

THE DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE  
RATIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

*Ratification of the Constitution by the States*

**RHODE ISLAND**

*Supplemental Documents*



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### **Facsimiles**

Facsimiles of the following items can be found on the University of Wisconsin Digital Collection website at <https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Constitution>.

498. Jeremiah Olney to Alexander Hamilton, Providence, 12 February 1790

Addendum. Samuel Nightingale: Memo Concerning Expenses Incurred for Fourth of July 1788 Celebration in Providence

## Introduction

The supplemental documents are intended to provide a fuller documentation and understanding of the debate over the ratification of the Constitution in Rhode Island than was possible in the printed volumes. This supplement contains official documents, letters, and newspaper items.

Except for some photographic reproductions (facsimiles), the documents consist mostly of literal transcripts. The documents are arranged chronologically except for the grouping “Controversy Over John Carter and the Impartiality of the Providence Gazette, 22 December 1787–9 February 1788.”

### Facsimiles

There are two facsimiles in this Supplement: Jeremiah Olney’s letter to Alexander Hamilton of 12 February 1790, and Samuel Nightingale’s Memo Concerning Expenses Incurred for Fourth of July 1788 Celebration in Providence. These facsimiles provide a visual representation of original documents, some of which were difficult or impossible to transcribe.

References to these facsimiles (including the document number, title, and footnotes) appear in the text portion of the Supplement with an indication to visit the University of Wisconsin Digital Collection’s website (<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Constitution>) to view the documents themselves.

### Appendix

Many newspaper items and pamphlets in the ratification debate had a regional or national circulation. These items are printed in *Commentaries on the Constitution: Public and Private* (CC). The Appendix in this volume lists these *Commentaries* items that were printed or reprinted in Rhode Island.

## Symbols

### Manuscripts

FC	File Copy
MS	Manuscript
RC	Recipient's Copy
RG	Record Group

### Manuscript Depositories

CtHi	Connecticut Historical Society
DLC	Library of Congress
DNA	National Archives
M-Ar	Massachusetts Archives
MHi	Massachusetts Historical Society
NRom	Jervis Public Library, Rome, New York
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania
R-Ar	Rhode Island Archives
RHi	Rhode Island Historical Society
RNHl	Newport Historical Society
RPJCB	John Carter Brown Library, Providence

### Short Titles

Abbot, <i>Washington, Presidential Series</i>	W. W. Abbot, Dorothy Twohig, et al., eds., <i>The Papers of George Washington: Presidential Series</i> (Charlottesville, Va., 1987–).
Boyd, <i>Jefferson</i>	Julian P. Boyd et al., eds., <i>The Papers of Thomas Jefferson</i> (Princeton, N.J., 1950–).
DHFFC	Linda Grant De Pauw, Charlene Bangs Bickford, Kenneth R. Bowling, et al., eds., <i>Documentary History of the First Federal Congress of the United States of America, March 4, 1789–March 3, 1791</i> (22 vols., Baltimore, 1972–2017).
DHFFE	Merrill Jensen, Robert A. Becker, and Gordon DenBoer, eds., <i>The Documentary History of the First Federal Elections, 1788–1790</i> (4 vols., Madison, Wis., 1976–1989).
Evans	Charles Evans, <i>American Bibliography</i> (12 vols., Chicago, 1903–1934).
PCC	Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789 (Record Group 360, National Archives)
Rutland, <i>Madison</i>	Robert A. Rutland et al., eds., <i>The Papers of James Madison, Volumes VIII–XVII</i> (Chicago and Charlottesville, Va., 1973–1991).

- Smith, *Letters* Paul H. Smith, ed., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789* (26 vols., Washington, D.C., 1976–2000).
- Syrett Harold C. Syrett et al., eds., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton* (27 vols., New York, 1961–1987).
- Washington Diaries Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, eds., *The Diaries of George Washington* (6 vols., Charlottesville, Va., 1976–1979).

**Cross-references to Volumes of**

***The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution***

- CC References to *Commentaries on the Constitution* are cited as “CC” followed by the number of the document. For example: “CC:25.”
- Mfm References to the supplements to the “RCS” volumes are cited as “Mfm” followed by the abbreviation of the state and the number of the document. For example: “Mfm:R.I. 2.” “Mfm” is also used in the running headers as an aide to the reader, and are especially helpful in multipage documents.
- RCS References to the series of volumes titled *Ratification of the Constitution by the States* are cited as “RCS” followed by the abbreviation of the state and the page number. For example: “RCS:R.I., 22.”



## Documents

### 1. Providence Gazette, 2 December 1786<sup>1</sup>

Mr. CARTER, The little respect that is paid to the American flag, and the repeated insults which subjects of the United States meet with in foreign ports, must convince the good people of this continent, that it is absolutely necessary we should invest Congress with a power to regulate our commerce, and to support our dignity, as free and independent States;—without which, we must very soon become a reproach and bye-word among the nations.—The following petition, which was drawn up and signed by eighteen of the most respectable Sea-Captains, from this and the neighbouring States, must in some degree convince the public of the truth of the above observation.—As the strictest justice is intended to our allies, should an answer be given to the petition, a copy will be forwarded to the writer of this by the first vessel from Guadaloupe, and shall be communicated to the public through the channel of your useful Gazette, by your constant reader,

A. Z.

*The humble Petition of all the American Commanders in the Harbour of Point-Petre (Guadaloupe) to Monsieur DE ST. JEAN, Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, Major of the Marine, and Commander of his Most Christian Majesty's Frigate Du Roy la Tourtereau, now on the above Station:*

SHEWETH, That your petitioners, relying on the faith of treaties subsisting between his Most Christian Majesty and the United States of North-America, have entrusted their persons and properties in the dominions of "*the Protector of the Rights of Mankind*," and have in every respect submitted in the most implicit manner to all laws and ordinances made known to us, demeaning ourselves in a quiet and peaceable manner, giving no offence to any person or persons whatever.

With infinite distress we therefore are under the disagreeable necessity of making known to you, that on Saturday evening, the sixteenth of September, between the hours of ten and eleven, while quietly in our beds, with a watch necessary for the attendance of our sick and the security of our ships, we were assaulted by a number of armed men, who, without the smallest offence on our parts, forcibly entered three of our ships, unattended by any commissioned officer, when your petitioners were insulted in words too indelicate for us to repeat, or for you to hear; at the same time, drawing their swords, they dragged three of us from our beds, and forced us into their boat, not suffering two of the number to put on any wearing apparel, in which manner they conducted us through the harbour, and afterwards conveyed us on board his Most Christian Majesty's frigate Du Roy la Tourtereau, under your command, where not being permitted to know our accusation, or to have access to the commanding officer, we were ordered to be lodged with the common sailors.—We must here beg leave to observe, that all the French ships are permitted to have lights on board, to attend their sick; while the unfortunate Americans are refused that favour, even to succour their dying men, and such succour was actually necessary on the night above mentioned.

We therefore must humbly entreat you, Sir, to move an enquiry in our behalf.—Firmly attached to his Most Christian Majesty, the great and good Ally of the United States, and happy in an alliance with a brave and generous nation, we earnestly entreat *Protection, Peace and Safety*; and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

*Point-Petre, Sept. 18, 1786.*

SIR, The substance of the above was intended for the Commander in Chief, but respect for your character, (which we have been told is a very honourable one) has altered our determination.—We have waited in expectation that some apology would have been made us, for the bad conduct of your marines.—We are sorry to add, we have had no redress.—As we arrived in this government the most affectionate friends, we wish not to leave it as determined enemies; and we flatter ourselves that your answer, delivered to our interpreter, will do justice to the high opinion we have of your integrity, and be productive of returning harmony between the subjects of the two nations.

*October 16, 1786.*

1. Reprinted: *New York Gazetteer*, 1 January 1787; *New York Packet*, 2 January; *Connecticut Journal*, 3 January; Poughkeepsie, N.Y., *Country Journal*, 10 January; *New Haven Gazette*, 11 January; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 14 February.

## 2. Providence Gazette, 6 January 1787<sup>1</sup>

TO the PRINTER of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.

MR. CARTER, A part of the following bill having been the last week read by a member of the General Assembly, in his place, you are requested by a number of your readers to insert the whole of it in your free and uninfluenced paper, for public consideration.—Should it hereafter pass into a law, the other States, which are also greatly perplexed about ways and means for *discharging* their debts, will doubtless follow so *equal and laudable* an example.

*An ACT for the more equal Distribution of political Happiness.*

Whereas the God of nature made all men equal; from whence it is evident, that the different conditions among mankind have originated from ambition, avarice, and the lust of domination. And whereas the great objects of the late war were the rights of equality, then violated by the rapacities of British power; notwithstanding which, many citizens among ourselves have acquired immense fortunes out of the earnings of others; and many also have claims and demands of a public and private nature, which they are as able to relinquish as the others to discharge. And whereas it is essential to the ideas of sovereignty, that all nations should be equal; whereas France, Spain and Holland, make demands for money lent, which they stand in no need of, and which we are unable to pay.

Wherefore, *Be it Enacted by the General Assembly, and by the Authority thereof*, That all debts, dues and demands, of whatever nature or kind, be forever abolished, extinguished and discharged.

*And be it further Enacted*, That an equal distribution of all property, both real and personal, within this State, be made by the first day of May next, making as many allotments as there are heads of families; and that — be a Committee for that purpose.

And whereas the continuation of a republican government depends upon supporting the principles of equality: *Be it therefore further Enacted*, That forever hereafter, at the end of thirteen years respectively, there be a general abolition of debts, and an equal distribution of property.

And whereas there may be some so bold and daring as to attempt the payment of debts, notwithstanding the good intentions of this General Assembly: *Be it therefore Enacted*, That every person offending herein, shall for every offence receive thirty-nine lashes, and be closely confined in gaol for the space of six months, upon conviction before a Justice of Peace, or Warden; and shall moreover forfeit his proportion of property to be distributed as aforesaid.

1. Reprinted fourteen times by 19 March: Vt. (1), Mass. (5), Conn. (1), N.Y. (2), N.J. (1), Pa. (1), Md. (1), S.C. (1), Ga. (1).

### 3. Barneveldt Newport Herald, 1 March 1787

*To the PUBLIC.*

When the people of this country renounced the dominion of Great-Britain, it became necessary that they should assume some form of government, either the despotic, monarchical, aristocratical, democratical form, or that of a confederate republic.

The vast extent of our territory, and the genius of my countrymen, forbade their embracing either of the three first, and they knew that “an overgrown republic can only be saved from despotism by subdividing it into a number of confederated republics.”—They therefore took the form of a confederate republic.

[“]If a republic is small,[”] says Baron de Montesquieu, [“]it is destroyed by a foreign force; if it be large, it is ruined by an internal imperfection.”—[“]A confederate republic has all the internal advantages of a republican, together with the external force of a monarchical government.”—It “is a kind of assemblage of societies that constitute a new one capable of increasing by means of new associations, ’till they arrive to such a degree of power as to be able to provide for the security of the united body.”—“The form of this society prevents all manner of inconveniences.”—“If a single member should attempt to usurp the supreme authority, he could not be supposed to have an equal authority and credit in all the confederate States. Were he to have too great an influence over one, this would alarm the rest; were he to subdue a part, that which would still remain free, might oppose him with forces independent of those which he had usurped, and overpower him before he could be settled in his usurpation.” [“]Should a popular insurrection happen in one of the confederate States, the others are able to quell it. Should abuses creep into one part, they are reformed by those that remain sound.”—“As this government is composed of petty republics, it enjoys the internal happiness of each; and with respect to its external situation, it is possessed by means of the association, of all the advantages of large monarchies.”

It has been already observed, from the author of the essays on crimes and punishments, that if we had formed a single overgrown republic it could be saved

from despotism only by subdividing it into a number of confederated republics:—and says the Abbe de Mably—“it is a very advantageous circumstance for the Americans, that the thirteen States have not blended their rights, their independence, and their liberties, by forming a single republic, which would have established common laws and acknowledged common magistrates. Had this been the conduct of the colonies throughout that vast extent of country which you possess, how could the empire of the laws have been secure?—Would not the springs of government necessarily have been relaxed in proportion as they were remote from their centre of motion?—How could its vigilance be every where equally extended either to prevent or remove abuses?”

The celebrated Montesquieu, whom we have before cited, and whose Spirit of Laws merits to be read with attention by all legislatures, observes “that a confederate government ought to be composed of States of the same nature, especially of the republican kind;—and in proof of his observation he adduces the Canaanites who “were destroyed by reason they were petty monarchies that had no union, nor confederacy, for their common defence; and indeed a confederacy is not agreeable to the nature of petty monarchies.” He adduces also the confederate republic of Germany, which, as it “consists of free cities, and of petty States, subject to different princes, experience shews that it is much more imperfect than that of Holland and Switzerland.”

The confederate republic of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, although composed of States of the same nature, and not so imperfect as that of Germany; yet the complication of its system, the delay necessarily arising from its constitution, and the extent of the power of the Stadtholder render it more imperfect than the government of the United States of America.

Thus it appears, from the first authorities, that we have chosen the form of government best adapted to the extent of our country, and the genius of the people.—It is composed of states of the same nature of the republican kinds, and in its construction, is superior to any confederation on earth,—yet, notwithstanding its superiority, it has its defects, and defects that will, unless they are remedied, produce its subversion,—its principal defects are the want of power in the Congress, to regulate the external and internal trade of the United States; and the want of power to call forth their resources; without the former, commercial treaties can never be executed, and our external trade must labor under continued embarrassments;—our internal trade, by which I mean the trade between the several States, will be subjected to such duties and impositions as local interests may suggest; and jealousy, discord, and contention ensue.—Already have some states laid such duties, upon articles imported from other states, and of their home production and manufacture, as amount to a prohibition, and will inevitably ruin the carrying trade of the United States; upon which their commercial character intirely depends.

It is to be hoped that the proposed convention of delegates at Philadelphia in May next will be universal, and that they may unite in recommending it to the several states to invest Congress with powers to regulate trade; and that the internal trade of the United States may be free.

Without the latter, unless Congress are clothed with power to call forth the resources of the respective states, the credit of the United States is at an end,

the government must stand still, and a dissolution of the union take place. The system formed for paying the foreign and domestic interest of the national debt cannot be executed; because several of the states have not complied with the requisitions of Congress; and, from their conduct, may it not be inferred that they never will, without compulsion. The debt is constantly accumulating, and, if the idea of extinguishing it without an equivalent continues to influence the minds of the people, it will accumulate until it overwhelms and buries the states in ruin.

This state I am informed is in arrear on the requisition of April 1784, upwards of twenty thousand dollars in specie; and on the requisition of September 1785, in consequence of the act making the paper emission receiveable for the continental tax, they had, by the first of January collected but little more than four thousand dollars in teamsters certificates, and not more than between sixteen and seventeen thousand dollars in indents, and that, by the terms of this requisition, the states are held to pay the deficiency of indents in specie, which, with the deficiency in teamsters certificates, will amount to about forty thousand dollars.

I believe the general assembly did not attend to this requisition; otherwise they would not, perhaps, have ordered the General Treasurer, at their last session, to purchase teamsters, invalids and interest certificates, or indents, with paper at par; for if this could have been effected, it was too late, the first of January being arrived, when by the requisition referred to, the quotas of specie or teamsters certificates, and indents, ought to have been in the state treasury. But I am informed that the treasurer of the state cannot purchase either of them at par; and, it is said, that the loan-officer is directed not to receive invalid certificates in payment of the requisition.—Thus, by a strange kind of policy, a number of our citizens have lost the benefit of receiving the interest of their certificates; and, instead of paying our quota of the requisition, which might have been done with the utmost facility, we are saddled with a heavy debt in specie.

Happy would it be for the United States if there were no instances of misconduct in the other states!—but there are some who in this respect, deserve to be rank'd with the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.

They who wish to live under a confederate republic, which I have evinced from the first authorities, is a form of government best adapted to the genius of this people and the extent of our country, cannot be offended when the defects in the confederation and the disadvantages which have flowed and must flow from them are pointed out with candor.—They will rather assist in remedying such defects.

I trust that none of my fellow-citizens would choose to be the slaves of a despot; if there should be any such, they will, it is confessed, effectually promote their designs by subverting the confederacy—for the extent of this country forbids any other than a despotic form of government, or that of a confederate republic.

If from a false ambition, from envy, or a desire to avoid the payment of just debts, any should pant after extreme equality, to such I would say, in the language of Montesquieu, that “as distant as heaven is from earth, so is the true spirit of equality from that of extreme equality. The former does not consist in managing

so that every body should command, or that no one should be commanded; but in obeying and commanding our equals. It endeavours not to be without a master; but that its masters should be none but its equals.”—“The natural place of virtue is near to liberty; but it is not nearer to extreme liberty than to servitude.”

Virtue is the main spring of republican governments:—in proportion as it is relaxed, that species of government loses its support;—therefore, my fellow citizens, if we would enjoy the true spirit of equality, and the blessings of a confederate republic, let us endeavour to remedy the defects in our confederation, and regain, and invigorate our public virtue.

*Newport February 27th, 1787*

#### 4. “B.”

##### **Providence Gazette, 3 March 1787<sup>1</sup>**

A Gentleman from New-York passed through this town a few days ago, who advises, that the Legislature of that State is now in session—that the subject of a Continental Impost has been resumed in their Assembly—that it was proposed, on one side of the House, to alter and amend their act, passed last year, *for granting the monies on a five per cent. duty to the use of Congress*, so as to *vest Congress with power to levy a five per cent. duty by acts, ordinances, and officers of Congress*, within that State.—On this motion a very long and learned debate ensued. Col. Hamilton, in favour of the motion, contended with great zeal, and displayed his well-known talents to great advantage.—He was answered by Samuel Jones, Esq; whose patriotic attachment to the constitution of the State, and the freedom of his country, does him the highest honour.—It is observable, that both these gentlemen are members for the city of New-York. On a division of the House, there appeared for granting the impost, agreeably to the request of Congress, 21—for adhering to the resolution of last year, 35.

The same gentleman informs, that the Assembly of Pennsylvania have decided on the same question, which was again presented to their consideration by a deputation of two members of Congress, the Honourable Mr. King, and the Honourable Mr. Monroe, some time last fall: And they have resolved to adhere to the system heretofore by them adopted for funding their public debts; and refused to comply with the recommendations of Congress on this subject.

The States of New-York and Pennsylvania were among the first to adopt this measure in 1782, even without the limitations and provisoes, for securing a faithful application of the monies, and for securing the privileges of the separate States, and of the citizens thereof, in the collection of these duties, since acceded to on the part of Congress.—Nay, to such a pitch did the zeal of the leading interest in the latter State arise on this subject, that scarce any punishment, short of *total annihilation*, was thought by some sufficient to be inflicted on this little State, for presuming to delay a compliance long enough to enquire into the nature and tendency of that *important measure*: While now we may exclaim with the poet, “*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*”—Lo! Rhode-Island has adopted the measure, as one may say, *lumpingly*, and become *the federal State*;

while Pennsylvania seems governed by a *local policy*, and, with New-York, presumes to *oppose the voice of the Union*, in a measure so long canvassed, and on the most mature consideration deemed, by the last Congress, *essential to its very existence*.

