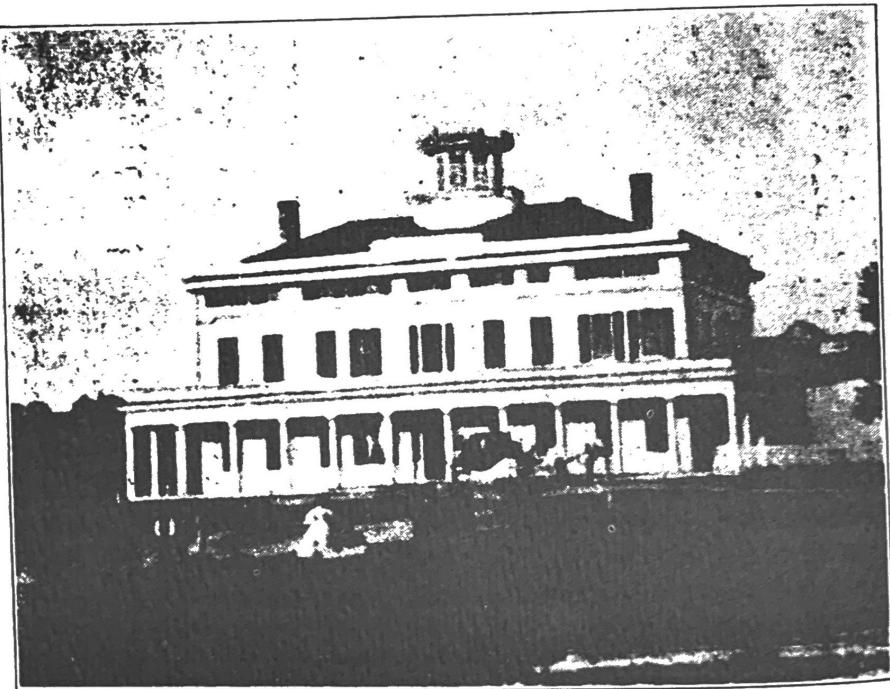


Portsmouth; a tract of land extending from the Quequechan in Fall River to the Seconnet land; in other words: to the Little Compton line. Excepted from this purchase were the Nannaquaket grant to Richard Morris, the Punkateest allotments to Plymouth townsmen, and the tracts which had been given to the Indian War heroes.

The purchasers organized as the Proprietors of Pocasset, but the Proprietors of Punkateest made up a separate organization and they comprised the same individuals with the addition of William Bradford, Thomas Clark, and John Williams of Plymouth, John Cook of Portsmouth and William Brown. The line which divided these two territories extended from the mouth of Sepowet Creek in a north, north-easterly direction across the south end of Sandy Pond.

Nathaniel Thomas was designated as surveyor for the Proprietors and the first division of lands was in the form of thirty great lots and thirty house lots in the Pocasset Purchase. North of the Pocasset Purchase lay the earlier Freeman's Purchase or Freetown. An eight rod highway about a mile from the shore was established through the length of the territory and another nearer the shore to traverse the great lots. The eight rod way has never been made available except in sections such as Plymouth Avenue in Fall River, the Fish Road, and the Old Highway in the south part of the town. The great lots extended from the bay to the eight rod way



LAWTON HOUSE

except where Nannaquaket intervened. Beginning at the north, the land along the Fall River was reserved for a time in common, and from thence south the lines were run for twenty three great lots and then a lot for the minister of the town when such a function should be established. Between the 12th and 13th lots a four rod highway led back from the shore, which now forms the state line, and is named State Avenue.

South of the minister's lot was thrown out a four rod way which is marked by Evans Avenue, and also a four rod way from the foot of the hill along the shore to Sining Flesh River. Next south of Evans Avenue was a ferry lot and the ferry there was at that time known as Durfee's Ferry. From this ferry lot on to the head of Quaket Pond were laid thirty house lots running about eighty rods from the shore highway, between which and the eight rod way, the gore of land was reserved for later distribution. On the south of the 17th house lot a five rod way made what is now Lawton Avenue, and then came another reservation at the foot of which was another ferry lot at what they called Sanford's Ferry. Behind the ferry lot at Sanford's Ferry a tract was designed to be used as a meeting house site and burial ground.

