

# William Carpenter, of Providence RI, the 1635 Immigrant

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William Carpenter was born about 1610, in or near Amesbury, Wilshire, England. His birth or baptism date has not been found. His father was buried there in 1625 and his son got his house as his heir. William later gave that property he inherited in Amesbury to his only known sister Frideswide Vincent.

William likely came to America in 1635 on the James of London that departed England about 26 April 1635. The name on the passenger list was listed as “Thomas Carpenter of Amesbury, carpenter.” It is reasonable to assume, for different reasons, that this “Thomas” was likely our William Carpenter.

He married Elizabeth Arnold (1611-aft 1679/1680), daughter of William Arnold (1587-abt 1676) maybe in 1637 likely in or around Providence. They were clearly not married in England. Her death is not known and she likely outlived her husband.

The best detailed article on William Carpenter, later of Providence, Rhode Island, is by Eugene Cole Zubrinsky in his excellent Carpenter Sketches.  
<https://carpentercousins.com/carplink.htm>

My goal in this article is to take a second look at William Carpenter and his death on 7 September 1685 in Providence, Pawtuxet section, and now in Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island. We believe he was most likely buried on his homestead in or near the Pawtuxet section that is now in the modern Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island. Can we identify the property he died on?

## Something to remember about Rhode Island

Rhode Island is a little different from most states. And please remember that many boundaries, some place names and other things have changed significantly since 1685. See **Section B** below.

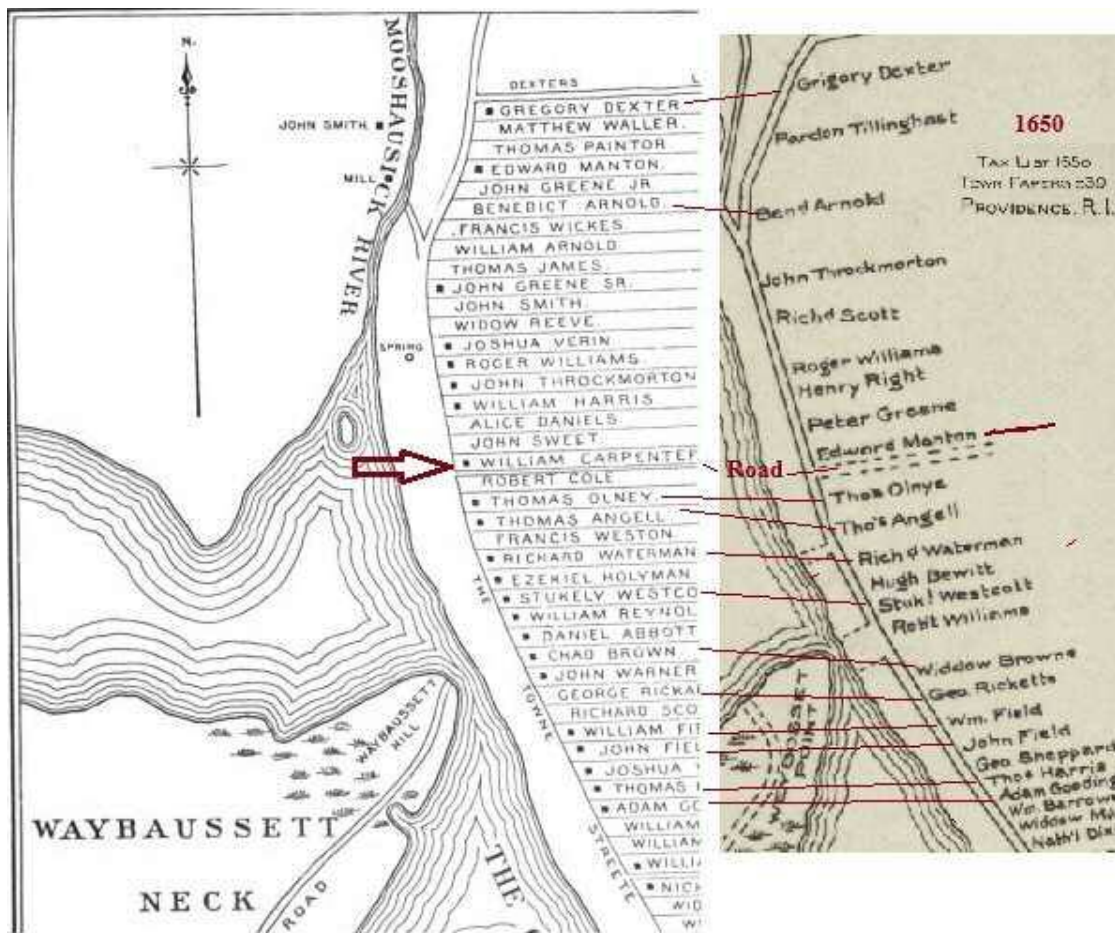
Rhode Island Counties did not exist before 1703. “Although Rhode Island is divided into counties, it does not have any local government at the county level. Instead, local governance is provided by the eight cities and thirty-one towns. Counties in Rhode Island have had no governmental functions since 1846 other than as court administrative and sheriff corrections boundaries which are part of state government.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_counties\\_in\\_Rhode\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_counties_in_Rhode_Island)

## What about his living in Providence?

Yes, most people have known that William Carpenter was an original Proprietor in 1638 and his name is affixed to having one of the first twelve lots in the town heart of today's Providence, Providence, County, Rhode Island. Back then the "Proprietors" as they were called, were living on their new home lots and improving them accordingly. Each lots contained about six acres each and all fronted on the "Town Street" with a dividing line between the lots running east and west. The William Carpenter's lot was separated from the lot of Robert Coles by a road.

For brevity I only show portion of that image here. The red arrow shows the start of the William Carpenter lot. But please notice by the 1650 Tax list image, the Arnolds & Carpenters are gone.



For more on these maps, please see **Section A** below.

### **Where did they move to?**

The following text is from page 17 from the book called, "History and Genealogy of the CARPENTER FAMILY IN AMERICA" from the settlement at Providence, RI 1637-1901. By Daniel Hoogland Carpenter of Mapelwood, Essex, NJ. Published by the Marion Press of Jamacia, Queensborough, NY in 1901. 370 Pages.

“[A]fter the signing of the Initial Deed the Proprietors made division of their purchase William Carpenter and his father-in-law, William Arnold, with Zachariah Rhodes, William Harris, and Robert Coles, for their shares were allotted a large tract at "Pautuxet," where they at once made settlement. It was a beautiful meadow-land, about four miles southerly from Providence, bounded on the east by Narragansett Bay and on the south by the Pawtuxet River.”

Yes, simply they moved a few miles south, trading their lots in Providence as part of the “Original Proprietors” for other properties.

There is even some question of even if they even lived on their Providence lots. Some say they improved them or worked them and others say they paid then traded them. That is for others to debate.

The net result is that they went to the end of the Pawtuxet River, made their homes there and worked the fields on either side of the river. In time, some favored the north side over the south side of the river and vice versa.

Let me end this portion with another quote from page 17 & 18 of Daniel H. Carpenter’s book.

“It was here that William Carpenter spent the remaining years of his life. For nearly half a century it was "his home," and around him at "Pautuxet" were gathered children and friends and all of earthly good needed to bring contentment and peace. The chronicles of the times have much to say of him. There is scarcely a page of the town records but has some mention of him.”

### **A little caution and facts**

Caution: Don’t get mixed up between Pawtucket a river in northern Rhode Island, Pawtuxet another river in Rhode Island, Pawcatuck a village in Connecticut, and Pawtuxet the present village at the end of the river by the same name and the former name of present day Cranston, Rhode Island. They are different places! See more details at: <https://bucklinsociety.net/colonial-history/pawtuxet-pawtucket/>



This map shows the northern settlements for a part of early Rhode Island. See also the related maps in **Section D** with added comments. See the source of these maps at: <https://ia600902.us.archive.org/2/items/rhodeislandbound00unse/rhodeislandbound00unse.pdf>

“Cranston, formerly known as Pawtuxet, is a city in Providence County, Rhode Island.”  
 “The Town of Cranston was created in 1754 from a portion of Providence north of the Pawtuxet River. After losing much of its territory to neighboring towns and the city of Providence, Cranston itself became a city on March 10, 1910.”  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cranston,\\_Rhode\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cranston,_Rhode_Island)

The area of present day Cranston, then called Pawtuxet, was purchased in 1638 from the Narragansett Indians by Roger Williams as part of the Pawtuxet Purchase.



Pawtuxet Village is a seaport hamlet which grew up around Pawtuxet Cove on the west side of Narragansett Bay, four miles southeast of Providence. It is on either side of the outlet of the Pawtuxet River. Today, Providence County and Kent Counties, to the south, are divided by the river at Pawtuxet. But back then it was all part of Providence.

In 1638, Stephen Arnold constructed a gristmill on the Pawtuxet Falls. History shows that the Arnold and Carpenter families were land owners in this area by 1642.

In 1647, Pawtuxet Village became part of the newly incorporated town of Warwick, settled by Samuel Gorton in 1642.

[https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs\\_zips\\_downloads/survey\\_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf](https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/survey_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf)

“In 1659, the first settlers, William Arnold, William Carpenter, and William Harris removed themselves from Massachusetts’s jurisdiction and believed they had established a valid claim to nearly one-third of the area of present day Rhode Island.”

“The meadows had proven to be very productive. In the 1670's, William Carpenter's farm at Bellefonte\*, along the banks of the Pawtuxet River, was large and thriving, with a sizeable flock of sheep, a herd of cattle and 15 horses. His son Joseph, along with Zachariah Rhodes and Stephen Arnold, had established a successful grist mill at Pawtuxet Falls and had cut a road through the wilderness that helped bring trade and prosperity to the small village.”

[https://www.warwickhistory.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=212:the-village-felt-the-wrath-of-t-he-narragansetts&catid=49&Itemid=110](https://www.warwickhistory.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=212:the-village-felt-the-wrath-of-t-he-narragansetts&catid=49&Itemid=110)

\* Bellefonte was developed in the 1860s as a neighborhood of Cranston, north of the Pawtuxet River centered near Waite Avenue and Mayflower Drive (aka Division Street).

On 27 January 1675 Pawtuxet Village, south of the river, was totally burned during King Philip’s war. Not only were houses burned, livestock stolen, and years of hard work demolished, a number of lives were lost as well. It was the start of many years of terror and desolation.

[https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs\\_zips\\_downloads/survey\\_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf](https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/survey_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf)

Many, like Daniel H. Carpenter in his 1901 book, have also reported that William Carpenter had a house which became as fortified blockhouse. It was a point of refuge where family members and neighbors retreated to for safety during the 1675/1676 war. This may be incorrect. No documentation, other than Carpenter stories in the later part of the 1800s tell of this. See the war portion below.

Remember that back then this general area was part of Providence in or near the Pawtuxet section of land. Today that land north of the river is now in Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island. Cranston, as Pawtuxet, once claimed land south of the Pawtuxet River and down river to the present day Village of Pawtuxet which is on both sides of the river.

The earliest bridge across the [end of the] Pawtuxet River was a rope bridge used in the seventeenth century. The first small wooden bridge was built around 1711 and was located close to the falls where its abutments got the full force of the river as well as the tide in the Pawtuxet Cove. It frequently required repairs and was carried away in the spring floods of 1771 and 1784.

[https://web.archive.org/web/20061109095450/http://www.pawtuxetcove.com/Historic\\_Houses\\_Cranston.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20061109095450/http://www.pawtuxetcove.com/Historic_Houses_Cranston.html)

### **Oh, where or where did they live?**

Where was this specific location where William Carpenter lived back then? What we call the Pawtuxet Village is the likely location where William Carpenter and his immediate family were living and as was the custom of that time, buried. Over time the family had not only living areas but separate farming areas, wood lots and later land set aside for their children. This does not include common land with other owners.

Would it not be nice to have a grave marker or two that survived the ravages of time?

### **First Clue**

Sadly we have only one such physical clue on the ground. This is the only monument marker in Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island that mentions a grandson of William Carpenter the immigrant, named Benjamin Carpenter born about 1693 and who died 16 December 1766 in Cranston.

This Benjamin Carpenter (abt 1693-1766) was son of the Benjamin Carpenter (abt 1650-1652-1710/1711) cited above.

