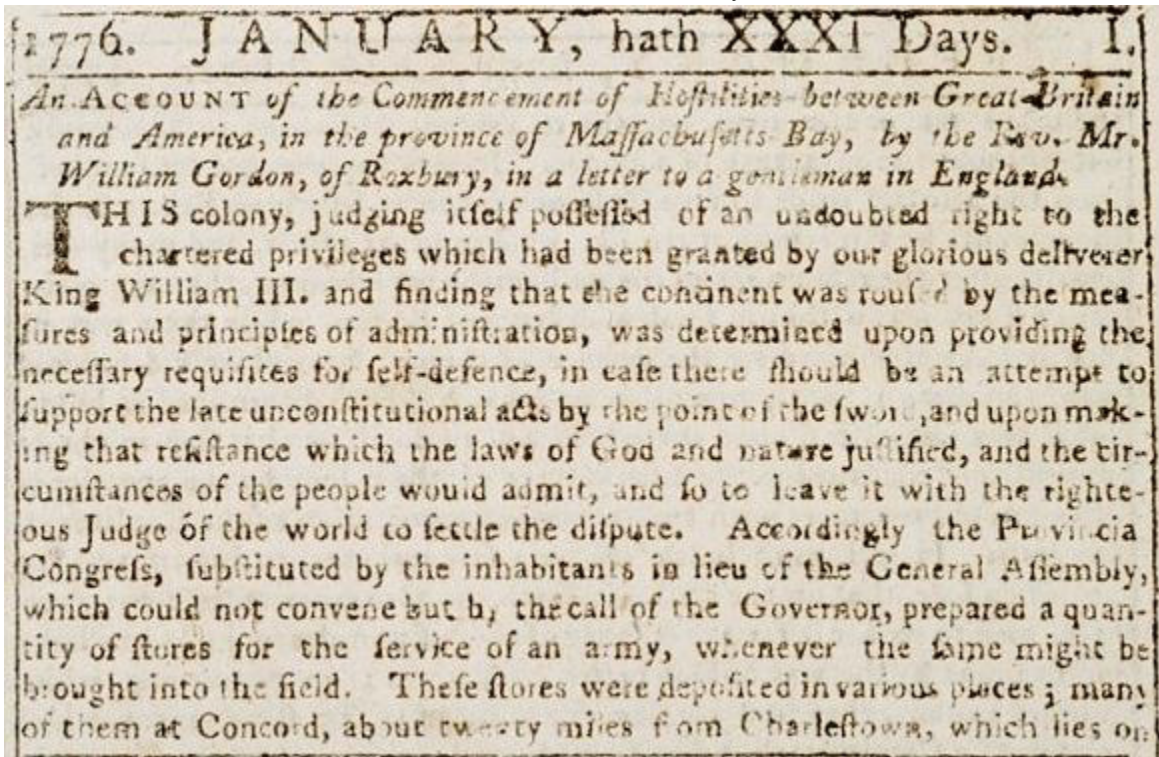
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In a rare-books catalog we find Samuel Stearns's THE NORTH AMERICAN'S ALMANACK, AND GENTLEMAN'S AND LADY'S DIARY, FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST 1776, With 12 Page Account of the Beginning of the Revolutionary War in Massachusetts:



[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**NEWPORT****AQUIDNECK ISLAND****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

This was printed by I. Thomas in Worcester, B. Edes in Watertown, and S.&E. Hall in Cambridge, and bears an asking price of "6 Coppers." Besides the usual monthly calendars, this publication offered a 2-page history of the charters of the British colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut, a list of the Governors of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Connecticut, from the first settlements up to the time they surrendered their charters, and the Reverend William Gordon of Roxbury's "An Account of the Commencement of Hostilities between Great Britain and America, in the Province of Massachusetts Bay."





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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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NOTE: [William Bartram](#) ascribed the lunar eclipse of this year to the year 1773, a fact which, even if we had no other such warnings in regard to his accounts of his travels, would have forced us to beware of a too-literal acceptance of them as reported.<sup>162</sup>

Date	Time UT (hr:mn)	Type	Node	Saros	Gamma	Magnitude		Duration (min)		Moon Position		Contacts UT (hr:mn)			
	Greatest					Pen.	Umb.	Par	Tot	RA	Decl.	U1	U2	U3	U4
1772 Oct 11	17:14	Total	D	123	0.093	2.76	1.647	236	104	1.16	7.5	15:16	16:22	18:06	19:12
1773 Apr 07	8:43	Partial	A	128	0.648	1.673	0.697	164		13.11	-6.4	7:21			10:05
1773 Sep 30	17:53	Partial	D	133	-0.623	1.773	0.688	182		0.49	2.6	16:22			19:24
1774 Feb 26	10:59	Penumbral	A	100	-1.357	0.412	-0.645			10.62	7.3				
1774 Sep 20	0:57	Penumbral	D	143	-1.312	0.479	-0.547			23.85	-2.4				
1774 Mar 27	23:19	Penumbral	A	138	1.396	0.321	-0.697			12.48	-1.6				
1774 Aug 21	15:06	Penumbral	D	105	1.327	0.434	-0.558			22.02	-10.7				
1775 Feb 15	15:11	Partial	A	110	-0.699	1.646	0.535	166		9.93	12	13:48			16:34
1775 Aug 11	7:15	Partial	D	115	0.576	1.798	0.835	176		21.38	-14.8	5:47			8:43
1776 Jul 31	0:02	Total	D	125	-0.156	2.575	1.597	212	96	20.71	-18.4	22:16	23:14	0:50	1:48
1776 Feb 04	14:29	Total	A	120	-0.013	2.911	1.789	236	106	9.19	16.2	12:31	13:36	15:22	16:27
1777 Jan 23	16:24	Partial	A	130	0.672	1.681	0.6	168		8.44	19.9	15:00			17:48

162. [William Bartram](#) tells us he is alone when he is not alone, and tells us he is unarmed when in fact he is packing a rifle. He isn't even to be trusted in regard to names, alleging for instance that his father [John Bartram](#) and his martyred-by-the-Indians grandfather had the same name, [John Bartram](#), when in fact he himself had been named after this grandfather, [William Bartram](#)! — Was he stoned when he wrote this? — Go figure.

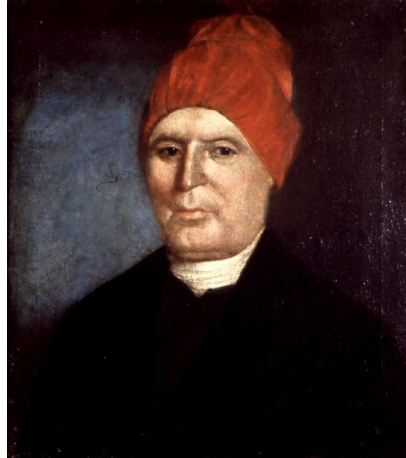


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The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#)'s A DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS, SHOWING IT TO



BE THE DUTY AND INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN STATES TO EMANCIPATE ALL THEIR AFRICAN SLAVES. The Calvinist minister of the 1st Congregational Church at [Newport, Rhode Island](#), a white guy, had [manumitted](#) his one black slave, and hoped for a future of benevolence, in which as a consequence of the Revolution, the practice of human enslavement in America would be discontinued, and the black people would go back to Africa where they belonged, because America should only be for us white people. Fair's fair, so if we fail to condemn [slavery](#) here, then "The Africans have a good right to make slaves of us and our children.... And the Turks have a good right to all the Christian slaves they have among them; and to make as many more slaves of us and our children, as shall be in their power."

**ANTISLAVERY**  
**RACISM**

Discretion being the better part of valor, while [Aquidneck Island](#) was occupied by the British military, the Reverend would abandon his 1st Congregational Church there and preach instead at Newburyport in



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Massachusetts and at Canterbury and Stamford in Connecticut (he would not return to Newport until 1780).

This reverend's training school for black missionaries to Africa would fall apart due to the disruption of the revolutionary fighting.

During Winter 1775/1776, acting on behalf of the Rhode Island legislature, militia General William West had been ferreting out loyalists. For the duration of the American Revolution, Newport sent its Loyalists, including Joseph Wanton (son of the deposed royal governor) and Thomas Vernon (the Comte de Rochambeau would use Vernon House, on Clarke Street in Newport, as his headquarters), to rusticate for the duration pleasantly and harmlessly in [Glocester](#) on the farm of Stephen Keach.



Stone-Ender in Chepachet

**VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES**



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February 14, Wednesday: The slave poet [Phillis Wheatley](#) wrote from [Providence, Rhode Island](#) to her friend Obour Tanner, a slave in [Newport](#), the topic of discussion evidently being the British occupation: "I doubt not that your present situation is extremely unhappy. Even I a mere spectator am in anxious suspense concerning the fortunes of this unnatural civil contest."

In Massachusetts, people were trying to kill each other at Dorchester Neck.



The Council of Massachusetts appointed Captain Eleazer Brooks of Lincoln a Colonel of the 3d regiment.

[Thomas Paine](#) revised his pamphlet COMMON SENSE to include an appendix responding to a [Quaker](#) non-violence pamphlet:

To the Representatives of the Religious Society of the People called Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in publishing the late piece, entitled "THE ANCIENT TESTIMONY AND PRINCIPLES OF THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS RENEWED, WITH RESPECT TO THE KING AND GOVERNMENT, AND TOUCHING THE COMMOTIONS NOW PREVAILING IN THESE AND OTHER PARTS OF AMERICA ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE IN GENERAL."

Basically his argument, insofar as it was coherent and intelligible, amounted to the attitude that any Friendly witness to non-violence was hypocrisy, in that it pretended to be a religious position entirely separate from politics while, by urging nonresponsiveness to governmental violence, amounting to a sponsorship of the political status quo, it was actually religion dabbling all of its toes in the political mainstream.

Such a crowdpleaser of an argument would sell 500,000 copies.



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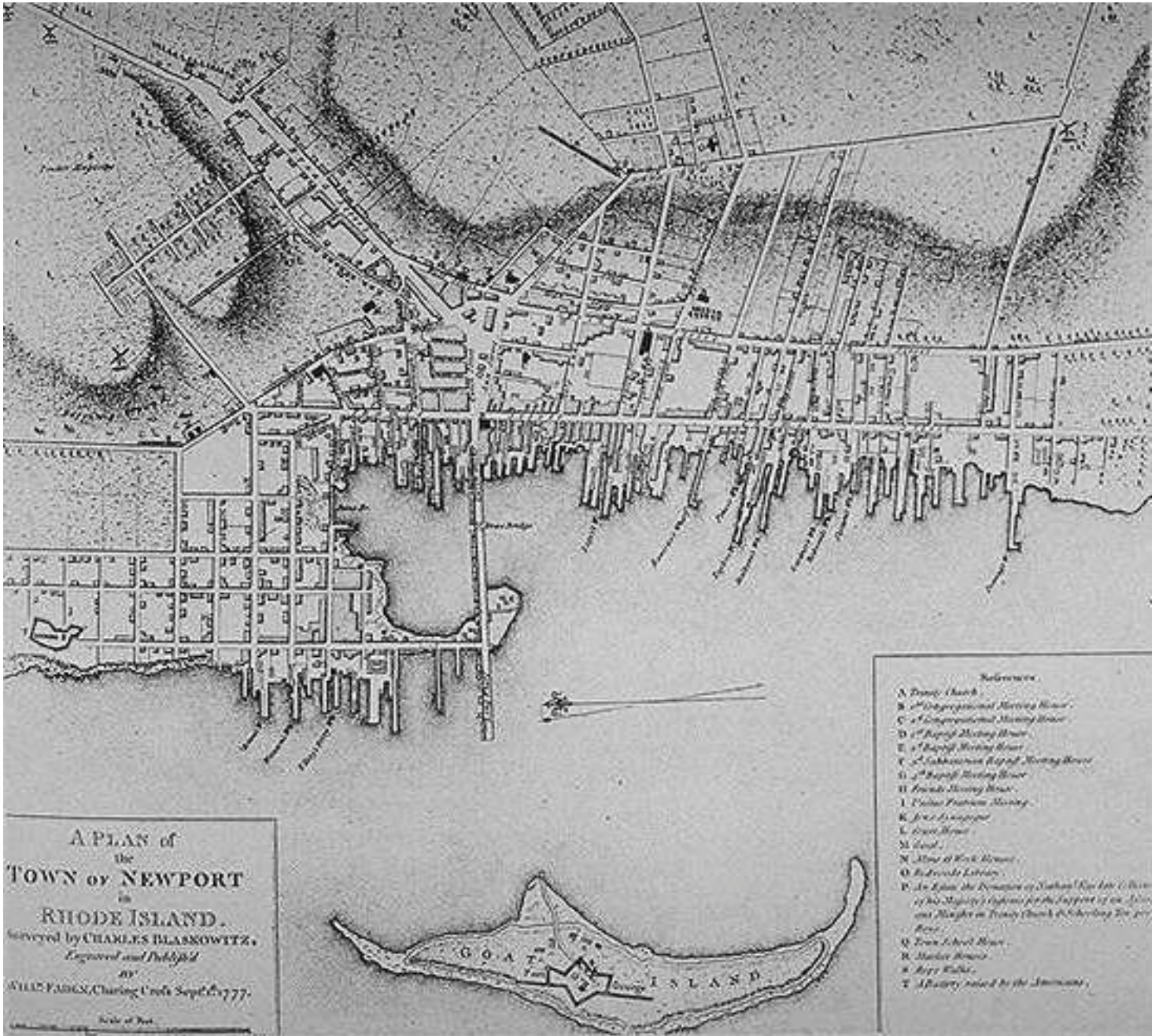
March: Fearful that the guns of the British warships anchored off [Newport](#) were aiming in directly at his Second Congregational Church, the Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) went to reside in [Dighton](#). While tending congregations in Taunton and in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) he would periodically travel back to Newport for a sermon.



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11th, 3rd Month: The Philadelphia Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) wrote to the [Newport](#) Meeting for Sufferings that “We are desirous as they are near and in your power to repeat assistance to them, as it is wanting, that they may be the particular objects of your care.”

**RHODE ISLAND**

March 25, Monday: Governor Samuel Ward of [Rhode Island](#) had died of the [small pox](#) in Philadelphia just three months prior to the [Declaration of Independence](#), which would have included his signature. Attending him at his deathbed was his [slave Cudgoe](#), whom he had purchased in 1768. His place at the Continental Congress had been taken on March 17th by the newly elected attorney [William Ellery](#) of [Newport](#). His remains would be interred in the graveyard of the 1st Baptist Church in Philadelphia (in 1860 they would patriotically be relocated to the Common Burial Ground in Newport).



You'll notice instantly that neither Samuel Ward nor Cudgoe are anywhere in this picture.

In regard both to the Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) and to the poet [Ellery Channing](#) of Thoreau's time period in Concord, bear in mind, as everyone else did during this period, that this name was a most famous name, for regardless of whoever gets credit for creating the [Declaration of Independence](#), a [William Ellery](#) (1727-1820) later cosigned it on behalf of [Rhode Island](#):

**New Hampshire:** *Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton*

**Massachusetts:** *John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert*



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## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry*

**Rhode Island:** [Stephen Hopkins](#), [William Ellery](#)

**Connecticut:** [Roger Sherman](#), [Samuel Huntington](#), [William Williams](#), [Oliver Wolcott](#)

**New York:** [William Floyd](#), [Philip Livingston](#), [Francis Lewis](#), [Lewis Morris](#)

**New Jersey:** [Richard Stockton](#), [John Witherspoon](#), [Francis Hopkinson](#), [John Hart](#), [Abraham Clark](#)

**Pennsylvania:** [Robert Morris](#), [Dr. Benjamin Rush](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#), [John Morton](#), [George Clymer](#), [James Smith](#), [George Taylor](#), [James Wilson](#), [George Ross](#)

**Delaware:** [Caesar Rodney](#), [George Read](#), [Thomas McKean](#)

**Maryland:** [Samuel Chase](#), [William Paca](#), [Thomas Stone](#), [Charles Carroll of Carrollton](#)

**Virginia:** [George Wythe](#), [Richard Henry Lee](#), [Thomas Jefferson](#), [Benjamin Harrison](#), [Thomas Nelson, Jr.](#), [Francis Lightfoot Lee](#), [Carter Braxton](#)

**North Carolina:** [William Hooper](#), [Joseph Hewes](#), [John Penn](#)

**South Carolina:** [Edward Rutledge](#), [Thomas Heyward, Jr.](#), [Thomas Lynch, Jr.](#), [Arthur Middleton](#)

**Georgia:** [Button Gwinnett](#), [Lyman Hall](#), [George Walton](#)

26th, 3rd Month: The Constitution of South Carolina.

### READ THE FULL TEXT

“The Preparative Meeting of [Newport](#) inform that Job Townsend, 2nd hath appeared in train band under arms, whereupon we appoint James Wanton and John Gould to labor with Townsend and endeavour to bring him to a sense of his misconduct and report to next Monthly Meeting.”

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)

[RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS](#)

April 4, Thursday: Off [Block Island](#), Commander in Chief of the Fleet of the United Colonies [Esek Hopkins](#)'s ships captured the schooner *Hawk* of the British fleet that had based itself in [Newport](#) harbor.

April 6, Saturday: About 1:00 in the morning Andrew Doria sighted HMS *Glasgow*, a 20-gun sloop carrying dispatches from Newport to Charleston. The American fleet engaged the enemy ship for an hour and a half before it turned back toward the safety of [Newport](#) harbor in [Rhode Island](#). After the break of day the American ships needed to give up their chase.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

10th, 4th Month: The [Newport](#) Meeting for Sufferings of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) reported that “Newport remains in very poor circumstances, as well as several towns to the Eastward, and we think the difficulties of the inhabitants of [Rhode Island](#) [[Aquidneck Island](#)] are increasing.” To this point, donations had been made to 330 local [Quaker](#) families consisting of a total of 1,267 persons.

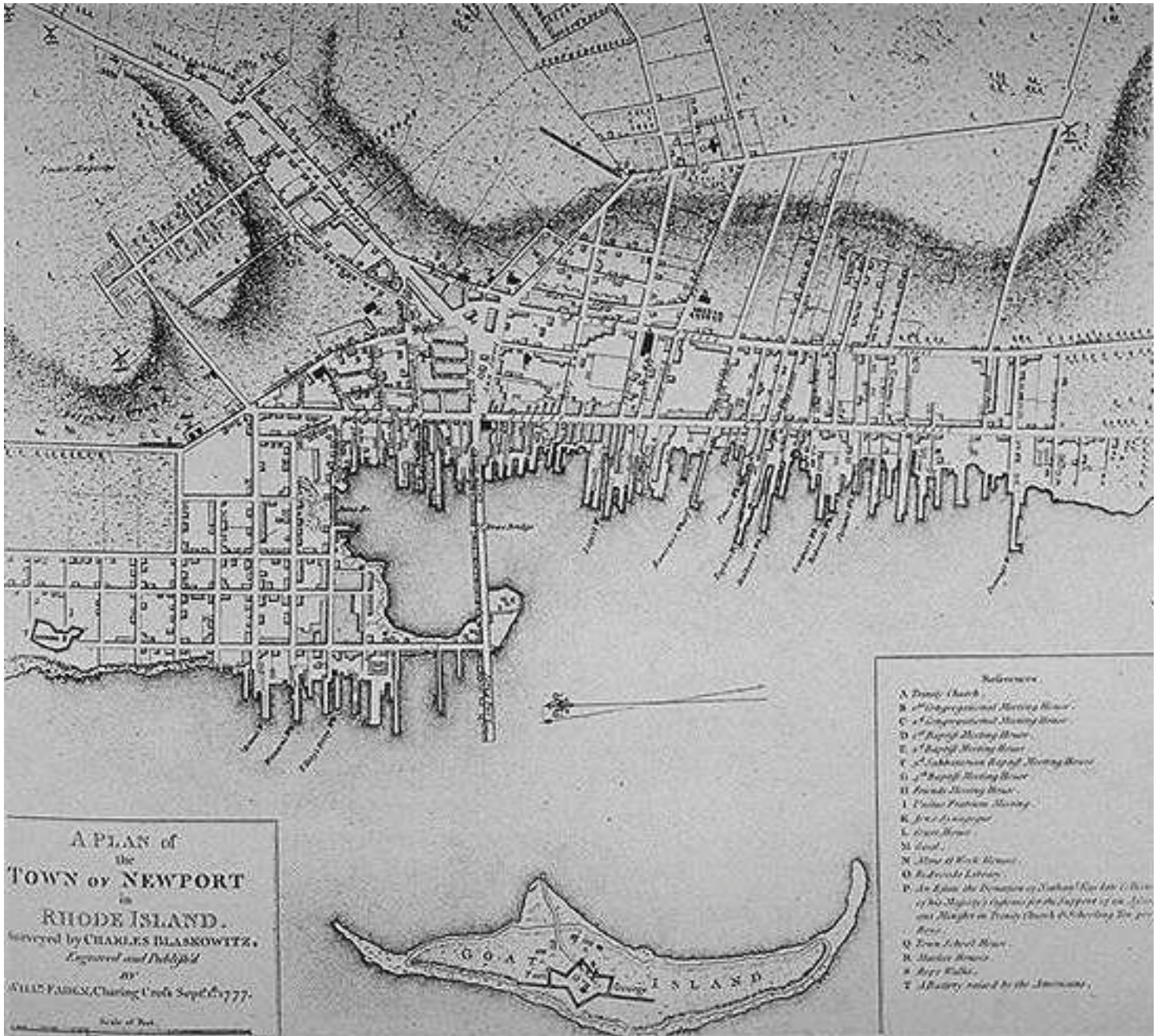
**GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE**

NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 4, Monday: The [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly made it the first of the English colonies in America to renounce allegiance to [King George III of England](#). In December the British navy would occupy [Newport](#) and all of [Aquidneck Island](#), where they would remain until they would voluntarily shift their base of operations toward the south in October 1779.<sup>163</sup>



163. In Algonquian, “Aquidnet” means “a place of security or tranquility,” from “aquene” or “aquidne” meaning secure or peaceful, and “et” meaning place.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Fearful that the guns of the warships anchored nearby had been aiming in directly at his Second Congregational Church, the Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#) had in March gone to live in [Dighton](#). Aquidneck never would recover its commercial prosperity after this occupation, as too many of the state's commercial operatives had already shifted their headquarters to [Providence](#).





