

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK



Between 1500 and 1620 at least half a hundred Europeans died while exploring the New England area, and countless fisherman put down their anchors at Georges Bank and filled their holds with fish destined for the tables of Europe. Occasionally a ship's captain would kidnap native Americans for sale in Europe as slaves, as, for instance, happened to [Squanto](#) in 1614. Somehow Squanto had gotten free and made his way to England, where at some time between 1618 and 1620 he had been able to sign on as a pilot for a voyage of exploration to Newfoundland. From there he had been able to make his way home and thus was present at Plymouth in 1620, when the *Mayflower* happened along.

In 1497 [John Cabot](#) sailed to the west for England, in 1524 [Giovanni da Verrazano](#) sailed to the west for France, in 1525 [Estêvão Gomes](#) sailed to the west for Spain, in 1542 [Jean](#)



CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

BLOCK ISLAND

[Fonteneau dit Alfonse de Saintonge](#) sailed to the west for France, in 1562 [Sir John Hawkins](#) sailed to the west for England, in 1605 [Samuel de Champlain](#) sailed to the west for France, in 1609 [Henry Hudson](#) sailed to the west for England, and in 1613, the Dutch being interested in establishing fur-trading posts in the Hudson River area, [Captain Adriaen Block](#) sailed to the west for Holland. He and another Dutch fur-trader were on their way home with a cargo of furs when his *Tiger* was consumed by fire at the outlet of the Hudson River.

The two captains and their crews constructed huts in which to overwinter on the island of Manhattan while they built a new ship for Block, a 45-foot, 16-ton vessel which they christened the *Onrust* (*Restless*). The trial voyage of this new ship was during Spring 1614: Captain Block sailed on the East River, through the whirlpools he so aptly named Hellegat (Hell Gate), and into Long Island Sound. In the course of this check-out cruise, Block became the 1st European of record to explore the Connecticut River, sailing all of 60 miles up the river against the spring freshet, probably past present day Hartford and as far as the rapids at Enfield.

Captain Block wrote "Next, on the same south coast, succeeds a river named by our countrymen Fresh River, which is shallow at its mouth.... In some places it is very shallow, so that at about fifteen leagues [between 30 and 60 miles] up the river there is not much more than five feet of water. There are few inhabitants near the mouth of the river, but at the distance of fifteen leagues above they become more numerous.... The depth of water varies from eight to twelve feet, is sometimes four and five fathoms [24-30 feet], but mostly eight and nine feet. The natives there [South Windsor] plant maize, and in the year 1614 they had a village resembling a fort for protection against the attacks of their enemies.... The river is not navigable with *yachts* [that's a type of Dutch boat] for more than two leagues farther, as it is very shallow and has a rocky bottom.... This river has always a downward current so that no assistance is derived from it in going up, but a favorable wind is necessary." In 1624 the Dutch built a settlement in New Amsterdam (this was to become the English settlement, New-York) and a trading post on the Connecticut River, calling it *Kievits Hoek* (soon to be abandoned). By 1633 the Dutch had acquired land from the natives in present-day Hartford on which they would construct a fort, and a trading post they knew as the "House of Hope."

BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

1524

March 1, Saturday: [Giovanni da Verrazano](#) (or Verazzano, or Verrazzano) of Firenzi may have visited our coast in *La Dauphine* as early as 1508 in the service of French merchants. However, the landfall of this date to this point has stood as the 1st verifiable visit to [Rhode Island](#) waters by a European.



READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

This skipper was in the employ of King Francis I of France and several Italian promoters, and was searching for an all-water way to get past the barrier of savage North America and on west toward the great markets of civilized Cathay ([China](#)).

After his initial landfall at Cape Fear on what is now the North Carolina coast, on about this date, as the 1st French ship to scout this coast, he would proceed northward to the present site of New-York and anchor in the