The following text is from page 29 from the book called, "History and Genealogy of the CARPENTER FAMILY IN AMERICA" from the settlement at Providence, RI 1637-1901. By Daniel Hoogland Carpenter of Mapelwood, Essex, NJ. Published by the Marion Press of Jamaica, Queensborough, NY in 1901. 370 Pages.

I should mention the person writing this is Daniel H. Carpenter the author himself. The map or sketch I provide below is from the previous page cited. For ease of reading, I increased the paragraphs and made other marks for emphasis.

“The accompanying map and sketch of monument will show the aspect of the "old plantation" of William Carpenter at the time of my last visit (1896).

The "monument" is of native granite, very durable and of good proportions. *It no doubt marks the last resting-place of William Carpenter and his wife* \* as well as of other members of his family.

The "block-house," or homestead, appears to have stood quite some nearer the river, but "the march of improvements" has obliterated and swept away every vestige whereby its site could be located, leaving only the "3 rods square" whereon the monument stands to mark or identify any part of the original plantation.

This monument stands in Cranston, about three and a half miles from the City Hall at Providence, and is reached by the trolley cars of the Providence and Cranston line.

It is 11 feet in height with a 2 ½ feet base. The surrounding ground is three rods square [aka 49.5 feet], with stone corner bounds, but is in a terribly disgraceful condition, being made the dumping ground for the débris of the neighborhood.

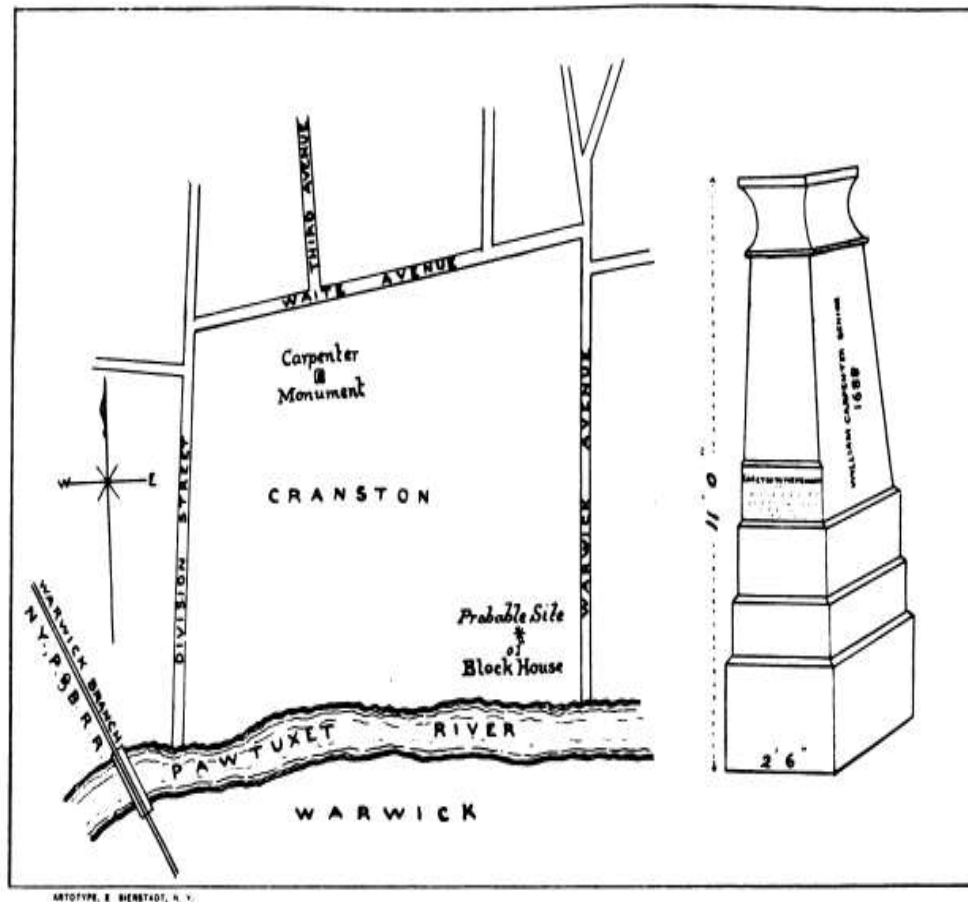
The inscription on the monument is in capital letters of equal size, and reads as follows:

ERECTED IN 1860 BY EARL CARPENTER  
YOUNGEST SON OF NATHANIEL  
IN MEMORY OF THOSE OF HIS ANCESTORS  
BURIED HERE, AND OF HIS ELDEST BROTHER DANIEL  
BORN JULY 4, 1773, DIED DEC 25, 1775.  
HIS GRANDFATHER BENJAMIN  
A DESCENDANT OF WILLIAM ONE OF THE  
FIRST SETTLERS OF RHODE ISLAND  
DIED DEC 16, 1766, AGED 73 YEARS,  
AND HIS GRANDMOTHER PRUDENCE  
DIED JULY 29, 1801, AGED 87 YEARS.

Is there any mention of William Carpenter or his wife Elizabeth? Or any mention of them being buried here? The answer is clearly no.

\* This statement is in contrast with page 17 & 18 of Daniel H. Carpenter's book. And it refers to the 'area of Pautuxet' where he died in 1685.

“It was here that William Carpenter spent the remaining years of his life. For nearly half a century it was "his home," and around him at "Pautuxet" were gathered children and friends and all of earthly good needed to bring contentment and peace.”



MAP OF PAWTUXET.

And if William Carpenter, the immigrant and his wife was really buried at this monument, why is he not mentioned on the monument as being buried there? Indeed, IF ... “WILLIAM ONE OF THE FIRST SETTLERS OF RHODE ISLAND” ... was really buried there, the State of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Historical Society would really tout it and place that into their history. And that did not happen.

In addition, the above map gives the impression that this one specific block of land was owned by William Carpenter from the River to at least the given Waite Avenue to the north and bordered Division Street (now Mayflower) to the West and Warwick Avenue (aka 1A) to the East. This is incorrect. Please remember this for later because it was not as simple as this impression.



Now, Let us compare that written map and diagram to the present day in the next images from Google Maps and its street views.



Please remember that William Carpenter lived down river from this location. It is called the Benjamin Carpenter lot for a reason. The grandson Benjamin Carpenter lived and was buried there after he got possession of the land nearby. His father Benjamin is cited in his father's 1680 receiving this land. There is no evidence, other than the 1901 book comment, that William the immigrant is buried there.

How many are actually buried in this lot is unknown. It is most likely far less than 50 probable and closer to just the three that are mentioned on the monument.

The ground has been so disturbed over the last two centuries by trees (repeatedly cut down) and trash burned, buried on and under its soil who knows how many times. Even today the lot occasionally collects trash and graffiti. See close up image above.

Was it land bought or used by William Carpenter at one time? Yes. It was land claimed by William and also part of the shared common land used by the first settlers. William Carpenter's sons Silas and Benjamin were given this land per their father's 1680 will (probated 1685) to share and divide as they wished. Son Benjamin (born about 1651) had son Benjamin Carpenter (born about 1693) who is mentioned on the monument. But that family descendant story is not part of this article.

For now we know that William Carpenter (the immigrant) lived in a town area where the fresh water flowed over the falls into the ocean. Think of the town area of Pawtuxet the village where the Pawtuxet River ends. Daniel H. Carpenter cites this – except in one portion - cited above - where he waxes about the last piece of William Carpenter property in present day Cranston. In the next portion are more details.

### **Just to make things more complicated ...**

Eugene Cole Zubrinsky in his Carpenter Sketches, wrote the following as part of William Carpenter's Residences. Emphasis and additional paragraphing added. I quote this from Page 6 & 7 of 23 from his, WILLIAM1 CARPENTER OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND (JAMES, 1635) article at: [https://carpentercousins.com/Wm1\\_Providence.pdf](https://carpentercousins.com/Wm1_Providence.pdf)

“D. H. Carpenter's assertion that William Carpenter and four others “at once made settlement” at Pawtuxet after receiving their respective shares of land there in 1638 is open to debate (see Carpenter [1901] 17). In the distribution agreement, dated 8 8th month [October] 1638, Roger Williams states that **“all the Meddow ground at Patuxett, bounding vpon the fresh River on both sides is to be impropriated vnto those 13 persons now Incorporated together in our Towne of providence . . . and to be equally divided among them”** (PrTR 15:31; RICR 1:20–21).

The boundary between the Pawtuxet lands and the “Gennerall Comon” of the town of Providence was established on 27 5th month [July] 1640 (followed by many years of controversy) (PrTR 15:2). On 30 11th month [January] 1641[2], **“Socononoco Sachem of Patuxset, . . . granted vnto Wm Arnold, Robert Cole & William Carpenter all the lands Marshes medowes, Islands Rivers ponds lyeing betweene the great fresh or salt River called Patuxset River both aboue & below the fall, the River called Pachasett, & the river called Wanasquatuckett, and the great salt River that is between Providence & Patuxit”** (SLR 1:63 [witnessed at Boston in 1645]).

(Arnold had obtained this deed—to land already purchased by Roger Williams, who [as above] had agreed to divide the Pawtuxet portion among the thirteen first comers—as

part of a bid to remove the troublesome Samuel Gorton and his company, who had settled on the west side of Pawtuxet, and also invalidate the claims of other original proprietors [Irrepressible Democrat 134].)

Shortly before 28 October 1642, “Wm Arnold of Patuxet & Robert Cole & others [having] lately put themselvs & theire families lands & estates vnder the protection & Government of [Massachusetts Bay Colony] . . . complained to [colony authorities] that [the Gortonists] haue since (vppon pretence of a late purchase from the Indians) gone about to deprive them of theire lawfull interest confirmed by 4 yeares posession . . .” (SLR 1:33; NEHGR 4:219).

If possession is taken to mean occupancy, then settlement of Pawtuxet probably occurred sometime between late 1638 and spring 1639. In a contemporaneous account of this dispute, Edward Winslow does indeed state that **“William Arnold & William Carpenter . . . had dwelt [at Pawtuxet] 4 year[s] before [Gorton and company] came there”** (NEHGR 4:218).

There is, however, no record indicating precisely when the Pawtuxet lots were laid out. On 14 2<sup>nd</sup> month [April] 1641, “the Towne of P[ro]vidence . . . Confirmed . . . vnto William Arnold one of the ffree Inhabetantes of the Towne of Providence” his various land holdings in the town proper but not in Pawtuxet (PrTR 1:109–11). Not until 2 2<sup>nd</sup> month [April] 1642, when Thomas Olney of Providence leased most of his Pawtuxet land to Arnold, was the latter man recorded as “of providence, or of pautuxett” (PrTR 1:103–4). On 8 September 1642, the Pawtuxet inhabitants, “upon their petition, were taken under [the] government & p[ro]tection” of Massachusetts Bay Colony (MBCR 2:26–27).

**(The Pawtuxet men, apparently then six in number—William Arnold, Robert Coles, William Carpenter, Benedict Arnold, Zachariah Rhodes, and William Harris—sought thus to avert encroachment by the Gortonists.)** Given the ambiguity surrounding the settlement date, it seems prudent to say that William Carpenter and his Pawtuxet neighbors established themselves there sometime between 1638 and 1642.”

Gene Zubrinsky’s concise statements reveal that there were multiple lands held in common such meadow land on both the north and south of the river and multiple family lands for specific use like wood and farm lots. But specific family living lots within the town were not clarified by any plot map that we would recognize today. But we know the primary living lands were south of the river at its mouth or end.

In case you missed it, in 1638, Roger Williams purchased the land north to the Pawtuxet River, thus founding Providence. Quickly, that also included land on either side of the river falls and its cove with Proprietor purchases. In 1642, Samuel Gorton claimed that he had purchased all the land south of the Pawtuxet River, including the same land on the south side of the river falls, where many of the settlers like Arnold and Carpenter had property. This overlap in claims caused much legal issues that continued for some time.

Daniel H. Carpenter reports in his 1901 book, that Roger Williams had to repeatedly reaffirm and attest to what he did, when he purchased land from the natives. And others later claimed to have purchased the same lands that such lands were sometimes claimed to have been “sold” several times. And there was much time spent in courts, and agreements and efforts to share the land. On page 16 it documents that as late of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of 1666 Roger Williams was still defending his legacy of land purchases.