**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

April 12, 1776	<a href="#">North Carolina</a> Instructions
April 22, 1776	Cumberland County, Virginia Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
April 23, 1776	Charleston, South Carolina, Judge Drayton's charge to the Grand Jury
April 23, 1776	Charlotte County, Virginia Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
April 24, 1776	James City County, Virginia Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
May 4, 1776	<a href="#">Rhode Island</a> Act repealing another securing allegiance
May 6, 1776	Georgetown, South Carolina presentment to the Grand Jury
May 13?, 1776	Buckingham County, Virginia Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
May 13?, 1776	Declaration of Chelmsford, Massachusetts
May 15, 1776	Virginia Instructions
May 20, 1776	Cheraws District, South Carolina presentment to the Grand Jury
May 20, 1776	Declaration of Plymouth, Massachusetts
May 20, 1776	Declaration of Watertown, Massachusetts
May 20, 1776	Declaration of Brookline, Massachusetts
May 21, 1776	Declaration of Lynn, Massachusetts
May 22, 1776	Declaration of Rowley, Massachusetts
May 23, 1776	Declaration of Plympton, Massachusetts
May 23, 1776	Declaration of Billerica, Massachusetts
May 23, 1776	Declaration of Boston, Massachusetts
May 27, 1776	Declaration of Dedham, Massachusetts
May 27, 1776	Declaration of Malden, Massachusetts
May 29, 1776	Declaration of the New-York Mechanics in Union
May 31, 1776	Declaration of Brunswick, Massachusetts
May 31, 1776	Declaration of Newburyport, Massachusetts
May 31, 1776	Declaration of Newbury, Massachusetts
(undated) 1776	Declaration of Stockbridge, Massachusetts
(undated) 1776	Declaration of Pittsfield, Massachusetts
June 3, 1776	Declaration of Taunton, Massachusetts
June 4, 1776	Declaration of Scituate, Massachusetts
June 5, 1776	Declaration of Wrentham, Massachusetts
June 6, 1776	Declaration of Hanover, Massachusetts
June 7, 1776	Declaration of Tyringham, Massachusetts
June 7, 1776	Declaration of Alford, Massachusetts
June 7, 1776	Declaration of Norwich, Massachusetts
June 8, 1776	Pennsylvania Instructions to Assembly
June 10, 1776	Declaration of Ipswich, Massachusetts



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

June 10, 1776	Declaration of the Associators, 1st Battalion (militia) of Chester County PA
June 10, 1776	Declaration of the Associators of Colonel Crawford's Battalion, Lancaster County PA
(undated) 1776	Declaration of the Associators, Elk Battalion Militia of Chester County, Pennsylvania
June 10?, 1776	Declaration of Associators, 4th Battalion (militia), City and Liberties of Philadelphia
June 10?, 1776	Declaration of Associators, 5th Battalion (militia), City and Liberties of Philadelphia
June 12, 1776	Declaration of Salem, Massachusetts
June 12, 1776	Declaration of Andover, Massachusetts
June 13, 1776	Declaration of Beverly, Massachusetts
June 13, 1776	Declaration of Amherst, Massachusetts
June 14, 1776	Connecticut Instructions
June 14, 1776	Declaration of Acton, Massachusetts
June 14, 1776	Declaration of Hubbardston, Massachusetts
June 14, 21, 1776	Declaration of Topsfield, Massachusetts
June 15, 1776	New Hampshire Instructions
June 15, 1776	Delaware Instructions
June 17, 1776	Declaration of Palmer, Massachusetts
June 17, 1776	Declaration of Bedford, Massachusetts
June 17, 1776	Declaration of Murraysfield, Massachusetts
June 17, 1776	Declaration of Marblehead, Massachusetts
June 17, 1776	Declaration of Boxford, Massachusetts
June 17, 1776	Frederick County, <a href="#">Maryland</a> Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
June 18, 1776	Declaration of Weston, Massachusetts
June 18, 1776	Declaration of Leverett, Massachusetts
June 18, 1776	Declaration of Danvers, Massachusetts
June 19, 1776	Declaration of Gageborough, Massachusetts
June 20, 1776	Declaration of Natick, Massachusetts
June 20, 1776	Declaration of Bradford, Massachusetts
June 21, 1776	Declaration of Southampton, Massachusetts
June 22, 1776	New Jersey Instructions
June 22, 1776	Anne Arundel County, <a href="#">Maryland</a> Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
(undated) 1776	Charles County, <a href="#">Maryland</a> Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
(undated) 1776	Talbot County, <a href="#">Maryland</a> Instructions to Provincial Convention or Assembly
June 24, 1776	Declaration of the Town of King's District, New York
June 24, 1776	Pennsylvania Instructions to Provincial Congress
June 24, 1776	Declaration of Spencer-Town [Albany], New York
June 24, 1776	Declaration of Gloucester, Massachusetts



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

June 24, 1776	Declaration of Williamstown, Massachusetts
June 25, 1776	Declaration of Northbridge, Massachusetts
June 25, 1776	Declaration of Haverhill, Massachusetts
June 27, 1776	Declaration of Sturbridge, Massachusetts
June 28, 1776	<a href="#">Maryland</a> Instructions
June 28, 1776	Declaration of Ashburnham, Massachusetts
June 29, 1776	Preamble, Virginia constitution
June 30, 1776	Declaration of Hanover, Massachusetts
July 1, 1776	Declaration of Amesbury, Massachusetts
July 1, 1776	Declaration of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
July 1, 1776	Declaration of Ashby, Massachusetts
July 1, 1776	Declaration of Greenwich, Massachusetts
July 2, 1776	Preamble, New Jersey constitution
July 4, 1776	Declaration of Bellingham, Massachusetts
July 4, 1776	Declaration of Winchendon, Massachusetts
(undated) 1776	Declaration of Eastham, Massachusetts
July 6, 1776	<a href="#">Maryland</a> 's "A Declaration"

28th, 5th Month: The committee appointed by the Preparative Meeting of [Newport](#) to deal with Friend Job Townsend, 2nd having reported no success in dealing with him as an armed member of the local revolutionary militia, the [Quakers disowned](#) him "to be any longer a member of our Society."





## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June: Several of [Newport, Rhode Island](#)'s most prominent Jews were among the 76 men asked by the Rhode Island General Assembly to sign a declaration of loyalty to the American colonies. The writing included the phrase, "upon the true faith of a Christian." In a letter and public testimony at the Newport State House (now known as the Old Colony House), Moses Michael Hays (1739-1805), a Sephardic Jew, the son of Judah Hays who had owned the 16-gun privateer *Duke of Cumberland* in 1760, objected to the phrase, instead suggesting that he be allowed to affirm his belief in the Revolution as a just cause. After much wrangling, with the offensive phrase omitted, Hays was able to affirm his loyalty on the dotted line at what is now referred to as the Old Colony House — one of the oldest existing government buildings in America.

JUDAISM



29th, 10th Month: At the Preparative Meeting of [Portsmouth](#), "One of the visitors from [Newport](#) informed that Benjamin Stanton had been on a cruise in a private vessel of war which being directly contrary to the peaceable principle we profess, we do disown him."

RHODE ISLAND  
QUAKER DISOWNMENT  
THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

11th, 11th Month: The Meeting for Sufferings of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) brought £60 worth of firewood to [Aquidneck Island](#) to relieve the sufferings of winter.

RHODE ISLAND

Winter 1775/1776: The British pulled down the wooden meeting house of the 2nd Church in North Square, [Newport, Rhode Island](#) for fuel (later this congregation would unite with the New Brick).

### GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE

They weren't so warm that winter in the environs of [Boston](#),

In the winter of 1775, and 1776, the town [[Concord](#)] carried to Cambridge, for the use of the [American] Army, 210 cords of wood, 5 tons of hay, and some other articles for which it paid 150 pounds.<sup>164</sup>

164. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)  
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 7, Saturday: A flotilla of British ships hove over the horizon, and came to anchor in [Newport, Rhode Island](#). From this point until May 27, 1782, to speak of the matter poetically, “the seat of Muses” in [Providence](#) would be transformed into “the habitation of Mars.” College studies were suspended indefinitely, and the new edifice (the one now called University Hall) was occupied by the soldiers initially for barracks and then for a hospital.

People were trying to kill each other at Tappan, New York.

Captain Simon Forrester (?-1817), having recently come ashore after his sloop *Rover* blew up a British ship sailing between Bristol, England and Guinea resulting in the deaths of 25 of its 28-man crew, on this day married a daughter of Daniel Hathorne, grandfather of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#).<sup>165</sup>

THE SCARLET LETTER: In the second storey of the Custom-House there is a large room, in which the brick-work and naked rafters have never been covered with panelling and plaster. The edifice - originally projected on a scale adapted to the old commercial enterprise of the port, and with an idea of subsequent prosperity destined never to be realized - contains far more space than its occupants know what to do with. This airy hall, therefore, over the Collector's apartments, remains unfinished to this day, and, in spite of the aged cobwebs that festoon its dusky beams, appears still to await the labour of the carpenter and mason. At one end of the room, in a recess, were a number of barrels piled one upon another, containing bundles of official documents. Large quantities of similar rubbish lay lumbering the floor. It was sorrowful to think how many days, and weeks, and months, and years of toil had been wasted on these musty papers, which were now only an encumbrance on earth, and were hidden away in this forgotten corner, never more to be glanced at by human eyes. But then, what reams of other manuscripts -filled, not with the dulness of official formalities, but with the thought of inventive brains and the rich effusion of deep hearts- had gone equally to oblivion; and that, moreover, without serving a purpose in their day, as these heaped-up papers had, and -saddest of all- without purchasing for their writers the comfortable livelihood which the clerks of the Custom-House had gained by these worthless scratchings of the pen. Yet not altogether worthless, perhaps, as materials of local history. Here, no doubt, statistics of the former commerce of Salem might be discovered, and memorials of her princely merchants -old King Derby -old Billy Gray -old Simon Forrester -and many another magnate in his day, whose powdered head, however, was scarcely in the tomb before his mountain pile of wealth began to dwindle. The founders of the greater part of the families which now compose the aristocracy of Salem might here be traced, from the petty and obscure beginnings of their traffic, at periods generally much posterior to the Revolution, upward to what their children look upon as long-established rank.

165. Captain Simon Forrester's businessman son Simon Forrester, Jr. (1776-1851) would eventually be supposed to be the richest man in Salem — and hence this note in Hawthorne's writing.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

December 8, Sunday: A British Army under General Clinton took possession of [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

During the British occupation of Aquidneck Island a number of area slaves would seek refuge there. A Newport Loyalist and a British officer would record in their diaries five separate such occasions, during which a total of 19 men, women, and children of color made their way by boat from the southern Rhode Island mainland to the freedom of British-occupied Newport.



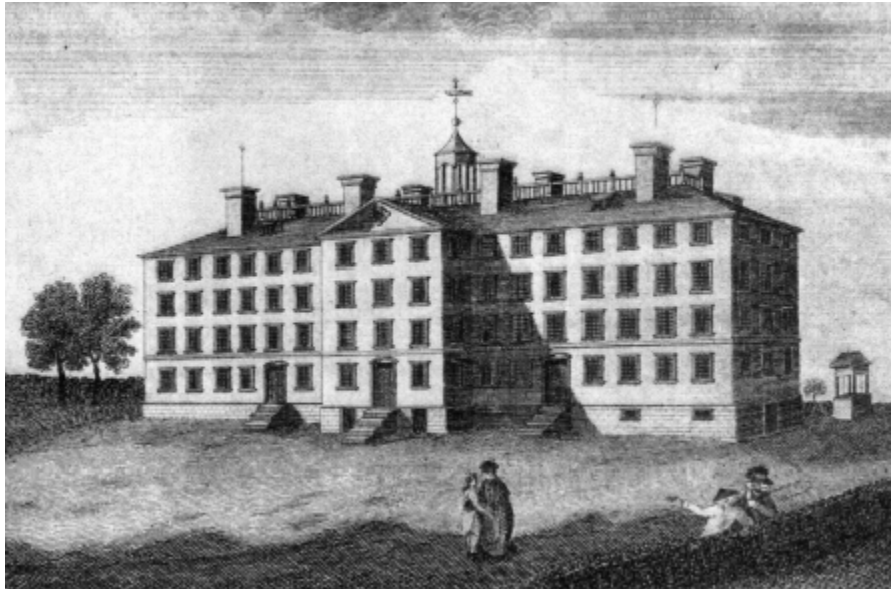


**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

December 10, Tuesday: The British troop encampments on [Aquidneck Island](#) were within clear sight from atop College Hill, which meant that there was an ever-present danger to young colonial men of impressment. President [James Manning](#) of [Rhode Island](#) College placed a notice in the [Providence Gazette](#) explaining that the building which had been constructed had for the time being been commandeered as a barracks for revolutionary soldiers.



The [College of Rhode Island](#) which eventually would become [Brown University](#) would actually not reopen for its students until May 27, 1782.

This is to inform all the Students, that their Attendance on College Orders is hereby dispensed with, until the End of the next Spring Vacation ; and that they are at Liberty to return Home, or prosecute their Studies elsewhere, as they think proper : And that those who pay as particular Attention to their Studies as these confused Times will admit, shall then be considered in the same Light and Standing as if they had given the usual Attendance here. In Witness whereof, I subscribe

James Manning, President.

Providence, December 10.

Since most of the colonials were abandoning [Newport](#) during this timeframe, we may presume that this was about the time at which the family of Friend [Abraham Redwood](#) also departed from there, to reside for a short period in North [Providence](#) before purchasing a farm in Mendon, Massachusetts, and the family of [Aaron Lopez](#) departed from there, to reside first in [Providence](#) and then in Leicester, Massachusetts.

On a following screen is a depiction of the beacon which would give warning to Providence, should the British occupying nearby Aquidneck Island begin an approach.



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

December 19, Thursday: Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#), troubled by persistent leaks, arrived at [Newport](#) harbor in the [Narragansett Bay](#) to find that the island was under the control of British forces. Together with other American vessels, it would retire up the [Providence](#) River.

[Thomas Paine](#) prepared his 1st "American Crisis" essay, the one in which he wrote that "These are the times that try men's souls."

**READ THE FULL TEXT**

31st, 12th Month: At the Preparative Meeting of [Portsmouth](#), the men's meeting for business recorded "*As our Meeting hath at this time a number of soldiers in it renders it inconvenient to proceed to business. Therefore this Meeting is adjourned to the breaking of the meeting for worship at [Newport](#) next Fifth day.*" Meanwhile the women's meeting for business recorded "*as the intercourse between this island and the main is obstructed by the arrival of the British Army here, the business respecting ... is refer'd....*"

**RHODE ISLAND**

**1777**

With the British occupying [Aquidneck Island](#), the [Jamestown](#), [Rhode Island](#) meetinghouse of the [Quakers](#) was commandeered for use as a military hospital. (The graves of seven soldiers are still nearby.)

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY FOR 1777. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

AN [ALMANACK](#), AND EPHEMERIS FOR 1777. By John Anderson, [Newport](#): Solomon Southwick.

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR [ALMANACK](#) ... 1777. Nathaniel Low. Boston. Printed by J. Gill and T. & J. Fleet. The frontispiece of this almanac is a woodcut map of the New York Campaign during the latter half of 1776 titled "A View of the Present Seat of War, at and near New-York." Nine landmarks or fortifications are keyed on this map in Manhattan and its surroundings, plus "General Washington's Lines on New York Island." (Presumably this military intelligence didn't amount to anything of which the enemy wasn't already fully aware.)





**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

In Augsburg, M.A. Lotter created this map:



**CARTOGRAPHY**

An 18 inch by 12 inch drawing which had been made of the 1775 military entrenchments of Boston by a Lieutenant Page of the English Corps of Engineers was printed in London for William Faden.<sup>166</sup>

**CARTOGRAPHY**

**MAPS OF BOSTON**

During this year a British officer was making a plan of the [Narragansett Bay](#) (see next screen).

**GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE**

166. This is the map which would be reprinted in 1849 for Frothingham's SIEGE OF BOSTON.

HDT

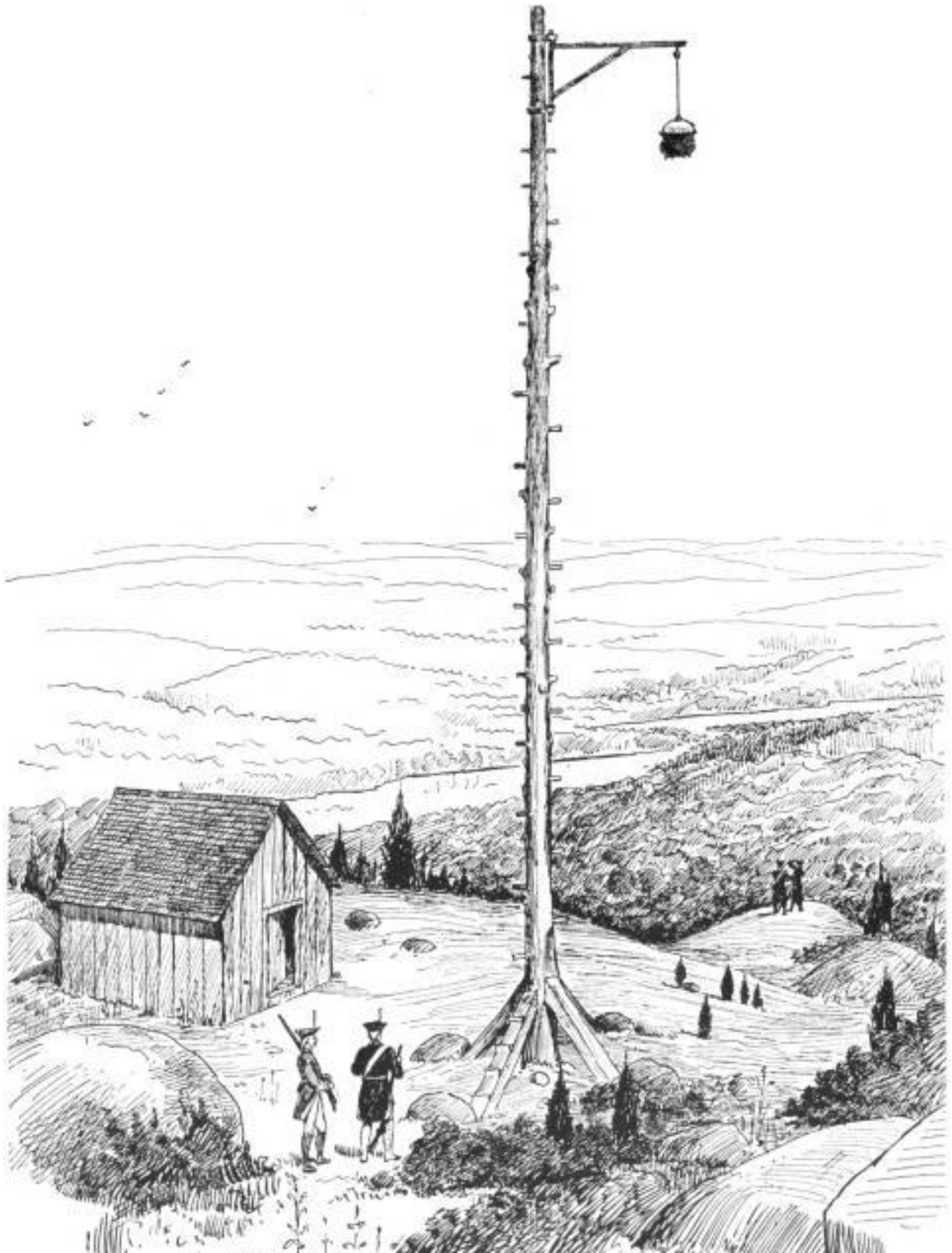
WHAT?

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**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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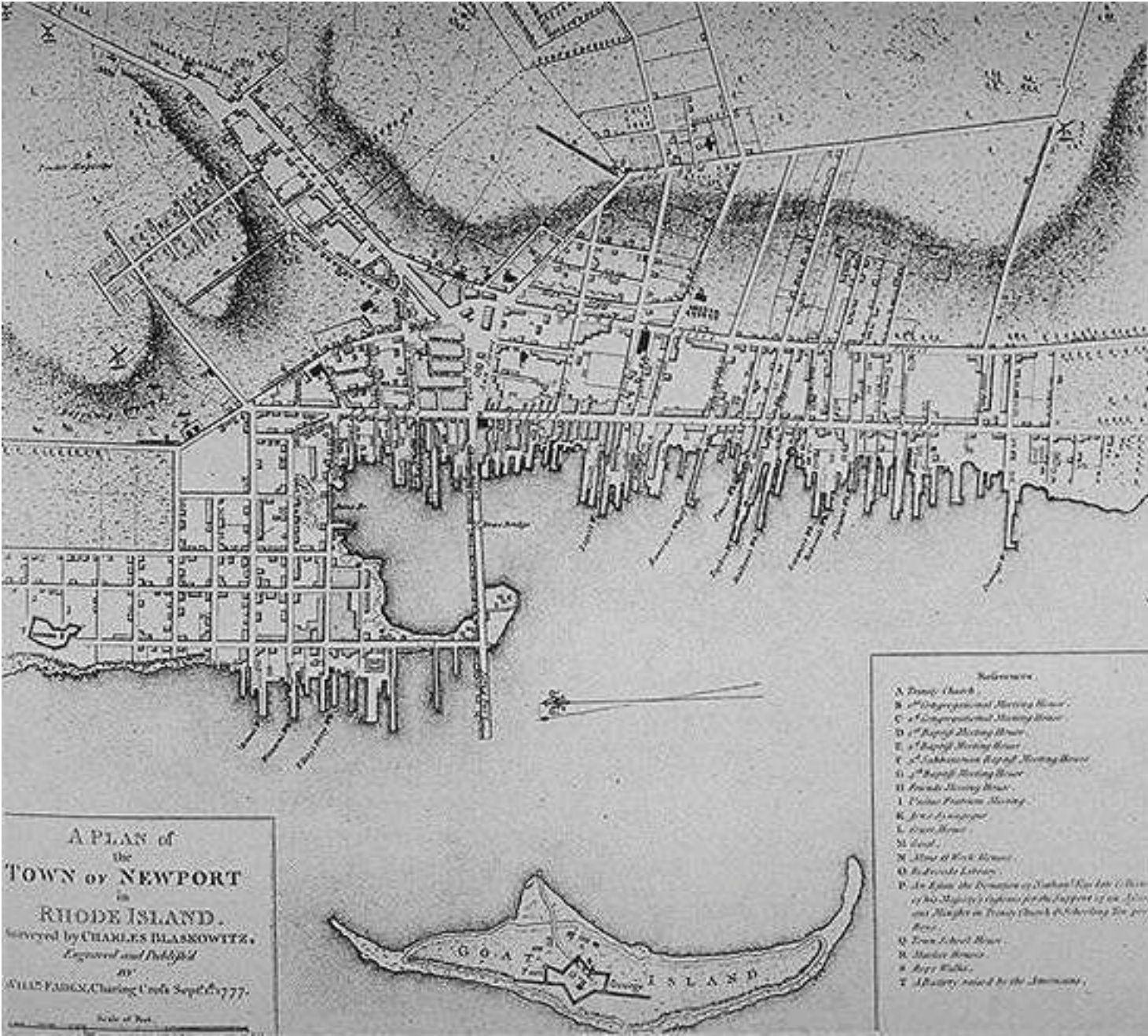


NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In London, an engraved plan of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was being published by William Faden (1750?-1836) according to a survey made by Charles Blaskowitz.