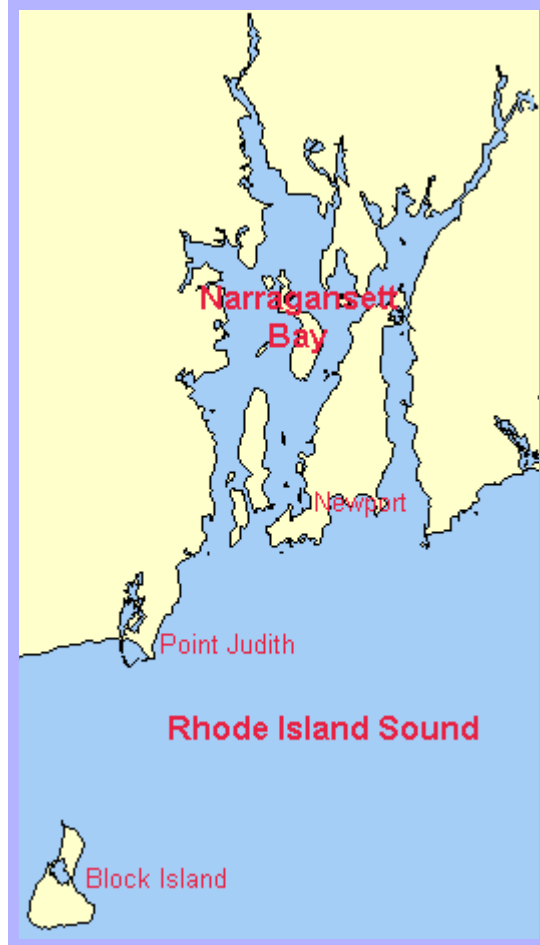


narrows which are now spanned by the giant bridge bearing his name, and claim the Algonkian *Manah-hatin*

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

BLOCK ISLAND

“Island of the Hills” on behalf of the French king.



From there, according to his own account, he would sail in an easterly direction until in about April he “discovered and Ilande in the forme of a triangle distant from the maine lande three leagues about the bigness of the Islande of Rhodes,”¹ an island which he named Luisa in honor of the Queen Mother of France. This

1. Rhodos, in Greek, means “rose,” and from this we have the Reverend Williams’s comment that “Rhode Island, like the Isle of Rhodes, is an island of roses.”

BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

must have been the island we now know as [Block Island](#), but the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) and others would



later mistake this as a reference to [Aquidneck Island](#), at which Verrazano soon came to anchor under the guidance of Wampanoag canoes.² Thus they would reject that indigenous name Aquidneck³ in favor of “Rhode Island” after Verrazano’s “the Island of Rhodes” and it would be Verrazano who had (inadvertently, indirectly, as a ricochet) given to our smallest state its name “[Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations.” When Verrazano’s ship would reach the waters off Point Judith, the [Wampanoag](#) would paddle out and guided the sailors to a 2d anchorage in Narragansett Bay, at what is now [Newport](#) harbor. Their ship would anchor there for a couple of weeks while noting the fertile soil, the woods of oak and walnut, and such game as lynx and deer. There is not now any record of what the [Narragansett](#) thought of their strange guests, but we do happen

2. [Giovanni da Verrazano](#) would, on a subsequent voyage, provide protein supplement to New-World cannibals. Later, the Dutch mariner [Adriaen Block](#) would rename Luisa Island, which had become Claudia Island, in honor of himself.

