

THE REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS





REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1599

Was [Roger Williams](#) born in Wales in 1599, or was he born in London in about 1603? The parish records of St. Sepulchre's Church in London, where it is said that he was christened in about 1603, have been all destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. We know that he was one of the four children of James Williams, merchant tailor, and his wife Alice, the daughter of Robert and Catherine (Stokes) Pemberton of St. Albans in Hertfordshire, and we know that he grew up not in Wales but in the Holborn district of London, near the great [Smithfield](#) plain on which fairs were held and where religious dissenters were being burned at the stake.



**ESSENCE IS BLUR. SPECIFICITY,
THE OPPOSITE OF ESSENCE,
IS OF THE NATURE OF TRUTH.**



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1621

June 25, Monday (Old Style): We don't really know a whole lot about what the life of [Roger Williams](#) was like before he emigrated from England to its American colonies, except that he brought himself to the attention of the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Sir Edward Coke, through an ability to take down in "a short hand" his sermons and his long speeches in the Star Chamber. Mrs. Sadler, a daughter of Sir Edward Coke, would describe him as having been "so hopeful a youth," that her father had "sent him into Sutton's Hospital" on this date, to be educated. (This Sutton Hospital is now known as the Charterhouse School.) Proving himself capable in this school, the school authorities would follow their custom of enabling such a student to continue afterward at Pembroke Hall in Cambridge University, where, after mastering Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Dutch, he would received the degree of A.B. in 1627. After such an education he would, of course, take orders in the Church of England and become a minister, becoming first a chaplain to Sir William Marsham at his manor house at Otes in Essex.

**ESSENCES ARE FUZZY, GENERIC, CONCEPTUAL;
ARISTOTLE WAS RIGHT WHEN HE INSISTED THAT ALL TRUTH IS
SPECIFIC AND PARTICULAR (AND WRONG WHEN HE CHARACTERIZED
TRUTH AS A GENERALIZATION).**



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1627

[Roger Williams](#) was granted the degree of A.B. by Pembroke Hall in Cambridge University. After such an educational career he would, of course, take orders in the Church of England and become a minister, becoming first a chaplain to Sir William Marsham at his manor house at Otes in Essex.

“HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE” BEING A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN TIME (JUST AS THE PERSPECTIVE IN A PAINTING IS A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN SPACE), TO “LOOK AT THE COURSE OF HISTORY MORE GENERALLY” WOULD BE TO SACRIFICE PERSPECTIVE ALTOGETHER. THIS IS FANTASY-LAND, YOU’RE FOOLING YOURSELF. THERE CANNOT BE ANY SUCH THINGIE, AS SUCH A PERSPECTIVE.



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1629

December 15, Tuesday (Old Style): Having completed his higher education and become a minister, [Roger Williams](#) had accepted the post of chaplain to Sir William Masham at his manor house at Otes in Essex. During this year his courtship of Jane Whalley had come to an abrupt termination when he encountered the disapproval of one of her aunts, Lady Barrington. Falling victim to a fever, he was nursed back to health in Lady Masham's household by another guest there, one Mary Barnard. (Presumably this would have been a daughter of the Reverend Richard Barnard in Nottinghamshire.) On this day Roger and Mary took the marriage vow at High Laver Church in Essex.

YOUR GARDEN-VARIETY ACADEMIC HISTORIAN INVITES YOU TO CLIMB ABOARD A HOVERING TIME MACHINE TO SKIM IN METATIME BACK ACROSS THE GEOLOGY OF OUR PAST TIMESLICES, WHILE OFFERING UP A GARDEN VARIETY OF COGENT ASSESSMENTS OF OUR PROGRESSION. WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP! YOU SHOULD REFUSE THIS HELICOPTERISH OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL PAST, FOR IN THE REAL WORLD THINGS HAPPEN ONLY AS THEY HAPPEN. WHAT THIS SORT WRITES AMOUNTS, LIKE MERE "SCIENCE FICTION," MERELY TO "HISTORY FICTION": IT'S NOT WORTH YOUR ATTENTION.



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1630

December 1, Wednesday (Old Style): The *Lyon*, carrying the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) and his wife Mary Barnard Williams, sailed from Bristol on the coast of England, bound for the port of [Boston](#) on the coast of New England. The couple may have brought children with them, as “only six can be precisely known to be born on our side of the water.”

**THE TASK OF THE HISTORIAN IS TO CREATE HINDSIGHT WHILE
INTERCEPTING ANY ILLUSION OF FORESIGHT. NOTHING A HUMAN CAN
SEE CAN EVER BE SEEN AS IF THROUGH THE EYE OF GOD.**



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1631

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) and the Reverend [John Eliot](#) arrived at a New World where all male church members in the Bay Colony were becoming eligible to vote, and where, for impiety, in this year Philip Ratcliff's ears were being severed (so how can someone's ears be impious, did they wiggle during worship, or what?).

When [Thomas Angell](#) came with the Reverend [Williams](#) on the ship *Lyon* under Captain William Pierce (Captain William Peirce? Captain A. Pearce?), sailing from [London](#) to Boston, he was about thirteen years of age and was bound in service to the Reverend as an apprentice or servant. (Another source says he was instead the servant of Richard Waterman.) After a couple of months in Boston the two went to Salem, where they would remain until their departure for [Providence, Rhode Island](#) in 1636.

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**

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February 9, Wednesday (1630, Old Style): The *Lyon* arrived in [Boston](#) harbor, carrying supplies (another source says this ship had anchored off Nantasket on February 3rd after a stormy voyage of 57 days, and that consequently the passengers, the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) and his wife Mary, had already managed to arrive in Boston on February 5th).



His arrival in America was duly noted by Governor John Winthrop, who wrote the newly arrived Williams into his diary as a “godly minister.” He would surprise them, for he would find the congregation at Boston to be an “unseparated people,” and his conscience would prove to be too “tender” to minister to them. Two months later he would be called as minister to Salem. The startled Boston elders had been informed that he would not serve a congregation that recognized the Church of England as he had become a separatist, and had become so enraged that the magistrates would bring pressure to bear on the authorities in Salem, caused him to leave Salem in late summer and pass over to the welcome of separatist Plymouth. There he would be admitted as a member of the Puritan church. He would remain with them for two years.

NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE FEBRUARY 9TH, 1630/1631 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFFY AT BEST).

April: The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) was accepted to minister at a church of [Boston](#), their Reverend Wilson having recently changed his mind and gone back home to England, but due to what he described as a “tender conscience” the post would prove unsuitable; we find that he referred to the congregants there as an “unseparated people.” According to Governor John Winthrop’s history, written later, what had happened was that the newly arrived minister “refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England.”



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August 8, Monday (Old Style): “The Tarrentines, to the number of 100, came in three canoes, and in the night assaulted the wigwam of the Sagamore of Agawam, slew seven men, and wounded John Sagamore, and James, and some others, (whereof some died after,) and rifled a wigwam of Mr. Craddock’s men, kept to catch sturgeon, took away their nets and biscuit.” The Sagamore of [Agawam](#) was Masconnomet. James was the sachem of a tribe in Saugus and John the sachem of a tribe slightly toward the west. James’s wife and others were carried away.

During this first week of August, at [Plymouth](#), Mary Williams, the wife of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), had given birth to a daughter who would be christened as Mary.

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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1633

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) returned from [Plymouth](#) to Salem. He believed, he said, in “soul-liberty,” which meant that every man had the complete right to enjoy freedom of opinion on the subject of religion. He would soon be in difficulties with the Massachusetts Bay authorities again, denouncing them for forcing religious uniformity upon the colonists in defiance of the liberty of their souls — and this time also publicly proclaiming that, since the king had no right to present them with lands that actually belonged to the native Americans, their colonial charter was invalid.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



August: [Mary Williams](#) is said to have been born in [Plymouth](#) during the 1st week of this month.



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1635

Late Spring: When the Dyers set sail for the New World, [Mary Dyer](#), having lost her first infant at birth, was pregnant again. They would arrive at the peninsula of the Tri-Mountain (Pemberton Hill, Beacon Hill, Mount Vernon) during the 5th month of her new pregnancy. In the Dyer home on Summer Street, the fireplace would be wide enough to accommodate 7-foot lengths, a great saving in the labor of chopping firewood. The couple would be sleeping in a room behind this fireplace while their indentured servants would be climbing a ladder to sleep in the loft under the peak of the roof.

The couple, who would soon apply to join the Reverend John Wilson's congregation, had been well educated. [William Dyer](#) would occupy himself in [Boston](#) as he had in England, as a milliner, and would become a friend of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#). Mary would become a friend of Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#) and of Assistant [William Coddington](#), who were Antinomians.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT
ANTINOMIAN CONTROVERSY

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



September 13, Sunday (Old Style): The General Court of [Boston](#) banished the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for espousing something very remotely¹ resembling democracy, threatening him with deportation to England if he did not renounce his convictions,² and he moved across the harbor temporarily to Salem. Which is to say, this minister had denounced the “freeman’s oath,” which he was construing as a transfer of allegiance from King [Charles I](#) to the government of Massachusetts, and for this construal had been summoned to court. His continued refusal to obey that court summons, and his Salem church congregation’s unwillingness to break absolutely with the Church of England in unity with their pastor,³ would cause him to flee in the following spring to the Mount Hope Bay and the kingdom of Massasoit. Although he had been granted a reprieve to remain in the Massachusetts Bay area through the season of cold, the Court learned that he could not restrain himself from uttering his opinions and that many people were going to his house, “taken with an apprehension of his Godliness.” Learning that he was preparing to form a plantation about Narragansett Bay firmed them in their resolve to send him back to England. He would be warned of this by John Winthrop, and would hastily bid his wife and baby daughters good-bye and seek sanctuary with his Indian friends in the Narragansett country. Some 35 years later he would record the events

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of this period as: “I was sorely tossed for one fourteen weeks in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bed or bread did mean.” When the officers would go to Salem to apprehend him, they would find that “he had gone three days before, but whither they could not learn.” The Wampanoag sachem would grant the dissident a tract of land on the near bank of the Seekonk River. There at [Rhode Island](#) Plantation he and friends from Salem would begin to build.

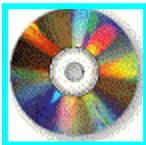


This doesn't make the Reverend Williams exactly a first, since earlier in this year the Reverend [William Blaxton](#) (or Blackstone) already had changed the venue of his secluded life from the Shawmut peninsula to Wawapoonseag at what is now called Cumberland in what is now called the Blackstone Valley, entitling him to claim to be the first permanent English settler of the Rhode Island area just as he had been the first permanent English settler of the peninsula which was becoming Boston.⁴

1. “Very remotely” is here a term of art. For instance, the Reverend [Williams](#) was an utter sexist who would never have conceived of making freedom of opinion available to anyone found in possession of a vagina:

*The Lord hath given a covering of longer hair to women
... and therefore women are not fitted for many actions
and employments.*

In other words, what style hath pulled asunder let none attempt to unite! We would see this sort of attitude again, and it would be during an era in which some men were, unaccountably, wearing their hair long:



“I don't think a woman should be in any government job whatever, mainly because they are erratic. And emotional.”



— President [Richard Milhous Nixon](#)



2. “Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the Elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates, as also written letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction; it is, therefore, ordered that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing,” etc.

3. When the Reverend [Williams](#) broke with the Salem church because of its unwillingness to sever all ties with the Church of England, he pronounced all its members “unregenerate,” including his own wife Mary and his own daughters. Henceforward, after Mistress Mary Williams had prepared a meal for her family, she would need to take her daughters and absent herself from the table while her husband blessed the meal and thanked God, alone. Then the “unregenerate” family might return and break bread together and partake of the meal. Although this practice would come to the attention of others who would chide the Reverend about it, remonstrances would be of course to no avail.

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Late October: The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) had returned to Salem as the Reverend Skeleton's replacement, and Mistress Mary Williams, his wife, there gave birth to a daughter who would be named Freeborn who eventually would marry first with Thomas Hart of [Newport](#) and then with Walter Clark, Governor of [Rhode Island](#). The Reverend's overscrupulous conscience would alienate the affections of the congregation, so that he would be excommunicated by his congregation for refusing to bring his young daughters Mary and Freeborn to them to be baptized, and then the General Court would banish him from that colony.



**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**

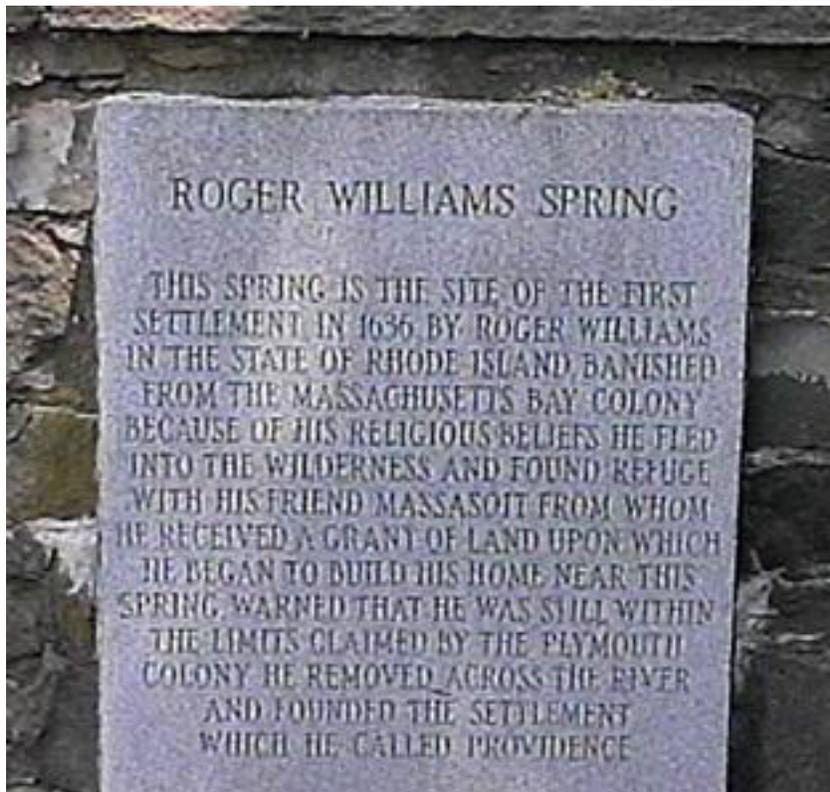
4. He used £12 of the £30 he had been given for the 44 acres of the Boston Common to purchase cattle. (I wonder how many cows that would have been.) Episcopal worship began in Rhode Island at this point, since the Reverend Blackstone was a functioning Anglican priest. He would preach regularly to native Americans and to white settlers beneath the "Catholic Oak" in Lonsdale but would erect no church edifices. Instead he would ride his white bull from settlement to settlement, preaching and administering the sacraments.

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1636

The “Puritan” “trading company” which had settled in New England as the “Massachusetts Bay Colony” managed to beat off the first threat against what they really regarded not as a trading company but as their Divine Commonwealth. This threat came in the person of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), a dissenter who had been forced by the orthodox Puritans to find shelter along with several friends with the natives of the [Narragansett](#) Bay area. In that new area these dissenters from Puritanism founded a settlement which they named Providence Plantation. Temporarily, at least, the dissenters of Providence Plantation practiced something in which they did not truly believe, but which was for the moment a convenient practice, to wit, religious toleration. Also temporarily, and while convenient, these newcomers at Providence Plantation practiced something in which they did not truly believe, but which was for the moment a convenient practice, to wit, fair dealings toward local inhabitants who did not have the grace to have white skins. (Eventually a dispute would arise between the Reverend Williams and the Reverend [William Blaxton](#), with the Reverend Williams on the side of religious intolerance and racial discrimination and the Reverend Blaxton on the side of religious tolerance and racial equality, and the Reverend Williams would win, and religious intolerance and racial discrimination would win, and yet the winner, the Reverend Williams, would be put down in our history books as a foe of religious intolerance and racial discrimination, while all memory of this Reverend Blaxton and of his lonely stand would be more or less elided from the culture myth which we teach to our children — except for such mementos as the Blackstone Avenue of fine homes in [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#).)



In a later timeframe, the Reverend William Hubbard would have his own imitable comments on this “lustre of years” in the history of New England.



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CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

READ HUBBARD TEXT

- Chapter XXXII. The general affairs of the Massachusetts, from the year 1636 to the year 1641.
- Chapter XXXIII. Various occurrences in the Massachusetts, from the year 1636 to 1641.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT

The congregation led by the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) fled to [Rhode Island](#) to create its 1st permanent white settlement in the colony of Providence Plantations in territory disputed between the [Pokanoket](#) and the [Narragansett](#). Head hereditary sachems [Canonicus](#) and Miantonomi granted the new arrivals “the meadows” upon the [Pawtuxet](#) River and its Seekonk estuary (which is to say, the [Blackstone River](#) and the brackish arm of the Narragansett Bay into which it feeds) and they began to plant. However, they were soon advised by Governor Winslow that this area was within the limits of Plymouth Colony. The Reverend accordingly embarked during the spring or early summer with five companions, landing at what has since been referred to as Slate Rock to exchange greetings with the local natives, and then rowing on to the site of their new settlement as negotiated, on the Moshassuck River, which, Williams observed, for the many “Providences of the Most Holy and Only Wise, I called Providence.” He observed of this, “I spared no cost towards them in

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tokens and presents to Canonicus and all his, many years before I came in person to the Narragansett; and when I came I was welcome to the old prince Canonicus, who was most shy of all English to his last breath.” [Henry Thoreau](#) would write later that “Nathaniel Morton, in his NEW ENGLAND’S MEMORIAL, printed in 1669 — speaking of white men going to treat with Canonicus, a Narragansett Indian, about Mr. Oldham’s death in 1636 — says ‘Boiled chestnuts is their white bread, and because they would be extraordinary in their feasting, they strove for variety after the English manner, boiling puddings made of beaten corn, putting therein great store of blackberries, somewhat like currants’ — no doubt whortleberries. This seems to imply that the Indians imitated the English — or set before their guests dishes to which they themselves were not accustomed — or which were extra-ordinary. But we have seen that these dishes were not new or unusual to them and it was the whites who imitated the Indians rather.”



“HUCKLEBERRIES”: But Nathaniel Morton, in his NEW ENGLAND’S MEMORIAL, printed in 1669 — speaking of white men going to treat with Canonicus, a Narragansett Indian, about Mr. Oldham’s death in 1636 — says ‘Boiled chestnuts is their white bread, and because they would be extraordinary in their feasting, they strove for variety after the English manner, boiling puddings made of beaten corn, putting therein great store of blackberries, somewhat like currants’ — no doubt whortleberries. This seems to imply that the Indians imitated the English — or set before their guests dishes to which they themselves were not accustomed — or which were extra-ordinary. But we have seen that these dishes were not new or unusual to them and it was the whites who imitated the Indians rather.

NATHANIEL MORTON

CANONICUS

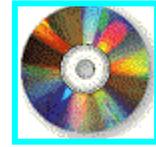
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"Everything in life is unusual until you get accustomed to it."

– The Scarecrow, in THE MARVELOUS LAND OF OZ
(L. Frank Baum, 1904)



**THE AGE OF REASON WAS A PIPE DREAM, OR AT BEST A PROJECT.
ACTUALLY, HUMANS HAVE ALMOST NO CLUE WHAT THEY ARE DOING,
WHILE CREDITING THEIR OWN LIES ABOUT WHY THEY ARE DOING IT.**

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[Thomas Angell](#) went to [Providence, Rhode Island](#) where the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), William Haris [Harris], John Smith, Joshua Verin, and Francis Wicks composed the first white settlers of Providence



(ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE, pages 20-21). Each of these received a lot of land. Thomas Angell's lot was where the 1st [Baptist](#) Church and High School and Angell Street are now situated, fronting on what was then the Towne Road but is now termed North Main Street. According to COLONIAL RECORDS, Volume 1, page 14, Angell was one of the six Commissioners from Providence to make the laws for the Colony. The first rules of government were signed by 13 men, among them Thomas Angell.



In 1844 when this history of this town began to be portrayed for the benefit of its citizens, here is the manner in which its history would be made to appear:

1636. First settlement of the town, by Roger Williams and his companions, viz. William Harris, John Smith (miller), Joshua Verin, Thomas Angell and Francis Wikes.

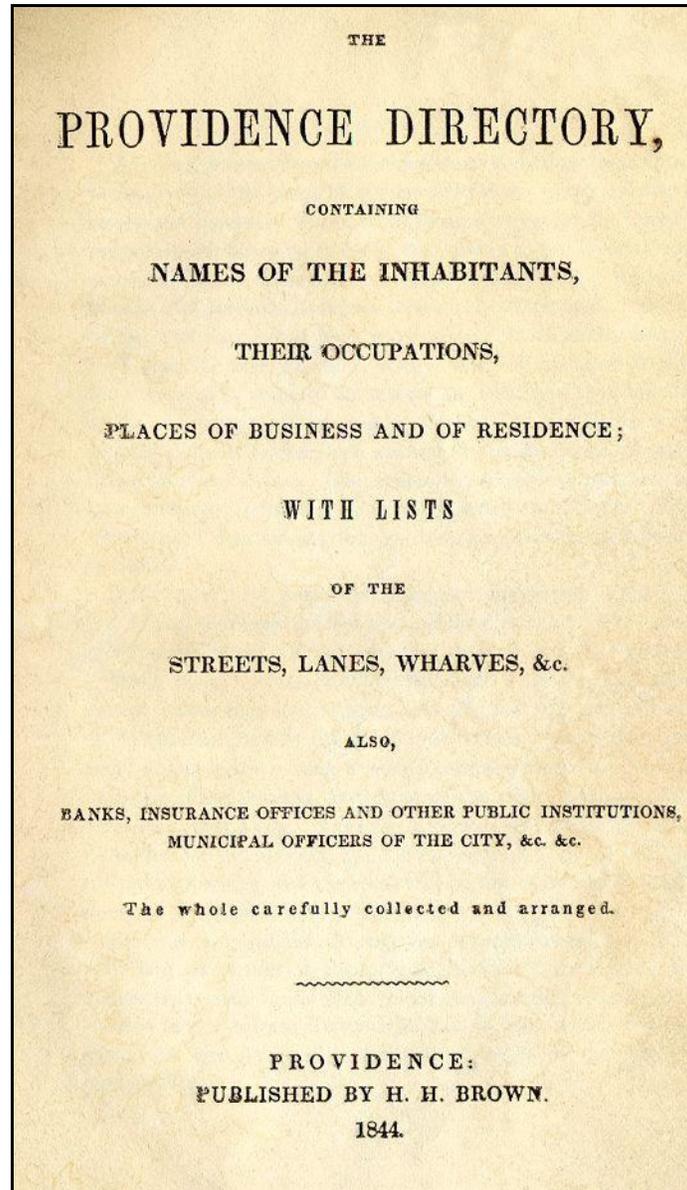
The tract of land which constituted the town of Providence, which then extended to the present limits of the county, was purchased by Mr. Williams for a valuable consideration, as appears from a deed made to him, and signed by the two [Narragansett](#) chiefs, Connanicus and Meauntunomie, 1639, which was in confirmation of a parol grant made two years prior to that date. These lands were in 1661 parcelled out in equal proportions to the rest of the Company, by Mr. Williams. Soon



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after this, "the Town street was laid out, which is now known as North Main and South Main streets. To each member of the Company were assigned a home lot and a six acre lot; and the home lot of Mr. Williams was in the vicinity of what is now St. John's Church." The spring of fresh water, where it is believed these pilgrims first stopped, is a little southerly from the church, in the rear of the large brick block of Nehemiah Dodge, on the westerly side of North Main st.



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January: The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) fled Salem, where he had found no peace, and took haven with the tolerant [Narragansett](#) tribalists of what would become [Providence, Rhode Island](#).



\CONTINGENCY

ALTHOUGH VERY MANY OUTCOMES ARE OVERDETERMINED, WE TRUST
THAT SOMETIMES WE ACTUALLY MAKE REAL CHOICES.

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March: In [Rhode Island](#), the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) used his influence with the [Narragansett](#) to convince them not only to reject a Pequot war belt but to ally with the English against them. In token of this alliance they sent to



the English settlement forty fathoms of their wampum, plus one chopped-off Pequot hand.

