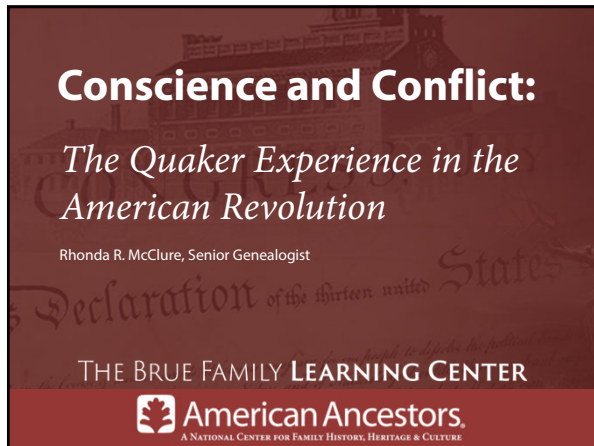
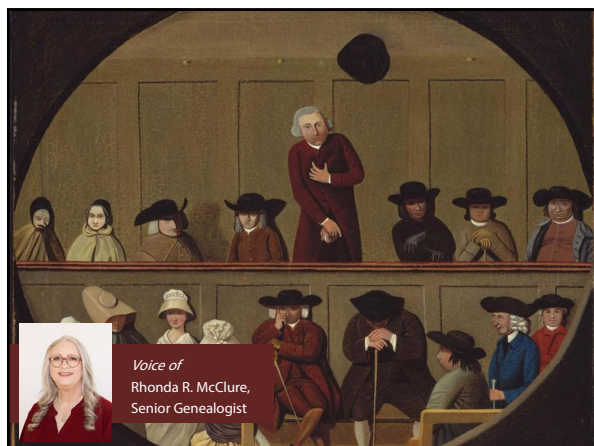


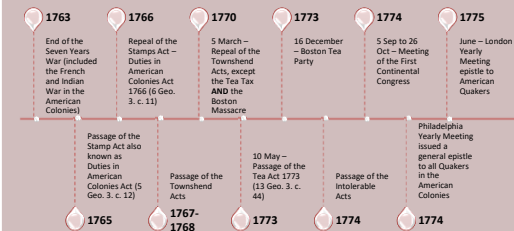






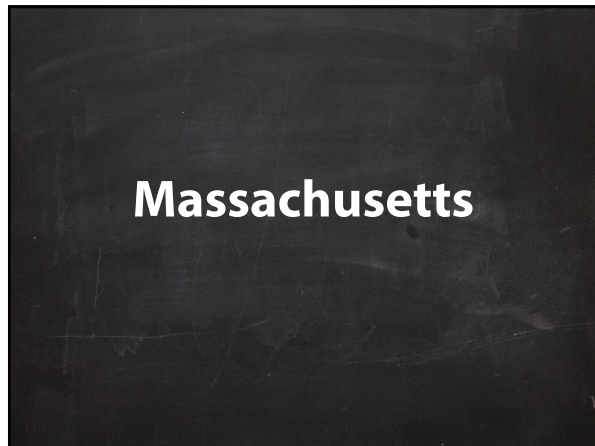
Historical Context

Historical Timeline



Quaker Beliefs

- Do not take up arms
- Do not swear oaths
- Do not support paid ministry
- Do not remove their hats in admiration
- Do not pay taxes to support war



Massachusetts

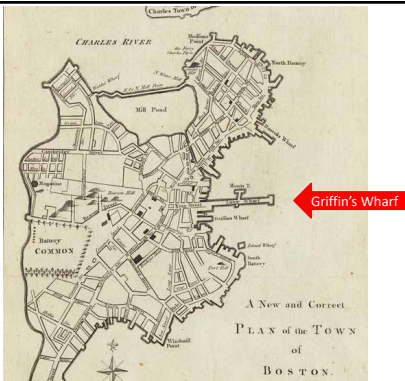
- Nantucket
- Boston Tea Party
- William Rotch, St.
 - Bayonets
 - Accused of Treason

Boston Tea Party

- Response to the Tea Act of 1773
- Arrival of three ships
 - Dartmouth (owned by Francis Rotch – Quaker)
 - Beaver (owned by William Rotch – Quaker)
 - Eleanor (owned by John Rowe)
- Francis Rotch tried to get permission for the Dartmouth & Beaver to return to England

