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SECOND REPORT
OF THE
RECORD COMMISSIONERS

RELATIVE TO THE

EARLY TOWN RECORDS.

[Presented January 30, 1893.]

Providence (City of). Record Commission



J. A. & R. A. REID, CITY PRINTERS,
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REPORT.

TO THE HONORABLE THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF PROVIDENCE.

GENTLEMEN: The Record Commissioners in their first report to your honorable body presented a brief review of the action taken by the town from time to time towards the preservation of its ancient records, wherein they expressed themselves as follows:

“The earliest effort in this direction was made Aug. 12, 1678, when Daniel Abbott was elected town clerk, to succeed John Whipple, Jr. At this time Roger Williams and Daniel Abbott were appointed a committee ‘to take a list of what they received, and to give to ye sayd John Whipple a cleare and full discharge for the same.’ This action was taken shortly after the Indian war [1675-76] when the town suffered so severely from its effects, and when the records passed through a severe ordeal.”

When the Commissioners made that statement their investigation of original papers had not extended beyond those in the possession of the city; and the official list of books and papers, which is printed in Vol. 7, of the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, at page 103, was taken to be the earliest reference to the collective records of the town, an inference encouraged by the fact that no earlier list

was then known to be in existence. Since then, however, an examination by the Commissioners of the manuscripts in the custody of the Historical Society has resulted in most valuable and interesting revelations. In a volume of manuscripts, entitled "Papers Relating to Providence," at page 54, was found the record of a town meeting held April 27, 1676, at which it was "Voted y^e Towne Books & Records (saved by Gods merifull Providence (from fire & water) now brought by him from Newport) should be in his hand a while & fower Men) who had bene Towne Clarks:) Tho: Olny jun Shadrach Manton John Whiple jun^r, & John Smith Miller should view & search y^e Papers, what is wanting or lost, & make report to y^e Towne y^e next quarter day."

Whether the committee appointed under this resolution ever reported is not positively known, but it is presumed that it did not, for in the same volume, at page 28, is "A List of Papers deliuered to John Whiple jun^r chosen Towne Clark by Roger Willjams former Town Clark" dated "Pro: 4 4. 77 so cald" (being an abbreviation of Providence, June 4, 1677, for it will be remembered that at that time March was the first month of the year,) *post*, Appendix A, and on page 29 of the same volume appears a report made October 27, 1677, by a committee appointed on that same fourth day of June, the heading of which report best indicates the character and purpose of the committee making it. The report begins in this wise: "ffor as much as the Towne of prouidence did at a Towne meting of Election held upon the 4th. day of June 1677 order and Appoynt Capt Arthur ffenner and John Whipple Junr: to vewe all the Books and

writings which belong to y^e sd Towne now in the hands of the s^d ffenner, and to see in what Condito they are and to take a list of them, they both Signeing to the sayd list: The which we have done as ffolloweth, Viz^{lt} ”

The report, which is quite minute and is full of interest, together with the list just referred to in this connection, is printed in full, *post*, Appendix B.

There has also come to light in the same volume, page 88, a list of books and papers transferred June 6, 1758, from Nicholas Tillinghast, late town clerk, to James Angell, then town clerk, by a committee appointed for that purpose, and which list may be found *post*, Appendix C. These lists are valuable in tracing the various records now remaining, and in aiding to determine the time when those now missing were lost.

The first report presented by this Commission to your honorable body relative to the records of the Town of Providence, dealt particularly with the record books now remaining in the custody of the several departments of the city. In connection with these, however, the Commissioners stated: “In addition to the books of record there are stored in cupboards in a room in the City Hall a large number of papers and documents, tied up in bundles and partly classified, dating back as far as 1678. These papers contain information of great value, which would be gladly welcomed by our citizens, could they be privileged to examine their contents. Included in these papers are depositions, indentures, documents relating to the Revolutionary War, tax lists, a mass of records relating to the colonial monetary system, and many

other varieties of records too numerous to particularize." With the appropriation made by the City Council for the continuation of the printing and collecting the early records of Providence, the Commissioners have been enabled to devote some attention to these papers. It is to be regretted that attention could not have been turned in this direction years ago, for without doubt many valuable writings have been lost for lack of care.

These papers are the original documents concerning the business transacted by the town, and it is fortunate, considering the vicissitudes through which they have passed, that so many have been preserved. It is reasonable to believe that with almost the first gathering of the early settlers in town meeting there must have been more or less petitions, bills and other writings, presented for consideration; but from the founding of Providence in 1636, down to the year 1675, no papers or documents, other than record books, relating to town affairs are to be found in the possession of the city. It was in this latter year that the Indian War occurred, and the preservation of the record books and some few other writings during that troublous period was accomplished with difficulty. The earliest paper in date found by the Commissioners in the collection is a particularly important one, it bearing date during the year in which Staples says that Roger Williams was Town Clerk, and on it appears his signature in that capacity. It is the only writing of any character in the possession of the city, to which his name is attached officially as Town Clerk.