2nd, 1st Month: On [Aquidneck Island](#) itself, in [Narragansett Bay](#), while it was occupied by the British army and navy, the men of the local [Friends](#) attempted to maintain their peaceableness:<sup>167</sup>

The address of the people called Quakers on Rhode Island in



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Monthly Meeting assembled the 2nd day of the 1st mo. 1777 -

May it please the General,
We the King's peaceable and loyal subjects being deeply affected
with the unhappy commotions which now prevail around us, on
which reflecting we are desirous that thou through the blessing
of Divine Providence may be instrumental in Restoring peace and
tranquility to this at present distressed Country - Believing
that thy intentions are to conduct toward such who have not
deviated from their Allegiance to the King in a leniant & tender
manner - we are desirous to inform thee that we as a Society
Concerned since the Commencement of the present unhappy
commotions to bear our Christian Testimony against any
violations thereof in any of our Members and have publicly
manifested our disunity with such as have appeared openly in
taking up arms.

With thankful hearts we adore that most merciful hand which
preserved us in that Critical time of thy landing so that no
human blood was shed and that through thy distinguished Lenity
the Inhabitants have been favoured beyond what might have been
Expected. Encouraged thereby we ask the protection of our
persons & properties & indulgence in the enjoyment of our
Religious Liberties with desires for thy well doing here and
happyness hereafter we are thy sinceer [sic] Friends

[SIGNATURES OF 38 MALE FRIENDS]

We whose names are hereafter inserted not being present at the
Meeting aforesaid, do manifest our Unity with this address by
subscribing same.

[SIGNATURES OF 27 MORE MALE FRIENDS]

During this month, the local Quaker Meeting for Sufferings recorded there to be abroad in the general
American population a "hope of the military" according to which, by for a period giving free reign to "lusts of
men in general," it would be possible to "shut up, separate, and destroy that union and fellowship which once
subsisted between the inhabitants of the two countries" — England and America. Meetings were urged to cope
with such a false expectation of the efficacy of bloodshed by continuing "to manifest to the world that there is
one universal parent over all, that his obedient children have no parties to support, their desire being to
promote the one peaceable kingdom of Christ...."

RHODE ISLAND
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

167. Friends considered the revolution to be a "civil war" in which there was no reason whatever to choose sides. In return, both
sides considered them disloyal.





## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

6th, 1st Month: The Meeting for Sufferings of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) delivered another £60 worth of firewood to [Aquidneck Island](#) to relieve the winter suffering of [Friends](#) there. They recorded: *“This Meeting taking under consideration that the place for holding the next Quarterly Meeting is as it stands appointed at [Newport](#), and by intelligence that we have received from a friend who lately came from [Rhode Island](#) [[Aquidneck Island](#)] we understand that provisions are scarce there, therefore and for other reasons we think it best that said meeting be held at Swanzey.”* (As it turned out, it was not even possible to obtain permission from the fighters for Friends to venture from the mainland onto the island to fetch the [Quaker](#) records of previous meetings: *“It is therefore the opinion of this Meeting that notwithstanding the want of our records and the absence of our Friends on the island, the meeting [at Swanzey] should still be held as planned.”*)

1st, 2nd Month: *“John G. Wanton and Robert Taylor of [Newport](#) have signed a declaration called the Test Act, which being contrary to the peaceable principles we profess, therefore for the clearing of our Christian testimony we do disown them.”*<sup>168</sup>

[RHODE ISLAND](#)  
[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)  
[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)  
[RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS](#)

25th, 3rd Month: The Meeting at [Newport](#) recorded: *“Answers to the queries were read approved and which are to be sent with an account to the Quarterly Meeting if opportunity offers to send them, which prospect at present appears so discouraging that we do not appoint any [Friends](#) to attend it.”*

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

29th, 4th Month: The Meeting at [Newport](#) recorded: *“The business refer’d for some months past is now refer’d until we may have communications with our [Friends](#) on the main.”*

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

24th, 6th Month: The Meeting at [Newport](#) recorded: *“There not appearing at present any probability of attending the ensuing Quarterly Meeting by representatives nor of sending an account is the reason that the ancient custom is at present omitted.”* The residents of Point Estates, owned by the [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting, were pleading poverty and *“deficient in paying their rents,”* and a committee was appointed to labor with them.

[RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS](#)

29th, 7th Month: The Meeting at [Newport](#) recorded: *“Our [Friends](#) Aaron Lankester and David Sands signifying to this Meeting their desire to get off the island [they were visitors from New York [Yearly Meeting](#)] we appoint Gould Marsh, Thomas Robinson and Isaac Lawton to assist them in getting a permit from the Commanding Officer of the Island.”*

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

168. Subscription to this Test Act, since it involved the provision of a substitute soldier or the making of an adequate payment for the obtaining of such a substitute soldier, was held to constitute personal participation in conflict and therefore was in violation of the peaceable principles of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)  
[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

26th, 8th Month: The minutes of the women's meeting of the [Aquidneck Island Friends](#) record that they had been alerted by the men's meeting "*that Hannah Borden, Anne Proud, and Ruth Goddard are indebted for Quit Rents for a considerable amount, we therefore appoint Amy Thurston and Mary Marsh to treat with said persons and make report to our next monthly meeting.*"

RHODE ISLAND

30th, 9th Month: The visiting committee of the women's meeting of the [Aquidneck Island Friends](#) reported that the reason why the female residents of Point Estates had fallen behind on their rents was "*the general calamity by which the price of the necessities of life are so greatly enhanced, that it is with difficulty that they can supply their own daily necessities.*" The property of the [Quakers](#) was being seized ("*destrained*") both by the British soldiers and by the American soldiers, because of their refusal to take sides in the warfare. The accumulated totals of these destraints had come to amount to some £2,473. Indeed, attendance at meeting for worship was falling off because some [Friends](#) had become so straited that their clothing was no longer fit for them to appear in public.

RHODE ISLAND

1778

May 25, Sunday: A British force of 500 men, including Hessian troops, marched through [Warren](#) and down the main street of [Bristol, Rhode Island](#) (now known as Hope Street), setting fire to many buildings and taking several citizens as prisoners to [Newport](#). The posh residence of the family of Captain [Mark Anthony DeWolf](#) at the south corner of Burton and Hope streets was one of the 19 torched (the DeWolfs had fled to a farm in Swansea). Most of the houses burnt were the barracks of American troops or homes of prominent "rebels." (Bristol now boasts the oldest continuous 4th-of-July celebration in America. First staged in 1785, it was begun by Bristolians who had taken part in the revolution.)

CELEBRATING OUR B-DAY

After the failure of the American drive to recapture [Newport, Rhode Island, Jemimah Wilkinson](#), who had become known as "The Universal Friend," and some of her associates, obtained General John Sullivan's permission and the British commander's permission to pass through the military lines and pay a visit to





**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

England. It has been suspected that her agenda was to pay an evangelical visit to King George III.



This agenda would fail of accomplishment, but she would succeed in winning over Judge William Potter of [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#). He would in 1780 create a sanctuary for her and her little group of admirers on his estate at [Little Rest](#) (now [Kingston](#)).

Universal Friend would be going on preaching trips escorted by her father. Eventually her father would be replaced at her side, first by Judge Potter and then by her cadre of women friends. Her caravan –usually 12, riding two by two behind her spirited horse with her seated on a stunning white leather and blue velvet saddle– would find its way to Philadelphia and Worchester in Pennsylvania. Meetinghouses would be established, initially in South Kingston at the home of Judge Potter and then also in New Milford, Connecticut.<sup>169</sup>

The town of Acton was keeping tabs on how much the revolution was costing them:

4 men	<a href="#">Rhode Island</a>	2¼ months	May and June	at £6=£24
4 men	Northern Army	4 months	Aug. to Dec.	at £24=£96
4 men	Northern Army	1½ months	Oct. and Nov.	at £9=£36
4 men	Cambridge	5 months	Nov. to April	at £12=£48
6 men	Cambridge	3 months	April to July	at £7¼=£43½

A full estimate of the services cannot be made. This town had the honor of furnishing several officers during the revolutionary war. Lieutenant Colonel Francis Faulkner and Captain Simon Hunt were in the battle at White Plains, and at other times were also engaged in actual service. The constitution was adopted by more than two thirds of the votes of the town.<sup>170</sup>

169. We are tempted to disrespect such a person as a mere self-deluded religious poseur — but in all fairness, if we do so there are any number of posturing males, cut from the same broadcloth, even today on the tube, whom we should also “diss.”

170. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)’s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD;...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)

(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



**NEWPORT**

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July 7, Tuesday: The French fleet from Toulon came to anchor at the mouth of the Delaware River, where they found that they had missed the British forces under Lord Howe, which had already gone to refuge at New-York. When the French commander would be informed, truly or falsely, that ships of this size could not pass over the bar into that harbor, he ordered his fleet to sail on to Aquidneck Island, and attempt in conjunction with the Revolutionary general John Sullivan and hopefully some 10,000 [Rhode Islanders](#) to capture the English force of nearly 6,000 soldiers at [Newport](#).

July 29, Wednesday: The French fleet came to anchor opposite [Newport, Rhode Island](#). The plan was for General John Sullivan to bring his revolutionary militiamen onto the island under the protection of the French naval artillery. The French ships would then advance up the channel and set marines ashore at the docks to assist in subduing the town. However, the militia didn't show up in time to fulfil this plan.

August 20, Thursday: The French fleet put into [Newport](#) harbor of the [Narragansett Bay](#).

August 21, Friday: Fearful that the English ships would return to the attack, the French fleet sailed from the [Newport](#) harbor of the [Narragansett Bay](#) to [Boston](#), in order to make necessary storm repairs there.

25th, 8th Month: The siege of [Aquidneck Island](#). The Quaker meeting at [Portsmouth](#) recorded: "*The communication between us and [Friends](#) at [Newport](#) being obstructed this meeting is adjourned to the 9th day of next month at the breaking up of the Meeting for Worship at Portsmouth.*"<sup>171</sup>

**RHODE ISLAND**

August 29, Saturday: In [Rhode Island](#), people were trying to kill each other at a place on [Aquidneck Island](#) variously known as Quaker Hill and as Butts Hill, near [Portsmouth](#). During this struggle, now grandly known as "The Battle of Rhode Island," the local black unit was opposing Hessian mercenary troops. The *Marquis de Lafayette* would describe the general engagement of this day as the "best fought action of the war."

The all-Black battalion fought a battle with the Hessians during the American Revolution. The battle is referred to as the "Battle of [Rhode Island](#)". When the 1776 enlistments were about up, the RI General Assembly voted to raise two regiments numbering 1,430 men combined. The recruiting did not go well. In spite of additional bounties offered, by February 1777, only 50 men had enlisted in the two regiments. As veterans of 1776 returned home, the situation improved a bit. By March, the two regiments had a total of about 400 men. (Various excuses have been advanced to explain this poor showing. RI had an estimated 1,200 men serving on ships, mostly privateers, and another 1,800 serving in the state's brigade, keeping an eye on [Newport](#)).

171. As part of the defensive work in preparation for battle, the British forces on the island in this year sank 13 of their older ships across the mouth of the harbor. One of these appears to have been, actually, what remained of a proud ship that Captain Cook had used during his explorations, *Endeavour* (renamed *Lord Sandwich*, and in its last days used as a prison hulk containing captured American rebels). Coincidentally, also finding its way to the bottom of the harbor here would be Captain Cook's *Resolution*, renamed in its later existence *La Liberte*.



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General Washington ordered the 1st and 2nd RI to join him despite the lack of strength. On Washington's suggestion, [Christopher Greene](#) was appointed commander of the 1st RI. Because he was still a prisoner at this time (he was captured during the Arnold expedition to Quebec), Lt. Colonel Comstock was put in command until Greene could join his unit. Upon arrival in the American encampment, the RI regiments were brigaded with the 4th and 8th Connecticut and the four units were placed under the command of General Varnum, who used some political clout at home to get a promotion to brigadier. During the summer of 1777, the two RI regiments peaked in strength at 600 men combined. At this point, [Christopher Greene](#) managed to join his regiment. In October and November of 1777, the RI units fought in the battle at Red Bank. After the battle, Greene evaded the British and got the two RI units back to Valley Forge for winter camp. In camp, the RI officers, concerned about the very low numbers in the ranks, came up with the idea of raising a regiment from slaves. Washington wrote Gov. Cooke of [Rhode Island](#) asking his opinion of the scheme. The governor expressed cautious optimism and said 300 men could be expected. So the troops of the 1st RI were transferred to the 2nd RI, numbering 400 as a result. This regiment served at Monmouth under Lee. Greene and his staff were sent back to RI to raise a black regiment to fill the ranks of the depleted 1st RI. The General Assembly voted that every able bodied Negro, Mulatto and Indian slave could enlist for the duration of the war. Bounties and wages would be the same as those of free men. Once enlisted and approved of by the officers of the regiment, the recruits would be free. At this time, there was a Black and Indian population of 3,331 in [Rhode Island](#). The scheme, which did compensate owners, produced less than 200 men. Seeing how expensive the plan was becoming, the Assembly cut off recruiting of slaves on June 10, 1778. This incarnation of the 1st RI first saw action in the battle of [Rhode Island](#) in August 1778. The Continental troops that fought in the battle (1st and 2nd RI; Sherburne's, Webb's and Jackson's and Livingston's) remained in RI for the winter of 1778-79. On October 25, 1779, the British evacuated [Newport](#). All the Continental units in RI were ordered to march. However, at the last minute, the 1st [Rhode Island](#) was told to stay in the state and guard the wharves and streets of [Newport](#). The 1st RI remained home into 1780. In July of that year, Rochambeau arrived in [Newport](#) with 4,000 French troops. An officer with Rochambeau, von Clausen, provides us with a description of one of the Black soldiers wearing a cast-off French waistcoat with long sleeves and red cuffs, as well as the waved helmet with bluish plumes. In October of 1781, Congress reconstructed the army again. The 1st RI, the 2nd RI, and Sherburne's battalion were all merged into one regiment called the 1st [Rhode Island](#). [Christopher Greene](#) maintained command, with subordinates Jeremiah Olney and Ebenezer Flagg. Sherburne, Isreal Angell and Ward were all forced to retire. The merger took place at West Point. Although authorized for 650 men, the actual strength was about 450 men. In May of 1781 the



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1st RI was stationed along the Croton River, north of Manhattan. On the 14th, a raiding party of Delancey's refugees surprised the Rhode Islanders at two points. To make the story shorter, [Christopher Greene](#) and Flagg were killed. Lt. Colonel Jeremiah Olney assumed command. Coggeshall Olney and John Dexter were promoted to major and made his subordinates. Though the official designation was still the 1st RI, it became known as Olney's battalion. The 1st RI was one of the first to head south to Yorktown. It was brigaded with New Jersey troops under Colonel Dayton, and placed in Lincoln's division. Stephen Olney's light infantry detached from the regiment and were given to Lafayette's Division of Light Infantry. In February of 1782, the regiment numbered 31 officers and 413 men. The regiment was disbanded in November 1783 when Congress decided to consolidate all regiments with less than 500 men and the state refused to spend additional recruiting money.

Major General John Sullivan reporting upon the Battle of [Rhode Island](#) shortly after its conclusion, specifically commended the portion of the Continental line which included the First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment as: "entitled to a proper share of the day's honors." The ability of this portion of the line to hold fast was crucial to the successful retreat of Continental forces from [Newport](#) to the mainland. The failure of the storm-damaged ships carrying French reinforcements to arrive by sea led to a concentrated British attempt to destroy the six battalions commanded by Sullivan. The success of Sullivan's strategic retreat was evident in the low casualty rate and the preservation of equipment despite the aggressive charges made by British regulars and Hessian forces. The British specifically expected to breach the Continental line where the inexperienced [Rhode Island](#) soldiers were stationed. Recently recruited and trained, [Newport](#) was the first campaign for the unit in late August of 1778. In spite of several charges by seasoned British forces, the regiment tenaciously held position and inflicted heavy casualties upon the British.

While the First [Rhode Island](#)'s acknowledged courage in battle was central to the days events, the composition and origins of the regiment are of special interest. The First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment in August of 1778 was a nearly all-black unit made up largely of recently freed slaves. Commended for valor by commanders in its own day, and a frequent reference for abolitionists in the nineteenth century for "deeds of desperate valor," the First [Rhode Island](#) has been largely forgotten in our own. It is important, however, when considering the Revolution to understand that men fought not only for the idea of political liberty, but also for personal liberty.

The American Revolution yields many examples of military service by African American men on both sides of the conflict. While as many as 10,000 were recruited, primarily in the South, by the



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British promises of freedom in return for service, as least 5,000 black men served the American effort. Black men served in the Continental Army in every enlisted position from infantryman to cook.

Black sailors used their considerable experience at sea in the Continental Navy as able seamen and pilots. Black soldiers were present at the Battles of Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, Saratoga, and virtually every other battle of the Revolutionary War. Individuals such as Salem Poor, Peter Salem, and Crispus Attucks were commended for gallantry or died in defense of the Patriot cause. A Hessian officer wrote in 1777 of the American army that "no regiment is to be seen in which there are not Negroes in abundance; and among them there are able bodied, strong and brave fellows."

Commanded by Colonel [Christopher Greene](#), the regiment at the time of the Battle of [Rhode Island](#) was as close to a "segregated" unit as it would ever be. Recruited to meet the quota of the Continental Congress for two regiments from the state to augment the Continental line, initial recruitment efforts were concentrated upon enrolling slaves. The regiment, however, was never entirely composed of former slaves or even African-Americans. White men, free blacks, and a few Narragansett Indians were present from the beginning. Over time, the unit resembled most of the Continental forces with a mix of whatever recruits could be found. That the majority of the men in this regiment were African American through most of the war was due to the terms of enlistment for former slaves.

Policy regarding African American military service (particularly that of slaves) from the colonial period through the Revolution shifted from philosophical opposition to practical acceptance in times of need. Between 1775 and 1778 policy changed from formal exclusion of any black man to acceptance of those free men already under arms to active recruitment not only of free black men but slaves. Catalysts for this change were the British offer of freedom in exchange for service and the desperate conditions of the Continental Army.

As General George Washington (at the insistence of both his generals and members of Congress) issued an order barring black enlistment in the Continental Army in November of 1775, Lord Dunmore, the British royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation offering freedom in exchange for service to indentured servants and slaves. The promise of freedom was effective and the response swift. Within a month of the offer at least 300 enrolled. Many came hundreds of miles on the strength of a rumor of the proclamation. Washington, fearing that the discharged free blacks from the Continental Army would join the Loyalist forces, urged the reenlistment of the free African American men currently serving in the Army. Others, like



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Alexander Hamilton and General [Nathanael Greene](#), supported the idea of slave enlistment believing that the promise of freedom in exchange for service would draw recruits and ensure their loyalty. By the winter of 1776, Washington was urging the Continental Congress to enroll free blacks under the new quotas they were setting for the states.

The winter of 1777-1778 saw the Continental Army in winter quarters at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Conditions and prospects for the Americans were bleak. The British occupied major cities, including nearby Philadelphia, and supplies and morale were low. States were having problems raising the quotas of men set by the Congress in 1776. [Rhode Island](#), ordered to supply two of the desired eighty-eight battalions, faced its own defense problems with the occupation of the capital at [Newport](#). The economy, largely supported by the slave trade, shipping, and agriculture was close to collapse from blockade and occupation. All available men were involved in the defense of the rest of the state from British advancement. The recruitment of slaves was the only option, in the view of General James Varnum, for raising any [Rhode Island](#) men for the Continental line.

Varnum urged Washington to merge the remnants of [Rhode Island](#) two battalions and send the officers of the second to [Rhode Island](#) to recruit slaves. Colonel [Christopher Greene](#), Lt. Colonel Jeremiah Olney and Major Samuel Ward were assigned to the duty. Washington wrote to [Rhode Island](#) governor Nicholas Cooke requesting assistance for the men. The speed in which this transaction -from Varnum's initial letter to Washington on the subject in January of 1778 until legislation passed the [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly in February- reflected the dire local and national situation. By February 23, 1778, Cooke notified Washington that the legislature had approved the plan. The General Assembly decreed that the individual slave enrolled in the regiment would "upon his passing muster, he is absolutely made free, and entitled to all the wages, bounties, and encouragements given by Congress to any soldier enlisting."

The [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly permitted "every able-bodied Negro, Mulatto or Indian man slave" to enlist in either of the two state regiments. The legislature, full of men connected to [Rhode Island](#)'s extensive slave trade, provided state support for any former slaves who became sick or injured during their service. This was an alteration of the statutes which fixed responsibility for support on the owner of freed slaves who might otherwise be manumitted when sick or aged. The legislature also provided for compensation to the slave owners of up to \$400.00 in Continental currency. The slaves, then, would be purchased by the state and, contingent upon service in the army for the duration of the war or until properly discharged, freed.

The legislation did not, however, pass without some contention



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despite the concessions made to slave interests and the military situation facing the state and the nation. Pro-enlistment advocates used classical examples of liberty in exchange for military service by slaves. The opposition came from General Assembly members most involved with the slave trade. They argued that enlistment would lead to insurrection and unrest among those still in bondage lead by slaves armed for the war. Additionally, they insisted that slave service was inconsistent with the rhetoric and principles for which the war was being fought. Those opposed to the general enlistment scheme managed to pass legislation in May that would terminate the experiment on June 10, 1778. But, as records show, slave enlistment continued without pause in [Rhode Island](#).

Within a week of the opening of recruitment three men had been enrolled and large numbers attempted to join. Most of those who are identified in the records by geographic designation came, as would be expected, from the southern counties of the state where by far the most slaves were held. A few, like Pero Mowey of Smithfield and Primus Brown of Johnston, came from small farming towns in the northern part of the state. As potential soldiers gathered at the recruitment centers in large numbers, local white men attempted to dissuade enlistment. They exhorted the slaves not to enlist as the Continental Army intended to use them in the most vulnerable and dangerous advance positions and that, if captured, the men faced the sure fate of being sold into slavery in the Caribbean.

Approximately 250 men ignored the advice of the agitators, passed the enrollment committee and joined the First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment. Like other African American recruits they saw service as enlisted men. In the state militias and the Continental Army, black enlisted men were often assigned positions related to personal service for officers or as foragers, cooks, and waiters. The predominance of black men in the [Rhode Island](#) unit, however, provided additional opportunities for service in other specialties such as infantry positions. The contingent nature of their service also undoubtedly contributed to the comparatively low rates of "unofficial absences" or outright desertions found among their white fellow enlistees. Other factors such as familiarity with rough conditions and the lack of some of the most common reasons for white desertion such as concern for the welfare of a family, farm, or business undoubtedly played a role. But, the reward of personal liberty for service undoubtedly was the primary factor. The white soldier enlisted usually for a short tour of duty (often only three months) and faced unfamiliar temporary restrictions on his personal liberty and separation from his community. The former slave soldier, familiar with restrictions on his liberty, faced his service with the promise of an ultimate and unfamiliar permanent freedom.



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The First [Rhode Island](#) was commanded by the men sent by Washington to recruit them. Colonel [Christopher Greene](#) commanded the unit from its formation in 1778 until his death at Points Bridge in 1781 when the command was assumed by Lt. Colonel Jeremiah Olney. In all, the unit saw five years of service and was a part of the Continental line at the battles which included Fort Oswego, Saratoga, Red Bank, and Yorktown. The regiment was an active part of the American effort, and in the Battle of [Rhode Island](#) and at Points Bridge, they were particularly noticed for their effectiveness in the field.