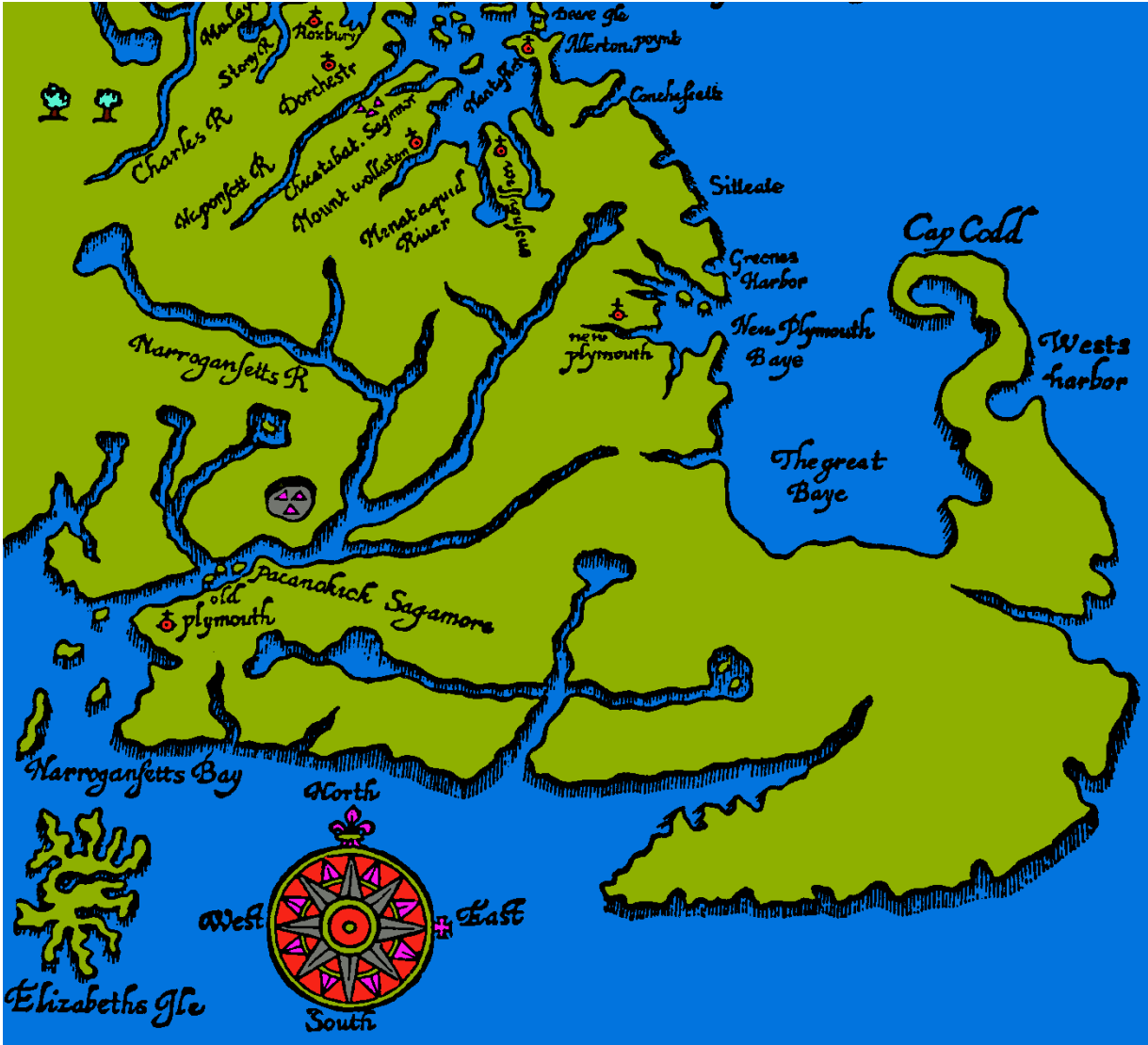
3. In Algonquian, “Aquidnet” means “a place of security or tranquility,” from “aquene” or “aquidne” meaning secure or peaceful, and “et” meaning place.

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

BLOCK ISLAND

to have retained a record of what that Florentine navigator thought of them:

These people are the most beautiful and have the most civil customs that we have found on this voyage. They are taller than we are ... the face is clear-cut ... the eyes are black and alert, and their manner is sweet and gentle, very much like the manner of the ancients.





BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

He then may have landed somewhere in this cluster of eight islands now known as the Isles of Shoals.

(When they built a bridge in his honor, they put it between Long Island and Staten Island rather than between any two of the islands in this group off the mouth of the “Merimock” River.)

One of the things to bear in mind, in regard to the fire that [Henry Thoreau](#) and his companion would so carelessly start, is that all this forest growth had come about subsequent to the cessation of the native American practice of constant management by burning. Here, for instance, is what [Giovanni da Verrazano](#) had to say

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

BLOCK ISLAND

about New England as managed by the native Americans:

We often went five or six leagues [15 to 20 miles] into the interior, and found the country as pleasant as it is possible to conceive, adapted to cultivation of every kind, whether of corn, wine or [olive] oil; there are open plains twenty-five or thirty leagues in extent entirely free of trees ... and of so great fertility, that whatever is sown there will yield an excellent crop. On entering the woods, we observed that they might all be traversed by an army ever so numerous.



THOREAU'S CARELESS FIRE

1614

During this year and the following one, the Dutch mariner [Adriaen Block](#) was sailing toward the Hudson River, visiting the offshore island which had already been reached by [Giovanni da Verrazano](#) in 1524 (“an island in the form of a triangle, distant from the mainland ten leagues, about the bigness of the Island of Rhodes,” the island which Verrazzano had named Luisa after the Queen Mother of France) and bestowing on it his own name. It is what we now know as [Block Island](#).



(Note that *Roode Eylandt*, in Dutch, means “red island.”)



"So long as the past and present are outside one another, knowledge of the past is not of much use in the problems of the present. But suppose the past lives on in the present: suppose, though encapsulated in it, and at first sight hidden beneath the present's contradictory and more prominent features, it is still alive and active; then the historian may very well be related to the non-historian as the trained woodsman is to the ignorant traveller."