THE MARKET FOR HUMAN BODY PARTS



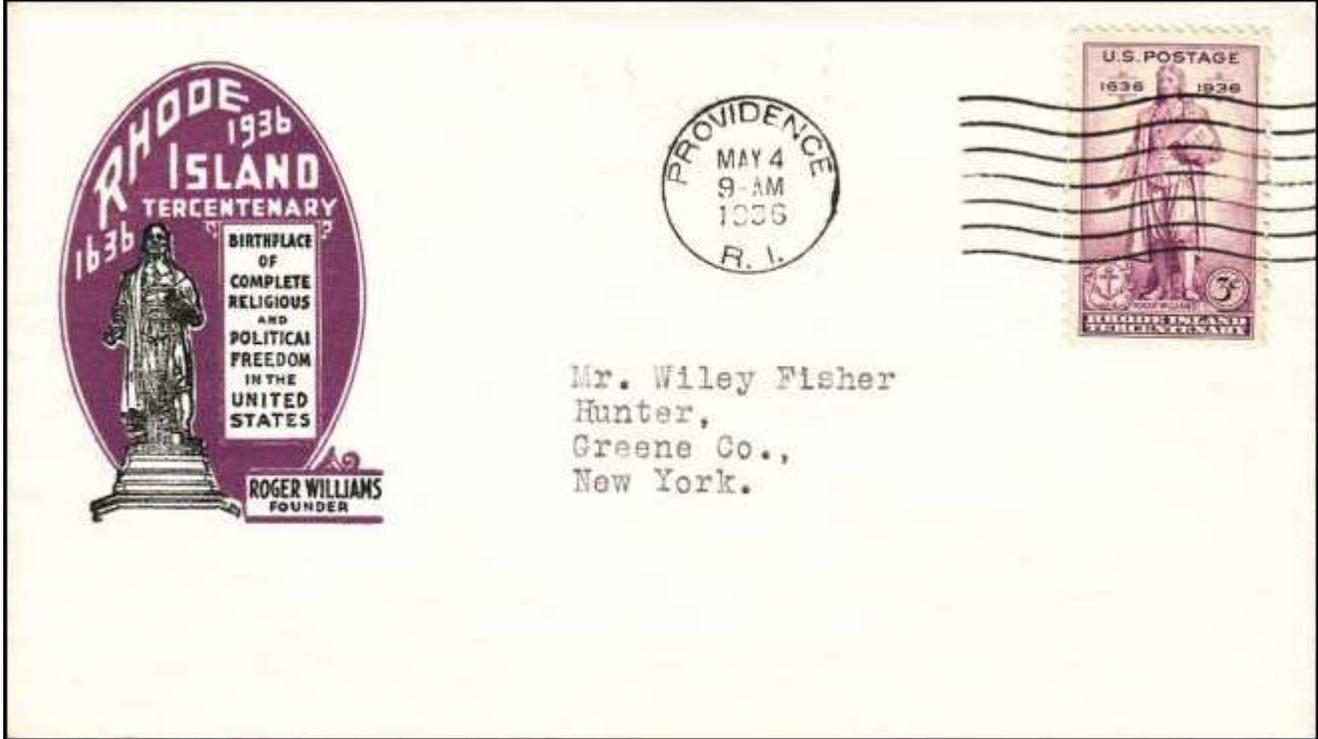
Uncas and the Mohegan also declined, choosing instead to fight against their former tribesmen. Despite this, and despite their decimation by disease, the Pequot were still formidable and claimed the nominal allegiance of 26 subordinate sachems from other tribes. However, the loyalty of many of their allies was suspect and, when the war began in real earnest, many of their erstwhile allies would await developments rather than committing themselves.

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



So what is the above 1936 “Tercentenary” stamp and envelope cover talking about?

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

In order to get a clue: In about this timeframe, what was the Reverend Williams doing? —He was landing near what would become [Providence](#), and negotiating with local native headmen and being granted permissions, and then hearing from the Bay Colony that he was still within what they considered to be their current borders, and rowing across the bay and beginning again to negotiate with local native headmen and obtain permissions to set up a white settlement. —And, I hear, there was supposed to be religious freedom in this settlement, for Baptists. (There's only a few little problems with this, such as the story that the Particular Baptists, and



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especially the Bible Baptist Association, tell according to which the Baptist religion as they appreciate it was not actually founded until a later timeframe, and according to which the Reverend Williams actually never was a Baptist minister and never delivered a Baptist sermon in a Baptist church, but instead was in his Rhode Island years a merchant and a slavetrader and a politician and an author, and such as that his kind of religious freedom –religious freedom, that is, for one persecuted minority of white adult male– actually would amount to something significantly less than complete religious and political freedom for anybody and everybody.)

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

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS EVADE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS, WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)



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June: The Reverend [Roger Williams](#), under banishment from Salem, and the group that went into exile with him, crossed to the other side of the Seekonk estuary to avoid any complication with the Plymouth Colony before founding a settlement what would be the [Rhode Island](#) Plantation. This was the first sizeable European settlement on Narragansett turf (preceding by a couple years the Antinomian settlement on [Aquidneck Island](#)).

ANTINOMIAN CONTROVERSY

The Reverend Williams's negotiation with this tribe was timely, since the beginning of English settlement in Connecticut was provoking a serious confrontation with the Pequot. The Reverend selected the name [Providence](#) for this new settlement in gratitude "for God's merciful providence to me in my distress" in causing the local [Narragansett](#) headman to grant permission to use this site. When he landed, the natives greeted him in English as a friend with the famous "What cheer, nehtop!"



The landing site of the Reverend Williams in Providence is now commemorated by a column at the corner of Gano Street and Williams Street. The plaque states that the waterline was in 1836 right there, despite the fact that the waterline is presently quite a ways downslope from this city plot (the slate outcropping upon which the Reverend set his foot now being buried a number of feet underneath fill material). The site of his home, at the corner of North Main Street and Canal Street along the Moshassuck River, is now the Roger Williams National Memorial. He always would have the friendship of Governor John Winthrop though circumstances, consistent with the honor of both, would enforce a long and sad separation. As the Colonial agent in [London](#), or chief Magistrate here, the Reverend would be equal, discreet, and disinterested to his death in April 1683.

**ONE COULD BE ELSEWHERE, AS ELSEWHERE DOES EXIST.
ONE CANNOT BE ELSEWHEN SINCE ELSEWHEN DOES NOT.
(TO THE WILLING MANY THINGS CAN BE EXPLAINED,
THAT FOR THE UNWILLING WILL REMAIN FOREVER MYSTERIOUS.)**

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Winter: The Pequot planned their retaliation and sent war belts to the [Narragansett](#) asking their help. Because of their friendship with the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), the Narragansett of the bay of [Rhode Island](#) not only refused the Pequot request, but sent warnings to Boston of impending war and allied themselves with the English. Narragansett support would provide a key factor in the English victory the following year.



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1637

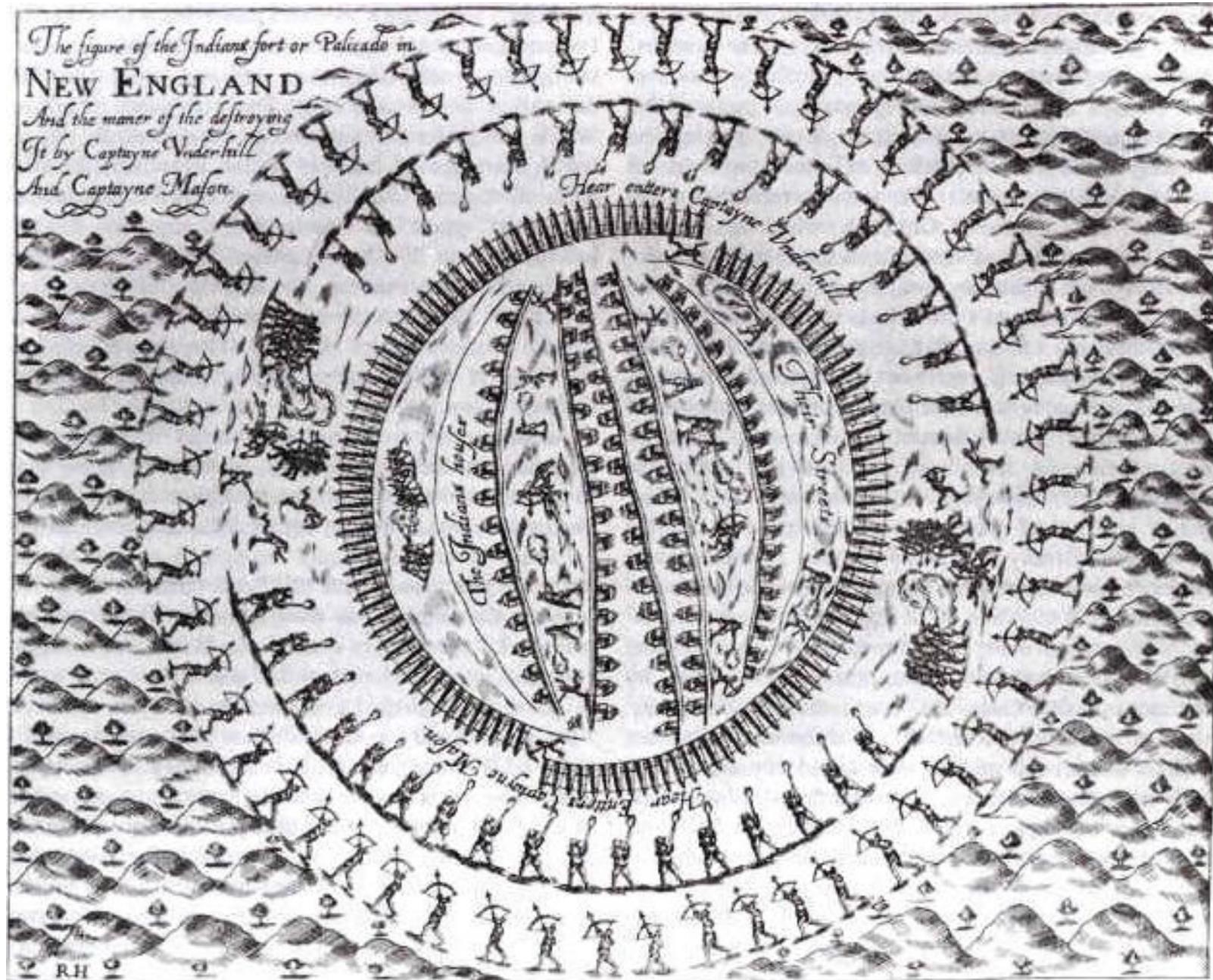
The Council of the [Narragansett](#) of the bay of [Rhode Island](#) decided to ally with the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut in its war against the Mohegan tribe known locally as the “Pequot” or “Mankillers” (they knew themselves not as mankillers but as “the fox people”). Because of their location outside the boundaries of the United Puritan Colonies, their political and military autonomy, and the peculiar religious views of the most prominent white minister in their midst, the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), [Narragansett](#) tribespeople were at that time able to discourage a flock of other ministers who were attempting to dissuade them from their religion.



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The Massachusetts militia massacred a Pequot village at Mystic. They killed about 600; taking 30 males offshore, they drowned them in the sort of event that is described as a “noyage”; their women and children were sold or handed around as [slaves](#).⁵



(For most nations, wars are about power and self-interest, but for Americans, they have always been about righteousness. American look at war as an epic struggle between good and evil. As Wubya put the matter, it is up to our nation “to defend the hopes of all mankind.” This sort of attitude began long before we were a nation, for in 1630 Governor John Winthrop had planted a great Biblical aspiration on American soil: “We shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us.” It is no accident that soon afterward his colonists had launched this war against Indian “devil worshippers.” The bodies of so many “frying in the fire,” according to [William Bradford](#), seemed “a sweet sacrifice to God.” The anxieties of the Indian conflicts would next lead the society straight into internal hunts for “[witches](#).” [American Exceptionalism](#) means, it seems, never needing to say that you are sorry.)

REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote to Governor John Winthrop about the successful expedition against the “Pequot” or “Fox People”: “It having again pleased the Most High to put into our hands another miserable drove of Adam’s degenerate seed, and our brethren by nature, I am bold (if I may not offend in it) to request the keeping and bringing up of one of the children.”

The Pequot slaves were transported to the West Indies aboard the 1st American slave ship, the *Desire*.⁶ On its return voyage, the ship transported a cargo of African slaves to Connecticut. (Refer to A WONDERFUL VICTORY OVER THE ENEMIES OF GOD and MASSACRE AT FORT MYSTIC.)

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE



Hugh Peter wrote to John Winthrop, Jr. that he had heard of a “dividend” of women and children from the Pequot captives and that he would appreciate being sent his own share, “a young woman or girl and a boy if you think good.”

5. A few Pequot warriors would elude capture and obtain refuge with other New England Algonquin groups. Most of those captured were executed but the Reverend [Williams](#) proposed that as a humanitarian measure, instead, they should be sold for a profit, and so about 1,400 persons would be exported. The peace treaty would systematically dismember what remained of the tribe in a manner designed to ensure that the Pequot could no longer function as a cohesive grouping. Some women and children would be distributed as “servants” to white households. The [Narragansett](#) and Eastern Niantic would accept some of the Pequot women and children, and one band was exiled to Long Island and became subject to the Metoac. For the most part, these Pequot would be absorbed by their “hosts” within a few years and would disappear. The remainder were placed under the Mohegan, and it is from this group that the two current Pequot tribes have evolved. The Mohegans would treat their Pequot guests so badly that by 1655 the English would be forced to remove them. Two reservations would be established for the Pequots in 1666 and 1683. By 1762 there would be only 140 Pequots and the decline would continue until a low point of 66 was reached as of the 1910 census. At present, the State of Connecticut recognizes two Pequot tribes: the Mashantucket and the Paucatuck. The 600 Paucatuck (Eastern Pequot) have retained the Lantern Hill Reservation (226 acres) at North Stonington but are not federally recognized. The Mashantucket (Western Pequot) received federal recognition in 1983.

6. The slave ship *Desire*, 120 tons, was constructed at Marblehead, Massachusetts and was one of the 1st ships, if not the very 1st, built in the colonies.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

A

Chronological TABLE

*Of the most remarkable passages in that part of
America, known to us by the name of NEW-
ENGLAND.*

Anno Dom.

1637. The *Pequites* Wars, in which were Slain
Five or Six Hundred *Indians*.

Ministers that have come from *England*, chiefly in the
Ten first Years, Ninety Four: Of which returned Twenty
Seven: Dyed in the Country Thirty Six: Yet alive in the
Country Thirty One.

The Number of Ships that transported Passengers to
New-England in these times, was 298. supposed: Men,
Women, and Children, as near as can be ghesed 21200.

1637. The first Synod at *Cambridge* in *New-England*,
where the *Antinomian* and *Famalistical* Errors were con-
futed; 80 Errors now amongst the *Massachusets*.

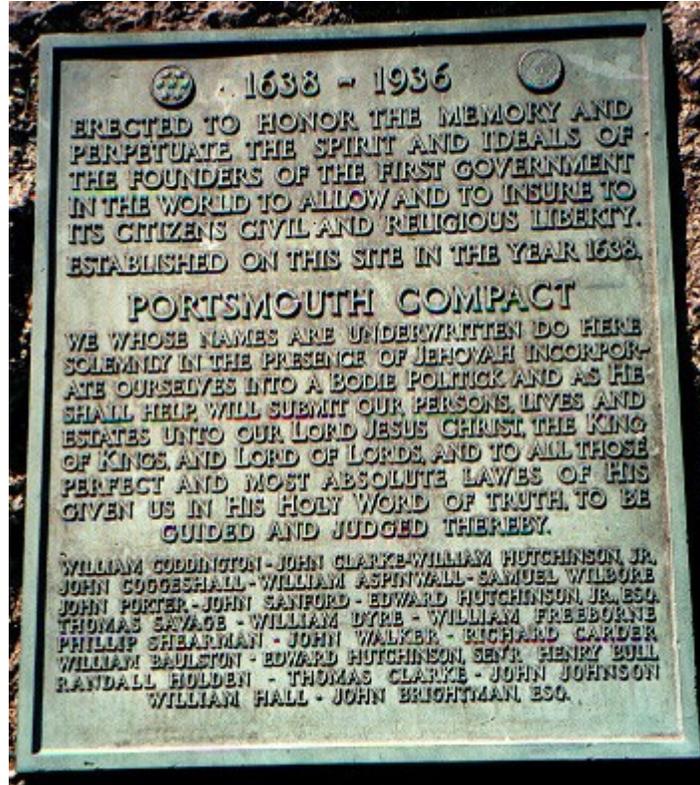
YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT EITHER THE REALITY OF TIME OVER THAT OF
CHANGE, OR CHANGE OVER TIME — IT'S PARMENIDES, OR
HERACLITUS. I HAVE GONE WITH HERACLITUS.

REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

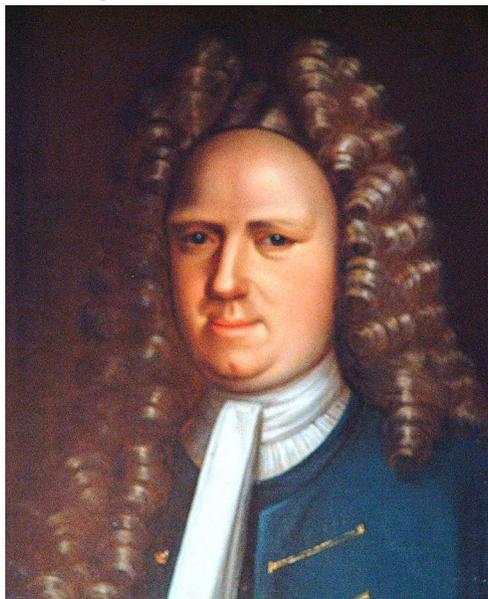
ROGER WILLIAMS

1638

An outpost was established at [Pawtuxet](#) in what would become [Rhode Island](#), by William Harris and the Arnold family. Other nonconformists coming down into the bay region, such as William Hutchinson and [Anne Hutchinson](#) and [William Coddington](#), were founding Pocasset (now [Portsmouth](#)) and signing the “Portsmouth Compact.”



[William Coddington](#) was chosen as governor.





REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

According to John Farmer, the 1st (white) settlers of [Rhode Island](#) were:

- [Roger Williams](#)
- William Aspinwall
- Arther Fenner
- John Thockmorton
- Samuel Wildbore
- Henry Reddock
- William Arnold
- John Porter
- Thomas Sucklin
- William Harris
- John Sandford
- Christopher Smith
- Stuckey Westcot
- Edward Hutchinson
- Richard Pray
- Thomas Olney, Senior
- Thomas Savage
- Nicholas Power
- Thomas Olney, Junior
- William Dyre
- Stephen Northrup
- John Greene
- William Freeborn
- Edward Hart
- Richard Waterman
- Philip Sherman
- Benjamin Herendon
- Thomas James
- John Walker
- Edward Inman
- Robert Cole
- Richard Carder
- John Jones
- William Carpenter
- William Baulston
- James Matthewson
- Francis Weston
- Henry Bull
- Henry Neale
- Ezekiel Holleman
- William Coddington
- William Man
- Robert Williams
- John Clark
- _____ Jinckes
- John Smith
- Edward Cope
- Roger Mawry
- Hugh Bewitt
- [Chad Brown](#)
- Edward Manten
- William Wickenden



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

- Daniel Brown
- Shadrach Manton
- John Field
- Henry Brown
- George Shepherd
- [Thomas Hopkins](#)
- [John Brown](#)
- Edward Smith
- William Hawkins
- Samuel Bennett
- Benjamin Smith
- William Hutchinson
- Hugh Bewett (the mason)
- John Smith
- Edward Hutchinson, Jun
- Adam Goodwin
- John Smith, Sr.
- John Coggeshall
- Henry Fowler
- John Smith, Jr.
- John Smith (Jamaica)
- Epenetus Olney
- Lawrence Wilkinson
- Daniel Williams
- Christopher Onthawk
- Joshua Verin
- John Sayles
- Richard Scott (this [Baptist](#) would become a [Friend](#), very likely the 1st in [Rhode Island](#))
- Joan Tyler
- Joshua Winsor
- Valentine Whitman
- George Way
- William White
- Thomas Walling
- John Warren
- John Whipple
- Matthew Waller
- Robert Williams
- Joseph Williams
- William Wickenden
- Robert R. West
- Pardon Tillighast

FIGURING OUT WHAT AMOUNTS TO A “HISTORICAL CONTEXT” IS WHAT THE CRAFT OF HISTORICIZING AMOUNTS TO, AND THIS NECESSITATES DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE SET OF EVENTS THAT MUST HAVE TAKEN PLACE BEFORE EVENT E COULD BECOME POSSIBLE, AND MOST CAREFULLY DISTINGUISHING THEM FROM ANOTHER SET OF EVENTS

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THAT COULD NOT POSSIBLY OCCUR UNTIL SUBSEQUENT TO EVENT E.

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March 22, Thursday (1637, Old Style): Part of the problem was that [Mary Dyer](#), a woman associated with Mistress [Anne Hutchinson](#), had given birth to a child, stillborn, characterized by Governor John Winthrop as a “monster.” The Reverend John Cotton, repentant, confided to the court his role in the secret burial. When exhumed, the body had seemed to lack a skull. Goody Hawkins, who assisted at the birth, was summoned to provide a description of the child as born. The baby’s “thornback” birth defect was being ascribed by the Puritans to the influence of antinomianism.

The group led by Mistress Hutchinson was expelled by an ecclesiastical court upon a charge of “traducing the ministers,” and she herself was excommunicated and ordered “as a Leper to withdraw yorselwe owt of the Congregation.”



Forasmuch as yow, Mrs. Huchinson, have highly transgressed & offended, & forasmuch as yow have soe many ways troubled the Church wth yor Erors & have drawen away many a poor soule, & have upheld yor Revelations: & forasmuch as yow have made a Lye, &c. Therfor in the name of our Lord Je: Ch: & in the name of the Church I doe not only pronownce yow worthy to be cast owt, but I doe cast yow out & in the name of Ch. I dow deliver you up to Sathan, that yow may learne no more to blaspheme, to seduce & to lye, & I dow account yow from this time forth to be a Hethen & a Publican & soe to be held of all the Bretheren & Sisters, of this Congregation, & of others: thefor I command yow in the name of Ch: Je: & of this Church as a Leper to wthdraw yorselwe owt of the Congregation; that as formerly yow have dispised & contemned the Holy Ordinances of God, & turned yor Backe one them, soe yow may now have no part in them nor benefit by them.

She would take refuge by abandoning [Boston](#) for Paumanok Long Island in [New York](#), and a number of people influenced by her heresy would take refuge, initially with the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) at [Providence](#) Plantations and then at [Portsmouth](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#), an island also known as Rhodes Island.⁷



RHODE ISLAND RELIGION

7. So named because mistaken with [Block Island](#), which had originally been compared as similar in coastal outline on the map, or in appearance from the sea, or in some respect or other, to the much larger island of Rhodes, of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Chronological TABLE

*Of the most remarkable passages in that part of
America, known to us by the name of NEW-
ENGLAND.*

Anno Dom.

1638. *New-Haven* Colony began.

Mrs. *Hutchinson* and her erroneous companions banished
the *Massachusetts* Colony.

A terrible Earth quake throughout the Country.¹

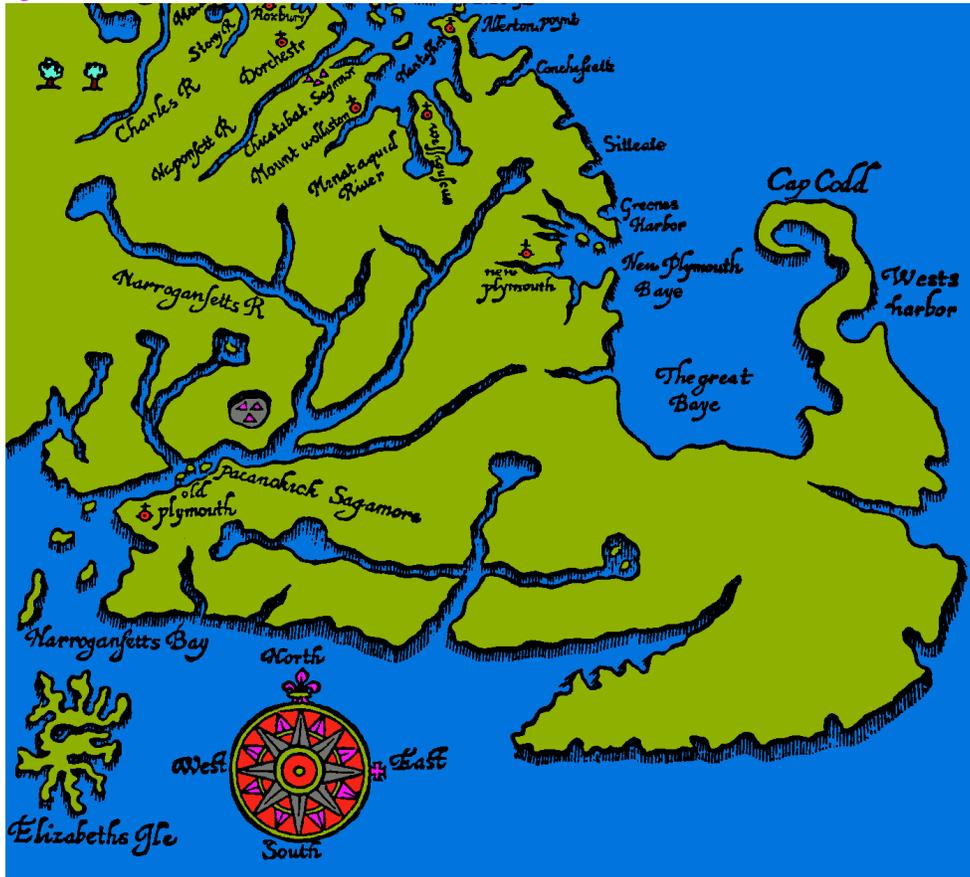
Mr. *John Harvard*, the Founder of *Harvard* College
(at *Cambridge* in *New-England*) Deceased, gave 700 *l.* to
the erecting of it.

¹ Compare Winthrop, N.E., vol. i. p. 265; Johnson's Wonder-working Prov. lib. ii. c. 12, *cit.* Savage; and Morton's Memorial, by Davis, p. 209, and note, p. 289.

REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

[William Dyer](#) and [Mary Dyer](#) were of course among those who sought refuge in [Rhode Island](#) on this [Narragansett](#) turf.



