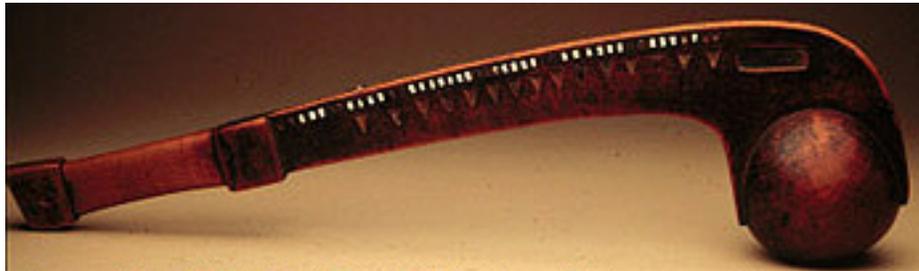


THE REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY OF PROVIDENCE RI



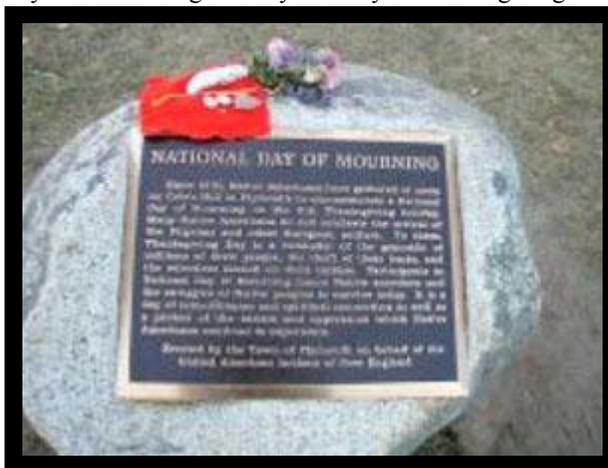
"I read somewhere that everybody on this planet is separated by only six other people. Six degrees of separation. Between us and everybody else on this planet."

– Ouisa, in [John Guare's](#)
["SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION"](#)



1676

August 17: The Plymouth colony was observing this day as a day of Thanksgiving.



Shortly after the Reverend John Cotton had completed his Lecture sermon, Captain Benjamin Church rode into town with the severed head of *Metacom*, the last surviving son of *Ousamequin* Yellow Feather (*Massasoit*) of *Pokanoket* who had been the colony’s benefactor, to whose friendship the white settlers owed so much. (To put an end to this line of succession, *Metacom*’s son –*Massasoit*’s grandson– would be sold into foreign slavery.) Church would receive a prize of 30 shillings for the body part, which he would characterize as “scanty reward, and poor encouragement,” but nevertheless the body part would be mounted atop a pole to serve as the centerpiece of the post-Lecture celebration.

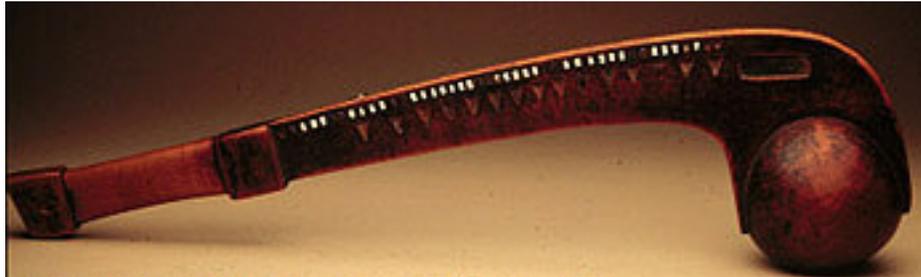
“KING PHILLIP’S WAR”

Presumably, also on display at that time would have been *Metacom*’s crippled hand, in the possession of his killer, Alderman, and the war club, large pipe, and belt of beads, shells, and bones that (it would much later be alleged) had been found in the camp and had been presumed to have been *Metacom*’s. (Actually, we don’t know these items to have been *Metacom*’s, as five or six natives had been killed of that encampment, and anyway, no mention was made at the time of any such objects. — All we really know is that the Reverend *John Checkley* of *Providence, Rhode Island* would in a much later timeframe obtain some such items –allegedly from Alderman although we do not know that, allegedly by offering him his gold watch although we do not know that– and that two of the three items allegedly from the Checkley collection having disappeared, the club from his collection, whatever its real provenance, is presently at the Fruitlands Museum in Harvard MA after

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

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having for years been stolen and unlocated.)¹



"That [John Checkley](#) accumulated important and perhaps unique Native American artifacts is likely, that he bought them from Alderman with Benjamin Church's assistance unlikely, and that he traded for them at the time of Philip's death impossible."