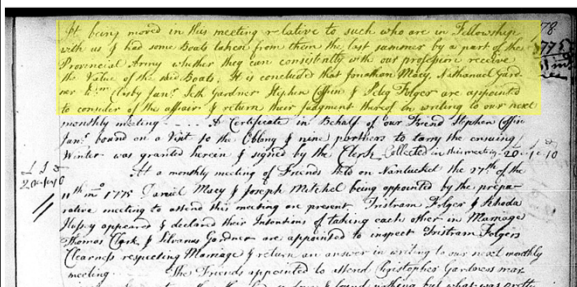
Boston Tea Party





1775 Map by a British Officer

Norman B. Leventhal Map Center,
Boston Public Library



18th of the 11th month 1775

Nantucket MM Men's Minutes 1775

ing of them, records it. The friends appointed to examine Jonathan Hughes affairs respecting his removal under notice that they have to do so; but do not find that he has taken such care in settling his affairs as they think best requires. But they are still desired to make further enquiry & make a return to the next monthly meeting. The friends appointed to consider & give their judgment whether it was reasonable for Friends who had been taken from them by a part of the Provincial Society to take the pay for them, do make a return that they have considered thereof & think Friends had best be clear of receiving any pay for them, with which this meeting took issue. This meeting is informed by his Co-record that they had treated with George Aspell respecting his joining a Company in leaving a plurality of offices out of a Chapel without legal authority. This is still a subject of enquiry as he is appointed to treat further with him hereafter & make a return to the next monthly meeting. All that Friends who have complained that Aspell has neglected paying him his just due, being (Quaker's) Friends, Mitchell & Co. are appointed to make the necessary enquiry hereabout. Quakers

27th of the 11th month 1775

Nantucket MM Men's Minutes 1775

4 month
1777
Whereas Joseph Russell the Son of Caleb Russell
and David Allen Jonathan Allen & Moses Allen
being the sons of Benjamin Allen, all having had their
Education amongst Friends, but by departing from
their Education and the Testimony of Truth have so
gone astray as to be concerned in receiving buying
or otherwise concerned in those goods taken in these
by way of arms, being those goods called Swiss goods
and Friends and friends having Labour with each other
in order to Discover to them the evil of such a trade
but friends Labour of Love not having its Desired
these are therefore Given forth as a Publick Testimony

Whereas Ralph Allen son of Benjamin Allen & Allaphal his wife having had a Birthright among friends but both do for Duty too promise Profession as the Unitarian or Latins on and of a Religion of James Allen a Unitarian being given into that Service the meeting is concluded to maintain ourselves against such Proceedings to give this both as a publick denial against them & do hereby disown from the said Ralph Allen from being ever a member of our Society & from meeting in our meetings in the month of 17th 1777

15th of 12th month 1777

Dartmouth Monthly Meeting

William Rotch

- A staunch Quaker
- Owned whaling and cargo ships
- Was at odds with non-Quaker individuals in Massachusetts for his pacifism
- Sought compromise with the British for survival of Nantucket

3.
My muskets met with a ready
sale, but whenever guns with
bayonets were shown, I invariably
took that instrument of war
from them. The purveyor would
insist on having it but I at
strongly resisted and I laid
them fall by. Many years
afterward I removed to another
store, leaving much rubbish
in the one I had left among
the rubbish were those bayonets
neglected and forgotten until
the war commenced, when
to my surprise they were brought
into view by an application

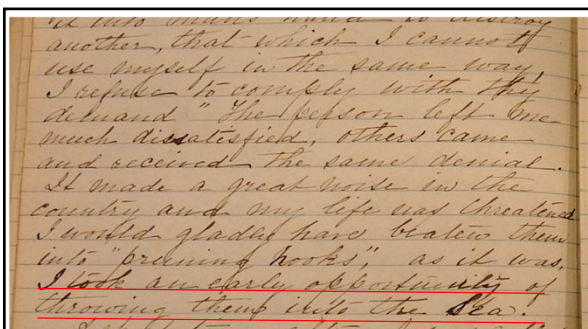
Wm. Rotch 1814 Memoir

Mentions removal of bayonets from muskets in 1764 when selling them

in the one I had left among
the rubbish were those bayonets
neglected and forgotten until
the war commenced, when
to my surprise they were brought
into view by an application
made for them by a person
from the Continent.
The time had now come
to support our testimony against
war, or forever abandon it, as
this very instrument was a severe
test. I would not hesitate
and therefore promptly denied
the applicant. My reasons