Many years afterward the Town Hall was erected where the Proprietors intended to put their house of worship.

Thirteen more house lots extended to Sining Flesh River and seven more great lots carried the survey to the Punkateest Purchase. Between the 28th and 29th great lots a three rod way located Sepowet Avenue.

The great lots and the house lots were assigned by lot to the several Proprietors according to their respective shares, of which Edward Gray held nine, Nathaniel Thomas and William Manchester five each, Christopher Almy three and three quarters, Job Almy, three and one quarter, Daniel Wilcox, two, and Benjamin Church and Thomas Waite one each. The surveyors proceeded to cut into sections, divide and make allotment of the remaining portions of their purchase, a process which took years to complete. Meanwhile the real estate business started in earnest as land was sold or traded and new names were entered upon the records, and the membership of the Proprietors' organization was constantly changing. Some of the original purchasers never made their residence in the town, but realized on their holdings and looked elsewhere for new opportunities to speculate in unoccupied territory.

The proprietors were compelled for some time to be vigilant in guarding their rights in their newly acquired areas. In October 1682, James Case and Thomas Butts were cited by the Court of New Plymouth, "to give reason of their being there and contineuance at Punkateest without liberty first obtained soe to doe from the Govment."

It was in 1682 that Seconnet was incorporated as the Town of Little Compton by the Colony Court, and in the following year Freetown became a township. Pocasset and Punkateest were assigned to the "constablerick" of Little Compton, and Captain Benjamin Church was appointed magistrate of the combined "constablerick".

In 1685 the Plymouth Colony was divided into three counties, Plymouth, Barnstable and Bristol, and a Court and Sheriff for this region were established at the county seat at Bristol. Six years later a more important change in the government occurred. By the royal order of the joint sovereigns, William and Mary, the Colony of New Plymouth ended its existence, and was merged with Massachusetts as the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The transfer of Colonial authority from Plymouth to Boston unquestionably spelled trouble in Pocasset. By the terms of King Charles' charter of 1663, Rhode Island claimed that her boundary lay three miles east of Narragansett Bay and the Seconnet River, but the claim of Plymcuth to the strip was decided by the Board of Trade in London to have priority over the Rhode Island claim. Some leading Rhode Islanders were loth to give up the fight and foremost among these was Capt. Christopher Almy, one of the Proprietors of Pocasset. The freemen who had settled in Pocasset up to this time were nearly all the sons of Portsmouth families and their sympathies were naturally with their native Colony. Furthermore there was a wide difference between the governmental systems and policies of the two colonies. Following the Andros regime, Rhode Island had been allowed to resume its democratic system under officials chosen by the freemen, but Massachusetts was ruled by Governors appointed by the Crown, an arrangement by no means popular about Boston Bay and far less acceptable to the citizens who were reared in the free atmosphere of the Island.