*Providence, March 2, 1787.*

1. Reprinted: Connecticut *Norwich Packet*, 8 March 1787; *New Hampshire Spy*, 13 March.

### 5. Newport Herald, 8 March 1787<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent observes that, the commercial treaty entered into between France and Britain, must very essentially change the political system of Europe; long accustomed to view each other as formidable rivals and natural enemies, their only study was to preserve a balance of power; but taught by experience, that the victorious seldom reap other advantages than trophies, while the unsuccessful are but equal sharers in the loss of men, and expenditure of money, they are now pursuing the only path to wealth and greatness,—as their systems of commercial intercourse, will open new marts for the produce and manufactures of each country, and lay the basis of friendship on mutual interest!—Europe seems to have profited by the American revolution, while these United States, forgetful of the calamities of a distressing war, and degenerated from the noble virtues which gave us liberty and independence, are torn by intestine divisions, licentious under the most free constitutions in the world, and excessively jealous of the fœderal head, presaging a melancholy prospect of displaying a theatre for some despot to act on, or a decline into the most abject ignominy and want;—our commerce is checked by foreign powers, and deranged by the sinister views of a domestic faction;—our foreign debt is daily accumulating for want of a compliance with requisitions made in virtue of the confederation; and the great council of the nation retain scarcely an epitome of government,—being without power to regulate trade, or enforce the articles of treaties, solemnly entered into; without funds or money, to discharge the loans made to us in times of our distresses, or even to support the present exigencies of the union.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Mercury*, 14 March 1787.

### 6. Enos Hitchcock to Silas Talbot Providence, 22 March 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

This Evening my Friend Mr. Benson handed me your favor of the 9th. inst:

That the present is a most important & very alarming Crisis teeming with Events on which the future condition of America much depends, I readily grant—But the Insurgency in Massts. is at present at low ebb—much depends on the ensuing Election—at present gover[n]ment is firm & supported by all the respectable Inhabitants. I assure you, Sir, the times would appear extremely dark was it not for an entire reliance on the supreme Ruler whose interposing hand we have so often seen in our greatest perils—extended in such a manner as leaves no room to doubt that the liberty of America is the object of divine patronage.



Governor Clinton, I find is returned to N-York, having effected the object of his Journey—The conduct of the people in this State called Rulers is such as surpasses all discription—I must refer you to their doings which need no comment as no language can heighten nor palliation lessen their Criminallity.

But to bid Adieu to politics. . . .

1. RC, Talbot Collection, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Conn.

## 7. Newport Herald, 22 March 1787<sup>1</sup>

### *Proceedings of Government.*

A correspondent has favoured us with a summary of the proceedings of the General Assembly at their late session, and requests us to give it a place in the Herald for the information of the public.

The Assembly was formed on Wednesday morning, when the public letters were read, and a committee was appointed as usual to report on such as required the immediate attention of the Assembly.—In their report were contained a letter from the Secretary of Congress with the resolution for revising the federal government; and letters from the Governors of Virginia and North-Carolina on the same subject.—Upon the motion, whether members should be appointed to represent this State in the Convention proposed to be held in Philadelphia on the second Monday of May, agreeably to the recommendation of Congress—the question was put, and it passed in the negative by a majority of 23. As it was negatived from a professed regard to the Articles of Confederation, it was proposed that an act should be passed for assessing this State's proportion of the Continental tax, agreeably to the requisition of Congress, made in pursuance of the Articles of Confederation; but this was not agreed to, and the requisition was again referred to a future session.

A letter from the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was read, inclosing an act of the General Court for apprehending some of the principals in the late rebellion against that government, and it was moved that an act should be passed requesting the Governor of this State to issue a proclamation for apprehending them if within this State; but the question was lost by a majority of 22.

A committee appointed at a former session to inquire into the consideration of the public securities due from this State now reported.—That the notes which had formerly issued on an interest of six per cent. per annum, were given for money loaned to government during the late war—for the wages & depreciation of the officers and soldiers of this State—for debts due from the confiscated estates and government.—That the notes issued on an interest of four per cent. were issued in payment of debts due from government in 1777 and passed as money, and in this situation suffered a depreciation.—The committee observed that *some* of the six per cent. notes were given for Continental money which was paid out of the Treasury to individuals; in whose hands it had greatly depreciated, and they were therefore of opinion that *all* the notes given on an interest of six per cent. ought in equity to be subject to a deduction: but it was said in reply, and confessed, that government had received the gold and silver of many



of the holders of the securities, and that as the notes had been consolidated, the whole of them expressed the real value of what had been received by the public—no deduction was therefore made from the principal sum,—but an act was passed ordering the payment of the one fourth part of the principal and interest in the paper currency of this State, now passing at an acknowledged depreciation of six for one, and subjecting the holders of them to a forfeiture of that proportion who shall neglect to apply and receive it of the Treasurer within six weeks.—The interest on the same to cease from the rising of the Assembly. The committee having reported that the four per cent. notes should be discharged at the rate of one paper dollar for 40 express'd in the notes—an act was read for the purpose, but objections arising from some of the most influential characters in the present administration, and who are holders of these kind of securities—this bill did not pass the Assembly, but was refer'd to their constituents together with a proposition [i.e., proposition] made by the Upper House, “that a committee of three persons be appointed to ascertain and determine the value which was given for them by the present holders, and that an adjustment thereof be made accordingly—the tax of 20000*l.* granted at the last session was now apportioned to the several towns agreeably to the apportionment of the former tax, and ordered to be paid into the Treasury on the first of July next. A Bill was also drafted for the payment of the impost of five per cent. in the articles imported; but as this would have been a severe attack on the emitting act which makes the paper money a tender in all cases and in many instances could not be executed from the impracticability of the division of the articles imported—It was, after a full discussion, referred to the wisdom of a future Assembly.

A Bill was attempted to be passed for altering the present mode of representation in Assembly, and allowing each of the towns to send only two members,—This was urged upon a principle of equal representation; but it seems difficult to reconcile this idea with the inequality which subsists among the different towns as to numbers of inhabitants and value of property—the only principles to be regarded in effecting an equal representation.—This Bill was also referred to the people for a decision.

A proposition was made in the Lower House by the minority, grounded upon the embarrassments occasioned by the present depreciation of the currency, and which had already prevented the due administration of justice by the Supreme Court of the State, “that the value of the present currency should be ascertained, and that the same should, in future, be a tender in payment for debts, at the rate of four for one.” The members who advocated this measure observed, that the money was now passing at a depreciation of six for one, and that the Bill which was then presented would, if passed into a law, in some measure restore credit to the money and harmony in the government.—They assured the House of their sincerity in the proposition, and if the Bill met with their concurrence, it should have their support.—It was however rejected by a majority of 17. It was then requested that the Bill might be referred, with others, to the people for their instructions to a future Assembly; but it was denied by the House, and the Bill was immediately voted off the table.

At the close of the session the attention of the members was called to their future election; and as conducive to it an act was passed to prevent bribery and corruption in the election of public officers in this State, and presenting the form of an oath or affirmation to be taken by every freeman.

A petition had been presented at a former session of Assembly, signed by 104 persons, residing within this city, for annulling and vacating the Charter, heretofore granted for the incorporating the town of Newport into a city, it was opposed by a counter petition, signed by upwards of 400 of the citizens.—The Lower House upon a partial hearing of the parties, passed a resolution for vacating the Charter.—The petition with this resolution was referred to the present session by a motion of the Upper House, when the parties were heard by them:—no evidence was adduced to support a single fact in the petition; but it appeared, that the petitioners against the city, did not form a fourth part of the freemen, nor had property to be assessed for more than one seventeenth part of the city tax, and that even a considerable part of this small proportion could not be collected from them.—It was also conceded, that, the corporation were formed of the most respectable characters, and were not chargeable with any misconduct, nor in any instance of violating the Charter—Notwithstanding, the resolution of the Lower House was concurred with, and the citizens thereby deprived of the many invaluable privileges guaranteed to them, in the most sacred manner by Charter, and from which they had derived the greatest advantage.

At about two o'clock, Sunday morning, a Bill was ushered into the Lower House to prevent Attornies at law, being eligible as members of assembly,—the unusual manner in which this Bill was brought on the tapis, and the extraordinary proceedings which had already taken place, being observed, even the fautors of this measure disavowed any knowledge of the Bill, and expressed their disapprobation of it, so that the *honourable member* who moved it, was obliged to solicit permission to have it returned to him, without taking a vote of the House—which was agreed to.

The Assembly are not to meet (unless specially convened) before the General Election.

We have often heard, says a correspondent, of sinking funds—But we know of no nation who have provided one so productive as that, with which this State are now furnished.—Thirty thousand pounds in the paper currency, is to be placed in the Treasury, for the discharge of a debt of upwards of £.100,000. The creditors are now called upon to receive the one fourth part of their debts in six weeks.—It is to be presumed from the present depreciation of the currency, that this will not be attended to, and so much of the debt, will of course be forfeited.—Government will continue their calls at future sessions, and in the course of six months, the debt will be extinguished, and the whole money provided for its discharge, remain the Treasury.

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 31 March and in whole or in part in twenty-four out-of-state newspapers by 26 April: N.H. (1), Mass. (12), Conn. (4), N.Y. (3), N.J. (1), Pa. (8), Del. (1), Md. (1), Va. (1), S.C. (1), Ga. (1). Various brief reports of the legislature's refusal to send delegates to the Constitutional Convention appeared in thirteen newspapers by 5 May: Vt. (1), N.H. (1), Mass. (3), Conn. (1), N.Y. (2), Va. (3), S.C. (1), Ga. (1).

### 8. Edmund Charles Genet: Notes on Rhode Island and the Federal Convention Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, post-22 March 1787<sup>1</sup>

Resolutions of the Legislature of Rhodeisland contrary to the Wishes of Congress

On March 22 1787 The Legislature of Rhodeisland took under consideration a letter from the Secretary of Congress with the Resolution for the revision of the federal Government and letters from the Governors of Virginia and Carolina [which had?] the same purpose. A Motion was made to send Representatives from the State of Rhodeisland for this purpose to the Convention which ought to take place in Philadelphia on May 2 in conformity with the recommendation of Congress; But this motion was rejected by a majority of 23 votes. They then proposed [– – –] [– – –] at least a debt to establish the quota of this State for the continental taxes in a manner in keeping with the requisition of Congress. This Request had the same fate as the preceding one and was deferred to another session.

This Assembly likewise refused to pass (in keeping with the request of the Governor of the State of Massachusetts) an act so that they could deliver a Proclamation to the effect of stopping some of the principal leaders of the Rebellion against the Government of Massachusetts who took refuge in the State of Rhodeisland It is all the more surprising [to see?] that the request was based on the Articles of *Confederation*. It even appears that the letter containing this request had been sent a long time before that resolution to J. Collins Governor of the State of Rhodeisland because he in his response in excuse for the delay placed the blame on the Post Master who did not tell him that it was necessary to [deliver up?] that letter [at the same time?]

1. MS, Edmund Charles Genet Papers, DLC. The document, marked “*No. 1*,” was “copied” by “E. P. G.” probably from dispatches received from French diplomats stationed in the United States.

### 9. Baltimore Maryland Journal, 6 April 1787

All the States in the Union, except Rhode-Island, have appointed Delegates to attend the Federal Convention, to be held at Philadelphia on the second Monday in next Month.

In the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, a few Days ago, upon the Motion whether Members should be appointed to represent that State in the Federal Convention, agreeably to the Recommendation of Congress—the Question was put, and it passed in the Negative by a Majority of 23.

### 10. Newport Herald, 12 April 1787

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in the Southern States, to his correspondent here, dated April 1, 1787.*<sup>1</sup>

“The distracted state you are in, is sufficient to wean and drive every good citizen from his native country;—matters have come to such an alarming crisis,

that the confederation must take notice of you, and it seems the opinion of many here, that when the convention meets in Philadelphia, that measures will be taken to reduce you to order and good government, or strike your State out of the union, and annex you to others; for as your Legislature now conducts, they are dangerous to the community at large, and ruinous to every honest and respectable character in the State, the clamour is now loud against your State, and will daily increase.”

1. Reprinted eight times by 16 May: N.H. (1), Mass. (4), Conn. (1), Pa. (1), Md. (1).

## 11. A Freeman

**Providence Gazette, 14 April 1787**

TO the FREEMEN of the State of RHODE-ISLAND and  
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

*My Fellow-Citizens,* The revolving year hath brought us to the eve of another General Election, and next Wednesday is the day assigned by our constitution for the choice of members to constitute the two Houses of Assembly. Fully convinced the last year that a change in government was necessary, I zealously joined in the opposition that was then formed to effect it, and conceived it very fortunate for the State that the opposition then met with success. I viewed the old Administration (as it is sometimes called) though composed of gentlemen very respectable in their private characters, yet as opposed to the wishes and interest of the people at large. I flattered myself that their successors would consider themselves as the servants of the public, appointed to execute the will of the people, not to legislate as their own particular caprice, resentments or interest, should dictate; but to relieve the distress and promote the welfare of every class of citizens.

The evil consequent on a scarcity of circulating cash, was then one of the principal subjects of complaint, and most of the towns in the State preferred petitions to the General Assembly, proposing as a remedy the emission of paper money, funded on landed security, redeemable at a short period, and in quantity to be sufficient merely for the purposes of a circulating medium, and to be a tender at law in the same manner as gold and silver ever had been. A bank of paper money, emitted on these principles, was the general wish and the principal object which the freemen had in view, in the change of affairs which then took place. But let me ask you, my fellow-citizens, have your public servants fulfilled these your reasonable wishes and expectations? Has the bank of money, which they have caused to be struck, been emitted on such principles as meet your approbation? Is not the quantity at least double what is necessary for a circulating medium in this little State, and is not the time of its redemption protracted to a most unreasonable period? Could it rationally be expected, that so large a sum, emitted on these principles, and pushed into circulation, would freely pass at par with specie, or be estimated as an honest equivalent to pay a specie debt? These questions must be answered in the negative, by every one who will judge with candour.—That law, therefore, which makes this paper money a lawful tender in payment of a debt due in solid coin, is unjust; and that clause which declares that a refusal of it, when so tendered, shall operate as a forfeiture of the debt, adds cruelty to injustice.

Every additional act which has been passed, as auxiliary or assistant to this first law, must be considered in the same point of view, as calculated to support a measure originally wrong, and indefensible on the principles of justice. The several penal acts, the execrated test-bill, the act annulling indorsements of negotiable notes, made *bona fide* and prior to the passing of that act; the act for the limitation of actions to two years, and many other acts of the General Assembly passed the last year, were fabricated with the same view, to carry into effect the law making a tender and refusal of the paper bills operate as a discharge of a specie debt; all of these acts collectively having it directly in object to abolish or discharge with paper every private contract without discrimination, and that within the short period of two years. The foreigner, the citizen of a sister State, the poor widow, and the helpless orphan, all, all must swallow it, however bitter the draught, or fatal in its effects.—It is impossible that a system of laws, so unprecedented in any civilized country, so palpably unjust, and fraught with absolute ruin to many of our fellow-men, can be sanctioned by the approbation of any honest, dispassionate and disinterested person.—It is certainly needless for me, at this time, to recapitulate the various remedies which have been proposed to the Legislature, at different times, for the evils consequent upon a continuance of the tender-act in its original form, causing a refusal of the bills to work an extinction of the debt. The report of the Committee of ten members, made at the session in June, is too well known to need repeating here. The bill for establishing the currency at four for one, although the acknowledged depreciation was much greater, and the various motions for placing the paper money on an equitable basis, and applying it to purposes equally beneficial to the State and individuals, are too well known, as well as too prolix, to be here inserted. Certain it is, that every overture of this sort, and every proposal to accommodate the unhappy differences prevailing in the State, although founded on the most reasonable concessions, have been treated either with silent contempt, or disdainfully rejected.

If the conduct of the General Assembly, for the year past, is considered as relative only to the internal police of the State, the foregoing recital of only a small part of their proceedings must be sufficient to convince every candid and impartial examiner, that a change in government at the ensuing election is absolutely necessary; but if their measures are viewed in another point of light, that is, relatively to the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, they present a prospect too serious not to excite our attention. They have ordered this State's quota of the interest, payable on monies borrowed of his Most Christian Majesty, and the States of Holland, as assigned us by the requisition of 1785, to be received and paid in paper bills! Two requisitions of Congress, one for the annual interest of the foreign and domestic debt, &c. and the other for the pay and subsistence of the federal troops now in service on the frontiers of the United States, and which requisitions have been lying before the General Assembly for a considerable part of the year past, have been referred from one session to another, without any legislative compliance with either of them, though made expressly in virtue of the powers vested in Congress by the Articles of Confederation, and obligatory on the State as such. They have also refused to comply with the resolution of Congress, proposing a Convention of members from all the States, to be held at

Philadelphia, in May next, for revising the federal government; although it appeared that nearly all the States had appointed Delegates to attend that Convention, and there was no reason to doubt but that the other twelve States would be therein represented.

Can any palliation or excuse be offered for a line of policy so inconsistent with our true interest, and that respect which we owe to Congress and our sister States?—I am sure no one will attempt to justify it. Is it honest—is it safe—is it consistent with good policy, or national faith, to attempt to discharge our quota of the foreign debt with paper money? Does it manifest a disposition by any means federal, to treat requisitions of Congress, made in virtue of the powers which we have granted them, with long and contemptuous neglect?—Does it not argue great obstinacy, as well as ignorance of the real interest of the State, to refuse to join in a Convention recommended by Congress, and approved by all the other States, when the object of that Convention is to reform the federal government, which by experience hath been found to be defective, and in which we are equally concerned with every State in the Confederacy?—It must be confessed, that these measures have a direct tendency to dissolve that bond of union, by which we confederated with our sister States, and to induce them to consider us as having derelicted the Confederacy, and not entitled to its assistance or protection; or rather will they not divide our territory, and subject it to the jurisdiction of the neighbouring States?—This retrospective view of the measures of the General Assembly, in regard to the internal administration of government, and as affecting its federal situation for the year past, will be sufficient to convince every unprejudiced freeman, that the well-being of the State requires men of a very different character from those now placed at the helm, to take the direction of our public affairs. A perseverance in the present system will be attended with irretrievable ruin to individuals, and is pregnant with consequences which cannot fail to alarm every considerate citizen, who has the prosperity and reputation of the State at heart.—Let us, my fellow-citizens, withdraw our confidence from public servants, who have so clearly-proved themselves unfit or incapable of the important trust which we committed to their management; and let us elect, for the ensuing year, men of known integrity and abilities. This is a constitutional remedy, and cannot fail of averting the many evils consequent upon the present ruinous policy, and of restoring the reputation of the State, both at home and abroad.

## 12. Albany Gazette, 3 May 1787

Every State in the Union, we are informed, have appointed Delegates to this Convention, RHODE-ISLAND ONLY excepted; whose *love* for the Confederation in its *present* form, and *truly* federal conduct, have been so recently evinced, that we are not at all surprized at her refusing to join in this National Council.

### 13. Newport Herald, 10 May 1787 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

Our Correspondent who favored us with the proceedings of the General Assembly, as published in the Herald No. 4, observes that he was pleased with the remarks of the Farmer in our last, and flattered himself that the Legislature at their late sessions would have taken measures for an early and regular publication of their proceedings; but as this has not been attended to, our correspondent conceives it a duty he owes his country to make this communication,—assuring the public, that he shall in the present as in his former publication, relate facts that will not be questioned even by those who have dictated the late and present measures.

Wednesday the 2d of May the two Houses of Assembly convened in this town, agreeably to the constitution, for the election of officers for the year ensuing.—From the return of proxies for general officers, it appeared that a great change was effected in the Upper House and the Delegates of Congress.—Those who had in any instance opposed or dissented from the proceedings of the late administration, were superseded by the avowed partizans of their favorite system.—In the Lower House the division was nearly as the last year.

The Assembly being thus organized adjourned to Thursday to give opportunity to arrange the business of the session.