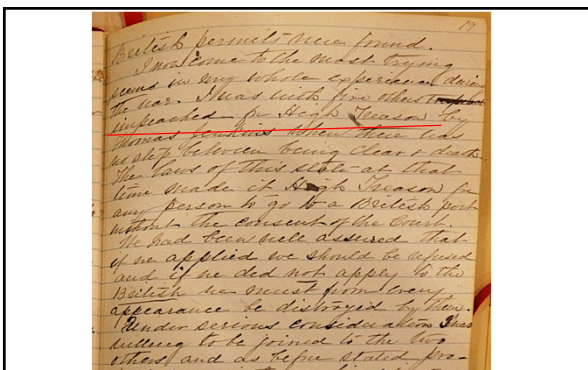
Wm. Rotch 1814 Memoir

Mentions removal of bayonets from muskets in 1764 when selling them



After many requests, and may refusals
by William Rotch, he ended up
throwing them into the ocean.

Wm. Rotch 1814 Memoir



Wm. Rotch 1814 Memoir

Thomas Jenkins' Complaint

- Outlines activities of William Rotch, Sr., and others
- Calls them "encouragers, aiders, & abettors of the Enemy"
- They wanted to "induce the Inhabitants of sd. Island to settle a correspondence with & openly join the Enemy"
- Stated in court in Boston, November 1779

*The House of Representatives in General Court
assembled at Boston Nov^r 1779*

Thomas Jenkins humbly sheweth.

*That as a true
and legal Subject of the State of the Massachusetts Bay,
as well as from enormous personal Injuries recd by him
infeelingly used to lay the following Representations
of Complaint before the Supreme Legislature of the
State.*

*Your Petitioner complains of certain
Bay Messrs Timothy Pelgis Esq Wm Ralfe James
Starbuck & Kierck Esqs all of the County of Suffolk
set as Persons dangerous & inimical to the Revolution*

Initial document of complaint

Initial document of complaint

[illegible]

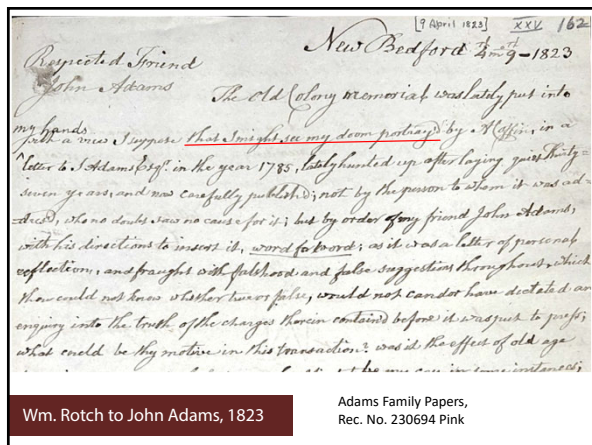
Witnesses

In the case of Complaint Thomas Jenkins against
William Stoth, Timothy Selgo & others of Northwicks
now lying before the Committee of both Houses of the
General Court. The Complainant Moves
That As the Nature of the Complaint was Confined to
Stoth beyond his Intention, and a subpoena was like
to go further than he wished to carry it, and finding some
in this matter in Conjunction with some of the persons com-
plained of by their own Contrivance of their Words & Conduct,
which the Complainant had been Stunned as Receipts by his
Reliance from Northwicks & he Depend upon their Information
to be his &c.

Retraction by Jenkins

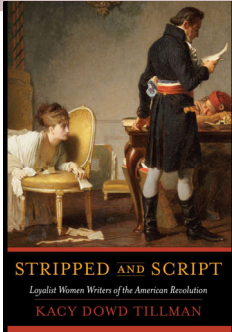
Timeline

- Complaint brought November 1779
- Notice sent to "all of the Island Nantucket yeoman" to appear before General Court issues 2 December 1779
- Complaint to be dealt with "first Tuesday of the next setting of the General Court" filed 27 Dec 1779
- Witnesses interviewed in March 1780
- Jenkins' request for dismissal of case likely March 1780



