

1. The town shall be free from all toll, only I desire one day's work of one man in a year from every family, but from those that have teams, and have much use of the bridge, one day's work of a man and team, and of those that have less use, half a day.

3. I shall join with any of the town, more or few, who will venture their labor with me for the gaining of meadow.

4. I promise, if it please God, that I gain meadow in equal value to the town's yearly help, I shall then release that.

5. I desire if it please God to be with me, to go through such a charge and trouble as will be to bring this to a settled way, and then suddenly to take me from hence, I desire that before another, my wife and children, if they desire it, may engage in my stead to these conditions.

6. If the town please to consent, I desire that one of yourselves be nominated, to join with the clerk to draw up the writing.

ROGER WILLIAMS.\*

### 1680. Governor Peleg Sanford.

Peleg Sanford (1632-c. 1700) was prominent in various official positions. He was general treasurer of the colony under the Royal Charter, from 1678-1681, and upon the death of the governor, was elected

\*The Providence town meeting, on May 9, 1662, passed the following vote: "Ordred that A bridge be made over Moshosick River by Tho: Olney jun<sup>r</sup> his Dwelling howse; John Browne, Edward Smith, Thomas Harris jun<sup>r</sup>, John Steere, Epenetus Olney, Tho. Arnold, Tho: Olney jun<sup>r</sup>, and George palmer, are appointed to git the Timber of the said Bridge, and to fframe it, and then to give no-

by the General Assembly to fill the vacant place, in 1680. He was governor of Rhode Island until 1683. He also served his colony as agent to England, and served the mother-country in the capacity of judge of the Admiralty.

The following "Answer of Rhode Island to the Inquiries of the Board of Trade," the original of which is in the British Public Record Office, is here reprinted from Arnold's *History of Rhode Island*, I. 488.

Whereas wee the Governor and Council of his Majesties Colloney of Rhoad Island and Providence Plantations received from your Lordships the Right Honorable, the Lords of his Majesties most Honorable Privy Councill, appointed a committee for Trade and Forreign Plantations certain heads of inquiry, subscribed by the honorable secretary, William Blathwayt, in obedience to your Lordships commands requiring an answer thereunto; wee the Governor and Council aforesaid accordinge to the best of our understandinge make answer as followeth, viz<sup>t</sup>.

To the first wee humbly answer that the Councells and Assemblies are stated accordinge to his Majesties appointment in his gracious letters Pattents, and our Courts of judicature are two in the yeare certain appointed accordinge to Charter, and are carried on by Judges and Jurors, accordinge to Law and Charter.

To the second, concerninge the court of Admiralty wee answer that wee have made provision to act accordinge to the Lawes of England as neare as the con-  
tice unto the Surveiors, to warn the inhabitantes together to mend the high wayes, and then to rear the said bridge; and this bridge to be done before the next hay tyme". Primitive as all this sounds, the skill to build a bridge over our river between May and "hay tyme" would have been appreciated by many of us in 1898.

An inkstand made from one of the timbers of the old Weybosset bridge is in the Museum of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

stitution of our place will beare havinge but little occasion thereofe.

To the third wee answer that accordinge to our Charter the Legislative power is seated in our Generall Assemblies, and the executive power of the government is in our Courts of Trialls settled accordinge to Charter.

To the fourth wee answer that our Lawes are made accordinge to the Charter not repugnant but agreeable to the Lawes of England.

To the fifth wee answer, that as for Horse wee have but few, but the chief of our Militia consists of ten companys of foote, being Trayned Bands under one Generall Commander, and their arms are firelockes.

To the sixth, wee answer that in the late Indian warres wee fortified ourselves against the Indians as necessity required, but as for fortification against a Forreign enemie, as yet wee have had no occasion but have made as good provision as at present wee are capacitated to doe.

To the seventh wee answer, that our coast is little frequented and not at all at this time with privateers or pirates.

To the eighth wee answer, as with respect to other Nations, that the French being seated at Canada and up the Bay of Funde are a very considerable number, as wee judge about two thousand, but as for the Indians, they are generally cut off by the late warr, that were inhabitinge our Colloney.