This arrangement was made in a Convention held on Wednesday evening, consisting of such members of Assembly and private characters as, to use the expression of an honorable member, “*were as good friends to the cause as ever broke bread;*” and it was soon announced to the public, that only such of the former officers would be re-elected as were well-affected to the present measures.—In pursuance of this plan new candidates, unacquainted with the routines of their proposed offices, were opposed to the most reputable and faithful officers; whose only crime was their not deeming it justice to pay a real debt with nominal value. The decision of the Legislature upon these oppositions, fully evinced the influence of Conventions and the baneful consequences attendant upon party divisions in a Republican Government.

The arrangement of militia officers not being made, it was referred to the next session.

A great division took place in the Convention in the nomination of the Supreme Judiciary—the judgment given by the late Court, relating to the operation of a penal law, gave great offence to the leading characters, and as they declined making concessions to the Convention, a new Court was warmly contended for, but disagreeing in sentiment on this arrangement, they obtained a vote of both houses of assembly on Friday for postponing the appointment till the next sessions—But on Saturday morning, the election of this Court was re-assumed (it having been previously agreed in Convention to continue the Chief Judge and appoint four new judges) and they were accordingly elected. After the election of officers—the attention of the Lower-House was called to the report of the committee on public letters, and the motion made at the last session for the appointment of Delegates to the Convention at Philadelphia was reassumed and urged with such force of reason and eloquence, as obtained a majority in the Lower House of two; but it was rejected in the Upper House by a majority of



four, and no appointment took place. The Committee also reported for consideration the Circular Letter of Congress recommending a general act to be passed by each State for repealing all acts that may be repugnant to the treaty of peace with his Britannic majesty. A general and desultory conversation took place on this question without entering on any particular violation of the treaty alluded to,—the leading members, however, manifested their disapprobation of the measure by alledging that they knew of no act existing in this State repugnant to the treaty. By this it seems they did not acknowledge the force of the observation made by Congress “*that the judges in general were men of character and learning, and feel as well as know the obligations of office and the value of reputation, and there was no reason to doubt that their conduct and judgment relative to these as well as other judicial matters would be wise and upright.*” It was agreed to refer the further discussion of this subject to the next sessions.

A request from the delegates for a supply of money—engrossed much of the time of the house—the committee who had a grant of 150*l.* paper at the last session to realize for the delegates, informed the house that they had exchanged it at 6 for 1—it was observed in justification of their conduct, that the person who exchanged this money was obliged the next day to exchange it to his loss at 7 for 1, this report displeased some leading members—as it was virtually acknowledging a depreciation which is incompatible with the money being a tender at par. A grant was finally made for 100*l.* currency to each delegate. It was the sense of the house, not to continue the delegates in congress during the sitting of the convention, as it was not probable there would be a congress—and of this the delegates were to be immediately informed.—An act passed granting to the governor as a perquisite—the office of intendant of trade within this state and placing it under his sole direction.

Saturday evening 8 o’clock a mutilated soldier, after waiting the session, had a hearing of his petition, wherein he related to the house, that confiding in the engagements of government to pay him five dollars per month as an invalid, he had married, and had now a wife and two young children to support, that his wages being now paid him in paper, were very inadequate for providing a subsistence, that agreeable to their late directions, he had applied to the town council of Portsmouth where he belonged, for necessaries, and they afforded him none, but referred him to a page in the old law-book, where provision was made for invalids in the French war, that he with his wife and little ones, had subsisted for some time on potatoes, the fruit of his labour. But alas! this resource had now failed them, and he had the remaining alternative, of the assistance of that hon. assembly, or the wretched state of beggary;—this pitiable object was hobbling with his crutches on one leg, with tattered garments, and lantern jaws, a melancholy proof of the truth of his narration;—the feelings of the spectators were sensibly affected:—A leading paper money member arose and said, Mr. Speaker if you have business of no greater importance, we can soon adjourn, as provision is made already—and nothing further can be done. But to the honor of the minority, they stood forth the advocates for justice, for gratitude, and for humanity, they conceived the application to be of the utmost moment, it was whether a soldier who had fought and bled for us should perish in the street, or



be justly paid his stipend, that the provision referred to was ostensibly made under the suggestion, that the invalids were a dissolute and drunken set of men, while the real reason was, that an additional grant would acknowledge the money had depreciated; this boasted provision is only a recommendation to the town councils to supply them with necessaries and the amount should be allowed out of the first specie continental tax—the towns therefore are not nor cannot be obliged to supply them, & by the present instance, we are convinced they will not do it—they observed that we were unjust in charging the United States 5 specie dollars per month paid to invalids, while in fact we paid them only 5 paper ones equal to 5 eighths of a dollar.—The house was called and rejected the petition by a large majority. . . .

The Assembly stands adjourned to the Second Monday in June next, then to meet in this Town.

1. Reprinted in part twenty-six times by 14 June: Vt. (1), Mass. (10), Conn. (4), N.Y. (3), Pa. (6), Va. (2). The omitted portion lists officers chosen by the legislature.

#### **14. Providence Committee of Merchants and Tradesmen to the Federal Convention, Providence, 11 May 1787<sup>1</sup>**

Gentlemen, Since the Legislature of this State have finally declined sending Delegates to meet you in Convention for the purposes mention'd in the Resolve of Congress of the 21st February 1787. The merchants Tradesmen & others of this place deeply affected with the evils of the present unhappy times have thought proper to Communicate in writing their Approbation of your Meeting and their regret that it will fall short of a Compleat representation of the Federal union—

The failure of this State was owing to the non currence of the upper House of Assembly with a Vote passed in the Lower House, for appointing Delegates to attend the said Convention, at thier Session Holden at Newport on the First Wednesday of the present month.

It is the General opinion here & we believe of the well inform'd throughout this State, that full power for the regulations of the Commerce of the United States, both Foreign & Domestick ought to be vested in the National Council—

And that effectual arrangements should also be made for giving operation to the present powers of Congress in thier Requisitions upon the States for National purposes—

As the object of this Letter is chiefly to prevent any impressions unfavorable to the Commercial Interest of this State from taking place in our Sister States, from the Circumstance of our being Unrepresented in the present national Convention; we shall not presume to enter into any detail of the Objects we hope your deliberations will embrace & provide for, being Convinc'd they will be such as have a Tendency to strengthen the Union, promote the Commerce, increase the power & Establish the Credit of the United States—

The result of your deliberations tending to these desirable purposes we still hope may be finally approved and adopted by this State, for which we pledge our Influence and best Exertions—

This will be deliver'd you by the Honble. James M. Varnum Esq. who will Communicate (with your permission) in person more particularly our Sentiments on the subject matter of our address—

In Behalf of the merchants, Tradesmen &c We have the Honour to be with perfect Consideration & Esteem

Your most obt. & Mo. humble Servants

Jabez Bowen	}	Committee
Nichos. Brown		
Welcome Arnold		
John Jenckes		
John Brown		
Jos. Nightingale		
Wm. Barton		
Thos. L. Halsey		
Phillip Allen		
Levi Hall		
Paul Allen		
Wm. Russel		
Jere. Olney		

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

#### 15. Providence Committee of Merchants and Tradesmen to James M. Varnum Providence, 14 May 1787<sup>1</sup>

By request of the merchants & Tradesmen of this Town we inclose to your care a letter addressd to the National Convention now conven'd at Philadelphia, wch. we desire you to deliver in such way as you may think best, and if the Convention shou'd be so condescending As to permit you to take a seat with them; when the Commercial Affairs of the ~~Country~~ Nation are discuss'd we shall think Ourselves highly favor'd, to have you there to speak for us

Our Opinions are that all Goods &c the produce or manufacture of the United States or any of them may be Transported to any or all of them; free of any Duty or Excise,

That all Goods Imported from any Foreign Nation that pays the National Impost at the first port of Entry may be Transported to any of the United States free of any further Duty or Impost.

That the Carrying Trade shou'd be Insur'd to the Ships & Vessels that belongs to the subjects of the United States on reasonable terms.—

And we hope the Consideration of a General Currency throughout the United States will not be forgot by the Convention, As it is so nearly Connected with Trade & Commerce.

If you find that you can be of service to the mercantile Interest of this State by tarrying in Philadelphia after you have finish'd your other business we shall be ready to reimburse the Extra Expence You may be at—

We heartily wish a Recommendation may go from the Convention, for the Comprehending of Vermont In the Number of the United States  
P S Least you shou'd have Left the City before this reaches you we have thought Expedient to Transmit a duplicate to Tench Francis Esqr. to be by him delivered

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

#### 16. Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer, 18 May 1787<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman in Newport, Rhode-Island, to his friend in this city.*

“Your observations on the state of our government, is truly just, and all the hopes I have are, that they will conduct in such a way that the other states, for their own safety, will be obliged to take the government from us, and divide it.

“We have for the last two weeks been hard at work, with intent, if possible, to make a change of men and measures, but I am sorry to say it was without effect.

“The last years transactions are so agreeable to the people in the country, that they have carried all before them, so that the same people are in again; and the paper money, which is eight for one, will continue a tender until both public and private debts are paid, and then it will run out as the old Continental money did.

“Such is our situation, that I wish myself out of the government, and any where would be agreeable, so as I might with my flock and little property be safe from villains; for I do assure you I am very uneasy.

“Our election is now over, and I must do the majority so much credit as to say they have been uniform throughout the session; their business was settled in conventions, in the evenings, without consulting the members from Providence, and this town. In short they have put out every honest man that was in office; the Judges of the Superior Court are villains of the first stamp; and so they are down to the lowest office.

“The Members from Providence and this town brought on the question, Whether they would send Members to the Convention at Philadelphia, or not? It passed the Lower House, by a majority of two; and when brought before the Upper House, there was a majority of two to one against sending them—therefore we shall not be represented, and, I suppose, finally, be put out of the Union.

“Our country Deputies are determined to ruin the trading part of the state; and, I much fear, they will accomplish their ends.”

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Mercury*, 11 June and in whole or in part in twenty out-of-state newspapers by 14 July: N.H. (1), Mass. (6), Conn. (1), N.Y. (1), N.J. (1), Pa. (2), Del. (1), Md. (3), Va. (2), S.C. (1), Ga. (1).

#### 17. Massachusetts Centinel, 19 May 1787<sup>1</sup>

The Legislature of Connecticut having last week appointed its Deputies, Twelve States will be represented in the grand federal Convention, now sitting in Philadelphia.—*Rhode-Island* is the delinquent State—but, observes a correspondent, this is a circumstance far *more joyous than grievous*; for her delinquency

will not be permitted to defeat the salutary object of this body, and her deputation, if, as is supposeable, they should have been *birds of feather* with the majority of her present administration, must have been the cause of much mortification to the illustrious characters who now compose that assembly, and must have reflected discredit on its proceedings.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 24 May, and in eleven out-of-state newspapers by 29 May: N.H. (1), Mass. (4), Conn. (1), N.Y. (1), Pa. (3), Va. (1).

### 18. *Newport Herald*, 24 May 1787<sup>1</sup>

#### RHODE-ISLAND'S SOLILOQUY

Mild is my clime, salubrious is my air,  
 My prospect charming, and my females fair;  
 My fertile fields do yield a plenteous store,  
 Enough for my own use, and rather more:  
 And yet, alas! I'm in a wo[e]ful case;  
 For I am cover'd o'er with foul disgrace:  
 I blush to lift my head before the UNION,  
 For with my sisters I refuse communion—  
 Alas for me! how dismal is my fate!  
 My freeborn sons are so degenerate  
 I fear their party broils will overturn my State.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 6 June; Middletown, Conn., *Middlesex Gazette*, 11 June; Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 12 June; Richmond, Va., *Independent Chronicle*, 20 June; *Virginia Journal*, 28 June; *Kentucky Gazette*, 8 September.

### 19. *Newport Herald*, 31 May 1787<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent observes, that the sons of anarchy here, flatter themselves, that the new Legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut (which are now in session) are deeply infected with the *paper influenza*, and that this virulent plague with all its concomitant evils, will spread a similar devastation to that we have fatally experienced;—But says our correspondent, if they should be inattentive to the ruin and merited depredation consequent on such disorders, if they should reject the wise and salutary system of their late administration, and blindly plunge into the Rhode-Island politics, in order that they might trample on the sacred principles of the constitution, and selfishly sport with the rights of property—no recrimination will be too severe—no satire will be too poignant—the pen of Junius, while it bitterly retorts the sarcastic proverb, “*Rhode-Island Faith*,” will awaken the patriot’s zeal to a firm opposition—a Tacitus will faithfully historify the reproachful system—and unveil the delusions and false glosses of the harpies of anarchy—while the Auctioneer will caricature the distinguishing contours of perfidy, fraud, and injustice.

1. Reprinted nine times by 25 August: Mass. (2), Pa. (3), Md. (1), Va. (1), S.C. (1), Ga. (1).

## 20. New York Daily Advertiser, 5 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

Should Rhode-Island, upon more mature deliberation, think proper to send delegates to the Convention now sitting at Philadelphia, letters mention, that JESSE DOOLITTLE and PELEG PINCKNEY, Esquires, will be the men!

The University of Rogue-Island have, it is said, lately conferred the honor of L.L.D. (Doctor of Musket, Swivel, and Cannon Law) upon his Excellency Major GENERAL SHAYS; and that a Diploma, upon parchment, will be forwarded to the General as soon as the Governor can acquire HARD MONEY (by loan, or otherwise) sufficient to pay the postage to Vermont.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part eight times by 16 July: N.H. (2), Mass. (4), Conn. (1), Md. (1), S.C. (1).

## 21. Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer, 6 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Washington county, Rhode-Island, dated May 1787.*

“The virtuous part of our *little* republic, at the late election, issued and supported a *prox* or printed ticket, consisting, *all* of LANDHOLDERS, graced by the respectable names of WILLIAM BRADFORD, Esquire, for Governor, and JOHN MALBONE, Esquire, for Deputy Governor—Our exertions were great; we wished to restore our credit among the nations, and still to be thought worthy of a name in the confederated empire. But alas! the glory of Rhode-Island is gone! Our opponents, or rather the opponents of every thing that is *good*, carried their *prox*, or printed ticket, by a very large majority. His excellency Captain Collins, is once more Governor, and the Honorable Mr. Owen, blacksmith, Deputy Governor. Our Upper House is a most curious medley of KNOW YE Justices, horse jockies, &c.—Their *prox* was headed by the word “perseverance,” an excellent motto, provided we subjoin “in villainy.” For since the fall of Adam to the present æra, *perseverance* in villainy, rascality, oppression, cruelty, and devilishness, was never more characteristic of any set of men, than the present rulers of Rhode-Island!

“Pardon my warmth, I feel for my devoted country; at a distance you only HEAR, WE REALIZE! Our widows and orphan children are ruined under the sanction of what these vile men call law! We shall all be ruined unless a miracle is wrought for our deliverance!

“Our Attorney General is one *Goodwin*; he supplants the patriotic Mr. Channing; General Varnum, Miller, &c. our delegates to Congress are superseded by such geniuses as must, if they ever take their places in that *august* body, sink into base insignificance; among them is *Sylvester Gardner*, Esquire, a noted KNOW YE Judge; his name, if you ever come across the Rhode-Island newspapers, you may take notice is very famous.

“We fervently wish that the federal convention may take pity upon us, and fall upon some spirited measure to rescue us from a group of unprincipled tyrants. It is impossible for our situation to be worse than it now is. We have become a *bye-word* among *all* people, and richly deserve it.—Make what use you please of this letter, and let the good citizens of the middle states know that we are not *wholly* abandoned. There are yet some among us who dare to *think, speak,* and *WRITE*. Probably you may hear from me again soon. In the mean time, I am, &c.”

1. Reprinted twelve times by 8 September: Mass. (4), Conn. (2), N.Y. (3), Va. (2), S.C. (1).

## 22. Civis

**Newport Herald, 7 June 1787**

MR. EDES, *You are requested to insert the following in your next Herald.*

The daring abuse offered to the great Council of the United States, and the Honorable Commissioners of the Treasury by Euripides, in the Newport Mercury of the 28th of last May, deserves the severest animadversion.

The strutting pomposity and inveterate insolence of this piece clearly indicate its author to be the person who, under the signature of An Honest Man, in the Newport Mercury of the 14th of December last, uttered a most diffusive strain of calumny against a body of men, the latchets of whose shoes he is not worthy to unloose.—For this he suffered such castigation as it was thought would have silenced him for ever.<sup>(a)</sup>—Could you think, EURIPIDES, that Civis, and the Friend to Peace, order and good government, were inattentive to the interests of the union?—Did you, POLITICAL DIVER, foolishly imagine that all men had grown as wicked as yourself?—that there was not one among the sons of freedom who would step forth to vindicate the injured honor of Congress, and chastise your audacity?—You shall find yourself deceived, and be lashed out of your delusion.—If ever I suffer, Oh liberty! thy altars to be profaned,—and the Head of the Union to be wantonly and maliciously attacked by EURIPIDES, by the bold assumer of the signature An Honest Man, or by any other abusive scribbler, and do not bear my public testimony against him, may the pen which is devoted to the service of my country drop from my unnerved hand!—

When did the great Council of the United States, thou vile calumniator, oppress the American nation?—Point out the time and the instance.—I challenge you.—Are not the expenditures of Congress sent to the States every six months for their information and inspection?—Are they concealed?—Is it not the duty of Legislators to inquire into them?—Is the Treasury of the United States “a seat of corruption?”—Is it “a *sieve* draining the wealth of the honest subject, and dropping its contents into the coffers of officers and designing men?”—Are the great Council of the United States, oppressors of the nation,—are they or the Honorable Board of Treasury daring thieves?—

Who wishes that new powers may be granted to Congress for the purpose of increasing pensioners, and erecting new offices?—Have not Congress, since the war, reduced the salaries of their officers, lessened the civil list, and given convincing proofs of real economy?—You know that they have, if you have any

knowledge of their doings;—and you ought to have been acquainted with their proceedings before you attempted to criminate them.

Euripides estimates the honor of an office, conferred upon him by the present administration, at so high a rate, that he doth not wish that a handsome salary should be annexed to it.—He is contented, it seems, with but little more than the paper perquisites of KNOW YE'S—but such thin, meagre diet will not support the servants of Congress.

I know very well what his services justly deserve; but he who is contented with a small reward for his services, must have either a mean opinion of them, or have received a Spartan education.—Some may suppose that this disciple of Lycurgus despises money.—Ambition is indeed the ruling passion of this dusky hypocrite;—but I cannot yet believe that, if the General Assembly should annex five hundred specie dollars to his office, he would resign it on that account; nor, notwithstanding his aversion to the creation of new offices, am I altogether sure that he would refuse an appointment to the offices of censor and financier, if those two offices should be created;—and they are both much wanted.

Cato (the Censor I suppose) was called (says Euripides) to the management of the Roman Revenue.—Cato was an honorable man.

Morris was called to the management of the American Revenue.—He was an able financier and saved much.—Euripides did not like him;—but he has not as yet called him a *thief*.

The Treasury Board is adorned with three gentlemen remarkable for their economy,—they are in the opinion of Euripides *daring thieves*.

Let them be just, and such blasphemers be liars.—Are we not arrived, says he, to a very serious moment? We are arrived at a very serious crisis indeed.

To be or not to be a nation is now the question.—Whether it shall be in the power of a State to infringe commercial treaties and put an end to commerce;—or whether Congress shall be empowered to regulate our foreign and domestic trade.

Whether a state shall at pleasure comply or not with the requisitions of Congress (founded in the confederation) and wipe away their proportion of the public debt with a sponge, or vile paper;—or the credit of the United States shall depend upon the precarious boon and fluctuating affection of the States?—In other words whether Congress shall patiently wait until the salvation of the union shall be wrought out by the *voluntary gifts* and *unfeigned love* of this State.—May we not say with truth, that the charity of this State hath waxed cold, and that the late administration did not discover even a disposition to discharge our quota of the public debt?