– Eric B. Schultz and Michael J. Tougias,
KING PHILIP'S WAR: THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF AMERICA'S FORGOTTEN CONFLICT, Woodstock VT:
The Countryman Press, 1999, page 296

1680

[John Checkley](#), perhaps a son of [John Checkley](#), was born in [Boston](#). (We note that this birth was occurring, of course, four years subsequent to the year in which [Metacom](#) had been shot down by Alderman.)

1703

May 28: [John Checkley](#) and Rebecca Miller were wed. It is not known whether this was a wedding that took place in England or in New England, but it is known that the groom would not return from his ecclesiastical education at Oxford, England until about 1710.

1. Nowhere in Captain Benjamin Church's HISTORY is there any mention of any artifacts relating to [Metacom](#), other than his mutilated hand, his head, the four quarters of his body, his gun, his small breeches, his "petunk," his stockings, and his powderhorn. At one point there was, allegedly, some sort of receipt from an Indian, who allegedly was selling a club, a belt, and a pipe to the Reverend [John Checkley](#), but there does not seem to be an indication that the signature was that of Alderman, nor has such a receipt been seen for many years, nor do we have any idea what might have happened to it.



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1710

The Reverend [John Checkley](#), Oxford-educated, at this point returned to New England.

1727

December 27: A sample of the handwriting of the Reverend [John Checkley](#), polemical churchman and proprietor of a toy shop:

From J. Checkley
Boston, N.E.
Dec. 27. 1727

J. Checkley

A sample of cursive handwriting. The text is written in black ink on a white background. The first part is a signature 'From J. Checkley' followed by 'Boston, N.E.' and 'Dec. 27. 1727' on the next line. To the right is a larger, more stylized signature 'J. Checkley'.

1738

The Reverend [John Checkley](#) became a minister in [Boston](#). He would turn out to have a very great capacity for controversy and, in publishing Leslie's SHORT AND EASY METHOD WITH THE DEISTS WITH ADDITION OF DISCUSSION ON EPISCOPACY, would need to pay a fine — for sedition.



REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

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1739

The Reverend [John Checkley](#) came down from [Boston](#) to become rector of King's Church (which would become St. John's) in [Providence](#).

REV. JOHN CHECKLEY

The Reverend John Callender's AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE, ON THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF THE COLONY OF [RHODE ISLAND](#) AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, IN NEW-ENGLAND, IN AMERICA, FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT, 1638, TO THE END OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

REVEREND CALLENDER

CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE

1741

In [Rhode Island](#), Richard Ward was in charge.

The Reverend [John Checkley](#), rector of King's Church (which would become St. John's) in [Providence](#), took inventory of his accomplishments.

REV. JOHN CHECKLEY

Captain William Chandler surveyed in the Narragansett Bay, and tried his hand at poetry.

CAPTAIN WM. CHANDLER



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1754

 [John Checkley](#) died in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). The inventory of his estate listed no war club or other valuable historical [Metacom](#) artifacts; in fact it indicates only some “Indian toys.”

The inhabitants of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) were petitioning their authorities toward obtaining a “large water engine.”

Passing through [Providence](#), Patuxet near Warwick, and [Warwick, Rhode Island](#), the Reverend Jacob Bailey recorded his impressions of these locales.

“JUST PASSING THROUGH”



REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

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1772

King George III appointed [Benjamin West](#) as historical painter to the monarch, with an annual allowance of 1,000 pounds.