Like white enlisted men, the black soldiers of the First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment who were demobilized at Saratoga in June of 1783 were left to find their own way home as best they could. Their commander, Lt. Colonel Olney left them with an address full of praise for their "valor and good conduct" and regret that men for whom he felt "the most affectionate regard and esteem" should be left with pay owed to them. Olney pledged to them his continued "interest in their favor." There is evidence that Olney was true to his word. He assisted men who fought attempts to re-enslave them and wrote in support of claims for pensions from the government or wages owed from the state. Each American soldier who left the army at Saratoga that day did so with the knowledge that he was a citizen of a free country. For many of the men of the First [Rhode Island](#) Regiment freedom had not only political meaning, but personal meaning as well.

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Although, as I pointed out above, the *Marquis de Lafayette* would describe the general engagement of this day as the “best fought action of the war,” the inscription on this pewter medallion covering the events of August 1778 in the Narragansett Bay of “ROHDE YLAND” depict the “AMERICAANE” soldiers as “D’vlugtende” or running away from British naval forces:





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29th, 8th Month: Although the “Battle of Rhode Island” was taking place on the “Quaker Hill” of [Aquidneck Island](#), it is interesting to note that this event so significant to other Rhode Islanders would go entirely unmentioned in any local [Quaker](#) meeting minutes. What would be mentioned about this day, however, would be the sad fact that during the build-up for this “Battle of Rhode Island,” a Tory home near [Bristol, Rhode Island](#) had had to be abandoned — and later Friend Sarah Trask, wife of Ebenezer Trask, was found to have in her possession some objects from that home. When Friend Sarah would prove to be unwilling to express contrition for her conduct she would be [disowned](#) by her [Friends](#) meeting.

(Battles we could put up with –they having nothing to do with us– but theft was a no-no.)

14th, 9th Month: A [Quaker](#) committee from [Providence, Rhode Island](#) had visited [Aquidneck Island Friends](#), and reported that they had found Friends on the eastern part of the island “*generally in health, though stript of almost all their remaining livestock, and had at Middletown divers of their houses burnt, as we were informed by the British party, Friends houses were much throng’d by the Americans, who were very numerous on the Island, their hay and cornfields were wasting fast, horses and oxen being loose among the corn and indeed it was a wasting time amongst them, as to their outward estates. Yet to our comfort, we found Friends according to our observation quiet and pretty well resigned in their minds and our visit amongst them appear’d to be to their satisfaction and it was a time of sympathy and refreshment to us, to find them in so good a frame under their difficult situation. We assembled Friends after their Meeting and made particular enquiry whether there were any under necessitous circumstances and visited a number of families, found one Friend with a large family under present want being turn’d out of his house and stript of most of his property to whom we gave 24 pounds to enable him to purchase a cow from the Main. We saw no way to visit Friends at [Newport](#) but were informed that they were generally well about the 8th of last month but that bread was very scarce there.*”

1779

22nd, 7th Month: The [Rhode Island](#) [[Aquidneck Island](#)] Monthly Meeting recorded that it had “*Received a Bill of exchange for one hundred pounds sterling drawn in favor of Thomas Robinson upon John Wright, Joseph Delaplane and Walter Franklin in New York, it being a charitable donation from our [Friends](#) in England, to be applied towards the support of such Friends as are reduced to necessitous circumstances within the verge of this Monthly Meeting.*”



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October: British forces began to be evacuated from [Newport](#). Bon voyage! They took with them almost all of the Newport town records previous to December 6, 1779, in a ship which would soon be sunk in the East River off New-York. When these records would be recovered from the wreck after three years of submersion, they would generally prove not to be salvageable.

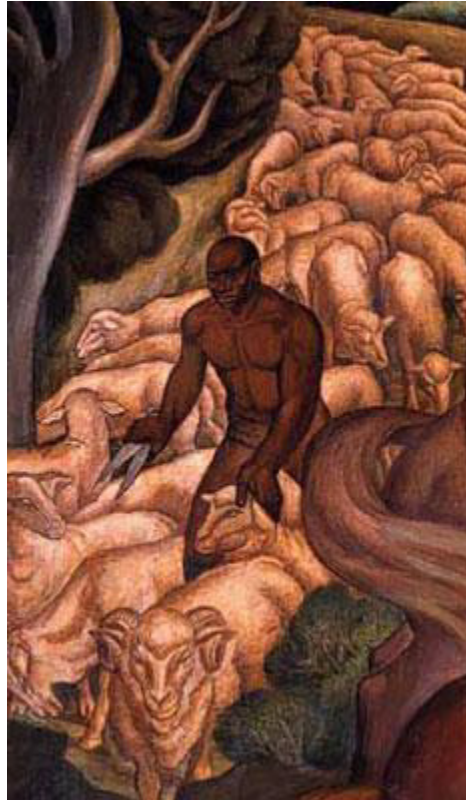
Curiously, on this pewter medallion commemorating the flight of the British forces from the Narragansett Bay in 1779, the word “vlugtende” at the bottom has been carefully reworked and the die built up so that what appears now instead of this charged word “fleeing” is an innocent and meaningless scroll:



For example, we know that during this month the legislature of [Rhode Island](#) was enacting “An Act prohibiting [slaves](#) being sold out of the state, against their consent,” but the title only of this bill having been located (COLONIAL RECORDS, VIII. 618; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 449), we lack the details of this

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restriction on the slave trade.<sup>172</sup>



According to the “Book of Negroes” (an enumeration of the 3,000 black Americans who would sail with the British from New-York harbor in 1783 when that city was evacuated after the revolution had succeeded), when the British evacuated [Newport](#) at this point, departing with them as free persons were 24 African-American men and women who had been [slaves](#) in [Rhode Island](#).

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In 1652 Rhode Island passed a law designed to prohibit life slavery in the colony. It declared that “Whereas, there is a common course practised amongst English men to buy negers, to that end they may have them for service or slaves forever; for the preventing 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 assignes longer than ten yeares, or untill they come to bee twentie four yeares of age, if they bee taken in under fourteen, from the time of their coming within the liberties of this Collonie. And at the end or terme of ten yeares to sett them free, as the manner is with the English servants. And that man that will not let them goe free, or shall sell them away elsewhere, to that end that they may bee enslaved to others for a long time, hee or they shall forfeit to the Collonie forty pounds.”<sup>173</sup>

172. We do have, however, a comparison piece of legislation that dates to this very same year, if not to the same month, an enactment of the legislature of Vermont entitled “An Act for securing the general privileges of the people,” etc., that abolished slavery inside the state (VERMONT STATE PAPERS 1779-1786, page 287).

173. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, I. 240.



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This law was for a time enforced,<sup>174</sup> but by the beginning of the eighteenth century it had either been repealed or become a dead letter; for the Act of 1708 recognized perpetual slavery, and laid an impost of £3 on Negroes imported.<sup>175</sup> This duty was really a tax on the transport trade, and produced a steady income for twenty years.<sup>176</sup> From the year 1700 on, the citizens of this State engaged more and more in the carrying trade, until Rhode Island became the greatest slave-trader in America. Although she did not import many slaves for her own use, she became the clearing-house for the trade of other colonies. Governor Cranston, as early as 1708, reported that between 1698 and 1708 one hundred and three vessels were built in the State, all of which were trading to the West Indies and the Southern colonies.<sup>177</sup> They took out lumber and brought back molasses, in most cases making a slave voyage in between. From this, the trade grew. Samuel Hopkins, about 1770, was shocked at the state of the trade: more than thirty distilleries were running in the colony, and one hundred and fifty vessels were in the slave-trade.<sup>178</sup> "Rhode Island," said he, "has been more deeply interested in the slave-trade, and has enslaved more Africans than any other colony in New England." Later, in 1787, he wrote: "The inhabitants of Rhode Island, especially those of Newport, have had by far the greater share in this traffic, of all these United States. This trade in human species has been the first wheel of commerce in Newport, on which every other movement in business has chiefly depended. That town has been built up, and flourished in times past, at the expense of the blood, the liberty, and happiness of the poor Africans; and the inhabitants have lived on this, and by it have gotten most of their wealth and riches."<sup>179</sup>

The Act of 1708 was poorly enforced. The "good intentions" of its framers "were wholly frustrated" by the clandestine "hiding and conveying said negroes out of the town [Newport] into the country, where they lie concealed."<sup>180</sup> The act was accordingly strengthened by the Acts of 1712 and 1715, and made to apply to importations by land as well as by sea.<sup>181</sup> The Act of 1715, however, favored the trade by admitting African Negroes free of duty. The chaotic state of Rhode Island did not allow England often to review her legislation; but as soon as the Act of 1712 came to notice it was disallowed, and accordingly repealed in 1732.<sup>182</sup> Whether the Act of 1715 remained, or whether any other duty act was passed, is not clear.

While the foreign trade was flourishing, the influence of the Friends and of other causes eventually led to a movement against

174. Cf. letter written in 1681: NEW ENGLAND REGISTER, XXXI. 75-6. Cf. also Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, I. 240.

175. The text of this act is lost (COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 34; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 31). The Acts of Rhode Island were not well preserved, the first being published in Boston in 1719. Perhaps other whole acts are lost.

176. E.g., it was expended to pave the streets of Newport, to build bridges, etc.: RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 191-3, 225.

177. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 55-60.

178. Patten, REMINISCENCES OF SAMUEL HOPKINS (1843), page 80.

179. Hopkins, WORKS (1854), II. 615.

180. Preamble of the Act of 1712.

181. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 131-5, 138, 143, 191-3.

182. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 471.



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slavery as a local institution. Abolition societies multiplied, and in 1770 an abolition bill was ordered by the Assembly, but it was never passed.<sup>183</sup> Four years later the city of Providence resolved that "as personal liberty is an essential part of the natural rights of mankind," the importation of slaves and the system of slavery should cease in the colony.<sup>184</sup> This movement finally resulted, in 1774, in an act "prohibiting the importation of Negroes into this Colony," – a law which curiously illustrated the attitude of Rhode Island toward the slave-trade. The preamble of the act declared: "Whereas, the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which, that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others; – Therefore," etc. The statute then proceeded to enact "that for the future, no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony; and in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be, and are hereby, rendered immediately free...." The logical ending of such an act would have been a clause prohibiting the participation of Rhode Island citizens in the slave-trade. Not only was such a clause omitted, but the following was inserted instead: "Provided, also, that nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave brought from the coast of Africa, into the West Indies, on board any vessel belonging to this colony, and which negro or mulatto slave could not be disposed of in the West Indies, but shall be brought into this colony. Provided, that the owner of such negro or mulatto slave give bond ... that such negro or mulatto slave shall be exported out of the colony, within one year from the date of such bond; if such negro or mulatto be alive, and in a condition to be removed."<sup>185</sup> In 1779 an act to prevent the sale of slaves out of the State was passed,<sup>186</sup> and in 1784, an act gradually to abolish slavery.<sup>187</sup> Not until 1787 did an act pass to forbid participation in the slave-trade. This law laid a penalty of £100 for every slave transported and £1000 for every vessel so engaged.<sup>188</sup>

183. Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 304, 321, 337. For a probable copy of the bill, see NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 299.

184. A man dying intestate left slaves, who became thus the property of the city; they were freed, and the town made the above resolve, May 17, 1774, in town meeting: Staples, ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE (1843), page 236.

185. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 251-2.

186. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 329; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 444; RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VIII. 618.

187. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, X. 7-8; Arnold, HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND, II. 506.

188. BARTLETT'S INDEX, page 333; NARRAGANSETT HISTORICAL REGISTER, II. 298-9. The number of slaves in Rhode Island has been estimated as follows: –

In 1708, 426. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, IV. 59.

In 1730, 1,648. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL TRACTS, No. 19, pt. 2, page 99.

In 1749, 3,077. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1756, 4,697. Williams, HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, I. 281.

In 1774, 3,761. RHODE ISLAND COLONIAL RECORD, VII. 253.



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November 1, Monday: It was reported that “the English had evacuated Newport, Rhodeisland [*sic*] last Tuesday; after blowing up the Court-house, Granary, Light-house, & their Fortification on Tomminy hill.” A state convention

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met in [Concord](#) again, October 6th, and continued in session seven days. Colonel Cuming [[John Cuming](#)] and Captain David Brown were delegates from Concord. A revised edition of the state price-current, several new spirited resolutions, relating to trade, currency, etc., and an address to the people, were adopted and published. County, town, and district meetings were recommended to carry these resolutions into effect. They were laid before the town [Concord], November 1st, and a committee of fourteen chosen, to fix the prices of such articles as were not therein enumerated. They reported, the next week, “that, as the regulations agreed upon by the late convention had been broken over by the inhabitants of [Boston](#) and many other places, they thought it not proper to proceed in the business assigned them, but to postpone the matter.” Thus ended the proceedings relating to this difficult subject. It was indeed a fruitless attempt to enforce a system of uniform prices of merchandise, while the currency was constantly depreciating in value. And it is believed, that the attempts just noticed were means to increase private property, more than to promote the public good.<sup>189</sup>

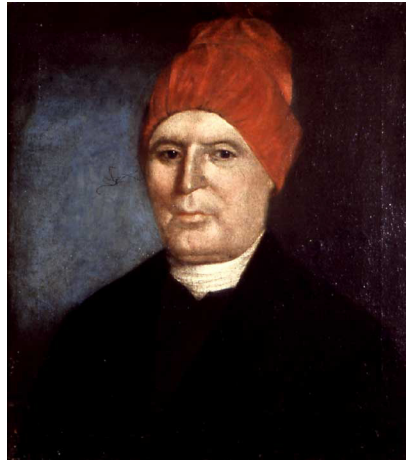
**1780**

Moses Michael Hays removed from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) to [Boston](#). He would be one of the founders of the Massachusetts Fire and Marine Insurance Company, which eventually would become Bank of Boston.

189. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#). Boston MA: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#), 1835  
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In 1776, when Aquidneck Island had come under the occupation of the British military, the Reverend Samuel Hopkins had gone to preach at Newburyport, Massachusetts and at Canterbury and Stamford, Connecticut.



At this point he returned to his 1st Congregational Church in Newport, Rhode Island.

REV. DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS

15th day 1st month: Friend William Robinfon of Newport, Rhode Island manumitted his previously enslaved Negrow man named Ifrael.



Name of slave	Owned by	Date of emancipation
Jane	Richard Smith	1757
Pegg	Stephen Richmond	27th 12th mo 1773
Phillis and her two children	John Knowles	1st 11th mo 1773
Casper and Judith		
Richard	Jeremiah Browning	27th 9th mo 1773
Israel	William Robinson	15th 1st mo 1780
Dick	John Congdon	29th 12th mo 1783
Luce	William Congdon	29th 3d mo 1784
Jack		
Fan		
Cuff, otherwise Cuff Knowles	Barshebe Knowles	24th 7th mo 1783
	Robert Knowles	
	Joseph Knowles	
	John Congdon	
	Charles Congdon	
Job	Hannah Knowles	
Rose	William Peckham	4th 8th mo 1786
	William Peckham	24th 8th mo 1786



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

April 7, Friday: [William Ellery Channing](#) (the first, famous William Ellery Channing, the Reverend, not the poet ne'er-do-well with whom [Henry Thoreau](#) would associate in Concord) was born in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

June: The town of Bedford sent eight revolutionary fighters to [Rhode Island](#) for three months, to help oppose the British there:

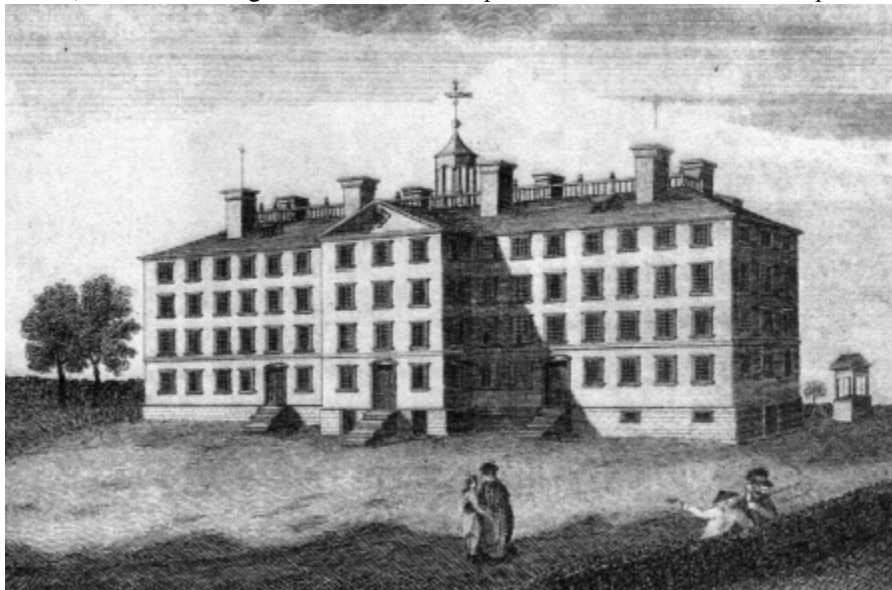
In June previous, seven men, John Johnson, Rufus Johnson, Nathan Merrill, Jonas Bacon, Cambridge Moore, Jonas Duren, Cesar Prescott, had been hired [by Bedford] to go to the North River, six months for a bounty of 120 bushels of corn each; and eight men, Joshua Holt, John Webber, Ebenezer Hardy, Amos Bemis, Jonathan Wilson, Andrew Hall, Isaac Simonds, and Israel Mead Blood, were hired for three months to [Rhode Island](#) for 90 bushels of corn each.<sup>190</sup>

190. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#). Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)  
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

A French army began to disembark at [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#).

At about this point in time the College Edifice erected atop College Hill in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) (now the original building of [Brown University](#)) had been evacuated by the revolutionary soldiers who had been using it as a barracks, and it was being converted into a hospital for French soldiers encamped along Camp Street.



Later on this building would be added to. Here it is at an interim stage, in 1864, after Hope College on the right had been constructed during 1821-1823 and after Manning Hall, in the center, had been constructed in 1834:



The original College Edifice of 1770, now known as [University Hall](#), is on the left in the 20th-Century postcard



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

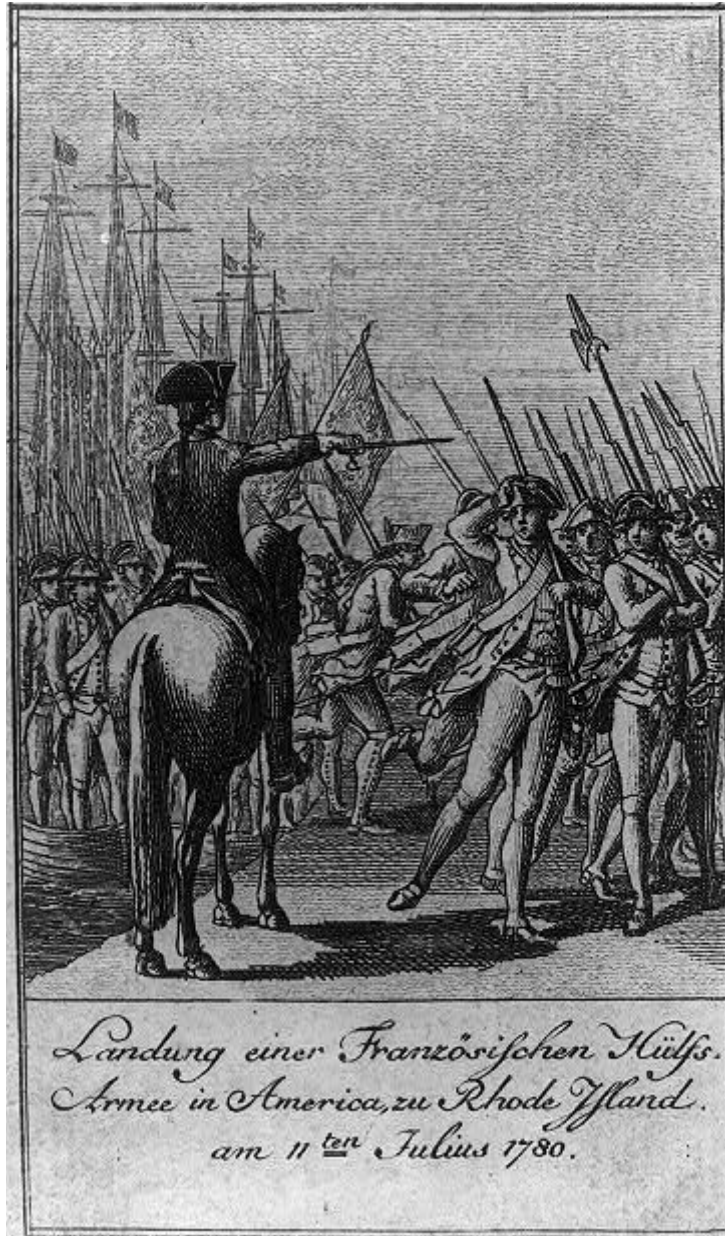
image below:



July 11, Tuesday: [Timothy Flint](#) was born in Reading, Massachusetts, a child of William Flint and Martha Kimball Flint.

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**NEWPORT****AQUIDNECK ISLAND****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Here is an illustration of the disembarkation of French troops on this day either on [Aquidneck Island](#) or at [Providence](#) in [Rhode Island](#):



*Landing einer Französischen Hülf's.  
Armee in America, zu Rhode Iſland.  
am 11<sup>ten</sup> Julius 1780.*

Count Axel de Fersen, a Swedish mercenary officer serving in this French army, would describe the life of the officers while they were bivouacked in [Newport](#).

**COUNT AXEL DE FERSEN**



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

July 12, Wednesday: People were trying to kill each other at Williamson's Plantation (Brattenville) and at Stallian's and at Brandon's Camp in South Carolina.

M. Claude Blanchard stepped ashore in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

### M. CLAUDE BLANCHARD

31st, 10th Month: The British army had been evacuated, [Aquidneck Island](#) had come to be occupied by French soldiers: "A part of the Meeting House at [Newport](#) having at some time past been occupied by the French Army, we appoint James Mitchell, James Chase, Isaac Lawton, and Jacob Mott to use their endeavours to have it released."

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

[RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS](#)

20th, 11th Month: The situation of the French troops in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) would be described by François Jean, Marquis de Chastellux.

### MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX

"Was read in this Meeting to good satisfaction an Epistle from the Quarterly Meeting held at Dartmouth the 12th and 13th of 10th month 1780 by which they desire we would treat with such [Friends](#) as are concerned in keeping [slaves](#), they having had information that there were some such among us, whereupon we appoint Isaac Lawton and Sampson Shearman to treat with them and report to next Monthly Meeting."

[MANUMISSION](#)

[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)

27th, 11th Month: A disownment by the [Newport](#) meeting: "Whereas James Marsh, who some time past came off from [Rhode Island](#) [[Aquidneck Island](#)] and by his own account had never been deprived of a right of membership which he held by Birth among [Friends](#), has since he came among us [among the Friends of [Smithfield](#)] maintained a life and conversation in many respects inconsistent with our religious testimony, particularly in hiring a man or men to go into the war in his stead and although he could not deny but that he thought it incompatible with the Christian profession under which he had past, yet after being laboured with for his restoration, he gave no encouragement in making Friends satisfaction...."