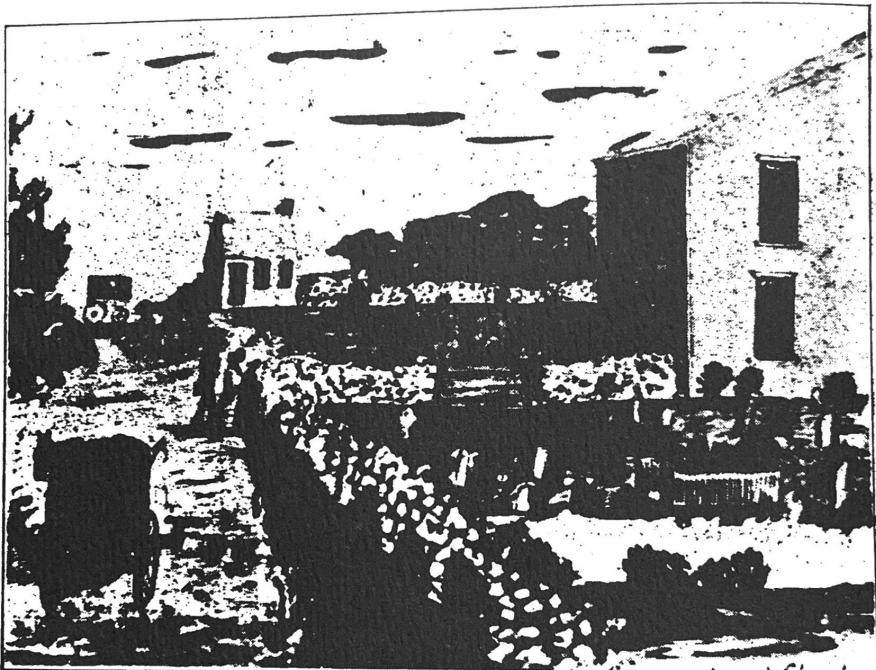
The Royal Governor was not the only thorn which nettled, but the laws of Massachusetts required each community to support the Orthodox Church and to raise by taxation funds for the support of a "learned minister" of this persuasion. The "Orthodox Church" was lacking adherents on Rhode Island, which had become a refuge for Baptists, Anabaptists and Quakers who were not wanted elsewhere, and it may be noted that among the newcomers at Pocasset were two strong Quakers who were destined to have commanding influence in the affairs of Tiverton: Joseph Wanton and Daniel Howland. It was the repugnance to taxation which led the American Colonies to revolt against the rule of Britain. In Pocasset it was the same aversion which almost brought the new settlers to open rebellion in 1692 and this issue ruffled and rankled Tiverton for the next fifty years.

The collectors of taxes began to find their commissions difficult. It was not only in Pocasset, but in the Seconnet end of Little Compton, in Dartmouth and other towns that people refused to pay or claimed they did not have the wherewithal. The officers would thereupon seize any property they could move in order to satisfy the assessment. One remonstrator claimed that "the Government of the Province had taken the very linen off the hedges and sold good shirts for two shillings apiece, and that poor people were fain to sift their meal to pay their rates and eat the bran for bread."

When it was attempted to collect a levy to pay the expenses of the expedition against the French in King William's war, many resisted and William Briggs was

arrested. A gang of sympathizers set upon the constable and released the prisoner. About this time Daniel Wilcox and David Lake of Nomquid, and Henry Head of Seconnet petitioned the Rhode Island Assembly to run the eastern boundary of Rhode Island according to the Charter of 1665. The Assembly accepted the petition and passed an order to that effect. Governor Easton notified Governor Sir William Phipps at Boston of the intention under date of October, 26, 1692. Governor Phipps was irate and promptly warned the Rhode Island government not to make the attempt. He also ordered a messenger to be sent to Little Compton to take into custody, Christopher Almy, Daniel Wilcox and Henry Head, they being charged with leading the insurrection which delivered William Briggs from the hands of the law. This attempt proved fruitless, and Capt. Samuel Gookin was ordered to take a sufficient force to Little Compton and bring in the offenders.

Captain Gookin started with twenty men, recruited eight more at Bridgewater, and tried to raise more troops at Taunton. The Taunton men were somewhat



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, LAKE ROAD

unwilling to join the expedition, but eighteen more were recruited at length. When the company reached Howland's Ferry, an alarm was raised by two shots on the Portsmouth side with the result that a large number of the Islanders rallied and came across to be ready to assist their rebellious friends. Capt. Gookin and his men quartered that night at Constable Daniel Eaton's place, and next morning learned that the insurgents had assembled in force at the house of Daniel Wilcox of Nomquid. Before he could reach the place, Wilcox' house was filled with armed men and a still larger number were posted about behind walls and hedges. The situation had assumed a serious phase indeed, and to make it worse for Gookin, he detected a feeling of lukewarmness among his own men. This coupled with the fact that they were poorly armed, some having empty guns and no ammunition, convinced him that he could not win the day by fighting. He however drew up his men and in a loud voice under a window read his warrant for the arrest of the men before named. The only effect was a torrent of jeers from the house. Captain Benjamin Church and his brother Justice Joseph Church, who did not sympathize with the resistance, used their persuasive powers to induce the crowd to disperse, but their efforts were without avail. Capt. Gookin ordered the door broken in with a large stone, and at this violent act Thomas Cook thrust his gun from a window, but thought better of it and did not fire. Finally the Captain, realizing that his mission could not be carried out without grave danger of bloodshed, ordered a retreat and started on the return to Boston in great discomfiture.