When [Paul Revere](#) went to create an image of King Phillip in this year for use in [Ezra Stiles](#)'s edition of Benjamin Church's ENTERTAINING HISTORY, he displayed no more originality than was usual for him. It is likely that he created this depiction of a man who had died in the previous century well before he was born on the basis of a series of mezzotints that had been published in London in 1710 which purported to depict not this [Wampanoag](#) leader but instead a couple of his *Mohawk* enemies, named Ho Nee Yeath and Sa Ga Yeath (and also, a group of Ohio natives that [Benjamin West](#) had painted in 1764). We note that neither of [Metacom](#)'s hands appear crippled in this famous Revere engraving, when the one salient fact that we have about his appearance is that a hand had been maimed, evidently when a pistol he was firing split in his gun hand (not knowing whether he was right-handed or left-handed, and the records not telling us which hand was in

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

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Alderman's bucket of rum, we don't know which hand Phillip had maimed).



This crude and derivative engraving would subsequently be used by New England whites to demonstrate that the sachem Metacom had indeed been in his person quite as hideous and malformed and dwarfish as his white enemies in his generation had been pleased to suppose.

1814

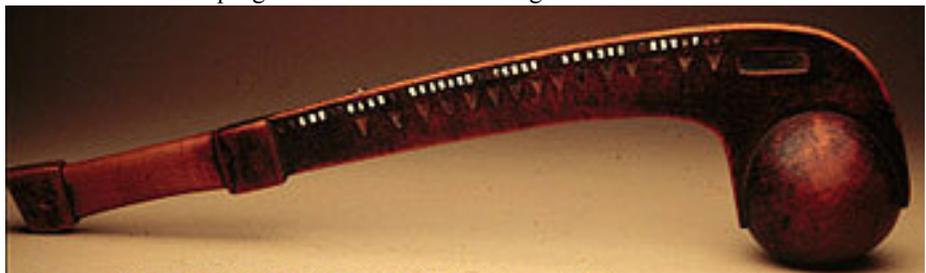
December: [Isaac Bailey](#) produced another issue of THE RHODE ISLAND LITERARY REPOSITORY, and in this one he made a satiric attack upon the character and reputation of the Reverend [John Checkley](#), rector of King’s Church (now St. John’s) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), dead for more than half a century and likely to remain dead.

LITERARY REPOSITORY



1842

Apparently an object that was being purported to have been [Metacom](#)’s war club was at this point known to be in the possession of the descendants of the Reverend [John Checkley](#) of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Whether this object representing the gradual decay and extinction of a most marked race, recording a chapter in the world’s history, that of the fate of the Indian race, than which there is no more saddening, had been inherited from the Reverend Checkley or had been acquired by some other family member from some other source is unknown. It is not known from whom the purchase had been made, or when. Whether the object in question ever was King Phillip’s war club is of course quite unknown, but obviously as of 1842 it was already serving its purpose, its purpose of course being to allow members of the surviving white race, viewing it, hefting it, secure in victory, no longer under any threat, to be appropriately saddened at the slow retreat of the wigwam and the tomahawk and the onward progress of the axe and the log cabin.²





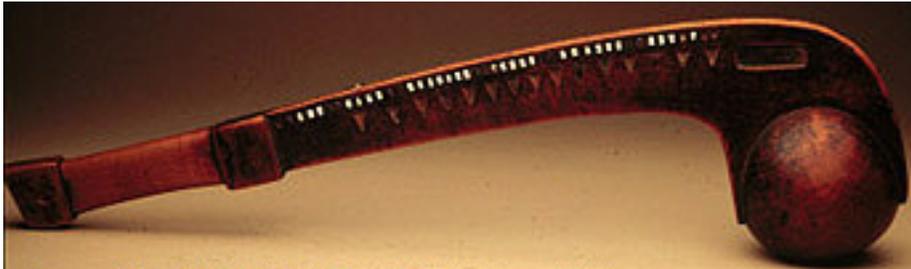
REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

In this year the actor [Edwin Forrest](#) was depicted in costume for his Metamora role in the play “Last of the Wampanoag” (on a following screen).³