### **You may be asking yourself why?**

For centuries in Europe, farmers, under Nobles, learned to gather together in defensible locations with mutual support from neighbors. Then they would go ‘a’ field’ to their pastures, meadows, and farms. During winter they would gather what they needed to survive winter closer in and during more hostile times fortify where they lived. If there was a river they usually lived and had fields mostly on their side of the river. This was just practical and most immigrants were familiar with this system. And they adapted such to the new world.

But Roger Williams and the Pawtuxet men had replaced the noble control of old in many respects. The Proprietors of Providence and especially those who went to Pawtuxet, were more like a trust or a company, And at first they ran the Rhode Island Plantations. But this was done without any clear division of order or rule of law. Slowly, Rhode Island began to change from an unlawful place where almost anything goes towards the rule of law. There are many books on this subject and this small paragraph gives only a hint at the frustration, confusion, the stepping on toes, claims and counter claims that the Pawtuxet men had to face.

And for all intents and purposes these six men, William Arnold, Robert Coles, William Carpenter, Benedict Arnold, Zachariah Rhodes, and William Harris effectively claimed and mostly controlled the meadows and lands of Pawtuxet on both sides of the Pawtuxet River including its feeding tributaries. They were the Pawtuxet Proprietors.

Over time this claimed Pawtuxet land (that later became Cranston) got whittled down. Then because of the Six Proprietors external and internal conflicts which resulted in dividing up the land and each eventually receiving hundreds of acres of land. This was over and above the land they purchased and traded from others. Some of their descendants intermarried and further sold and sub-divided the lands their ancestors had held.

Please see the selection of maps in **Section D** that shows claimed land followed by land reductions until the Pawtuxet land becomes divided between present day Cranston & Warwick Counties and only called the Pawtuxet Village today.

### **Native American relations**

Mostly, these early Rhode Islanders had treated the Native Americans differently. This by following the example of Roger Williams who let the Indians determine the price for the land in trade goods and they granted the Europeans land. Generally speaking this mostly worked and natives found that there were ways to settle dispute without violence with these new neighbors.

One may argue that the locals did not understand the difference between European possessions of land and use. And that psychological babble and beads took advantage of Native Americans. And yes, this did happen. But in Rhode Island things started differently with better intent. But, as we will soon find out things did not work out well for the Natives like in many other areas of New England.

And things were changing with more Europeans moving into Rhode Island. This no doubt caused more tension among the next generation of Native Americans that were feeling more and more pressure to give up their lands. Europeans once less numerous were now more numerous and making drastic changes seemingly to everything. It was a fuse that was waiting to be lit.

### **King Philip's War 1675-1676**

A rival to the Narragansett Indians were the Wampanoag Tribe. Under Chief Metacomet (aka King Philip) they first invaded killing and enslaving the friendly local Native tribes. Then they encouraged by their example, hostility toward the Europeans settlers. They got many natives to join them.

Hostilities started in other colonies. By the end of 1674, after the hostile natives had fortified the old Wampanoag village in southern Rhode Island, with their new slaves and converts, they began to attack burning and pillaging in southern Rhode Island.

Prior to this Rhode Islanders had been pretty much left alone as most of the fighting was in the adjacent colonies. The Europeans were not prepared and suffered greatly at first. As the militias began to fight back, Rhode Island settlers were dragged into the war.

In southern Rhode Island hundreds of sheep, cattle, horses and other properties were stolen and many Europeans and their Indian friends died trying to defend property and families.

It was not until mid-December of 1675 that Colonial Militia forces destroyed the Native fortified stronghold in southern Rhode Island and even killed the natives who had been enslaved by the hostiles.

Chief Metacomet escaped that massacre but was later killed by another native working with the Europeans. And the fighting mostly ended in late 1676. Some minor raids and fighting happened into early 1677. But within a decade or two most Native Americans became more assimilated, left or otherwise were pushed out of Rhode Island.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Rhode\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Rhode_Island)

### **Why is this War so important?**

We know the Europeans were unprepared and when the United Colonies did gather their forces, their conduct with war was one of overkill in retaliation.

History reports that of the settlements attacked south of the Pawtuxet River, that on 27 January 1675/1676 that southern part of the Pawtuxet Village was totally burned down during King Philip's War.

Most of the early village was south of the river, but it was not fortified. To cross the river back then, you had to either go up stream or cross the cove by boat. Historically many of these river crossings used a rope system to assist boats to cross using different techniques. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cable\\_ferry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cable_ferry)

At lower water river heights, one could easily wade or push animals across the river farther upstream. Only at the lowest of tides, and during low water could you wade the the river mouth then cross the sand bars and a swampy area to get to the northern side. Please remember that the river back then was not tame like it is today. It flooded frequently and adjacent meadows were rich in nutrients for farming and grazing because of this.

During the day most of the men folk were tending their fields and grazing animals. The goal to burn down structures allowed most of the people to flee. You could retreat to safety to the north side of the cove or the small peninsula to the east by boat. The river and bay provided a defensive line. Odds are the water was cold in January as was the temperature and fording the river mouth would have been very dangerous.

But what about that blockhouse or fortified structure that William Carpenter supposedly had? Such a building would not be out in the middle of farming, grazing and common lands. It was more likely where his family lived that was where his heart and heart was.

It was in or near the present day Pawtuxet Village either on the north or south side of the river. The stories were that the villagers gathered together at the Carpenter house and it survived the raid. *But did it?*



Reportedly William Carpenter, the son of our William Carpenter, died defending that house. However, we know he died between 27 April 1676 and before 10 February 1679/1680 likely in Pawtuxet. **This was clearly sometime after the village was burned down on 27 January 1675/1676.**

**Side Note:** Before 1752 in the colonies used the Gregorian calendar and the year did not end on 31 December but the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. This was due to errors that occurred over the centuries. The Julian calendar we use today fixed that. Old style dates compare to new style for dates from 1 January to 25 March are given dual years to recognize this. [https://carpentercousins.com/Calendars\\_Dating\\_Styles.pdf](https://carpentercousins.com/Calendars_Dating_Styles.pdf)

I suspect, but can not prove that people conflated stories and mixed up the facts. If William Carpenter was living south of the river, his house burned down. There is no document citing this story before the mid 1800s. But we know his family survived the Indian attack that late January day.

While the War of 1675/1676 was the start of years of terror and desolation, it was also time for frantic building of structures to defend with.

From a military viewpoint the mills north of the river needed to be defended; boats landing areas were needed to bring in supplies and militia troops had to be deployed. And on the north side of the Falls was a road that went north to the City of Providence. This would be important for communications and supplies.

North of the Falls is where your primary defenses would have to be. South of the Falls would also need to be defended because of an early wharf or two. This means multiple areas to defend with fortifications.

Whether the new stockades and other defensive structures were put on Carpenter's land is unknown. We know that between 1675 to before his death on 7 September 1685, he was well respected and a leader. And leaders make a big difference in conflicts.

Add in that William Carpenter was a skilled carpenter by trade and he would be doubly invested in any fortified structures after the village had been burned. After the war, he would undoubtedly help rebuild homes.

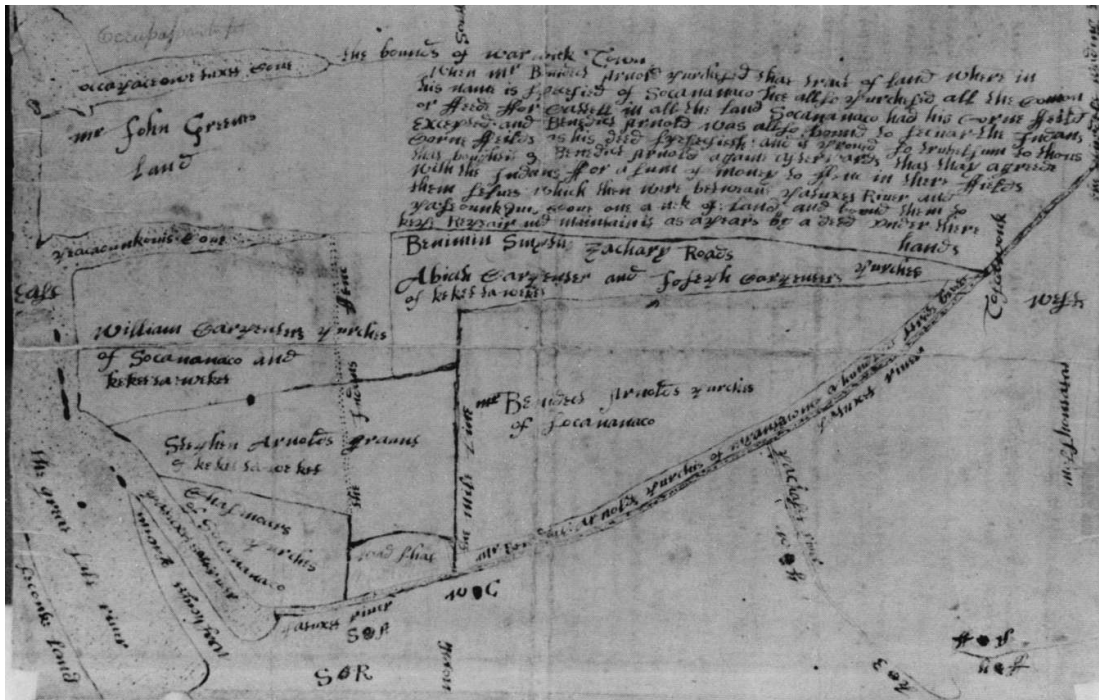
Sadly there are no traces today of that or other fortified positions, time has wiped away the trace and memory of that time. Even the burial pits and isolated graves and the memories of dear lost ones are lost to time.

No earlier than 1 July 1661

Is there any document where William Carpenter's personal land was once located?

Yes!

This map is hard to read. This was made no earlier than 1 July 1661, and this documentation clearly shows the name William Carpenter on the left side middle. This is the earliest map I have seen that documents where William Carpenter lived in Pawuxet.



When I first saw this map, it was image 13 of 56 at:

[https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs\\_zips\\_downloads/survey\\_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf](https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/survey_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf)

It describes the 1661 deed from Kekettowicket to Smith, Rhodes, Joseph Carpenter, and Abiah Carpenter that describes that parcel as "bounded on the south side with the souther most swamp that runneth Eastward into the Cove called paseunqua Cove."

I should mention that when I first saw this "deed map" I was a bit confused, poorly read a few names, thought the river was a road and somehow got directions messed up. And I turned to an old mentor named **Gene Zubrinsky** who I have known over the last quarter of a century. He literally set me straight and pointed me in the correct direction.

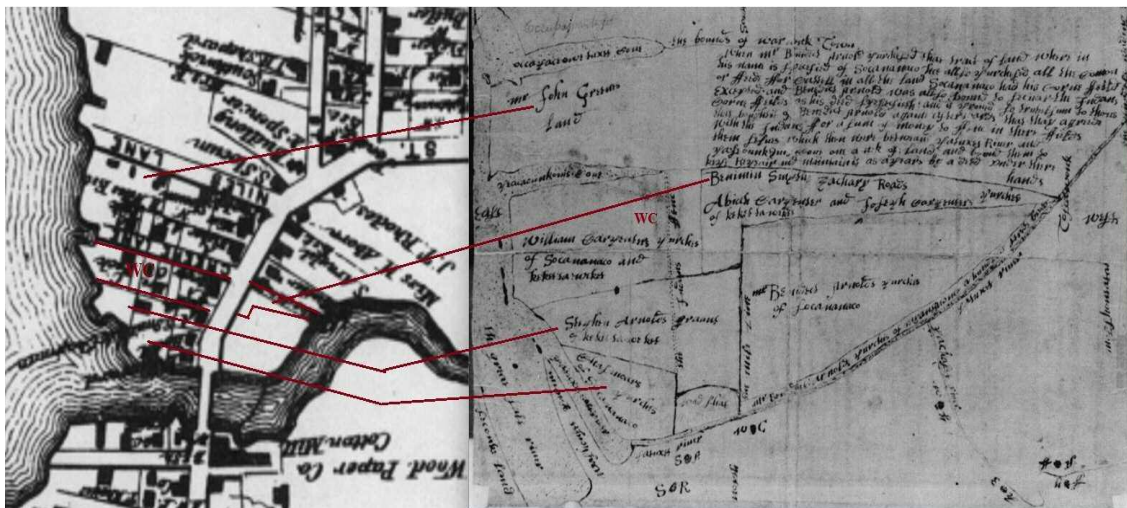
Here is what Gene wrote about this map image.