[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)

Between 1775 and 1780: The [Friends](#) of [Aquidneck Island, Rhode Island](#) had recorded 22 [manumissions](#) of black [slaves](#) between 1775 and 1780, while disowning during that period 14 members of the Society who after being visited and labored with had refused to sign such documents. At the end of this process the comment was made that there was "hardly a Friend" who continued as a slaveholder. "Hardly?" –We do know of one such Quaker: Ann Bower was still holding her slaves, nor had she been disowned.

[QUAKER DISOWNMENT](#)



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1781

[Benjamin West](#) was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

*CALENDRIER FRANÇAIS POUR L'ANNÉE COMMUNE 1781.* [Newport, Rhode Island](#): De l'Imprimerie de l'Escadre.

An account of this almanac together with the other works printed on the French Fleet, entitled "The Printing Press of the French Fleet," by Howard M. Chapin, was published by Preston & Rounds, Providence, 1914.<sup>191</sup>

"Following the calendar is a list of names of the officers of Count Rochambeau, Destouches and others." —Hammett.

[[ALMANACK](#) FOR 1781.] By John Anderson, [Newport](#).

Imperfect copy. Title page missing.

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR; OR, AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1781. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler. [Newport](#): Henry Barber.

The second almanac of the Wheeler series. Henceforth West calculated for Wheeler instead of for Carter. It contains cut of the eclipse.



BICKERSTAFF'S NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1781. [By Isaac Bickerstaff, esq., Philom.] [Providence](#): John Carter.

According to the [Providence Gazette](#) four impressions were issued. In the second edition there is a change in the tide tables. After the final disagreement between West and Carter, the latter re-issued the almanac under this pseudonym. It contains the man of signs cut and one eclipse cut.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1781. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): John Carter.

It has a cut showing the eclipse and an elaborate cut of the man of signs. It is the last West Almanac published by Carter, and 191. The type had been brought over by the French fleet, but actually the press was set up ashore.



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

with it the West-Carter controversy ended.



[Rhode Island privateering](#) during the Revolutionary War:

1776	57
1777	17
1778	17
1779	39
1780	13
1781	9
1782	26
1783	17



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

– Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>192</sup>



During a visit by General George Washington to Newport, Rhode Island, a town meeting was held in the Touro Synagogue.



**JUDAISM**

1781. Gen. Washington visited Providence. His arrival was announced by a salute from the artillery. He was conducted to the house of Hon. Jabez Bowen (now Manufacturer's Hotel,) and the town was illuminated at night. Next day he dined with the citizens in the Court House, and in the evening attended a splendid ball. A formal address was presented to him by a committee of the most distinguished citizens, to which he made a felicitous reply, and expressed much gratification at the respectful attentions he received.

192. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

January 26, Friday: We have a record of a portion of a letter that the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) wrote on this day to Dr. Stiles.

**REV. DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS**

New Haven; 1781. Received a letter from Rev. Mr. Hopkins, dated [Newport](#), January 26; wherein he says, speaking of the state of religion there, "Every thing is dark and discouraging here, with respect to the all-important interest. The people in general are going from bad to worse, and I now see no way for my continuing here longer than till spring. Neither your people nor mine are disposed to attend public worship constantly, except a few individuals. There is but little encouragement to preach, where there is so little attention, and so very little concern about any thing invisible."

**RHODE ISLAND**



## NEWPORT

## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

March 6, Tuesday: According to the journal of [Friend Thomas B. Hazard](#) or Hafsard or Hasard of [Kingstown, Rhode Island](#),<sup>193</sup> “General Washington went to Newport this day. The town was illuminated.” Presumably Washington and his escort of 20 soldiers had arrived over the old Pequot trail out of Connecticut and had crossed over to [Newport](#) on the ferry.

People were trying to kill each other at Wetzell’s or Whitsall’s Mills and at Wiboo Swamp in South Carolina. (I wish they’d learn to stop doing that.)

In England, Erasmus Darwin and the widowed Elizabeth Pole were wed. She was wealthy, so during this month they would move from Lichfield to her grand home, Radburn Hall near Derby.



This of course meant that Dr. Darwin would no longer be able to attend the monthly meetings of the Lunar Society at the Soho House in Birmingham — that his future contacts with these friends would be through correspondence.

### THE LUNAR SOCIETY OF BIRMINGHAM



193. He was a blacksmith and sometimes rode to [Quaker](#) meeting with his wife on the same horse — and sometimes she would fall off but “not hurt herself much.” He was called “Nailer Tom” because of the nails he trimmed from scrap iron, and in order to distinguish him from a relative known as “College Tom,” from another relative known as “Shepherd Tom,” and from his own son who —because he had fits— was known as “Pistol-Head Tom.”



**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

May 16, Wednesday: We find on page 341 of volume 19 of the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) records of title transfers, that our good ol' buddy [Efek Hopkins](#) was on this day up to selling a girl to her own mother, a resident of [Newport](#), "*for and in Confideration of the Sum of One Hundred Good Silver Spanish Milled Dollars to Me in Hand already paid*" (kindly don't ask me to explain how something like this can go down, here or anywhere). Isn't it interesting that the age of this girl isn't specified, nor are we told how it came about that the child



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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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of a free woman was being treated as a slave?

Know all Men by these Presents That I Ezek Hopkins of North Providence, in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, for and in Consideration of the Sum of One Hundred Good Silver Spanish Milled Dollars to Me in Hand already paid by Flora Wanton a Free Negro Woman of Newport in the County of Newport, in the State of Rhode Island &c. aforesaid, which said Flora Wanton is Mother of a Certain Negro Servant Girl called Peggy, now belonging to Me the said Ezek Hopkins, the Receipt of which said Sum of Money I hereby acknowledge. Have Remitted Released and Forever Quitclaimed and by these Presents Do remise Release and forever Quitclaim All the Right, Title, Interest Property Claim and Demand whatever which I ever had now have, or can have of, in and to the said Servant Negro Girl called Peggy, to her Mother, the said Flora Wanton, in order that the said [sic] said Peggy may be made Free, and for this Purpose I hereby Bargain and Sell all my said Right and Title to the said Negro Girl to her said Mother the said Flora so that neither I, my Heirs Executors Administrators or any other person claiming from by or under Me, or their or either of them shall have any Claim whatever to the Service of the said Peggy from and After the Date of these Presents but shall and will be therefrom forever barred and excluded by these Presents. And I covenant That That [sic] I will Warrant to the said Flora Wanton to defend against the Lawful Claims of all persons claiming any Right or Title to the Services of said Negro Girl Peggy in Consequence of any Conveyance heretofore made.

Witness my Hand and Seal this Sixteenth Day of May A.D. 1781.

Signed Sealed and Delivered in Presence of us  
Timothy Bourden.....  
Griffith Harris.....




Ezek Hopkins

The Foregoing is a True Copy. Recorded this 16<sup>th</sup> Day of May A.D. 1781 }  
Witness Theodore Foster Town Clerk - }

SLAVERY  
MANUMISSION

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



 Our national birthday, Wednesday the 4th of July: In Massachusetts, there was the 1st official state celebration as recognized under resolve of a legislature. At [Newport](#) in [Rhode Island](#), the American militia hosted at a celebration dinner for General Rochambeau’s officers.

CELEBRATING OUR B-DAY





**NEWPORT**

**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

August 12, Sunday: General Rochambeau broke camp at [Newport, Rhode Island](#), and set out to join General Washington in White Plains, New York.

20th, 8th Month: “The [Friends](#) appointed to treat with Artemis Fish reported that he still continues under his former embarrassment. It is therefore referred to our next Monthly Meeting.”

**RHODE ISLAND**

31st, 8th Month: A committee of [Friends](#) visited Governor William Greene to ask that the [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) be cleared of soldiers. The governor addressed a letter to the French officer in charge, and gave it to the Quakers to deliver. When the committee would deliver this letter, they would be courteously received and the meetinghouse would within a few days be cleared of troops.

30 1 day of 12 M 1781 (December 30, Sunday, 1781): [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) was born as a birthright Friend, the 1st son of Friend James Gould and Friend Hannah Wanton Gould. He would write on his 25th birthday:

*30 3 day of 12 M 1806 / With the day compleats the 25 year of my Age<sup>194</sup>*

James, his father, seems to have followed the tailor’s trade in part due to being quite lame. His shop was near the Parade, which is the present-day Washington Square of [Newport](#). Hannah, his mother, was a daughter of Stephen Wanton and had grown up in one of the grand families of Rhode Island, a family that had obtained at least part of its fortune by investment in the [international slave trade](#). He would grow up in the [Quaker](#) community near the Point on [Aquidneck Island](#), and get married with Friend Hannah Rodman, daughter of Friend Clark Rodman and Friend Abigail Rodman, in 1808, and this couple would produce two offspring, Caleb who would die in infancy and John Stanton Gould who would get married with Mary Ashby and settle in Hudson, New York.

194. Friend Stephen crafted the books he used for his journals, himself, by taking plain paper and stitching it together down the middle, and then folding the papers over on the stitch line. All entries from his journal in the Kouroo Contexture were prepared by Rosalind Cobb Wiggins. “Posie,” as she was called, earned an MA in Black Studies in Education following a 25-year career as a portrait and ecclesiastical sculptor. After teaching at Washtenaw Community College in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and at [Moses Brown](#) School in Providence, Rhode Island, she retired to work as the curator of the New England Yearly Meeting Archives, archives which are now kept at the Rhode Island Historical Society on Hope Street in Providence, Rhode Island. Since then she published works about Friends and African Americans in 18th- and 19th-Century New England. Her article “Paul and Stephen, Unlikely Friends” appeared in [Quaker History](#), Volume 90 Number 1, for Spring 2001.

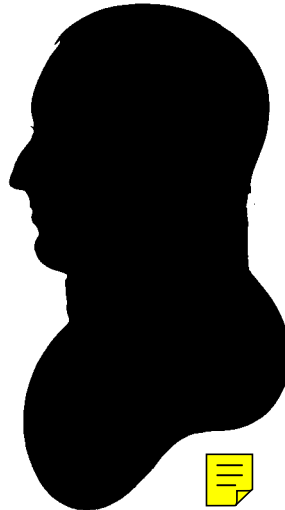


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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

This is the only known image of Friend Stephen:



Friend Stephen is the Gould who wrote the very extensive spiritual diary, now in the Rare Book collections of Cornell University along with the original of the above image:

#2557 Stephen Wanton Gould  
Diary #10  
May 1, 1809-June 30, 1812  
Contains entries of:  
Birth of Stephen's son Caleb — May 24, 1809  
Death of Caleb — August 30, 1810  
Birth of Stephen's son John Stanton — March 14, 1812  
Death of Stephen's father James Gould, January 21, 1812

The cover is handmade of a double sheet of heavy paper, hand-stitched along the side:

“ No 1<sup>o</sup> ~ from 1<sup>st</sup> of 5m<sup>o</sup> 1809 to 30<sup>th</sup> of 6 m<sup>o</sup> 1812 ~ ”

There is in the Cornell collection also a curious tiny one which reads, in its entirety, as follows:

12 mo 19 1826 Edward Almy came to our house to board. / Moses Lopez says he came to Newport in the year 1767. & was 20 years old when he arrived. & landed on Romes's wharf, now the Shipyard owned by the family of Gibbs. He is now, this year 1827 — 80 years of age — He now lives in NYork & visited Newport 6 mo 1827



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**1782**

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, AND RHODE-ISLAND REGISTER FOR 1782. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M. and Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#): Bennett Wheeler.

It contains three cute explaining eclipses; and a reprint of the Articles of Confederation.



THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR FOR 1782, [Newport](#).

No copy located. Mentioned by Hammett.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1782. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): John Carter.

The type used is smaller than that previously used in this Bickerstaff series of almanacs.

NOTE:

THOMAS'S MASSACHUSETTS, CONNECTICUT, [RHODE ISLAND](#), NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1782, published by Isaiah Thomas at Worcester, is the first of a series of Massachusetts almanacs that bear the name of [Rhode Island](#) in their title. These continued until 1810.

There were also similar series by Weatherwise (1791-1799), Bickerstaff (1791-1799), and Pope (1797).

[Rhode Island privateering](#) during the Revolutionary War:



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1783	17



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

– Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>195</sup>



195. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 27 (Trinity Monday): Henry Headley was elected scholar at Trinity College, Oxford. Other students there, the critic William Lisle Bowles and the classicist William Benwell, would become his friends. Headley would fall under the influence of Poet Laureate Thomas Warton, then a fellow of this college.



Aaron Lopez was in a carriage, returning to Newport, Rhode Island, and stopped off at Scott's Pond in Smithfield to let his horse drink. The horse bolted into deep water, the carriage overturned, and the rich man drowned.<sup>196</sup>

On this day the course of instruction at the College of Rhode Island atop College Hill in Providence was resuming after the wartime hiatus. Long live peace!

BAPTISTS BROWN UNIVERSITY

196. To get some idea of just how easily one might become entangled in apparatus and unable to extricate oneself underwater from the wreckage of this sort of conveyance, you might take a close look at John Brown's "chariot" — which is stored behind the John Brown mansion in Providence, Rhode Island.



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**1783**

STAFFORD'S ALMANACK, FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1783. "Hosea Stafford," a pseudonym of Nehemiah Strong. New Haven, Connecticut: Printed and Sold by T. & S. Green. The verses at the top of the calendar pages for July through December told of an "Amiable Virgin," who presumably wouldn't have remained virginal for all that long, and the publication went on to recommend a medicine that might be applied both externally and internally, "The Poor Man's Medicine," concocted by the boiling of quicksilver (which is to say, the poisonous metal mercury) in water. Included was a census tabulation of the inhabitants, and also of local Indians and Negroes: "A Return of the Number of Inhabitants in the State of Connecticut, February 1, 1782; and also of Indians and Negroes."

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR: OR THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1783. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#): Bennett Wheeler.

Besides three cuts explaining eclipses, it has a reprint of the treaty with France.

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR: OR THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#), FOR 1783. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M., A.A.S. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler for Henry Barber, [Newport](#).

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY FOR 1783. By Isaac Bickerstaff, esq., Philom. [Providence](#): John Carter.

Two eclipse cuts are shown.



[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**NEWPORT****AQUIDNECK ISLAND****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

The “Meeting for Sufferings” committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), with Friend [Moses Brown](#) acting as clerk of that committee, noted that £134 was lying around in their education kitty and decided to bite the bullet and create a Yearly Meeting School. They considered [Providence](#), [Portsmouth](#), and [East Greenwich](#) in [Rhode Island](#), and Lynn in Massachusetts, and settled on Portsmouth because they were offered the use of a room in the local Friends meetinghouse together with the rental income from a number of house lots that Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting owned in [Newport](#). Friend Isaac Lawton there could be the schoolmaster at an annual salary of £75, and local families were volunteering to provide room and board for as many as 30 young scholars.



[John Brown](#) of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) provided half the funds for a “compleat Philosophical Apparatus and Library” of science at the [College of Rhode Island](#) — clearly they were able to take a “philosophical” *pecunia-non-olet* attitude, at the time, toward the fact that such moneys arose at least in part from the international vending of human beings, both between Africa and America (the international trade in new



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slaves) and from region to region along the American coast (local resale of used slaves).



Here is an example of the local resale of used slaves mentioned above (something that we seldom take into consideration when thinking about these issues), a local resale practice that would be allowed to continue unimpeded even after the "international slave trade" and its dread Middle Passage had been benevolently interdicted. In this year, a white widow of Warren, Rhode Island, Roby Luther Whitting, was having difficulties with her slave lad Fantee. She had leased her property to Edward Jones of Providence on May 22, 1782 to be used for a period of one year, but Jones had been dissatisfied with Fantee's labor and also dissatisfied with Fantee's general attitude. In a letter to the widow on January 17, 1783 he asked to be paid damages, alleging that the boy had been guilty of "every vice under the sun," vices unspecified. In this situation, Fantee escaped, was recaptured and imprisoned, and was then returned in disgrace in irons to the widow in Warren. The slavemistress, at her wit's end, on February 6, 1783 entrusted her black, "about Eighteen or Twenty Years Old a Healthy Active Lad," to Isaac Gorham of the Patty to be sold in the West Indies, to be taught a lesson he wouldn't forget by being gradually worked to death in the cane fields. (On the voyage thither, Captain Gorham's sloop would be intercepted by a British warship and lucky Fantee would find himself confiscated as contraband.)



"It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color - the superficial fact about a human being. Who could want such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed slavery, is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God."



- Stanley Cavell, MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY? 1976, page 141

Rhode Island privateering during the Revolutionary War:



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1782	26
1783	17



"In the United States, every possible encouragement should be given to privateering in time of war with a commercial nation ... to distress and harass the enemy and compel him to peace."

– Thomas Jefferson, 1812



"If privateering had not been already well established in the British Empire when Rhode Island first took to the sea, Rhode Islanders would have had to invent it. It suited them well.

– Hawes, Alexander Boyd, page 65<sup>197</sup>



19th, 4th day, 3rd Month: "Preparative Meeting of Portsmouth informed that Weston Hicks [a member of the Religious Society of Friends] appeared at a public Town Meeting and there advised the people not to let any refugee Tory or anyone that had been friendly to the British Army while they were in Rhode Island [on Aquidneck Island] have any vote or be chosen into any office in the Town [Portsmouth, Rhode Island], which appearing to us to create strife and animosity and being inconsistent with our religious principles and very unbecoming to a professor thereof, whereupon a committee was appointed to labour with him and bring him to a sense of his misconduct, and for his neglect of attendance of our religious meetings."

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

197. Hawes, Alexander Boyd. OFF SOUNDINGS: ASPECTS OF THE MARITIME HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Chevy Chase MD: Posterity Press, 1999



NEWPORT

AQUIDNECK ISLAND

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1784

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR; OR, THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1784. By [Benjamin West](#). [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#): Bennett Wheeler.

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR; OR, THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1784. By [Benjamin West](#). [Newport](#): Solomon Southwick.

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR: OR, THE RHODE ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1784. By [Benjamin West](#), A.M., A.A.S. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

Second edition. Advertised in the [U.S. Chronicle](#).

THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR; OR THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1784. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler. Sold by Terrence Reilly.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1784. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): John Carter.

It contains eclipse cut.



April 29, Thursday: The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) wrote from [Newport, Rhode Island](#) to [Friend Moses Brown](#) in [Providence](#) about the prospects of their abolitionist efforts:

I have dared publicly to declare that this town [Newport] is the most guilty, respecting the trade, of any on the [North American] continent, as it has been, in a great measure, built up by the blood of the poor Africans.... This has greatly displeased a number [of the local white people], and I fear the most are far from a disposition to repent, especially they who have the greatest share of the guilt.... This gives me a gloomy

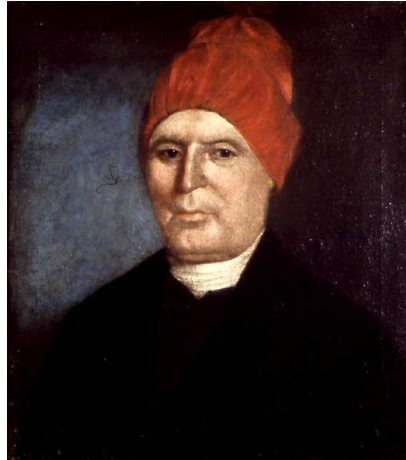


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prospect of our future circumstances!



I don't have a date for this, but will insert it arbitrarily at this point. When the Reverend wrote a polemic against the [international slave trade](#), at first the [Newport Herald](#) would agree to print his new tract — but then the editor would change his mind.

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The [Declaration of Independence](#) showed a significant drift of public opinion from the firm stand taken in the "Association" resolutions. The clique of political philosophers to which Jefferson belonged never imagined the continued existence of the country with slavery. It is well known that the first draft of the Declaration contained a severe arraignment of Great Britain as the real promoter of slavery and the slave-trade in America. In it the king was charged with waging "cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of *infidel* powers, is the warfare of the *Christian* king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where *men* should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another."<sup>198</sup>

To this radical and not strictly truthful statement, even the large influence of the Virginia leaders could not gain the assent of the delegates in Congress. The afflatus of 1774 was rapidly subsiding, and changing economic conditions had already led many to look forward to a day when the slave-trade could

198. Jefferson, *WORKS* (Washington, 1853-4), I. 23-4. On the Declaration as an anti-slavery document, cf. Elliot, *DEBATES* (1861), I. 89.



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successfully be reopened. More important than this, the nation as a whole was even less inclined now than in 1774 to denounce the slave-trade uncompromisingly. Jefferson himself says that this clause "was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who, on the contrary, still wished to continue it. Our northern brethren also, I believe," said he, "felt a little tender under those censures; for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others."<sup>199</sup>

As the war slowly dragged itself to a close, it became increasingly evident that a firm moral stand against slavery and the slave-trade was not a probability. The reaction which naturally follows a period of prolonged and exhausting strife for high political principles now set in. The economic forces of the country, which had suffered most, sought to recover and rearrange themselves; and all the selfish motives that impelled a bankrupt nation to seek to gain its daily bread did not long hesitate to demand a reopening of the profitable African slave-trade. This demand was especially urgent from the fact that the slaves, by pillage, flight, and actual fighting, had become so reduced in numbers during the war that an urgent demand for more laborers was felt in the South.

Nevertheless, the revival of the trade was naturally a matter of some difficulty, as the West India circuit had been cut off, leaving no resort except to contraband traffic and the direct African trade. The English slave-trade after the peace "returned to its former state," and was by 1784 sending 20,000 slaves annually to the West Indies.<sup>200</sup> Just how large the trade to the continent was at this time there are few means of ascertaining; it is certain that there was a general reopening of the trade in the Carolinas and Georgia, and that the New England traders participated in it. This traffic undoubtedly reached considerable proportions; and through the direct African trade and the illicit West India trade many thousands of Negroes came into the United States during the years 1783-1787.<sup>201</sup>

Meantime there was slowly arising a significant divergence of opinion on the subject. Probably the whole country still regarded both slavery and the slave-trade as temporary; but the Middle States expected to see the abolition of both within a generation, while the South scarcely thought it probable to prohibit even the slave-trade in that short time. Such a difference might, in all probability, have been satisfactorily adjusted, if both parties had recognized the real gravity of the matter. As it was, both regarded it as a problem of secondary importance, to be solved after many other more pressing ones had been disposed of. The anti-slavery men had seen slavery die in their own communities, and expected it to die the same way in

199. Jefferson, WORKS (Washington, 1853-4), I. 19.

200. Clarkson, IMPOLICY OF THE SLAVE-TRADE, pages 25-6; REPORT OF THE LORDS OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL, etc. (London, 1789).

201. Witness the many high duty acts on slaves, and the revenue derived therefrom. Massachusetts had sixty distilleries running in 1783. Cf. Sheffield, OBSERVATIONS ON AMERICAN COMMERCE, page 267.