1846

Some sort of apparently authentic war club, heavy pipe, and belt of beads, shells, and bones alleged to have been the ones allegedly collected by Alderman at the site of his killing of [Metacom](#) and alleged to have been passed on to Captain Benjamin Church and then allegedly to the Reverend [John Checkley](#) by Metacom’s killer, allegedly in exchange for the Reverend’s gold watch, were loaned at this point by Angelica Gilbert James to the Historical Society of Connecticut in Hartford. She alleged that she had inherited these items from her distant ancestor, the Reverend Checkley of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). Eventually the Historical Society would return these three items to her but, in the process of returning them, all track would be lost of a couple of the items and only the war club is presently locatable.



The barrel of the gun with which, supposedly, King Phillip had been slain, was at this point on display in [Plymouth](#), and this, at least, does appear to have been an authentic relic — at least in the sense that some such relic was indeed at the time on display, a physical object whatever its provenance, so described, and thus it would be glimpsed by [Henry Thoreau](#) in 1851:



July 31, Thursday: Those same round shells (*Scutella parma (placenta)* ?) on the sand as at Cape Cod, the live ones reddish the dead white— Went off early this morning with Uncle Ned to catch bass with the small fish I had found on the sand the night before— 2 of his neighbor Albert Watson’s boys were there —not James the oldest—but Edward the sailor & Mortimer —(or Mort —) in their boat They killed some striped basse (*Labrax lineatus*) with paddles in a shallow creek in the sand —& caught some lobsters. I remarked that the sea shore was singularly clean for notwithstanding the spattering of the water & mud & squirting of the clams & wading to & fro the boat my best black pants retained no stains nor dirt as they would acquire from walking in the country. I caught a bass with a young — haik? (perchance) trailing 30 feet behind while Uncle Ned paddled.— They

2. This object, which purports to be a native American war club 22 inches in length and weighing 28¹/₂ ounces, was made from the ball root of a maple tree. A ball root is something that develops when the root system of a tree hangs over a stream bank in such a way as to expose the roots and cause them to grow at an angle. The object is inlaid with white and purple wampum. White wampum is made from the central column of a whelk shell. Purple wampum is made from quahog shell. There are also several triangular horn pieces inlaid along one side of the club. The holes were made to fit individual beads. There are two lines of wampum along the top width of the club, although most of this wampum is missing. Also, there are two bands of wampum along the adjacent surfaces of the handle, 44 beads to a side. Then on one side there were spots for 15 triangular inlaid horn pieces, two of which are still in place. Also, on the other side, there is a lower band of wampum beads, only partially completed. Two parallel lines can be detected in the wood, that were made with something sharp, clearly to outline where the bead inlay was to be continued. There are also three rectangular sections engraved into the club near the ball, perhaps for a brass inlay that is now missing.
3. Forrest was able to achieve a massive aspect on stage despite the fact that he was not taller than the average man of his generation (that would have been five feet seven and a half inches).

HDT

WHAT?

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catch them in England with a “trawl-net” sometimes they weigh 75 lbs here
 At 11 AM set sail to Plymouth. We went somewhat out of a direct course to take advantage of the tide which was coming in. Saw the site of the first house which was burned –on Leyden Street –walked up the same. – parallel with the Town Brook. Hill from which Billington Sea was discovered hardly a mile from the shore on Watsons grounds. Watsons Hill where treaty was made across brook South of Burying Hill At [Marston] Watsons– The Oriental Plane– *Abies Douglasii*– ginkgo tree q.v. on Common. –a foreign hardhack –Eng. oak –dark colored small leaf –Spanish chestnut. Chinese arbor-vitæ– Norway spruce like our fir balsam– A new kind of fir-balsam– Black eagle one of the good cherries– fuchsias in hot house– Earth bank covered with cement.