Note that at this point the Dyer family had not yet been tainted by [Quakerism](#) — the Reverend [Williams](#), in tolerating them at this point, was not by that fact tolerating Quakers.⁸ It may be that the Reverend's track record was good, overall, at least for that era, but in fact he didn't like Quakers in the same way he didn't like Papists, which in our own day and age would be taken as a sign of religious intolerance rather than as a sign of religious tolerance:

They admit no interpreter but themselves, for the spirit within, they say, gave forth the Scripture, and is above the Scripture, ... and that all they do and say is scripture — Papists and Quakers most horribly and hypocritically trample it under their proud feet.

BETWEEN ANY TWO MOMENTS ARE AN INFINITE NUMBER OF MOMENTS, AND BETWEEN THESE OTHER MOMENTS LIKEWISE AN INFINITE NUMBER, THERE BEING NO ATOMIC MOMENT JUST AS THERE IS NO ATOMIC POINT ALONG A LINE. MOMENTS ARE THEREFORE FIGMENTS. THE PRESENT MOMENT IS A MOMENT AND AS SUCH IS A FIGMENT, A FLIGHT OF THE

8. In addition, this is often overlooked but in fact in the Dyer family, only [Mary Dyer](#) and her son Will ever became [Quakers](#).



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

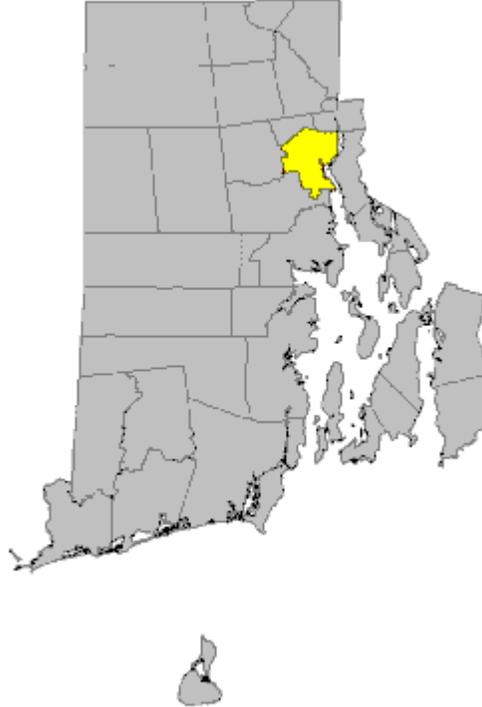
ROGER WILLIAMS

IMAGINATION TO WHICH NOTHING REAL CORRESPONDS. SINCE PAST
MOMENTS HAVE PASSED OUT OF EXISTENCE AND FUTURE MOMENTS
HAVE YET TO ARRIVE, WE NOTE THAT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS ALL
THAT EVER EXISTS — AND YET THE PRESENT MOMENT BEING A
MOMENT IS A FIGMENT TO WHICH NOTHING IN REALITY CORRESPONDS.

REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

March: At a council held on the west bank of the Pettaquamscutt River, the [Narragansett](#) headmen [Canonicus](#) and Miantonomi granted to the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) permission to occupy a tract which included the [Providence](#) area from the Seekonk estuary to Neutakonkanut Hill on the west.



(There was no indication that this permission to reside was to be in any manner exclusive. This was in no sense a deed, or a title, or a grant of political independence, but quite to the contrary, amounted to a pledge of honest white subordination to the beneficent red leader. When the Reverend met him, he was tall, erect, heavy of frame, yet spare and bony, attired in a skin robe with fringes, with long feathers in his hair, carrying a bow and a spear in the fold of his arms. Williams characterized him as “a wise and peaceable prince ... for any gratuities or tokens, Canonicus desires sugar, Miantonomi, powder.” The friendship of Williams, Canonicus, and Miantonomi would not waver, and it was Canonicus who granted Chibchuwesa, to be called Prudence Island,

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There are no authentic depictions of any of these persons (including Rev. Williams)

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to Williams as a place of residence.)⁹



THE FALLACY OF MOMENTISM: THIS STARRY UNIVERSE DOES NOT CONSIST OF A SEQUENCE OF MOMENTS. THAT IS A FIGMENT, ONE WE HAVE RECOURSE TO IN ORDER TO PRIVILEGE TIME OVER CHANGE, A PRIVILEGING THAT MAKES CHANGE SEEM UNREAL, DERIVATIVE, A MERE APPEARANCE. IN FACT IT IS CHANGE AND ONLY CHANGE WHICH WE EXPERIENCE AS REALITY, TIME BEING BY WAY OF RADICAL CONTRAST UNEXPERIENCED — A MERE INTELLECTUAL CONSTRUCT. THERE EXISTS NO SUCH THING AS A MOMENT. NO “INSTANT” HAS EVER FOR AN INSTANT EXISTED.

9. The Narragansett sachem Tashtassuck had had one son and one daughter, who, within the culture of their tribe, as son and daughter of a sachem, had been united in marriage. The first of their offspring had been [Canonicus](#), although eventually he would have three brothers. The youngest of his brothers, the war leader Mascus, would be the father of the war leader Miantonomi. Canonicus and Mascus came to share the tribal rule, with Canonicus playing the role of peace leader and Mascus that of war leader. The tribes that were in submission to the Narragansett during the period of the height of their influence were the Massachusetts, the Wampanoag, the Nipmuc, the Sakonnet, the Nauset, the Shawomet, the Niantic, and the Coweset, amounting to an alliance of about 30,000 people. Mascus had died before the arrival of the English, but the *Massasoit* (headman of the headmen) of the Wampanoag and ten of his sub-sachems had formally re-acknowledged their subordination to the Narragansett. (Massasoit's son Metacomet, who would be known to the English as “Phillip,” was at this point still a rugrat.) Primarily, [Canonicus](#) resided near what is now Cocumcussoc, at [Wickford, Rhode Island](#).

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August 20, Monday (Old Style): Watertown, in the Massachusetts Bay colony, had been insisting that its grant, since it had been specified as running eight miles toward the west, actually converged to a point north of Walden Pond, and that therefore it was entitled to land that was generally considered to be well within the 6-mile quadrangle assigned to the town of [Concord](#). The General Court therefore on this day issued an order, that these Watertown lines were to be extended only so far “as Concord bounds give leave.”

[Chad Brown](#) had come to Boston Harbor in the *Martin* in July with his wife [Elizabeth Brown](#) and their young son [John Brown](#), and on this day was incorporated into town fellowship with others at [Providence](#) (previously known as *Moshasuck*), [Rhode Island](#). In 1642, after the brief tenure of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), he would become the leader of the worship group that in a considerably later timeframe, after the emigration of some Particular Baptists, would become the 1st [Baptist](#) church of Providence.¹⁰

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**

Late in September: The baptism of the son of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). (We know that this child was not being baptized as a newborn, because at his baptismal ceremony the mother was again like 8 months pregnant.)

Late in September: At [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Mary Williams, the wife of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), gave birth to a daughter who would be named Providence who would die unmarried during March 1686.

10. According to an article “Was [Roger Williams](#) Really a [Baptist](#)?” published by the Baptist Publishing House of Texarkana TX, by Professor of Church History Louis F. Asher of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, “evidence is lacking to show that the group at Providence constituted a Baptist church before about 1654, at which time a Baptist church was organized by some Particular Baptists who had recently migrated from England.” The historian of the First Baptist Church In America, Professor Stanley Lemons, however, disagrees with this evaluation, and points out that it is one made by “Particular Baptists” and spread around by the “Bible Baptist Association.” According to this Rhode Island viewpoint, the work of Dr. Asher, “a now-deceased professor at a tiny, splinter Baptist seminary in Texas,” is not to be relied upon.



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ROGER WILLIAMS

1639

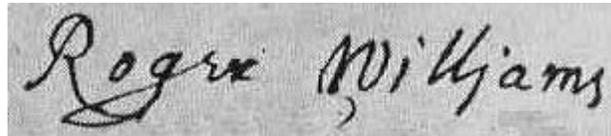
At the request of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) mediated with the natives to prevent a threatened coalition of the Pequot of Connecticut with the [Narragansett](#) and Mohegan groupings. He would write of this in later years: “Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequot ambassadors, whose hands and arms methought reeked with the blood of my countrymen murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut River.”

NO-ONE’S LIFE IS EVER NOT DRIVEN PRIMARILY BY HAPPENSTANCE



It has been alleged that America’s 1st [Baptist](#) church was formed in this year in [Providence](#) (previously known as *Moshasuck*), [Rhode Island](#). However, we do not know that this group either considered itself to be, or was, actually Baptist in its orientation.¹¹

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) is said to have embraced some sort of [Baptist](#) faith. In fact, some Americans you meet on the street nowadays will want to tell you that he was our **very first Baptist** pastor! (Presumably he ministered in the white building that presently proclaims itself to be the first Baptist church in America — a magnificent structure which would not be erected on Mr. Angell’s house lot **for more than a century!**) However this parses, the fact is that within a very few months Williams had thought better of this involvement with this group of people and had disengaged himself.¹²



I need to give full weight to the popular conceit that the Reverend Williams was the minister of the first Baptist church, so I will quote at length from one of the secondary sources that fully embraces that hypothesis. You will see how evidence to the contrary has been marginalized:

There can be little doubt, as to what were the religious tenets
[Roger Williams](#) “[Stack of the Artist of Kouroo](#)” Project

11. According to an article “Was [Roger Williams](#) Really a [Baptist](#)?” published by the Baptist Publishing House of Texarkana TX, by Professor of Church History Louis F. Asher of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, “evidence is lacking to show that the group at Providence constituted a [Baptist](#) church before about 1654, at which time a Baptist church was organized by some Particular Baptists who had recently migrated from England.” The historian of the First Baptist Church In America, Professor Stanley Lemons, however, disagrees with this evaluation, and points out that it is one made by “Particular Baptists” and spread around by the “Bible Baptist Association.” According to this Rhode Island viewpoint, the work of Dr. Asher, “a now-deceased professor at a tiny, splinter Baptist seminary in Texas,” is not to be relied upon.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

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of the first settlers of Providence. At the time of their removal here, they were members of Plymouth and Massachusetts churches. Those churches, as it respects government, were Independent or Congregational, in doctrine, moderately Calvinistic and with regard to ceremony, Pedobaptists. The settlers of Providence, did not cease to be members of those churches, by their removal, nor did the fact of their being members, constitute them a church, after it. They could not form themselves into a church of the faith and order of the Plymouth and Massachusetts churches, until dismissed from them; and after such dismissal, some covenant or agreement among themselves was necessary in order to effect it. That they met for public worship is beyond a doubt; but such meetings, though frequent and regular, would not make them a church. Among the first thirteen, were two ordained ministers, Roger Williams and Thomas James. That they preached to the settlers is quite probable, but there is no evidence of any intent to form a church, previous to March 1639. When they did attempt it, they had ceased to be Pedobaptists, for Ezekiel Holyman, a layman, had baptized Roger Williams, by immersion, and Mr. Williams afterwards, had baptized Mr. Holyman and several others of the company, in the same manner. By this act they disowned the churches of which they had been members, and for this, they were soon excommunicated, by those churches. After being thus baptized, they formed a church and called Mr. Williams to be their pastor. This was the first church gathered in Providence. It has continued to the present day, and is now known as THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH....

Most of the preceding statements are founded on the records of the church. Other sources of information have been resorted to. Where that information differs from the record, the difference will now be given, together with such other facts in relation to this church, as have been collected from all sources whatever. The record states that Mr. Williams held the pastoral office about four years. A letter of Richard Scott, appended to "A New England Fire-Brand Quenched," and published about 1673, states that Mr. Williams left the Baptists and turned Seeker, a few months after he was baptized. Mr. Scott was a member of the Baptist church for some time, but at the date of this letter, had united with the Friends. According to Mr. Williams' new

12. According to Professor Asher, although the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) "held that the local church was a voluntary congregation of baptized believers," and "felt that there were recorded witnesses to the truth who extended back to pre-reformation times," and believed in the continuing work of the Holy Spirit and other kindred [Baptist](#) teachings," he objected to "other important Baptist beliefs" such as the belief in "active fellowship in a Baptist church," so there is "no conclusive evidence ... which objectively supports that claim. — Well, at least, that is the "Particular Baptist" take on this history. However, Williams' own writings fail to clearly identify him with any Baptist church at any time! His debates with the Quakers made that clear." "Williams never actively associated with the Baptists by uniting with them.... He found no existing religious persuasion with which he could actively associate.... [John Clarke](#)'s church for example, was in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and going strong at that period. Clarke and Williams were the best of friends and associates, both politically and socially. Throughout Clarke's life in New England, however, Williams never associated with Clarke in any religious fellowship, insofar as available records are concerned. Williams' brother, Robert, and Robert's wife, Elizabeth, were both members of Clarke's church in 1672.... Robert was a "Schoolmaster in Newport," and the other brother was a "Turkey Merchant." Originally, Robert and his wife were members of the group with Williams at Providence. (Morgan Edwards, MATERIALS FOR A HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS IN RHODE ISLAND. Vol. VI; In Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society. [Providence: Hammond, Angell & Co., Printers, 1867], 314).... When Roger Williams charged the Quakers with denying a visible way of worship — that is, churches, ministers, baptism and other cardinal ministerial practices, the Quakers countered by pointing out Williams' inconsistency in affirming such a teaching of the Baptists but refusing to become actively identified with them.... In spite of an abundance of historical acumen alleging that Roger Williams was the first Baptist pastor in America, he was not a Baptist at all!"

Note that the Particular Baptist take on these materials is that rather than becoming a Baptist, Williams became a "Seeker" — but that this term "Seeker" functions in their discourse in much the manner that the term "Commie" functioned in the America of the 1950s, or the term "Liberal" functioned in the 1990s, as a mere term of derogation and dismissal.

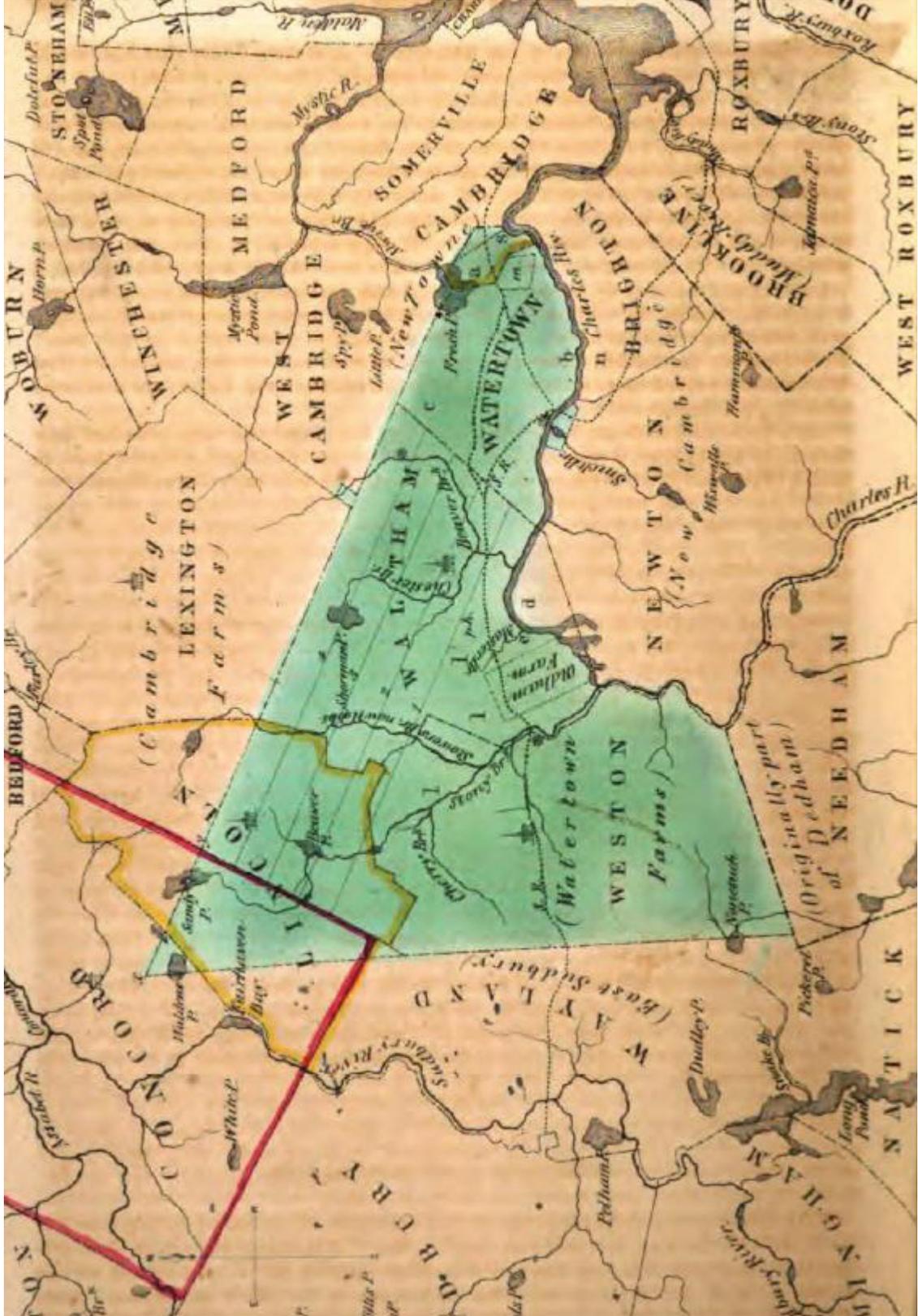
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views as a Seeker, there was no regularly constituted church on earth, nor any person authorized to administer any church ordinance, nor could there be, until new apostles should be sent by the Great Head of the church, for whose coming he was seeking. He was not alone in these opinions. Many, in his day, believed that the ministry and ordinances of the christian church were irretrievably lost, during the papal usurpation. It has been supposed, by some, that Mr. Williams held these opinions while in Massachusetts, and that this was the reason he denied the church of England to be a true church, and withdrew from his connexion with the Salem church. Aside from the statement of Mr. Scott, above quoted, that Mr. Williams turned Seeker, after he joined the Baptists and walked with them some months, the supposition is shown to be groundless, by his administering baptism in Providence, as before stated, and joining with the first Baptist church there. These acts he could not have performed, had he then been a Seeker.¹³

13. William Read Staples (1798-1868). ANNALS OF THE TOWN OF [PROVIDENCE](#), FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT, TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT, IN JUNE, 1832. Providence, [Rhode Island](#): Printed by Knowles and Vose, 1843.

[VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES](#)



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1640

July 15, Wednesday (Old Style): At [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Mary Williams, the wife of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), gave birth to a daughter who would be named Mercy who eventually would marry with Resolved Waterman and then with Samuel Winsor and then with John Rhodes (having children with all three).

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1641

March 16, Tuesday-19, Friday (1640, Old Style): Government of [Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations.

READ THE FULL TEXT

By this point [Samuell Gorton](#), who had fled from Newport after his flogging, had established himself in [Providence](#) to the point of becoming a thorn in the paw of [Roger Williams](#): “Mr. Gorton, having foully abused high and low at Aquidneck, is now bewitching and madding poor Providence.” Clearly, Gorton would need to relocate with his little cult of followers elsewhere (they would eventuate well south of town, in the rural environment known then as Shawomet).

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

HISTORY’S NOT MADE OF WOULD. WHEN SOMEONE REVEALS, FOR INSTANCE, AS ABOVE, THAT GORTON “WOOD” NEED TO RELOCATE WITH HIS LITTLE CULT OF FOLLOWERS ELSEWHERE, S/HE DISCLOSES THAT WHAT IS BEING CRAFTED IS NOT REALITY BUT PREDESTINARIANISM. THE RULE OF REALITY IS THAT THE FUTURE HASN’T EVER HAPPENED, YET.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1642

Church elder [Chad Brown](#), upon the sudden exit of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) from the pulpit of the worship group in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) after only a few months of participation, took over as the head of that congregation.¹⁴

Mr. Williams held the pastoral office about four years, and then resigned the same. Mr. Holyman was his colleague. His successors were Chad Brown and William Wickenden, the first ordained in 1642 and the other, by Mr. Brown. Gregory Dexter succeeded Mr. Wickenden.— He had been a preacher of the Baptist denomination before he came to New-England. Thomas Olney, who succeeded Mr. Dexter, is said to have been born in Hertford, England, about 1631, and to have arrived in Providence in 1654. He withdrew and formed a separate church, which continued but a short time. The ground of difference was, the necessity of the laying on of hands. His successor, Pardon Tillinghast, came to Providence, in 1645. Ebenezer Jenckes succeeded him. He was born in 1669, was ordained in 1719, and died, pastor, in 1726. James Brown, grandson of Chad Brown, born in 1666, was next ordained, and continued pastor till his death, in 1732. Samuel Windsor succeeded Mr. Brown. He was born in 1677, ordained in 1733, and remained in office till his death, in 1758. Thomas Burlingham was colleague pastor with Mr. Windsor, and was ordained at the same time with him. He left his charge some the before his death, which I was in 1740, to preach to a new church in Cranston. Samuel Windsor, son of the preceding Samuel, was next in office. He was born November 1, 1722, and ordained June 21, 1759. About the year 1770, he made repeated complaints to the church, that his duties were too arduous for him to perform, and requested them to give him an assistant. The church acceded to his request, and John Sutton was invited to preach as his assistant, which he did for six months. After he left, James Manning, President of Rhode-Island College, removed to Providence with that institution. He was requested, soon after his removal, to preach to this society, after which, the pastor invited him to partake of the communion with the church. His acceptance of this invitation gave offence to some of the church members. Several church meetings were subsequently holden, at which President Manning's privilege of communion was repeatedly confirmed, Mr. Windsor then exerting himself against it. The reason assigned for this opposition was, that the president did not hold imposition of hands to be a pre-requisite to communion, although he himself had submitted to it, and administered it to such as desired it. Some attributed the change in Elder Windsor's views, to the president's "holding to singing in public worship, which was very disgusting to Mr. Windsor." In April 1771, Mr. Windsor presented to the church a writing, signed by a number of the members, stating that they were in

14. According to an article "Was [Roger Williams](#) Really a [Baptist](#)?" published by the Baptist Publishing House of Texarkana TX, by Professor of Church History Louis F. Asher of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, "evidence is lacking to show that the group at Providence constituted a [Baptist](#) church before about 1654, at which time a Baptist church was organized by some Particular Baptists who had recently migrated from England." The historian of the First Baptist Church In America, Professor Stanley Lemons, however, disagrees with this evaluation, and points out that it is one made by "Particular Baptists" and spread around by the "Bible Baptist Association." According to this Rhode Island viewpoint, the work of Dr. Asher, "a now-deceased professor at a tiny, splinter Baptist seminary in Texas," is not to be relied upon.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

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conscience bound to withdraw from such as did not "hold strictly to the six principles of the doctrine of Christ, as laid down in Hebrews vi. 1, 2." In May following, he also withdrew and joined the Separates. After advising with some other Baptist churches, this church, in July 1771, chose President Manning for their pastor. He accepted the office, and held it until near his death, in 1791. The general meeting, or Association of the Baptists, in September 1771, recognized the church under Mr. Manning, as the old church. During the life of President Manning, John Stanford preached some months for this church and society. Jonathan Maxcy succeeded Mr. Manning in the charge of the church, and in the presidency of the college. He was a graduate of Rhode-Island College, and has ever been regarded as one of her most talented sons. After about two years, he resigned both offices, and removed to Schenectady, to take the Presidency of Union College. Subsequently he was President of Columbia College, South Carolina, which office he held till his death. Rev. Stephen Gano had the charge of the church, after President Maxcy, for thirty-six years. He was a native of New-York, born in 1762, and educated a physician. He received ordination at the age of twenty-three, and in 1792, removed to Providence and became pastor of this church. He died in August 1828, universally lamented. No man ever had more friends, or warmer ones, than Dr. Gano. If any of his hearers estimated the pulpit labors of other ministers above those of their pastor, it was not because they were supposed to possess more piety toward God, or more love to man, than he did. After remaining more than a year and a half without a pastor, they united in calling Robert E. Pattison to that office. He accepted their call, and commenced his labors in March 1830. In August 1836, his health having become infirm, he resigned his office, and accepted the Presidency of Waterville College, in Maine. William Hague, pastor of the First Baptist church in Boston, was elected to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Pattison's resignation. He entered on his duties on the 25th day of June, 1837, and remained pastor until August 1840, when he resigned to take charge of the Federal-Street church, Boston. During this period, Mr. Hague was absent eight or nine months, in Europe, for the improvement of his health. The church being again without a pastor, and Mr. Pattison having in the mean while resigned the Presidency of Waterville College, he was a second time called to the pastoral office, and resumed his duties in April 1841. In February 1842, he was appointed one of the Corresponding Secretaries of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, and at the earnest solicitations of several friends of the mission, he accepted the appointment, after having a second time tendered to the church his resignation as their pastor, to take effect after the first Sunday in April 1842. The vacancy caused by this resignation had not been permanently filled, in September following.¹⁵

15. William Read Staples (1798-1868). ANNALS OF THE TOWN OF [PROVIDENCE](#), FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT, TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT, IN JUNE, 1832. Providence, [Rhode Island](#): Printed by Knowles and Vose, 1843.



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Louisquisset (Loquasuck) was purchased by the proprietors of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). The bounds of Providence were set to run from beyond [Pawtucket](#) at the [Blackstone River](#) at Sugar Loaf Hill, to Observation Rock on the bank of the Moshassuck River west of Lonsdale north of Buitt's Bluff, to Absolute Swamp, which is the east bank of the Woonasquatucket River near Louisquisset, to Oxford of the Woonasquatucket (Centerdale), to Hipses Rock just west of Netaconkanut, to Mashapaug, to Sassafras Point on the Bay near the present Rhode Island Yacht Club near [Pawtuxet](#) village. These bounds are said to have been walked together by Miantonomi and the Reverend [Roger Williams](#).



DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.

February 15, Tuesday (1641, Old Style): At [Providence](#), Mary Williams, the wife of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), gave birth to a son who would be named Daniel.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

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End of February: [Richard More](#), a distant relative of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) through his mother [Katherine More](#), joined Salem's First Church and became a freeman of the town (eligible to vote there).

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads 'Richard: More'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1643

[ALMANACK FOR [RHODE ISLAND](#) AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN NEW ENGLAND FOR 1644. London: Gregory Dexter.] In his “History of Printing in America,” Isaiah Thomas stated that this was the first [almanac](#) for Rhode Island (however, no copy of this has been located).

(Gregory Dexter also printed at London A KEY INTO THE LANGUAGE OF AMERICA, which [Roger Williams](#) had written that summer during his sea voyage to England.)

March 14, Tuesday (1642, Old Style): A patent for [Providence](#) Plantations had been obtained in England by [Roger Williams](#) with the assistance of [Sir Henry Vane](#).

READ THE FULL TEXT

1643. In the summer of this year, [Roger Williams](#) sailed from New-York to England. for the purpose of procuring a charter of incorporation for the colonies of Rhode-Island and Providence. Miantonomi, one of the Narragansett Chiefs, a true friend to Williams and his company, was this year barbarously murdered by Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, pursuant to a decision of Commissioners of the United Colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Hartford and New-Haven.

(The 1st tax imposed by [Rhode Island](#) would be a levy of £100 as a free gift and grant to [Roger Williams](#) for his trouble in procuring this charter. The share of each town would be set by the first general assembly of the whole people, in 1647, with the towns through their town councils to collect this and then send it directly to Williams. In 1650 this gift would be “ordered” to be paid by the commissioner’s court and penalties would be attached for delinquency. This did not work out very well, for by 1651 [Providence](#) would still not have compensated Williams. There would be only one other such taxation during the first seven years of the colony’s existence: when a call was made for each town to have its own “magazine” with each town raising the funds for its own powder-storage facility.)

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

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September 7, Thursday (Old Style): The authorities at Boston, frightened that Gortonite views would take hold among the population at large, sent soldiers to arrest [Samuell Gorton](#) and six of his companions at Conimicut. These Massachusetts soldiers ignored [Roger Williams](#) when he asked them to respect the boundaries of [Providence](#). [Samuell Gorton](#) and some of his followers would serve a term of imprisonment for heresy, in leg irons at Charlestown. As a result of this encroachment by Massachusett soldiers, the leaders in [Providence](#) would get together with the leaders in [Newport](#) and [Portsmouth](#) to formally create a united colony of [Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations. This illustration is a piece of raw imagination out of SCRIBNER'S POPULAR HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES (1897):



7th Day 7th M^o.

7 September.

Samu : Gorton & his comp^a had a safe conduct offered them, & were writ unto about div^{se} iniuries offered by them to us, (& the people und^r our iurisdiction, both English & Indians,) to come to o^r Co^t, & there make answe^re to the p^ticulars, to w^{ch} they returned no other but contemptuous & disdainfull answers ; whereupon 3 co^mission^s were resolved to bee sent to requir & see satisfaction made wth security, or to bring their p^{so}ns, wth reference to their instructions. 12 writings were deliv^{ed} my bro: Tyng, w^{ch} came fro^m M^r Peters & M^r Wells.

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READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

The white settlers at [Concord](#) had been sadly disappointed in their choice of terrain. The lowlands, such as the Great Meadows, had turned out to be far too inundated with water to farm, while the nearby highlands, such as the Walden Woods in which [Henry Thoreau](#) would fail to establish a beanfield, had turned out to consist of an unexpectedly sterile sandy loam that could neither adequately be fertilized nor irrigated. They therefore sought the permission of the government authorities in [Boston](#), to resettle elsewhere.

It appears that the inhabitants [of Concord] were not well satisfied with their situation; and that other places, either adjoining the town or at a distance from it, were sought, to which they might remove. In a Petition on this subject to the



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General Court, it is said:

"Whereas your humble petitioners came into this country about 4 years agoe, and have since then lived at Concord, where we were forced to buy what now we have, or the most of it, the convenience of the town being before given out; your petitioners having been brought up in husbandry, of children, finding the lands about the town very barren, and the meadows very wet and unuseful, especially those we now have interest in; and knowing it is your desire the lands might be subdued, have taken pains to search out a place on the north-west of our town, where we do desire some reasonable quantitie of land may be granted unto us, which we hope may in time be joined to the farms already laid out there to make a village. And so desiring God to guide you in this and all other your weighty occasions, we rest your humble petitioners."

This petition is signed by
Thomas Wheeler,
Timothy Wheeler,
Ephraim Wheeler,
Thomas Wheeler, Jr.,
Roger Draper,
Richard Lettin,

is dated September 7, 1643; and endorsed by the Court:

"We think some quantitie of land may be granted them provided that within two years they make some good improvement of it."¹⁶

Early December: At [Providence, Rhode Island](#) Mary Williams, the wife of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), gave birth to a son who would be named Joseph.

16. [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. This material is on page 15.)



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ROGER WILLIAMS

1644

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#)'s THE BLOVDY TENENT, OF PERSECUTION, FOR CAUFE OF CONSCIENCE, DIFCUFFED, IN A CONFERENCE BETWEENE TRVTH AND PEACE, VVHO, IN ALL TENDER AFFECTION,....



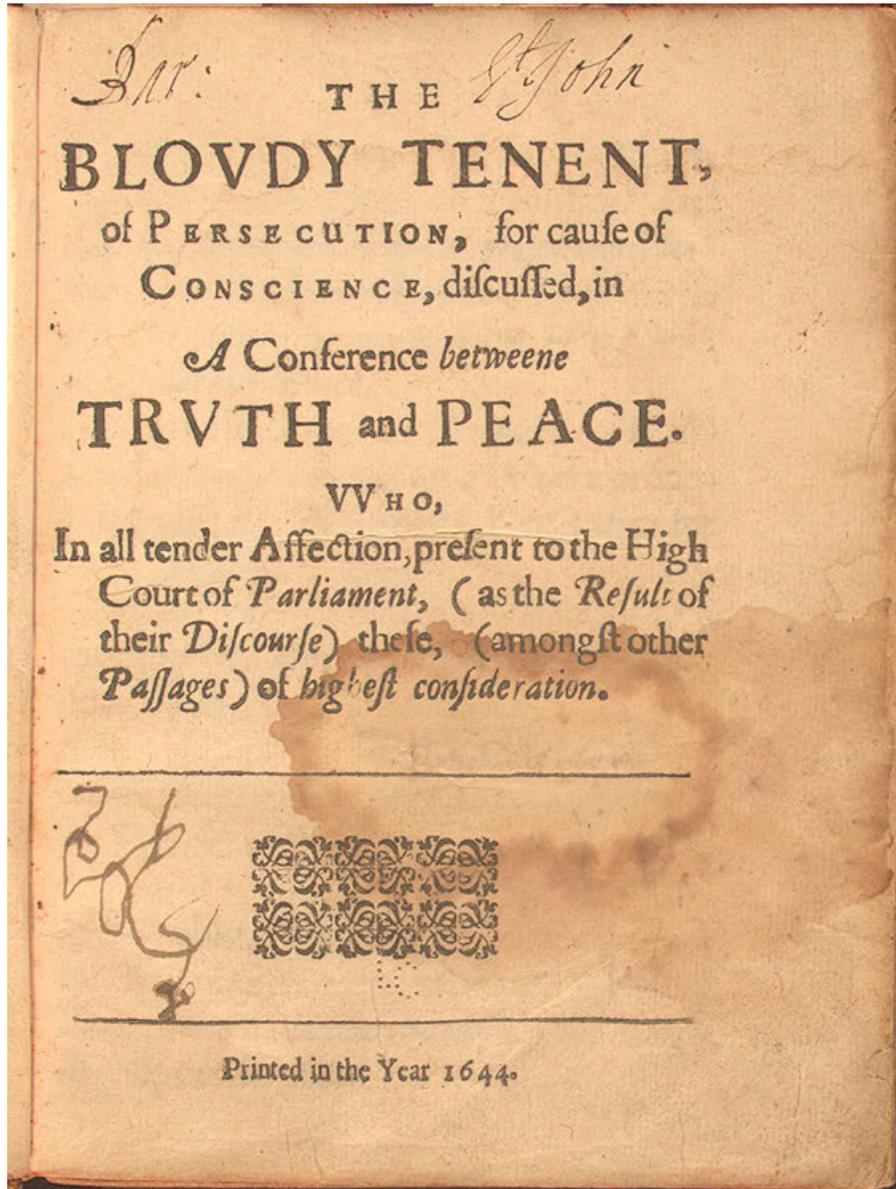
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March (1643/1644, Old Style): The commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, to wit the surrounding colonies of Connecticut, New Haven, the Plymouth Bay, and the Massachusetts Bay, had declared that they would accept [Rhode Island](#) as part of their alliance only on condition that a majority of the Rhode Island adult white males of property would “without reservation submit” either to the authority of the Plymouth colony or to the authority of the Massachusetts colony. To defend their Rhode Island and Providence Plantation settlements against this hegemonization on the part of the other English colonies, the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) journeyed to England and secured a parliamentary patent uniting the four white settlements on the Narragansett Bay, at [Providence](#), *Shawomet* ([Warwick](#)), [Newport](#), and [Portsmouth](#) (*Pocasset*), into a single colony and confirming the land grants his fellow settlers had received from native residents. This legislative document would serve as their foundational document until, due to the Stuart Restoration of 1660, it would become provident to seek a royal charter.

NATIVE
PLACE-
NAMES





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On the voyage the Reverend would write, primarily upon the basis of his experience among the [Narragansett](#) tribespeople of the bay of Rhode Island, his *A KEY INTO THE LANGUAGE OF AMERICA*. In the dedication of this volume he would comment that “A little key may open a box where lies a bunch of keys.” Upon his arrival in London, his manuscript would be set in print by the shop of Gregory Dexter, later to be a master printer in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), and then pastor of the Baptist Church there, and then the Town Clerk, and then a Deputy Governor, and in 1655 the colonial Governor.

The Reverend would describe the native recipe for *Wuttáhimneash* Strawberries: “This Berry is the wonder of all Fruits growing naturally in these parts: It is of it selfe excellent: so that one of the chiefest Doctors of England was wont to say, that God never did make a better Berry: In some parts where the Natives have planted, I have many times seen as many as would fill a good ship within few miles compasse: The Indians bruise them in a Mortar, and mixe them with meale and make Strawberry bread.”¹⁷

Thoreau would write of this that “Roger Williams, who knew the Indians well, in his account of those in his neighborhood –published in 1643– tells us that ‘*Sautaash* are those currants (grapes and whortleberries) dried by the natives, and so preserved all the year, which they beat to powder and mingle it with their parched meal, and make a delicate dish which they call Sautauthig, which is as sweet to them as plum or spice cake to the English.’”

“HUCKLEBERRIES”: Roger Williams, who knew the Indians well, in his account of those in his neighborhood – published in 1643 – tells us that ‘*Sautaash* are those currants (grapes and whortleberries) dried by the natives, and so preserved all the year, which they beat to powder and mingle it with their parched meal, and make a delicate dish which they call Sautauthig, which is as sweet to them as plum or spice cake to the English.’

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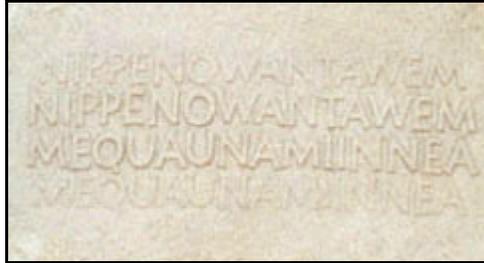
17. We need to bear in mind that these native American strawberries of this period were not identical with what we now grow in our fields — what we now grow is a cross between these native American strawberries and European alpine strawberries. The mixture of pounded strawberries and corn meal was made into hamburger-size patties and cooked, unsweetened of course, and eaten with boiled fish.



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John Benson of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) would conceive a sculpture in granite made from a block found at an exposed surface in the uppermost stratum of a [Westerly](#) quarry, worked during the most recent Ice Age. At the Bonner Monument shop near the quarry, he would modify this glacially worked surface to accommodate an inscription taken from the descriptions of the native American language found in this book by the Reverend Williams. The stone would be positioned on the campus of The University of Rhode Island in 1994.



(The writing means “I am of another language. / Remember me.”)

From A KEY INTO THE LANGUAGE OF AMERICA, a poem “Of the Heavenly Bodies”:

When Sun doth rise the Stars do set,
Yet there's no need of Light,
God shines a Sun most glorious,
When Creatures all are Night.

The very Indian Boys can give
To many Stars their names,
And know their Course and therein do
Excel the English tame.

English and Indians none inquire,
Whose hand these Candles hold,
Who gives these Stars their Names, himself
More bright ten thousand-fold.

The charter for [Rhode Island](#) which Williams would obtain in England would prove to be very important as for the following 20 years it would be indisputable. Native troubles continued to increase in the colonies and Williams would be called upon to mediate these difficulties. He had established a trading post near [Wickford](#), which he operated very successfully, living there for long periods at a time while still maintaining his homestead in [Providence](#).¹⁸

March 14, Thursday (1643, Old Style): The parliamentary committee on Foreign Plantations issued to [Roger Williams](#) a “Free Charter of Civil Incorporation and Government for the [Providence](#) Plantations, in the Narragansett Bay, in New England.” This [Rhode Island](#) grant was not a mere land patent, nor a trading charter like that of Massachusetts, but was an entire governmental charter, bestowing the authority to rule locally within the assigned limits by a form of government of their own choice, enacting whatever laws they deemed fit. A proviso that the local rules and regulations needed to be “conformable to the laws of England” was accompanied by a permissive clause “in far as the nature and constitution of the place will admit.”

The bounds of this our first charter, I (having ocular knowledge of persons, places and transactions) did honestly and conscientiously, as in the holy presence of God, draw up from Pawcatuck river, which I then believed, and still do, is free from all English claims and conquests; for although there were some Pequods on this side the river, who, by reason of some Sachems' marriages with Borne on this side, lived in a kind of neutrality with both sides, yet, upon the breaking out of war, they relinquished their land to the possession of their enemies,

18. To protect his trading post at [Wickford](#), the Reverend Williams invested in two of the type of small cannon referred to among the Christians as “murderers.”

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the Narragansetts and Niantics, and their land never came into the condition of the lands on the other side, which the English, by conquest, challenged; so that I must still affirm, as in God's holy presence, I tenderly waived to touch a foot of land in which I knew the Pequot wars were maintained and were properly Pequod, being a gallant country; and from the Pawcatuck river hitherward, being but a patch of ground, full of troublesome inhabitants, I did, as I judged, draw our poor and inconsiderable line.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

September 17, Tuesday (Old Style): The ship carrying [Roger Williams](#) arrived in Boston harbor. He brought a letter addressed to the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. In this document, several English panjandrums expressed regret that among such fine folks "who mutually give good testimony each of the other," on the other side of the pond, "there should be such a distance." They suggested a more "ready expressing of those good affections, which we perceive you bear each to the other, in the actual performance of all friendly offices." The Bay colony did honor this letter to the point of allowing Williams to pass through unmolested. He would be met on the Seekonk by his friends in fourteen-count-'em-fourteen canoes, and would arrive in triumph in [Providence](#) with their [Rhode Island](#) charter in his hand.

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1647

May 19, Wednesday-21, Friday (Old Style): Although the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) had brought back from England a royal charter for a united “Providence Plantations and Rhode-Island” colony in 1644, based upon the legitimacy of his actually having obtained permission to settle there from the owners of the land, the native Americans (!), it had taken several years to work out a political alliance of the four previously independent settlements actually involved, to wit, [Providence](#), *Shawowmet* (later known as [Warwick](#)), [Newport](#), and



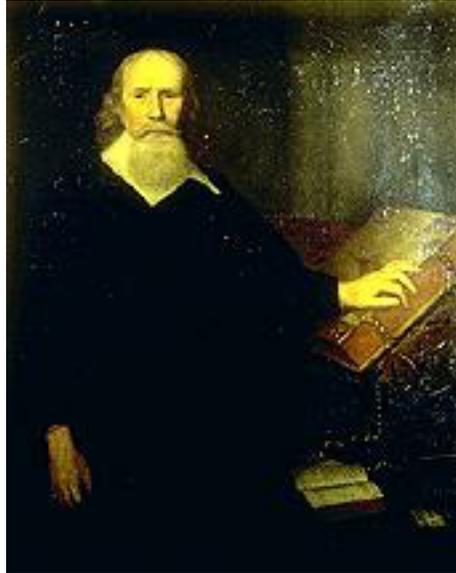
[Portsmouth](#). On this date the first meeting of the united colony took place in Portsmouth and an anchor was selected as the colonial brand.

[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)

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Dr. [John Clarke](#) was assigned to write up a Code of Laws for the new colony, and asked [William Dyer](#) to assist him.



The document they would author would declare the freedom of the individual conscience. Dyer would become the Secretary of the Council and then the Attorney General of [Rhode Island and Providence Plantations](#), and eventually, during Henry Thoreau's lifetime, one of his descendants would become the governor of the state.

This code of laws they would draft, would conclude as follows:

These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgressions thereof, which, by common consent, are ratified and established through the whole Colony. And otherwise than this (what is herein forbidden) all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his GOD. AND LET THE LAMBS OF THE MOST HIGH WALK IN THIS COLONY WITHOUT MOLESTATION, IN THE NAME OF JEHOVAH THEIR GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER.

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June 4, Friday (Old Style): Sachem [Canonicus](#) of the [Narragansett](#) died, more than 80 years old with snow-white hair. His name would be applied to the place at which he had lived, [Conanicut](#) (Quononicut) Island — which eventually would become the site of the white town of [Jamestown](#), [Rhode Island](#). The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote, “were it not for Canonicus ... Rhode Island would not be.” Headman Canonicus’s grandson Canonchet (Nanuntemo) would lead the [Narragansett](#) during “[King Phillip’s War](#)”.



In the [English Civil War](#), the army took [King Charles I](#) as its hostage, and held him at Newmarket.

December: [Roger Williams](#) prevailed upon some few [Rhode Islanders](#) to renew their allegiance to the town of [Providence](#) and to the colony, and sign a statement consigning their previous disputes to the “Grave of Oblivion.”

[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)



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1648

September: [William Coddington](#) and Captain Partridge presented an application to the Commissioners of the United Colonies:

Our request and motion is in the behalf of our Island; that we the Islanders of Rhode Island may be received into combination with all the United Colonies of New England in a firm and perpetual league of friendship and amity; of offence and defence, mutual advice and succor, upon all just occasions, for our mutual safety and welfare, and for preserving of peace amongst ourselves; and preventing, as much as may be, all occasions of war and difference; and to this our motion we have the consent of the major part of our Island.

The Commissioners responded that the request should be favored only if [Rhode Island](#) would agree to fall under the jurisdiction of the [Plymouth](#) colony. Coddington, who was a bigwig of Royalist bent, submitted to this condition and, with Captain Partridge, according to an account by his opponent [Roger Williams](#), returned “with propositions for Rhode Island to subject to Plymouth; to which himself and Portsmouth incline; our other three towns decline.” Apparently this Royalist was making a bid to become Royal Governor over the colony. Dr. Turner would comment wryly, in his biography of the man, that “Almost any man would be in favor of monarchy, if he could be king.” Coddington would sail for England in January 1648/49, leaving Captain Partridge in control of [Newport](#), without discussing his scheme with anyone locally.

[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1649

March: At a special meeting of the [Rhode Island](#) Assembly charters of incorporation were granted to the different towns, and [Roger Williams](#) was chosen "Deputy-President."

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

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1650

[Thomas Angell](#) was a member of the Town Council in [Providence](#) and surveyor and commissioner, and one of six jurymen.

The settlers in [Rhode Island](#), who had not yet been able to reimburse [Roger Williams](#) with the agreed sum of £100 for his trip to England to secure them their charter, at this point needed to persuade him to return to England and appear before the Committee on Plantations and represent their interests. To get him again to go, they pledged that they would indeed pay this three-year-old debt, and would pay in addition another £100. They would not, however, be able to advance him any money for the voyage and for his family to live on during his absence, so Williams at this point sold his trading house. During his stay in England, in order to earn money to support himself, he would need to teach Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and Dutch.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

November 11, Monday (Old Style): The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) made an appeal to the town council of [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#), urging that a “distracted woman,” Mrs. Weston, be provided for — this amounts (according to W.R. Street) to one of our earliest recorded references in America to public care for persons with mental illnesses.¹⁹

PSYCHOLOGY

I crave your consideration of yt lamentable object Mrs. Weston, my experience of ye distempers of persons elsewhere makes me confident yt (although not in all things yet) in a great measure she is a distracted woman. My request is yt you would be pleased to take what is left of hers into your own hand, and appoint some to order it for her supply, and it may be let some publike act of mercy to her necessities stand upon record amongst ye merciful actes of a merciful town yt hath received many mercies from heaven, and remembers yt we know not how soon our own wives may be widows and our children orphans, yea, and ourselves be deprived of all or most of our reason, before we goe from hence, except mercy from ye God of mercies prevent it.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

19. Street, W.R. A CHRONOLOGY OF NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN AMERICAN [PSYCHOLOGY](#). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1994. Indeed, the author may be correct in this claim, for I am unable to discover in the early records of the town of Ipswich any such concern for the mentally ill, and instead I find records of an insistence that every person receiving town assistance must be assigned some sort of useful work for the town.

1651

The [Reverend Hugh Peters](#) at this point returned to England.



Chronological TABLE

Of the most remarkable passages in that part of America, known to us by the name of NEW-ENGLAND.

Anno Dom.

1651. *Hugh Peters, and Mr. Wells came for England.*

It became necessary for the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) to return to England to confirm the charter for [Rhode Island](#) that he had obtained in 1644. He sold his trading post to finance the voyage.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

While in London, he published EXPERIMENTS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE, AND HEALTH AND THEIR PRESERVATION, which he dedicated: "To the truly honorable the Lady Vane." He described this work as having been done "in the thickest of the naked Indians of America, in their very wild houses and by their barbarous fires." He would write to his wife while abroad. "My dearest love and companion in this vale of tears," congratulating himself and her upon her recovery from recent illness: "I send thee, though in winter, a handful of flowers made up in a little posy, for thy dear self and our dear children to look and smell on, when I, as grass of the field, shall be gone and withered."

[Samuell Gorton](#) was elected as the 1st President over the towns of [Warwick](#) and [Providence](#), which at that time were being referred to as the Providence Plantations.

That the lawe making Assemblie of this Collonie shall Consist of six men of every Towne of this Collonie, and that these six men of every Town shall be chosen by the free inhabitants of every severall Towne, and the major vote of this assembly shall Acte in making lawes.



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

July: [William Coddington](#) sailed again for New England, having in hand the new charter dated April 3, 1651 anointing him as the parliamentary Governor over the islands of “Aquedneck” and “Conanicut” that bore the signature of Lord President Bradshaw. (Upon his arrival in November, he would not be greeted with the sort of enthusiasm with which [Roger Williams](#) was greeted, but instead, his lying presumption and overweening ambition would eventuate, during August 1654, in Gregory Dexter’s letter to Lord Vane in which he would point out that “We were in complete order, until Mr. Coddington, wanting that public, self-denying spirit which you commend to us in your letter, procured by most untrue information, a monopoly of part of the colony, viz., [Rhode Island](#) to himself, and so occasioned our general disturbance and distractions.”

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS

ROGER WILLIAMS

1652

From the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) of [Rhode Island](#)'s EXPERIMENTS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HEALTH, an epistle to Mrs. Williams entitled "In the Valley of the Shadow of Death":

In the next place, my dear love, let us down together by the steps of holy meditation into the valley of the shadow of death. It is of excellent use to walk often into Golgotha, and to view the rotten skulls of so many innumerable thousands of millions of millions of men and women, like ourselves, gone, gone forever from this life and being, as if they never had life nor being, as the swift ships, as the weaver's shuttle, as an arrow, as the lightning through the air.

It is not unprofitable to remember the faces of such whom we knew, with whom we had sweet acquaintance, sweet society, with whom we had familiarly eaten and lodged, but now grown loathsome, ugly, terrible, even to their dearest, since they fell into the jaws of death, the King of terrors.

And yet they are but gone before us, in the path all flesh must tread. How then should we make sure, and infinitely much of a Saviour, who delivers us from the power and bitterness of death and grave and hell, who is a resurrection and life unto us, and will raise up and make our bodies glorious, like his glorious body, when He shall shortly appear in glory.

It is further of great and sweet use against the bitterness of death, and against the bitter-sweet delusions of this world daily to think each day our last, the day of our last farewell, the day of the splitting of this vessel, the breaking of this bubble, the quenching of this candle, and of our passage into the land of darkness, never more to behold a spark of light until the havens be no more.

Those three uncertainties of that most certain blow, to wit, of the time when, the place when, the manner how it shall come upon us, and dash our earthen pitcher all to pieces – I say the consideration of these three should be a threefold cord to bind us fast to an holy watchfulness for our departures, and a spur to quicken us to abundant faithfulness in doing and suffering for the Lord and his Christ. It should draw up our minds into heavenly objects, and loosen us from the vexing vanities of this vain puff of this present sinful life.