Pennsylvania

Stripped and Script



CONTENTS

Endorse

Introduction

Stripped and Script

CHAPTER ONE

Scripting Disaffection

Grace Grewden Galloway

CHAPTER TWO

Scripting Neutrality

Sarah Logan Fisher and Elizabeth Drinker

CHAPTER THREE

Scripting Neutrality

Margaret Hill Morris

CHAPTER FOUR

Scripting Loyalty

Anna Beale and Rebecca Sheemaker

CHAPTER FIVE

Scripting Patriotism

Elizabeth Coates Fergusson

Pacifists

- Predominantly found among members of the Society of Friends (aka Quakers)
- Were distrusted by those against continued British rule
- Some found themselves punished and jailed

Sarah Logan Fisher

- Fisher family well-to-do Quakers in Philadelphia
- Thomas Fisher married Sarah Logan
- Remained neutral (result of Quaker pacifist principles)
- Were in their hearts “conscientious royalists”
- This fact known to patriots
- Her husband involved in the Spantown Controversy, 1777

7th Day, morning took a li'le alk
with Joshua & Jon, drank Tea
at Hamm's sup'd at Home, very
unwell with a pain in my face, this
Evening a Paper came out from the
Committee of Safety, unlike anything
I ever before heard of, except the
Spanish Inquisition, declaring that

Sarah Logan Fisher, Diary, 1777

every person who refused the
Continental Money, should be liable
for the first offence to forfeit the
Goods of a sum of equal value, for
the second offence to forfeit the same
& to be banished what they are pleased
to call this State; to what place,
in what manner, they shall judge
most proper. That all those who
have been imprisoned, & whose Names
have been shut up by them, on the
account of their refusing it formerly,
are to be opened & they are to be
subject to this new Law, after having
acknowledged all the rigours of the old
one, as most extraordinary instances
of arbitrary power, & of their liberty.

we shall enjoy should this good
Government be established, a Govern-
ment I will prove from
weak & wicked Men.

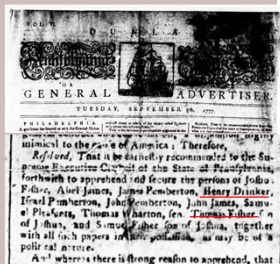
8th Day, 1st Day. Did not
go to meeting to Day, being not
very well, had no company all
Day, sup'd at Sister Hilly's, heard
no political News to Day, but
confused reports about the
engagement on 6th Day, something
our hopes of some time our Peace
possible, as State of suspense, very
painfull situation.

9th Day, morning went down to see
Bully Allen but found him not. Sup'd

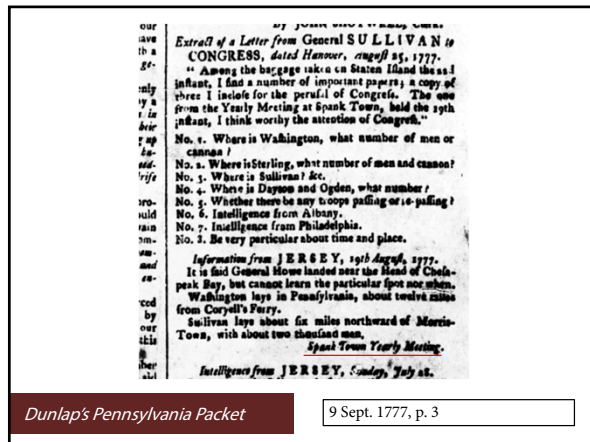
Sarah Logan Fisher, Diary, 1777

Spanktown Controversy, 1777

- Result of a forged document
- Philadelphia Quakers suspected as Loyalists
- Many of the men were jailed in Virginia



Dunlaps Pennsylvania Packet, 9 Sept. 1777, front page







A Study in Queens County

- Undertaken by Joseph S Tiedemann
- Published in results 1983
- Looked at 3,074 white males over 16 residing in Queens County on 1 January 1776
- Augmented info from this census with additional records in a "Collective Biography"
- Compared Loyalists, Neutrals and Patriots

TABLE I
LOYALTY IN QUEENS COUNTY (1775)

Loyalty	Collective Biography		Queens County Quakers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Whig	368	12.0	19	4.5
Tory	824	26.8	38	9.0
Trimmer	27	0.9	1	0.2
Neutral	1855	60.3	366	86.3
Total	3074	100.0	424	100.0

Whig = Patriot
Tory = Loyalist
Trimmer = "fence sitter"
Neutral = Neutral

"Loyalty in Queens County (1775)"

TABLE II
QUAKERS AND NEUTRALITY IN QUEENS COUNTY (1775)