NEWPORT

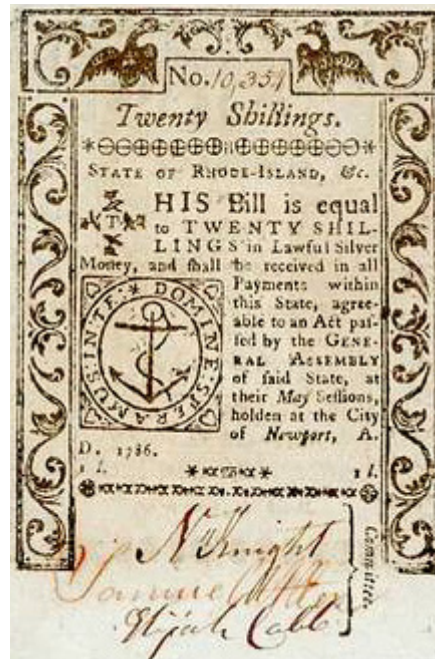
AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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others, with as little active effort on their own part. The Southern planters, born and reared in a slave system, thought that some day the system might change, and possibly disappear; but active effort to this end on their part was ever farthest from their thoughts. Here, then, began that fatal policy toward slavery and the slave-trade that characterized the nation for three-quarters of a century, the policy of *laissez-faire*, *laissez-passer*.

1786

[John Collins](#) was elected governor of [Rhode Island](#); and would hold that office until 1789. Farmers were burning their grain, dumping their milk, and leaving their apples to rot in the orchards in an inconsequential farm strike directed against [Providence](#) and [Newport](#) merchants who would no longer accept a paper currency that had become essentially worthless. This was a 20-shilling note of [Rhode Island](#) currency in circulation at the time:



[William Ellery](#), who had been a long-term member of the Continental Congress, at this point returned to [Newport](#). Soon he would be functioning as a commissioner of the continental loan office, and for a time as chief justice of the [Rhode Island](#) superior court.



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April 15, Saturday: In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), [Walter Channing](#) was born to William Channing and Lucy Ellery Channing. His father, a Princetonian, was a federal district attorney. His maternal grandfather William Ellery, a Harvard man, had signed our [Declaration of Independence](#). His older brother, the Reverend William Ellery Channing, would be the minister of the Federal Street Church in Boston from 1803 to 1842. His younger brother, Edward Tyrell Channing, would become the Boylston Professor of Rhetoric at Harvard College, succeeding John Quincy Adams as that young man left academia for his career in diplomacy and politics. In 1804 Walter Channing would enter Harvard College and among his classmates would be a 1st cousin, Richard Henry Dana, who after a hiatus for a few years before the mast, would also be at Harvard at the same time as Henry David Thoreau. In 1807 students at the College would go on a rampage, and in 1808 Walter's bachelor's degree would be withheld as punishment (he would receive the degree — but not until 1867). In 1809 Walter would obtain the M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and after that he would study for three years in Europe to return to Boston in 1812 to take up a practice in obstetrics. Even without the bachelor's diploma, [Doctor Walter Channing](#) would become professor of Obstetrics and Medical Jurisprudence at Harvard Medical School.



May: The parishioners of the Second Congregational Church in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) selected a new pastor, a full decade after their pastor, the Reverend [Ezra Stiles](#), had left for [Dighton, Providence](#), Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Yale College in New Haven, Connecticut.



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1788

AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1788. By Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#) [[Rhode Island](#)].<sup>202</sup> [Newport](#): Peter Edes. October 11, 1787.

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY, OR [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1788. By Daniel Freebetter, Philomath. [Newport](#): Peter Edes.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR, LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S DIARY FOR 1788. By Isaac Bickerstaff, esq., Philom. [Providence](#): John Carter.

WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, AND RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1788. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

WHEELER'S SHEET [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1788. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

Broadside. Advertised in the [U.S. Chronicle](#). No copy located.

[Benjamin West](#) began to lecture in mathematics and natural philosophy at the [College of Rhode Island](#). THE NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR: OR, THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST 1788.... [[Benjamin West](#)] [Providence](#): Printed by Bennett Wheeler. One-page account of the College of Rhode-Island. A number of useful "receipts" such as how to make Japan ink, how to prevent the "smoking" of lamps, and how to produce "the King of France's Teeth Powder, famous for making the Teeth White and preserving them from the Scurvy."

(Same, second impression) Advertised in the [U.S. Chronicle](#).

[Isaac Bailey](#), who would as a young adult be heavily engaged in the [Providence](#) printing business, was born in [Rhode Island](#).

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) boarding school that Friend [Moses Brown](#) had established in [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#) in 1784 at this point was discontinued due to cash flow problems (although the rents from Point Estates in [Newport](#) had been promised as tuition, due to the general economic distress in New England during this year the renters there had fallen behind in their monthly payments).<sup>203</sup>

MOSES BROWN SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

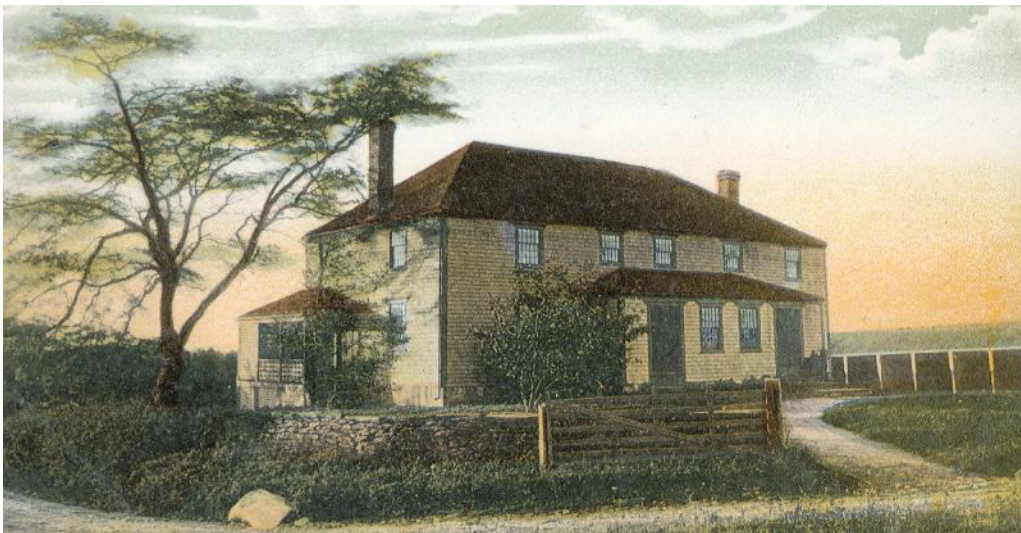
202. Elisha Thornton had been born in Smithfield, Rhode Island in 1748, and was the first native Rhode Island almanac maker. He would discontinue publishing his own material with the issue of 1792 and thereafter would vend his calculations to other printers. 203. After a hiatus of two decades, in 1808, Friend Moses would revive this school board, and after more than another decade of planning, the school would begin anew in 1819, this time atop College Hill in [Providence](#).

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If you have seen allegations concerning [antisemitic](#) remarks supposedly made by George Washington and [Benjamin Franklin](#) at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, warning all Americans against the insidious influence of the Jews, please take into consideration that the primary authoritative source at present for the proceedings, Max Farrand (ed.) RECORDS OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION, rev. ed., 4 volumes (New Haven and London, 1966, 1987) makes no reference to such antisemitic remarks by either the rural [slaveholder](#) Washington or the urban [slaveholder](#) Franklin. Washington's tolerant attitude toward Jews is evidenced by a letter he would write to the leader of the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) on August 17, 1790, in which he would say that the government of the US "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance," and requires only that those who live under the protection of the government "demean [which is to say, conduct] themselves as good citizens" (Edwin Gaustad, A RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF AMERICA [NY, 1966], page 125). (Since this congregation of Jews was, among other things, investing in the [international slave trade](#), here the definition of what constituted demeaning oneself as a good citizen was a quite lax one, involving merely the generation of profits.) As for Franklin's attitude toward American Jews in 1787, in this very next year he contributed to a fund to help pay off the debt of the Jewish Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia. The "text" of Franklin's alleged remarks originated in a magazine [Liberation](#) on February 3, 1934 and then began to be reprinted by any number of Nazi and antisemitic groups. Charles A. Beard, in the [Jewish Frontier](#) for March 1935, demonstrated this to have been a fabrication. The matter was further investigated by Julian P. Boyd, in the [Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography](#), [LXI](#) (1937), 233-234, and he concurred that the text was an entire fabrication. For a more recent treatment, refer to Claude-Anne Lopez's "Franklin, Hitler, Mussolini, and the Internet" as part of her MY LIFE WITH BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (Yale UP, 2000, pages 3-16).

March 8, Saturday: [Abraham Redwood](#) died on the island of Aquidneck. His body would be buried in the Coggeshall family plot on Coggeshall Avenue in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), next door to the stables of the Preservation Society. In the latter stages of his life, Friend Abraham had been labored with unsuccessfully by his fellow [Quakers](#), to persuade him to renounce his reliance upon human [slavery](#).<sup>204</sup> The will of this Quaker slavemaster and philanthropist provided £500 to be used toward the establishment of a Friends' School and £500 to be used toward the establishment of a [College of Rhode Island](#), provided that said college would be located in his home town of Newport. Did his money have blood on it? No, the wonderful thing about money (like the wonderful thing about a dirty little boy) is that it's infinitely washable.

[MOSES BROWN SCHOOL](#)  
[BROWN UNIVERSITY](#)

Winter: [Friends Moses Brown](#) and Samuel Emlin (a traveling public Friend visiting from Philadelphia) went to the [Providence, Rhode Island](#) home of the premier slavetrader, Cyprian Sterry, were invited to enter, and had there an extended conversation with that businessman. Some 6 negro vessels were leaving the Narragansett Bay during that season bound for the shores of Africa, and in the harbor at [Newport](#), Sterry was in the process of fitting out one of these six. The Quakers warned Sterry that if he violated the new law about the engagement of Rhode Islanders in the [international slave trade](#), they would see to it that he was prosecuted. Sterry took refuge in the standard lie — he was sending, he averred, his ship to Africa after ivory and gold rather than, Heaven forbid, after black [slaves](#).

204. Eventually the [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) disowned him — but their record, now at the Rhode Island Historical Society, neglects to state the reason why this action was taken.



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**1789**

The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) preached some hot-stuff sermons that later on he would have published.

**SERMONS FROM 1789**

WEATHERWISE'S [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR 1789.... Boston: Printed and Sold by Edmund Freeman. More than five pages of this were devoted to the fate of an American who had torched a British naval facility during December 1776. The account, "An authentic Account of James Hill, otherwise John Hind, otherwise James Hind, otherwise James Acksan, commonly called John the Painter, who was executed for setting fire to the Rope-house belonging to His Majesty's Dock Yard at Portsmouth," instanced that this person had been being paid for military intelligence by an American commissioner in Paris, Silas Dean.



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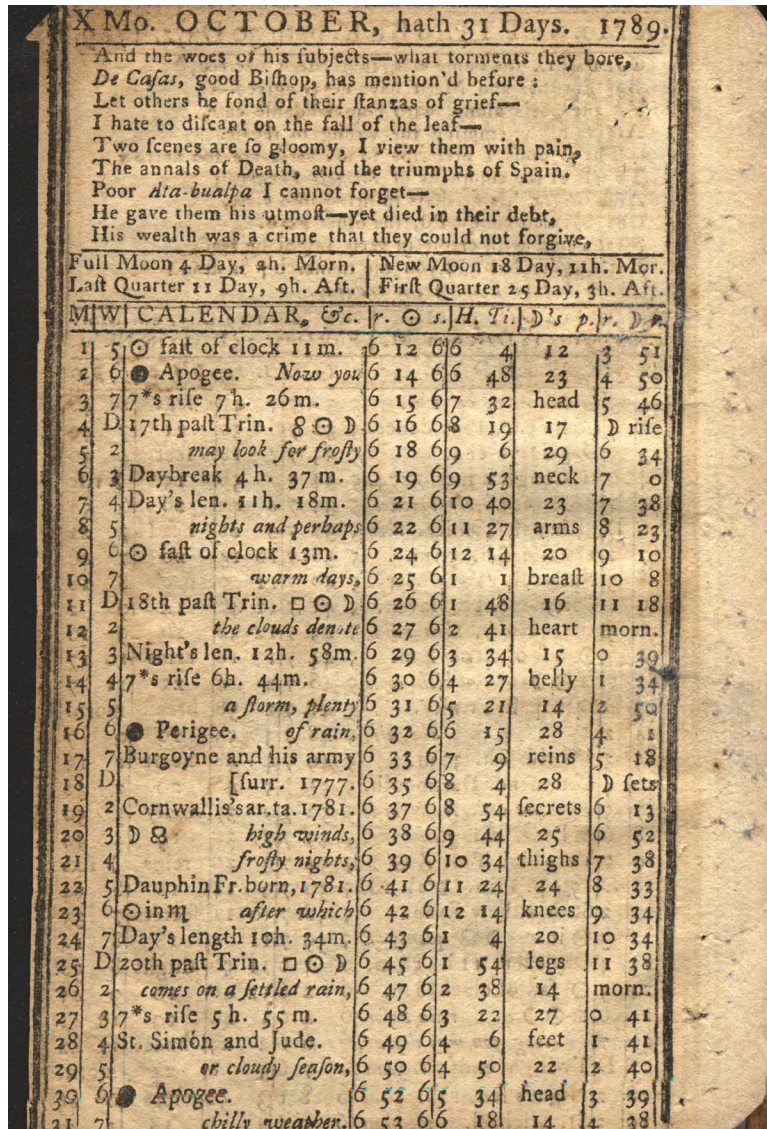
**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

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POOR RICHARD'S RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1789. BY POOR RICHARD. [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#): Peter Edes.

AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1789. By Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#). [Newport](#): Peter Edes.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1789. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): John Carter.



WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR & RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1789 ([Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler) had an exceedingly crude woodcut of the "Arms of the United States."

The title page bears cut of Arms of United States and the almanac contains a report of the committee to make the channel, with directions for entering the harbor of Providence.



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February 20, Friday: At the meetinghouse of the Religious Society of Friends at the corner of Towne and Meeting Streets in Providence, Rhode Island, the Providence Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade came into being and selected its first officers. David Howell (January 1, 1747-July 21, 1824) would be president, Friend Moses Brown would be treasurer, and Friend Thomas Arnold would be recording secretary. Also involved in the creation of this Society were the Reverend Samuel Hopkins, minister of the 1st Congregational Church at Newport, Friend William Rotch, prominent merchant of New Bedford, etc. The new society would function as a sort of non-official "District Attorney," or "Special Prosecutor," dedicated to bringing before the bar of justice any violators of the ban that had been enacted by the General Assembly in 1787 against taking part in the international slave trade.

ANTISLAVERY



MOSES BROWN

According to Mack Thompson's MOSES BROWN, RELUCTANT REFORMER (Chapel Hill NC: U of North Carolina P, 1962, pages 195-6):

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.<sup>205</sup> Samuel 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...."<sup>206</sup>

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: Meantime, in spite of the prohibitory State laws, the African slave-trade to the United States continued to flourish. It was notorious that New England traders carried on a large traffic.<sup>207</sup> Members stated on the floor of the House that "it was much to be regretted that the severe and pointed statute against the slave trade had been so little regarded. In defiance of its forbiddance and its penalties, it was well known that citizens and vessels of the United States were still engaged in that traffic.... In various parts of the

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

206. The Reverend Samuel Hopkins to Friend Moses Brown, March 7, 1789, MOSES BROWN PAPERS (John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Volume VI, page 57)

207. Cf. Fowler, LOCAL LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT, etc., page 126.



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nation, outfits were made for slave-voyages, without secrecy, shame, or apprehension.... Countenanced by their fellow-citizens at home, who were as ready to buy as they themselves were to collect and to bring to market, they approached our Southern harbors and inlets, and clandestinely disembarked the sooty offspring of the Eastern, upon the ill fated soil of the Western hemisphere. In this way, it had been computed that, during the last twelve months, twenty thousand enslaved negroes had been transported from Guinea, and, by smuggling, added to the plantation stock of Georgia and South Carolina. So little respect seems to have been paid to the existing prohibitory statute, that it may almost be considered as disregarded by common consent."<sup>208</sup>

These voyages were generally made under the flag of a foreign nation, and often the vessel was sold in a foreign port to escape confiscation. South Carolina's own Congressman confessed that although the State had prohibited the trade since 1788, she "was unable to enforce" her laws. "With navigable rivers running into the heart of it," said he, "it was impossible, with our means, to prevent our Eastern brethren, who, in some parts of the Union, in defiance of the authority of the General Government, have been engaged in this trade, from introducing them into the country. The law was completely evaded, and, for the last year or two [1802-3], Africans were introduced into the country in numbers little short, I believe, of what they would have been had the trade been a legal one."<sup>209</sup> The same tale undoubtedly might have been told of Georgia.

Subsequent to July 31: The federal Congress enacted a supplementary Customs Act, creating 59 custom districts in 11 states. In this act, no provision whatever was made for [Rhode Island](#) simply because it had not yet ratified [the Constitution](#) of the United States — and thus had not yet become a State of the Union.<sup>210</sup>

**1790**

The United States Government issued its first patent, to Samuel Hopkins of Vermont (apparently not the same person as the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of the 1st Congregational Church at [Newport, Rhode Island](#)), for a process to make potash and pearl ash.

208. Speech of S.L. Mitchell of New York, Feb. 14, 1804: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 8th Congress, 1st Session, page 1000. Cf. also speech of Bedinger: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, pages 997-8.

209. Speech of Lowndes in the House, Feb. 14, 1804: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 8th Congress,, 1st Session, page 992. Cf. Stanton's speech later: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 9th Congress, 2d Session, page 240.

210. Upon the belated ratification of the federal government by [Rhode Island](#), President Washington would appoint [William Ellery](#) as collector of customs for the port of [Newport](#), and this function he would fill for the remainder of his life.



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WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1790. [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#): Bennett Wheeler.

Cut of eclipse on title page.



(Same, second edition.)

The second edition contains an apology for the non-appearance of the comet of 1661.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1790. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): John Carter.

Contains two eclipse cuts. This almanac contains "Directions for sailing up the Providence River."



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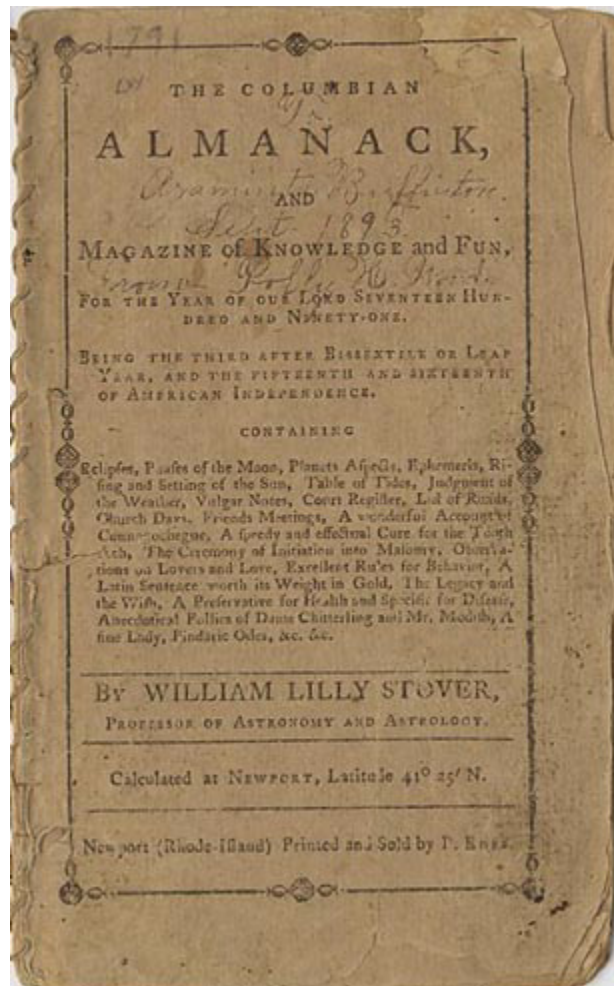
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AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1790. By Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#). [Newport](#): Peter Edes.

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1790. [Newport](#): Peter Edes.

THE COLUMBIAN [ALMANACK](#) AND MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND FUN FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD SEVENTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-ONE. BEING THE THIRD AFTER BISEXTILE OR LEAP YEAR, AND THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE. "William Lilly Stover, Professor of Astronomy and Astrology." Calculated at [Newport](#), Latitude 41° 25' N.: Printed and Sold by Peter Edes. This offered calculations identical to those of Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#)'s RHODE ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1791, which was also printed by Peter Edes.





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At some point during the first part of this year, President George Washington paid another visit to [Newport](#) and its synagogue (it was not then known as the “[Touro Synagogue](#)”). He sat with the synagogue’s President (Parnas) in the place of honor on the raised platform at the side, inside a rail and separate from the congregation. While there, a Jewish inventor named Jacob Isaacs presented the President with a bottle of water which he represented to be drinking water converted by a special secret process from sea water. Sampling this bottle of water, the President expressed himself highly satisfied with the result.<sup>211</sup>

The primary purpose of the great white father, however, in visiting [Rhode Island](#) at this point, was to lean on local politicians to get the federal [Constitution](#) ratified:

1790. A State convention at Newport, in May, voted, to adopt the Federal Constitution; and this State came into the Union, the last of the original thirteen; and the event was commemorated by great public demonstrations of joy. The population of the town was 6380. President Washington again visited this town [[Providence](#)], with several distinguished public men in his suite. His arrival was announced by a discharge of artillery and the ringing of bells. A procession of citizens was formed, and he was conducted to the Golden Ball Inn, kept by Henry Rice, now the Mansion House. He was complimented by a public dinner, at which three hundred citizens attended. A very respectful and cordial address was made to him by a Committee appointed by the town, to which he suitably replied, and departed in the evening.

211. The first record of anyone trying a desalting process is actually to be found in Pentateuch. When Moses and the people of Israel came upon the waters of Marah, which were bitter, “the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast unto the waters, the waters were made sweet.” The earliest interest in desalination processes arose from the danger of dying of thirst on the open sea. The US would become involved in 1791 when a technical report would be presented by President George Washington’s Secretary of State [Thomas Jefferson](#), describing the results of a simple distillation process. Jefferson as head of the Board of Arts would call in a panel of chemists to test the submitted device and, when it could not be made to function as expected, he would deny the application for patent. Later, when desalination of small quantities of water would become feasible, information on the procedure to be followed would be printed on the back of all the papers on board American vessels so that a source of fresh water might be obtained in an emergency. Then, in a later timeframe, conversion units would begin to be manufactured so that steam ships would not need to fill cargo bays with casks of fresh water with which to refill their boilers.



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**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

May 24, Monday-29, Saturday: During this year, the 1st US national census would be reporting 68,824 people in [Rhode Island](#), 6,380 of whom were in [Providence](#).