Although the men of Pocasset were left the victors of the day, they were soon

doomed to disappointment. Captain Almy pressed the case of the boundary line with the Rhode Island assembly and proposed sending an agent to London to reopen the matter. The Assembly however backed away from their former position and in effect voted to discountenance the rebellion. The Massachusetts government having proffered the olive branch by a proclamation of amnesty to all offenders except Almy, Wilcox, Head and Briggs, most of them gave up and accepted the Governor's terms. William Briggs also surrendered and paid his fine. Capt. Almy, being a resident of Portsmouth was out of reach of the Boston authorities, but Head and Wilcox were haled before the court at Bristol in August 1693, and fined 150 pounds each. They were ordered to be taken to the gaol at Boston till the fines be paid, but on the way Wilcox made his escape from the constables and fled into Rhode Island, where he remained for eight years in exile from his family. Massachusetts constantly pressed the Rhode Island government for his extradition, and at one time Lord Belloncourt, the successor of Sir William Phipps, made a trip to Newport and severely chided the Governor and Council for harboring an outlaw. At this session Wilcox bodily sat as a spectator, apparently enjoying the fruitless efforts of the Noble Viceroy, but he could not hold out indefinitely, and in 1701 on his humble petition, stating that he was poor and that his wife was sick at Tiverton, he was allowed to return to his home on conditions. These conditions stipulated the cession of 160 acres of his land in Tiverton and one thirtieth share in the Proprietors undivided land which extended back to Lake Quicucus. Subsequently the Province traded the Tiverton land with Col. Benjamin Church for a tract lying east of the North Watuppa Pond and on this tract established the well known Copicut Indian Reservation.

There was already brewing in Pocasset an agitation for separation from Little Compton, and the flame was fanned by the incident at Daniel Wilcox'. Residents of the north end, some of whom were located near the Fall River, complained of the inconvenience of travelling twelve miles to Little Compton. Seconnet was to a lesser degree affected by the Rhode Island influences, there being quite a number of Plymouth people in that section who were affiliated with the Pilgrim or Orthodox Church. In a report to the Secretary at Boston on Dec. 15, 1692, Major Walley, of Bristol, suggested that Pocasset should be set off from Little Compton, and declared: "the Sober part of Little Compton earnestly desired yt Pocasset & pukatees that is added to yt Constablerick may be taken off as a Town by themselves & they are in hopes when they are without them they shall obtain a minister, for the others vote with them on all occasions & proves a great hinderance to any thing yt is good." Apparently sentiment at both ends was in harmony on the question of the division of the town.

The climax of this movement came about when the General Court on June 14, 1695 passed the following act:

"Whereas there is a certain tract or tracts of land, called by the Indians Pocasset and Puncateese, scituate, lying and being between the bounds of Little Compton and Freetown, within the county of Bristol, bordering upon the sea or salt water towards the west, extending along the shore between the towns aforesaid, about twelve miles northerly and southerly, and from the salt water toward the east into the country about four miles till it meet with Dartmouth line, which land belongs to sundry persons, the proprietors thereof, and was put under the constablerick of Little Compton, aforesaid: who upon their petition to this court are reduced to their former state: now forasmuch as there are already a competent number of inhabitants, and a good quantity of land convenient for a township—

"Be it therefore enacted by the Governor, Council and Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same is enacted.

"(Sect. 1.) That henceforth the said tract or tracts of land, as now bounded by the limits and bounds of Little Compton, Freetown and Dartmouth aforesaid, is and shall be a township, and called by the name of Tiverton: and shall have and enjoy all such immunities, privileges and powers as generally other towns within this province have and do enjoy: and Joseph Palmer, the late constable, is hereby required, forthwith to warne the inhabitants of the said town to meet together to choose selectmen, constables and other town officers to carry on and manage their prudential affairs in an orderly way, as the law directs, until the next annual day of election for town officers: and the said inhabitants are enjoyned accordingly to assemble and attend the works.