“The map is consistent with purchases beginning at least as early as 1643 and extending at least into the early 1660s by William Arnold; his sons, Benedict and Stephen; sons-in-law, Zachary Rhodes and William1 Carpenter; Carpenter's son Joseph2; Abiah3 Carpenter of Rehoboth; Benjamin Smith; and John Greene of Providence (also named on the map).

The map’s location of the “Patuxet” River confirms that the purchases were in the Pawtuxet section of northernmost Warwick (now in Kent County) and were from respective sachems Socananaco and Kekettowicket, both of whom are named on the map.

Rhodes, Smith, Joseph Carpenter, and Abiah Carpenter were all named in a deed from Kekettowicket dated 1 July 1661 (More Early Records of the Town of Warwick, Rhode Island, ed. Cherry Fletcher Bamburg and Jane Fletcher Fiske [Boston, 2001], 153–54 [cited in my Abiah Carpenter sketch]).

The map—looking southerly, with compass directions (N, S, E, W) reversed and the Pawtuxet River shown immediately below the various tracts—was therefore created after that date.”



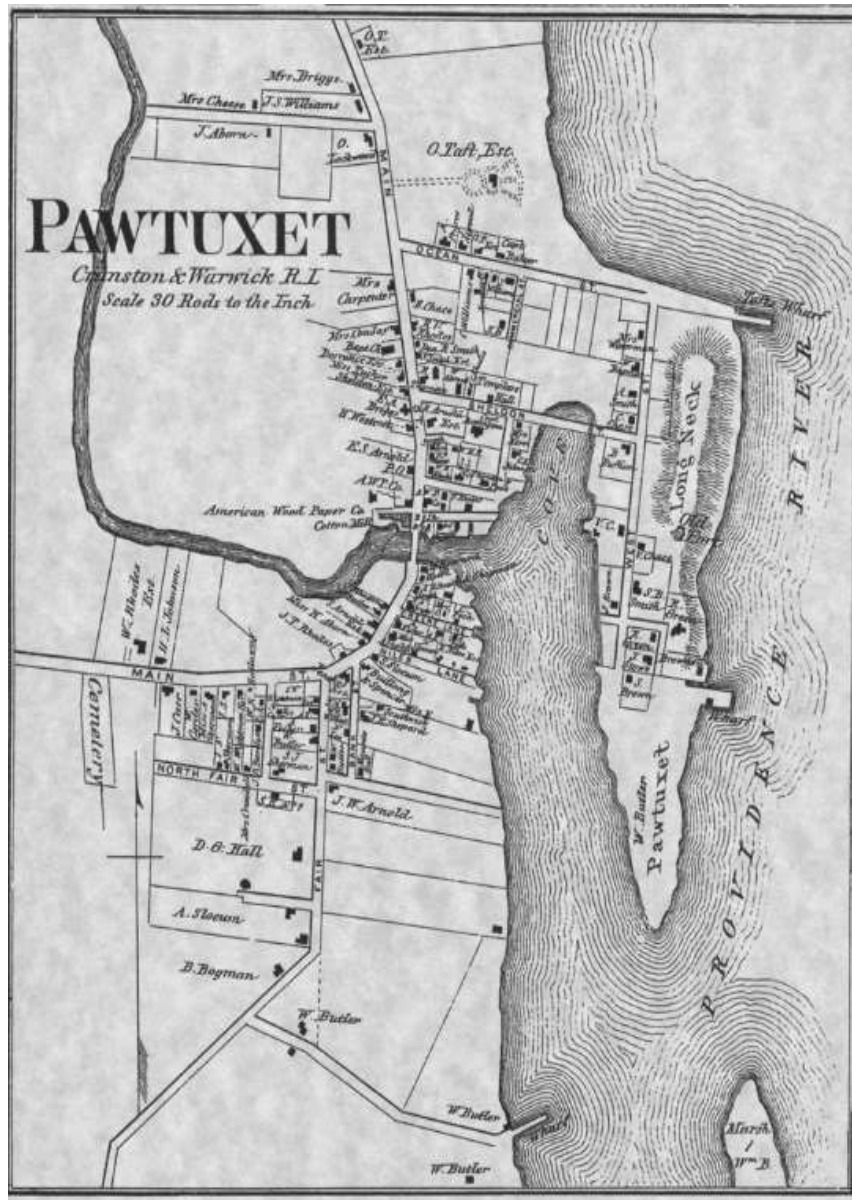
While the image here is a little small, this is a match up with an upside down 1870 map. The following image will show the 1870 map correct side up. See **Section C** for larger images of these pictures.

This 1870 image is number 23 of 56 at:

[https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs\\_zips\\_downloads/survey\\_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf](https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/survey_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf)

The next image the upright image of the 1870 map. The general area of the old Carpenter land is within the red rectangle. Please note that there is a Mrs. Carpenter and a few Arnold surnames cited. I have not identified them.

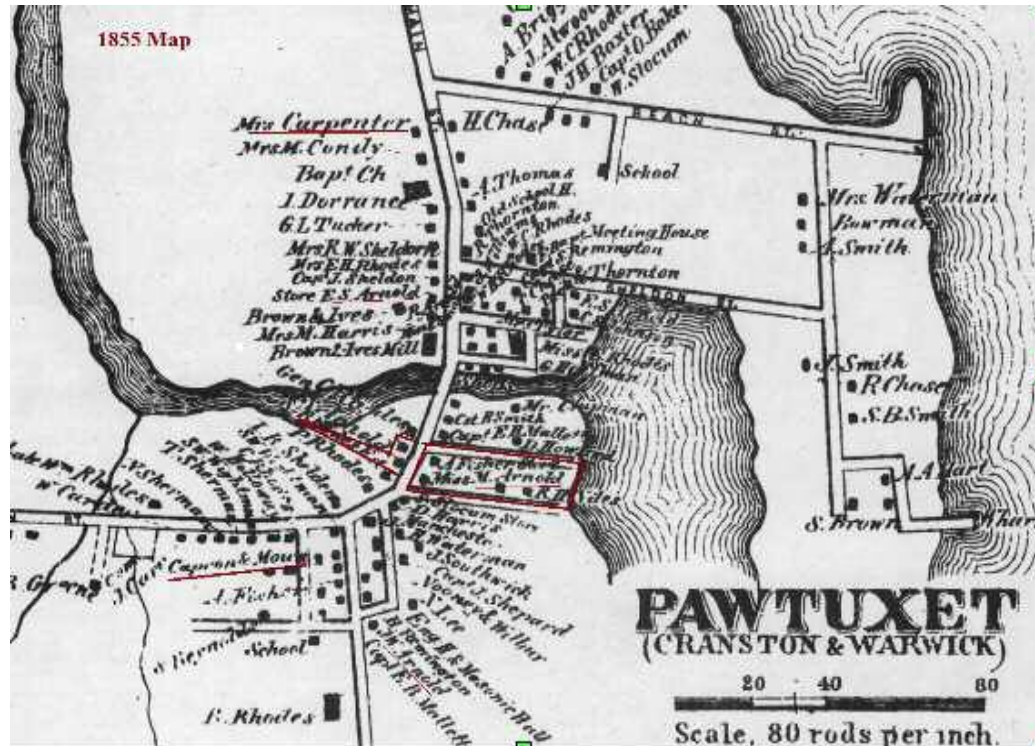
Following that image one from 1855, and I show it deliberately because there are two Carpenters cited on it – unknown relationship – and again it shows again about where the Carpenter lots were located back circa 1661.





This last 1855 image is number 20 of 56 at:

[https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs\\_zips\\_downloads/survey\\_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf](https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/survey_pdfs/pawtuxet.pdf)



### Is that where he was buried?

Now that we have found where the William Carpenter lot is on a map, “made no earlier than 1 July 1661,” is that where he died and was buried? Sadly, no.

The image found likely shows where he raised his family in the two decades previous. After that 1675-1776 King Philip’s War, the old village to the south of the Falls had to be rebuilt. And we are still a decade away to Carpenter’s death.

As the community was rebuilt, our William Carpenter was part of that. He was carpenter by trade and a leader of the community.

Please remember that one of the most consistent thing in life is change.

In time, some of the original founders of the village had died, some moved away and the common lands once held by 6 Proprietors, were now less, and in the process of becoming private land.

For the Arnolds and the Carpenters this worked out very well. Land was traded, bought and consolidated. The Arnold Family became one of the biggest land holders, mostly to the south of the river. And the Carpenter Family became one of the largest, mostly north of the river. Please note the word 'mostly' is used because it is relative over a period of time. And it was the Patriarchs of the families who had to decide which of their children got what land.

Knowing about the fragility of life, William Carpenter wrote a will. He gives land or other property to his children that survived and some grandchildren. And maybe we will find another clue where he may have been buried. So the journey of discovery continues!

### **The 1680 Will**

The last will and testament of William Carpenter, who died 7 September 1685, “of Pautuxett in ye townshipp of Providence,” had his will dated 10 February 1679/1680 and it was proved with a codicil on 1 October 1685. To see the typed 35 items of the will, the codicil and the inventory of his household, please see the following book citation. Focus on pages 135 to 151 and pages 278 to 281. Please note that this book (v.06) and its 20 sister volumes are available in many locations on line. And the handwritten images for those books can also be found on line. I found the transcriptions very good.

I encourage any researcher to understand the dividing lands as documented in the 1660 to 1685 time period. Without this understanding, one can be readily and easily confused. Names, places and descriptions then are quite different from today. For example see the related maps in **Section D** below.

Let me remind the reader we do not have proof or a document saying where he lived from 1680 to 1685. To be clear, William Carpenter's 1680 will does not say anything similar to “the property I dwelt on” or “this is my home.” If it did, this article would not have had to be written. Thus we have to rely on deductive reasoning to estimate.

Instead of focusing on the hundreds of acres of land mentioned east and west of the “7 mile line” and from the division line between the Town of Providence and Pawtuxet to the river by the same, I will focus on land mentioned that is now in and adjacent to Pawtuxet Village. Why? The is the most likely place William Carpenter was living.

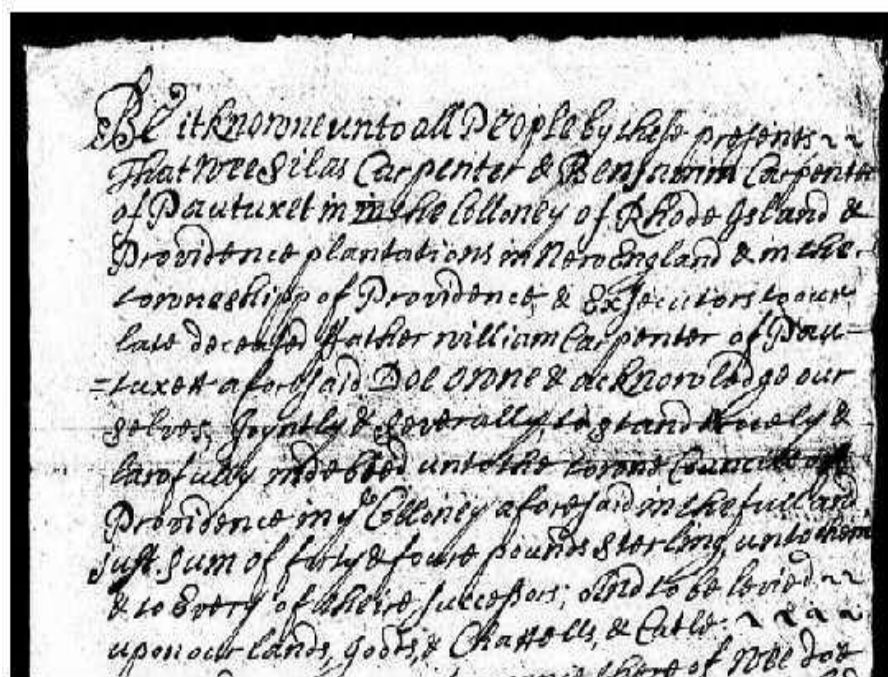
To be clear, William Carpenter's 1680 will does not say anything similar to “the property I dwelt on” or “this is my home.” If it did, this article would not have had to be written!