Mr Thomas Russel –who cannot be 70 –at whose house on Leyden st. I took tea & spent the evening –told me that he remembered to have seen Ebenezer Cobb a nat. of Plymouth who died in Kingston in 1801 aged 107 who remembered to have had personal knowledge of Peregrine White saw him an old man riding on horse back –(he lived to be 83)– White was born at Cape Cod harbor before the Pilgrims got to Plymouth– C. Sturgis’s mother told me the same of herself at the same time. She remembered Cobb sitting in an arm chair like the one she herself occupied with his silver locks falling about his shoulders twirling one thumb over the other– Russell told me that he once bought some *primitive* woodland in P. which was sold at auction the biggest Pitch pines 2 ft diameter –for 8 *shillings* an acre– If he had bought enough it would have been a pasture. There is still forest in this town which the axe has not touched says Geo. Bradford. According to Thatchers Hist. of P. there were 11,662 acres of woodland in ’31. or 20 miles square. Pilgrims first saw Bil. sea about Jan 1st –visited it Jan 8th. The oldest stone in the Plymouth Burying ground 1681 (Coles? hill where those who died the first winter were buried –said to have been levelled & sown to conceal loss from Indians.) Oldest on our hill 1677 In Mrs Plympton’s Garden on Leyden st. running down to Town Brook. Saw an abundance of pears –gathered excellent June-eating apples –saw a large lilack about 8 inches diameter– Methinks a soil may improve when at length it has shaded itself with vegetation.

Wm S Russel the Registrer at the Court House showed the oldest Town records. for all are preserved –on 1st page a plan of Leyden st dated Dec. 1620 –with names of settlers. They have a great many folios. The writing plain. Saw the charter granted by the Plymouth Company to the Pilgrims signed by Warwick date 1629 & the box in which it was brought over with the seal.

Pilgrim Hall– They used to crack off pieces of the Forefathers Rock for visitors with a cold chisel till the town forebade it. The stone remaining at wharf is about 7 ft square. Saw 2 old arm chairs that came over in the May flower.– the large picture by Sargent.– Standish’s sword.– gun barrel with which Philip was killed –– mug & pocket-book of Clark the mate– Iron pot of Standish.– Old pipe tongs. Ind relics a flayer

**KING PHILLIP
PLYMOUTH ROCK**



a pot or mortar of a kind of fire proof stone very hard–



only 7 or 8 inches long. A Commission from Cromwell to Winslow? –his signature torn off. They talk of a monument on the rock. The burying hill 165 ft high. Manomet 394 ft high by state map. Saw more pears at Washburn’s garden. No graves of Pilgrims.

Seaweed generally used along shore– Saw the *Prinos glabra*, inkberry at Bil. sea. Sandy plain with oaks of various kinds cut in less than 20 yrs– No communication with Sandwich– P end of world 50 miles thither by rail road– Old. Colony road poor property. Nothing saves P. but the rock. Fern-leaved beach– Saw the King crab *Limulus polyphemus* –horseshoe & saucepan fish –at the island covered with sea green & buried in the sand –for concealment.

In P. the *Convolvulus arvensis* –small Bindweed.

**CLARK’S ISLAND
BOSTON HARBOR**

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The following preposterous illustration of [Metacom](#) was prepared by Samuel Griswold Goodrich for Graham's American Monthly Magazine:



1897

In the Reverend [John Checkley](#)'s memoirs, belatedly published in this year (he had died in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) in 1754, just about a century and a half before), it was alleged that the Reverend had spent some time with Captain Benjamin Church. If that did indeed happen, it could only have happened long after [Metacom](#)'s death, possibly a few years after the Reverend had returned to New England in 1710 but before Church died in 1717. It is to be noted, also, that these belated memoirs say nothing whatever about any important historic artifacts of Phillip, either acquired from Alderman or otherwise acquired, and, also, that they describe Church in no such context.