"And it is further declared.

"(Sect. 2.) That the constable or constables of said Tiverton shall collect all such arrears of publick taxes as were assessed and proportioned upon the inhabitants of said town by the selectmen of Little Compton whilst they were annexed to that town, according to the lists then made, which the said selectmen are to furnish them with,

and the treasurer is ordered to issue out this warrant to the constable or constables of said Tiverton for collecting the same accordingly."

Pursuant to this action of the General Court the freemen were assembled at the residence and inn of Daniel Howland, where a town meeting was organized, officials duly elected and Tiverton became a political entity. Twenty-seven names were recorded as the original residents of the new township, the name of which was taken from that of an old town in Devonshire. Let us run over this list of the freemen and see who they were and where they originated.

The first name on the roster is that of Major Benjamin Church, the famous soldier who gained such great distinction in the war with King Philip, and later rendered valuable service against the French and Indians of the North. He was son of Richard Church, who came to Boston with Governor Winthrop and afterward located at Plymouth. His residence at Tiverton was not of long duration, and after sojourning in Freetown and at Bristol, his last years were spent in Little Compton, where he had established the first home there previous to his campaigns against the Indians. His interests in Tiverton were somewhat extensive, and he anticipated the development of the settlement by securing choice sites on the streams which offered the opportunities of power to drive the mill wheels of the pioneer industries. He was one of the original Proprietors.

Edward Gray, who had the greatest real estate holdings, was son of another



HOWLAND'S FERRY VILLAGE

Proprietor, Edward Gray of Plymouth. The senior Gray did not live to see the organization of the town, but died in June 1681, and was buried on Burial Hill in Plymouth, where his grave is marked by the oldest lettered tombstone in that famous cemetery of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Capt. Christopher Almy of Portsmouth, Pocasset Proprietor, was represented in Tiverton by two sons, Christopher and William Almy. As already noted, the captain was an ardent supporter of the proposition to include Tiverton and Little Compton in Rhode Island jurisdiction. He was a prominent figure in Rhode Island affairs and was concerned not only with the eastern boundary but also with the line on the other side. At the time when Tiverton was being born, Captain Almy was in England, having been delegated to represent Rhode Island's appeal to Queen Anne in the case of a controversy with Connecticut over their limits and bounds.

Thomas Waitt was one of the Proprietors who had located his home upon his land, and so was William Manchester. He was a pioneer settler living in Punkateest before the Pocasset Purchase. His two brothers Stephen and Job were original Tiverton inhabitants and also Fobes Manchester, who was probably a cousin of the three brothers.

The only other original Proprietor in the list was Daniel Wilcox and he was an exile from his home as has been related. It has also been noted that he was con-

cerned in the enterprise of the first ferry across the Seconnet River. Originally from Portsmouth, he had married the daughter of John Cook of the Mayflower and lived in Dartmouth for some years, locating at Nomquid, or Tiverton Four Corners, before the Purchase. Capt. Church said of him that he "well understood the Indian language."

John Cook, Jr., not related to the Mayflower Cooks, was son of John Cook of Portsmouth, Proprietor in Punkateest and his location was in Punkateest Neck. In the north end of the town in what is now Fall River was another John Cook, a cousin of John Cook, Jr. In that area he acquired considerable land and erected what was said to be the finest house in town. From him was named Cook Pond, otherwise known as Laurel Lake.

In the same locality about two and a half miles south of the Fall River lived Richard Borden. He was cousin to John Cook last named, and was son of John Borden of Portsmouth who built the mill and forge on the Quequechan and laid the foundations of the industrial center of the city of Fall River.

Gershom Wodell was a grandson of William Wodell of Portsmouth who was one of the independent spirits who had been once haled before the court in Boston charged with "heresy and sedition." Gershom evidenced something of an inherited disposition, as will be seen later.

Joseph Tallman was son of Peter Tallman of Portsmouth. He was probably the only resident not of pure English blood. Peter Tallman was a German who came out to Barbados Island and there married an English girl before moving on to Rhode Island. The story of Peter's controversy with King Philip and his unlucky appeal to the Plymouth authorities has been previously related.