Very few papers bearing date prior to the middle

of the eighteenth century remain, and it is not until the years succeeding the Revolutionary War that any considerable number have been found.

Reference has already been made to the devastating effect of the Indian War of 1675 upon the records and documentary possessions of the town, and the danger to which they were exposed during the Revolution is evidenced by papers that have been preserved, wherein it appears that in December, 1776, the records were gathered together and transported to the home of Col. John Waterman, in Johnston, by Amos Chaffe, where they remained "near two years" before they were returned to the town. The removal to Johnston was made by order of the Governor when the British army occupied a portion of the colony. See *post*, Appendix D.

Previous to the erection of the market house in 1773, there was no regular depository for the records of the town, and they were kept in the store or house of the Town Clerk for the time being. It was not until the latter part of the eighteenth century that even a Town Clerk's office was provided by the town for the deposit of its records and the dispatch of its business.

Work on the market house was begun May 24, 1773, and upon its completion a Town Clerk's office was regularly established there, Theodore Foster, who was Town Clerk from 1775 to 1787, being the first occupant of the new quarters. In that building, as originally constructed and as subsequently altered, the records of town and city remained for more than a century, accumulating year by year; the older documents as crowded out by more recent ones being stored in the attic, sometimes packed away in cup-

boards and on shelves, and sometimes scattered loosely and carelessly about the floor, neglected, forgotten, and inaccessible for ready reference. In 1878, when the present City Hall was ready for occupancy, these old papers were gathered together in boxes and stored away in cupboards, in a room on the upper floor of that building.

The most cursory examination makes it painfully apparent that very many documents of inestimable value must have been lost or destroyed, and it is not much to be wondered at when one considers the usage they received and the neglect they suffered, an illustration of which is afforded by the fact that when the Commissioners assumed charge of them a muster roll, of Col. Israel Angell's Second Rhode Island Regiment in the Revolution, containing the names of upwards of two hundred and fifty soldiers, was found doing duty as a wrapper for a bundle of well-nigh useless papers.

The following extract from the Fourth Report of Robert T. Swan, Esq., Record Commissioner of Massachusetts, "on the Custody and Condition of the Public Records," is little less applicable in its general features if not in its details, to the towns and cities of Rhode Island than to those of our adjoining commonwealth. He says: "During the high price of paper in the late war many public papers were sent to the paper mills, some going directly from public offices. At that time an agent for persons in England made a tour of the towns within a radius of ten or fifteen miles of Fitchburg, and bought all the old papers which could be obtained from any source. These were carried to Fitchburg, and such as were wanted

were preserved and probably sent to England; the others, which aggregated many tons, were sent to the mills."

"In view of the fact that the selling of papers was so general, and that provision for the safety of the files had seldom been made, it is surprising to find in some cities and towns so many which have been preserved. Occasionally these are bundled up and labelled, and very occasionally kept in vaults; but more often they are in old chests or trunks, which contain also some old record books, and until very recently contained all. Among these papers are valuation lists, unrecorded reports of committees, maps, plans, etc., of a value which cannot be estimated until they are needed." * * * *

"Occasionally a town has realized the importance of its records and papers and has authorized some one to put them in order. In 1842, Lewis Bradford, who had been for many years town clerk of Plympton, by vote of the town, put in order all the records and papers which could be found. He made an index of them at the time, and in one book containing tax-lists made the following note, the concluding part of which holds good to-day: 'The Assessors might have sewed their pamphlets of Assessments with twine, and yearly fastened them together as in this Book; and in that way their assessments might have been preserved in good order, and been much less liable to embezzlement. Some town officers are Do for the Present persons, or Do littles and do so little that in after times some of their doings are rather unintelligible.'"