The governing figures in the state had been defying the instructions of the nascent federal government and instead of staging a representative convention of delegates had conducted a democratic popular referendum on the new US constitutional document. Since this referendum had been boycotted by the Federalists, it had defeated the constitution by a vote of 2,708 over 237. Finally, however, in mid-January 1790, the requisite convention of delegates had been called together, and an initial inconclusive convention had been held in [South Kingstown](#) on March 1-6, and a second convention of delegates was staged in [Newport](#) on May 24-29, and a ratification tally of 34 votes over 32 votes was obtained when [Providence](#) threatened to secede from the state and unite itself either with Connecticut or with Massachusetts — and, finally, on May 29th, by the slimmest of margins, two votes, Rhode Island became the 13th of the original 13 states to ratify [the Constitution](#):



The Reverend [Isaac Backus](#) had offered to his friends for consideration a Bill of Rights for incorporation somehow into the document. His 2d item read as follows:

As God is the only worthy object of all religious worship, and nothing can be true religion but a voluntary obedience unto His revealed will ... every person has an unalienable right to act in all religious affairs according to the full persuasion of his own mind, where others are not injured thereby....

Might it be said that, in holding out in this way against a new federal union between slaveholding colonies and nonslaveholding colonies, these Rhode Island [Quakers](#) were anticipating the civil war which would destroy so many American lives three or four human generations into the future? (By way of radical contrast, the people in the other American colonies were in effect saying to them, “Hey, don’t let a little thing like human slavery bother you so much!”) Well, you could say that if you believe that Rhode Islanders are by their very nature pure of heart. However, some historians have alleged that the issue can be better understood by observing the Watergate rule, “follow the money” — Rhode Island, they suggest, had needed to uphold state sovereignty in order for its paper money to retain value.



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**AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

**RATIFICATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

<b>December 8, 1787</b>	<b>Delaware</b>	<b>YES= 30</b>	<b>NO= 0</b>
<b>December 12, 1787</b>	<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>YES= 46</b>	<b>NO= 23</b>
<b>December 18, 1787</b>	<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>YES= 38</b>	<b>NO= 0</b>
<b>January 2, 1788</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>YES= 26</b>	<b>NO= 0</b>
<b>January 8, 1788</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>YES=128</b>	<b>NO= 40</b>
<b>February 6, 1788</b>	<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>YES=187</b>	<b>NO=168</b>
<b>April 28, 1788</b>	<b>Maryland</b>	<b>YES= 63</b>	<b>NO= 11</b>
<b>May 23, 1788</b>	<b>South Carolina</b>	<b>YES=149</b>	<b>NO= 73</b>
<b>June 21, 1788</b>	<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>YES= 57</b>	<b>NO= 47</b>
<b>June 25, 1788</b>	<b>Virginia</b>	<b>YES= 89</b>	<b>NO= 79</b>
<b>July 26, 1788</b>	<b>New York</b>	<b>YES= 30</b>	<b>NO= 27</b>

**JOINING LATER IN ADHERENCE TO THE US CONSTITUTION: 12 & 13**

<b>November 21, 1789</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>YES=194</b>	<b>NO= 77</b>
<b>May 29, 1790</b>	<b>Rhode Island</b>	<b>YES= 34</b>	<b>NO= 32</b>

**READ THE FULL TEXT**

1790. A State convention at Newport, in May, voted, to adopt the Federal Constitution; and this State came into the Union, the last of the original thirteen; and the event was commemorated by great public demonstrations of joy. The population of the town was 6380. President Washington again visited this town, with several distinguished public men in his suite. His arrival was announced by a discharge of artillery and the ringing of bells. A procession of citizens was formed, and he was conducted to the Golden Ball Inn, kept by Henry Rice, now the Mansion House. He was complimented by a public dinner, at which three hundred citizens attended. A very respectful and cordial address was made to him by a Committee appointed by the town, to which he suitably replied, and departed in the evening.



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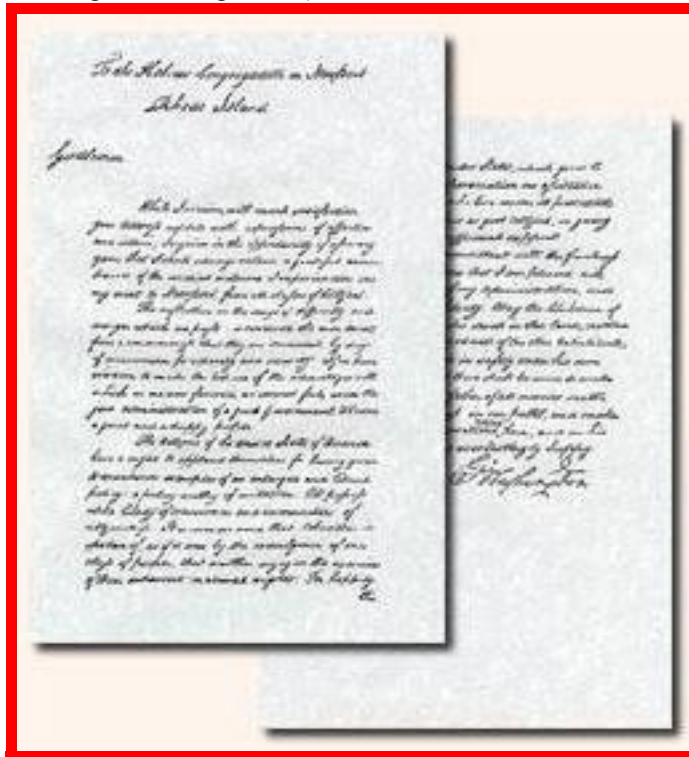
**GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

June 14, Monday: The federal Congress created the [Rhode Island](#) custom districts of [Providence](#) and [Newport](#). These two districts handled all ship traffic connecting with nine Rhode Island ports, in the Providence district, [Providence](#) and [Pawtuxet](#), and, in the Newport district, [Newport](#), [North Kingstown](#), [East Greenwich](#), [Westerly](#), [Bristol](#), [Warren](#), and Barrington.

**READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT**

August 17, Tuesday: Il genio poetico appagato, a cantata by Giovanni Paisiello to words of Pagliuca was performed for the initial time, in San Ferdinando, [Naples](#).

President George Washington had received a communication from Moses Seixas, warden (*shamash*) of the [Touro Synagogue](#) which he had visited in 1781, in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), rejoicing in the religious liberty afforded by the United States.<sup>212</sup> In reply the president sent the famous letter “To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, R.I.” which since has been taken as the classical expression of religious liberty in America. In this response Washington politely observed “*For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean [which is to say, conduct] themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support*” (Edwin Gaustad, A RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF AMERICA. NY, 1966, page 125 — this letter is preserved at the B’ai B’righ Building in Washington DC).



**RHODE ISLAND RELIGION**

212.It was Moses Seixas who officiated at the Covenant of Circumcision (B’rith Milah), removing the foreskin of the male infant.



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Note: If you have seen allegations concerning anti-Semitic remarks supposedly made by this politician general and by the politician printer [Benjamin Franklin](#) at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, warning all Americans against the insidious influence of the Jews, please take into consideration that the primary authoritative source at present for the proceedings at this convention, Max Farrand (ed.) RECORDS OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION (Revised Edition, 4 volumes, New Haven and London, 1966; 1987) makes no reference to any such remarks by either individual.

**ANTISEMITISM**

As for Franklin's attitude toward American Jews in 1787, in the very next year he contributed to a fund to help pay off the debt of the Jewish Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia. The "text" of Franklin's alleged remarks originated in a magazine [Liberation](#) on February 3, 1934 and then began to be reprinted by any number of Nazi and anti-Semitic groups. Charles A. Beard, in the [Jewish Frontier](#) for March 1935, demonstrated that this had to have been a fabrication. The matter was further investigated by Julian P. Boyd in the [Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography](#), [LXI](#) (1937), 233-234, who has concurred that the text was an entire fabrication.

**JUDAISM**

**1791**

THE COLUMBIAN [ALMANACK](#) AND MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND FUN FOR 1791. By William Lilly Stover, professor of astronomy and astrology, [Newport \(Rhode Island\)](#): P. Edes.

The type pages of this almanac are wider than those of its contemporary Rhode Island almanacs. The Court Register is placed above the astronomical calculation for the month in the space formerly filled by poetry. It contains an account of the masonic initiation.

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1791. By Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#). [Newport](#): P. Edes.

WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1791. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

It has a cut of the eclipse on the title page.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1791. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#), John Carter.

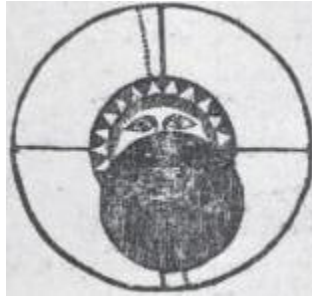


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A cut of the eclipse is included.



In Worcester, Massachusetts, Isaiah Thomas (1749-1831) was printing the most extensive Bible published here in Colonial times, the FIRST QUARTO BIBLE. Thomas walked on eggshells, making careful comparison of 30 different editions of the King James Bible and then having every sheet that was set in his press examined by the clergymen of Worcester. Thomas had been apprenticed to a printer at the age of 6, had illustrated a book with woodcuts at the age of 13, and would retire in 1802 at the age of 53 as one of the richest men in America — no doubt, a considerable part of this wealth would come from printing various editions and sizes of this Bible (Benjamin Franklin would refer to Thomas as “The Baskerville of America”). In his prospectus announcing this quarto edition the printer agreed to accept, in partial payment, “wheat, rye, indian corn, butter or pork, if delivered at his store in Worcester or at the store of himself and Company in Boston by the 20th day of December, 1790, the remaining sum of twenty-one shillings to be paid in cash, as soon as the books are ready for delivery.”

**HISTORY OF THE PRESS**

**1792**

The Moses Levy and Moses Seixas families lived together in a mansion at 29 Touro Street, near the [Touro Synagogue](#). Moses Levy, a merchant and trader of New-York and [Newport](#), was one of several Ashkenazi families in the town at that time. Moses Seixas was Cashier of the Bank of Rhode Island. He was also a founding member of the nation’s oldest Jewish Masonic Lodge, King David in Newport, and Grand Master of the Masonic Order of [Rhode Island](#). In this year Moses Levy died, willing his interest in the mansion at 29 Touro Street to Moses Seixas.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1792. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): John Carter.

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1792. By Elisha Thornton of [Smithfield](#).<sup>213</sup> [Newport](#): P. Edes.

WHEELER’S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1792. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

213. Elisha Thornton had been born in Smithfield, Rhode Island in 1748, and was the first native Rhode Island almanac maker. He would discontinue publishing his own material with this issue and thereafter would vend his calculations to other printers.



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A cut of the eclipse appears on the title page.





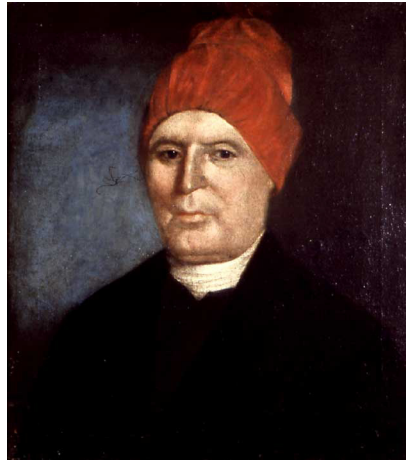
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**1793**

The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#)'s THE SYSTEM OF DOCTRINES CONTAINED IN DIVINE REVELATION, EXPLAINED AND DEFENDED. SHOWING THEIR CONSISTENCE AND CONNECTION WITH EACH OTHER. TO WHICH IS, ADDED, A *TREATISE ON THE MILLENNIUM* (a description of the "New Divinity," or the "New England School of Theology," that was calling believers to give their love to God alone, sacrificing all personal considerations, and thus take their places in the divine order, which would come to be known as "[Hopkinsianism](#)").<sup>214</sup> As part of this the Reverend deduced from prophecies in the books of DANIEL and REVELATION that the [millennium](#) would come not far from the end of the 20th Century.



**HERE IS VOLUME ONE**  
**HERE IS VOLUME TWO**

Also, during this year, his A DISCOURSE UPON THE SLAVE TRADE AND THE HISTORY OF THE AFRICANS.

214. This would sell 1,200 copies. The doctrines of [Hopkinsian](#) theology may be summed up as follows: God so rules the universe as to produce its highest happiness, considered as a whole. Since God's sovereignty is absolute, sin must be, by divine permission, a means by which this happiness of the whole is secured, though that this is its consequence, renders it no less heinous in the sinner. Virtue consists in preference for the good of the whole to any private advantage; hence the really virtuous man must willingly accept any disposition of himself that God may deem wise — a doctrine often called willingness to be damned. All have natural power to choose the right, and are therefore responsible for their acts; but all men lack inclination to choose the right unless the existing bias of their wills is transformed by the power of God from self-seeking into an effective inclination toward virtue. Hence preaching should demand instant submission to God and disinterested goodwill, and should teach the worthlessness of all religious acts or dispositions which are less than these, while recognizing that God can grant or withhold the regenerative change at his pleasure.



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## AQUIDNECK ISLAND

### GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June: Friend [Elias Hicks](#) of Long Island visited the monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#).<sup>215</sup>

This was part of [Friend](#) Elias's 14th ministry journey. That summer he was traveling with the young [James Mott, Jr.](#), future bridegroom of the newborn Lucretia Coffin.

[LUCRETIA MOTT](#)



On this long journey, he had gone from the Jericho meetinghouse on *Paumanok* Long Island (still extant, pictured above) across the sound to Port Chester meeting, up the Connecticut shore to Stamford meeting, on up the shore to Stonington meeting, into [Rhode Island](#) to the [Westerly](#) meeting, up to the meetings in and around [Providence](#) and Taunton, back down and round through the [Newport](#) meeting and the [New Bedford MA](#) meeting to the Falmouth meeting, and at this point out to the meeting on [Nantucket Island](#). He would continue back up across Cape Cod to the Sandwich meeting and on up along the South Shore to the Scituate meeting, and on to the [Boston](#) area and the Salem meeting, and north to the Newburyport MA and Hampton and Dover NH meetings, and on to the Portland ME meeting, and beyond that crossing the “great river Kennebeck” twice and reaching to the Fairfield and Winthrop meetings, and then the Pittsfield NH meeting, and then back down into Massachusetts and to [Boston](#), visiting again some meetings already preached at and attending New England [Yearly Meeting](#), and then striking west presumably through [Concord](#), over to the North Adams meeting in the north-west corner of Massachusetts, and up through Vermont to the Sharon, Hanover, and Vergennes meetings, and up across Lake Champlain to the Grand Isle meeting, and then back down through Vergennes again to the meetings in Saratoga and Albany and Hudson NY, and then back home to Jericho by way of the Brooklyn meeting of New-York. Total mileage they would put on their horses during this traveling season: 2,283 miles. During this absence his child Sarah would be born, and the two traveling ministers by November had spoken at about 123 meetings.

It was at some point during this year that Friend Elias's young orphaned relative, [Edward Hicks](#) who had been taken into the Quaker household of David and Elizabeth Lewis Twining, having reached the age of 13, was being put out as an apprentice to the Tomlinson brothers, coachmakers in Attleborough.

215. Other famous-name visitors to [Nantucket Island](#): John Easton, former [Rhode Island](#) deputy governor, [Metacom](#), sachem of the [Wampanoag](#), Frederick Douglass, and [Henry Thoreau](#).



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1794

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1794. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): Carter and Wilkinson.

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#), WITH AN EPHEMERIS FOR 1794. By Elisha Thornton. [Warren](#): Nathaniel Phillips for Jacob Richardson, [Newport](#).

(Thornton's?) SHEET [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1794. ([Providence?](#)) Broadside. Advertised in [Providence Gazette](#).

PHILLIPS'S UNITED STATES DIARY, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1794. [Warren](#): Nathaniel Phillips.

WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1794.... [[Benjamin West](#)]. [Providence](#): Printed ... by Bennett Wheeler. Title cut of lunar eclipse.



Two-plus pages were devoted to “Thirteen Allegories.” Described the “famous thieves vinegar” that had been such an effective remedy during the 1666 plague in London.

The arms of the United States and of Rhode Island appear on title page of this and subsequent Phillips almanacs.

[Friend Moses Brown](#) and [Friend](#) Samuel Rodman presented to President George Washington and Vice-President John Adams a memorial in opposition to the [international slave trade](#). The federal Congress passed an act prohibiting the trans-Atlantic trade. (When officials of the [Newport](#) customs district would begin to enforce this law in the subsidiary port of [Bristol](#), this would interfere with the nefarious activities of [Rhode Island](#) slavetraders [James DeWolf](#) and Shearjashub Bourne. The [slavetraders](#) would lobby the government for the establishment of Bristol as a separate customs district and no longer subject to these out-of-control officials of the Newport customs district — who were actually daring to enforce this new law.)

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: Of the twenty years from 1787 to 1807 it can only be said that they were, on the whole, a period of disappointment so far as the suppression of the slave-trade was concerned. Fear, interest, and philanthropy united for a time in an effort which bade fair to suppress the trade; then the real weakness of the constitutional compromise appeared, and the interests of the few overcame the fears and the humanity of the



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many .



The DeWolf Crest



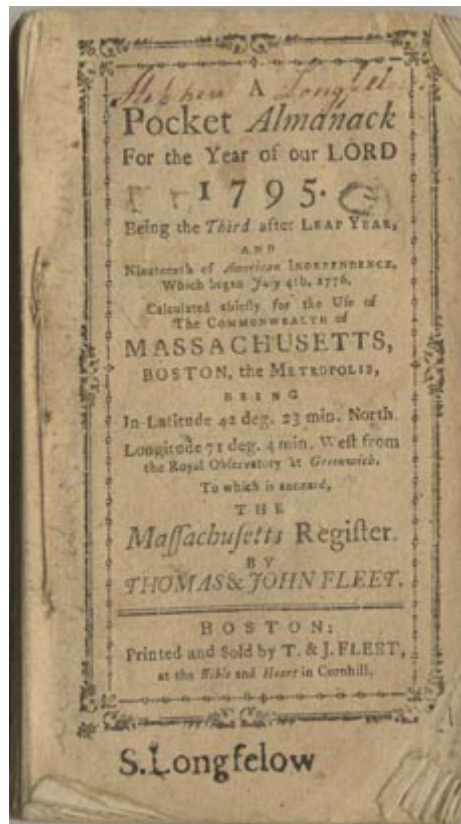
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**1795**

A POCKET [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1795... TO WHICH IS ANNEXED, THE MASSACHUSETTS REGISTER... Boston: Printed and sold by Thomas & John Fleet. The first 20 pages was an almanac, most likely that of Nathanael Low. The remainder of the pages were devoted to tables and listings such as the Massachusetts county census of 1791, Light Houses on the Head Lands and Islands of the United States, Practitioners of Law in Massachusetts, Cutters employed in Aid of the Customs, Post Office Matters, and Ministers, Churches and Religious Assemblies in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1796.... "Isaac Bickerstaff." Boston: Printed for B. Larkin, E. Larkin.... The calculations correspond closely to those of Osgood Carleton's almanac for 1796.

PHILLIPS'S UNITED STATES DIARY; OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1795. [Warren](#), [Rhode Island](#): Nathaniel Phillips.



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ANDERSON REVIVED: BEING AN [ALMANACK](#), AND EPHEMERIS FOR 1795. By John Anderson. [Newport](#): Henry C. Southwick and Co.

WHEELERS'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1795. [Providence](#): Bennett Wheeler.

(Same, with variation on last ten pages.)

NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1795. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): Carter and Wilkinson.

THE RHODE-ISLAND REGISTER FOR 1795.

Bartlett ascribes this to Elijah Fenton. It was bound both with the Bickerstaff and with the Thornton almanacs for 1796.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1795. By Elisha Thornton. [Providence](#): Carter and Wilkinson.

THORNTON'S SHEET [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1795. [Providence](#): Carter and Wilkinson.

Broadside. Advertised in [Providence Gazette](#).

August: [John Brown](#) of [Providence](#) conspired with Captain Peleg Wood of [Newport](#) to inject another [Rhode Island negrero](#) vessel into the [international slave trade](#).



**1796**

The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#)'s THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF MISS SUSANNA ANTHONY: WHO DIED IN [NEWPORT](#) (R.I.) JUNE 23, MDCCXCI, IN THE SIXTY FIFTH YEAR OF HER AGE: CONSISTING CHIEFLY IN EXTRACTS FROM HER WRITINGS, WITH SOME BRIEF OBSERVATIONS ON THEM.

**MISS SUSANNA ANTHONY**

**RHODE ISLAND**

August 30, Tuesday: [Henry Marchant](#) died in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

Late in the year: Captain Peleg Wood brought [John Brown](#)'s [negrero Hope](#) back to [Rhode Island](#) after a successful voyage in which he had brought a cargo of newly enslaved human beings from the coast of Africa to the barracoons of Havana, Cuba. A new law had just forbidden Rhode Islanders from any participation in the [international slave trade](#), and Captain Wood's son was overheard to comment that [Newport](#) slavetraders were eagerly awaiting the outcome of this "experiment ... to try the strength of the law."

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: Meantime, in spite of the prohibitory State laws, the African slave-trade to the United States continued to flourish. It was notorious that New England traders carried on a large traffic.<sup>216</sup> Members stated on the floor of the



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House that "it was much to be regretted that the severe and pointed statute against the slave trade had been so little regarded. In defiance of its forbiddance and its penalties, it was well known that citizens and vessels of the United States were still engaged in that traffic.... In various parts of the nation, outfits were made for slave-voyages, without secrecy, shame, or apprehension.... Countenanced by their fellow-citizens at home, who were as ready to buy as they themselves were to collect and to bring to market, they approached our Southern harbors and inlets, and clandestinely disembarked the sooty offspring of the Eastern, upon the ill fated soil of the Western hemisphere. In this way, it had been computed that, during the last twelve months, twenty thousand enslaved negroes had been transported from Guinea, and, by smuggling, added to the plantation stock of Georgia and South Carolina. So little respect seems to have been paid to the existing prohibitory statute, that it may almost be considered as disregarded by common consent."<sup>217</sup>

These voyages were generally made under the flag of a foreign nation, and often the vessel was sold in a foreign port to escape confiscation. South Carolina's own Congressman confessed that although the State had prohibited the trade since 1788, she "was unable to enforce" her laws. "With navigable rivers running into the heart of it," said he, "it was impossible, with our means, to prevent our Eastern brethren, who, in some parts of the Union, in defiance of the authority of the General Government, have been engaged in this trade, from introducing them into the country. The law was completely evaded, and, for the last year or two [1802-3], Africans were introduced into the country in numbers little short, I believe, of what they would have been had the trade been a legal one."<sup>218</sup> The same tale undoubtedly might have been told of Georgia.

1797

Richard Henry Dana, Sr. was sent to school in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

August 5, Monday: There was a preliminary appearance in federal court in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) on this day, in preparation for the trial of [John Brown](#) on charge of being engaged in the [international slave trade](#).

Per Jay Coughtry, Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas:

On August 5, 1797, [John Brown](#), the premier merchant and first

216. Cf. Fowler, LOCAL LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT, etc., page 126.

217. Speech of S.L. Mitchell of New York, Feb. 14, 1804: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 8th Congress, 1st Session, page 1000. Cf. also speech of Bedinger: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, pages 997-8.

218. Speech of Lowndes in the House, Feb. 14, 1804: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 8th Congress,, 1st Session, page 992. Cf. Stanton's speech later: ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 9th Congress, 2d Session, page 240.