David Lake, who lived at the south end and received his land as a reward for his service in the war, was selected as the first town clerk when the town was organized. He was another who came out of Portsmouth where he was a member of a horse troop before the war.

Amos Sheffield, son of Ichabod Sheffield of Portsmouth and Newport served as town clerk at a later period. He was also the village blacksmith.

Joseph Wanton was a citizen who was to exercise a large influence upon the affairs of Tiverton. He came from Scituate in the Plymouth Colony about 1688 and acquired property facing the north end of Quaket Pond. At the Gut of Nanna-quaket he built a warehouse and dock and carried on an extensive business in ship-building. His voice prevailed in the town meetings, and the people were wont to look to Joseph Wanton as their chief counsellor in matters of public interest and importance. He was a member of the sect of Quakers and when a Society of that persuasion was founded in Tiverton, he was the accepted leader and principal preacher. Other Wantons of the same family located in Newport, and during the period in which Tiverton was a township of Massachusetts, two of his brothers served as Governors of Rhode Island. Then in 1745 Gideon Wanton, son of Joseph, native of Tiverton but removed to Newport, became Governor. Still later almost at the beginning of the Revolution, Joseph Wanton, nephew of the Tiverton Joseph assumed the same office, but he was cool toward the popular feeling of revolt, and eventually in November 1775 was deposed as a Tory.

Daniel Howland, the innkeeper and proprietor of Howland's Ferry was son of Zoeth Howland of Dartmouth who was barbarously murdered by the Indians. He was prominent in town affairs and for the first twenty years his centrally located residence was the official place of assembly for the regularly appointed town meetings. He was also a Quaker.

The following named freemen were all sons of Portsmouth who had made Tiverton their home: John Pearce, Thomas Cory, Joseph Anthony, Edward Briggs, John Briggs, and Joseph Taber.

The antecedents of Edward Colbe and John Coke have not been determined by the present writer.

This review, covering the twenty-seven founders of the town, serves to illustrate the fact that the sentiment and spirit of Rhode Island were preponderant. Furthermore, by their situation, they necessarily had little commerce or communication with their capital of Boston. The magnetic needle rather, pointed to the prosperous and active town of Newport as their market place. And of the few who were not bred on the Island, the most influential were Quakers and entirely out of sympathy with the Massachusetts system of supporting a particular religious sect by general taxation.

They with their sons, and with the newcomers who followed them into Tiverton, were the workers who cleared the forest, built the stone walls, planted the fields, and

and swamp" to the "fertile glebe" of the "glad swain." Anyone who has ever labored upon the stony soil of Tiverton will always have the highest respect for the persevering toil of the pioneers. It is true that the Indian war had removed the menace of savage warfare, but the woods were not cleared of dangerous enemies, and an early town meeting vote is a reminder of the perils of pioneering:

"Voted that any of ye inhabitance of our town that shall henceforward from ye date hereof till one full year is Expired or any other ajacent person that shall kill any Grone Woulfe or wound them in our town so that they kill them within the same day they wound them or him, provided they or he hath any proof or good succomstance that if ye sd woulfe was so wounded & killed in such place. Every such person or persons shall receive out of our Town Treasury ye sum of thirty shillings besides the twenty that is alowed out of ye publick payments, provided that he bring ye head with ye ears to ye treasurer of this our town within ye space of twenty-four hours after ye killing of ye said woulfe, which if he or they neglect to doe soe and it appear that he faill and cannot by the time they shall forfeit ye thirty shillings and have no more than ye law alloweth. All that is Killed all Ready from ye thirteenth of March to ye tenth of April 1708. Let them bring in fourth with and they shall be allowed ye full, but If they Neglect they must Expect to Lose ye 30s."