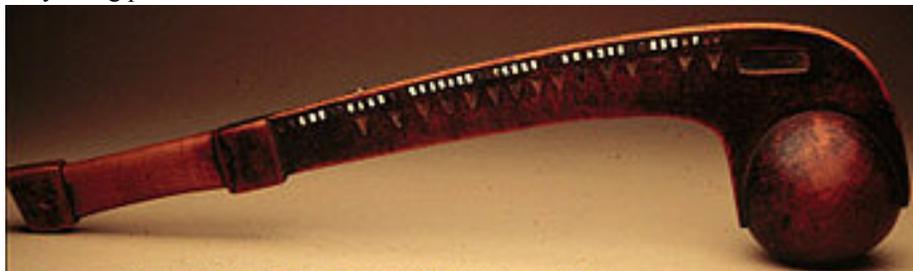


REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

1913

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



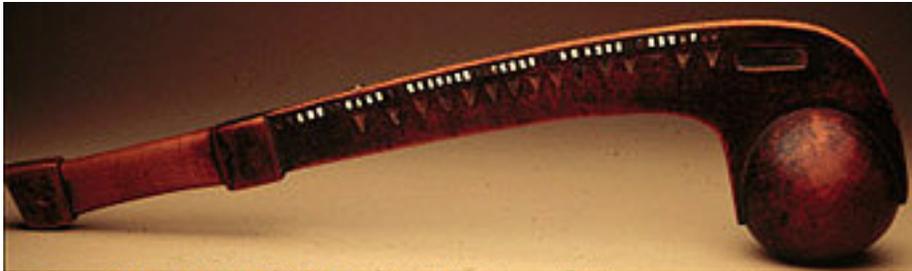


REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

1929

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



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

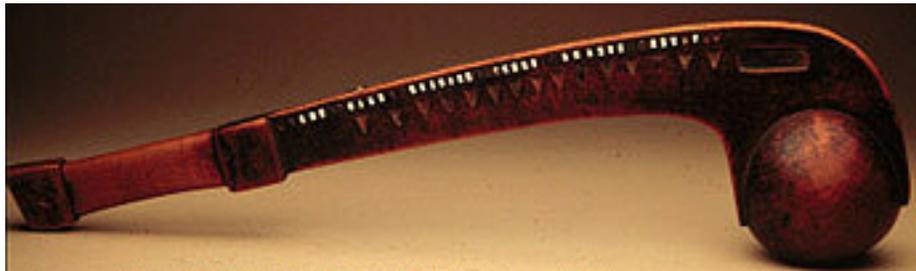


REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

1930

Miss Clara Endicott Sears purchased the object attributed as [Metacom](#)'s war club from Mrs. Laura Anne Fuller Daniels of Union ME.



Sometime during this decade, the following image representing [Metacom](#) would be painted by Thomas Hart Benton:

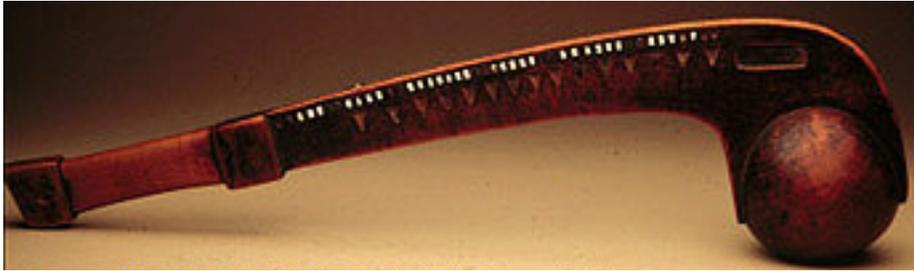




REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

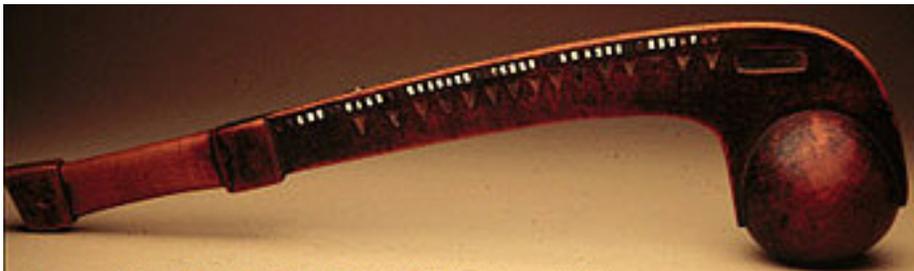
REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

May: Warren K. Moorehead purchased the war club said to have been collected by Alderman at the site of his killing of *Metacom* and said to have been passed on to the Reverend *John Checkley* in exchange for the Reverend's gold watch. He formally presented this headbasher to the Fruitlands Museum, where to make sure it would never during time of peace be used for its intended function it would be secured inside a Plexiglas® case.