And it should be land suitable for farming, a vegetable garden, a place for William and his wife Elizabeth to live in the older years. This means the property already had a house and farm structures after that horrendous 1675-1776 King Philip's War.



Typed extract from page 136 compared to written document.

Be it knowne unto all people by these presents That wee  
Silas Carpenter & Benjamin Carpenter of Pautuxett in y<sup>e</sup> Col-  
loney of Rhode Jsland & Providence plantations in New Eng-  
land, & in y<sup>e</sup> townshipp of Providence, & Exsecutors to our  
late deceased father william Carpenter of Pautuxett aforesaid,  
Doe owne & acknowledg ourselves, joyntly & severally to stand  
truely & lawfully indebted unto the towne Councill of Provi-  
dence in y<sup>e</sup> Colloney aforesaid in y<sup>e</sup> full & just sum of forty &  
four pounds sterling unto them & to Every of their suces-  
sors, & to be levied upon our lands goods, & Chattells &  
Cattle.

A photograph of a handwritten document, likely a will, written in cursive script. The text is written on aged, slightly discolored paper. The handwriting is clear but somewhat slanted. The text matches the typed extract above, starting with "Be it knowne unto all people by these presents" and ending with "upon our lands, goods, & Chattells, & Cattle." The document is framed by a dark border.

The image above shows a typed and hand written portion of William Carpenter's 1680 will. It is from "The Early Records of the Town of Providence" – Volume VI (aka V. 06) <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/378566/?offset=2&return=1#page=1&viewer=picture&o=info&n=0&q=>

## Item 5

Item 5 of the Will of William Carpenter – His two sons, Silas and Benjamin Carpenter, gain property “in the Neck Called Pautuxett Neck” and “in that place Called the vineyard.”

An isthmus is a narrow strip of land connecting two larger land areas, usually with water on either side. A peninsula is a piece of land that is almost surrounded by water but connected to mainland (via an isthmus).

Here I pause because the term “Neck” today is an isthmus (aka a land bridge) which is a narrow piece of land connecting two larger land areas often surrounded by water. A peninsula is a piece of land that is almost surrounded by water but connected to mainland via an isthmus. But in the past it could also describe a piece of land that looked like a neck geographically. In Rhode Island there are many “necks.”

Near Patuxet Village is a small peninsula had been known since about 1776 as the Fort Warwick Neck, Fort Pawtuxet Neck, and eventually Fort Neck. By the 1860s, it was known as the “Long Neck” then later as the Pawtuxet Neck when it was developed. [https://www.warwickhistory.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=216](https://www.warwickhistory.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=216)

Thankfully, William Carpenter clarified by calling the neck the Pawtuxet Neck. And that is where there was good farm land and grazing land. See the images below.

The Vineyard then was not a place to cultivate grapes for wine like today. It was a place abundant in wild grapes. Being next to the river and the oxbows, it was subject to flooding. I cite the following with emphasis added.

“The charter of Rhode Island, granted by King Charles II in 1663, contains the expression of the royal intention to “give all fitting encouragement to the planting of vineyards (with which the soil and climate seem to concur). The judgment is correct: Rhode Island ought to be a wine growing region, but the social and economic conditions were evidently wrong, despite the example set briefly by the Huguenots.

The state of things in New England generally was summed up in 1680 by the early historian William Hubbard:

Many places do naturally abound with grapes, which gave great hopes of fruitful vineyards in after time: but as yet either skill is wanting to cultivate and order the roots of those wild vines, and reduce them to a pleasant sweetness, or time is not yet to be spared to look after the culture of such fruits as rather tend to the bene , or melius esse , of a place, than to the bare esse , and subsistence thereof.

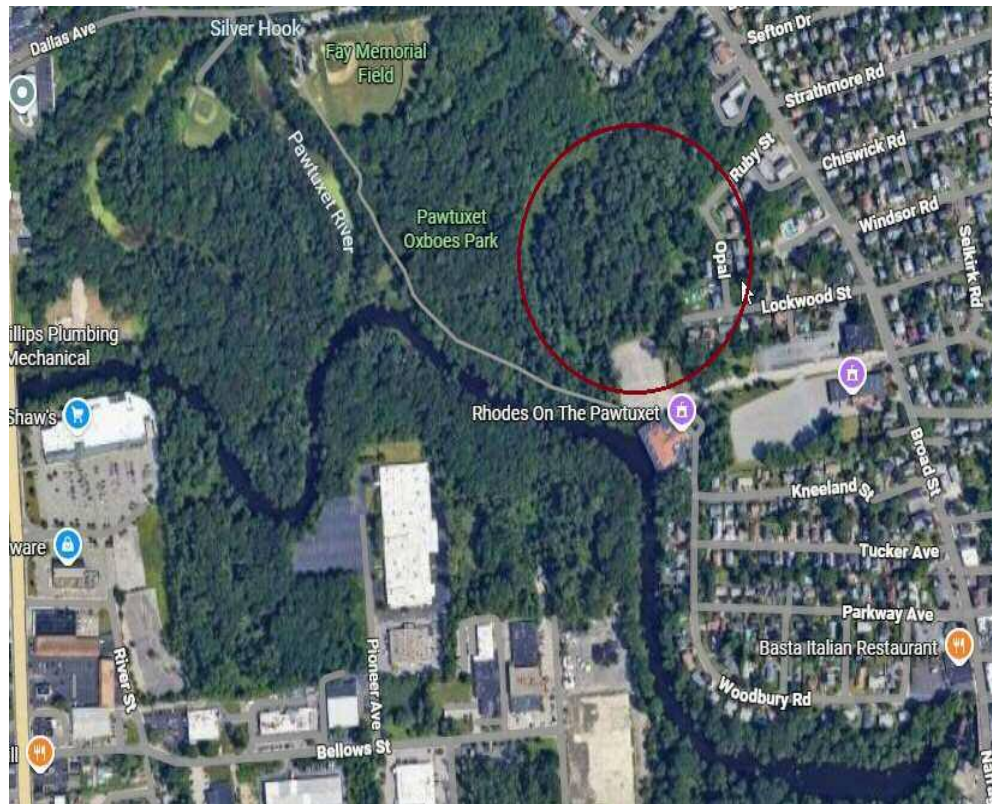
Even the growing of grapes in farm gardens never caught on in New England. The Yankee tradition was simply to make use of the wild grapes growing freely in every wood, so that the work of selection and cultivation to improve the native varieties never really got started.”

This is from: <https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft967nb63q&chunk.id=d0e869&toc.id=&brand=ucpress> – See the end of page 30 and the start of Page 31.

When William Carpenter wrote in his will, “in that place Called the vineyard” - he was referring to an area abundant in wild grapes. Cattle readily eat the leaves, vine and fruit as part of their diet. But care has to be taken to make sure they mostly eat grass to avoid bloating. Other animals, some more than other, especially humans, ate grapes also.

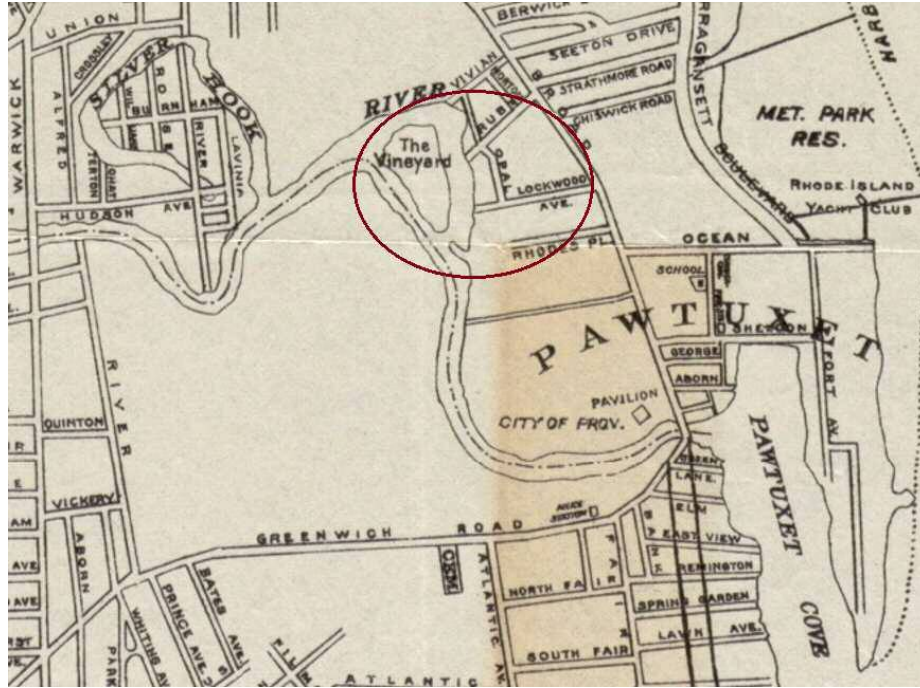
However today the Vineland is not called that. Just north of the Pawtuxet River and west of the narrow neck of land is part of the eastern side of the Pawtuxet Oxboes Park. That is where the Vineyard once was. It was on the flood plain then.

Remember that some eastern parts have been filled in over the last couple centuries due to development. The following images will show the general area where it once was.



Above is the 2025 Google Maps and older maps follow.







<https://gaspee.org/Pawtuxet1870map1000.gif>

### Item 11

Item 11 of the Will of William Carpenter – He gives his son Ephraim and daughter Priscilla Vincent title and interest “in and to that Cove lieing neere ye placed Called ye landing place (in pawtuxett) the which Cove I bought of Thomas Angell of Providence ; The sayd Cove to be Equally devided betwixt them ...”

The landing place that he is referring to *is likely* where the oldest two wharfs (long gone) were just below the opening of the river on the south side. Between the land of “Mr. John Greene” & William Carpenter is a cove. See the map in **Section C**. Today that would be at or very close to the present day Pawtuxet Village Park. See the image above. <https://exploreri.org/siteReport.php?siteID=220&src=criteria>

Before the first dam and wharves were, this cove allowed access to the river. The wild river had then sandbars that directed the river current southward past the cove. When the tide was right, you could easily go up river. During flood times the adjacent sandbars fluctuated quite a bit. It was a long time later that sand was dredged from the river mouth.

Back in the mid to late 1600's, salmon spawned up the river and that cove pretty much controlled river access. And because of the tides, the current could fluctuate greatly near the mouth. Simple fish traps would allow fish to enter and not exit. Native Americans had used such traps as did the Europeans. That made it a valuable location.

What I find interesting is that the William Carpenter lot cited on the map made “**no earlier than 1 July 1661**” and its location is NOT mentioned in his will. See that named portion and related map above where those Carpenter lots were located circa 1660 to 1685.

One has to assume the property lot was sold or given away prior to the writing and execution of the 1680 will.

### Item 31

Item 31 of the Will of William Carpenter – gives sons “Silas & Benjamin Carpenter **all my Carts, Ploughs, & all tacklin[ ]** to them or any of them belonging ... As **also all other Tooles of what sort so ever** I give to my two aforesaid sons Silas & Benjamin ...”