"A few towns are by special vote now having papers

examined and arranged, and have collected from private sources public papers of value." * * *

"The temptation to retain papers belonging in public custody, or to pilfer from the files in the public offices, is increased by the auction sales, where papers, which are the property of the State or of cities and towns, are boldly advertised and sold. At a sale in New York, in 1876, a record of births in Middleborough, from 1714 to 1730, and some of the records, of the treasurer of Hanover, were sold. Fifty-three pages of the record of the trial of Hugh Parsons of Springfield, on a charge of witchcraft, before Mr. Pyncheon, said to have been torn from the records, were sold at the same sale. A large collection of papers advertised as 'Official Papers of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts at the most interesting and important portion of its deliberations,— the period preceding Lexington and Bunker Hill,' were advertised to be sold in Boston, but were replevined by the Commonwealth. At the first sale of the Leffingwell collection of papers, recently held in Boston, the city of Boston purchased forty-four lots at a cost of nearly one thousand dollars, nearly every one of which was once the property of the city. At the second sale, fifty-two lots of papers belonging to the Commonwealth were sold. It may be that, to secure such papers that are out of proper custody, there is no remedy except to purchase them; but more stringent measures should be taken to prevent the loss of others, and the penalty attached to the offence should be sufficient to act as a menace."

It is not unreasonable to believe that these same conditions have surrounded the records of the town

of Providence, and that many valuable papers and documents have been abstracted from the files or have been destroyed as valueless. The following quotation from the "Magazine of New England History," for January, 1892, affords an apt illustration of the dangers from purloiners to which public records are subject:

"About twenty years ago, the officials of Gorham, Maine, discovered that the first volume, containing the earliest records, 1764 to 1815, was missing. Every effort was made by individual search, and the town offered a liberal reward for the return of the lost records, but without success. Recently the volume was returned. The simple fact that it came from Boston is all that is known of its recovery. With the missing volume came two others, containing records of marriages, births and deaths of the town from 1764 to 1822. It is not stated that the loss of the last-mentioned volume was known, but it certainly shows carelessness on the part of some one. It is hoped that all of our New England towns will provide means for printing their old records and thus prevent the loss which sooner or later overtakes uncared for papers of this class."

The papers still remaining are often of great value in ascertaining the circumstances which surround certain recorded acts of the town, and in many cases they are the only evidences found of important occurrences.

An interesting illustration of this in connection with the will of William Harris, is introduced here, to show the condition under which that instrument was admitted to probate, and as an example of the quaint and simple style of expression of the times.

The will of William Harris was preferred for probate January 24, 1681, [Will Book 1, page 23] and beyond the fact that "it being demanded of Andrew Harris whether he would accept of his exsecutorshipp & execute his fathers will according as his father appoynted in his will, the said Andrew his answer was, that he will not meddle at all with any of his ffathers estate as executor", there is no recorded evidence that the will awakened any more dissatisfaction than might be inferred from this refusal; but an original document, *post*, Appendix E, now just brought to light, gives an insight into the family relations and will be of interest to those who have made a study of this prominent figure in the early days of the colony.

The Commissioners having made a personal examination of these old papers referred to, decided to enter at once upon a systematic method of putting them in such order and condition as would insure their preservation and accessibility for practical use. They also caused the attic or upper part of the old city, or market, building to be thoroughly examined, to see if by any chance any papers or documents still remained, and in this work they were kindly assisted by Mr. Freeman P. Little, Secretary of the Board of Trade, which board are the present lessees of the building; but, beyond a few valueless scraps, nothing was found. In entering upon the work of repairing these papers and putting them in the best possible condition for use and preservation, the Commissioners were fortunate in having the assistance of John Noble, Esq., Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, and of William P. Upham,

Esq., attorney-at-law, of Newtonville, Massachusetts, under whose supervision upwards of 250,000 papers have been treated for the City of Boston, for which purpose the sum of thirty thousand dollars has been appropriated by that municipality.

These gentlemen made it possible for the Commissioners to secure the services of Miss Lizzie H. Goldthwaite, of Danvers, Massachusetts, an expert in the delicate work of repairing old documents, so that the Commissioners were enabled to embark in the work with all the knowledge and skill that years of experience had effected. It is proposed that the first series of papers shall include all from the earliest period down to the close of the year 1799, with the exception of records of Justices' Courts.

The papers are being arranged chronologically, and where more than one date appears the latest is invariably taken as the date of the paper. As they have been folded up and so remained for many years, a large portion of them are much worn in the creases and otherwise dilapidated. Each paper is carefully repaired, pressed, stamped as the property of the city, and finally mounted in large books made specially for the purpose, so that they can be most conveniently used by those having occasion to refer to them with the least possible wear or injury to the papers themselves. Unfortunately, valuable manuscripts present to many persons a peculiar temptation to pilfer them, and so the commissioners, in order to preserve these documents, have had a small and neat stamp made with which each paper is impressed, showing it to be the property of the city, and offering ready means of

identification. The stamp is so small as to cause no disfigurement, and it is believed will prove an effectual safeguard against larceny. At the end of each book is a certificate giving a general statement of the papers contained therein, signed by the Commissioners.

In the preparation of these papers thus far, the time of two assistants has been given entirely to this work, while that of one assistant has been devoted to it for about four months.