1970

July 2: Two men in a tan 1963 Chevy parked directly in front of the Fruitlands Museum, one of them pretending to be disabled in order to park in that location, and shortly thereafter the artifact purporting to be *Metacom's* headbasher was discovered to be missing from its Plexiglas® case. It is possible that a third party was involved in the theft, with a mission to distract museum employees while the others took the opportunity to break into this case.



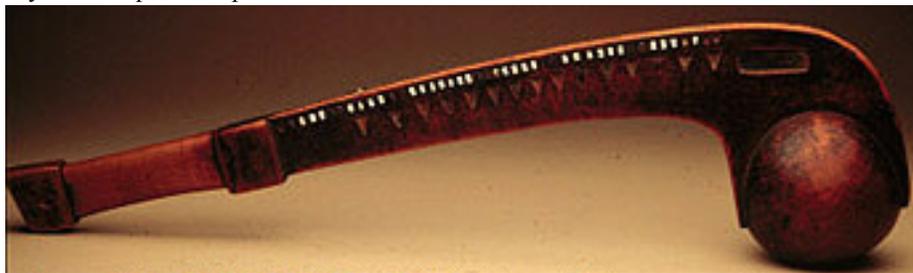
ALDERMAN
 BENJAMIN CHURCH
 JOHN CHECKLEY
 "KING PHILLIP'S WAR"

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

1994

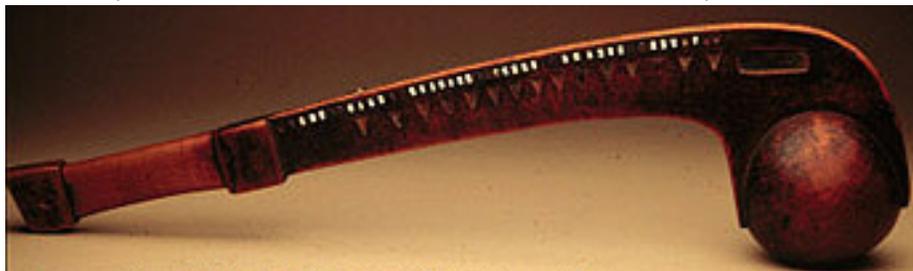
October: Ned Jalbert purchased, at a Worcester yard sale, for \$125, the war club that would turn out to be the one that had been stolen from Fruitlands Museum in 1970. Afterward, it would be learned that this object had previously been acquired as part of an estate sale.



ALDERMAN
BENJAMIN CHURCH
JOHN CHECKLEY
"KING PHILLIP'S WAR"

1995

June 19: The native American war club that Ned Jalbert had purchased, at a Worcester yard sale in the previous year, for \$125, was at this point formally returned to the Fruitlands Museum, from which it had been heisted in 1970. The circumstance, that it was heisted from the museum and then recovered, demonstrates the contention power



ALDERMAN
BENJAMIN CHURCH
JOHN CHECKLEY
"KING PHILLIP'S WAR"

of such attributed cultural objects, but of course does nothing whatever to corroborate the idea that this piece of shaped wood had ever been held in *Metacom's* maimed hand:



REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY



"That [John Checkley](#) accumulated important and perhaps unique Native American artifacts is likely, that he bought them from Alderman with Benjamin Church's assistance unlikely, and that he traded for them at the time of Philip's death impossible."



– Eric B. Schultz and Michael J. Tougias,
KING PHILIP'S WAR: THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF AMERICA'S
FORGOTTEN CONFLICT, Woodstock VT:
The Countryman Press, 1999, page 296



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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: June 9, 2013



REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

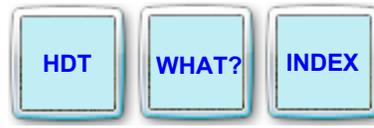
REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

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.



REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

REVEREND JOHN CHECKLEY

To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.

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.