### Item 32

Item 32 of the Will of William Carpenter – “I Give unto **Elizabeth my deare & loveing wife** in Consideration of all her demand in ye law, ... And further my will is, **That my two sons Silas & Benjamin take ye whole & sole Care of Elizabeth my loveing wife their mother** to provide for her in all Respects Conditions as a woman ought to be provided for duering her natural! life **& to see her body descently Buryed.**



### Item 33

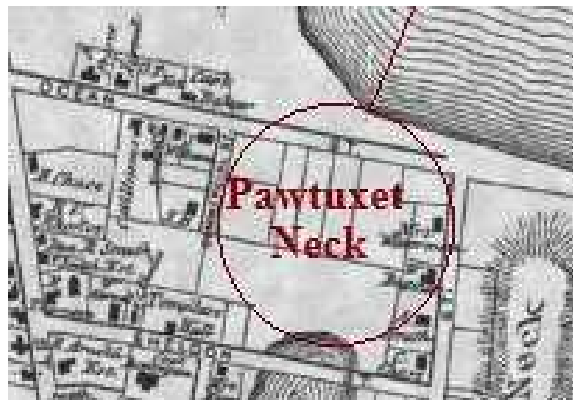
Item 33 of the Will of William Carpenter – “And ffurther my will is that my two sons, Silas **Carpenter & Benjamin Carpenter be my whole & sole Exsecutors** to pay all ye debts owing by me at my decease & to receive in all debts owing to me **& to see my Body descently Buried ...**”

### In deductive conclusion

**If a father ... gave away** his carts, ploughs, tackle and tools to two specific sons ... **and** charged them to take care of their mother while she lived after the father’s death ... **and** gave them farming land to till ... **and** reminded them to make sure that the father and later their mother were decently buried ... **one could reasonably assume or conclude the following.** (See **Section E**)

**That the property “in the Neck Called Pautuxett Neck”** had a house where the mother then lived and that property would have had a small family burial plot where their parents could be decently buried. As was as the custom of that time. See **Section B**.

Thus, we can conclude within this reasoning that William Carpenter (born about 1610 – died 1685 Rhode Island) was most likely buried on his homestead **”in the Neck Called Pautuxett Neck”** which was in Pawtuxet, Providence town(ship), and that is now in Pawtuxet Village, Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island. And we can also conclude that his grave is lost to time.



### Erratta

Remember that there was no parish church cemetery anywhere near by Pawtuxet Village in 1685 that William Carpenter and his wife could easily attend and be properly buried like people in England. See **Section B**. That process did not start in Rhode Island until the early 1700s with one notable exception. The links following provide their information starting with two from the very early 1700s.

<https://ripnewport.com/trinity.html>

<https://www.providenceri.gov/parks/north-burial-ground/>

The oldest Common Burying Ground in Rhode Island dates back to 1640 and that was in Newport. Reverend John Clarke provided land to provide decent burials for all.

<https://ripnewport.com/commonbg.html>

By the way, there are only about 10 grave markers from 1685 or before in Newport. And only 10 are surnamed Carpenter. The oldest Carpenter recorded buried there is from 1750.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/122874639/charity-carpenter> and her husband Hezekiah Carpenter is buried there also. But no William Carpenter is listed there.

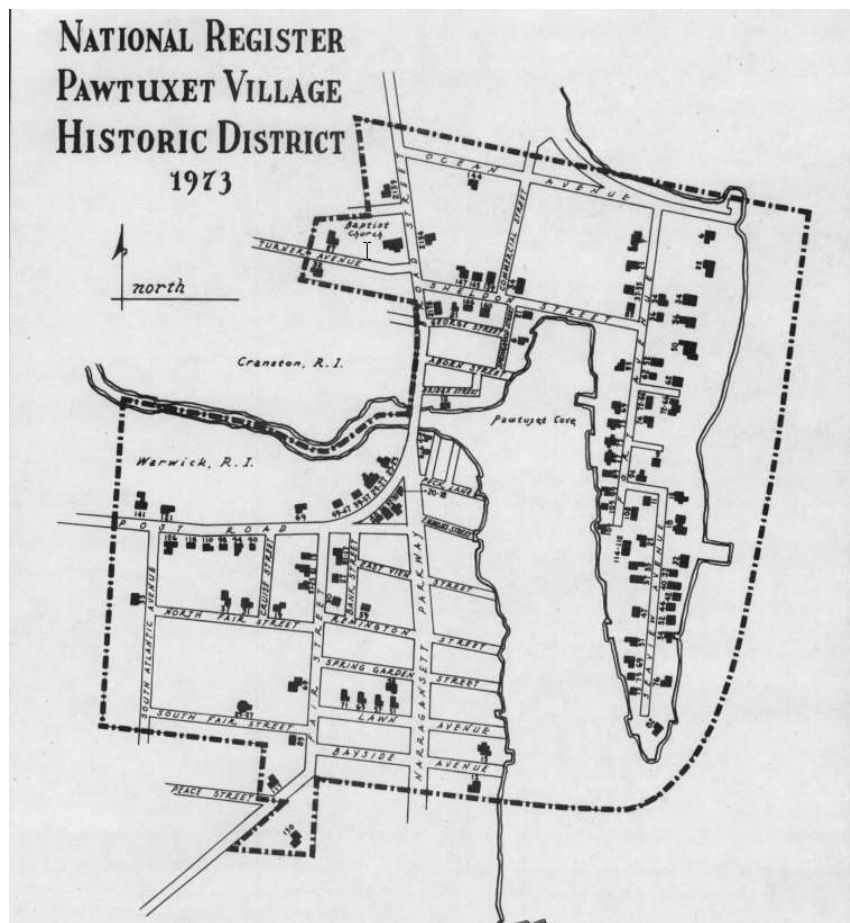
The area in question in and around Pawtuxet Village is rather small. The following images will help clarify this.



This image shows how small the area in question really is.



The distance from the Benjamin Carpenter Monument Lot to the general area cited where William Carpenter lived for decades, is just about one mile as the crow flies.

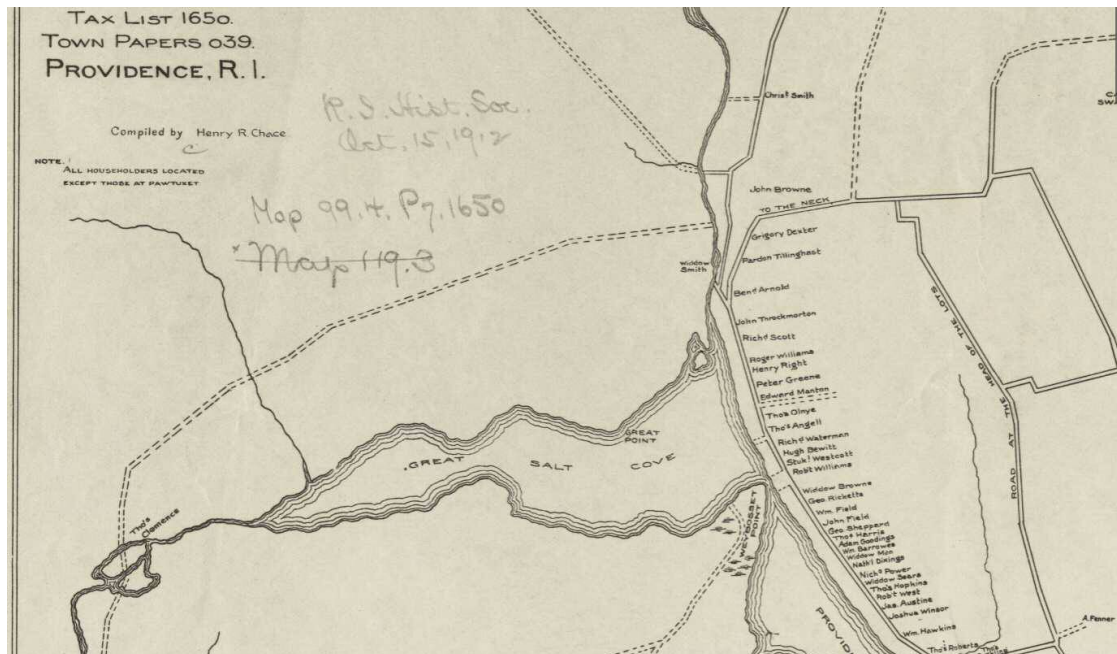
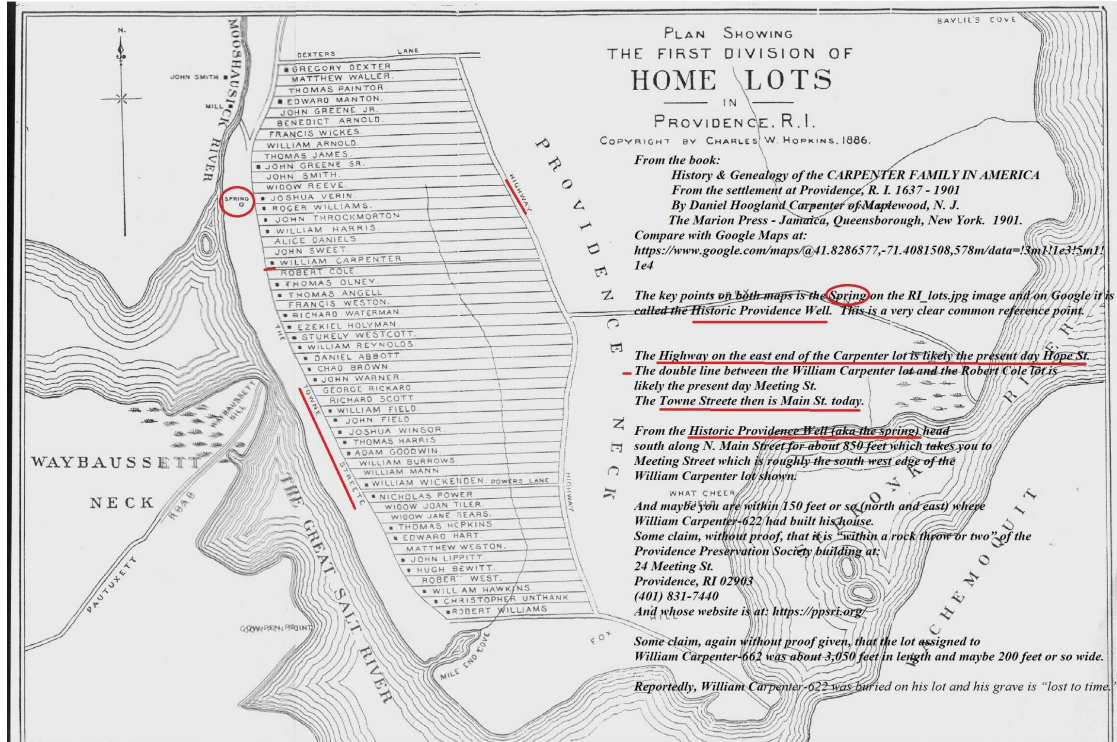


The Pawtuxet Village Historic District in 1973.



## Maps Section A

William Carpenter-662 was born about 1610 in Amesbury, Wiltshire, England. He died on 7 Sep 1685 in Pawtuxet, now, Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island.



## **Section B**

### **The Unique Nature of Rhode Island Burial Grounds**

People coming to Rhode Island for the first time are usually surprised at how rural the state is and at how many cemeteries are scattered throughout woods and fields. The majority of the cemeteries listed in the Cemetery Database are small family lots that have been abandoned for many years and can be difficult to access. Additionally, most are not owned or maintained by any church or town. They are owned by descendants of those buried in the lots, usually by reservations placed in the deeds when the land was sold. These burial grounds remain from earlier centuries when Rhode Island settlers, unlike those of the other New England colonies, buried their dead on private family land instead of in central community locations such as a town green.

The political and religious history of the Rhode Island colony is behind this practice. Rhode Island was the only colony to have separation of church and state. In other colonies, each town was to some extent a parish of the church. New towns were formed by splitting off a second or third parish. The center of town was the green, where all public buildings were located, including the church. When taxes were collected, they were used to pay the minister's salary. Residents of the town were buried around the church.

In Rhode Island, which was founded on the principle of religious tolerance, the churches were much smaller, and there were many scattered throughout the towns. Therefore the town green system did not develop (with the exception of the few towns that were originally part of Massachusetts, like Little Compton). Churches included 7th Day Baptists, Six Principle Baptists, Episcopal, Quaker, Jewish, Congregational, and splinter groups like Ann Hutchinson's followers. Most of these churches did not have cemeteries and most towns, except the large port towns with small house lots like Newport, Bristol, and Providence, did not have large cemeteries until about 1850, or 100 to 200 years after the other colonies.

<https://www.rihs.org/rhode-island-cemetery-database/>

#### **Pawtuxet Village**

Pawtuxet's occupation by English settlers, about 1638 predates Samuel Gorton's 1642 settlement at Shawomet. Pawtuxet was a stop along the Pequot Trail (later known as Post Road which connected Providence to the Narragansett country and the settlements of southeastern Connecticut. Its location in a sheltered cove contributed to the Village's growth as a seaport in the 18th century. The falls on the river spurred industrial development in the 19th century. Textiles mills erected in 1800 and 1810 were destroyed by fire in 1859 and 1875 respectively, thus ending the Village's role as a manufacturing center.