Town	Total Popu-lation	Percentage			
		Neutral	Quaker	Of Quakers Neutral	Of Non-Quakers Neutral
Flushing	246	76.4	24.4	91.7	71.5
Oyster Bay	660	74.0	22.7	89.3	70.8
Hempstead	935	57.3	12.0	78.6	54.4
Newtown	394	54.6	5.1	70.0	53.7
Jamaica	407	28.0	1.5	16.7	28.2

Quakers & Neutrality

One of the friends appointed in the case of Lancaster has
 in reports that he has had an opportunity with him that Lancaster
 said he could say nothing more than he had said. But further informed him
 that he was unwilling to build a ship, suggested for sailing of leave which
 he intended to finish of North people. The meeting after continuing
 the case is of opinion that he said Lancaster could in acting on a
 Public Committee, Superintending the appointment of millenarians
 and building a ship of war is inconsistent with our religious principles
 and has a tendency to lay waste the following against case of Flushing
 This Meeting therefore resolves against such practice & send Lancaster
 and desists him from being any longer a Member of our Society -
 Untill he shall renounce his out-gorge to the subscription of the Flushing
 and also that of some North. It appears to appear here with the
 judgment of this meeting the weight of appeal and report next month.

The friends appointed on Samuel Thompson's case reported in writing
 on the 24th inst. and on the 25th inst. in their description the necessary application
 The case is still continued under the care of the same friends who are -
 ordered to give him such assistance as they shall on inquiry be very stand
 in need of without confining the inquiry to him alone.

The friends appointed on Charles Wright's case report they have not had
 an opportunity with him they are still continue and are desirous to report
 next month.

The Friends on Charles Wright's case after taking the committee
 of the 24th inst. and on the 25th inst. in their description the necessary application

Lancaster Burlin

- Building a ship “supposed for a ship of war”
- Served on a ”Publick Committee”
- Oversaw “the appointment of militia officers”
- Was Disowned 6th of 3rd month 1776

[eI
If mention of being
disowned, check earlier
meetings for more
information

...and is desired to call on Daniel Boone for money
 The Friends appointed to labour further with William
 Kenyon report another opportunity with him and that he
informs them he could do no inconsistency in dealing in
prize goods, after a time of deliberation thereon, the same
 Friends are desired to inform him the Meeting has come to a
 judgement to disown him and report
 The Friends appointed to deal with Springfield Loo:
 since report no opportunity with him they are continued

Flushing Monthly Meeting

William Kenyon

- Brought up in meeting of 15th of 5th month 1782
 - Purchasing “prize goods”
- Meetings in which they mention working with him:
 - 5th of 6th month 1782
 - 4th of 7th month 1782
 - 7th of 8th month 1782
- Disowned 7th of 8th month 1782

North Carolina

William Borden

- Son of original R.I. Quaker settlers to Core Sound Monthly Meeting (N.C.)
- Disciplined in July 1754 for activities including drinking
- Reinstated to membership in 1773
- Stood before the meeting in 1778 for discipline (minutes vague on the issue) and apologized and was forgiven

William Borden had this published in the 17 June 1778 issue of the *North Carolina Gazette*

These are to informe the publick that whereof the people called Quakers differ in opinion and Sundry things which I can't hold with and especially about this disturbance in the Nation and [they] do not be conformably [sic] to laws and good orders a rated by the states [,] I therefore have for some time past and do at this time diannul these proceeding of theirs and cant be conforably [sic] to their rules [,] I therefore disannul myself from being in community or members of them or with them for those reasons.

Abstracted in Neva Jean Sprecht's "Being a Peaceable Man, I have Suffered Much Persecution: The American Revolution and Its Effects on Quaker Religious Identity" *Quaker History*, vol. 99, no. 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 37-48.

William Borden's Published Statement

Minutes recorded in response to Borden's announcement in the *North Carolina Gazette*

The said Wm. Borden a few years past was very desirous of being [shielded] from mustering under our denominations; and we charitably hoped he acted on just principles and the bottom of conviction, but this last and new levy of troops, soon proved his foundation and we believe was the cause of his foresaid advertisement. Therefore we can no less in our time then publicly declare our disapprobation of such unfaithfulness and double dealing, and that we disallow having any further fellowship with said Borden.