– R.G. Collingwood, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939, page 100

The Islands offlying New England	
Block Island	Mt. Desert Island
Boston Harbor	Nantucket Island
Dry Salvages	Naushon Island
Gardiners Island	Newfoundland
Isles of Shoals	Plum Island
Long Island	Shelter Island
Manhattan	Staten Island
Martha's Vineyard	St. George's Bank
Minots Ledge	Aquidneck Island

"An island always pleases my imagination, even the smallest, as a small continent and integral portion of the globe. I have a fancy for building my hut on one. Even a bare, grassy isle, which I can see entirely over at a glance, has some undefined and mysterious charm for me."

– [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#)

BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

June: Argall and Ralph Hamor departed from the Virginia coast for England.

The sachem Epenow of *Capawak* ([Martha's Vineyard](#)) who had been captured in 1611 by Edward Harlow, and donated to [Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#) of Plymouth, England, at this point escaped from the ship commanded by Nicholas Hobson. He had tricked them into bringing him back across the ocean by persuading them that he knew where gold ore was to be found. John Smith was exploring the coast from Monhegan Island (Maine) as far as the tip of Cape Cod. Thomas Hunt captured 20 men from *Patuxet* (including Tisquantum or Squanto) and 7 men from *Nauset* to sell as slaves in Spain. Tisquantum was taken to England "on a Bristol ship." [What is meant here is a ship out of the port of Bristol, England — not a ship pertaining to what would become the slave-trading port of [Bristol, Rhode Island](#).] The Wampanoag became hostile towards Europeans.



The Dutch mariner [Adriaen Block](#) mapped the southern New England coast, from the Hudson River to eastern Massachusetts.



1661

Block Island at the eastern entrance to Long Island Sound, renamed in his own honor by the Dutch explorer Adriaen Block who belatedly visited the island in 1614, was at this point being settled by a group of whites.



COPYRIGHT NOTICE: In addition to the property of others, such as extensive quotations and reproductions of images, this "read-only" computer file contains a great deal of special work product of Austin Meredith, copyright ©2013. Access to these interim materials will eventually be offered for a fee in order to recoup some of the costs of preparation. My hypercontext button invention which, instead of creating a hypertext leap through hyperspace -resulting in navigation problems- allows for an utter alteration of the context within which one is experiencing a specific content already being viewed, is claimed as proprietary to Austin Meredith - and therefore freely available for use by all. Limited permission to copy such files, or any material from such files, must be obtained in advance in writing from the "Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project, 833 Berkeley St., Durham NC 27705. Please contact the project at <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.

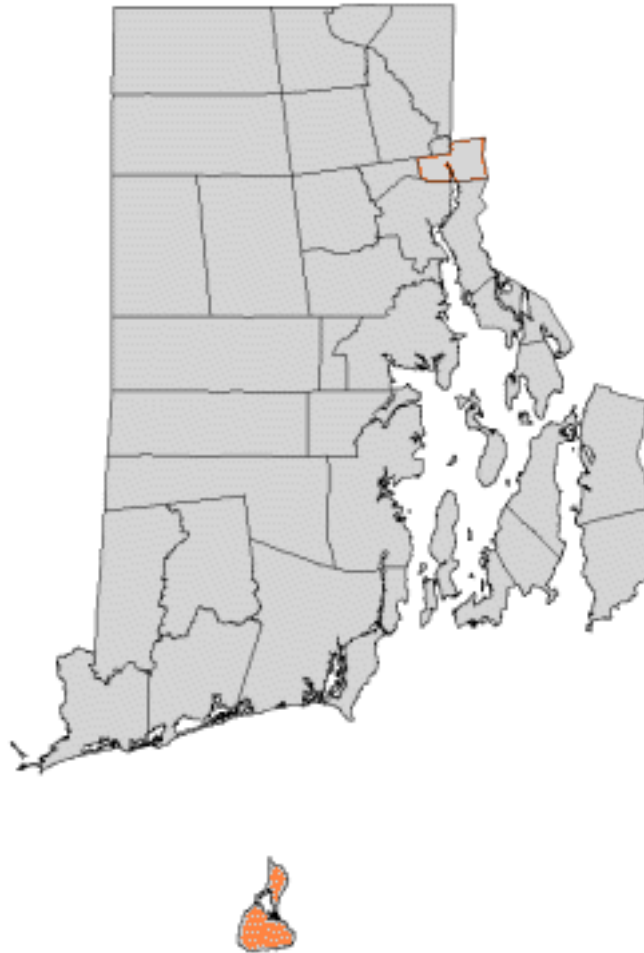


"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."
- Remark by character "Garin Stevens" in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK



Prepared: September 1, 2013

*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.



BLOCK ISLAND

CAPTAIN ADRIAEN BLOCK

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

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