Oh how weaned, how sober, how temperate, how mortified should our spirits, our affections, our desires be when we remember that we are but strangers, converse with strange companies, dwell in strange houses, lodge in strange beds and know not whether this day, this night shall be our final change of this strange place for one far stranger, dark and doleful, except enlightened by the death and life of the Son of God!

How contented should we be with any pittance, any allowance of bread, of clothes, of friendship, of respect, etc.!

How thankful unto God, unto man, should we poor strangers be for the least crumb, or drop, or rag vouchsafed unto us, when we remember we are but strangers in an inn, but passengers in a ship; and though we dream of long summer days, yet our very life and being is but a swift short passage from the bank of time to the other side or bank of a doleful eternity!



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How patient should our minds and bodies be under the crossing, disappointing hand of our all-powerful Maker, of our most gracious Father, when we remember that this is the short span of our purging and fitting for an eternal glory, and that when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world!

How quietly, without the swellings of revenge and wrath, should we bear the daily injuries, reproaches, persecutions, etc., from the hands of men, who pass away and wither, it may be before night, like grass or as the smoke on the chimney's top, and their love and hatred shall quickly perish!

Yea, how busy, how diligent, how solicitous should we be like strangers upon a strange coast, waiting for a wind or passage, to get dispatched what we have to do, before we hear that final call, "Away, Away, let us be gone from hence!"

A letter from the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) to Governor John Endecott:

The Maker and Searcher of our hearts knows with what bitterness I write, as with bitterness of soul I have heard such language as this to proceed from yourself and others, who formerly have fled from (with crying out against) persecutors! "You will say this is your conscience; you will say you are persecuted, and you are persecuted for your conscience. No; you are Conventiclers, heretics, blasphemers, seducers. You deserve to be hanged; rather than one shall be wanting to hang him I will hang him myself. I am resolved not to leave an heretic in the country." ...Oh, sir, you cannot forget what language and dialect this is, whether not the same unsavory and ungodly, blasphemous and bloody, which the Gardiners and Bonners both former and later used to all that bowed not to the state golden image of what conscience soever they were. And indeed, sir, if the Most High be pleased to awaken you to render unto his holy majesty his due praises, in your truly broken-hearted confessions and supplications, you will then proclaim to all the world, that what profession soever you make of the Lamb, yet these expressions could not proceed from the dragon's mouth.

Oh remember, and the most holy God bring it to your remembrance, that you have now a great price in your hand, to bring great glory to his holy name, great rejoicing to so gracious a Redeemer (in whom you profess is all your healing and salvation), great rejoicing to the holy Spirit of all true consolation, whom yet so long you who have grieved and sadded, great rejoicing to those blessed spirits (attending upon the Lamb, and all his, and terrible to his persecutors), great rejoicing and instruction to all that love the true Lord Jesus (notwithstanding their wanderings among so many false Christs), mourning and lamenting after him in all parts of the world where his name is sounded. Your talents are great, your fall hath been so; your eminency is great, the glory of the Most High in mercy or justice toward you will be great also.

Oh remember it is a dangerous combat for the potsherd of the earth to fight with their dreadful Potter. It is a dismal battle for poor naked feet to kick against the pricks; it is a dreadful voice from the King of kings, and Lord of lords, "Endicott, Endicott, why huntest thou me? why imprisonest thou me? why finest, why so bloodily whippest, why wouldst thou (did not I hold they bloody hands) hang and burn me?" Yea, sir, I beseech you remember that it is a dangerous thing to put this to the may



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be, to the venture or hazard, to the possibility. Is it possible (may you well say) that since I hunt, I hunt not the life of my Savior, and the blood of the Lamb of God? I have fought against many several sorts of consciences, is it beyond all possibility and hazard, that I have not fought against God, that I have not persecuted Jesus in some of them?

Sir, I must be humbly bold to say, that 'tis impossible for any man or men to maintain their Christ by their sword, and to worship a true Christ! to fight against all consciences opposite to theirs, and not to fight against God in some of them, and to hunt after the precious life of the true Lord Jesus Christ. Oh remember whether your principles and consciences must in time and opportunity force you. 'Tis but worldly policy and compliance with men and times (God's mercy overruling) that holds your hands from murdering of thousands and ten thousands were your power and command as great as once the bloody Roman emperors was.... Oh remember once again (as I began) and I humbly desire to remember with you, that every gray hair now on both our heads is a Boanerges, a son of thunder, and a warning piece to prepare us for the weighing of our last anchors, and to be gone from hence, as if we had never been.

From the Reverend [Roger Williams](#)'s THE BLOODY TENENT YET MORE BLOODY, a context in which he is bitching and moaning about the "tenent" by which the Reverend John Cotton has had him kicked out of the Bay Colony:

TRUTH. Dear Peace, our golden sand is out, we now must part with an holy kiss of heavenly peace and love; Mr. Cotton speaks and writes his conscience; yet the Father of Lights may please to show him that what he highly esteems as a tenent washed white in the Lamb's blood, is yet more black and abominable, in the most pure and jealous eye of God.

PEACE. The blackamoor's darkness differs not in the dark from the fairest white.

TRUTH. Christ Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, hath broke forth, and daily will, to a brighter and brighter discovery of this deformed Ethiopian. And for myself I must proclaim, before the most holy God, angels, and men, that (whatever other white and heavenly tenents Mr. Cotton holds) yet this is a foul, a black, and a bloody tenent.

A tenent of high blasphemy against the God of Peace, the God of Order, who hath of one blood made all mankind, to dwell upon the face of the earth, now all confounded and destroyed in their civil beings and subsistences by mutual flames of war from their several respective religions and consciences.

A tenent warring against the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, denying this appearance and coming in the flesh, to put an end to and abolish the shadows of that ceremonial and typical land of Canaan.

A tenent fighting against the sweet end of his coming, which was not to destroy men's lives, for their religions, but to save them by the meek and peaceable invitations and persuasions of his peaceable wisdom's maidens.

A tenent foully charging his wisdom, faithfulness, and love, in so poorly providing such magistrates and civil powers all the world over, as might effect so great a charge pretended to be committed to them.

A tenent lamentably guilty of his most precious blood, shed in



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the blood of so many hundred thousands of his poor servants by the civil powers of the world, pretending to suppress blasphemies, heresies, idolatries, superstition, etc.

A tenent fighting with the spirit of love, holiness, and meekness, by kindling fiery spirits of false zeal and fury, when yet such spirits know not of what spirit they are.

A tenent fighting with those mighty angels who stand up for the peace of the saints, against Persia, Grecia, etc., and so consequently, all other nations, who fighting for their several religions, and against the truth, leave no room for such as fear and love the Lord on the earth.

A tenent, against which the blessed souls under the altar cry loud for vengeance, this tenent having cut their throats, torn out their hearts, and poured forth their blood in all ages, as the only heretics and blasphemers in the world....

A tenent loathsome and ugly (in the eyes of the God of heaven, and serious sons of men) I say, loathsome some with the palpable filths of gross dissimulation and hypocrisy. Thousands of peoples and whole nations compelled by this tenent to put on the foul vizard of religious hypocrisy, for fear of laws, losses, and punishments, and for the keeping and hoping for of favor, liberty, worldly commodity, etc.

A tenent wofully guilty of hardening all false and deluded consciences (of whatever sect, faction, heresy, or idolatry, though never so horrid and blasphemous) by cruelties and violences practised against them; all false teachers and their followers (ordinarily) contracting a brawny and steely hardness from their sufferings for their consciences.

A tenent that shuts and bars out the gracious prophecies and promises and discoveries of the most glorious Sun of Righteousness, Christ Jesus, that burns up the holy Scriptures, and forbids them (upon the point) to be read in English, or that any trial or search, or (truly) free disquisition be made by them; when the most able, diligent, and conscionable readers must pluck forth their own eyes, and be forced to read by the (whichsoever predominant) clergy's spectacles.

A tenent that seals up the spiritual graves of all men, Jews and Gentiles (and consequently stands guilty of the damnation of all men), since no preachers, nor trumpets of Christ himself may call them out, but such as the several and respective nations of the world themselves allow of.

A tenent that fights against the common principles of all civility; and the very civil being and combinations of men in nations, cities, etc., by commixing (explicitly or implicitly) a spiritual and civil state together, and so confounding and overthrowing the purity and strength of both....

A tenent that stunts the growth and flourishing of the most likely and hopefulest commonweals and countries, while consciences, the best, and the best deserving subjects are forced to fly (by enforced or voluntary banishment) from their native countries; the lamentable proof whereof England hath felt in the flight of so many worthy English into the Low Countries and New-England, and from New-England into old and other foreign parts.

A tenent whose gross partiality denies the principles of common justice, while men weigh out to the consciences of all others that which they judge not fit nor right to be weighed out to their own. Since the persecutor's rule is, to take and persecute



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all consciences, only himself must not be touched. A tenent that is but Machiavelism, and makes a religion but a cloak or stalking horse to policy and private ends of Jeroboam's crown and the priest's benefice, etc. A tenent that corrupts and spoils the very civil honesty and natural conscience of a nation.... In the sad consideration of all which (dear Peace) let heaven and earth judge of the washing and color of this tenent. For thee, sweet heavenly guest, go lodge thee in the breasts of the peaceable and humble witnesses of Jesus, that love the truth in peace! Hide thee from the world's tumults and combustions in the breasts of thy truly noble children, who profess and endeavor to break the irony and insupportable yokes upon the souls and consciences of any of the sons of men.

PEACE. Methings (dear Truth) if any of the least of these deep charges be found against this tenent, you do not wrong it when you style it bloody. But since, in the woful proof of all ages past, since Nimrod (the hunter or persecutor before the Lord) these and more are lamentably evident and undeniable. It gives me wonder that so many and so excellent eyes of God's servants should not espy so foul a monster, especially considering the universal opposition this tenent makes against God's glory, and the good of all mankind.

TRUTH. There hath been many foul opinions, with which the old serpent hath infected and bewitched the sons of men (touching God, Christ, the Spirit, the Church, against holiness, against peace, against civil obedience, against chastity), insomuch that even sodomy itself hath been a tenent maintained in print by some of the very pillars of the Church of Rome. But this tenent is so universally opposite to God and man, so pernicious and destructive to both (as hath been declared) that like the powder-plot, it threatens to blow up all religion, all civility, all humanity, yea, the very being of the world, and the nations thereof at once.

ANTI-CATHOLICISM

PEACE. He that is the father of lies, and a murderer from the beginning, he knows this well, and this ugly blackamoor needs a mask or vizard.

TRUTH. Yea the bloodiness and inhumanity of it is such, that not only Mr. Cotton's more tender and holy breast, but even the most bloody Bonners and Gardiners have been forced to arm themselves with the fair shows and glorious pretences of the glory of God, and zeal for that glory, the love of his truth, the gospel of Christ Jesus, love and pity to men's souls, the peace of the Church, uniformity, order, the peace of the commonwealth, the wisdom of the state, the King's, Queen's, and Parliament's proceedings, the odiousness of sects, heresies, blasphemies, novelties, seducers, and their infections, the obstinacy of heretics, after all means, disputations, examinations, synods, yea, and after conviction in the poor heretic's own conscience. Add to these the flattering sound of these glossing titles, the godly magistrate, the Christian magistrate, the nursing fathers and mothers of the Church, Christian kings and queens. But all other kings and magistrates (even all the nations of the world over, as Mr. Cotton pleads) must suspend and hold their hands, and not meddle in matters of religion until they be informed,



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etc.

PEACE. The dreadful righteous hand of God, the eternal and avenging God, is pulling off these masks and vizards, that thousands and the world may see this bloody tenent's beauty.

TRUTH. But see (my heavenly sister and true stranger in this sea-like, restless, raging world), see here what fires and swords are come to part us! Well; our meetings in the heavens shall not thus be interrupted, our kisses thus distracted, and our eyes and cheeks thus wet, unwiped. For me, though censured, threatened, persecuted, I must profess, while heaven and earth lasts, that no one tenent that either London, England, or the world doth harbor, is so heretical, blasphemous, seditious, and dangerous to the corporal, to the spiritual, to the present, to the eternal good of all men, as the bloody tenent (however washed and whited) I say, as is the bloody tenent of persecution for cause of conscience.

October 2, Saturday (Old Style): [Roger Williams](#) was able to obtain, through the influence of the younger [Sir Henry Vane](#) “the sheet-anchor of our ship,” and through warnings that in its present disordered condition the [Rhode Island](#) colony might well fall into the clutches of the Dutch of [New Netherland](#), a revocation of the commission that had been granted to [William Coddington](#). This new document merely empowered the magistrates and people of the colony, pending further instructions, to administer their government per previous instructions.

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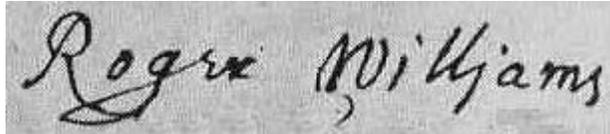
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1653

April 1, Friday (Old Style): The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote from [Sir Henry Vane](#)'s estate at Belleau in Lincolnshire, England to his friends and neighbors in [Providence](#) and [Warwick](#) relative to the confirmation of the charter acquired by Vane's mediation, admonishing them to dwell in peace, etc., and in a postscript added: "My love to all my Indian friends."

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Williams". The ink is dark and the paper appears aged and slightly textured.

In this year in [Rhode Island](#), the building that would house the Mowry Tavern—a place where Williams would hold meetings—was under construction.





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1654

In about this timeframe [Thomas Angell](#) acted as constable for the town of [Providence](#) in the precedent-setting case of Richard Chasmore, also known as “Long Dick” (the man’s offense was that he had knowingly harbored [Quakers](#)), in which [Rhode Island](#)’s sovereignty over its citizens versus the authority of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was tested. It wasn’t that they themselves had any love for Quakers, it was merely that they resented the implication that the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) was the only man in Rhode Island with any power, and took exception to the presumption of the Massachusetts Bay Colony authorities that they had authority even while standing on Rhode Island land. By stonewalling during this altercation, Thomas Angell and his four deputies withstood the implied challenges of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Some Particular Baptists who had recently emigrated from England organized the worship group of [Chad Brown](#) in [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#) as a [Baptist](#) church.²⁰

20. According to an article “Was [Roger Williams](#) Really a [Baptist](#)?” published by the Baptist Publishing House of Texarkana TX, by Professor of Church History Louis F. Asher of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, “evidence is lacking to show that the group at Providence constituted a [Baptist](#) church before about 1654, at which time a Baptist church was organized by some Particular Baptists who had recently migrated from England.” The historian of the First Baptist Church In America, Professor Stanley Lemons, however, disagrees with this evaluation, and points out that it is one made by “Particular Baptists” and spread around by the “Bible Baptist Association.” According to this Rhode Island viewpoint, the work of Dr. Asher, “a now-deceased professor at a tiny, splinter Baptist seminary in Texas,” is not to be relied upon.

We may note that according to this Particular Baptist claim, this occurrence was fully a dozen years after the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) had disentangled himself from this worship group in 1642. In this dispute, some Baptists assert that it was the Reverend Williams who was the **very first American Baptist** pastor! (Well, whatever the interpretation, it is a fact that he did not minister in the white building that presently proclaims itself to be the first Baptist church in America — which magnificent structure he would never see because it would not be erected on Mr. Angell’s house lot **for more than a century**! The assertion that this is the First Baptist Church In America, the FBCIA, only works if one is willing to parse the term “This Church” as an abbreviation for “The Continuing Congregation Associated Now With This Building.”)



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At home in [Providence](#) after an absence of nearly 3 years, the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) became President of the [Rhode Island](#) colony, which office he would hold until 1658. (He would become a freeman of the community in 1655, and would serve as Commissioner in 1658, 1659, and 1661, and would serve as a Deputy in 1670, 1678, 1679, and 1680, and would have a seat on the Town Council during 1675 and 1676.)



1654. All the towns re-united this year, under the Charter, the towns on the main land having been separated from those on the island since the commission to Gov. Coddington. Trade with the Dutch was prohibited. A law was passed against selling liquors to the Indians. There was a General Election at Warwick Sept. 12. First recorded election of military officers in Providence. All the inhabitants were required, by the Court of Commissioners, to sign a submission to the Protector and the Parliament. The sale of liquors and wines was regulated: Indians were to be whipped, or laid "neck and heels" for being drunk, and the ordinary keeper who sold him the liquor, was to be fined. A prison and a pair of stocks were ordered to be built in Providence. The number of freemen in Providence was forty-two. Four military trainings a year were ordered by the Town.



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1656

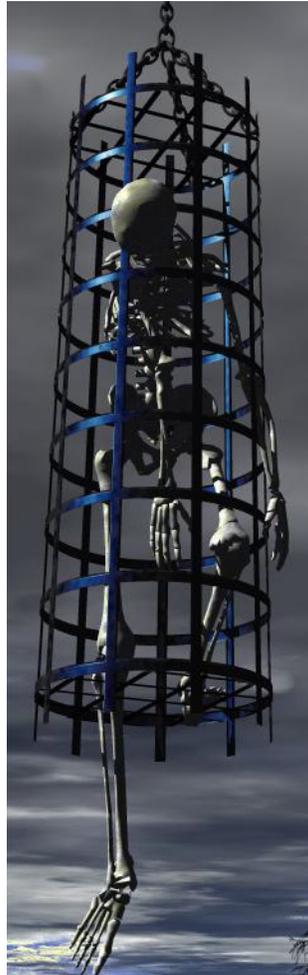
In [Rhode Island](#), Benedict Arnold was in charge (not “the” Benedict Arnold, but his grandpa).

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1657

August 27, Thursday (Old Style): [Providence, Rhode Island](#) determined that, for the better suppression of misconduct, select criminals would need to be placed on display along what is now known as “Main Street,” at the center of the town settlement: “A Cage was ordered to be Erected in the highway, the Corner of [Roger Williams](#) Lott.”



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1658

Spring (1657, Old Style): Family names such as Lopez, Rivera, Seixas, deToro (Touro), Gomez and Hays began to settle in [Newport](#) on [Rhode Island](#)'s [Aquidneck Island](#), and by the time of the American Revolution this population of Sephardic Jews would have grown to a prosperous community of several hundred souls. As international sugar traders from Brazil, the West Indies, Portugal, etc. they chose to maintain their headquarters on the island because it was a thriving peaceful commercial center with a major port.²¹ For a long time they would hold *minyanim* in private homes. Their first public venture would be not the construction of a synagogue but the creation of a [Jewish](#) cemetery. (Only later, in 1763, would they be constructing the [Touro Synagogue of Congregation Jeshuat Israel](#).)²²

21. Rabbi Theodore Lewis, M.A.S.T.D., has confidently asserted that these Jews came to Rhode Island “because of the assurance of freedom of religion and liberty of conscience promised by Governor [Roger Williams](#) to all who came within its borders.” To make a small point, the man was President of Rhode Island, not Governor, but the big point is to imagine how Rabbi Lewis can look right into people’s minds, people dead for centuries, and detect their true motives. This President Williams with an international reputation for religious openness who attracted the Jews to Rhode Island, I might point out, happens to be the same Reverend Williams who, we know, had pronounced his own wife, Mistress Mary Williams, and his own daughters, to be “unregenerate,” which meant that after Mary had prepared a meal for her family, she needed to take her daughters and be absent from the table while her husband blessed the meal and thanked God, alone. Then this tolerant man would allow his “unregenerate” family to return and break bread together and partake of the meal. (Although this practice would come to the attention of others who would chide the Reverend about it, remonstrances would be to no avail. Go figure.)

What is considerably more likely is that these immigrants had heard of the code of laws that had been enacted in [Rhode Island](#) in 1647, which concluded as follows:

These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgressions thereof, which, by common consent, are ratified and established through the whole Colony. And otherwise than this (what is herein forbidden) all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his GOD. AND LET THE LAMBS OF THE MOST HIGH WALK IN THIS COLONY WITHOUT MOLESTATION, IN THE NAME OF JEHOVAH THEIR GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER.

However, that code of laws had been written, not by the great Reverend Williams, but by [John Clarke](#) with the assistance of [William Dyer](#) (Friend Mary Dyer’s husband). Presumably Rabbi Lewis did not grasp that point, because he was supposing the code of laws to have been enacted in 1674, six years after the settlement, rather than as it actually was, in 1647, eleven years before the settlement!

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1661

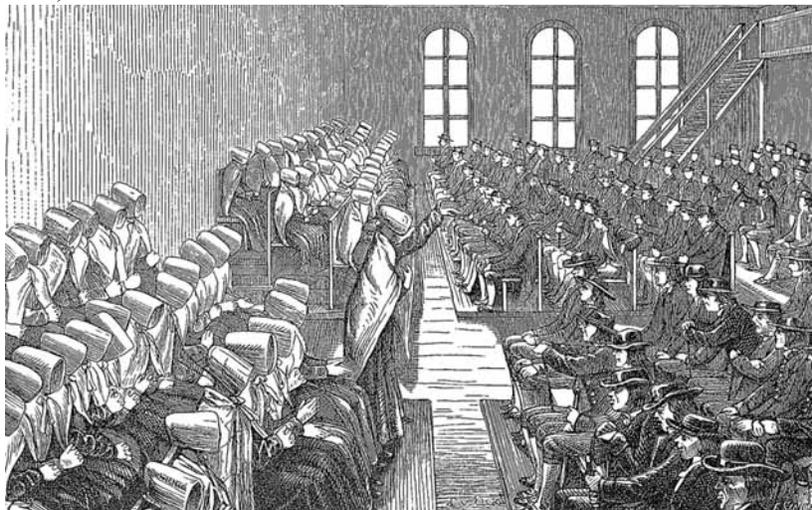
Massasoit died and was succeeded by his 1st son, *Wamsutta*, the one who had been nicknamed “Alexander”

22. Some of the members of this congregation, such as [Aaron Lopez](#), would, like some of their Christian neighbors, even some of the members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), engage in the [international slave trade](#). After their synagogue building, in what had become the bad part of town, had been deconsecrated, the empty and dilapidated structure, under a caretaker who was a [Quaker](#), would find use occasionally, surreptitiously, for the harboring of escaping slaves as a station on the Underground Railroad. 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, be polite, as I was, and do not complicate matters by inquiring whether Newport’s Jews and Quakers participated in the international slave trade.

(When you visit the largest [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in the world, almost next door to this synagogue — ditto, do not inquire into the sensitive topic of why they avoid mentioning to the white tourists that this structure had for about half a century served as a segregated black dancehall!)

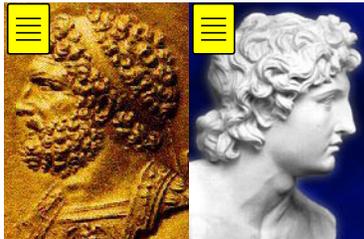


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(sic) by the whites.²³

Att the earnest request of Wamsitta, desiring that in regard his father is lately deceased, and hee being desirouse, according to the custome of the natives, to change his name, that the Court would confer an English name upon him, which accordingly they did, and therefore ordered, that for the future hee shalbee called by the name of Allexander Pokanokett; and desiringe the same in the behalfe of his brother, they have named him Phillip.



Allexander [Wamsutta](#) was married to [Squaw Sachem Weetamoo](#) of Pocasset. He sold Attleboro lands to the [Plymouth](#) colony. This sachem would be signing the land sale documents presented to him by the English sometimes with

an **A** sometimes with a **W** and sometimes with a **M**

(these things are complex, for in fact he had in addition another name beginning with the letter M) as his younger brother Metacom, when he would in his turn become the sachem of the [Wampanoag](#), would be signing these ubiquitous documents with

a big inky **P**

*Phillip alias, metacom
his P marko*

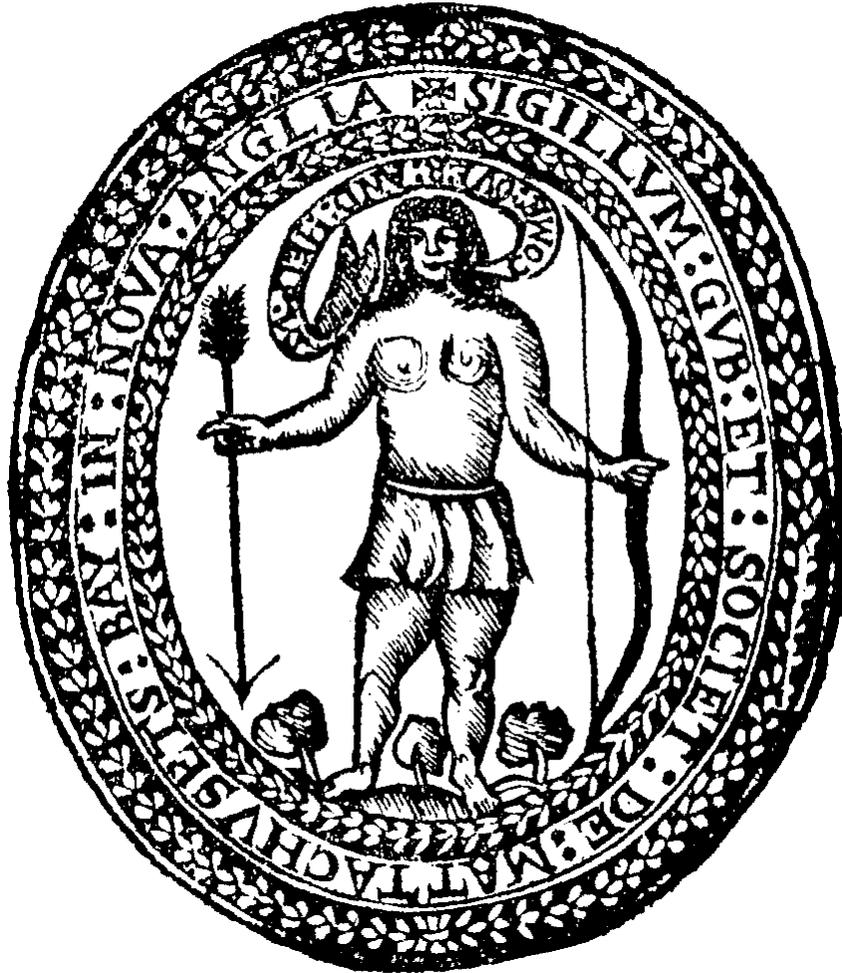
(it all was made to seem so legitimate and respectful and congenial).