Public virtue, on which rested the fabric of the union, is, alas! no more;—the principles of morality are trampled upon, the sense of a general interest is lost; and as the fat-fleshed and well-favoured kine of Pharaoh were eaten up by the lean and ill-favoured, so are the generous, social affections eaten up by a base, lean, ill-favoured self-interest.

These, I repeat it, are indeed serious times, and out of them arise questions of vast magnitude, some of which I have mentioned, and all of which lead to and center in this momentous question, whether we shall or shall not be a nation?

These are times which demand the united wisdom and virtue of all the States.

In this critical, this dangerous situation, Congress have recommended, it to the States, to send Delegates to the Convention at Philadelphia, to consider seriously what ought to be done, to restore our public affairs and preserve the union from dissolution.—For the reputation, the prosperity and happiness of this State, I could have wished that our wise legislators, who are so strongly attached to the public weal, had complied with the recommendation, and sent delegates to represent the State in that convention.—When delegates from all the other States are met and meeting at Philadelphia, to consult about matters of the highest concern to all the States, that this State should have no one to appear for, and to point out what may be beneficial to her and to the union at large, how singularly sottish and disgraceful is it!—The madness and folly of this State is enough to vex the patience of a Job, and almost distract every considerate man, who has any regard for her and the union.

Did Janus and this Euripides, and the rest of the junto imagine that, by withholding delegates from the convention, they should not be obliged to comply with what Congress may recommend in pursuance of the report of the convention?—Do they imagine that this little State can cope with all the other States?—Do they imagine, that detached from the union it can subsist?

The whole drift of the abusive, insolent piece on which I am animadverting, is to inflame the minds of the people against the federal government, in order to prevent such powers being granted to Congress, as shall enable that body to carry into execution, requisitions founded in the confederation;—and to effect this purpose, the author of it has stuck at nothing.—The Great Council of the nation are *oppressors*,—the Treasury is the *seat of corruption*, and both or one of them are *thieves*.

When recommendations and requisitions won[']t do, what, Mr. Euripides (for you are the judge and the censor) what is the next natural step in the order of government?—Do not hesitate,—Do not be afraid to speak out. An honest man never need to fear,—Force.—True—in such cases all must be lost or compulsion, however horrible it may appear to the imaginations of those who are upon a scheme of systematic fraud, must be used.—When states will not pay their just debts, an armed force,—an armed force, Euripides, if nothing else will do, must and will be employed to compel payment. What signifies your cautioning the people to “remember with fear that civil government always supports itself best with its own strength?”—Is the civil government of the United States of America sufficient to support itself at all with its own strength?—No.—It is upon the very verge of dissolution.

The frame of the Union rested on the public virtue of the States; and large and melancholy experience evinces that public virtue no longer animates them.

Little or no regard is paid to the requisitions, exhortations and remonstrances of Congress;—the principles of morality are publicly violated;—self-love and social are no longer considered as the same; but a mean, sordid, self interest, which knows not a whole, is the sole object that engrosses the attention of too many of our legislatures.—And yet, says our benevolent Euripides, “let us remember the great national objects: a government supported, by voluntary gifts,



unfeigned love, and repeated instances of mutual affection vibrating between the governing and governed with reciprocal energy.”

What philanthropy!—What a beautiful simile!—What a copiousness!—What a redundancy of language have we here!!! Surely this must be the work of the Honest Man of West Greenwich;—Surely Euripides must be the very man that G. B. has stiled the Political Diver;—for surely no man else so abounds in abuse and bombast.

The simile of the sieve, and the flowers which decorate the close of his performance amidst my indignation excise a smile.

What mode this politico, philosophico mountebank has of draining gold and silver coins, or paper securities through a sieve I can no more conceive, than how a juggler could jump into a quart bottle, or a camel or cable can go through the eye of a needle.

A great State, or a combination of States, subsisting by voluntary gifts and mutual affection is stupid Eutopian nonsense, contrary to the observation of the present day, and the experience of all ages.

But the notion of energetic vibrations of reciprocal affection is really laughable. The word vibrations naturally excites the idea of a pendulum of a clock, and between that, in vibration, and our Euripides there is a most striking ridiculous resemblance.—The pendulum of a clock is made of lead cased in brass, and so is his head, and he, like that in motion, is constantly shifting sides.

His curious performance comprehends every species of nonsense,—the glaring—the pompous—the laughable—the stupid;—but the worst of it is, it contains too a vast deal of meditated scurrility and rancour.—Nonsense in a certain case, Euripides, may receive some palliation, and be winked at; but for studied, deliberate malice and calumny there can be no cloak.—It is absolutely unpardonable.

(a) But in some measure recovered from his wounds, and presuming upon the inattention of the friends to the union, he dares again advance his mis-created head.

### 23. Blackbeard

**Virginia Independent Chronicle, 13 June 1787<sup>1</sup>**

“Numidia’s grown a scorn among the nations  
For breach of public vows. Our punic faith  
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.

ADDISON.”

*We hold the glass, and but reflect your shame,  
Like Spartans, by exposing, to reclaim.*

Lansdowne.

Great complaints have been made, (with perhaps more passion than reason) against the political conduct of one of these states; but whoever will coolly consider the principles that uniformly influence every government in the world, must acknowledge that national prosperity is the sole and constant object of true patriotism. Whether the means of obtaining this end be right or wrong, is alto-

gether a matter of opinion, which does not concern the nation itself, for those measures that are most likely to succeed are always understood to be politically just; the maxims of morality for states and individuals are widely different, and national faith is a mode of expression used only to quiet vulgar minds, and to overcome weak scruples which are always inconsistent with national interest. What power on earth ever went to war without declaring itself perfectly in the right? And what treaty was ever made that continued binding a moment after it became expedient to break it? The true criterion of national justice is success, and only the vanquished can be in the wrong. Algerine patriots have no doubts about the right of taking the property, and making slaves of all the Christians they can catch, and it is perfectly consistent with the religion and humanity of all nations that have colonies, to steal thousands of Africans from their country and friends, and to make them toil under the whip of a driver in a cane patch. Why then should not R——d I——d freemen wipe off their debts with a paper sponge, and break a confederation which is found by experience to be incompatible with their country's good: Stealing and cheating being in effect synonymous terms, they must surely be equally just. The same principles operated in full force among the Ancients, who are considered as models of perfection. Lycurgus formed Spartan soldiers by making thieving a virtue, and the Romans never wanted a motive to make war where there was a prospect of plunder.

It appears to me that instead of railing at our sister state we should encourage her. She has no staple commodity but industry, and as depredation seems to be the most profitable way of employing that, we should allow her to proceed upon the general plan of self-interest, and to cruise against all nations except ourselves.

I would therefore propose to consider R——d I——d as Europe considers the states of Barbary, their principles are exactly similar, except in religion, and in this they may become nearly so by worshipping \*\*\*\*\*<sup>2</sup> for Mahomet, and adopting the "*Oracle of Reason*" for an Alcoran. As we surround her by land, she would for her own sake be always at peace with us, and we might play off the risque of navigating in our seas against France and England, who enjoy, to our exclusion, the trade of the Streights and Levant. American passes would become of more importance to them than Mediterranean ones are to us, and as we should grant these only to American bottoms, the whole carrying trade of the West-Indies and of British America would belong exclusively to us. The powers of Europe could not expect us to protect their ships from these depredations, because they will not protect our trade in the Mediterranean. The importance of this protection however would be an hundred times greater to them than that of theirs can be to us; because their West-India ships are in number and value an hundred times more than ours in the Mediteranean Sea would ever amount to; besides which these ships in coming down the Gulph Stream must necessarily pass our cruising ground. We should also receive great commercial benefit from this plan, for the R——d I——ders will be able to supply us with West-India produce at half the price it would cost by importation even if the island ports were open to us: Thus, even if stealing were a national crime, we should reap the benefit of theft without being guilty of it.

The importance the twelve states would enjoy among the nations of Europe must be obvious at first view. We should be courted by all of them to make treaties of mutual defence against R——d I——d and Algiers, while we should only treat with those who are able to secure the Mediterranean trade to us, thereby always leaving nations enough out of the compact to support the cruising business of our neighbours.

I hope the federal convention will consider this subject fully, and allow R——d I——d to withdraw herself from the Union, that the new world, like the old one, may have a band of Pirates in the scale of its importance.

1. Reprinted in the August issue of the Philadelphia *American Museum* and in nine newspapers by 4 October: Mass. (2), Conn. (1), N.Y. (4), Pa. (2).
2. Some of the reprints replaced the eight asterisks with "Ethan Allen."

#### 24. Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer, 18 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Rhode-Island,  
to his friend in this city, dated June 7.

"Next week the Assembly will meet here, and will go on with the ruinous and disgraceful system they have hitherto adopted. We are very anxious to hear what the Convention are doing—for to them we look for our political redemption.—Indeed our only hope is in them to save us from destruction."

1. Reprinted seven times by 27 June: N.Y. (4), Pa. (3).

#### 25. Massachusetts Gazette, 19 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

On Monday, last week, the Assembly of Rhode-Island convened at Newport, and on Saturday evening last adjourned, to meet, in September next, at Bristol—having, in the course of their session, passed a vote, by a majority of 17—NOT to send any delegates to the federal convention, at Philadelphia.

1. Reprinted eight times by 5 July: Mass. (2), Conn. (2), Pa. (2), Md. (2).

#### 26. Newport Herald, 21 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

The Honorable General Assembly of this state met in this town on Monday, & on Saturday last adjourned to the third Monday of August, then to meet at Bristol.—We are favored by our correspondent with their proceedings, which, agreeably to his request we now publish for the information of the public.

The first of the session was employed in private business, in which a uniform disposition of administration to pursue their late measures was fully manifested;—the town of Newport, by an early opposition to their system, had rendered themselves obnoxious to the leading and influential characters, and were threatened with the consequences of their displeasure;—the vacating their charter of incorporation at a former session, because it tended to give influence and promote the interest and happiness of the citizens was a striking proof of their vindictive power;—influenced by this principle, an application had been en-

couraged to be brought forward, in order to annul a judgment grounded upon the report of three hon. gentlemen of a neighbouring state who, in pursuance of a rule of court, had adjudged in favor of the then city against a citizen respecting the title of the beach, marsh and pond, a petition was now heard and a new trial granted, notwithstanding it appeared that the parties had been fully heard, that the conduct of the referees was unexceptionable, and their report had received the approbation of a court of law;—summary and unusual proceedings were had in another instance, by destroying the title a member in the minority of that house had in a real estate, by a legislative act, without a legal trial;—While this business was transacting, the attention of the Upper House was called to the more important concerns in government;—convinced that their dissenting from the vote of the Lower House at May session, for the appointment of deputies to represent this state in the federal convention at Philadelphia, was ruinous to the government, they now passed a vote for the appointment of delegates, and sent it down for concurrence, the vote was received on Wednesday, however the consideration of it was referred to Saturday, when after a long debate it was non-concurred with by a majority of 17—although but the last session a similar vote originated and passed that house.

The Upper House also passed a bill, essentially complying with the recommendation of Congress, “for repealing all such acts or parts of acts of this state as are repugnant to the treaty of peace between the United States and his Britannic Majesty”—but the Lower House non-concurred with it by a majority of 10.—A bill was preferred for repealing the tender law so far as it respected private contracts.—This gave rise to a very interesting debate, in which the iniquity and injustice of tenders with our depreciated money were strongly pointed out.—An honorable member of the minority in support of this bill, led the attention of the House to the last drama of life, and their solemn appearance before the Judge of all, to answer for the deeds done in the body.—“How do you know, sir! (in his address to the speaker) but your soul may this night be required of you, and how can you answer, for establishing injustice, by the solemnities of law?”—the House was at first clamorous—but it gave greater energy to the worthy member—he exhibited in the striking traits of truth the extraordinary proceedings of the present administration, he traced the impure source from whence they derived such knowledge in perfecting their present measures, to the laws for emitting *old tenor*—A system which he said was fraught with every species of injustice & wickedness, & yet it was the code applied to for information and adduced as precedents.—He arraigned the conduct of the trustees for loaning out the money, charged some of them who were members and of the majority in that House with converting it to their own uses and loaning it without securities, that their accounts were unsettled and large balances in their hands, &c.—Truth and justice seemed for a moment to triumph, as no answer was made to the speech—but on calling the House, the bill was rejected by the usual majority.

By information from the Treasurer it appeared that the first quarter part of the debt, amounting to about twenty-seven thousand pounds, was discharged

with twelve or thirteen thousand in paper money; had all the creditors called for this dividend, they could not have received it as there was not a sufficiency in the Treasury to pay the nominal amount—yet, in pursuance of a former resolution, those who have not received their proportion have forfeited their right to it. On these principles, government are provided with a fund to discharge the whole debt, they have therefore in pursuance of the original plan, authorised the Treasurer to pay the second dividend, but the time of forfeiture is referred to the next sessions, when it is expected there will be a sufficient sum in the Treasury to pay all who may apply.

At the close of the session a member in the majority who had given his voice for non-concurring with the vote of the Upper House relative to the bill for repealing all laws repugnant to the treaty, moved, agreeably to the rules of the House, to recede from their non-concurrence; but to prevent this the leading and influential characters withdrew with some of their brethren, and left not a sufficient number of members to constitute a house, and the assembly were reduced to the necessity of breaking up without a regular adjournment.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part twelve times by 2 August: Mass. (7), N.Y. (2), Pa. (2), S.C. (1).

## 27. Pennsylvania Packet, 23 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Rhode-Island  
to his friend in this city, dated 12th June, 1787.*

“Our grand council of the state meets this day in Newport, on the old, short and concise plan. Governor Collins is for sending members on to the federal convention, and nobly declares he had rather go at his own expence than the state should be without an *able delegate*. Rather than we should be without a gentleman of such *first rate abilities*, I would chearfully contribute towards defraying the expence myself.”

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 28 July, and in twelve out-of-state newspapers by 11 July: Mass. (1), Conn. (1), N.Y. (5), Pa. (1), Md. (1), Va. (2), N.C. (1).

## 28. Providence Gazette, 23 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

Saturday last the General Assembly of this State adjourned to the third Monday in August next, then to meet at Bristol.

In their late Session, a Vote passed the Upper House for appointing Delegates to the Fœderal Convention; which was rejected in the Lower House by a Majority of 17.—A Bill likewise passed the Upper House, essentially complying with the Recommendation of Congress for repealing all Acts repugnant to the Treaty of Peace with Great-Britain; this was rejected in the Lower House by a Majority of 10.—A Continuance of the iniquitous Tender-Act was voted by the usual large Majority.

1. Reprinted nine times by 18 July: Conn. (2), N.Y. (3), Pa. (3), Md. (1).

### 29. Newport Herald, 28 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent observes, that it is impolitic for a citizen of this State in his travels abroad to acknowledge his country, unless he can prove a uniform and decided opposition to *Know Ye men and measures*—So great disrepute and contempt are we held by our Sister States, that *Rhode-Island Faith* is become a proverbial term of reproach when one violates his engagements—If a rebel or pirate escapes from justice, it is suggested that he has fled for refuge here—If language fails of odious epithets to pourtray the finished villain, he is compared to a *Know Ye Judge*. Unhappy State! thy government is distracted, thy trade is ruined, and thy character is sullied by merited reproach—If an enemy had brought us to the precipice of annihilation, our innocence would have invigorated the efforts to rise, but when we reflect that the calamities we feel are deliberately introduced by those who ostentatiously profess to *relieve the distressed*—when poverty advances with rapid strides, in the prosecution of a system, which was to render our country richer than Eldorado—how can we too strongly execrate the policy of such measures—how can we too bitterly curse the men who have dictated them.

1. Reprinted thirteen times by 1 August: Mass. (5), N.Y. (2), N.J. (1), Pa. (3), Md. (1), Va. (1).

### 30. New Haven Gazette, 28 June 1787<sup>1</sup>

The legislature of Rhode-Island have again determined not to send delegates to the Convention.

The report that Rhode-Island is to be excluded from the Union is utterly without foundation.

1. The *Gazette of the State of Georgia*, 2 August, reprinted both paragraphs while the *Hudson Weekly Gazette*, 5 July, reprinted only the first paragraph.

### 31. Connecticut Norwich Packet, 5 July 1787<sup>1</sup>

The reason why the Assembly of Rhode Island did not appoint Delegates, to attend in the fœderal Convention at their late session; is said to be this: They well knew there was not a man in the majority capable of that important trust, and in taking them from the minority they would run counter to their favourite principle of PERSEVERANCE, so that to conform to themselves, and not disgrace that state and the union, they have concluded to send none at all.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 19 July, and in ten out-of-state newspapers by 3 September: Mass. (3), N.Y. (1), Pa. (2), Md. (2), Va. (1), S.C. (1).

### 32. Baltimore Maryland Gazette, 10 July 1787<sup>1</sup>

Rhode-Island seems to have run the ga[u]ntlet of contempt through all the States; her conduct has been severely reprobated, and the most reproachful epithets bestowed on her, even by her neighbours of Massachusetts.—“From her antifederal disposition,” say they, “Nothing better could have been expected. To

that State it is owing, *that the continental impost has not taken place*. To her may be charged the poverty of the soldiers of the late army, the heavy taxes of our citizens, and the embarrassed state of the public finances. It is, however, sincerely hoped and wished, that her dissent will *never more be permitted to defeat any federal measure*. Rather let her be dropped out of the union, or apportioned to the different States that surround her. Nor will the American constellation lose one gem thereby. The State of Vermont shines with far superior lustre, and would more than compensate the loss.”

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 4 August, and in nine out-of-state newspapers by 2 August: Mass. (1), Pa. (5), Va. (2), S.C. (1).

### 33. *Massachusetts Gazette*, 13 July 1787<sup>1</sup>

The arrival at Philadelphia of the delegates from New-Hampshire, (who are now on their journey) will completely close the representation of the states in the federal convention, now convened in that city. *R. Island*, it is well known, has *definitively* denied meddling in affairs, which so nearly concern the Union as the revision of the confederation; of course, is *not* to be numbered among the states of united America. Therefore, to consider the representation as *complete*, is only *exposing* the folly of that state, and *expressing* the wishes of all the rest. Such obstinacy and perverseness—such arrogance and self importance, is not becoming a child of Columbia, and a younger sister—What, then, remains to be done, but for the other sisters, naturally affectionate, to deny her those enjoyments which themselves reciprocally share, and which SHE ONCE merited—to cast her off—yea, verily, even from being of the sister-hood—and to forget that such a creature, as *R—eI—d*, ever existed!—To say, *let her alone—she is given to idols*, will not make compensation for the loss of our national honour and credit.

1. Reprinted nine times by 13 August: N.H. (1), Conn. (1), N.Y. (3), Pa. (2), Md. (1), S.C. (1).

### 34. *William Ellery to Benjamin Huntington* Newport, 20 July 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . The principal part of the Sessions of our Assembly for more than a year past has been employed in manœuvring with our blessed paper money.—

Our legislature admitting the citizens of this State to pay their debts to the citizens of your State in paper bills, and not permitting the debtors in your State to discharge their debts to the citizens in this in the same manner, is ungenerous, unjust, and antifederal.—Unless our Law, which makes this discrimination, should be repealed I hope you will remonstrate against it to Congress as well as to this State.—

The minority here are looking up with anxiety to the General Convention for safety.—They hope that the Convention will report to Congress a system of federal government which will secure to the citizens in each State their peace, their liberty and property.—

For my own part it is my wish that Congress may be invested with the exclusive right of coinage and of emitting paper bills,—with sufficient power to compel the States to pay their quotas of the public debt, and with the power of regulating the exterior and the interior trade of the United States.—

As for the form of the federal government,—perhaps it would be best that it should consist of two houses or branches, and that the Upper house should be the great Executive Council.