It is estimated that this series will contain upwards of 15,000 papers, and to make them as available as possible it is proposed to thoroughly index the volumes so that the contents thereof may be easily ascertainable, and already much progress has been made in this work.

That the collection includes papers of great value and throws light on many interesting events in the history of the town, will appear from the statement that among them are found papers relating to the yellow fever epidemic, the small-pox epidemics, the building of the market house, the binding of apprentices, enlistments and the purchase of arms, the building of fortifications and beacon, the payment of bounties during the Revolutionary War, and bills on account of the poor of the town.

In pursuing investigation relative to the ancient records, the Commissioners have examined several volumes of manuscripts in the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and have found many writings which doubtless were once the property of the town. Indeed a number of pages of the records of the Town Meetings are there preserved, which would fill gaps occurring in the volumes now

in the city's possession. These papers are a part of the "Foster Papers," so called, and "Rhode Island Manuscripts." Included in the Society's collections are three pages of the "First Book of the Town of Providence," two of which do not appear in the printed copy of that book, and one of which contains a brief reference to a meeting of the early settlers held "third month 13 die, 1639." These pages have been printed in the appendix to the second volume of the Early Records.

The Library Committee of the Historical Society has afforded all possible aid to the Commissioners in permitting them to have the use of the books of manuscripts for examination and for the purpose of making abstracts therefrom, in which work the Hon. Amos Perry, Secretary and Librarian of the Society, has materially assisted.

The student of Rhode Island history cannot fail to find new and interesting fields for investigation in these papers, as the manner in which they have been stored away for so many years has made the information contained in them hitherto unavailable.

As before stated, the series of papers which the Commissioners are now engaged in arranging, terminates with the year 1799, and includes but a small part of those still stored away in the cupboards on the upper floor of the City Hall, from which this first series is made up, and it would be wise to continue the work of classifying and arranging to all papers prior to the date of the incorporation of the city in 1832, since which time the records have been carefully kept. The city then will have all the books, papers and documents connected with its growth and

development permanently and satisfactorily preserved. It is difficult to determine how many papers are included in that period, but the economical expenditure of any reasonable amount for this purpose would be wise and judicious.

It is gratifying to know that an interest in the public records not only in this city but also throughout the whole state, has been stimulated by the work which the City Council has authorized and so liberally provided for, and the continuation of the work will place this city on an equal footing with the progressive cities of the country which have already seen the importance of similar work.

It is with pleasure that the Commissioners are able to report that Mr. Howard Redwood Guild, of this city, has deposited with the Commissioners as the property of the city, three hundred and sixty-five manuscripts bearing date from 1684 to 1828. These papers are of peculiar interest from the fact that many of them are original documents from which the Proprietors' Records, so called, were made up, which were destroyed a few years ago in the Aldrich House fire. Included, also, among this collection are many original documents relating to the lay-out of highways, returns of land laid out by the proprietors, returns and accounts of the Deputy Wagon Master General of the Providence Brigade at the battle and operations on Rhode Island, in 1778, warrants, depositions, marriage certificates, bonds, inventories, wills, letters, &c.

The whole forms a valuable addition to the documentary possessions of the municipality.

Since the completion of the first volume of the

printed records, the Commissioners have received many commendatory letters from societies and scholars emphasizing the value and importance of the work now in process by the city.

The second volume of the Early Records of the Town of Providence, herewith submitted, is one of peculiar interest. It contains the records of the earliest Town Meetings and Quarter Courts, and throws much light on the customs and conditions of the times. The "Progress of Laws," contained in this volume, presents the earlier forms of court proceedings in civil matters in this jurisdiction, and must prove of great interest to all students of jurisprudence. This volume has been known at different times as "The Book with Brass Clasps," "Short Old Book which once had brass Clasps," "The Towne Old Book," "The Short Old Book," "The Second Book Town of Providence," and "The Old Burnt Book," the latter name being derived from the fact that there are many of the "Leaues scorcht and partly burnt," from the effects of the fire which destroyed a part of the town in 1676. The earliest reference to the book, which has been found, is October, 1677, where it is stated that it now contains "70: leaves and one nott wrott upon, soe there is wanting: 65: leaves, the Book being much defaced." Its original arrangement has been lost, and the leaves as they are now arranged are confusing and misleading, it being extremely doubtful if the original arrangement of the book can ever be accurately determined. The Commissioners, however, have considered it a part of their duty to correct, as far as possible, the derangement of the pages which has occurred. It was

discovered, after careful examination, that the book had been used for two distinct purposes; first, for the entry of land transfers and for the recording of instruments, such as indentures, notice of stray horses, records of liquors received in the town, and other matters requiring to be recorded; and secondly for the minutes of Town Meetings, Courts of Election, and Quarter Courts. By making a table of the different dates on which these various meetings were held, and indicating the page on which the record was found, it became apparent that the leaves had, except in some few instances, been exactly reversed, and that when requiring rebinding instead of the pages being sewed or fastened to the covers by the edges, by which they now are, the opposite edges should have been used for that purpose.