To the 9th wee answer, that as for Forreighners and Indians, we have no commerce with, but as for our neighbouringe English, wee have and shall endeavour to keepe a good correspondency with them.

To the 10th we answer as to the Boundaryes of our Land within our Patent that our Charter doth declare the same viz—[extracts the bounds from the charter, and adds, “the greatest part of it uncultivated, and is about a degree as we conceive.”]

To the 11th wee answer that the principal town for trade in our Colloney is the Towne of Newport, that the generality of our buildinge is of timber and generally small.

To the 12th, That wee have nine towns or divisions within our Colloney.

To the 13th, That wee have several good Harbors in the Colloney of very good depth and soundinge, navigable for any shippinge.

To the 14th, That the principall matters that are exported amongst us, is Horses and provisions, and the goods chiefly imported is a small quantity of Barbadoes goods for supply of our families.

To the 15th, That as for Salt Peter we know of none in this Colloney.

To the 16th, Wee answer that wee have severall men that deale in buyinge and sellinge although they cannot properly be called Merchants, and for Planters wee conceave there are about five hundred and about five hundred men besides.

To the 17th, that we have had few or none either of English, Scots, Irish or Forreighners, onely a few blakes imported.

To the 18th, That there may be of Whites and Blakes about two hundred borne in a yeare.

To the 19th, That for marriages we have about fifty in a yeare.

To the 20th, That for burrials this seven yeares last past accordinge to computation amounts to foure hundred fifty and five.

To the 21st, That as for Merchants wee have none, but the most of our Colloney live comfortably by improving the wilderness.

To the 22d, That wee have no shippinge belonginge to our Colloney but only a few sloopes.

To the 23d, that the great obstruction concerninge

trade is the want of Merchants and Men of considerable Estates amongst us.

To the 24th, wee answer that a fishing trade might prove very beneficiall provided accordinge to the former artickle there were men of considerable Estates amongst us and willing to propagate it.

To the 25th, That as for goodes exported and imported, which is very little, there is no Custome imposed.

To the 26th, wee answer that those people that goe under the denomination of Baptists and Quakers are the most that publicly congregate together, but there are others of divers persuasions and principles all which together with them enjoy their liberties accordinge to his Majesties gracious Charter to them granted, wherein all people in our Colloney are to enjoy their liberty of conscience provided their liberty extend not to licentiousnesse, but as for Papists, wee know of none amongst us.

To the 27th, That we leave every Man to walke as God shall persuade their hartes, and doe actively and passively yield obedience to the Civill Magistrate and doe not actively disturb the Civill peace and live peaceably in the Corporation as our Charter requires, and have liberty to frequent any meetings of worship for their better Instruction and information, but as for beggars and vagabonds wee have none amongst us; and as for lame and impotent persons there is a due course taken. This may further humbly informe your Lordships that our predecessors about forty years since left their native countrey and comfortable settlements there because they could not in their private opinions conform to the Lithurge, formes and ceremonies of the Church of England, and transported themselves and families over the Ocean seas to dwell in this remote wilderness, that they might enjoy their liberty in their opinions, which upon application to his gracious Majesty

after his happy restoration did of his bountifull goodnesse graunt us a Charter full of liberty of conscience, provided that the pretence of liberty extend not to licentiousnesse, in which said Charter there is liberty for any person that will at their charges build Churches and maintaine such as are called Ministers without the least molestation as well as others.

In behalf and with the consent of the Councill, signed  
PELEG SANFORD, Governor.

Dated Newport on Road Island  
the eighth of May 1680.

### 1685. Edward Randolph.

Randolph (c. 1640–c. 1700) was the famous agent sent to New England by the home government in 1676, with instructions to obtain information as to the resources of, and state of feeling in, the colonies. In 1678 he was appointed collector and surveyor of customs in New England, and, in 1685, was made secretary and registrar of the province of New England. He also held office for the Crown in New York, and, it is stated, in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Cotton Mather says, in his *Parentator* (1724) that Randolph died in Virginia in great poverty. The paper quoted is taken from Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, III. 175, 176.

#### *Articles of Misdemeanor against Rhode Island.*

To the Right Honorable the Lords of the Committee  
for Trade and Foreign Plantations.