This was the year of the property transaction known as the “Northern Purchase.” The English of [Rehoboth](#)

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23. When the seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony depicted an American native with a cartoon bubble coming out of his mouth, going “Come over and help us,” the reference of course was to the Book of the Acts of the Apostles in the Christian Bible, which has the Apostle Paul dreaming of a Macedonian who is pleading that he “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”



On that basis, for the whites to have assigned to two Native American sachems the names “Phillip” (*sic*) and “Alexander” (*sic*) — two well-known kings of ancient Macedonia, would seem rather innocent. However, bear in mind that it was the naming convention of the period, to refer to persons of color by the deployment of offensively grandiloquent and therefore implicitly derogatory nicknames. The dusky brothers [Wamsutta](#) and [Metacom](#) were therefore nicknamed Alexander and Phillip more or less in the mode in which masterly whites were in the habit of condescending magisterially to their black slaves: such ostentatious names (in the case of black slaves, master-assigned names such as those which Dr. LeBaron of [Plymouth](#) tried to enforce upon his house slaves, such as Pompey and Julius Caesar — starving one of his slaves, Quasho Quando, as punishment when the man absolutely refused to respond to such a name) implicitly gestured toward their low standing in the eyes of the righteous, marking them as pretenders, as con artists, implicitly warning fellow whites not to take them seriously as human beings or as leaders.

In what significant manner does this differ from the period in Central Europe during which Jews were being required to register and to receive family names and were being assigned names, by a sympathetic constabulary, which translate into the ordinary English as “gold-grubber” and as “money-bags”?

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(chartered in 1643 by the [Plymouth](#) Colony, and the birthplace of public education in North America) hired



Thomas Willett to negotiate for them with [Wampanoag](#) sachems for what is now Attleboro and North Attleboro. This 1661 deed still exists and very clearly is signed by Willett and by [Wamsutta](#).²⁴ The land in question has clearly belonged to the white man since way back. One of the terms and conditions of this deed document, however, is that part of the property in question had been set aside for perpetual use by the natives. Since there aren't any natives there any longer, and since continuous occupancy is normally taken by our courts to be the signal of native title, this clause would seem to be ancient history — but as of the Year of Our Lord 2003 there is a case pending in the [Rhode Island](#) courts which alleges that legal title to the land district that had been set aside, that seems to amount to [Cumberland](#) and east [Woonsocket](#), is open to challenge.



The bite in this antique document comes from the fact that since the early 1660s, colonial law, and the federal law that followed after this colonial law upon our national independence, has consistently held that no native tribal land could be validly conveyed to another unless that conveyance had the blessing of a federal court, or of the US Congress. Since there exists no federal legislative or judicial record whatever, that these lands which had been formally set aside for native use in this Wamsutta/Willett title document have subsequently legitimately been conveyed to anyone else, and since the tribe in question, the Seaconke [Wampanoag](#), happens to be still in existence, it is abundantly clear that the land in question —whatever that land amounts to and whoever now resides upon it— still belongs to them and to them alone. (After the natives lost in this race war

24. [Metacom](#) had such a high regard for Captain Thomas Willett that during the race war he ordered that the Willett family not be harmed. When someone who had not heard of this brought the head of Hezekiah Willett to Metacom, thinking that he would be pleased, Metacom did what he could: he adorned the head of Willett's son with wampum, and combed its hair.



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known as “[King Phillip’s War](#)”, we understand that very naturally the victorious white colonists simply moved in and took over by eminent domain, selling the red survivors of the war into slavery or packing them off to other lands. However, that makes the situation of these native inheritors similar to, say, the situation of an Israeli Jew who is holding a WWII-era title document to a family home in the Polish town of Oswicum, the German form of the name being “Auschwitz” — a family home now inhabited and defended by non-Jewish Poles who definitely have some sort of piece of paper asserting their invalid title. It seems clear that the legal implications of World War II for its survivors, and the implications of King Phillip’s War for its survivors, have yet to be fully worked out.)

But you can’t please everybody all the time. Soon [Wamsutta](#) fell under suspicion of not favoring one English colony over another, but instead, of the evil practice of selling merely to the highest bidder, favoring his own interest and the interest of his band over the interest of others. He was therefore taken captive by an indignant Major Josiah Winslow and marched rapidly to Duxbury at gunpoint, as part of a strategy to put the arm on him and to induce him to favor the [Plymouth](#) colony over the [Rhode Island](#) colony. They needed for him to pledge to sell no more native American territory to settlers out of the [Rhode Island](#) group, even if those white people were to offer his people a better deal.

Did he not understand who his real friends were? However, while being held under guard in Duxbury, Alexander [Wamsutta](#) became seriously ill, so ill that the guards feared to be blamed for his death and released him to hike home — and in his fever he didn’t make it all the way back.

[Metacom](#), the second son of the *Massasoit*, the one who had been nicknamed “Phillip” by the whites, was at that time 24 years of age, and suspected or professed to suspect that the whites had poisoned his brother, or had caused his illness because of the overexertion of being force-marched at gunpoint, or at the very least had sadly neglected his brother during his fever. That suspicion, well or poorly grounded, was going to cause one hell of a lot of trouble.

[Weetamoo](#), a Pocasset, had been the consort of [Metacom](#)’s older brother [Wamsutta](#). With his death, as his younger brother became Sachem, she became not merely a widow but the Squaw Sachem.

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#), William Field, the Reverend Thomas Olney, Jr., Joseph Torrey, Philip Taber (1605-1672), and John Anthony were associated together in [Providence](#), Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

HDT

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**Inauthentic representation of Metacom
by Paul Revere, for whom an Indian was
an Indian was an Indian, at the Library
of Congress. Done in 1772.**

REVEREND ROGER WILLIAMS**ROGER WILLIAMS****1663**

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *Poem, to the King's most sacred Majesty*, to [Charles II](#), and his *The Siege of Rhodes*, Part II.



Elder [John Clarke](#) presented two addresses to King [Charles II](#) of England regarding the colony of [Rhode Island](#), informing the monarch that it desires “to be permitted to hold forth in a lively experiment that a flourishing civil state may stand, yea, and best be maintained, and that among English spirits, with a full liberty of religious concernments.” The colony was granted a new charter declaring that “no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any differences of opinion or matters of religion.” (Commonly, in superficial accounts of Rhode Island history, this charter is credited to the efforts of [Roger Williams](#). Evidently this is done in order to simplify the cast of characters.)

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

November 24, Tuesday (Old Style): There was great celebration at [Newport, Rhode Island](#). Clearly, an attempt was being made to outdo even the elaborate reception that had been given in [Providence](#) to [Roger Williams](#) when he had paddled his canoe down the river to the colony with its Patent of 1644!

At a very great meeting and assembly, of the freemen of the Colony of Providence Plantations, at Newport, in Rhode Island, in New England, November the 24, 1663. The abovesaid assembly being legally called and orderly met for the solemn reception of his Majesty's gracious letters patent unto them sent, and having in order thereto chosen the President, Benedict Arnold, moderator of the Assembly.

It was ordered and voted, *neme contra decente*. 1. That Mr. [John Clarke](#), the Colony agent's letter to the President, assistants and freemen of the Colony, be opened and read, which accordingly was done with delivery and attention. 2. That the box in which the King's gracious letters were enclosed be opened, and the letters with the broad seal thereto affixed, be taken forth and read by Captain George Baxter in the audience and view of all the people; which was accordingly done, and the said letters with his Majesty's royal stamp, and the broad seal, with much becoming gravity held up on high, and presented to the perfect view of the people, and then returned into the box and locked up by the Governor, in order to the safe keeping of it. 3. That the most humble thanks of this Colony unto our gracious



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Sovereign Lord, King Charles the second, of England, for the high and inestimable, yea, incomparable grace and favor unto the colony, in giving these his gracious letters patent unto us, thanks may be presented and returned by the Governor and Deputy Governor, in the behalf of the whole Colony.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



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1668

February 10, Monday (1667, Old Style): In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), [Roger Williams](#) wrote a letter for general distribution.

READ THIS LETTER



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1669

[Roger Williams](#) wrote to Governor John Winthrop, Jr. about the master printer of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Gregory Dexter,

Sir, I have encouraged Mr. Dexter to send you a limestone, and to salute you with this enclosed. He is an intelligent man, a master printer of London and conscionable (though a Baptist).

(Note well: present-day Providence Baptists allege, with the utmost of heat and conviction, that this Roger Williams was a Baptist minister, founder of their flock.)

We have the following information about [Providence, Rhode Island](#) from Nathaniel Morton's NEW ENGLAND'S MEMORIAL:

This year three men were executed for robbing and murdering an Indian near Providence, which, besides the evidence that came against them, they did in substance confess against themselves, and were condemned by legal trial. Some have thought it great severity, to hang three English for one Indian; but the more considerate will easily satisfy themselves for the legality of it;...

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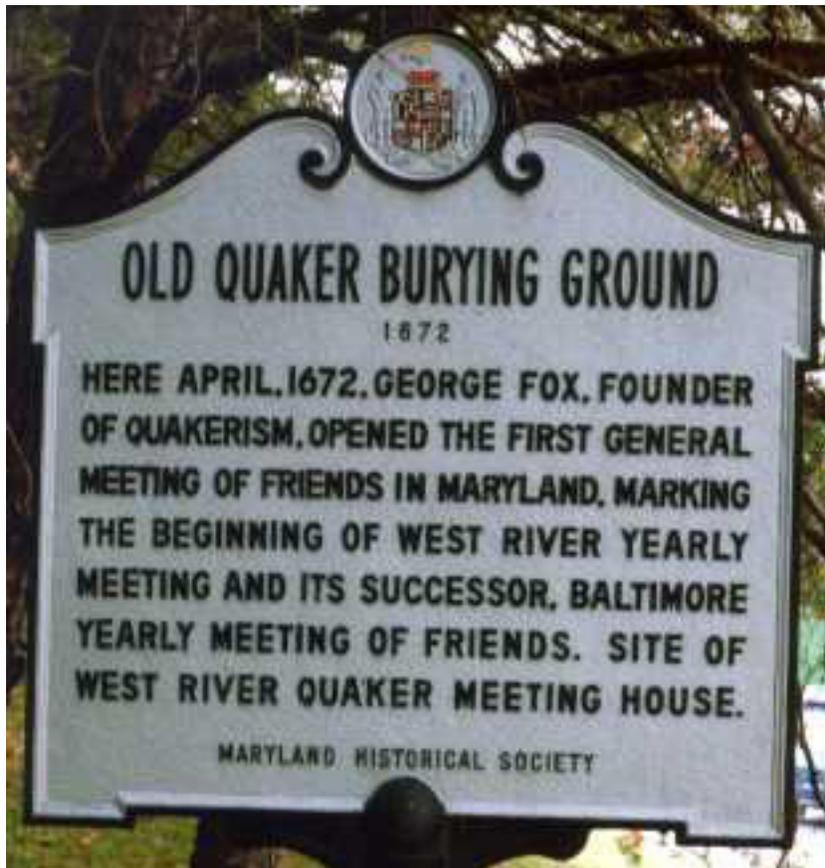
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1672

Friend [George Fox](#) rode through the colonies of the Eastern seaboard of the North American continent, especially in and around Southern [Maryland](#), sleeping out as he had done in his youth in his leathern suit in northern England (he reports, unsurprisingly, that sleeping on frozen ground makes one “very cold”), primarily to counter the influence on American [Quakers](#) that was being exercised by John Perrot of Boston, which he among others regarded as excessive; however, he displayed a special interest in obtaining conversations with Native Americans, since he presumed that these people whom he believed to be totally unfamiliar with the Gospel might be able to instruct him as to the extent to which what he knew as the “saving light of Christ” is quite universal, that is, enlightens everyone and is not necessarily mediated by the Holy Scripture of a particular culture, may be assisted by but does not require close familiarity with Gospel manifestations of the saving light, is not contingent upon any very particularly cultural heritage.

George Fox



Friend George attended several established meetings, including one called “Patuxent.” He was present at the General Meeting of Friends on West River, which would become the Baltimore [Yearly Meeting](#). He would write of staying at the home of James Preston, son of the Richard Preston who had died in 1669. On one occasion, returning from a trip on horseback with James Preston, the home was found to have been burned and his chest destroyed, “due to a careless wench.”

Catholic *conquistadores* of the 16th Century, wherever anything in the faith of the Aztecs or the Incas



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reminded them of some portion of their own rites and rituals, detected only the mocking spirit of the Devil; this Quaker missionary of the 17th Century, on the other hand, was prepared to experience in any similarity a universality of the human spiritual experience of the Divine. After all, if the light came only from Holy Scripture, then how did Father Abraham in the BIBLE get the light? The scripture that tells us about his life could not have existed during his lifetime! Abraham's seed was blessed not because Abraham adhered to scripture but, according to Genesis 22:16, because he "obeyed my voice." Fox had never been able to have such conversations with people in England, could not even have them with European intrusives in America, because any noticed similarities might perfectly well be explained as due to commonalities of cultural background rather than commonalities of human nature. In his journal Fox records about a dozen such encounters, some of them one-on-one conversations, others at large gatherings. While he did use these encounters as an opportunity to witness to his gospel message,²⁵ Fox also made careful essays at comparing native reports of spiritual experiences with his own.²⁶ It was Fox's belief, or his trust, according to the assertion in Joel 2:28 that the Holy Spirit is poured out upon **all flesh**, that even when the scriptures were not known or the gospel preached, the hold of the Holy Spirit could be detected upon the human soul. The question he kept asking his Native American informants was a simple one:

Did they know something within them which reprov'd them when they did wrong?

All Fox's encounters were friendly and affirmative, but on several occasions they went beyond this and created an ongoing relationship between local Quaker groups and Native Americans. One such occasion was when Fox twice addressed a group of leaders in Maryland:

... and they heard the word of the lord and did confess to it. And what I said to the kings and emperor ... I desired them to speak to their people, that God is setting up his tabernacle of witness in their wilderness countries and setting up his glorious ensign and standard of righteousness. And they asked when we had meetings and they said they would come to them and were very loving.

The other such occasion was when Fox addressed about a hundred natives and blacks for about two hours, on Shelter Island off Long Island:

...they said all was truth and did make a confession of it after the meeting. So I have set up a meeting among them once a fortnight, and Friend Joseph Silvester is to read the Scriptures to them, negroes and Indians.... A great desire there is and a great love and satisfaction were among the people, blessed be the Lord. His name spreads and will be great among the nations and dreadful among the heathen [Malachi 1:14].

During this year Friend [George Fox](#) also attended the [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends in New-England at the home of Governor [William Coddington](#), who had become a Quaker. While on this visit, George Fox held a meeting in [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#) "in a great barn, which was thronged with people." This was just after the yearly meeting, and in all probability was the immediate cause of the challenge that would be sent by the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) to him and [Friends](#) with him, to debate fourteen propositions which he had drawn up in relation to Friends' doctrines.

25. [George Fox](#). JOURNAL, ed. John Nickalls. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1952, page 643.

26. [George Fox](#). JOURNAL, ed. John Nickalls. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1952, page 642.



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June 13, Thursday (Old Style): Friend [George Fox](#) had returned from Long Island to [Maryland](#) shore, and then had embarked on a longer journey, arriving on this day at Rhode Island (that's merely a moderately sized island in [Narragansett Bay](#), rather than the extensive "Providence Plantations" affiliated with it on the mainland shore which are now referred to collectively as the "State of [Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations"). George Bishop's NEW ENGLAND JUDGED says the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) which he was visiting on this island had been in existence since 1661.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'George Fox' in a cursive script.



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After Friends were gone to their several habitations, we stayed some days upon the island; had meetings in several parts thereof, and good service for the Lord. When we were clear of the island, we returned to Oyster Bay, waiting for a wind to carry us to Rhode Island, which was computed to be about two hundred miles. As soon as the wind served, we set sail. We arrived there on the thirtieth day of the Third month, and were gladly received by Friends. We went to the house of Nicholas Easton, who at that time was governor of the island; where we rested, being very weary with travelling.

On First-day following we had a large meeting, to which came the deputy-governor and several justices, who were mightily affected with the Truth. The week following, the Yearly Meeting for all the Friends of New England and the other colonies adjacent, was held in this island; to which, besides very many Friends who lived in those parts, came John Stubbs from Barbadoes, and James Lancaster and John Cartwright from another way.

This meeting lasted six days, the first four days being general public meetings for worship, to which abundance of other people came. For they having no priest in the island, and so no restriction to any particular way of worship; and both the governor and deputy-governor, with several justices of the peace, daily frequenting the meetings; this so encouraged the people that they flocked in from all parts of the island. Very good service we had amongst them, and Truth had good reception.

I have rarely observed a people, in the state wherein they stood, to hear with more attention, diligence, and affection, than generally they did, during the four days; which was also taken notice of by other Friends. These public meetings over, the men's meeting began, which was large, precious, and weighty. The day following was the women's meeting, which also was large and very solemn.

These two meetings being for ordering the affairs of the Church, many weighty things were opened, and communicated to them, by way of advice, information, and instruction in the services relating thereunto; that all might be kept clean, sweet and savoury amongst them. In these, several men's and women's meetings for other parts were agreed and settled, to take care of the poor, and other affairs of the Church, and to see that all who profess Truth walk according to the glorious gospel of God.

** When this great general meeting was ended, it was somewhat hard for Friends to part; for the glorious power of the Lord, which was over all, and His Blessed Truth and life flowing amongst them, had so knit and united them together, that they spent two days in taking leave one of another, and of the Friends of the island; and then, being mightily filled with the presence and power of the Lord, they went away with joyful hearts to their several habitations, in the several colonies where they lived.*



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When Friends had taken their leave one of another, we, who travelled amongst them, dispersed ourselves into our several services, as the Lord ordered us. John Burnyeat, John Cartwright, and George Pattison went into the eastern parts of New England, in company with the Friends that came from thence, to visit the particular meetings there; whom John Stubbs and James Lancaster intended to follow awhile after, in the same service; but they were not yet clear of this island. Robert Kidders and I stayed longer upon this island; finding service still here for the Lord, through the great openness and the daily coming in of fresh people from other colonies, for some time after the general meeting; so that we had many large and serviceable meetings amongst them.

During this time, a marriage was celebrated amongst Friends in this island, and we were present. It was at the house of a Friend who had formerly been governor of the island: and there were present three justices of the peace, with many others not in profession with us. Friends said they had never seen such a solemn assembly on such an occasion, or so weighty a marriage and so comely an order. Thus Truth was set over all. This might serve for an example to others; for there were some present from many other places.

** After this I had a great travail in spirit concerning the Ranters in those parts, who had been rude at a meeting at which I was not present. Wherefore I appointed a meeting amongst them, believing the Lord would give me power over them; which He did, to His praise and glory; blessed be His name for ever! There were at this meeting many Friends, and diverse other people; some of whom were justices of the peace, and officers, who were generally well affected with the Truth. One, who had been a justice twenty years, was convinced, spoke highly of the Truth, and more highly of me than is fit for me to mention or take notice of.*

Then we had a meeting at Providence, which was very large, consisting of many sorts of people. I had a great travail upon my spirit, that it might be preserved quiet, and that Truth might be brought over the people, might gain entrance, and have a place in them; for they were generally above the priest in high notions; and some of them came on purpose to dispute. But the Lord, whom we waited upon, was with us, and His power went over them all; and His blessed Seed was exalted and set above all. The disputers were silent, and the meeting was quiet and ended well; praised be the Lord! The people went away mightily satisfied, much desiring another meeting.



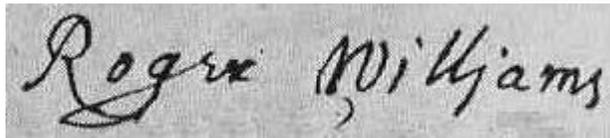
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Friend [George Fox](#) did not meet the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) in [Providence](#), though that local VIP had debated with Friend John Burnyeat during his visit to [Newport](#) in 1671. After Fox and his companion, Friend Nicholas Easton, had left Providence and had gone back down the Bay, and had left there as well and was sailing back toward Long Island, the Reverend Williams would row over to Newport, some 30 miles despite his advanced age — but he would miss being able to issue his challenge to a debate with the main man.

The Reverend Williams would attempted to debate instead with Friends [William Edmundson](#), John Stubbs, and John Burnyeat. The debate would not go well, as Friend Henry Nichols would sing persistently and loudly, and Friend Ann Eaton would pray loudly and persistently, attempting to drown out the Reverend Williams’s voice.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



1672. Roger Williams held a public disputation with three Friends or Quakers, which continued three days at Newport and one in Providence. Deputies or members of the General Assembly were for the first time required to take an oath or affirmation on commencing their official duties. This was protested against by those of Providence.

After two days of such proceedings, there had been an [eclipse](#) of the sun as the debate came to an end.

ASTRONOMY

“Nothing was more common, in those days, than to interpret all meteoric appearances, and other natural phenomena that occurred with less regularity than the rise and set of sun and moon, as so many revelations from a supernatural source. Thus, a blazing spear, a sword of flame, a bow, or a sheaf of arrows seen in the midnight sky, prefigured Indian warfare. Pestilence was known to have been foreboded by a shower of crimson light. We doubt whether any marked event, for good or evil, ever befell New England, from its settlement down to revolutionary times, of which the inhabitants had not been previously warned by some spectacle of its nature. Not seldom, it had been seen by multitudes. Oftener, however, its credibility rested on the faith of some lonely eye-witness, who beheld the wonder through the coloured, magnifying, and distorted medium of his imagination, and shaped it more distinctly in his after-thought. It was, indeed, a majestic idea that the destiny of nations should be revealed, in these awful hieroglyphics, on the cope of heaven. A scroll so wide might not be deemed too expensive for Providence to write a people’s doom upon. The belief was a favourite one with our forefathers, as betokening that their infant commonwealth was under a celestial guardianship of peculiar intimacy and strictness.”

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), THE SCARLET LETTER



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The Reverend would then write, and publish in Boston in 1676, what Fox elsewhere would term “Roger Williams’s ‘Book of Lyes,’” a book bearing the amusing title GEORGE FOX DIGGED OUT OF HIS BURROWS (reprinted in PUBLICATIONS OF THE NARRAGANSETT CLUB, Volume V, pages xx-xlv, Providence, 1872). When Fox and Burnyeat would reply to said “slandrous book” in a 65-page pamphlet, A NEW ENGLAND FIRE BRAND QUENCHED, Fox would seem not even to be sure exactly where the Reverend Williams, that famous “apostle of soul liberty,” was flourishing, as in this pamphlet he would refer to the Reverend as “a priest of New England (or some colony thereabouts).”

This place (called Providence) was about thirty miles from Rhode Island; and we went to it by water. The Governor of Rhode Island, and many others, went with me thither; and we had the meeting in a great barn, which was thronged with people, so that I was exceedingly hot, and in a great sweat; but all was well; the glorious power of the Lord shone over all; glory to the great God for ever!

After this we went to Narragansett, about twenty miles from Rhode Island; and the Governor went with us. We had a meeting at a justice’s house, where Friends had never had any before. It was very large, for the country generally came in; and people came also from Connecticut, and other parts round about, amongst whom were four justices of the peace. Most of these people had never heard Friends before; but they were mightily affected with the meeting, and a great desire there is after the Truth amongst them; so that our meeting was of very good service, blessed be the Lord for ever!

The justice at whose house the meeting was, and another justice of that country, invited me to come again; but I was then clear of those parts, and going towards Shelter Island. But John Burnyeat and John Cartwright, being come out of New England into Rhode Island, before I was gone, I laid this place before them; and they felt drawings thither, and went to visit them.

*At another place, I heard some of the magistrates say among themselves that if they had money enough, they would hire me to be their minister. This was where they did not well understand us, and our principles; but when I heard of it, I said, “It is time for me to be gone; for if their eye were so much on me, or on any of us, they would not come to their own Teacher.” For this thing (hiring ministers) had spoiled many, by hindering them from improving their own talents; whereas our labour is to bring every one to his own Teacher **in** himself.*

I went thence towards Shelter Island [so named because Nathaniel Sylvester, sole proprietor of this island at the eastern end of Long Island between Gardiner’s Bay and Little Peconic Bay, had offered shelter to persecuted Friends from New England], having with me Robert Widders, James Lancaster, George Pattison, and John Jay, a planter of Barbadoes.

We went in a sloop; and passing by Point Juda [Judith] and Block Island, we came to Fisher’s Island, where at night we went on shore; but were not able to stay for the mosquitoes which abound there, and are very troublesome. Therefore we went into our sloop again, put off for the shore, and cast anchor; and so lay in our sloop that night.