This mistake was evidently committed before the transcript of 1800 was made as the same general confusion is found in that volume that appears in the original as now bound, with the exception that the copyist at that time attempted to correct the trouble on no settled plan, whereby his copy is more confused and misleading even than the original as now bound. The pages used for the first purpose or for the miscellaneous records, were placed in such order as the nature of the records would seem to justify and comprise the first forty pages. As these entries were not necessarily made in the order in which the instruments were executed, and as the time of recording them was not always noted by the recording officer, an apparent confusion of dates appears. The Commissioners believe that the pages as now arranged in the printed volume approach as near to the original order as can be effected.

Through the kindness of Mr. Alfred Metcalf, executor of the will of the late Henry J. Steere, the Commissioners have been able to include in the printed volume a fac-simile of the compact of the twenty-five acre purchasers, as it appears upon the pages of the original book. In addition to the general interest this fac-simile will excite on account of the importance of its subject matter, it is interesting as presenting a good example of the chirography of the times prevailing throughout this volume and which it has been necessary to interpret and transcribe.

By resolution of the City Council No. 351, approved July 1, 1892, an appropriation of six hundred dollars was allowed the Commissioners in addition to the appropriation made on April 2, 1892, which appropriation was made with the understanding that an additional number of the First Volume of the Early Records of Providence should be printed. In issuing the first volume, the amount of the appropriation at the disposal of the Commissioners would allow them to print but 500 copies. The great interest taken in the work, caused this number to become exhausted within two months of the time it was ready for distribution, and many persons who desired copies were unable to obtain them. With this additional appropriation, the Commissioners have printed 500 copies and have made the edition of the present volume to correspond with the first, namely, 1000 copies.

In this work which the Commissioners have accomplished, they have been ably assisted by Miss Huldah D. Sheldon who has prepared the copy used in printing, and has had general oversight of the office work; and by Miss A. Josephine Torrey, and Miss S. Fran-

ces Rathbun who have prepared the manuscripts for preservation.

The Commissioners herewith submit a statement of expenditures made since their last report.

FOR PRESERVING TOWN PAPERS.

Classifying, repairing and mounting "Providence Town Papers,"	\$611 00
C. W. Jenckes & Bro., paper boxes,	9 08
Eastern Advertising Co., envelopes,	6 10
R. L. Greene, paper for repairing,	17 40
Starkweather Williams & Co., scissors, brushes &c.,	6 26
Charles B. Botsford & Co., paper for repairing,	3 50
William Millen, cups, &c.,	63
A. J. Woodbury & Co., transparent paper,	10 00
L. H. Goldthwaite, special services,	60 00
W. H. Claffin & Co., drying paper,	11 70
Akerman Co., 50 books for papers,	105 80
A. A. White & Co., rubber stamp,	75
Anthony, Cowell & Co., two pine bureaus,	6 50
Library Bureau, cards for index,	12 60
Edward Field, miscellaneous expenses,	11 60
Akerman Co., binding old records,	11 40
Henry B. Bennett, case for card index,	39 69
Akerman Co., folios,	5 25
	<hr/>
	\$929 26

FOR PRINTING TOWN RECORDS.

Snow & Farnham for printing 1000 copies Vol. 2 and electrotype plates for same	\$765 60
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Akerman Co., for binding and wrapping Vol. 2,	\$181	25
Transcribing Vol. A, Third Book Town of Providence,	257	50
Clerical assistance,	190	00
G. H. Richter & Co., type writer supplies	75	
Snow & Farnham, printing,	11	70
Library Bureau, index cards,	7	40
Bugbee, Thompson Co., office supplies, . .	22	01
Akerman Co., wrapping Vol. 1, [500 copies]	1	75
G. H. Richter & Co., type writing machine,	30	00
Snow & Farnham, printing 500 copies 1st Vol.,	116	95
H. D. Sheldon, miscellaneous expenses, . .	4	64
Akerman Co., binding and wrapping 500 copies 1st Vol. [printed wrappers.] . . .	80	25
	<hr/>	
	\$1,669	80
Total amount for both purposes,	2,599	06
Balance from former report, \$29 09		
Amount of appropriation April 2, 1892,	1,500	00
Amount of appropriation July 1, 1892,	600	00
Amount of appropriation No- vember 16, 1892,	4,000	00
Amount of expenditures,	6,129	09
	<hr/>	
Balance on hand,	\$3,530	03

Respectfully submitted,

HORATIO ROGERS,
G. M. CARPENTER,
EDWARD FIELD,

Record Commissioners.