The idea of a King; I am not reconciled to.—There are some hints in news papers about splitting our State in twain, and assigning one part of it to your State.—What think you of this?—Would it be best for us, for you, and for the Union? A division of this State will not however I believe soon take place if ever.—

I have much to write;—My mind is full and anxious for the fate of the Union;—but I have only time to add *esto perpetua*;—to express my ardent wishes that Divine Providence may direct to such measures as shall promote our national felicity,

1. RC, Thomas C. Bright Autograph Collection, NRom.

### 35. Providence United States Chronicle, 2 August 1787

A Correspondent, who has observed the illiberal Publications in the Newspapers of divers of the other States in the Union, tending greatly to injure the State of Rhode-Island, &c. in the Esteem of the Public, has furnished us with the following Paragraphs in Answer:—

Much is said because this State hath not joined in the *Grand Convention*, at Philadelphia.—It would have been best under all Circumstances that she had. This is the present Opinion, perhaps, of a large Majority of the State. But the benevolent and philosophic Politician, capable of comprehending influential Causes, sometimes deep and remote, producing Motives and Councils, the Connection whereof cannot be seen at a transient Glance, will readily find a Mantle of Charity for a People circumstanced as the People of this State are. The Conduct of her Legislature respecting this Matter is a Proof more of *Indecision* of Council, than of *Perverseness* of Disposition; and that she is disposed to do right, when convinced of what Right is.—For at the Session of the General Assembly in May, on the Question in the Lower-House, whether Delegates should be sent to the Convention, it was after long Debate voted in the Affirmative, by a Majority of Two.—The Vote was carried for Concurrence to the Hon. Upper-House, in the Forenoon of one of the last Days of the Session.—It was soon found on Debate that the Opinion of some of the Members was as decidedly against the Measure as of others decidedly for it. The Question was put off till the Afternoon, when it was again resumed—and the Matter having been lengthily debated, on the Question being put, it appeared that the House was divided in Sentiment as follows, viz. His Excellency the *Governor*, and Mr. *Foster*, Mr. *Arnold*, and Mr. *Cooke*, of the Council, for *concurring*—Mr. *Stanton*, Mr. *Williams*, Mr. *Sayles*, Mr. *Congdon*, Mr. *Gardner*, and Mr. *Hazard*, for *non-concurring*:—The other Members



of this House, viz.—His Honor the *Deputy-Governor*, and Mr. *Durfee*, both being indisposed, were not present or in Town at the Time—so that the Measure was *non-concurred* in this House by a Majority of Two.—Nothing further was therefore done respecting it this Session.—But at the Session in June, it appeared that the other States had, in general, agreed to a Convention—and some of the Members having, on further Consideration, and the different Appearance of Circumstances, altered their Opinion, the Question was therefore again resumed by the Upper-House, when all their Members, except Mr. *Williams*, were present; and after having been fully debated, on the Question being taken, it appeared that his Excellency the *Governor*, his Honor the *Deputy-Governor*, Mr. *Foster*, Mr. *Sayles*, Mr. *Arnold*, Mr. *Gardner*, Mr. *Cooke*, and Mr. *Durfee*, were for sending Delegates—and Mr. *Stanton*, Mr. *Congdon*, and Mr. *Hazard* against it.—A Vote was therefore drawn accordingly, and sent down to the Lower-House for their Concurrence.—A Number of Causes now conspired to induce the Lower-House not to concur—Causes which a Person acquainted with Mankind and reflecting on the peculiar Circumstances of the State at the Time, and the Jealousies prevalent, can readily conceive of.—This being a true Statement, without going into the Particulars of the Arguments, on either Side, on this important Question, it can by no Means be inferred that this State is for departing from the present Confederation, or that she will refuse her Assent to Alterations, recommended by Congress, founded in that wise and prudent Policy which shall tend to promote and secure the general Liberty and Happiness of the People.

This State will again retrieve her Character and her usual Respectability.—Excepting a few illustrious Characters removed from her by Death, who were known throughout the Union—such as a *Ward*, a *Hopkins*, a *Cooke*, and a *Greene*, and some whose Names are as Stars of less Brilliance,—has she not still with her alive those Men of firm and independent Spirits, zealous in the Cause of Liberty and Justice, who so heartily joined in the Establishment of the present national Independence of the United States? who, in 1775, raised and equipped Three Regiments of Troops, with General *Greene* at their Head, to serve in the Federal Army? who, in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, and 1779, kept up their Quota of Troops, distinguished in the Continental Army by the repeated public Testimonials of the illustrious Commander in Chief, in their Favour; during the Whole of which Time the Enemy had a large Army in Possession of their capital Town? whose unremitting Exertions against the common Enemy, during the Whole of the aforesaid Period, were such as to keep a great Proportion of their Militia in the Field, serving by Rotation, and nobly enduring the Hardships of the Camp and impoverishing Distress, accumulated to that Degree as at one Time to threaten Famine, when the Honorable Governor *Bowen* and the Honorable Doctor *Manning* were employed to apply to fertile and more happy Connecticut, for Liberty to buy Corn there (an Embargo Act of that State being then in Force) where the just Representation they made of the real Situation of this State at that Time, owing to her extraordinary Exertions in the War, was such as drew Tears from the Eyes of the Connecticut Assembly.—All these Matters, with the Atchievements of her *Talbots*, her *Bartons*, of her Troops in the Field, her Exertions by Sea and Land, in paying the Continental Taxes, and loaning Money

on the earnest Solicitations of Congress, when it was not done by some of the other States, now seem to be forgotten.

The People in general in this State retain their former independent, republican Sentiments.—They have been capitally mistaken with regard to the Emission of their Paper Money: It having been made a Tender in absolute Discharge of just Debts, was a fatal Error, for which every honest Man is sorry. The People at large, however, are still as honest as any indiscriminate equal Number of People in any Part of the United States would be in their Circumstances. The “KNOW YE” Advertisements are held in such general Abhorrence, even in this State, that they have in a Manner *ceased to appear*—and the public Mind of the State is fast accommodating itself to Measures for retrieving its false Steps, whether arising from Mistake, or Passion in the Warmth of Resentment. The Paper Money remaining a Tender, in its present depreciated Condition, to the legal Extinguishment of a just Debt is a Cause of merited Reproach—and no Man who values his Reputation pretends to vindicate it; and those who were most in Favour of the Paper Money Emission now wish it had been on a different Footing. It is a Misfortune incurred from the Imbecility of human Nature, productive of a peculiar political Situation, requiring the Wisdom of a *Solomon*, the Integrity of a *Zeno*, and the Prudence of a *Washington*, to deal out Justice among the People, supposing every Man’s Case separately heard and judged of, on the Principles of Equity; and much more difficult to pass general Laws, which shall do Justice to all.—The Arduousness of the Undertaking, when Distrust and Jealousy it must be acknowledged too much prevail, is perhaps the Cause that it has been delayed.—Any Government may fall into wrong Measures at some Time or other; but the common Sense and common Honesty of Mankind in a free Government will have their usual Influence, and will perhaps as soon bring Matters right in the State of Rhode-Island as in any other Government, especially as her Citizens now see the Necessity of laying aside Party Animosity, and of turning their Attention to a Matter so nearly affecting their Honor and Credit as a State, and their political Prosperity at Home and abroad.

### 36. Charleston Columbian Herald, 2 August 1787<sup>1</sup>

GENTLEMEN, *Should you deem the following singular occurrence worthy of the public attention, by inserting it you will oblige*

A CORRESPONDENT

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia.*

“A report prevails in this city, and it is credited by all ranks, that the federal convention, finding how difficult it will be to pay off the national debt to foreigners within the time stipulated, have resolved,—*That it be recommended to the Congress of the United States, to set up the whole state of Rhode-Island for sale to the highest bidder, or bidders, citizens or states of the confederacy, in the view of applying the nett proceeds of such sale to the liquidation of the foregoing debt*—Whereupon it is confidently asserted, that a *private citizen* of the state of Georgia, after having estimated the real value of his rice plantation, slaves and other property (over

and above his debts) and presuming the same to be considerably superior to the real value of the state of Rhode-Island, has already transmitted to Congress his proposals for purchasing it by private contract;—and that Congress have taken this generous offer of his *ad referendum*.”

1. Reprinted: *New York Advertiser*, 17 August; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 29 August; *Newport Herald*, 30 August; *New Hampshire Spy*, 4 September; *Salem Mercury*, 4 September; Newburyport, Mass., *Essex Journal*, 5 September.

### 37. Foreign Spectator

#### Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer, 8 August 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . Rhode Island presents now a fatal example of corruption in the very Legislature, that has struck a panic over the whole continent; and not without reason—for if the heart of one state is corrupt, very probably many members of other states are mortified. Yet the strong opposition of a virtuous majority in that state; the general disapprobation of its conduct; and the many warm declamations on the decay of public virtue, forbid us to despair. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 15 August; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 16 August; *Salem Mercury*, 21 August; *Massachusetts Centinel*, 22 August; *Massachusetts Gazette*, 24 August; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 12 September. For the complete item in the *Independent Gazetteer* of 8 August, see Mfm:Pa., 15.

### 38. Providence United States Chronicle, 16 August 1787

“A Pamphlet is said to have been lately published in Virginia, and is now circulating, recommending a monarchical Government for these States. The Writer proposes to send to England for the Bishop of Osnaberg, second Son to the King of Great-Britain, and have him crowned KING over this Continent:— We have found by Experience, says he, that we have not Wit enough to govern ourselves—that all our Declamation and Parade about Republicanism, Liberty, Property and the Rights of Man, are mere Stuff and Nonsense; and that it is high Time to tread back the wayward Path we have walked in these Twelve Years.’—This Plan, we are told, gains Friends and Partizans rapidly, and it surely is necessary for the great Body of the People to be on their Guard.—The Federal Convention may save us from this worst of all Curses (a ROYAL GOVERNMENT, and its Appendages a STANDING ARMY, and a BAND OF PENSIONERS, &c. &c.) if they should recommend a prudent Addition to the Articles of Confederation (and that they will, from their Characters we have Reason to expect) and we are then wise enough to second their Views.”

### 39. Pennsylvania Gazette, 22 August 1787<sup>1</sup>

There is nothing calls more loudly upon each of the states to adopt the new frame of federal government, than the situation of Rhode-Island. The fate of that state must soon be the fate of every state in the union, if not prevented by a strong federal power.

The conduct of the United States, with respect to their governments, may be illustrated by the following story: An old man arrived, after a long and dangerous voyage, upon the coast of America, with a family, consisting of a wife, a few choice old servants, and *thirteen* sons. As soon as they landed, they joined and built a large and commodious dwelling-house, where they lived in safety for several years. The sons, however, grew weary of the company of their parents, and each of them built a cabin for himself, at a distance from the family mansion-house. They had not lived long in this way, before they began to suffer many difficulties and wants.—One of them had his implements of husbandry stolen from him—another lost a crop, from not having strength enough on his farm to erect a fence in time—a third had all his sheep devoured in one night by the wolves—a fourth narrowly escaped being scalped by a party of drunken Indians—a fifth caught a cold and fever, from the roof of his cabin having been blown away in the night by a thunder-gust—a sixth had his whole flock washed away by a great flood—and each of the rest met with some one or more of the disasters that have been mentioned. At last *twelve* of them met by agreement upon a plain, and agreed to petition their father to be admitted again under his protection. The venerable old man opened his doors to them, and they again became members of his family. They first joined in repairing and fortifying the old mansion-house. They, moreover, added *two* more rooms to it, for the separate use of the old man and his wife, in order thereby to preserve their dignity and authority. From this time the whole family became respectable, happy, and prosperous, nor did they separate from each other till the death of both their parents, when the accession of new settlers, and the cultivated state of the country, made it safe and prudent for them to set up for themselves.

The *thirteenth* son, who refused to accompany his brothers to his father's house, after living a miserable life for three years by himself in the woods, was found *hanging* by his garter to the limb of a tree near his cabin.

1. This item also appeared in the Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer* on 22 August. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 6 September; Providence *United States Chronicle*, 6 September (1st paragraph only); *Providence Gazette*, 8 September (minus the 1st paragraph); and *Newport Mercury*, 17 September; and in the August issue of the Philadelphia *American Museum* and in whole or in part in nineteen out-of-state newspapers by 11 September: N.H. (1), Mass. (5), Conn. (5), N.Y. (1), Pa. (5), Va. (2).

#### 40. *Newport Herald*, 23 August 1787<sup>1</sup>

The Hon. General Assembly of this State were to have convened agreeably to their adjournment, at Bristol on Monday last; but neither of the members of the Upper House attending on Monday to adjourn that House, a question on Wednesday arose in the Lower House whether the Assembly could be formed so as legally to proceed to business; it passed in the negative, and the members retired without doing any business: it was however proposed by the gentlemen of the minority to hear the public letters, and to advise his Excellency the Governor respecting the propriety of specially convening the Assembly before October Sessions: a message was accordingly sent to the Governor requesting the

letters, but before they could be obtained so many members retired that the letters were not read and no advice was given.

A Correspondent observes that the stated periods for the meeting of the Hon. the Legislature the last summer were not sufficient for doing the *immense* business that was carved out for the “*Relief of the distressed.*”—Several sessions *extraordinary* were had for the very *laudable* purpose of depriving the citizens of *trial by jury*, framing and enforcing penal acts, tests, &c. to *force people to take money*,—to *force* them to take *money!*—what a metamorphosis—the citizens of Rhode-Island were formerly fond of *money*, but now force will not oblige them to take it; and what a metamorphosis in the legislature too—so much business was done last year that there is none to do this, even at the times specified by law for legislating.

It is shrewdly suspected that either *fear* or *conscience* has got hold of *some* people—and the *jockeys* who led them into the scrape are afraid to trust them upon the *public* theatre lest their antifederal and diabolical system should not be able to hold the plaudit of a majority of 23.—Why were not the public letters suffered to be read?—The reason is obvious—there is a French proverb: Il n’y a que la verité qui offense—That is, truth alone is offensive to the guilty.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 27 August; *New Hampshire Spy*, 28 August; *Massachusetts Centinel*, 29 August; *Worcester Magazine*, 30 August; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 4 September.

#### 41. Providence Gazette, 25 August 1787<sup>1</sup>

*Article from a Correspondent.*

A merry Fellow, on reading the following Paragraph in the last Chronicle—“The Meeting of the General Assembly of this State, which was to have been at Bristol, on Monday last FELL THROUGH, as none of the Members of the Upper House arrived there on that Day”—facetiously remarked, he was glad to learn that the Assembly “FELL THROUGH;” he hoped however that they had not received any Injury in their *Passage through*, but that they would all be found safe ON THE OTHER SIDE, or at least a Majority of them, at the next Session.

1. Reprinted nine times by 18 September: Vt. (1), Mass. (1), Conn. (2), N.Y. (2), N.J. (1), Pa. (1), Del. (1).

#### 42. Francis Dana to Elbridge Gerry Newport, 2 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

Your letter of the 18th. of June was sent on to me at this place, from Boston. I feel myself very much obliged by the confidence you place in me; and shou’d have been happy in affording you my feeble assistance in the great work you have in hand. When I first heard of the adjournment of the Convention, I fondly flattered myself my health might have permitted me to attend by the time of its second meeting, but I found myself to be then too much indisposed to attempt it, to my very great mortification[.] I am much at a loss what can detain the Convention so long upon their business, when ’tis natural to suppose they must

have settled the great outlines of the Fœderal Constitution prior to the appointment of their Committee to sit in their recess; and since we hear they were prepared to report in good season. I agree with you fully that your proceedings must be productive of great good or of infinite mischief to us. And which of these is to be our portion I pretend not to say because I am a stranger to your plan of Government: but I will venture to say that if you give us but even the shadow of a Monarch a Doge or a Stadholder, the last will be our Lott, althō it shou'd happen to be generally adopted by the States. It will be sowing the seeds of Corruption and Discord, which will soon shoot up in so fertile a soil as our's. I have contemplated the subject with all the attention I am able to give it. The result in my mind is that the Fœderal Government shou'd consist of two branches only, both eligible by the Legislatures of the several States, for different periods. The Senate, or whatever name it may bear, to constitute the Supreme Executive, & to continue longest in being. Each branch to have a negative on the other in all matters of Legislation. This as to the form only, my health will not permit me to enter upon the powers of Government or a distribution of them between the two branches &c, &c,—

This State, I think, will not choose Delegates to the Convention, or order on their Delegates to Congress. I hope they will not, as their neglect will give grounds to strike it out of the Union & divide their Territory between their Neighbours thus to Extend Connecticut down to the Naraganset shore, & running up Northern through Patuxet River to our South Line so as to leave Providence Newport & all the Islands to Massachusetts: which as it wou'd give the commercial part of this State to Massachusetts wou'd best accord with the spirit & genius of our People while the residue wou'd perfectly coincide with that of Connecticut. According to my best observation, such a Division of this State wou'd meet the general approbation of the Commercial part of it, thō they are afraid to take any open measures in the present state of things, to bring it about. Their Interest must dictate such a measure—They can never be secure under the present form of their Government: but will always labour under the greatest mischief any people can suffer that of being ruled by the most ignorant & unprincipled of their fellow Citizens. This State is too insignificant to have a place on an equal footing with any of the others in the Union, unless it be Delaware. Therefore a bold politician wou'd seize upon the occasion their abominations and antifœderal conduct presents for annihilating them as a separate Member of the Union. I think they are now fully ripe for the measure, and that the other Members of the Union, nay all Mankind, must justify it as righteous & necessary

I shall return to Cambridge next week, where I shall be very happy to learn from you whatever you can communicate relative to our fœderal Concerns,

Mrs. D joins me in begging your & her acceptance of our best regards. & we hope soon to have the happiness of seeing you both in Cambridge

I am, dear Sir, your old & sincere friend

P.S. You will excuse my not sooner noticing your favour My state of health has prevented me from doing it

1. RC, L. W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, N.J.

#### 43. John Collins to the President of Confederation Congress Newport, 4 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

I Recived yours of the 13th of August the 24, & Shall pay due attention to its Contents—I have issued my warrants to Call our General Assembly to meet on monday the 10th instant, I shall lay your letters and the Several letters from the Secretary of Congress before them, & make no doubt they will pay due attention to their Contents—I have not as yet lost all hopes of geting a Representation to the General Convention timely, that their Report may be made in the name of the thirteen United States, the idea of a Report from twelve States Onely appears extream disagreeable, I Shall Spare no pains to prevent it—

With Great Regard Sir—I have the Honour to be your Excellencys most Obedient Humbe Servt

1. RC, Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789, Item 64, State Papers of New Hampshire and of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1775–88, p. 584, RG 360, National Archives.

#### 44. Newport Herald, 6 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

The novel instance of an *Hon. Body's* “*falling through*,” says a correspondent hath not only led to much speculation in investigating the real cause—but the critics and wits have been peculiarly pointed on this occasion,—the term “*falling through*,” says a civilian is objectionable, because it implies a dissolution of government; for if any branch of a legislature do not attend when legally warned, or by their own solemn adjournment, it appears like an abdication from office; *it must certainly degrade a government, if there is a possibility of degradation*, he therefore thinks that it is with great propriety, there is no appropriate word in our language to express the idea now meant to be conveyed.—A Newtonian Philosopher begins to doubt his master's Hypothesis since *light bodies fall through a heavy medium*.—A Physician being questioned by his wife whether any malady prevented their attendance, observed that they had the *falling sickness*.—A midwife in detailing the news of the day to her gossiping attendants, emptied her budget, by advising them to guard against *Abortions*.—A spotless virgin vauntingly said to the man of her wish, that they had committed *un grand faux pas*.—A poor chimney sweeper who was taken up sadly bruised, in “*falling through*” the chimney, crankly said that he did but *follow an example of his master's*—while a *friend to the majority* is singing *Te Deum* for their being so far recovered from the *fall* as to propose getting up on Monday.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 17 September.