Another quaint ordinance passed May 7, 1708, concerns a less dangerous but more numerous enemy:

"Voted that every freeholder of our town that Is a housekeeper shall kill six Black birds between ye first of May, and ye tenth of June next, and what they shall kill more they shall have one penny apiece for the heads. If brought in within ye time above sd, and he that Doth not kill Six shall pay into ye treasurer of our town one penny for every head that is wanting of six heads, and he that kills none shall pay sixpence into ye place above sd and ye persons to Receive ye heads are Richard Borden, Amos Sheffield

per me Amos Sheffield, Town Clerk"

For "Black birds" read "crows" and perhaps the troubles of the farmers will be more clearly understood by the reader of this day.

For the next fifty years the inhabitants increased in number. They cut trees and pulled stumps. They built houses and barns and boats. They ploughed land and caught fish, and whenever the men met at the tavern or at the town meeting, one matter was uppermost in their discussions, and that was "taxes." Taxes and assessments which seem ridiculously small in these days of taxation and vexations, but obnoxious nevertheless. The town charges were little. Education was a concern of private expense, and highway work was carried on by the community, each contributing his share of the labor. Time came when the town must raise money for the aid of the aged and infirm poor, but the tax of supporting the ministry "did not set" with Tivertonians.

In 1696, officials sent to collect taxes were seized and taken to Newport, where they were released only under bonds to let the people of Tiverton alone. The General Court thereupon passed a vote that the Lieutenant Governor should protect his officers from the violence of Rhode Island.

Another tax which proved difficult of enforcement was the excise required of those who dispensed beer, cider and distilled beverages. The method for the collection of this license fee was to "Farm the excise." That is the taxes were sold to bidders who depended upon their success for their personal remuneration. In 1698 Samuel Wakefield of Salem and John Wilson of Ipswich hired the commission for the southern counties, but complained that in Bristol County the innholders and retailers refused to pay anything, and that they there "suffered great abuses and once had their horses ears cut off in tiverton." It would appear that bootlegging existed here long before the era of Prohibitionary Amendment.

The town was entitled to a Representative in the General Court, but for some years they were represented only now and then. Such an official would have to be at his own expense or look to the town for remuneration. In 1698, in reply to a warrant requiring the election of a Representative, the Town Meeting asked to be excused on the ground that there were only 26 families in town.

In the first decade of the eighteenth century, the colonies were at war with the French and Indians to the north, and a Foot Company was recruited from Southern Massachusetts, which went "down east" under command of Capt. John Cook of Tiverton, who was commissioned by Governor Dudley in April 1704. Twenty-four years afterward his widow was vainly endeavoring to obtain an allowance for his services.

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in 1707 Lieut. Col. John Wanton was recruiting in Tiverton for volunteers to go in the expedition against Port Royal, Nova Scotia.

Year by year the troublesome tax controversy dragged on, the government determined that the town should support a regular minister, and the townspeople feeling differently. In 1702 they sought to satisfy the law by electing Joseph Wanton as the minister of the town, but a Quaker was not to be officially accepted as an Orthodox minister. The Six Principle Baptist Church of Dartmouth had some adherents in the south end, and the Episcopalian Rev. James Honeyman of Newport, for eight years from 1704, came over to the main land and conducted missions in Tiverton and Little Compton. The Quakers however were the predominating influence, and their tenets did not countenance a clergy serving for pay.

In June 1708, the General Court ordered that Mr. Joseph Marsh, Minister, be sent to Tiverton, and that he be allowed Fifty Pounds salary from the Public Treasury, and that Thirty Pounds be added to the Tax of the Town. This brought their total quota to the amount of Two Hundred Pounds. The town officials ignored the order and assessed no tax whatever, whereupon Richard Borden, Assessor, was arrested for dereliction of duty and jailed. This summary action incited a flood of remonstrance, and the Court receded in the matter of the tax for the ministry and receiving an offer of 170 pounds, released the Treasurer.

The following year it was provided that "neighboring ministers be desired to preach in the town." In the next few years allowances were made by the Court to Mr. Marsh, Thomas Tufts and Nathaniel Fisher for their services. In 1723 Theophilus Pickering officiated as Town Minister and 72 pounds, 11 shillings was ordered added to the town for his salary. Mr. Pickering after a year's trial reported that he was "Discouraged by the perverse and Untractable Temper & Carriage of Said People" and had only received thirty pounds of what he was supposed to get. There were more turbulent times, and again the Assessors, Joseph Anthony and John Sisson, were jailed. Again there was a compromise settlement and payment of 27 pounds, 9 shillings instead of seventy-two-nine.