January 30, 1893.

APPENDIX A.

Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts. Papers
Relating to Providence. 1643-1793. Page 28.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Pro : 4 | A List of Papers deliuered to John |
| 4. 77 | Whiple jun ^r chosen Town Clark |
| ‘so cald’ | by Roger Willjams former Town
Clark. |
| 1 | Towne Meetings Votes & Orders |
| 2 | Committees Order about Jndjans |
| 3 | Generall Record about Probate of Wjlls |
| 4 | A Will for Resolued Waterman |
| 5 | A Will for Hen : Wright |
| 6 | H. Wrights Inventorie |
| 7 | Leonard Smiths Will |
| 8 | Proclamation agn st Bacon &c |
| 9 | A Will for James Olny |
| 10 | Apprizal of John Smiths Estate |
| 11 | Tho : Olny jun ^r his Letter to ye Council |
| 12 | Tho : Olny Sen ^r his dispose of J. Olnys Estate |
| 13 | A bond from Jos : Smith |
| 14 | Administration to Jos : Smith |
| 15 | James Olnys debtors |

[ENDORSEMENT]

An Coppie
what papors
m^r Roger
Williams
Delivered
vp to ye : Towne

APPENDIX B.

Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts. Papers
Relating to Providence 1643-1793. Page 29.

ffor as much as the Towne of prouidence did at a Towne meting of Election held upon the 4th. day of June 1677 order and Appoynt Capt Arthur ffenner and John Whipple Jvnr : to vewe all the Books and writings which belong to ye sd Towne now in the hands of the sd ffenner, and to see in what Condito they are and to take a list of them, they both Signeing to the sayd list : The which we have done as ffolloweth, Viz^{lt}

- Jt The Towne old Book, now Containeing of 70 : leaves and one nott wrott upon, soe there is wanting : 65 : leaves, the Book being much defaced,
- Jt The longe Book with parchments Covers Cheifely Consistin of records of Deedes is of Lands, now Containeing of : 69 : leaves, and 7 peces of leavs all wrott vpon. besides two leaves pinned to an other soe there is twenty leaves wanting. .
- Jt The new Book with Brass Clapes, Containeing of : 164 : pages wrott upon, besides fower leaves wrott upon which are not paged, as also : 18 : leaves wrott upon at that End of the Book where the Alphabett is : soe there is one leave wanting that wass wrott upon,
- Jt The little Book with parchment Covers wherein was the Entry of actions, is wanting :
- Jt papors of Gennerall Assemblys Acts to the number of : 23 : Each of them haveing the seale of the

Colloney Affixed, the seales being all of them in good Condition not defaced, Saveing only one, which is an Assemblys Acts bereing date may the 4th: 1669: soe that there is to the number of soe many wanting as haue come to the Towne since Jon : Whipple Jvnr delivered vp ye Book .

- Jt one papor of the Gene : Covnsells acts with the seale of the Collony afixed: is wanting: .
- Jt A papor of william Harris put into the Towne at a Towne meetng Janvarey the : 27th: 1670 Containng the account of a rate or Rates, is wantin and nott to be fovnd,
- Jt A Small papor Book Containing the Enrolements of wills:
- Jt Covrts Acts Sewed to geather, in the manner of 2th: Books, as also Severall Courts acts made vp in rovles to the nvmer of 18, with noe seales affixed, there being other Covrts acts Sewed up in the manner of a Book which is wanting, .
- Jt Severall Coppies of william ffeilds : and william Carpenters papors,
- Jt A Deed of Gift from Richard waterman to his Grand Children the Children of Resolved waterman, Deceased,
- Jt The will and Inventory of Zachary Roads Deceased, wanting.
- Jt The Towne Covnsells will vpon the Esstate of Samvell Comstock : deceased is wanting .
- Jt The Towne Covnsells will and Inventory upon the Esstate of George Rikerds, is wanting .
- Jt The Bond from George Kindrick, to the Towne Covnsell of providence, is wanting . .
- Jt The will and Inventory of william ffeild, Deceased: is wanting