Pawtuxet Village's location at the terminus of one of Providence's streetcar lines in 1870 lead to the village's development as a resort center. In 1892, electric trolley lines (the first in the area) contributed to the village's growth as a suburban neighborhood. The completion of Narragansett Parkway and Bayside Avenue in 1923 ultimately altered Pawtuxet's street layout and traffic patterns.

Pawtuxet Village has the greatest concentration of Colonial and Federal era architecture in Warwick.

<https://www.warwickri.gov/historic-district-commission/pages/overview-warwicks-historic-districts>

### Pawtuxet Village

Pawtuxet is a village at the mouth of the Pawtuxet River, and is in the present cities of Cranston and Warwick, to the south of Providence, RI. Pawtuxet means "Little Falls" in the native language. The area was originally occupied by the members of the Pawtuxet tribe, part of the larger Narragansett Indian tribe. In 1638, Rhode Island founder, Roger Williams, purchased the property extending south from Providence to the Pawtuxet River.

In 1642 Samuel Gorton was banished from the neighboring colony of Massachusetts and, along with a group of fellow dissidents, moved to Rhode Island. Shortly thereafter [should be 4 years before and NOT his followers] his followers William Arnold, William Harris, and William Carpenter, settled along the meadows of the Pawtuxet and the harbor of Pawtuxet Cove. After falling into disagreement with Roger Williams and the residents of the established settlements in Providence, and Pawtuxet, Gorton and his band purchased from the Narragansett Indians a tract of land south of the Pawtuxet River, in the hope of governing themselves without being harassed by the civil and religious authorities in control elsewhere. The town of Warwick, Rhode Island, was thus founded.

[Note: for those in the Midwest of American, where "town" and "village" are legally the same sort of entity, remember that in New England, a "town" can be a larger political entity, midway between county and village.]

Some of those south of the Pawtuxet River insisted they were not a part of Providence. Fairly early, the political disputes lead to the line between Warwick and Providence being established as the Pawtuxet River. The southern part of the village of Pawtuxet became a part of Warwick, while the part of the village north of the river remained a part of Providence. In 1754 the town of Cranston was split off from Providence in 1754.

Therefore, although in 1772, Pawtuxet Village was a separate entity from other villages, Pawtuxet had its northern section in the town of Cranston, while its southern section was in the town of Warwick.

<https://bucklinsociety.net/colonial-history/pawtuxet-pawtucket/>

**GREAT MEADOW HOLLOW.** A valley, mentioned frequently in the early records, directly south of the present junction of Lonsdale avenue and Main street, in Pawtucket. It appears on the Lockwood Map of 1835, where it is called Meadow Hollow. The Great Meadow itself lay on the Moshassuck River to the west of the Hollow. (*P. R.* ii: 7; iii: 98; xi: 165; xiv: 162.)

**LONG NECK.** The neck, still often so called, extending north and south, to the east of the cove at Pawtuxet. It was also called the Little Neck. (*P. R.* v: 55, 57; xv: 95; and Hopkins Atlas of 1882.) On a plat of 1661, in the R. I. Hist. Soc. MSS., v: 11, this neck is marked Washouset Point.

**NECK.** "The Neck" was the land between the Moshassuck and Seekonk rivers, and extending on the north somewhat beyond the present line between Providence and Pawtucket. Mentioned in the records as early as 1642. (*P. R.* i: 110; ii: 1; and MS. Town Papers, 01291.)

PAWTUCKET. The name, Pawtucket River, an original boundary of Providence, was used interchangeably with the name Seekonk River for that part of the stream between Pawtucket and the present India Point, as well as for that part of the present Providence River south of India Point. The name was also invariably applied to the river north of Pawtucket, now called the Blackstone River. Pawtucket Fields, also an original Providence boundary, were on the western

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RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

side of the river and south of Pawtucket Falls. (*P. R.* ii: 129; iv: 71; v: 224; xiv: 112, 194.)

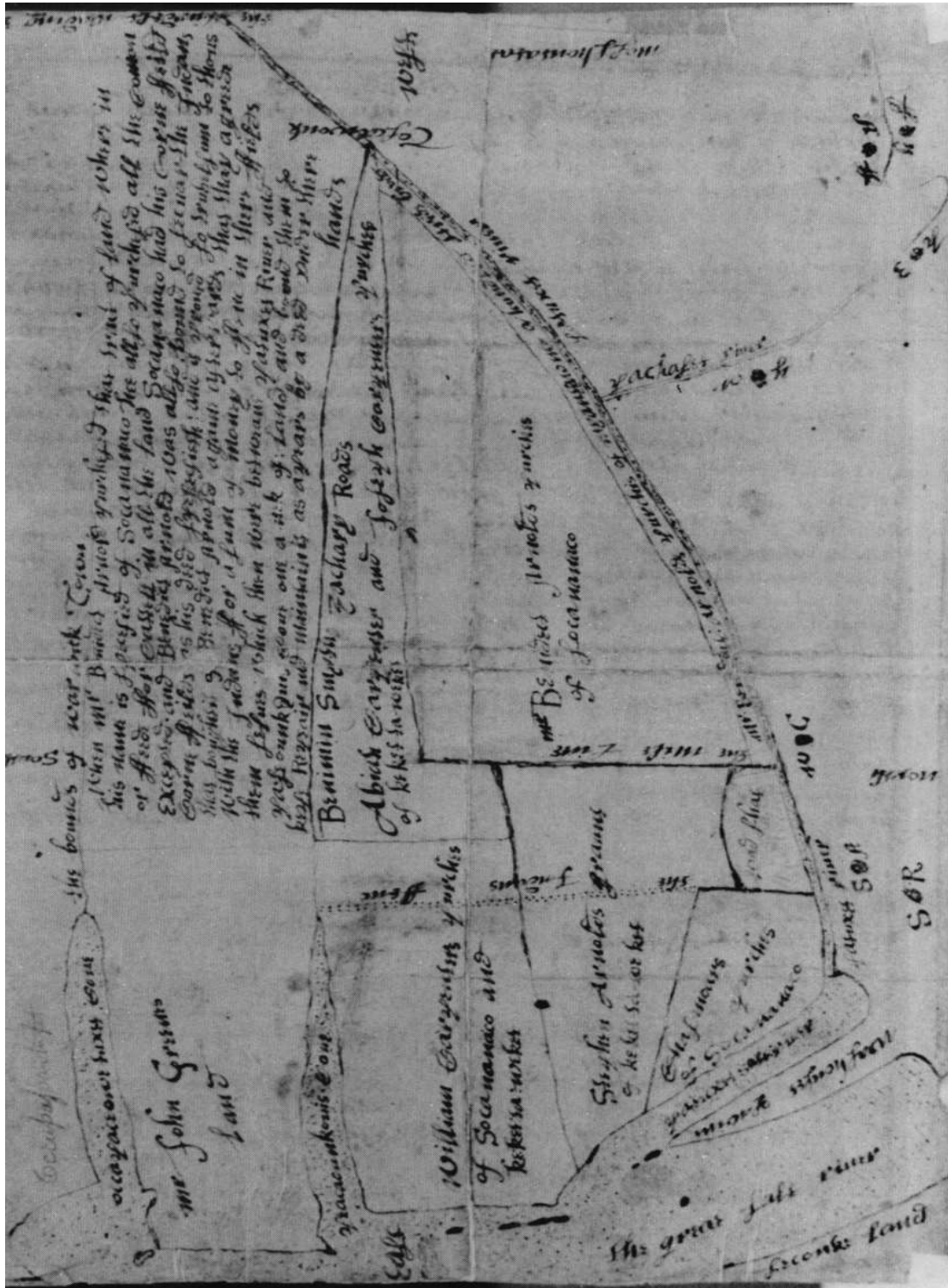
PAWTUXET. An original boundary of Providence and a name given then, as now, to the locality, the falls and the river. Also in one or two cases called Pootatugock. (*P. R.* iv: 18, 71; xiv: 64. There is an early plat of the lands north of Pawtuxet reproduced in Rider's *Hist. Tract*, ser. 2, no. 4, p. 100, and a hitherto unnoticed plat of 1661 of the lands south of the river in R. I. Hist. Soc. MSS., v: 11.)

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RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

TOSKEUNKE. The meadows on both sides of the Pawtuxet River, south of the present Warwick line and to the east of the village of Pontiac. It was affirmed that the river itself at that place was called Toskeunke, but it was apparently never so termed, except by some of the Warwick settlers. (*P. R.* iv: 161; *Harris Papers*, pp. 57, 298, 310; plats in Rider's *Hist. Tract*, ser. 2, no. 4, p. 100; and R. I. Hist. Soc. MSS. v: 11; and Warner Papers, no. 63, 75, in J. C. B. Library. The land between Pontiac and Meshanticut Brook is called Chee-Toskeunke on the plat in Rider's *Hist. Tract*, and there is occasional use of the name (See Copies of Warwick Records, p. 33, in R. I. Hist. Society).