#### 45. Newport Herald, 6 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

A freeman who feels for the dignity of government, presumes that on the meeting of the Hon. Assembly there will be a solemn inquiry into the reasons of their not forming a sessions at Bristol agreeable to the Adjournment—in order that their constituents may know whether this unparall[el]ed dissolution



was premeditated or the unavoidable operations of unforeseen contingencies—we are already the reproach and bye-word of the world, let us be cautious of adding to their contempt—and endeavour to rise from the merited disgrace we have voluntarily plunged into.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Mercury*, 13 September; *Boston Gazette*, 17 September; *Worcester Magazine*, 20 September; *Winchester Virginia Gazette*, 5 October; *Virginia Gazette and Independent Chronicle*, 6 October.

#### 46. *Newport Herald*, 13 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

Anticipations for May 1788.

Yesterday the hon. Assembly were organized and entered on the various business before them. Unbiased by the factions of party, free from local prejudices, and enemies of perfidy, fraud, and injustice, their whole view seems to comprize the system of good government.—The country and the mercantile interest are again happily reunited: no longer distracting jealousies and low finesses disturb our little State; public and private credit rises from its ashes, and industry again displays her stores of wealth.

Thursday last being the day appointed for a General Thanksgiving for our restoration from anarchy and its attendant evils.—The solemn tribute of gratitude was offered by the largest assemblies that ever met here in one day on public worship. Collections were made in the various societies for the poor. Thus while the rich have reason to rejoice in a security of their property, the hearts of the defrauded widows and orphans are again made glad.

A committee is appointed to make report of all acts or parts of acts that may be repugnant to public faith and private justice, in order that they may be expunged from the records, and the minutes burnt, that no precedent for fraud and injustice under sanction of law shall ever be adduced.

A general pardon is granted to all fraudulent tenderers, on condition of their making full payments with interest of all demands existing against them at the time of their tender; otherwise they are to be proceeded against on the statute of fraud and punished with the utmost rigour of the law.

The Charter of Incorporation to the town of Newport is restored to them, with a solemn guarantee of national faith for its maintenance and preservation.

A Bill of Rights is preparing to be laid before the people for their ratification, to define the power of assemblies, and establishing the necessary independency of courts.

The total suppression of all paper money hath relieved the farmer and merchant from the sensible evils of a medium and no medium.

Proposals are submitted by a foreign ambassador for liberty to erect a dry dock in the harbour of Newport, with necessary stores, for their annual fleet to refit at.—This measure hath been long agitated, but the indecisive tone of public faith rendered it too precarious to trust property here.

It is confidently reported that several late leading characters waited on his Excellency our Governor, to exculpate themselves from the many evils brought



on us, that their conduct was error in judgment rather than perverseness of heart—they besought his protection and profered him their services as honest citizens.—His Excellency, with the dignity of an honest magistrate, told them their conduct was too well known to flow from the basest principles to admit the least palliation; but if you are truly penitent, says he, retire from taverns and ferryways, cease to corrupt the morals of the people and go in quest of employ, for the field of labour is wide enough; thus by industry and peaceable behaviour atone for your past misconduct, *and I myself will plead your pardon from the people.*

Robberies are less frequent than for some time past. The firmness of an equitable government gives new energy to the vigilance of sheriffs and their officers, while it supports the judiciary in integrity and independence, which renders it impossible for a villain to elude apprehension and certain punishment.

A striking proof, says a correspondent, that our morals are regaining, is the number of *new churches* of various denominations that are erecting in the State.—The catholicism of the apostolic era begins to irradiate this western hemisphere, and the precepts of our blessed Redeemer efficaciously teaches men that to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God, is better than wealth iniquitously obtained or titular honors from licentious powers.

It is calculated that the late regulations of commerce by the Federal Assembly will make an annual saving of one third of the imports of foreign manufactures immediately, which will give full employ to our laboring poor.

A number of patriotic gentlemen have associated here for the establishment of manufactures of our rude materials; considerable sums are already subscribed to further this plan, that this useful society will be enabled to create a rivalry by the value of their premiums.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part: *Boston American Herald*, 17 September; *New Hampshire Mercury*, 20 September; *Massachusetts Gazette*, 21 September; Northampton, Mass., *Hampshire Gazette*, 26 September; *Pennsylvania Herald*, 27 September.

#### 47. Newport Herald, 13 September 1787

PROVIDENCE, *Sept.* 4th, 1787.

MR. EDES, *You are particularly requested to insert the following in your next, if it should arrive in season, if not in the succeeding Herald.*

In a free State, like this, every citizen has, in my opinion, an undoubted right to animadvert with decent freedom on any public measures.

Taking it for granted that this right will not be controverted, I shall, without an apology, enter directly upon my design, which is principally to show that the calling of the "General Assembly together to meet in the State-House at Newport in the County of Newport on monday the tenth day of Sept. next at 11 o'Clock, A. M." as expressed in a certain instrument dated the thirty-first day of August, A. D. 1787, signed John Collins, is altogether illegal, and that the said calling is predicated on false ground.—I propose also to make such remarks on said instrument, as I pass through it, as shall occur.

In order that the weight of my objections may be felt it will be necessary that this instrument called a warrant should be published at large; for otherwise readers in general will not be able to compare the objections with the instrument, by which only a right judgment can be formed.

The instrument runs thus:

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.

To the Sheriff of the County of Providence, or his deputy Greeting

Whereas the legislators of this State were to convene in General Assembly on the third Monday of August cur[rent]—but by some accident no member of the upper House of Assembly appeared at the time and place of Convention, to adjourn the said upper house whereby the said General Assembly could not legally set to do business and the same was then dissolved—And whereas it appears to me highly necessary for the public good that the General Assembly should be convened in order that the Important matters relative to this State shou'd be laid before them—I have by and with the advice of my Council thought fit to call the said General Assembly together to meet in the State House at Newport in the County of Newport on Monday the tenth day of Sept. next at 11 oClock AM. in order to do such business as may be laid before them—You are therefore commanded to give notice to each and every representative or deputy within your precinct—and also to each and every member of the upper house or assistant within your precinct that they may be and appear at the State house in Newport in the County of Newport on Monday the tenth day of September next, then and there to meet in General Assembly to do and Transact such salutary measures as shall be devised.

Given under my hand and seal at Newport this thirty-first day of August, A D. 1787.

JOHN COLLINS.

I shall show in the first place that this instrument is illegal.

By act of government the Governor, or in his absence, the Deputy Governor is empowered to grant forth a warrant on any *emergent occasion* for calling together *every* member of the General Assembly.

Without inquiring whether any *emergent occasion* required an Assembly to be called at the time mentioned in the paper referred to, it is for the sake of argument conceded that the Governor of the State had then authority to call a General Assembly.—The point is whether the said paper is an authentic gubernatorial warrant or not.—I affirm that it is not,—and that it is illegal and void.—To render a warrant legal it is absolutely necessary that by annexing his title to his signature or by some suitable expression in the body of the warrant, the issuing officer should be known, otherwise it cannot be expected that it should be obeyed; for no regard is due to a warrant that is not issued by the proper officer; and whether it was issued by the proper officer or not cannot be ascertained unless his title is annexed to his signature or is expressed in the body of the warrant.

In the case of the paper before us,—no title is annexed to the name JOHN COLLINS, nor is the word Governor mentioned in any part of it, nor is the seal of the State affixed to it.—It indeed bears a private seal; but it is destitute of every mark that should designate it to be a gubernatorial warrant.

It is true also that the name of the Governor is JOHN COLLINS; but there may be several persons of that name in this State, and it is presumed that there is no official authenticity in the private seal of the Governor if it were distinguishable from other private seals.

It is so necessary and so common for all officers to add their titles to their signatures in the official instruments issued by them that I am puzzled to account for the incurable, the fatal defect in the warrant under consideration.

There is not I dare say a warrant issued by a Justice of Peace, or a KNOW YE issued by a Judge which is destitute of the title of the issuing officer.—His title is always affixed to and makes part of his signature. As for instance, John Grelea, *Just. Peace*,—George H. Peckham, *Just. Peace*,—S. Gardner, *J. C. Pleas*,—S. Potter, *J. C. Pleas*,—or Paul Mumford, *C. J. Sup. Court*.

Without the proper title no warrant, nor KNOW YE can have any legal efficacy.

I have said that the calling of the General Assembly referred to was predicated on false ground.

It is predicated on a *dissolution* of the General Assembly.—This plainly appears from the express terms of the close of the first paragraph of the curious instrument in contemplation,—“the said General Assembly could not legally set to do business, *and the same was then dissolved*. I say this is false ground; because the General Assembly was not then in fact *dissolved*.

A *Dissolution* says the learned Blackstone is the *civil death* of the Parliament; and this may be effected three ways, 1st. By the King’s will. 2d. By the demise of the crown. 3d. Lastly, A Parliament may be *dissolved* or expire by length of time.—A *dissolution* it is to be presumed, is as effectually a *civil death* of the General Assembly of this State, as a *dissolution* is the *civil death* of the British Parliament;—but it is humbly conceived that a dissolution of the former cannot be effected by the sovereign will or by the demise of our Governor.—As our constitution stands, it can expire or die a natural death only, and that cannot take place but at the close of the period for which it is appointed; and most certainly the constitutional period of its *dissolution* had not *then*, nor is it yet arrived.

For a Governor or Deputy-Governor to attempt to revive a *dissolved* or dead General Assembly; which cannot be revived but by a new election, not only argues great boldness, but is pregnant with absurdity.—A General Assembly may *fail*, as it seems it did, not long since at Bristol, but even a Governor cannot *dissolve* it.—It must and will live out its destined period.

Now for some remarks en passant.

This attempt to revive the dead, by warrant, it seems was made by the advice of *my Council*, saith the paper signed John Collins, the reader will see by adverting to it that these are his words, “I have by and with the advice of *my Council* thought fit to call the said General Assembly together to meet,” &c.—Where he found this Council, his *my Council*, I cannot divine.—Where did they sit?—Where is their advice recorded? Such a body or sett of men is unknown to our constitution; although it may be an ingredient in the constitution of some other State or States;—but we do not recollect that any Governor before, has in a warrant or proclamation called it *my Council*.—There is a loftiness in the tone

of this expression, *my* Council, which setting aside the impropriety and unconstitutionality of it, must grate harsh discord in the ear of a citizen of this State.

By an explanation of the words every member of the Upper House in this warrant, the Deputy-Governor is excluded from being summoned.—“You are therefore commanded to give notice”—“to each and every member of the Upper House, *or assistant.*”—The Deputy-Governor is not an assistant, and therefore by this explanation, *or assistant*, he is excluded.—But what is the General Assembly called for after its dissolution and by the advice of *my* Council?—“in order that the important matters *relative to this State*” (not to the union) “should be laid before them,”—“to do such business as may be laid before them,”—“to do and transact such salutary measures as shall be devised.”—Beautiful repetition of ideas!—and wonderful novelty of expression!—“To do and transact such salutary measures as shall be devised,” is altogether new and curious; but it is not the diction, it is the illegality of this warrant, and the impropriety of the ground on which it stands that I meant to prove and set forth— (not but that it is wished that every thing which may be supposed to come from the chair should be precise and elegant)—I think I have effected my purpose and proved what I proposed to evince.—If I have done it, it is to be hoped that the members of the General Assembly will not undertake to do any thing in a legislative capacity by virtue of an unauthenticated, illegal warrant.

#### 48 A-F. The Rhode Island General Assembly Newport, 10–15 September 1787

48-A. *Resolution to Appoint a Committee to Draft a Letter to the Continental Congress Explaining Why Rhode Island Did Not Send Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, 15 September*<sup>1</sup>

In the lower House Sept. 15th. 1787.

Resolved that the Hon. the Speaker of this House James Sheldon & Paul Mumford Esquires & the Clerk, together with such others as may be appointed by the upper House be & they are hereby appointed a Committee to draft a Lre [i.e., letter] to the Hon. Cont. Congress shewing the Reasons why this State have not had a Delegation at the Convention at Philadelphia, & to present the same to the Asbly.

Voted & Passed

By Ord: *R J Helme Clk*

In the Upper House Read the same Day & Concurred With the Addition of the Honble Daniel Owen Esq. and Thomas G. Hazard Esqr.

Voted By Ord Hy Sherburne D[e]p[uty] Sec[r]etar[y]

1. MS, Acts and Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly, 126, R-Ar.

*48-B. Resolution to Appoint a Committee to Draft a Letter to The Continental Congress Explaining Why Rhode Island Did Not Send Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, 15 September*<sup>1</sup>

It is Voted and Resolved, That the Honorable Daniel Owen, Esqr. Thomas G. Hazard, Esqr. the Honorable the Speaker of the Lower House, James Sheldon, Paul Mumford, and Rowse J. Helme, Esquires, be and they are hereby appointed a Committee, to draught a Letter to the Honourable the Continental Congress showing the Reasons why this State have not had a Delegation at the Convention at Philadelphia, and to present the same to this Assembly.

1. MS, Rhode Island Records, Vol. 13, pp. 404–5, R-Ar.

*48-C. House of Deputies Proceedings, Saturday, 15 September (excerpts)*<sup>1</sup>

Saturday this House met according to the adjournment

Vote of this House Appointing a Comtee. to draft a Lre [i.e., letter] to Congress shewing the Reasons . . .

Vote of this House approving a L[et]tre to the president of Congress was read & passd . . .

Vote of the Upper House respecting sending the Delegates Read & Concurr'd . . .

1. MS, House of Deputies Journal, R-Ar.

*48-D. House of Magistrates Proceedings, Saturday, 15 September (excerpt)*<sup>1</sup>

. . . No. 35 Vote of the Lower approving the Draught of a Letter to the President of Congress accompanied by A Protest was Read & Concurred. . .

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

*48-E. Governor John Collins to President of Congress  
Newport, 17 September*<sup>1</sup>

I do myself the Honor of transmitting to your Excellency, the Several Acts, Which passed at the last Session of Assembly respecting our Federal concerns, together with a Letter which was Reported by a Committee of the Assembly specially appointed, for assigning reasons why this State did not send Delegates to the late Convention at Philadelphia, and why they did not send their Delegates to Congress previous to the 1st. of Nov[ember] next, at which time they have by the Inclosed Resolve directed that Two of their Delegates then attend Congress.

1. RC, PCC, Item 64, State Papers of New Hampshire and of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1775–1788, p. 588, DNA. Collins sent three enclosures with this letter: 1) The General Assembly's resolutions explaining why it did not send delegates to Congress (Mfm:R.I. 48-F); 2) The Rhode Island General Assembly to the President of Congress, 15 September 1787 (RCS:R.I., 19–21); 3) Newport and Providence's Protest of the Rhode Island General Assembly's Letter to Congress, 17 September (RCS:R.I., 21–23).

48F. *Resolution Explaining Why Rhode Island Did Not Send Delegates to Congress 15 September*<sup>1</sup>

State of Rhode-Island & Providence Plantations

In General Assembly September Session AD 1787.

Whereas a Letter from his Excellency the President of Congress, dated the 13th of August Last hath been laid before this assembly informing that but few Members of Congress have attended of Late and requesting a Representation of this State in Congress by their Delegates; and this State being disposed to comply in all respects with the Articles of Confederation so far as in their power; and as it is expected that matters of Great National Importance will come under the Consideration of Congress to be convened on the First Monday of November next.—Thereupon It is Voted and Resolved, That Two of the Delegates for this State be and they are hereby directed to attend as the Representatives of this State in the Congress of the United States to Convene on the Said First Monday in November next agreeably to the Articles of Confederation.

And it is further Resolved, That his Excellency the Governor be & he is hereby requested to answer the Said Letter and to inform the President of Congress of the measures taken by this Assembly for having this State duly represented, in Congress, to meet on the first Monday of November next, and that they have not given Orders for their Delegates going forward previous to that time, under an apprehension that the States will not be generally represented until the meeting of Congress for the next Year, and that the more Important matters of the Union will not be acted upon by Congress until that time and assuring his Excellency the President of Congress,—That it is the desire and intention of this State to do every thing in their power for promoting the great objects of the Confederacy, The General Welfare and happiness of the Whole.

A true copy,

Witness

Hy. Sherburne Dy Secry

1. MS, RCC, Item 64, State Papers of New Hampshire and of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1775–1788, pp. 596–97, 599, DNA. This item was enclosed in Governor John Collins to the President of Congress, 17 September 1787 (Mfm: R.I. 48-E). Another copy is in Letters Sent by the Governor, Vol. 4, no. 74, R-Ar.

49. **Joseph Chew to Charles Stuart**  
**London, 20 September 1787 (excerpt)**<sup>1</sup>

. . . a Pacquet is Just arrived from New York[.] I dont hear what the Convention have done at Philadelphia; by the Papers it appears the States of Connecticut, and Rhode Island, have Entered into a Serious dispute. Several of the assembly of the former in their Speeches are for Chastising the Latter[.] one member says it would be of Advantage to the other States if Rhode Island was Sunk by an Earth Quake, *a friendly disposition this . . .*

1. RC, Stuart Papers (Microfilm), Reel 7, pp. 70–71, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

**50. Newport Herald, 20 September 1787**

A Mighty hero has appear'd,  
 Great wonders he has wrought,  
 He wrote a piece which does exceed  
 The reach of human thought.

Who can conceive such eloquence  
 Was form'd in nature's womb,  
 Dear Mr. Printer put the man  
 In your Parnassian Loom.

O had but Civis liv'd till now  
 Good grammar he would learnt;  
 But O! alas! poor Civis died,  
 And lost the mighty grant.

I understand he left behind  
 A great and glorious prize;  
 But this good man will never need  
 A glass before his eyes.

He sees so clear all human help  
 He utterly disdains;  
 But still I fear if I dare speak,  
 A fracture's in his brains.

This great man's name runs thro' the world,  
 But seldom is spoke right;  
 The spectacles poor Civis left  
 May bring his name to light.

But first of all I'd have them search  
 The head of this great man,  
 For sure it is not wholly heal'd,  
 Pray heal it if you can,

That he may more conspicuous shine,  
 And give the world more light,  
 For such a connoisseur as he  
 Will teach with great delight.