- Jt The Acts of the Towne Covnsell the: 4th: of
Aprill: 1670: is wanting,
- Jt The letter of Administration from the Towne
Counsell to mary Mawrey with Six seales
affixed, is wanting.
- Jt The Bond from Mary Mawrey to the Towne
Covnsell bearing date the 9th: day of September:
j669: with her Seale affixed, is wanting
- Jt The old Deede called the Towne Evidence
- Jt The Deed of Confirmeation from Cussvckqunsh,
and Nenekelah with Richard Smith junr tesste-
mony pinned there to.
- Jt The Deed of Confirmation from SCattupp, &
Quéquágonvett,
- Jt The Deed of Confirmation from Cavjanaquant,
being also Subscribed Aiaquaomitt. The 3th:
Deedes of Confirmation being all indorssed with
tesstemonys on the Back Sides,
- Jt The Deed in parchment from mr Roger williams
to the Towne of prouidence,
- Jt Eleaven papors from severall Jndians of Resigne-
ments: of Claimes, as from wamsittow, Alias
Alexander, phillip: woottiation, wessavmavge,
Antionitt, Tom of wachamokett, and others, all
wanting
- Jt The will & Jnventorey of Joshva ffoote Deceased,
is wanting
- Jt The Jnventory of the Esstate of John Clawson,
As also an accovnt in a papor by Thomas olney
senr of the dissposition of John Clawsons goods ;
- Jt The Bond of Joshva winsor, & James Ashton,
As also the Award of Arbetration upon a deffer-
ance betwene ye sd winsor, and James Ashton,
- Jt The Jndenture of Daniell Comstock ;

Jt As also severall other papor, the rest of the Towne Records nott, perticvlerized, [now remaining] with a linning Bagg in which they are in Closed,

Jt memor^{ll}
 a papor signed william Harris beareing date ye 15th: of Decemr : 1669 : Jndorssed on ye back sid, A protest against Dexters plaister, is wanting The will and Jnventory of Thomas walling [deceased, wanting,] providence
 october the Arthur ffenner
 : 27th : 1677 : John Whipple Junr :

APPENDIX C.

Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts. Papers Relating to Providence 1643-1793. Page 88.

A List of Books of Records, & Papers of public Concerns, Received of Mr Nicholas Tillinghast late Town Clerk of the Town of Providence, And delivered to Mr James Angell the present Town Clerk, of s^d Town by Messrs Dan^l Abbott, Elisha Brown, & George Taylor, a Com^{ttee} appointed for that Purpose, at a Town Meeting held in s^d Providence, on the 6th Day of June A D: 1758 viz^t

Town old Book with many Leaves Schorchd & partly burnd'