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citizen of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), reluctantly entered federal district court in his hometown and became the first American to be tried under the U.S. Slave Trade Act of 1794. After months of out-of-court wrangling with the plaintiffs, officers of a state abolition society, it appeared that Brown would now stand trial for fitting out his ship *Hope* for the African [slave trade](#). The voyage had concluded profitably in Havana, Cuba, with the sale of 229 [slaves](#) a year earlier.<sup>219</sup>

Brown's accusers included his younger brother, [Moses](#), a tireless opponent of both slavery and the slave trade since his conversion, on the eve of the American Revolution, from the family's [Baptist](#) faith to the [Society of Friends](#). A founding member and officer of the Abolition Society, chartered in 1789, [Moses Brown](#) had been fighting Rhode Island slave traders, including brother John, for a decade, since the passage of the largely ineffective state statute of 1787 that prohibited the trade to state residents.<sup>220</sup>

In this instance, the society's traditional tactic -cajoling a pledge from the accused to forswear slaving in the future in exchange for dropping the suit- had failed. Even so, as Moses had pointedly reminded John before trial, the charges thus far were limited, involving only the comparatively mild first section of the three-year-old federal statute. A conviction would therefore require nothing more than forfeiture of the vessel, an aging one at that. What John should most fear, Moses advised, were "larger prosecutions" should he further provoke the Abolition Society by refusing to settle out of court.<sup>221</sup>

Ultimately, the elder Brown ignored his brother's mediation efforts and offered only an eleventh hour plea for a continuance to haggle over milder pledge terms. Its patience exhausted, the Abolition Society flatly rejected that ploy whereupon the case proceeded swiftly to trial. As predicted, the district court judge had little choice but to assent to the arguments and evidence in the prosecution's narrowly defined case. Consequently, [John Brown](#) lost his vessel at a local auction in late August, thereby closing the forfeiture case. When the Abolition Society again sought Brown's promise to abandon his African commerce, he refused, quickly prompting the "larger prosecutions" Moses had warned him about.<sup>222</sup>

Meanwhile, Moses had become suspicious of John's continuing recalcitrance. It seemed premeditated in his younger brother's view, perhaps a deliberate strategy devised by John's "friends at [Newport](#)" (i.e., slave traders) to guarantee further suits over the illegal sale of the slaves. Such litigation, while potentially more costly, would also require a jury trial, and

219. Jay Coughtry, *THE NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE: RHODE ISLAND AND THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE* (Philadelphia, 1981), pages 214-215.

220. *NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE*, chapter 6. See also Mack Thompson, *MOSES BROWN: RELUCTANT REFORMER* (Chapel Hill, 1962), pages 175-190.

221. [Moses Brown](#) to [John Brown](#), March 15, 1797, *MOSES BROWN PAPERS*, vol. 9, no. 29, Rhode Island Historical Society; [Moses Brown](#) to [John Brown](#), *ibid.*, vol. 9, no. 32.

222. [John Brown](#) to [Moses Brown](#), July 29, 31, 1797, *MOSES BROWN PAPERS*, vol. 9, nos. 43 and 44, Rhode Island Historical Society. See also *NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE* at 215.



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the slave traders assumed that local juries would not convict one of their own. They were right. Within six months [John Brown](#) announced his court victory over the "Wicked and Abominable Combination I mean the Abolition Society."<sup>223</sup>

This insiders' view of the foregoing case of the ship *Hope* is documented, along with numerous other key prosecutions, in the correspondence of John and especially Moses Brown, now available in this microfilm series, PAPERS OF THE AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE: SELECTIONS FROM THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Moreover, Moses Brown's letters reveal not only the Abolition Society's formal legal stratagems but also its traditional policy of intense but informal negotiating with slave traders who often yielded to the group's demands without a court fight. Cyprian Sterry, for example, the principal slave trader in Providence during the 1790s with fifteen voyages to the African coast in 1794 alone, fully succumbed to the society's persistent pressure. He escaped prosecution (along with his captain, Samuel Packard) for an African voyage involving the ship *Ann* by signing a written pledge to leave the [slave trade](#) forever.<sup>224</sup>

Despite occasional successes in and out of court, in general the campaign against the slave traders in the wake of federal prohibition was proceeding haltingly at best. Moses Brown continued to monitor the efforts of customs officials in the Rhode Island district for the Abolition Society, which increasingly relinquished its early prosecutorial role to the U.S. Attorney's office. Congress bolstered the federal district attorney's legal arsenal with amendments to the 1794 statute in 1800 and again in 1803. Meanwhile, an aggressive secretary of the treasury appointed a special prosecutor for the district in 1801. The new laws closed the most obvious loopholes in the original act while the appointment of a resident special prosecutor provided a full-time federal agent who could focus exclusively on the escalating volume of vessels clearing state ports for Africa.<sup>225</sup>

Documentation for these events not only reveals the growing docket of slaver cases but also regularly exposes the personal and political dimensions of enforcement and evasion. By century's end, for example, it had become clear that slavers had rendered nearly null the local auctions designed to separate owners from their slaving vessels. African merchants and their influential supporters simply intimidated all potential bidders and then repurchased their ships for a fraction of their assessed value. To end such bogus sales-at-auction, the government in 1799 sent Samuel Bosworth, surveyor of the port of [Bristol](#), to bid for the D'Wolf family's recently condemned schooner *Lucy*. Twice within twenty-four hours of the scheduled sale, [John Brown](#) and two D'Wolf brothers, the country's largest slave traders, visited Bosworth at home to dissuade him from his

223. [John Brown](#) to [Moses Brown](#), July 31, 1797, [MOSES BROWN](#) PAPERS, vol. 9, no. 44, Rhode Island Historical Society and Moses Brown to [John Brown](#), November 17, 1797, *ibid.*, vol. 9, no. 49; [John Brown](#) to James Brown, June 21, 1798, [John Brown](#) Papers, box D, Rhode Island Historical Society

224. [John Brown](#) to [Moses Brown](#), [MOSES BROWN](#) PAPERS, vol. 9, no. 43. See also NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE at 213-214.

225. NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE at 216-222.



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duty. Despite a threatened dunking in [Bristol](#) harbor, Bosworth “with considerable fear and trembling” arrived at the wharf on auction morning where he was met by a party of local “Indians” in unconvincing native garb and with faces blackened. No [Bristol](#) version of the patriotic tea party ensued, fortunately. Instead, Bosworth’s captors hustled him aboard a waiting sailboat and deposited him two miles down the bay at the foot of Mount Hope. The government never employed that strategy again.<sup>226</sup> Such an outrage was not the limit of “the trade’s supporters” arrogance, however. Soon, Special Prosecutor John Leonard would personally feel the wrath of Rhode Island’s African merchants. Even his limited success in libeling several of their vessels under the anemic section one was enough to prompt an attack on his person. They apparently feared that Leonard’s February 1801 victory in prosecuting a D’Wolf captain caught redhanded by a U.S. Navy cruiser would set a costly precedent. Consequently, several overzealous supporters of the [slave trade](#) assaulted Leonard on the steps of the federal courthouse in Washington.<sup>227</sup> Even [John Brown](#) thought this response somewhat extreme, especially as he was then involved in concocting a federal legislative solution to his slaving constituents’ problem. During the hectic months between Thomas Jefferson’s election and inauguration as president, Brown successfully spearheaded a move in Congress to create a separate customs district for the port of [Bristol](#). Following passage of the requisite legislation late in February 1801 and the eventual appointment of customs officers amenable to the slave traders’ needs, the effort to stop the [slave trade](#) in the courts permanently stalled. The end of Rhode Island participation in illegal African commerce would begin only years later with the implementation of the Anti-Slave Trade Act of 1807 on January 1, 1808. This now constitutional statute outlawed all foreign slave trading by American citizens in any capacity. By the time violations of this new law carried the death penalty in 1819, Rhode Islanders, along with other New Englanders, had found new markets for their commerce and textile factories for their surplus capital. The brief revival of the slave trade in clipper ships of the antebellum era from ports such as Baltimore would proceed without them.<sup>228</sup>

226. Samuel Bosworth to Oliver Wolcott, August 1799, Shepley Papers, vol. 9, no. 8, Rhode Island Historical Society; Jonathan Russell to Albert Gallatin, March 18, 1804, *ibid.*, vol. 9, no. 7. George Howe tells the tale of the *Lucy* in his MOUNT HOPE: A NEW ENGLAND CHRONICLE (New York, 1959), 107-108.

227. [John Brown](#) to Benjamin Bourn, February 1801, Peck MSS, vol. 11, no. 66, Rhode Island Historical Society.

228. [John Brown](#) to James D’Wolf and Shearjashub Bourn (n.d. but 1800), JOHN BROWN PAPERS, Rhode Island Historical Society; [John Brown](#) to Shearjashub Bourn, February 1801, Peck MSS, box 11, no. 66, Rhode Island Historical Society. The full story of the separate district issue and the eventual end of slave trading from [Rhode Island](#) is detailed in NOTORIOUS TRIANGLE at 225-229 and 233-237.



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**1798**

The Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#) preached some hot-stuff sermons that later on he would have published.

**SERMONS FROM 1798**

[Benjamin West](#) became the [College of Rhode Island](#)'s Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy.

PHILLIPS'S UNITED STATES DIARY; OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1798. [Warren](#), [Rhode Island](#): Nathaniel Phillips. (These almanacs had been put out in Warren since 1793, but this one would be the last of the series.)

WHEELER'S NORTH-AMERICAN CALENDAR, OR AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1798. [Providence](#): B. Wheeler.

The United States arms appear on the title page.

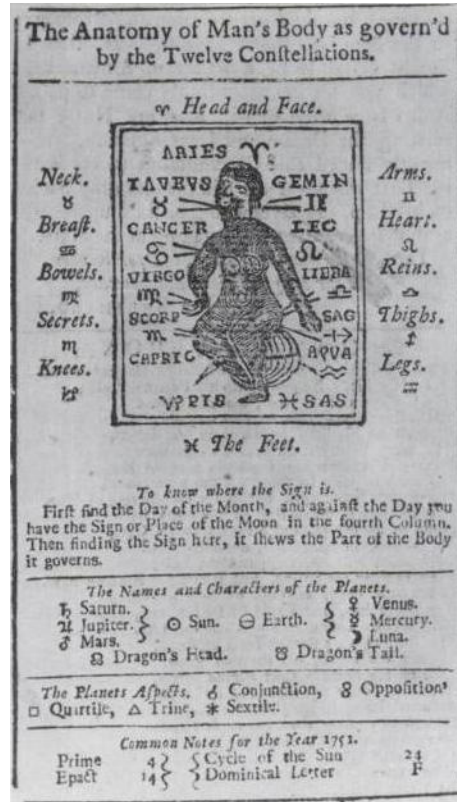
THE RHODE-ISLAND CALENDAR OR [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1798. By Isaac Bickerstaff. Printed for and sold by Joseph J. Todd, at his bookstores in [Providence](#) and [Newport](#).

There is no ruled border on the text.

NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1798. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): Carter and Wilkinson.

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Cut of man of signs appears.



1799

[Benjamin West](#) left his position at the [College of Rhode Island](#) to open a school for navigation in his home in [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

FLEETS' REGISTER AND POCKET [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1799. Boston: Printed and sold by J. & T. Fleet. The first 20 pages of this were devoted to an almanac, most likely by Nathanael Low. The remainder consisted of tabulations of various items of interest such as that the Federal tax on slaves was 50 cents per head, and the names of the ten coroners doing business in Cumberland County.

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1799. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence](#): Carter and Wilkinson.



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It has man of signs cut.



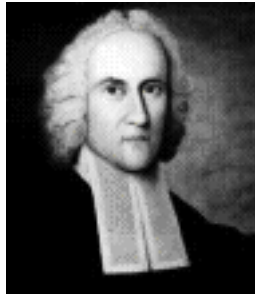


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Again, the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#)'s LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE LATE REVEREND, LEARNED, AND PIOUS MR. [JONATHAN EDWARDS](#), PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW-JERSEY. TOGETHER WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS PRIVATE WRITINGS & DIARY. AND ALSO SEVENTEEN SELECT SERMONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.



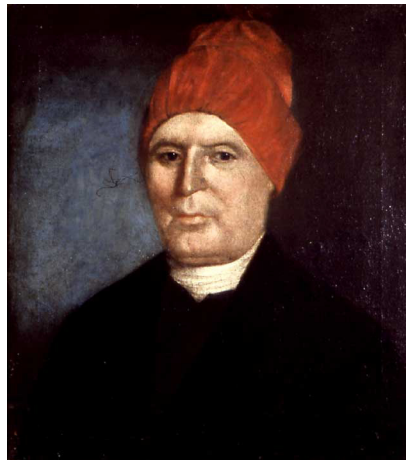
**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**

**READ IT AND WEEP**

Also during this year, the Reverend Hopkins's MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF MRS. SARAH OSBORN, WHO DIED AT [NEWPORT, RHODEISLAND](#), ON THE SECOND DAY OF AUGUST, 1796. IN THE EIGHTY THIRD YEAR OF HER AGE was printed at Worcester, Massachusetts by Leonard Worcester.

**MRS. SARAH OSBORN**

During this year he had an attack of paralysis from which he would not fully recover.



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The *General Greene*, having seen service in the West Indies, sailed back into its home port of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), bringing with it the yellow fever. Aboard this vessel in this year, Midshipman [Oliver Hazard Perry](#) survived two bouts of the [yellow fever](#). During this year there would be another outbreak of the [yellow fever](#)



in Philadelphia — and Dr. Benjamin Rush would be forming the medical opinion that this disease was not [contagious](#). Various methods and places of separating out foreigners and infected beings had been devised in 1793 in Philadelphia, and then with each annual recurrence. Temporary hospitals and treatments facilities had been thrown up. Places of isolating both the sick and new arrivals had been established. No ships arriving from the tropics had been being allowed into the port of Philadelphia without the examination of passengers by appointed physicians and the quarantining of any suspected of illness. Calls from all quarters for an isolation facility had led by this year to the design and construction of “The Lazaretto” eight miles to the south. This new structure was designed by physicians, public health officials, and government agencies to serve as the point of arrival for all ships, passengers, and immigrants. It included docks, grounds, dormitories, a hospital, and treatment facilities to handle hundreds of arriving passengers at a time. All passengers were detained at



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least temporarily, those suspected of infection were quarantined, and those determined to be ill were treated in accordance with the limited understanding available at the time. The thousands who died from infections would be buried on site. The Lazaretto as it was completed in this year included a building that resembled very much Independence Hall in Philadelphia. It included a compound of additional buildings and facilities that could handle the immigration or expulsion of all new arrivals in the port. (The Lazaretto would operate quietly and efficiently as Philadelphia's version of Ellis Island from this point until the end of the 19th Century. In the early 20th Century the facility would become the headquarters of the Philadelphia Sea Plane Base — one of the first sea plane facilities in the United States. Later in the 20th Century the compound would also be used as popular marina. The Lazaretto is on the Delaware River just a few miles south of Philadelphia International Airport.)



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**AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
BILIOUS YELLOW FEVER,  
AS IT  
APPEARED IN PHILADELPHIA,  
IN THE YEAR 1799  
BY BENJAMIN RUSH**

The diseases which succeeded the fever of 1798, in November and December, were highly inflammatory. A catarrh was nearly universal. Several cases of sore throat, and one of erysipelas, came under my care in the month of November. The weather in December was extremely cold. It was equally so in the beginning of January, 1799, accompanied with several falls of snow.

About the middle of the month, the weather moderated so much, so as to open the navigation of the Delaware. I met with two cases of malignant colic in the latter part of this month, and one of yellow fever. The last was Swen Warner. Dr. Physick, who attended him with me, informed me that he had, nearly at the same time, attended two other persons with the same disease.

The weather was very cold, and bilious pleurisies were common, during the later part of the month of February.

March was equally cold. The newspapers contained accounts of the winter having been uncommonly severe in Canada, and in several European countries.

The first two weeks in April were still cold. The Delaware, which had been frozen a second time during the winter, was crossed near its origin, on the ice, on the 15th day of this month. The diseases, though fewer than in the winter, were bilious and inflammatory. During this month, I was called to a case of yellow fever, which yielded to copious bleeding, and other depleting medicines.

May was colder than is usual in that month, but very healthy. In the first week of June, several cases of highly bilious fever came under my care. In one of them, all the usual symptoms of the highest grade of that fever occurred. On the 13th of the month, Dr. Physick informed me, that he had lost a patient with



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that disease. On the 23d of the same month, Joseph Ashmead, a young merchant, died of it. Several other cases of the disease occurred between the 20th and 29th days of the month, in different parts of the city. About this time, I was informed that the inhabitants of Keys's-alley had predicted a return of the yellow fever, from the trees before their doors emitting a smell, exactly the same which they perceived just before the breaking out of that disease in 1793.

In July, the city was alarmed, by Dr. Griffitts, with an account of several cases of the fever in Penn-street, near the water. The strictness with which the quarantine law had been executed, for a while rendered this account incredible with many people and exposed the doctor to a good deal of obloquy. At length a vessel was discovered, that had arrived from one of the West-India islands on the 14th of May, and one day before the quarantine law was put into operation, from which the disease was said to be derived. Upon investigating the state of this vessel, it appeared that she had arrived with a healthy crew, and that no person had been sick on board of her during her voyage.

In the latter part of July and in the beginning of August, the disease gradually disappeared from every part of the city. This circumstance deserves attention, as it shows the disease did not spread by contagion.

About this time we were informed by the news-papers, that dogs, geese, and other poultry, also that wild pigeons were sickly in many parts of the country, and that fish on the Susquehannah, and oysters in the Delaware bay, were so unpleasant that the inhabitants declined eating them. At the same time, flies were found dead in great numbers, in the unhealthy parts of the city. The weather was dry in August and September. There was no second crop of grass. The gardens yielded a scanty supply of vegetables, and of an inferior size and quality. Cherries were smaller than usual, and pear and apple-trees dropped their fruits prematurely, in large quantities. The peaches, which arrived at maturity, were small and ill tasted. The grain was in general abundant, and of a good quality. A fly, of an unusual kind, covered the potatoe fields, and devoured in some instances, the leaves of the potatoe. This fly has lately been used with success in our country, instead of the fly imported from Spain. It is equal to it in every respect. Like the Spanish fly, it sometimes induces strangury.

About the middle of August the disease revived, and appeared in different parts of the city. A publication from the academy of medicine, in which they declared the seeds of the disease to spread from the atmosphere only, produced a sudden flight of the inhabitants. In no year, since the prevalence of the fever, was the desertion of the city so general.

I shall now add a short account to the symptoms and treatment of this epidemic.

The arterial system was in most cases active. I met with a tense pulse in a patient after the appearance of the black vomiting.



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Delirium was less frequent in adults than in former years. In children there was a great determination of the disease to the brain.

I observed no new symptoms in the stomach and bowels. One of the worst cases of the fever which I saw was accompanied with colic. A girl of Thomas Shortall, who recovered, discharged nine worms during her fever. It appeared in Mr. Thomas Roane, one of my pupils, in the form of a dysentery.

A stiffness, such as follows death, occurred in several patients in the city hospital before death.

Miss Shortall had an eruption of pimples on her breast, such as I have described in the short account I gave of the yellow fever of 1762 in this city, in my account of the disease of 1793.

The blood exhibited its usual appearances in the yellow fever. It was seldom sisy till toward the close of the disease.

The tongue was generally whitish. Sometimes it was of a red colour, and had a polished appearance. I saw no case of a black tongue; and but few that were yellow before the seventh day of the disease.

The type of this disease was nearly the same as described in 1797. It now and then appeared in the form of a quartan, in which state it generally proved fatal. It appeared with rheumatic pains in one of my patients. It blended itself with gout and small-pox. Its union with the latter disease was evident in two patients in the city hospital, in each of whom the stools were such as were discharged in the most malignant state of the fever. The remedies for this fever were bleeding, vomits, purges, sweats, and a salivation and blisters.

There were few cases that did not indicate bleeding. It was performed, when proper, in the usual way, and with its usual good effects. It was indicated as much when the disease appeared in the bowels as in the blood-vessels. Mr. Roane, in whom it was accompanied with symptoms of dysentery, lost nearly 200 ounces of blood by twenty-two bleedings.

Purges of calomel and jalap, also castor oil, salts, and injections were prescribed with their usual advantages.

In those cases where the system was prostrated below the point of re-action, I began the cure by sweating. Blankets, with hot bricks wetted with vinegar, and the hot bath, as mentioned formerly, when practicable, were used for this purpose. The latter produced, in a boy of 14 years of age, who came into the city hospital without a pulse, and with a cold skin, in a few hours, a general warmth and an active pulse. The determination of the disease to the pores was evinced in one of my patients, by her sweating under the use of the above-mentioned remedies, for the first time in her life. A moisture upon her skin had never before been induced, she informed me, even by the warmest day in summer.

The advantages of a salivation were as great as in former years. From the efficacy of bleeding, purges, emetics, and sweating, I had the pleasure of seeing many recoveries before the mercury had time to affect the mouth. In no one case did I rest the cure



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exclusively upon any one of these remedies. The more numerous the outlets were to convey off superfluous fluids and excitement from the body, the more safe and certain were the recoveries. A vein, the gall-bladder, the bowels, the pores, and the salivary glands were all opened, in succession, in part, or together, according to circumstances, so as to give the disease every possible chance of passing out of the body without injuring or destroying any of its vital parts.

Blisters were applied with advantage. The vomiting and sickness which attend this fever were relieved in many instances, by a blister to the stomach.

In those cases in which the fever was protracted to the chronic state, bark, wine, laudanum, and aether produced the most salutary effects. I think I saw life recalled, in several cases in which it appeared to be departing, by frequent and liberal doses of the last of those medicines. The bark was given, with safety and advantage. after the seventh day, when the fever assumed the form of an intermittent.

The following symptoms were generally favourable, viz. a bleeding from the mouth and gums, and a disposition to weep, when spoken to in any stage of the fever.

A hoarseness and sore throat indicated a fatal issue of the disease, as it did in 1798. Dr. Physick remarked, that all those persons who sighed after waking suddenly, before they were able to speak, died.

The recurrence of a redness of the eyes, after it had disappeared, or of but one eye, was generally followed by death. I saw but one recovery with a red face.

I saw several persons, a few hours before death, in whom the countenance, tongue, voice, and pulse were perfectly natural. They complained of no pain, and discovered no distress nor solicitude of mind. Their danger was only to be known by the circumstances which had preceded this apparently healthy and tranquil state of the system. They had all passed through extreme suffering, and some of them had puked black matter.

The success of the mode of practice I have described was the same as in former years, in private families; but in the city hospital, which was again placed under the care of Dr. Physick and myself, there was a very different issue to it, from causes that are too obvious to be mentioned.

There were two opinions given to the public upon the subject of the origin of this fever; the one by the academy of medicine, the other by the college of physicians. The former declared it to be generated in the city, from putrid domestic exhalations, because they saw it only in their vicinity, and discovered no channel by which it could have been derived from a foreign country; the latter asserted it to be "imported, because it had been imported in former years."




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**NEWPORT IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

**NEWPORT GOING ON, AND ON ...**

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

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



**Prepared: November 26, 2013**



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



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



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

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