**51. Providence United States Chronicle, 20 September 1787**

*The following Extracts from the Debates in the British House of Commons are, at this Time, particularly worthy the Attention of every Person who has the Honor or Happiness of his Country at Heart—and will shew us the Necessity of a proper FEDERAL GOVERNMENT being immediately established:*

BRITISH HOUSE of COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 14.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee, Mr. Steele in the chair,

Mr. *W. Grenville* observed, that when, by the King's proclamation, the Americans had been excluded from supplying the West-India islands with articles necessary for their consumption, in American bottoms, some gentlemen had apprehended that those islands would be reduced to great distress, supposing that Great-Britain could not furnish a sufficient supply for all their wants; but experience hath proved that their fears were ill-founded, as greater quantities of all sorts of commodities had been imported into our West-India islands, since they had been shut to American-built vessels, than ever had been before in any given period of time. The Ministry had, in the first instance, prohibited the importation of all manufactured goods into our islands, that were not the produce of His Majesty's European dominions: this was thought to be sound policy, and the islands had not felt any bad effects from it. There were two species of articles, the produce of the American States, which were allowed to be imported into our islands; but the importation was legal only when they were brought in British bottoms. These articles were wheat or flour, and lumber. It had on this occasion been suggested, that preventing the Americans from carrying these articles in their own bottoms to our islands would produce one, or both, of these effects, that the planters would be scantily supplied, or that the Americans would be inclined by this restriction to acts of retaliation against our trade. With respect to the former, he shewed, from official papers, that a greater supply had been furnished every year since the termination of the war, than during any one of the seven years that preceded it. And as to the latter, he observed,—*That while there was scarcely any government in the United States, there was as little to be apprehended from their resentment, as there was to be expected from any amicable negotiation with them!!!* This country had derived great benefit from the policy that confined the intercourse between the United States and our islands to British bottoms; it had highly improved our navigation, as would appear to gentlemen, when he assured them that this trade alone employed 58,000 tons of shipping, and nearly 4000 seamen. During the last year, indeed, the tonnage had decreased to about 50,000, which was to be ascribed principally to this cause, that the Americans, not being allowed to come directly to our islands, had sent their lumber, grain, &c. &c. to the neutral islands in the West-Indies, and then shipped them in foreign bottoms for the British islands. But he proposed to apply a remedy to this, which was, that the importation of grain, lumber, &c. from the United States should be continued confined to British ships, to the exclusion of all others. This part of the bill, for which he intended to move, might be made perpetual or decisive; but, as to all its other parts, he would have them limited to a year, in order to shew,—*if a STABLE government should be established in America, which might be disposed to treat amicably with this country, that no disinclination to enter into such a negotiation existed on our part!!* He then moved, that the Chairman be directed to move the House for leave to bring in a bill to vest in his Majesty for one year more the power of regulating, by his royal proclamation, the commercial intercourse between His Majesty's dominions and the United States in America.

Lord *Penrhyn* observed, that it was not sufficient that the West-India islands should be amply supplied with all necessaries; they ought also to have the liberty



of procuring them on the cheapest terms; and he found by what the Right Hon. Gentleman had said, that the British shipping, employed between the West-India islands and the continent of America, had fallen last year from 58,000 to 50,000 tons; a circumstance that should surely prevent Parliament from persevering in the measure which had occasioned such a decrease.

Mr. *Grenville* replied, that the employment of so great a quantity of shipping as 58,000 tons was owing to our restrictive laws; and that the decrease of 8000 tons in the last year was no good argument for removing the restrictions. He had pointed out the cause of the decrease, and was sure that the remedy he proposed would produce the desired effect.

Mr. *Dempster* said, his only objection to the bill now moved for was, that it would vest in the Crown a power of regulating the trade of the country by proclamation, which ought to be regulated only by act of Parliament: He was therefore of opinion, that, if any measure was judged necessary relative to the American trade, it ought to be enacted specifically by Parliament, and not indefinitely under the sanction of a royal proclamation.

Mr. *Grenville* admitted, that where any specific plan could be decidedly adopted, it ought to be under the authority of the legislature, and not merely of a royal proclamation: But while possible negotiations with America might be pending, or while there might be *a discordant government, or no government at all, in the United States*, he thought it was better policy to regulate the commercial intercourse by a discretionary power to be placed in the King, than by a decided plan to be adopted at this moment by the legislature.

The question was then put, and the motion was carried without a division.

## 52. Providence United States Chronicle, 20 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

On Monday, last Week, the Honorable General Assembly met at Newport, in Consequence of Warrants issued by his Excellency the Governor.—The following was the most important Business transacted:—Impressions unfavourable to this State had of late rested on the public Mind, because this State had not sent Delegates to the Convention, at Philadelphia.—A joint Committee of both Houses of Assembly was therefore appointed to draft a Letter to his Excellency the President of Congress, informing him of the Reasons why the Assembly had not fallen in with that Measure.—The Committee reported the Draft of a Letter, which was approved by a Majority of both Houses, a Copy whereof was ordered to be immediately forwarded.—An Act was passed pursuant to a Recommendation of Congress, declaring the Treaty of Peace between his Britannic Majesty and the United States of America fully and absolutely binding on all the Citizens of this State, as the Law of the Land, in no wise to be receded from, misconstrued, or in any Manner violated.—A Resolution was also passed, reciting that whereas a Letter from his Excellency the President of Congress, dated the 13th day of August last, had been laid before the Assembly, informing that but few Members had attended Congress of late, and requesting a Representation of this State in Congress by their Delegates;—also setting forth that this State is

disposed to comply in all Respects with the Articles of the Confederation, so far as is in their Power; and that it is expected Matters of great national Importance would come under the Consideration of the Congress to be convened on the First Monday of November next, and therefore requiring Two of the Delegates to attend as the Representatives of this State in the Congress of the United States, to convene on the said First Monday of November next, agreeable to the Articles of the Confederation;—and also requesting his Excellency the Governor to answer the said Letter, and to inform the President of Congress of the Measures taken by this Assembly for having this State duly represented in the Congress to meet on the First Monday in November next; and that they have not given Orders for their Delegates going forward previous to that Time, under an Apprehension that the States will not be generally represented till the Meeting of the Congress for the next Federal Year; and that the more important Matters of the Union will not be acted upon till that Time—and assuring his Excellency the President of Congress, that it is the Desire and Intention of this State to do every Thing in their Power for promoting the great Objects of the Confederacy, the general Welfare and Happiness of the Whole.

The Paper Currency from its depreciated Condition being productive of complicated Injustice and Mischief, claimed the Attention of the Legislature, and notwithstanding there was more than Fifteen Thousand Pounds in the Treasury, besides very considerable Sums paying in daily from the Taxes granted and assessed within a little more than a Year, it induced the Lower-House of Assembly to vote another Tax of Twenty Thousand Pounds, in Addition to the two last Taxes of Twenty Thousand Pounds each, to be assessed, collected and paid into the General-Treasury by the 25th Day of January next, as well for the Purpose of appreciating the Currency, as was said by a Number of the Members, as to induce the Holders of the State Securities to bring them in, and receive the Paper Money for them—supposing that drawing such large Sums, in quick Succession, from Circulation by Taxes, would have a Tendency to bring the Paper Money nearly upon Par with Silver, and to induce the Generality of the Holders of the State Securities to apply at the Treasury for Payment of such Part as has been ordered to be discharged. Upon these Principles a Motion was made, with some Probability of its being carried in the Lower-House, to require the Holders of the State Securities to receive Payment at the Treasury of a second Quarter Part within a short limited Time, under the Penalty of forfeiting it.—This being known in the Upper-House, who supposed it would be more eligible to allow the State Securities, now due and payable, to be receivable for the Taxes by the Collectors, as it would throw the Securities into Circulation, and bring them into the Treasury, with the free Consent of the Holders; which would answer all the Purposes of those who wished to see the State Debt paid, without the Animosity and Danger resulting from a Measure so unjustifiable in the Opinion of many, as declaring it forfeited if the Securities were not brought in. The Upper-House therefore unanimately agreed to a Concurrence with the Vote of the Lower-House with this Amendment—that the Tax should be for Thirty Thousand Pounds, and that the State Securities now payable should be receivable by the Collectors equally with the Money, and sent back the Vote with that Amendment.

The Lower-House non-concurred—and sent up their Vote of Non-concurrence.—The Upper-House then voted to adhere to their Proposition—and sent down their Vote of Adherence.—Whereupon the Matter was again agitated in the Lower-House, who also voted to adhere to their first Vote—but sent up a Member to make known the Reasons for their non-concurring—whereupon a Motion was made and carried in the Upper-House, for receding from their former Vote, and agreeing with the Lower-House so far as respected the Securities being receivable by the Collectors equally with the Money.—This Vote was sent to the Lower-House, who, on the Question being taken whether to concur or not, appeared equally divided, when the Speaker decided it in Favour of a Concurrence, so that a Tax of Thirty Thousand Pounds is to be assessed, collected and paid into the General-Treasury by the 25th Day of January next, without the State Securities being receivable for the Tax.

Nearly at the Close of the Session a Vote passed the Lower-House, as had been proposed, requiring the Holders of the State Securities to bring them into the Treasury within a short limited Time, to receive the Payment of the second Quarter, under the Penalty of Forfeiture of that Quarter Part.—But the Consideration of this Vote was postponed by the Upper-House to the next Session, which is to be holden at South-Kingstown, in the County of Washington, on the last Monday of October next—the Assembly having adjourned on Saturday Night last to that Place.

1. Reprinted: Boston *American Herald*, 24 September 1787.

### 53. Boston Independent Chronicle, 20 September 1787

A dangerous fault in America, says a correspondent, is an attachment to property, and fondness of luxuries, too general, and too great for *young federal Republics*. It makes people more unwilling to pay taxes—It renders the present stagnation of trade more afflicting, than what it really is; and therefore a greater cause of discontent—It gives the wealthy a dangerous influence on manners and government, as in the opinion of too many a great estate qualifies a man to be a model of taste, and a legislator. It will be the most probable cause of difference between the states, on the respective quotas of fœderal expences, commercial regulations, &c. The many cruel and fraudulent violations of public and private faith, by tender laws, and fluctuating paper currencies, have unhappily stained the national character, and nearly destroyed public and private credit. The infamous doctrine, that *every man has his price*, is now very current, and rapidly spreads the corruption, from which it sprung. Too bad opinion of mankind weakens yet more the reciprocal confidence, love and respect; and impairs the very principle of integrity—Characters not very honest think it very pardonable to pay others in their own coin; nay, even to cheat one that would cheat them, if he could—The noblest minds indeed never injure the worst of men; but they grieve, that so few deserve their esteem and affection; and some even retire in philosophic melancholy from the scenes of human depravity, which they can so little direct—fatal loss to their distressed country. The selfish principles of too many individuals, and the weakness of government, have been the principal

causes of tender laws and paper currencies; ignorance of finance, and the necessity of the times, only secondary. The depreciation of the continental money, which had nearly lost the American cause, and did more hurt than all the miseries of a long civil war, arose principally from a too general dislike of taxation; the cruel injustice of some individuals; and the weakness of the federal government. I have yet a coat, the cloth of which cost me a thousand dollars, when a tenant offered me sixty pounds as two years rent for a plantation lot for thirty pounds specie a year; and I shall keep it for life, as a monument of human depravity unrestrained by civil power. Rhode-Island presents now a fatal example of corruption in the very legislature, that has struck a panic over the whole continent; and not without reason—for if the heart of one state is corrupt, very probably many members of other states are mortified. Yet the strong opposition of a virtuous minority in that state, the general disapprobation of its conduct; and the many warm declamations on the decay of public virtue, forbid us to despair.

#### 54. Providence Gazette, 22 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

For the Gratification of some of our curious Readers, the following Proceedings of the Honourable General Assembly, at their Session last Week, have been handed us for a Place in this Day's Gazette.

*An Act declaring the Treaty of Peace the Law of the Land.*

Be it Enacted by the General Assembly, and by the Authority thereof it is hereby Enacted, That the Treaty of Peace entered into between the United States of America and his Britannic Majesty, is fully binding upon all the Citizens of this State, as a Law of the Land, and is not in any Respect to be receded from, misconstrued, or violated.

*In the Lower House, Sept. 14, 1787.*

*Resolved,* That a Tax of £20,000, Lawful Money, be assessed upon the Polls and Estates of the Inhabitants of the several Towns within this State, to be levied, collected, and paid into the General-Treasury, by the 25th Day of January next, agreeably to an Act to be drawn up for that Purpose.

*Voted and passed.*

*By Order,* R. J. HELME, *Clerk.*

In the Upper House. Read the same Day and concurred, with these Additions—that the said Tax be £30,000—and that all this State's public Securities, due and payable, be received by the Collectors of said Tax in Payment thereof; excepting those Notes which were given in Payment of the 4 per Cent. Notes, and the first Quarter Part of the 6 per Cent. Notes, which are forfeited, agreeably to the Act of this Assembly heretofore passed.

*Voted and passed.*

*By Order,* HENRY SHERBURNE, *Dep. Sec'ry.*

In the Lower House the same Day, the Amendment read, and non-concurred.

*By Order,* R. J. HELME, *Clerk.*

In the Upper House the same Day. The foregoing Non-concurrence of the Lower House being read, *it is thereupon Resolved*, That this House adhere to their former Vote.

*Voted and passed.*

*By Order*, HENRY SHERBURNE, *Dep. Sec'y.*

In the Upper House the same Day. This House recede from their former Vote, so far as respects the public Securities being received in Payment of the Tax, and adhere to that Part of their Vote for assessing the Sum of £30,000.

*Voted and passed.*

*By Order*, HENRY SHERBURNE, *Dep. Sec'y.*

In the Lower House the same Day. The Amendment of assessing £30,000 read and concurred with.

*By Order*, R. J. HELME, *Clerk.*

*In the Upper House, Sept. 15, 1787.*

Whereas a Letter from his Excellency the President of Congress, dated the 15th of August last, hath been laid before this Assembly, informing that but few Members of Congress have attended of late, and requesting a Representation of this State in Congress by their Delegates; and this State being disposed to comply in all Respects with the Articles of Confederation, so far as in their Power, and as it is expected that Matters of great national Importance will come under the Consideration of the Congress, to be convened on the first Monday in November next, *It is thereupon Resolved*, That two of the Delegates for this State be and they are hereby directed to attend as the Representatives of this State in the Congress of the United States, to convene on the said first Monday in November next, agreeably to the Articles of the Confederation.

*It is further Resolved*, That his Excellency the Governor be requested to answer the said Letter, and to inform the President of Congress of the Measures taken by this Assembly for having this State duly represented in Congress, to meet on the first Monday in November next—and that they have not given Orders for their Delegates going forward previous to that Time, under an Apprehension that the States will not be generally represented until the Meeting of Congress for the next Year, and that the more important Matters of the Union will not be acted upon by Congress until that Time; and assuring his Excellency the President of Congress, that it is the Desire and Intention of this State to do every Thing in their Power for promoting the great Objects of the Confederacy—the general Welfare and Happiness of the Whole.

*Voted and passed for Concurrence.*

*By Order*, HENRY SHERBURNE, *Dep. Sec'y.*

In the Lower House, Sept. 15, 1787. Read the same Day, and concurred.

*By Order*, R. J. HELME, *Clerk.*

A Vote also passed the Lower House for forfeiting another Quarter of this State's Securities, if not brought into the Treasury within a limited Time; which was taken under Consideration in the Upper House, and referred to the next Session of Assembly, to be holden in South-Kingstown on the last Monday in October next.

1. Reprinted: *State Gazette of South Carolina*, 22 November.

**55. Boston Gazette, 24 September 1787**

The legislative assembly of R. Island, which, as the term is, *fell*, in the month of August last, was, on the 10th instant, convened by their Governour's Proclamation; who opened the Session by acquainting them—That he had received a letter from the President of Congress, urging the State in the strongest terms, to send forward Delegates *to be present* when the Federal Convention should report, which was daily expected.—It was presumed that notice of this importance would immediately have had its effect; for what could have been more candid and fair, than for Congress to give them this timely notice; and what more reasonable, than that *they*, for their own sake, as well as upon *enlarged* and *federal* principles, should have complied with the requisition of Congress.—Thus their Delegates might in *that* body have been made acquainted with the nature and reasons of the report, whatever it might be, and so the Assembly themselves be able to come to a more impartial decision of the subject, when it should be finally laid before *them*, than they might have done without such explanation. This might have been expected, more especially as they had omitted to join Members of their own to the Convention of the States; but all the good sense of a virtuous minority was insufficient to prevail on the Assembly to agree to send on their Delegates *immediately*, although the requisition of Congress was *repeated* in another pressing letter on the subject. They indeed requested their Governour to inform Congress, that the reason of their not sending their Delegates immediately was, because *they* apprehended the States would not be generally represented until their meeting for the next year; and further, that they had directed two Members to attend on the first Monday in November next. But what reason had they so to apprehend, after Congress had repeatedly informed them, that a matter of the greatest magnitude, on which the welfare and perhaps the existance of the Union might depend, was *daily expected* to come into consideration; and upon that account requested the attendance of their Members? There was one, and only one more matter of a federal nature, before the Assembly of Rhode Island at their late session, the decision of which we are happy to find, discovers a federal disposition; and that was, an act passed upon the resolution of Congress, requesting the State to repeal any laws repugnant to the Treaty with Great Britain; in which they declare that the said Treaty was a law of the land, and that it was in no respect to be receded from, misconstrued or violated. This act we flatter ourselves is a prelude of future dispassionate and deliberate councils and wise determinations in the assembly of our sister State; and we hope she never will forget that she is a constituent member of one great *confederated* Commonwealth.—It is the earnest wish of all good men, that the United States may *perpetually* preserve their *several* excellent *Republican* Constitutions, and that Congress may be vested with full and sufficient powers to *perpetuate* their *joint* Prosperity and Dignity.

**56. Salem Mercury, 25 September 1787<sup>1</sup>**

On Monday the 10th inst. the General Assembly of Rhode-Island met at Newport, with somewhat more of a federal disposition, perhaps, than they had evinced at some former periods: They adjourned, the Saturday night following, to the last Monday of October.—In this session, they agreed on a letter to be sent to the President of Congress, informing him of the reasons why the Assembly had not sent Delegates to the Convention at Philadelphia; in order to do away the impressions unfavourable to that State, which had of late rested on the publick mind, on that account. An act was passed, agreeably to a recommendation of Congress, declaring the treaty of peace fully and absolutely binding on all the citizens of that State, as the law of the land, in no wise to be receded from, misconstrued, or in any manner violated. A resolution was passed, reciting, that whereas a letter from his Excellency the President of Congress, dated the 13th day of August last, had been laid before the Assembly, informing, that but few members had attended Congress of late, and requesting a representation of that State in Congress by their Delegates;—also setting forth, that that State is disposed to comply in all respects with the Articles of the Confederation, so far as is in their power; that it is expected matters of great national importance would come under the consideration of the Congress to be convened on the first Monday of November next—and therefore requiring two of their Delegates to attend, as the Representatives of that State, in the Congress of the United States, to convene on the said first Monday of November next, agreeably to the Articles of the Confederation;—and also requesting his Excellency the Governour to answer the said letter, and to inform the President of Congress of the measures taken by the Assembly for having that State duly represented in the Congress to meet on the first Monday of November next; and that they have not given orders for their Delegates going forward previous to that time, under an apprehension that the States will not be generally represented till the meeting of Congress for the next federal year, and that the more important matters of the Union will not be acted upon till that time—and assuring his Excellency the President of Congress, that it is the desire and intention of that State, to do every thing in their power for promoting the great objects of the Confederacy, the general welfare and happiness of the Whole. The Paper Currency, from its depreciated state being productive of complicated injustice & mischief, claimed the attention of the Legislature; and, notwithstanding there were more than 15,000*l.* in the treasury, besides very considerable sums paying in daily from the taxes granted and assessed within little more than a year, it induced the Assembly to vote another tax of 30,000*l.* in addition to the two last taxes of 20,000*l.* each, to be assessed, collected, and paid into the treasury, by the 25th day of January next—as well for the purpose of appreciating the currency, as to induce the holders of the State Securities to bring them in, and receive the paper money for them—supposing, that drawing such large sums in quick succession from circulation, by taxes, would have a tendency to bring the paper money nearly upon a par with silver.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part eight times by 27 October: Mass. (1), N.Y. (1), Pa. (2), Md. (2), Ga. (2).



### 57. Newport Herald, 27 September 1787

Mr. EDDES, *I am sensible you have an aversion to KNOW YE 's*, but as the following is of so extraordinary a nature, I trust you'll give it a place in your next Herald, especially as the net proceeds are to be applied to the sinking of the hundred thousand pounds bank lately emitted.