The long Book Parchment Cover, many Leaves torn, & partly lost

The Book with Brass Clasps, some Leaves torn out
some Defaced

The Book of Land Evidences No 1

The Book of d^o 2

The Book of d^o 3

The Book of d^o 4

The Book of d^o 5

The Book of d^o 6

The Book of d^o 7

The Book of d^o 8

The Book of d^o 9

The Book of d^o 10

The small Book d^o with painted Cover 10

The Book of d^o 11

The Book of d^o 12

The Book of d^o 13

The Book of d^o 14

The Book of d^o 15

Book with a blue Paper Cover some what Shattered
began 1692

Book of Town Acts & Orders with a Parchment Cover

Two Schedules of Town Affairs somewhat Shattered

Two Books, & Shattered Schedule of Town Council
Affairs

A small Stiled Schedule of Town Meeting Affairs began
1717 / 8

Book for registering Marriages & Births

Town Meeting Book with a Cloth Cover began 1725

Two Colony Law Books & a printed Schedule

The Town Council Book No 2

The Town Council Book 3

The Town Council Book 4

The Town Council Book 5

The Town Council Book 6

Small Schedule covered with blue Paper of Town Council
Affairs

Book for Proceeding at Tⁿ Meetings to y^e year 1755
Parchment Cover

Plan of the House Lotts at Patuxit Made 1752

Plan of Westconaug Lands

Plan & Papers relating to the New Street in Providence

Plan & Papers of Patuxit Highway

Plan of Highway across Waterman's Marsh

Plan of Highway from Power's Lane Southward

Plan of Highway at Burrow's Bridge & Papers Appendent

Plan of Thatch bed of Joseph Brown & Papers relating

Plan of the Road to Patuxit

Return of a Highway, Potter's & Baker's

Returns of a Landing Place at Ruttenburge's

Deed of Thomas Patey & Papers thereto appertaining

Deed of Land where the Courthouse & Goal Stand

Deed of Highway & Training Field

Schedules of Acts of Assembly to the Year 1758

11 : Bundles of Copies of Mortgage Deed of Sundry
Banks

17 : Bundles do of the Eighth & Ninth Banks

5 : Bags of old Papers

Book for Registering Stray Cattle &c

Eight Rate Bills

Plan of Lotts laid in Will^m Tillinghast's Land

Deeds & Papers of Solomon Pain & Jos : Hopkins

Affairs

4 : Plans of Highways vizt : Stamper's Hill &c Bundled

3 : Bundles of Letters of Administration & relative Bonds

1 : D^o of Accounts of Administration

1 : do of Guardianship

2 do Indentures

1 : do Licence Bonds

1 : do Certificates from Several Town

Six Bundles of Mixed Papers

Twenty Eight Deeds not recorded

in Providence the Tenth Day of June A. D: 1758
 Received of Mess^{rs} Daniel Abbott, Elisha Brown &
 George Taylor, the Com^{tee} first aforementioned, all the Books
 & Papers enumerated & entered on the on the foregoing
 Pages of this Sheet
 As Witness my Hand

James Angell Town Clerk

APPENDIX D.

Providence Town Papers.

VOLUME 3, PAGE 127. No. 1230.

At a Town Meeting of the Town of Providence held on
 the 16:th Day of May AD 1777

It was Voted and Ordered that Twelve Shillings lawful
 Money be paid to Amos Chaffee of Providence out of the
 Town Treasury for removing the Town Records to
 Johnston by Warrant from the Governor . . . upon the
 Alarm in December last

Witness Theodore Foster Town Clerk
 To Mr. James Arnold Town Treasurer

Providence Town Papers.

VOLUME 3, PAGE 128. No 1231.

The Town of Providence debt

To Carting a Load of the Records of Inf^r Court & the
 Records of this Town from the Town to Col John
 Watermans in Johnstone about six or Seven Miles £1-16-0

Providence Dec.^{mr} ye 9th Ad 1776 { Amos Chaffe

Voted that 12/ out of the Town Treasury
 of the above May. 16. 177

Providence Town Papers.

VOLUME 4, PAGE 104. No. 1620.

The Town of Providence

1779	To John Waterman	Dr
Feb'y 12 th	To my Time and Service in Re-	} £7,, 10,, 0
	moving the Town Records from Providence	
	to My House : keeping the Records at my	
	House near Two Years : and bringing them	
	Back to Providence	

John Waterman Ju

At a Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Providence
on the 1st Day of March A. D. 1779

Resolved That Seven Pounds and Ten Shillings the
Amount of the above Account be paid to the said John
Waterman and the Town Treasurer is Requested to pay the
same accordingly

Witness Theodore Foster, Town Clerk

£7 . . 10 . . 0

To James Arnold Esq. }
Town Treasurer }

[ENDORSEMENT]

March 10 1779 Rec^d the within
John Waterman Jr

APPENDIX E.

Providence Town Papers.

VOLUME I, PAGE 8. No. 14.

vpon ye 10th day of Januarey in ye yeare 1681 Andrew
Harris Coming to ye Dwell place of Susanna Harris Tho :

Olney Junr: then by order of ye said Sussana Harris, & Howlong Harris did on both there behalves inform the said Andrew Harris that his Mother, to witt the Saide Susanna Harris had from m^r Brinley Received his ffather [to witt] william Harris his will & therefore had sent for him that so he might heare ye Same Read & also as hee was a Joynt Exsecutor with them that they joyntly together might Endeavour to settle the Estate, his answer was, that hee had heard y^t before now, & knew what was in it, & he Should heare it againe on time or another lett them doe what ye Could. It was replye^d unto him that there was nobody did obstruct him now but did Earnestly desire that he that he would now heare it read againe; the Super Scription being then Read unto him, which was, that his Mother & his sister howlong Should Keepe ye will until it Could be Comitted to m^r Brinley, his answer was lett them Keepe them if ye will & so turned away & went out of doors Refuesing to heare it further, he then was desired as hee was a Joynt Exsecutor with his mother & Sister to joyne with them & take an Enventory of ye Estate, his ans: was that he would not Medle with it nor have any thing to doe with them in y^t Matter & So he sayd he bid them farwell, gitting up upon his horse Rod away

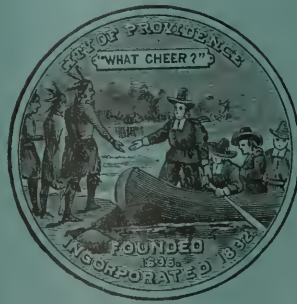
1893.]

CITY DOCUMENT.

[No. 13.]

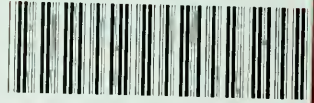
SECOND REPORT
OF THE
RECORD COMMISSIONERS
RELATIVE TO THE
EARLY TOWN RECORDS.

[Presented January 30, 1893.]



J. A. & R. A. REID, CITY PRINTERS,
Dyer and Pine Streets.
1893.

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