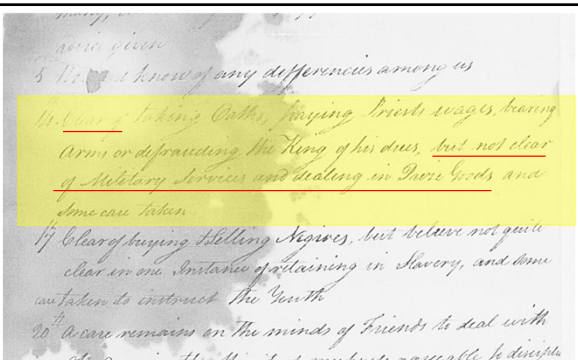
Abstracted in Neva Jean Sprecht's "Being a Peaceable Man, I have Suffered Much Persecution: The American Revolution and Its Effects on Quaker Religious Identity" *Quaker History*, vol. 99, no. 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 37-48.

Core Sound Monthly Meeting

The Queries

The Queries

- Question used as a spiritual practice to guide personal reflection and group worship
- They are not about what to believe, but how to live
- During difficult times they may reflect what is going on in the outside community



14. Clear of buying, selling, or hiring
Army or defrauding the King of his dues, but not clear
of Military Services and dealing in their Goods and
some case taken
 15. Clear of buying, selling, or hiring
clear in one instance of obtaining in Slavery, and some
are taken to interest the Youth
 20. are remains on the minds of Friends to deal with
the Ministry of members accountable to discipline

Flushing MM, Mens Minutes

4th of the 7th month 1782

Seeking Records

Monthly Meeting Minutes

- Best resource is the Men's Meeting Minutes within the Monthly Meeting of the individuals
- Seldom completely searchable
- May be digitized and available on a number of sites
- If mention is found, must be reviewed before and after mention found for full story

Sites of Use

- Ancestry.com
- FamilySearch.org (Quaker records often require at least affiliate library access)
- Archive.org (has some digitized monthly meeting minutes)
- Friends libraries (usually associated with colleges founded by Quakers)

Additional Resources

- Manuscript collections via historical societies
- Manuscript collections via libraries and museums
- JSTOR (for articles about Quakers and the American Revolution)
- Genealogical journals (with articles about Quaker families)

58 *Autobiographical Memoir of William Rotch.* [Jan.

know the result of our mission. Famine thought this reasonable, and put the question in all their minds. I was not to be moved until it came to me. We then proceeded to New York.

On representing our case to the Commodore Sir George Collier of the army.

On representing our case to the Commodore Sir George Collier of the army. This was a great state of our captured vessels, were partial, that we made no up. Consequently were remained in it. On this understanding the order that all our men should be sent to the army. We then proceeded to New York. We also applied to the Hon. Mr. Ashburton, but the young man could get no written order from him direct that there be no departure. No doubt did, as they gave up the quest until Sir George Collier's, a period by the arrival of Ashburton than time again.

Timothy Folger was then sent to the order to the Commodore Sir George Collier of the army. This was a great state of our captured vessels, were partial, that we made no up. Consequently were remained in it. On this understanding the order that all our men should be sent to the army. We then proceeded to New York. We also applied to the Hon. Mr. Ashburton, but the young man could get no written order from him direct that there be no departure. No doubt did, as they gave up the quest until Sir George Collier's, a period by the arrival of Ashburton than time again.

I have come to the most trying scene in my whole experience during the war. I was with four others impeached for high treason, by Thomas Jenkins, when there was no step between being clear and death.

The laws of this state at that time made it high treason for any person to go to a British port without the consent of the court. We had been well assured that if we applied we should be refused, and if we did not apply to the British, we must from every appearance be destroyed by them. Under serious consideration, I was willing to be joined to the two others, and as before stated, proceeded as with our lives in our hands. This was made one of the great charges in the impeachment.

We were examined before a committee of the court on the impeachment, but knowing we were to appear again when the witnesses should arrive, we made no defense, which we afterwards found was an error in judgment.

By this means the court thought us guilty, and were about to

NEHG Register, vol. 32, p. 38

COMPLAINT AGAINST WILLIAM ROTCH AND OTHERS, 1779.

Communicated by FREDERICK C. SAMPSON, Esq., of Nantucket, Mass.

IN the autobiography of William Rotch, published in the REGISTER, he states (vol. xxii, p. 38) that in 1779 he was "with four others impeached for high treason by Thomas Jenkins, when there was no step between being clear and death." Appended to the manuscript autobiography is the following copy of Mr. Jenkins's petition to the Massachusetts General Court. The reader is referred to the above autobiography of Mr. Rotch for his account of these matters. See also Mr. Starbuck's "Nantucket in the Revolution" (REGISTER, xxix. 50) for reference to them.