Next day we went into the Sound, but finding our sloop was not able to live in that water, we returned again, and came to anchor before Fisher’s Island, where we lay in our sloop that night also. There fell abundance of rain, and our sloop being open, we were exceedingly wet.

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Next day we passed over the waters called the Two Horse Races, and then by Gardner's Island; after which we passed by the Gull's Island, and so got at length to Shelter Island. Though it was but about twenty-seven leagues from Rhode Island, yet through the difficulty of passage we were three days in reaching it.

The day after, being First-day, we had a meeting there. In the same week I had another among the Indians; at which were their king, his council, and about a hundred Indians more. They sat down like Friends, and heard very attentively while I spoke to them by an interpreter, an Indian that could speak English well. After the meeting they appeared very loving, and confessed that what was said to them was Truth.

Next First-day we had a great meeting on the island, to which came many people who had never heard Friends before. They were very well satisfied with it, and when it was over would not go away till they had spoken with me. Wherefore I went amongst them, and found they were much taken with the Truth; good desires were raised in them, and great love. Blessed be the Lord; His name spreads, and will be great among the nations, and dreadful among the heathen.

While we were in Shelter Island, William Edmundson, who had been labouring in the work of the Lord in Virginia, came to us. From thence he had travelled through the desert-country, through difficulties and many trials, till he came to Roanoke [not little Roanoke Island off the coast, but the extensive mainland adjacent to the Roanoke River], where he met with a tender people. After seven weeks' service in those parts, sailing over to Maryland, and so to New York, he came to Long Island, and so to Shelter Island; where we met with him, and were very glad to hear from him the good service he had had for the Lord, in the several places where he had travelled since he parted from us.

We stayed not long in Shelter Island, but entering our sloop again put to sea for Long Island. We had a very rough passage, for the tide ran so strong for several hours that I have not seen the like; and being against us, we could hardly get forwards, though we had a gale.

We were upon the water all that day and the night following; but found ourselves next day driven back near to Fisher's Island. For there was a great fog, and towards day it was very dark, so that we could not see what way we made. Besides, it rained much in the night, which in our open sloop made us very wet.

Next day a great storm arose, so that we were fain to go over the Sound, and got over with much difficulty. When we left Fisher's Island, we passed by Falkner Island, and came to the main, where we cast anchor till the storm was over.

Then we crossed the Sound, being all very wet; and much difficulty we had to get to land, the wind being strong against us. But blessed be the Lord God of heaven and earth, and of the seas and waters, all was well.





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ROGER WILLIAMS

Oh! how darest thou Roger Williams, publish such false lyes to the World, when thou knowest in thy Conscience, that G.F. had never any Writing, or Letter, or Proposals from thee; neither did he ever exchange a word with thee. The Lord God of Heaven knowes it, and the Deputy Governour knowes, that I received none of thy Writings or Papers or Proposals by him. Behold all sober people the foundation of this mans Attempt, the beginning of his work; and since the foundation of thy Book is a notorious lye, the building upon such a foundation of lyes is not like to be otherwise: which lyes thou hast made thy refuge; as throughout thy Book may be evidently seen. For except a man had sold himself to work falsehood, and make lyes; he could not have done more wickedly, and have uttered falser charges that though hast done. But the Lord God which knows them, and sees thy evil design in them, will sweep them away with the besom of Destruction, and clear his people from thy manifest false tongue....

But by this all may see the wickedness, that is in the Bottle of this R.W. by what does flow out of it in his Book, to wit, a malicious spirit against G.F. who was never concerned him by word or writing, much less did G.F. ever do him wrong. And yet he says, G.F. well knew, what Artillery he was furnisht with out of his own bald writings, (as he scoffingly calls them) &c. when never a word of this is true: though he presumes to present it to the King for Truth concerning G.F....

This also is an abominable falsehood, the Lord know it, a groundless untrue imagination of his own; for there was no such Agreement or Consultation. Is this man fit to write of Religion, that lyes? a vain man! What is he, and his designs, that they should require Consultations and Junctos? so let the honest Reader Judge, from whence R.W. had all these lyes, if not from his Father the Devil, who is out of Truth: but with the Truth is both his Father and he Judged.



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July: Friend [George Fox](#) visited [Rhode Island](#), staying with Governor Nicholas Easton. [Quakers](#) were just becoming the dominant group in that colony's government. Governor Easton, 11 of the 16 assistants, and perhaps seven of the 20 deputies were members of the Religious Society of Friends. Friend Nicholas Easton was the primary political leader there at this point, and the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) the primary spiritual leader. Friend George recorded that:

In New England there was an Indian king that said he saw that there were many of their people of the Indians turned to the New England professors. He said they were worse since than they were before they left their own religion; and of all religions he said the Quakers were the best.

Commenting on this, Jill Lepore surmises that this may be more than merely the "Quaker party line," that although there is no extant record of such a visit, Friend John Easton of [Rhode Island](#) may have taken Friend George along on a visit to the sachem [Metacom](#) at [Mount Hope](#). Alternatively, she offers, Friend George may simply have become aware somehow of the sachem Metacom's rejection of the Reverend [John Eliot](#)'s proselytizing.

The conclusion Friend [George Fox](#) arrived at in his New World travels was that all humans did experience Christ's light, however this experience might be conceptualized in a given culture:

Now Jews, and the Turks, and heathen, and Indians, that do not nor will not profess and own Christ in the flesh, to be the Savior; if one come to speak to them of their evil deeds and words, and ask them if there is something in them that tells them, they should not speak and do so, or so wickedly? (for the light of Christ troubles and condemns them if they do evil), here they will confess to the light of Christ though they know not what it is....

But Fox did not come to America during this period just prior to the outbreak of "[King Phillip's War](#)" only to

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interrogate the indigenes. As mentioned above, he also came to deal with the intrusives, in particular with one intrusive, a Boston one named John Perrot. Fox wanted to counter the influence that was being exercised by Friend Perrot in Boston.



At the time Friend Perrot evidently was attempting to develop the [Quaker](#) insistence, that in matters of worship we ought to dispense with any form which might divide worshipers into opposing groups contemptuous of and intolerant of each other, to the point at which even the regularity of showing up on time for a silent meeting of worship, on First Day, was to be regarded as a “form” and discarded. [George Fox](#) sought to drive away such individuals, whom he characterized as “disorderly walkers.” And indeed, those Quakers who distrusted the growing levels of group control over individual conduct began to walk in other paths.



July 13, Saturday (Old Style): The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote a letter, from [Providence, Rhode Island](#), challenging Friend [George Fox](#) to a debate. The debate was to concern fourteen propositions, seven of them to be debated at [Newport](#) and seven at Providence.

July 26, Friday (Old Style): The Reverend [Roger Williams](#)'s July 13th letter challenging Friend [George Fox](#) to a debate reached its destination after Friend George had sailed. The English visitors who still remained in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Friends John Stubbs, John Burnyeat, and [William Edmundson](#), eagerly accepted the challenge. The debate in Newport would take place at the Friends meetinghouse over a 3-day period, that in Providence over a single day. (The occasion would not be well-mannered: Friend Henry Nichols would insist upon singing loudly, while Friend Ann Eaton would insist upon praying loudly, struggling to drown out the Reverend Williams's voice.) The Reverend would publish an account of this as THE FOX DIGGED OUT OF HIS BURROWES, and then the Quakers would blast back with A NEW-ENGLAND FIRE-BRAND QUENCHED.

Two of Friend [George Fox](#)'s American traveling companions, Friends John Burnyeat and John Stubbs, held a meeting in [Warwick](#) “where none had been before, and several were convinced.... And there we had to do with one Gorton and his Company, who were by other people there called Gortonians, but they called themselves



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Generalists. They were of the Opinion, All should be saved. But they were in reality Ranters, for in our Discourse, they would maintain, and say, No creaturely actions could be sin; and would have no whoredom, nor drunkenness, nor the like to be sin, but what was spiritual; the outward action was but creaturely. And thus in their filthy, unclean spirits, they, like the old Ranters, made merry over the reproof of God's Spirit. So from thence we came down again to Road Island, and there we spent some time." (I do not know whether the not-well-mannered meeting described above as having taken place in Providence, and the meeting that included Gortonians described above as having taken place in Warwick just south of Providence, constitute the same event described in different manners — or whether these were two separate occasions. We need to bear in mind that neither George Fox nor Roger Williams were present at this meeting, and that if [Samuell Gorton](#) was present, he was present as an aged man who had recently retired after sitting in the colonial legislature. We need to bear in mind also that Warwick was not a town in which there had ever been a [Quaker](#) meeting — in fact the Friends would not settle a meeting in Warwick until more than two decades subsequent to Gorton's death, in 1699, and the local meeting would not erect its 1st meetinghouse until about 1720.)



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1675

 December 18, Saturday (Old Style): The army of the United Colonies came together. They bivouacked that night during a bitter snowstorm, in an open field without blankets near [South Kingstown](#).

"KING PHILLIP'S WAR"

The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote Governor John Winthrop, Jr. that it was necessary to attack the [Narragansett](#) because they were "barbarous men of Bloud." He had taken pains to consult with God and had been listening to the "mind and voice of the most high amongst us," and had assured himself that those among the [Quakers](#) who were "contrary" to war were simply mistaken as to God's will.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

Near a native stonework known as "Queen's Fort" on the border of Exeter and [North Kingstown](#) in [Rhode Island](#), said to have been the stronghold of sachem Quaipen and her adherents, on this day the native named Peter who would betray the native fort in the Great Swamp Fight was captured by the English.

1676



March 29, Wednesday (Old Style): At the beginning of King Philip’s War, Providence had been neutral and this neutrality had been respected by the Wampanoag. However, whites from Providence and another Rhode Island town had joined the United Colonies army as it marched had through on its way to the “Great Swamp Fight” in which so many Narragansett and Wampanoag had been killed, and after which so many had starved because their winter supplies had burned. On this day, therefore, with only some 30 whites of the 500 residents of Providence remaining in the vicinity, the English settlement was raided. Only one man and one woman were killed during the general torching of the empty houses of the town. The man was named Wright. This resident had trusted in the power of the BIBLE to save him, and had remained in his house clutching this book. The native American torch party, encountering this intransigence, “ripte him open, and put his BIBLE in his belly.” The woman was a Quaker: Friend Elizabeth Sucklin. All the other 30-odd remaining residents had taken refuge in garrison houses and these garrison houses were not attacked. “Elizabeth Sucklin was preparing to goe from Her own Hous to A Fort but delaying they Killed Her.” “The House of John Smith where the Town records were Kept, was burnt with about 26 Others, but the Record was mostly thrown into the Mill Pond, afterward carried to Newport for Safety and brought back the 27th of April next year 1677.” The native attackers did not torch the house that had been erected by Samuel Whipple on the north side of Abbott Street to the east of the Town Street that is now North Main, possibly because they were aware that it had been being used for religious meetings. Allegedly, during this general torching, an exceedingly strange meeting took place. The Reverend Roger Williams, age 77, allegedly walked out into the forest, with his home and 71 other homes in smouldering ashes behind him (another source says 54 houses were torched, another that 27 were torched: whatever, we know that of the entire town, only two houses survived), and allegedly he remonstrated with the Narragansett warriors.



To their claim that

“God was [with] them and Had forsaken us for they had so prospered in Killing



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and Burning us far beyond What we did against them,”

the famous Reverend allegedly responded

“God had prospered **us** so that wee had driven the Wampanoag with Phillip out of his Countrie....”



In other words, we have here really does amount to a couple of strange strangenesses:

1stly, we have here a purported historical record of an encounter in which we might have presumed the incautious reverend was going to get his incautious ass murderized whereas nothing of that sort occurred;

2dly, we have here a record of a bunch of guys supposedly more influenced or less influenced by Christianity, who all seem to be presuming equally as they stand around at the forest margin, chit-chatting about deep theology, that whatever best succeeds in this world *ipso facto* constitutes human righteousness!

“KING PHILLIP’S WAR”
WAMPANOAG

August 14, Monday (Old Style): The fortified trading post of Thomas Clarke and Thomas Lakes at Arrowsic was destroyed.

According to the ANNALS OF PROVIDENCE, surviving *Narragansett* and *Wampanoag* captives were being offered for sale of their labor in *Providence, Rhode Island* by a list of slavetraders which startlingly includes some famous names, and were being offered into this temporary human slavery at remarkably affordable prices:

A town meeting was held before Thomas Fields’s house, under a tree, by the water side, on the 14th of August, 1676. A committee was appointed to determine in what manner the Indians should be disposed of. They reported as follows:

Inhabitants wanting, can have Indians at the price they sell at the Island of Rhode Island or elsewhere. All under five, to serve until thirty, above five and under ten, till twenty eight; above ten to fifteen, till twenty seven; above fifteen to twenty, till twenty six; from twenty to thirty, shall serve eight years; all above thirty, seven years.

We whose names are underwritten, being chosen by the town to see to the disposal of the Indians now in town, we agree that Roger Williams, N. Waterman, T. Fenner, H. Ashton, J. Morey, D. Abbot, J. Olney, V. Whitman, J. Whipple, sen.; E. Pray, J. Pray, J. Angell, Jas.



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Angell, T. Arnold, A. Man., T. Field, E. Bennett, T. Clemence, W. Lancaster, W. Hopkins, W. Hawkins, W. Harris, Z. Field, S. Winsor, and Capt. Fenner, shall each have a whole share in the product. I. Woodward and R. Pray, three fourths of a share each. J. Smith, E. Smith, S. Whipple, and T. Walling each half a share.

Signed,

Roger Williams

Thomas Harris, sen.

Thomas Angell

Thomas Field

John Whipple, Jr.

We have an additional document dating to this period, on this same topic:

To Anthony Low, five Indians, great and small eight pounds
To James Rogers, two, for twenty bushels of Indian corn
To Philip Smith, two, in silver, \$4.10
To Daniel Allen, one, in silver, \$2.10
To C. Carr, one, twelve bushels of Indian corn
To Elisha Smith, one, in wool, 100 lbs.
To Elisha Smith, one for three fat sheep

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1677

November 17, Saturday (Old Style): [Roger Williams](#) told a court of commissioners that he was especially suited to negotiate with the natives over land ownership because “God was pleased to give me a painful patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy smoky holes ... to gain their tongue.”

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)

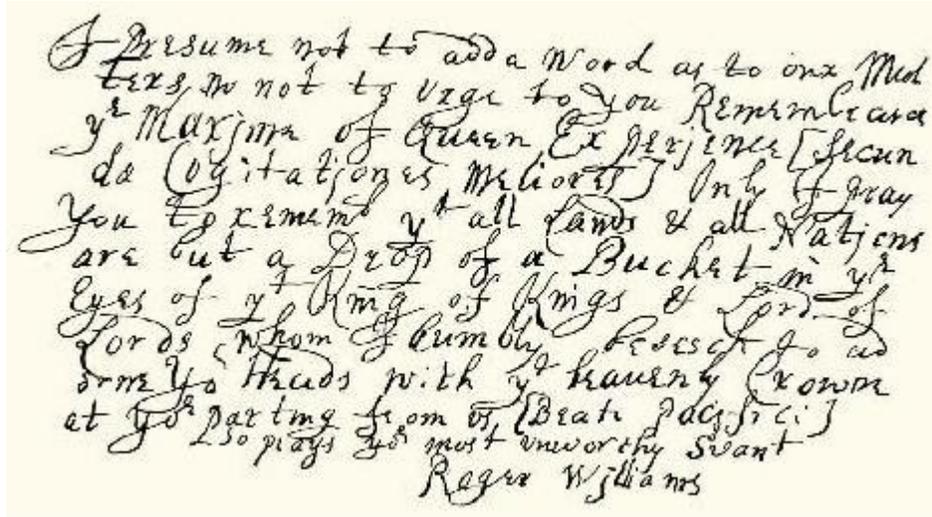
[John Evelyn](#)'s diary entry for this day was in part as follows:



I din'd with Mr. Godolphin & his Wife, at which time he sealed the Deedes of settlement on his Lady, in which I was a Trustee: &c:

1678

October 4, Wednesday (Old Style): [Roger Williams](#) wrote to the much honored Mr. Thomas Hinckley (the final governor of the Plymouth Colony), and the rest of the much honored Commiffioners from the respective colonies, affembled at [Providence](#) (if they were not able to decypher his handwriting, he was present to expound upon it for them):



Much Honored Sirs: - Your wifdoms know that this town is liable to many payments: that moneys will be drawn like blood from many amongst us: for fome of us have appeared legally in town meetings to anfer the charge and fummons and declaration of the plaintiff againft the town of Providence. Others have not appeared at our town meetings; or, appearing have diffented from the major vote, which hath always (in all thefe tranfactions) carried on matters in juft order and quietnefs. The non-appearers and diffenters will not pay, as being none of the town in this cafe.

We had much heat in our laft town-meeting, I motioned a fufpenfion of proceedings until the fitting of this high court. Both parties yielded and propofes to fubmit to your decifion, in active or paffive obedience. We were hot; fo no adrefs was orderly prepared, &c.: and therefore I hold it my humble duty, in the town's name, to pray your favorable and moft feafonable help unto us. I presume not to add a word as to our Matters, no not to urge to your Remembrance y^e Maxim of Queen Experience [Secunda Cogitationes Meliores] Only I pray You Egxement y^e all Lands and all Nations are but a Drop of a Bucket in y^e eyes of y^e King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whom I humbly Beseech to adorn y^r Heads with y^e heavenly Crown at yo^r parting from us [Beati pacifici] So prays yo^r most unworthy Svant, Roger Williams



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1682

May 6, Saturday (Old Style): The Reverend [Roger Williams](#) wrote to Governor [Simon Bradstreet](#), characterizing himself as “old and weak and bruised (with rupture and colic) and lameness on both my feet.” He had summed up his life under 22 headings: “By my fireside I have recollected the discourses, which (by many tedious journeys) I have had with the scattered English at Narragansett before the war and since. I have reduced them unto these twenty-two heads (enclosed) which is near thirty sheets of my writing. I would send them to the Narragansetts and others; ther is no controversy in them, only an endeavour of a particular match of each poor sinner to his maker.” He asked the governor for advice as to printing this, and alluded to the accounts he had received from England of the beheadings of Shaftsbury and Howard, and of the conflicting accounts he had received of their having been reprieved, etc. while indicating that he desired to put these difficulties into perspective: “But these are but sublunaries, temporaries and trivials. Eternity, O Eternity, is our business.”

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

To the great annoyance of Colbert, Versailles became officially the seat of French national government (until 1789). The 40-year-old monarch did not like the Louvre and Tuileries palaces of Paris, and would develop for this edifice “a boundless passion,” as the Marquis de Sourches would note in 1682. To house the government and his family, Hardouin-Mansart had build the Ministries wing (1678/1679) and the South wing (1678/1682), followed by the Orangerie. The marble court was transformed and the Hall of Mirrors was built. The Swiss Ornamental Lake had been dug out in 1678 to provide earth for a vast vegetable garden, entrusted to La Quintinie. The work had been pursued relentlessly: in 1679, Mansart had begun the construction of the Grand and Little Stables. In 1680, Le Nôtre had redesigned the grand perspective of the gardens by laying down the Green Carpet. To house the king’s domestic staff, the Grand Commun had been erected in 1682. Louis XIV would decide on the construction of a new chapel (1689-1709). 1683 would bring the appointment of a new Superintendent for his buildings and in 1685 the North wing would be built to house the Court. Over 36,000 workmen would be kept busy on the Versailles site.



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1683

[Roger Williams](#) died (the precise day of this Reverend's death is unknown, but we fancy that it occurred sometime between January 16th and March 16th, 1682/1683). He was buried in the orchard in the rear of his homestead lot at Towne Street (now North Main Street) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), within the boundaries of the What Cheer farm, at a site said to have been of his own choosing. (After many years his remains would be searched for and nothing whatever would be found other than tree roots, and so some soil that was darker than other nearby soil was arbitrarily shoveled into a soapbox which was then stored in the vault of a descendant in the North Burial Ground.

DIGGING UP THE DEAD

In 1936 the contents of this soapbox would be sealed within a bronze container and set into the base of the monument erected to his memory on Prospect Terrace. In news reports from time to time, you will observe the comment "We've lost track of the location at which Williams was originally buried," reference is seldom made to the dubiousness of the contents of the base of the monument on Prospect Terrace. Curiously, also, while these journalistic efforts are **always** accompanied by a visual, either a sketch or a painting or a statue of Williams, they **never** confess that since no-one took the trouble to describe Williams while he was alive, none of us have **ever had any idea** what he might have looked like — not how tall he was, not what color hair he had, or any other aspect of his physicality. Why is it that they are so careful about the original gravesite while so careless about the appearance, and of the provenance of the supposed artifacts? —This inconsistency seems to be a trade tradition.)



The box is down here, but what's actually in the box?

Here is how the situation would be described in Wilfred Harold Munro's 1881 PICTURESQUE RHODE ISLAND. PEN AND PENCIL SKETCHES OF THE SCENERY AND HISTORY OF ITS CITIES, TOWNS, AND HAMLETS, AND OF MEN WHO HAVE MADE THEM FAMOUS (Providence RI: J.A. & R.A. Reid):

Early in the year 1683, at the ripe age of eighty-four, Roger Williams was gathered to his fathers. Precisely how or when his death occurred is not known. He was buried in a spot said to have been selected by himself on What Cheer, not far from the place where he first landed on Rhode Island shores. At the head of his grave an apple-tree stood for many years. Not long ago, when the grave was opened, the roots of this tree were found to have passed through the space the body is supposed to have occupied. From the main root smaller branches had followed the course of the arms and legs. This singular specimen is still preserved, and may be seen in the Museum of Brown University.²⁷

27. Actually, Brown University doesn't have any "Museum of Brown University" and nobody I talked to on campus had any idea where such a "singular specimen" might be being stored.



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1686

March: Providence Williams, daughter of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) and his wife Mary Williams, died at the age of 48. She had not married.

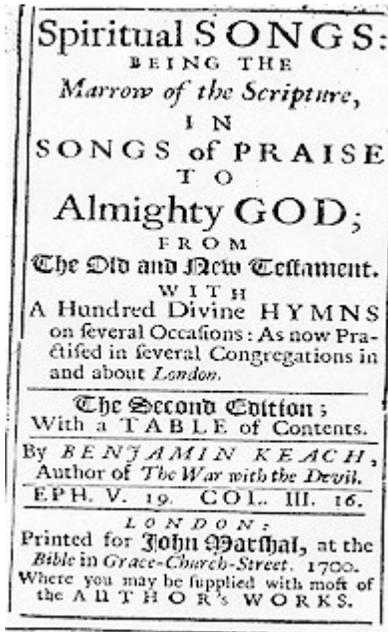
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1700

The Reverend [Benjamin Keach](#)'s SPIRITUAL SONGS: BEING THE MARROW OF THE SCRIPTURE (London: John Marshal).



Awake, my soul, awake, my tongue,
My glory wake and sing,
And celebrate the holy birth,
The birth of Israel's King!

O happy night that brought forth light,
Which makes the blind to see,
The Dayspring from on high came down
To cheer and visit thee.

The careful shepherds with their flocks
Were watching for the morn,
But better news from Heav'n was brought;
Your Savior now is born!

In Bethlehem the Infant lies,
Within a place obscure,
Your Savior's come, O sing God's praise!
O sing His praise fore'er.



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The [Baptists](#) of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) who had been meeting in private homes, began their first meetinghouse.²⁸

In a related piece of news, in this year the old [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#) was sold to Joseph Mosey for £11 14s. and a new meetinghouse was in the process of being erected. On a following screen are three postcard views of the new construction, the first dating to about 1905, the second to 1908, and the third to 1955:

28. A plaque at the picturesque white “First Baptist Meeting House” in beautiful downtown Providence, Rhode Island asserts quite sincerely that “This church was founded by Roger Williams, its first pastor and the first asserter of liberty of conscience. It was the first Church in Rhode Island and the first Baptist Church in America.” That structure, however, was not in existence prior to 1775 — which would be three full generations of human life beyond this point in time. Also, some Baptists do not claim Roger William now as having been a Baptist minister, although he had indeed toyed with a religious group in Providence for some months in the year 1639 before separating himself from them, and that religious group with which he had toyed in 1639 would, fifteen years afterward upon the migration of some Particular Baptists from England, begin to identify itself as Baptist.

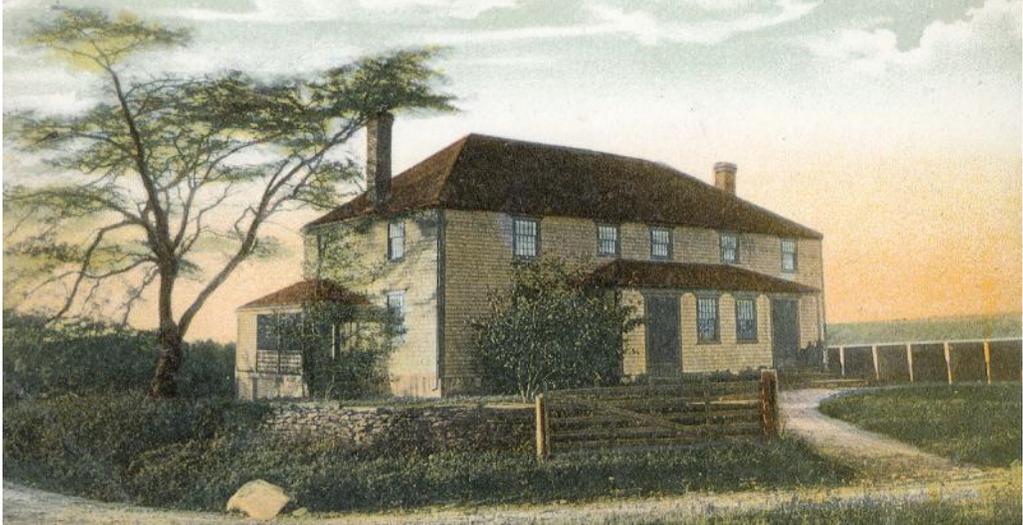
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1773

The Reverend [Isaac Backus](#) preached a sermon, AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, AGAINST THE OPPRESSIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY, that advocated religious liberty through the separation of church and state.