At this time the town had as Representative in the Court a lively champion in the person of Gershon Wodell. Gershon was by no means a diplomat and his advocacy of the town's contentions was sometimes couched in language that offended the dignity of that body. On June 23, 1722, he was put on impeachment, so to speak, and after being heard and ordered to withdraw, the question was put: "Whether the Petition of Mr. Gershon Wodell, a Member of this House, does not Contain false and reflecting Expressions upon the House. And it passed in the Affirmative.

"Then a further question was put, Whether Mr. Gershon Wodell be Expelled this House as not being worthy to continue a Member of it? And it passed in the Affirmative." He was succeeded by Thomas Manchester, but the next year Wodell was returned and again ousted. Once more he was sent back, and May 30, 1726 was expelled for the third time, it being entered in the records that he "still continues to an obstinate refusal of making an Acknowledgement of his faults."

The vexatious dispute between the colonies over their title to the territory east of Narragansett Bay had not subsided. After the absorption by Massachusetts it recurred at nearly every session of the legislatures of both colonies without effective progress toward any settlement. Surveyors were put to work and commissions appointed, but no agreement satisfactory to all parties seemed possible. In 1734 Rhode Island made an appeal to the King, which was referred to the Plantations Committee and thence to the Board of Trade. The response and denial of Massachusetts was entered two years later, and in 1740 the Board determined that the matter should be settled by Royal Commission. Letters patent were issued to fifteen gentlemen, five each from the Provinces of New Jersey, New York and Nova Scotia. This body got together in 1741 to give hearing to the contestants. The agents of Massachusetts insisted that the boundary lay through the middle of the East or Seconnet Passage, the strait of Bristol Ferry, and so up the Bay and the Pawtucket River. The Rhode Island attorneys claimed a line from a point three miles north north-east of Assonet due south to the ocean, and west by north from the same point to Fox Point, Providence, and thence due north. If this line had been accepted, it is interesting to observe that in addition to the towns now in Rhode Island, there would have been included all of the present Westport with a slice of Dartmouth, all of Fall River, Somerset and Swansea, most of Freetown and part of Rehoboth and Seekonk.

The judgment of the Commission was filed June 30, 1741 giving Rhode Island further territory east of the Pawtucket River. No one was satisfied and both parties took appeals.

to London. There the arguments were threshed out over and over again before the Plantations Committee, and finally decided substantially as recommended by the Commission in 1741. On May 28, 1746 an Order in Council was confirmed by Royal Decree and Tiverton was at last a parcel of the little Colony of Rhode Island. On December 2nd of the same year, a special session of the General Assembly incorporated the towns of Bristol, Tiverton, Little Compton, Warren and Cumberland, and the two southerly towns were added to the County of Newport. The first Town Meeting under the new order was held in February following.

The old subject of a town minister was to be heard again in a final echo, just previous to the transfer to Rhode Island a group in the southerly part of the town, who were members of the Congregational Church of Little Compton, formed an ecclesiastical body and incorporated as the Amicable Congregational Society. They



The double row of elm trees from 'Job Gray Corner' of 'Quaket' to Seaport Avenue are a sight which never fails to be admired. It is said they were started from seed, in plant pots, many years ago by Abigail Wilbur (1734-1822), wife of Abraham Brown.

called as their pastor a Scotch divine from Carver, Mass., Rev. Othniel Campbell, and built a meeting house on the Lake Road. As minister of the only church in town with a regular place of worship, Mr. Campbell assumed the title of Town Minister, although the introduction of Rhode Island law precluded the prospect of assistance from the public treasury. The ruling element in the town were not willing that the Congregationalists should enjoy any priority, and a vote was passed in town meeting Nov. 13, 1749 which read:

"And it appearing to sd meeting that one Othniel Campbell who hath entered into ye Southerly part of sd Town near ye outermost thereof for two or three years past who hath lately since declared himself to be the minister of sd Town and ye In-