Copy of Thomas Jenkins's Complaint against Sundry Persons.

To the Honorable Council and the Honorable House of Representatives in General Court assembled at Boston, State of Massachusetts Bay, November, 1779.

Thomas Jenkins humbly sheweth, that as a true and liege subject of the State of Massachusetts Bay, as well as from enormous personal injuries received, he is most strongly urged to lay the following representation and complaint before the supreme Legislature of the State.

Your petitioner complains of Dr. Benjamin Tupper, Timothy Folger, Esq., Wm. Rotch, Samuel Starbuck and Keria Coffin, all of the Island of Nantucket, as persons dangerous and inimical to the freedom and independence of this and the other United States of America, as encouragers, aiders and abettors of the Enemy, in making inroads on the state territories, and depredations on the property of the good subjects of this State.

It can be clearly proved, if your honors should see fit to order an in-

NEHG Register, vol. 33, p. 305

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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF WILLIAM ROTCH.
WRITTEN IN THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.
Commissioned by FREDERICK C. SAWYER, Esq., of Nantucket, Mass.
(Continued from vol. xxii, page 35.)

WE^a arrived in the harbor of Newport, where Capt. Dawson commanded the navy and Gen. Prescott the army, but the refugees had made interest with the general not to permit us to land, and we were ordered to depart by Capt. Dawson. We interceded with him to let us stay a little longer, for we found the expedition was progressing rapidly, and unless we could arrest it, it would be in vain to proceed to New York.

Again Dawson, by request of Gen. Prescott, under the influence of the refugees, ordered us immediately to depart. Dr. Tupper

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Memoranda.

A FRIEND of mine has repeatedly requested me to put on paper some of the occurrences of about twenty years of my life, from 1775 to 1794, which he had heard me relate in conversation.

When the revolutionary war broke out in 1775, I saw clearly that the only line of conduct to be pursued by us, the inhabitants of the Island of Nantucket, was to take no part in the contest, and to endeavor to give no occasion of offence to either of the contending forces. A great portion of the inhabitants were of the denomination of Friends, and a large number of the considerate of the other societies united in the opinion that our safety was to be found in a state of neutrality, as far as it could be obtained, although we had no doubt that fighting would be our lot, and which we afterwards experienced from both parties. Our situation was rendered more difficult from having among us a few restless spirits who had nothing to lose, and who were often thwarting our pacific plan and subjecting us to dangers, not caring what confusion they brought upon us, if

^a William Rotch, an enterprising and successful merchant of Nantucket and New Bedford, was born at Nantucket, Oct. 14 O. S. (15 N. S.), 1724, and died at New Bedford, May 16, 1828. For his biography and genealogy, see Ricketson's "History of New Bedford," pp. 108-15. See also "Nantucket in the Revolution," in the *Register* (Ames, xxvii, 272-8, 438-42; xxix, 48-55, 141-5. This autobiography is dated "New Bedford, 2d month, 1814."—ED.

Beginning of transcription

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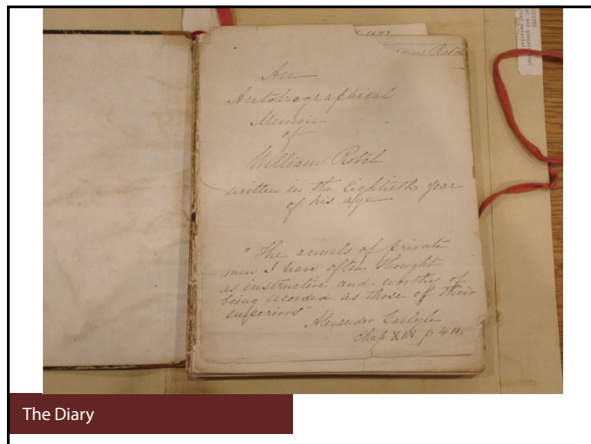
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The Diary

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Upcoming Events

IN-PERSON LECTURE
Preservation Roadshow: Caring for Your Family Treasures
August 29, 2026, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET



ONLINE LECTURE
Tracing Loyalist Lineages: Sources and Strategies
Presented by Sheilagh Doerfler
September 12, 2026, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET



IN-PERSON EXHIBIT
Patriots of Color
April 23–December 31, 2026

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