Separation of church and state, it's what the reverend fantasizes that Jesus wanted back in the days of the Roman occupation of Israel: "Now who can hear Christ declare, that his kingdom is, not of this world, and yet believe that this blending of church and state together can be pleasing to him?"

SELFPRIVILEGING

There was an implicit Antisemitism here of the garden variety sort that is embedded within the Gospel According To Matthew. Christians were Christians, they were not Jews! The Jews had had a covenant with God but get this, that had been an older covenant, that had been an exclusively Jewish one, that one with Abraham was a superseded one and is entirely supplanted by our new covenant, which is the covenant of grace, which is with Christ Jesus and through him with his main man, the Protestant minister in town. This new covenant, the one that pertains to us Christians, the one of grace, is that in order to be saved we must believe on the Christ. It was necessary to break all direct connection between the federal government and institutionalized religion because any such connection would be Jewish rather than Christian. That old sort of connection must be broken by not allowing taxation to support official churches. The early American tradition of taxing local citizens to provide salaries for local ministers — that had been an utterly wrongheaded tradition. Just as obviously the power to tax is the power to destroy, so also, obviously, support of religion through taxation was inevitably going to lead to government control over religion. Get this, religion should control government, not vice versa. When it comes to the question, who is more influential in a town, the minister or the mayor, the answer must be that it is the minister who is more influential. The tail is not going to wag the dog. Please note that this is in no sense an advance in principled government: what it amounts to is full-bore self-privileging at its most outrageous. We really should not attempt to use either the attitude of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) or the attitude of the Reverend Backus toward "separation of church and state" as a model for our current national situation, for either of these early dudes would consider our current situation to constitute a perversion of their conception of the ultimate authority of Preacher over President. We currently legitimize non-Christian religions and neither of them would have approved of any such kettle of fish. We do not allow school prayer and (if any such issue had then been allowed to raise its ugly head) they would have been outraged and would indignantly have insisted upon school prayer. Their wall of separation was merely a wall to protect the apparatus of the Christian church in each several State from any encroachment from the new authority of the new federal government, and it was most decidedly not one intended to provide the new federal



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government, or any of the older state governments, with any protection from religion, or to provide practitioners of other religions with any protection from abuse by hegemonic Christians. It would be President Jefferson, not Williams or Backus –[Thomas Jefferson](#) the guy who as an older man would consider himself fully competent to off the top of his head edit and simplify the Bible– who would come to regard all religious creeds and sects as potential tyrannies over the mind of man and explicitly deny that America was intended to be, could be, or should be a Christian nation! These Baptists wanted to keep church and state separate merely in order to create a solely Christian nation in which citizens would not render any more to Caesar than was truly Caesar’s –a minimal amount, merely what was absolutely necessary– while devoting the entire remainder of their energies and attention to the fulltime service of God under the guiding influence of their local pastor. Freedom was the last thing on these ministerial minds. What was on their minds can be most simply put: “I don’t want you to be the important one, I want me to be the important one. This isn’t about you, it’s about me.”

AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC

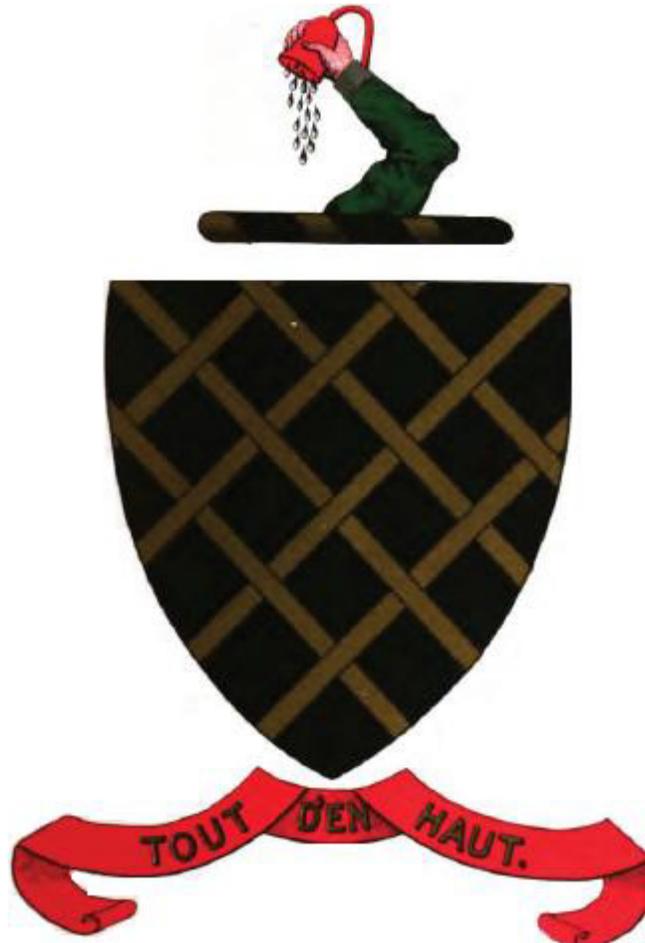
CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT

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1803

➡ April 23, Saturday: [Adin Ballou](#) was born to Ariel and Edilda Ballou on a farm in [Cumberland](#) on the border between [Rhode Island](#) and Massachusetts, descendant in the 5th generation of one Maturin Ballou who had come to America about 1640 and had involved himself in the founding of [Providence](#) (the family has even preserved a scrap of paper that was a signed receipt given to them, for something, by the Reverend [Roger Williams](#)). Ballou was instructed that his ancestor Maturin had been the descendant of a French family of [Huguenots](#) that had been driven into exile in England by religious persecution.²⁹



WIKIPEDIA'S LIST OF HUGUENOTS

29. Later in life he would be forced to the conclusion that this family tradition was probably inaccurate, but the main thing in such influences is that an impressionable age he believed it and was thereby impressed with a putative tradition of suppression. While the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) was creating his communitarian movement in New England, of Christian non-resistance to evil, and was lecturing on this topic before an audience including [Henry Thoreau](#)—an authentic descendant of persecuted Huguenots—in January 1841 ➡ at the Concord Lyceum, he was believing himself to be the inheritor of this sort of religious tradition. Those of us who interest ourselves in this sort of thing would be interested to learn whether Ballou recognized [John Thoreau, Sr.](#), upon his visit to [Concord](#), to be specifically of [Huguenot](#) as well as of French extraction.



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ROGER WILLIAMS

1835

 February 20, Friday: [Waldo Emerson](#) began reading Friend [George Fox](#)'s A NEW ENGLAND FIRE BRAND QUENCHED reply to the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), and looked again at Volume I of Friend [William Penn](#)'s SELECT WORKS.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

[Charles Darwin](#) recorded in his journal the earthquake that destroyed the city of Concepcion, Chile:

This day has been remarkable in the annals of Valdivia for the most severe earthquake which the oldest inhabitants remember.— Some who were at Valparaiso during the dreadful one of 1822, say this was as powerful.— I can hardly credit this, & must think that in Earthquakes as in gales of wind, the last is always the worst. I was on shore & lying down in the wood to rest myself. It came on suddenly & lasted two minutes (but appeared much longer). The rocking was most sensible; the undulation appeared both to me & my servant to travel due East. There was no difficulty in standing upright; but the motion made me giddy.— I can compare it to skating on very thin ice or to the motion of a ship in a little cross ripple.

An earthquake like this at once destroys the oldest associations; the world, the very emblem of all that is solid, moves beneath our feet like a crust over fluid; one second of time conveys to the mind a strange idea of insecurity, which hours of reflection would never create. In the forest, a breeze moved the trees, I felt the earth tremble, but saw no consequence from it.— At the town where nearly all the officers were, the scene was more awful; all the houses being built of wood, none actually fell & but few were injured. Every one expected to see the Church a heap of ruins. The houses were shaken violently & creaked much, the nails being partially drawn.— I feel sure it is these accompaniments & the horror pictured in the faces of all the inhabitants, which communicates the dread that every one feels who has thus seen as well as felt an earthquake. In the forest it was a highly interesting but by no means awe-exciting phenomenon.— The effect of the tides was very curious; the great shock took place at the time of low-water; an old woman who was on the beach told me that the water flowed quickly but not in big waves to the high-water mark, & as quickly returned to its proper level; this was also evident by the wet sand. She said it flowed like an ordinary tide, only a good deal quicker. This very kind of irregularity in the tide happened two or three years since during an Earthquake at Chiloe & caused a great deal of groundless alarm.— In the course of the evening there were other weaker shocks; all of which seemed to produce the most complicated currents, & some of great strength in the Bay. The generally active Volcano of Villa-Rica, which is the only part of the Cordilleras in sight, appeared quite tranquil.— I am afraid we shall hear of damage done at Concepcion.

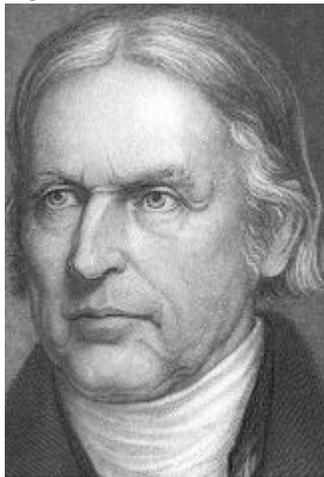
1854

The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) wrote his main justification of the [Hopedale](#) Community, PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.



CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

The first section of this treatise would be his only completed work of systematic theology. He asserted that God permeated an “infinitarium,” that is, an infinity of universes, and that both space and time were without center or limit. Every separate one of these universes, of this infinity of universes within this “infinitarium,” he asserted, was going through an unending sequence of “grand cycles,” each one of which could appropriately be characterized as “an eternity.” His Christology was not Unitarian, nor was it Trinitarian, but instead was rather similar to the ancient heresy known as “Sabellianism.” He asserted that Christ was a manifestation of God, proportioned in such manner as to be comprehensible by our finite minds, but he asserted also that Christianity might not be the sole religion to contain divine truth. Like the Reverend Hosea Ballou, the



Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) portrayed atonement as a form of demonstration by God, an appeal to human beings for a spiritual and moral response. He differed from this other Reverend Ballou in asserting that divine punishment in the afterlife was necessary, not only for the sake of justice but also as a mechanism for individual correction and progress. Our human spirits, as they were gradually regenerated, were eventually to become one with God.



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This treatise laid out a plan for human society that was as simple and as obvious as the Lord's Prayer. To be perfect as God is perfect is a difficult thing for us human creatures. We all impinge on each other in one manner or another; we are all in life together, on this planet together, and should we fail to forgive "them" their trespasses, no way could our own trespasses be forgiven — for our own trespasses against "them" are in no way more privileged than "their" trespasses against us. When we manage to avoid seeking to retaliate for the harms that are done to us by others, we face only a further obligation. After accepting these harms with no spirit of retribution, no spirit of doing harm in response, we must go on and do more: we must ask that the people who did these things to us be forgiven. And we can ask for this only if we ourselves are ready to grant the prayer. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye.... Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." The word "as" in this prayer means "to the extent that." To the extent that we are able to forgive these other people for what they have done to us, to that extent and to that extent only, forgive us for what we ourselves have done against them, and, the inverse also, if there should be lurking in us any residual unwillingness to forgive, to that extent please do not forgive us for what we have ourselves done, but instead take retribution against us. There's no such thing as selective forgiveness, it only works if it is perfectly indiscriminate, and if it is perfectly applied across the board.³⁰

If, while we sue for mercy, we exercise none; if, while we pray for forgiveness, we meditate vengeance; if, while we ask to be treated better than we deserve, we are trying to respond to others according to their deserts; then we at once display our own insincerity, and our worship is a fraud and God is mocked. Our spirit of partiality is in opposition to the Lord's spirit of indiscriminate acceptance (which seems while we are in this spirit to be mere blind and callous indifference); we stand self-excluded from his presence alike unforgiving and unforgiven. The idea, repeated over and over, is that it is a law of life that only the forgiving can be forgiven. This forgiving is what constitutes our proof of our sincerity. This, not something as trivial as passing the salt to others at the table if we wish others to have the politeness to pass the salt to us, is the meat of the golden rule of doing unto others as we would have done unto ourselves. Our spirits must be fit to receive forgiveness. Then God can commune with us, for we have erected no barrier, we have not held ourselves away from his perfect spirit. It is only in the spirit of human forgiveness that we can receive and enjoy the divine forgiveness.

Yet Christianity has been suborned to authorize, to aid, and to abet the whole catalog of penal injuries, and when they are not enough, capital punishment, and not only that, but also the just war. The Chaplain leads the troops in the Lord's Prayer, while Christians draw near their God with their lips, and hold their hearts far away in a safe place where there may yet be found vengeance.

30. Also, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:12-15). "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses; but if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25-26). "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:37).

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This, then, would be the foundation of our economic life, that to the greatest extent possible we voluntarily refrain from gaining our bread in any manner that interferes one with another, recognizing that a certain minimal level of such interference is inevitable, and, since we know full well that these residual interferences are unavoidable, we merely be understanding of these residual interferences in a spirit of awareness that we are as likely ourselves to commit such blunders against others, as they are to commit such against us. –
The remainder of any economic program, obviously, is just window dressing and agenda and special pleading.

By this point the Reverend John Murray Spear, Medium, of the [Hopedale](#) community, had come to be under the direction of a group of spirits that termed itself “The Association of the Beneficents.” His committee (in sequence according to how long they had been in the spirit realm) included:³¹



DIED	PERSONALITY
65CE	Lucius Annaeus Seneca
1546	Martin Luther
1683	Roger Williams
1772	Emmanuel Swedenborg
1790	Benjamin Franklin
1790	John Howard
1809	John Murray
1813	Benjamin Rush
1825	Thomas Jefferson
1834	Lafayette
1842	William Ellery Channing



31. John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore (1732-1809), had been the appointed governor of the Virginia colony. After the battles of Lexington and Concord he had taken gunpowder stores from Williamsburg and moved his seat of government to a British man-of-war anchored off Yorktown. After he had burned Norfolk in 1776, the Americans had been able to drive him back to England from his station on Gwynn’s Island in Chesapeake Bay. It is not clear that John Murray Spear had been named after this earl, and it is not clear that this is the John Murray that he was intending to channel. An alternative hypothesis was that he was intending to channel the father of American Universalism, the Reverend John Murray (1741-1815) and that somewhere somehow an error has crept in.

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What this spiritual committee decided was that voting would not be necessary. All decisions, it seemed, could in the future be made by “a single leading, sound, central mind,” indeed, by the mind of the Reverend John M. Spear, Medium. “The leading mind gathers up, focalizes, concentrates the whole.” (This of course is what we in the 20th Century are familiar with as the *Führerprinzip*.) Spear proceeded to set up a new community of spiritualists in a city to be called Harmonia, in western New York, and to experiment with the creation of a perpetual motion machine. The machine was to be constructed in the Lynn home of the Hutchinson Family Singers, and the spirit of [Benjamin Franklin](#) guaranteed that, when constructed, it would work.



(The community of Harmonia would soon be charged with free love, and would disintegrate.)

THE FALLACY OF MOMENTISM: THIS STARRY UNIVERSE DOES NOT CONSIST OF A SEQUENCE OF MOMENTS. THAT IS A FIGMENT, ONE WE HAVE RECOURSE TO IN ORDER TO PRIVILEGE TIME OVER CHANGE, A PRIVILEGING THAT MAKES CHANGE SEEM UNREAL, DERIVATIVE, A MERE APPEARANCE. IN FACT IT IS CHANGE AND ONLY CHANGE WHICH WE EXPERIENCE AS REALITY, TIME BEING BY WAY OF RADICAL CONTRAST UNEXPERIENCED — A MERE INTELLECTUAL CONSTRUCT. THERE EXISTS NO SUCH THING AS A MOMENT. NO “INSTANT” HAS EVER FOR AN INSTANT EXISTED.

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→ December 6, Wednesday: All week, [Henry Thoreau](#)'s new lecture "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" had been being advertised in [The Liberator](#) and in all four of [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s major newspapers — the [Daily Post](#), [Daily Journal](#), [Bulletin](#), and [Daily Tribune](#).³²

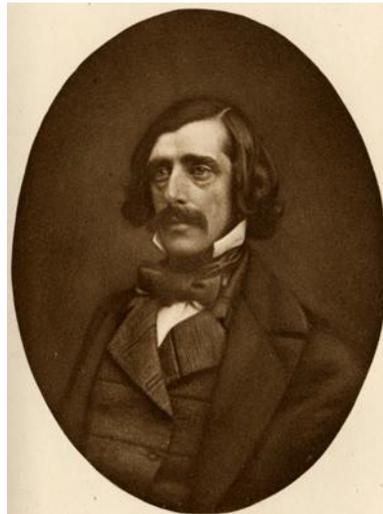


The [Daily Post](#) and the [Daily Tribune](#) had also run brief articles in which the visiting lecturer had been being described as

a young man of high ability, who built his house in the woods, and there lived five years [*sic*] for about \$30 a year, during which time he stored his mind with a vast amount of useful knowledge—setting an example for poor young men who thirst for learning, showing those who are determined to get a good education how they can have it by pursuing the right course.

[Providence [Daily Post](#), December 6, page 2, column 4. A slightly altered version of this sentence appeared in the Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December

On this day the lecturer arrived by train and, accompanied by Charles King Newcomb, visited the Reverend [Roger Williams](#)'s slate rock in the Blackstone estuary, and visited an old hilltop fort in Seekonk on the east side of the bay.



Beginning at 7:30 PM, at Railroad Hall, Thoreau delivered his lecture, or sermon, for the first time. Admission was 25 cents. Thoreau was impressed by the railroad depot in which he was lecturing, "its towers and great

32. [Liberator](#), December 1, page 3, column 2; Providence [Daily Post](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Bulletin](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Journal](#), December 5, page 3, column 1, and December 6, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December 6, page 3, column 5.



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length of brick.” The only indication of how the audience responded is Thoreau’s journal entry of that evening:

After lecturing twice this winter I feel that I am in danger of cheapening myself by trying to become a successful lecturer, i.e., to interest my audiences. I am disappointed to find that most that I am and value myself for is lost, or worse than lost, on my audience. I fail to get even the attention of the mass. I should suit them better if I suited myself less. I feel that the public demand an average man,—average thoughts and manners,—not originality, nor even absolute excellence. You cannot interest them except as you are like them and sympathize with them. I would rather that my audience come to me than that I should go to them, and so they be sifted; i.e., I would rather write books than lectures. That is fine, this coarse. To read to a promiscuous audience who are at your mercy the fine thoughts you solaced yourself with

THOREAU’S SERMON

[Various versions of “LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE”, variously titled, would be delivered:

- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on December 6, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on December 26, 1854 in the [New Bedford](#) Lyceum
- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on December 28, 1854 at the Athenaeum on [Nantucket Island](#)
- On January 4, 1855 in the [Worcester](#) Lyceum, as “The Connection between Man’s Employment and His Higher Life”
- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on February 14, 1855 in the [Concord](#) Lyceum
- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on November 16, 1856 for the [Eagleswood](#) community
- “Getting a Living” on December 18, 1856 in the vestry of the Congregational Church of Amherst, New Hampshire
- “LIFE MISSPENT” on Sunday morning, October 9, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)’s 28th Congregational Society in Boston Music Hall
- “LIFE MISSPENT” on Sunday, September 9, 1860 at Welles Hall in Lowell.]



December 6: To Providence to lecture I see thick ice and boys skating all the way to Providence, but know not when it froze, I have been so busy writing my lecture.



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1860

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Prospect Terrace was built. It would later be enlarged, and the statue of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) would be added in 1939.

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT



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1939

June: In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the story goes, the remains of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#), founding daddy DWM, that had originally been interred in the orchard in the rear of his homestead lot at Towne Street (now North Main Street), but had since been relocated into the tomb of a descendant in the North Burial Ground, were sealed within a bronze container and set into the base of the monument erected to his memory on Prospect Terrace.³³

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

1996

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Maryland Quakers](#) in England, 1659-1720" ([Maryland Historical Magazine](#) 91, pages 451-466).³⁴

The "Three Women in a Bathtub" statue of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, [Susan Brownell Anthony](#), and Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) was relocated from the Crypt of the Capitol building, a passageway in the basement, into the main Statuary Hall, which had had no depictions of human females, where it replaced a statue of the Reverend [Roger Williams](#).³⁵ All well and good for the white women, said the offwhite and nonwhite women, but: "Why is there no depiction in such alabaster marble of [Sojourner Truth](#)?" Responded a Capitol spokesperson:

"I'm sure we'll work this out somehow."



34. Ken's interest in Ireland and England took him to these two countries more than half a hundred times.

35. The statue of the Reverend was not in any sense a likeness, since nobody has left us a single clue as to what the Reverend [Williams](#) actually looked like.



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2009

October 20, Tuesday: An article about the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) in the [Providence Journal](#), by Paul Davis, Journal Staff Writer <pdavis@projo.com>:

RIC professor sees another, less heroic Roger Williams

PROVIDENCE – Since he first trudged through the woods to found Providence, Roger Williams has been variously called an American statesman, a canny trader and a champion of religious freedom. Julianne Jennings, a Native American, would like to add a few more labels to the list.

Indian fighter.

Slave trader.

"We have to stop the lying," says Jennings, 48, an author and adjunct professor of anthropology at Rhode Island College.

In her Non-Western Worlds Native Americans class, Jennings offers what she says is a "more balanced" view of New England's feel-good, Indian summer past. Her goal? "To decolonize America's classrooms."

As part of her effort, she's urging the state Department of Transportation to erect a plaque on South Main Street, one designed to give Rhode Islanders a new –and darker– picture of the state's founder.

Relying on 17th-Century letters and town hall records, Jennings says that Williams sent Indian prisoners from King Philip's War to the Caribbean, Portugal, Spain and Africa, where they were sold as slaves.

He was also a steely strategist during the bloody Pequot War, argues Jennings. At one point, she says, Williams told Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop to attack a Pequot fort in Mystic, Connecticut, at night, so that the "English, being armed, may enter their houses and do what execution they please."

In May 1637, a band of New England Colonists did just that. They set Pequot dwellings on fire and shot the natives as they fled from their homes, killing hundreds of Indian men, women and children.

Not everyone is comfortable with the new picture.

"It's certainly not the portrait we paint of Roger Williams," says Mary A. Channing, president of the Roger Williams Family Association.

"To call Williams an Indian hater is just plain wrong," adds Rhode Island author and historian J. Stanley Lemons. In fact, Williams was responsible for 40 years of peace with the Narragansett Indians and other tribes. "Rhode Island did not have an Indian problem" until a Colonial militia from Connecticut, Plymouth and Massachusetts attacked the Narragansetts during King Philip's War, he said. "Until then, Rhode Island was neutral."

Williams did participate in the sale of Indian captives, but the money was used by the Colonists to rebuild Providence, largely destroyed in the war. Although the Narragansetts did not harm Williams, they burned down his home, Lemons said. "He was a man of his time. There wasn't anyone who didn't believe in slavery"



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in the 1600s, he said. When he referred to Indians as "barbarians" and "savages," he was only using the language of the time.

"I've had people scream at me, 'How dare you do this!'" says Jennings, who is a member of the Cheroenhaka Nottoway tribe from Virginia.

She shrugs. In 2007, she received a RIC award for her work as an advocate against violence toward Native American women. Her Indian name is Strong Woman.

"I'm only providing a fuller picture of the man," she says. "It makes Roger Williams a more complex and interesting figure." As a young girl in South Providence and East Providence, Jennings went to Indian powwows and heard tribal stories from her father, part African-American and part-Nottoway and Eastern Pequot Indian.

One day a schoolteacher told Jennings that all the Indians in the region were dead. "I really had a problem growing up with that."

The Indians who survived the Colonial wars worked "side by side" with the region's Africans, and that closeness "eventually gave birth to communities of color, transforming the looks, language and lore of the Indians in this region," Jennings says.

Local clerks further obscured the identity of the Indians by classifying them as "Colored, Negro or Black" and even "White" on census records and birth certificates, a move that helped disenfranchise the Native people, she says.

Two centuries later, Jennings is fighting back.

In 2007, she changed her birth certificate classification from black to Native American, "not to reject my African-American heritage," but to recapture her Indian past, she says.

She also coauthored a book, *A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND: VOICES FROM PAST AND PRESENT*.

A year later, she got her master's degree from RIC – the first Native American to do so in RIC's anthropology department.

She credits the idea for a Roger Williams plaque to Richard Lobban, a former RIC department chairman and professor who now teaches at the Naval War College in Newport.

Lobban, she says, helped establish a Black Heritage Trail in Providence.

The trail is great, she says, "but where are the Native American plaques? When I walk through Providence, I see 70-foot statues of white colonizers looking down on me."

John Brown, the Narragansett Indian tribe's historic preservation officer, endorses the public sign "in principle." "Correcting the past can be painful," he says.



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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: April 17, 2016



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



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