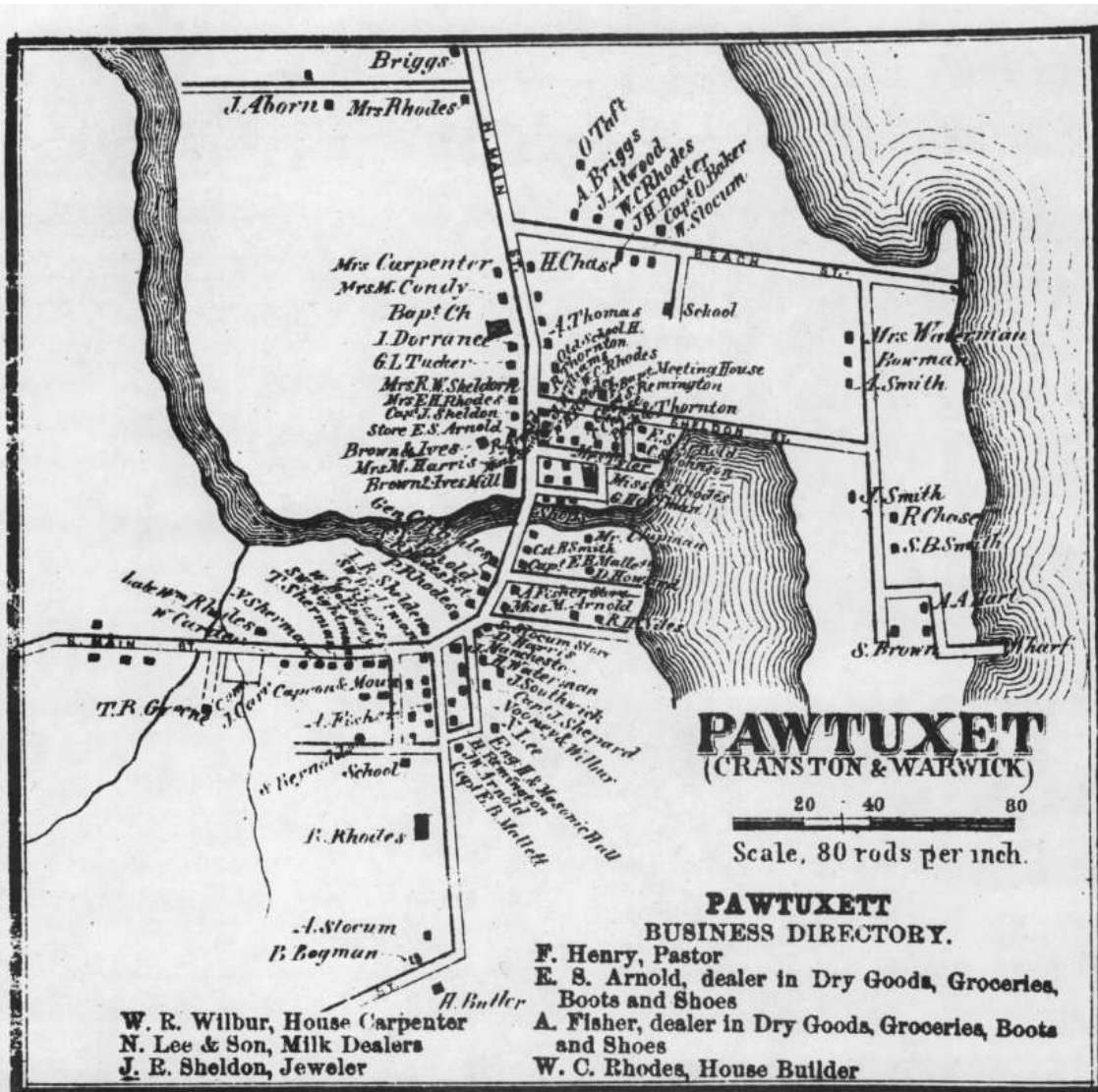
## Section C





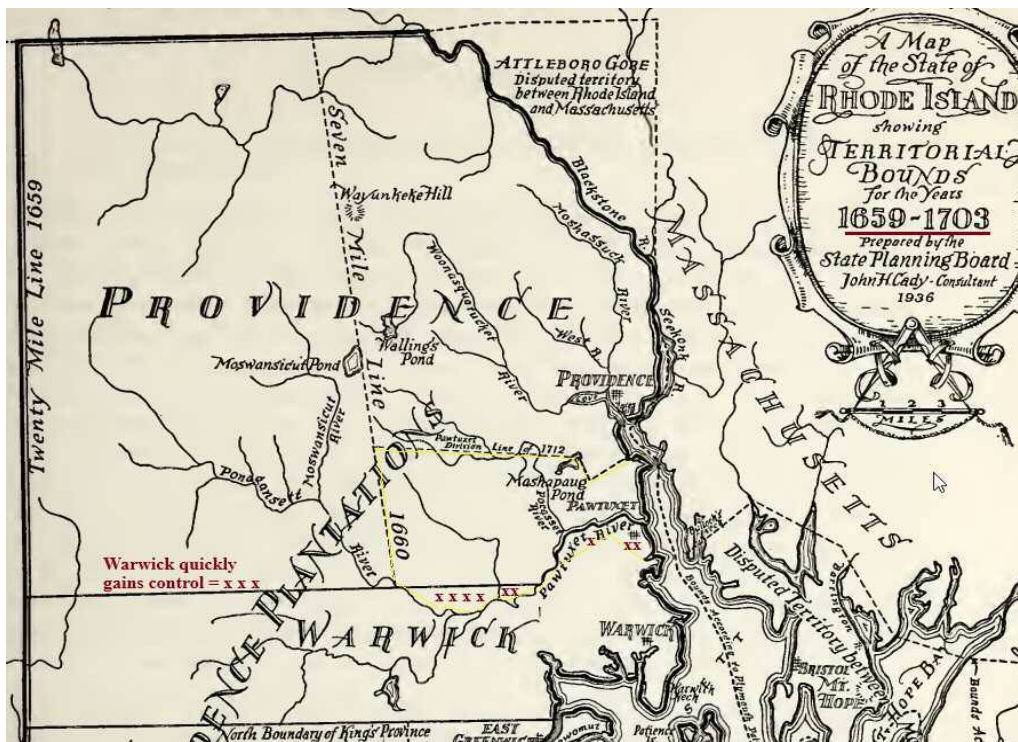
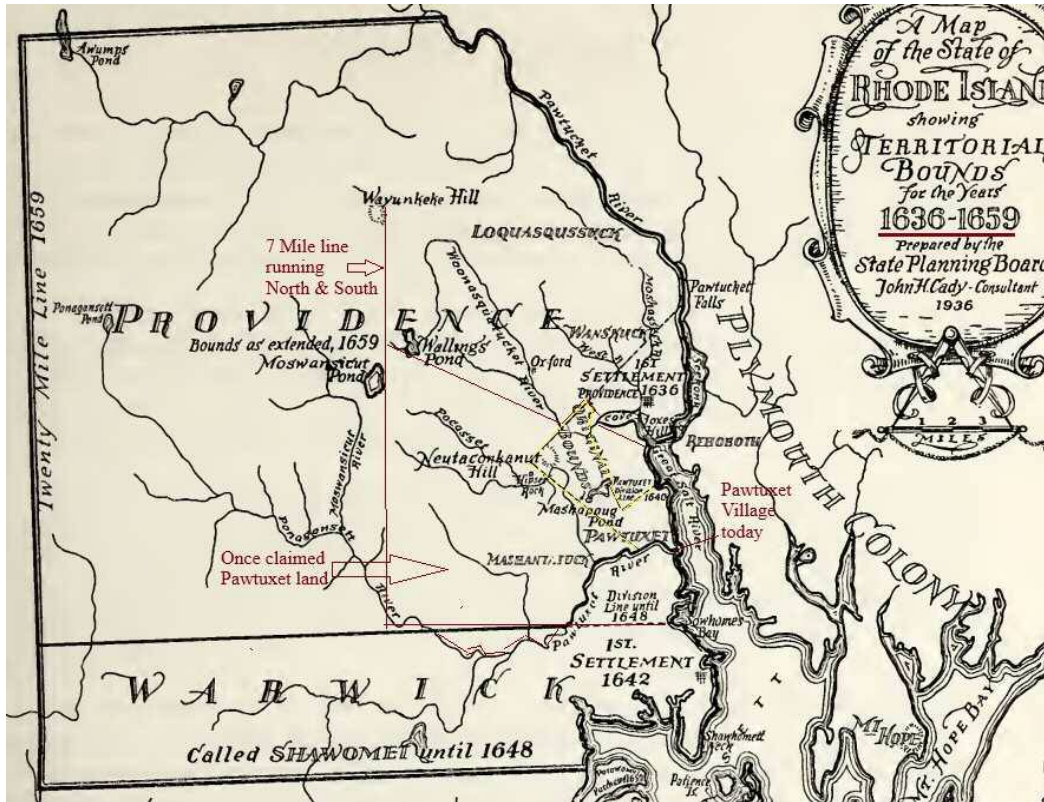






1855

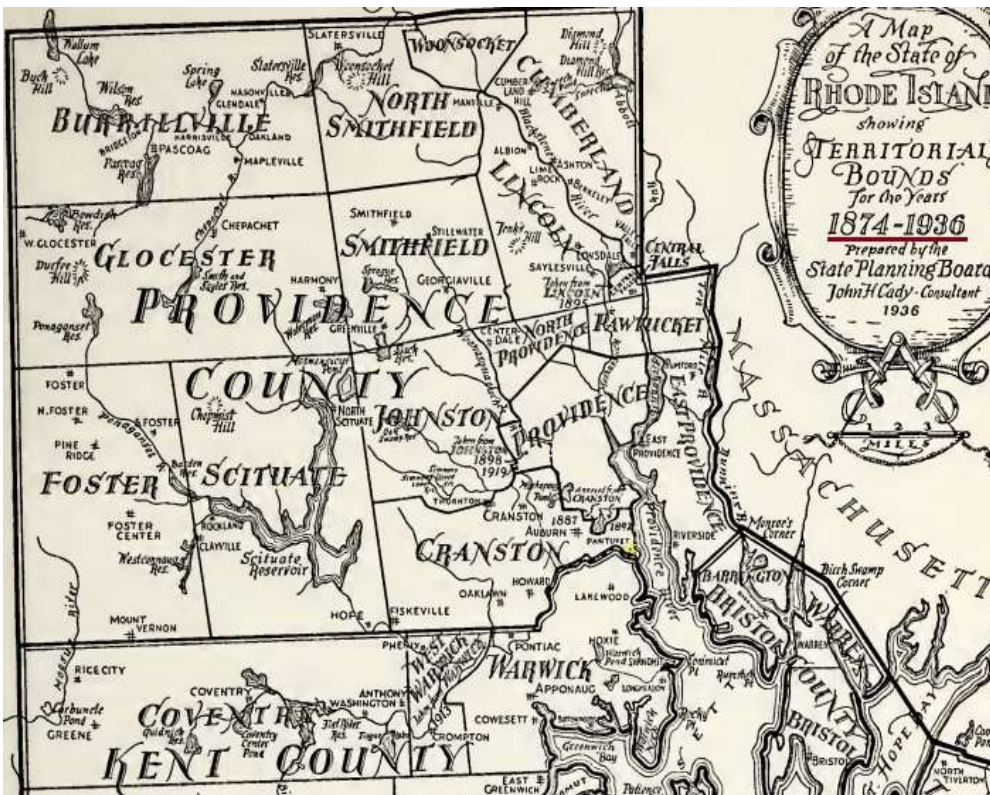
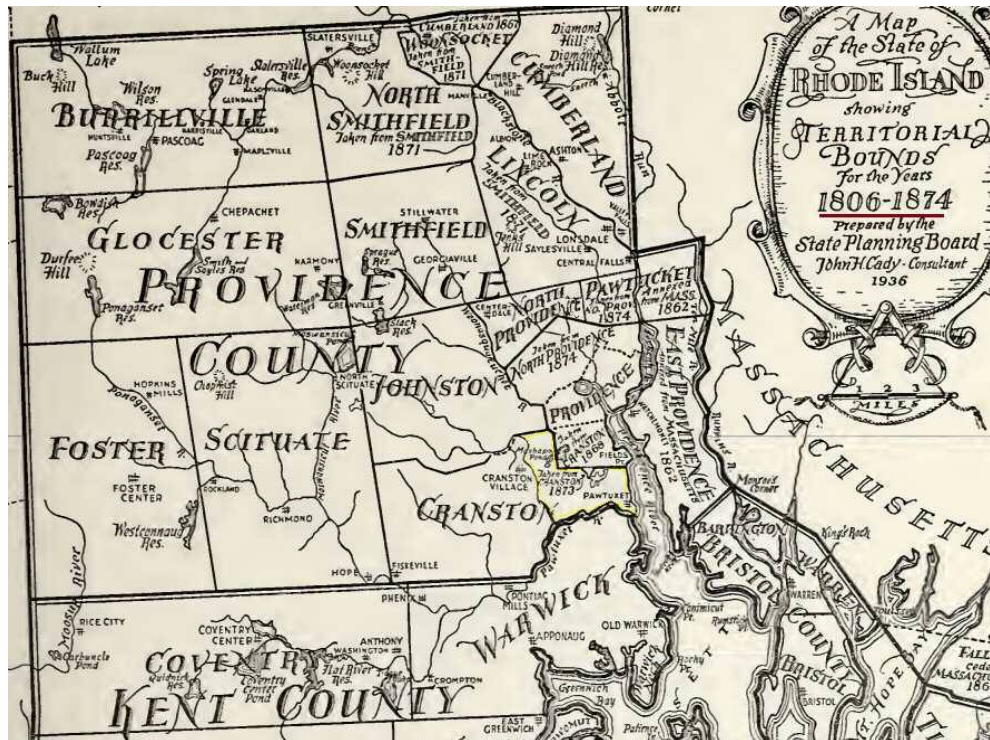
## Section D











## Section E

### Proof.

What is proof? Proof is a set of qualifiers that label it as proof. This is after a relatively exhaustive search and your level of proof must be clearly indicated or stated.

Here are some basics;

1) Proof is often that key document that lists that person A is related to person B with enough information to identify A & B. There are primary and secondary documents. Primary is the original birth, marriage or death record or a direct copy of such. Secondary is a report of such compiled from primary documents. Having the primary is the goal. For the DAR, three levels of primary proof are asked for. These are Birth, Marriage and Death.

Remember, the farther back in time we go, this higher level or burden of proof often cannot be found.

2) Proof can be a preponderance of the evidence that any reasonable person looks at and comes to the same conclusion. This can be from primary and secondary documents that together or combined presents the case beyond a reasonable belief to the majority of people.

And sometimes the farther back in time, because of war, fire, pestilence and the ravages of time, we can not find this level of proof.

3) Then we come to reasonable belief. You have enough documentary evidence that more than about half the people looking at the same evidence will come to the same conclusion you did.

4) Even farther back in time ... you may find just enough evidence that the person existed at an X time and place. And any connection is a speculation or best guess.

This leads to documentation. This is a listing of every thing related found, often in chronological order, including conflicting information in your research.

This is from an old class handout:

<https://carpentercousins.com/KISSGENEALOGY!.pdf> - See page 4.