KNOW YE all whom it may concern, That though there is an advantageous proposal made for the purchasing this State by a gentleman from the southward for his summer seat, we the lawful proprietors, think it best to dispose of it by auction to the highest bidder, as thereby many of its most valuable and wealthy inhabitants that may wish to be purchasers may have an opportunity of the same, for *we mean to deal equitably; it is the essence and spirit of our government that equal justice should be administered to every one*, witness our late proceedings.—But we would more especially advertise such of its inhabitants as have made large fortunes by shipping horses, paying paper money for past contracts, and trading upon other persons property—such as have undervalued notes of hand given by persons necessarily absent at the time of purchasing, and thereby procuring them at a very low rate—borrowing large sums of silver and gold under various pretexts, &c. &c. &c. that the sale will commence on the 29th of September at *Anti-Federal Nocturnal Convention Hall*, in lat. 41° 28' N. It is a long name, but I hope the country members will be able to *read* it: if not they must give it to their speaker at their next Junto Convention, he can spell it I dare say, if he don't get asleep. Its extent is about 40 miles square, more or less, butted and bounded as follows,—northerly and easterly by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, westerly by Connecticut, and southerly by the Atlantic. Its air is temperate and delightful beyond description, and the soil perhaps of the most exuberant kind. It produces not only every necessary of life, but a species of — of a very extraordinary nature, truly anti-federal; but this can have very little weight with a foreigner, as the form of government which he would establish in union with his Sister States would soon cause an elopement of such reptiles, for they cannot bear with any thing but what their blundering heads and wicked hearts direct.

### 58. "X."

#### Newport Herald, 27 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

*An extraordinary account of an extraordinary administration.*

The old one was deposed, with all their abilities, integrity, and public faith—the new one was ushered in, with all their promises, by an astonishing majority.—The victorious standard displayed their professional engagements, RELIEF FOR THE DISTRESSED, while the exergue to their *paper coin* more significantly pointed out their real system,—*In te D—b—lo speramus.*

Their first acts gave an eclat that rendered them famous; at one stroke and in one day searches were made into the inextricable mazes of banking and loaning, and 100,000*l.* in paper was emitted,—the directors, signers, and trustees had



but few of their estates as a pledge for responsibility; but they had qualities of a superior kind, being “*as staunch friends to the cause as ever broke bread.*”

The natural and constitutional liberties of the subjects were secured by the celebrated penal law, prohibiting under severe penalties, all persons from depreciating the paper by *word, deed, or thought*. This act gave great encouragement to commerce, by preventing venders of all commodities selling them for what they liked best; and made provision plenty by the necessary seclusion of markets. It was curious to see the free traders of an independent and commercial republic examining their customers to know whether they were informers before they admitted them by their private doors to purchase; and butchers running like thieves with their own meat when a paper-money man presented to view—so rare were these times.

This sage restriction was however found ineffectual to restrain the opposition of a “certain class of men,” that it became necessary to propose administering the *Great Oath* to every son and daughter of fallen Adam, in these words,—“May the D——l, the Prince and Power of the Air and the great Dragon of H——l, take you to torment and buffet, if you do not use your best endeavours that the paper shall have a currency equal to gold and silver; and if you do not freely vend therefor all goods, wares or merchandise, which you may or ever shall be possessed of, and if you do not at all times declare, believe and take it to be equal to gold and silver as aforesaid, &c.[”] but the people, dreading the fate of one Ananias the perjurer, rejected it.

A dignified Judiciary were brought to the bar to convince them that they were but the creatures of power.

Debtors are enabled to pay off their debts by gibbeting their characters in Know Ye’s, thereby filling the treasury with the superfluous money of widows and orphans.

The limitation of debts of every kind are so shortened as to ease the debtor from troubling himself about a payment—an outlawry being more lucrative than even a discharge with paper.

A system is established for paying the domestic debt by installments, to the perfect dissatisfaction of the creditors and to the advantage of those who must pay it.

A haughty city hath been humbled by having its charter annihilated without proof of violation.

The requisitions of Congress have been respected by being permitted to lie on the table.

The mutilated soldier hath been restrained from debauchery and drunkenness by being paid his stipend in *real paper*, which the bawd and the retailer of drams refused to take.

Law suits are rendered perpetual to the great emolument of Courts and Attornies,—witness the precedent of setting aside the solemn adjudication of the *marsh, beach and pond*.

A new election was secured by a *political* Bribery Act.

The public have been flattered with an idea of the appointment of delegates to Convention, while at bottom they were no more than the *shuttle* of the racket.

Friends “to the cause” have been paid for services at current exchange, while the payment of the consolidated debt with depreciated paper, and tenders in private demands are still wisely continued.

Free from the shackles of science and the experience of Statesmen their whole deliberations spontaneously flowed from unimproved nature—Marchalled in Squads they have performed evolutions in legislation with great rapidity, giving effuency [i.e., efficiency] and dispatch to measures by *Juntos*, *Body-Meetings*, and *Conventions*.

Unburthened with property they have been uniform advocates for a common-age; for had they put in practise the old fashioned maxim, “*pay what thou owest*,” they would [have] had none to receive, but all to give.

They disdained corruption, being destitute of the means.

They sold no offices, as they became the merited reward of *needy friends*, who formed the forlorn hope of their column. They have been opposed in all their gradations to power and wealth, and perplexed in the execution of all their measures.

They have sustained with fortitude and patience the opposition and reproaches of a respectable minority.

But why do I particularize? Strangers that were informed of their brilliant talents and magnanimous virtues, who have since attended their deliberations say with the Queen of Sheba, that *the one half could not be told*.

Their removal from power now cannot be premature, since they have accomplished the benevolent plan of *relieving the distressed*. Whatever may be their fate it must be glorious, as the united applauses of the *Relieved* will preserve a counterpoise against the curses of the *Oppressed*, though the last may endeavour to sink them with obloquy into oblivion, the gratulations of the former will echo a peaceful requiem in their passage across the Styx.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 18 May 1788.

### 59. Secretary of the Confederation Congress Charles Thomson to the Governor of Rhode Island, New York, 28 September 1787<sup>1</sup>

In obedience to an unanimous resolution of the United States in Congress Assembled a copy of which is annexed, I have the honor to transmit to Your Excellency the Report of the Convention lately Assembled in Philadelphia together with the resolutions & letter accompanying the same and have to request that Your Excellency will be pleased to lay the same before Your Legislature in order that it may be submitted to a Convention of Delegates chosen in Your State by the people of the State, in conformity to the resolves of the Convention, made & provided in that case—

1. RC, Letters to the Governor, Vol. 20, no. 84, R-Ar.

### 60. Newport Herald, 4 October 1787

Wednesday being the 3d of October, the dexterity of NONY, a *famous barber*, was tried on the *beards* of many; among the number was *Euripides*, whose beard had grown very long by such a close application to the Proceedings of the Federal Convention as not to allow himself time before this to be tonsorated.—And we are sorry to inform the public that the keen edge of *Nony's* razor operated so violently upon the *delicate chin* of *Euripides* as to force the blood through the skin; however, as *Nony* shaves for paper money, *Euripides*, with some others of his debtors, will undoubtedly discharge their accounts with paper, *Nony* may therefore use the same (there being a *sanative virtue* in it) as a cataplasm to heal the wounds his razor has made.

### 61. Crito

Providence Gazette, 6, 13 October 1787<sup>1</sup>

*To the* EDITOR *of the* PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.

*By publishing the following Essay in your free and impartial Paper, you will oblige the Public, and your constant Reader,*

CRITO.

When the public, or any part of the community, are taking those measures, or going into that practice, which may issue in ruin, and most certainly will, unless reformed; he who foresees the approaching evil cannot act a benevolent or faithful part, unless he gives warning of the danger, and does his utmost to reform and save his fellow-citizens, even though he should hereby incur the displeasure and resentment of a number of individuals. In this view, Crito asks the candid attention of the public to what he has to say on the following interesting and important subject.

Some, perhaps, will not chuse to read any farther; but drop this paper with a degree of uneasy disgust, when they are told the subject to which their attention is asked is, THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, which has been practised, and in which numbers in these United States are now actually engaged.

So much has been published within a few years past on this subject, describing the fertile country of Africa, and the ease and happiness which the natives of that land enjoy, and might enjoy to a yet greater degree, were it not for their own ignorance and folly, and the unhappy influence which the Europeans and Americans have had among them, inducing them to make war upon each other, and by various methods to captivate and kidnap their brethren and neighbours, and sell them into the most abject and perpetual slavery—and at the same time giving a well-authenticated history of this commerce in the human species, pointing out the injustice, inhumanity and barbarous cruelty of this trade, from beginning to end, until the poor Africans are fixed in a state of the most cruel bondage, in which, without hope, they linger out a wretched life; and then leave their posterity, if they are so unhappy as to have any, in the same miserable state: So much has been lately published, I say, on these subjects, that it is needless

particularly to discuss them here. It is sufficient to refer the inquisitive to the following books, viz.—Several tracts collected and published by the late ANTHONY BENEZET, of Philadelphia.—*A Dialogue concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, lately reprinted at New-York, by order of the society there, for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated; and especially, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the human Species, particularly the African*, by THOMAS CLARKSON, which was honoured with the first prize in the University of Cambridge, for the year 1785.

If the African slave trade, and the consequent slavery of the Negroes in the West-Indies, and in the United States of America, be an open and gross violation of the rights of mankind, a most unrighteous, inhuman and cruel practice, which has been the occasion of the death of millions, and of violently forcing millions of others from their dear native country, and their most tender and desirable connexions, and of bringing them to a land of slavery, where they have not a friend to pity and relieve them, but are doomed to cruel bondage, without hope of redress, till kind death shall release them, as is represented, and seems to be abundantly proved in the above mentioned publications, and many others, a conviction of which is fast spreading among all ranks of men in Europe and America; then the following terrible consequence, which may well make all shudder and tremble who realize it, *forces* itself upon us, viz. all who have had any hand in this iniquitous business, whether more directly or indirectly, have used their influence to promote it, or have consented to it, or ever connived at it, and have not opposed it, by all proper exertions of which they have been capable: All these are, in a greater or less degree, chargeable with the injuries and miseries which millions have suffered, and are suffering, in consequence of this trade; and are guilty of the blood of millions who have lost their lives by this traffic of the human species! Not only the merchants who have been engaged in this trade, and for the sake of gain have sacrificed the liberty and happiness, yea the lives of millions of their fellow men, and the captains and men who have been tempted by the love of money to engage in this cruel work, to buy and sell and butcher men; and the slave-holders of every description, are guilty of shedding rivers of blood: But all the Legislatures who have authorized, encouraged, or even neglected to suppress it, to the utmost of their power; and all the individuals in private stations, who have any way aided in this business, consented to it, or have not opposed it to the utmost of their ability, have a share in this guilt. It is therefore become a *national sin*, and a sin of the first magnitude; a sin which righteous Heaven has never suffered to pass unpunished in this world. For the truth of this assertion we may appeal to history, both sacred and profane.

We will leave the inhabitants of Britain, and other European nations, who have been and still are not concerned in the slave trade, to answer for themselves; and consider this subject as it more immediately concerns the United States of America.—Hundreds of thousands of slaves have been imported into these States, many thousands are now in slavery here, and many more thousands have been brought from Africa by the inhabitants of these States, and sold in the West-Indies, where slavery is attended with cruelty and horrors beyond description. And who can reckon up the numbers who have lost their lives, and been

really murdered, by this trade, or have a full conception of the sufferings and distresses of body and mind, which have been the attendants and effects of it! All this blood which has been shed, constantly cries to Heaven; and all the bitter sighs, groans and tears, of these injured, distressed, helpless poor, have entered into the ears of the LORD of hosts, and are calling and waiting for the day of vengeance.

The inhabitants of Rhode-Island, especially those of Newport, have had by far the greatest share in this traffic of all these United States. This trade in the human species has been the first wheel of commerce in Newport, on which every other movement in business has chiefly depended: That town has been built up and flourished, in times past, at the expence of the blood, the liberty and happiness, of the poor Africans; and the inhabitants have lived on this, and by it have gotten most of their wealth and riches.—If a bitter WOE is pronounced on “him who buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong,” (Jer. xxii. 13) “to him who buildeth a town by blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity” (Heb. ii. 12) “to the *bloody* city,” (Ezek. xxiv. 6) what a heavy, dreadful woe hangs over the heads of all those, whose hands are defiled by the blood of the Africans, especially the inhabitants of that State, and of that town, who have had a distinguished share in this unrighteous, bloody commerce!

All this, and more, follows as a necessary consequence, which, it is presumed, none will dispute, on supposition the before mentioned publications give in any measure a just representation of the slave trade, and the consequent slavery of the Africans; and unless thousands and millions of all ranks, and of the most disinterested, and many of them men of the best abilities and character for knowledge, uprightness and benevolence, and who are under the greatest advantages to know the truth, and judge right of this matter, both in Europe and America; unless *all those* are grossly deluded.

But if all these may be fairly confuted, and the African slave trade, and the consequent treatment of those who are by means of this reduced to slavery, can be justified, and shewn to be consistent with justice, humanity and universal benevolence, then the whole of this consequence will be obviated, and all the supposed guilt of injuring our fellow men in the highest degree, and of shedding rivers of innocent blood, will be wiped away as a mere phantom, and vanish as the baseless fabric of a night vision. It is earnestly to be desired therefore, if this be possible, that some able, disinterested advocate for the slave trade, if such an one can be found, would step forth, and do it. But if there be no such man, let the interested, and those who are in this traffic, and the slavery of the Africans, arise and shew it to be just and benevolent, if they can. We will promise you a candid and patient hearing; for we desire to justify you, if it were possible. If this can be done to the satisfaction of all, it would remove from our minds a sett of painful feelings, which cannot be easily described, and dissipate a gloom which now hangs heavy upon us, in the view of the exceeding depravity, unrighteousness and cruelty, of men, who, for a little gain, will deluge millions in slavery and blood, with an unfeeling heart, and their eyes fast shut against the glaring light which condemns their horrid deeds; and in the painful prospect of the dreadful vengeance of Heaven, for such daring outrage against our fellow-men, our brethren!

But until this be done, this business must be unavoidably viewed in the most disagreeable, odious, horrible light, by us. And we must be suffered to consider, and lay before the public, some of the great aggravations which attend the continuation of this practice by us in these American States.

When the inhabitants of these States found themselves necessarily involved in contention with Britain, in order to continue a free people, and had the distressing prospect of a civil war, they, being assembled in Congress, in October, 1774, did agree and resolve in the following words: "We will neither import nor purchase any slave imported, after the first day of December next: After which time we will wholly discontinue the slave trade; and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures, to those who are concerned in it." This reasonable, noble and important resolution, was approved by the people in general, and they adhered to it through the war; during which time there was much publicly said and done, which was, at least, an implicit and practical declaration of the unreasonableness and injustice of the slave trade, and of slavery in general. It was repeatedly declared in Congress, as the language and sentiment of all these States, and by other public bodies of men, "that we hold these truths to be self-evident, that *all men* are created *equal*: That they are endowed by their Creator with certain *unalienable rights*: That among these are *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*:" "That all men are born *equally free and independent*, and have certain natural, inherent, and *unalienable* rights, among which are the defending and enjoying *life and liberty*, acquiring, possessing and protecting *property*, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety. By the immutable laws of nature, all men entitled to life and liberty," &c. &c.

The Africans, and the blacks in servitude among us, were really as much included in these assertions as ourselves; and their right, *unalienable right* to liberty, and to procure and possess property, is as much asserted as ours, if they be *men*. And if we have not allowed them to enjoy these unalienable rights, but violently deprive them of liberty and property, and are still taking, as far as in our power, all liberty and property from the nations in Africa, we are guilty of a ridiculous, wicked contradiction and inconsistency; and practically authorize any nation or people, who have power to do it, to make us their slaves.

The whole of our war with Britain was a contest for LIBERTY: By which we, when brought to the severest test, practically adhered to the above assertions, so far as they concerned *ourselves*, at least; and we declared, in words and actions, that we chose rather to *die* than to be slaves, or have our liberty and property taken from us. We viewed the British in an odious and contemptible light, purely because they were attempting, by violence, to deprive us, in some measure, of those our unalienable rights. But if *at the same time*, or since, we have taken or withheld these same rights from the Africans, or any of our fellow-men, we have justified the inhabitants of Britain in all they have done against us, and declared that all the blood which has been shed in consequence of our opposition to them, is chargeable on us. If we do not allow this, and abide by the above declarations, we charge ourselves with the guilt of all the blood which has been shed by means of the slave trade; and of an unprovoked and most injurious conduct,

in depriving innumerable Africans of their just, unalienable rights, in violently taking and withholding from them all liberty and property; holding them as our own property, and buying and selling them, as we do our horses and cattle; reducing them to the most vile, humiliating, and painful situation.

This whole contest, it must be again observed, was suited to bring and keep in our view, and impress on our minds, a deep and lasting sense of the worth of liberty, and the unrighteousness of taking it from any man; and consequently of our unrighteousness and cruelty towards the Africans.—If it were known, that the wise Governor of the world had determined to take some method to convince us of the injustice of the slave trade, and of the slavery of the Africans, and manifest his displeasure with us for it, and use means suited to reform us, could we conceive of any measures which might be better suited to answer this end, than those which have actually taken place in this war, considered in all the circumstances of it? It would be thought impossible that every one who then was, or had been, active in reducing the Africans to the abject and suffering state in which they are in the West-Indies, and even among us, should not reflect upon it with self-condemnation, regret and horror, had not experiment proved the contrary. And while we execrated the British for taking our men, and ordering them to be transported to the East-Indies, and for crowding so many of our people into prisons, and prison-ships, where they died by thousands, without any relief or pity from them, was it possible for us not to reflect upon our treatment of the Africans, in transporting so many thousands of them from their native country, to a land of slavery, while multitudes, being crowded and shackled in our ships, have died on their passage, without one to help or pity them? Could any avoid seeing the righteous hand of GOD stretched out against us, and retaliating our unrighteous, cruel treatment of them, in a way suited to strike conviction into our minds of our guilt, and of the righteous displeasure of Heaven with us for these horrid deeds which had been done by us? Surely we had good reason to espouse the language of the brethren of Joseph, in a similar case: “We are verily guilty concerning our brethren, the Africans, in that we saw the anguish of their souls, under our cruel hands, and they besought us, and cried for pity; but we would not hear: *Therefore is this distress come upon us.*”

Is it possible that the Americans should, after all this, and in the face of all this light and conviction, and after they had obtained liberty and independence for themselves, continue to hold hundreds of thousands of their fellow-men in the most abject slavery? And not only so, but, notwithstanding their resolutions and declarations, renew and carry on the slave trade; and from year to year convey thousands of their fellow-men from their native country, to a state of most severe and perpetual bondage! This would have been thought impossible, was it not known to be true in fact. And who can describe the aggravated guilt which the Americans have brought upon themselves by this? If this was an Heaven-daring crime, of the first magnitude, before the war with Britain, how much more criminal must we be *now*, when, instead of regarding the admonitions of Heaven, and the light and conviction set before us, and repenting and reforming, we persist in this evil practice! What name shall be given to their



daring presumption and hardiness, who, from a thirst for gold, have renewed this trade in slaves, in the bodies and souls of men, and of those whom they employ in this inhuman, horrid business!

*“Is there not some chosen curse,  
Some hidden thunder, in the stores of Heaven,  
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast these men,”*

who owe their riches to such aggravated, detestable crimes, now necessarily involved in carrying on this trade!

[13 October] And is not Heaven frowning upon us *now*? We are as yet disappointed in our expectations of peace, prosperity and happiness, in consequence of liberty and independence. Instead of rising to honour, dignity and respect, among the nations, we have suddenly sunk into disgrace and contempt. Our trade labours under great disadvantages, and is coming to nothing. We have lost our money, having parted with the greatest part of it, not to pay our debts, but for foreign luxuries or unnecessaries, and those things which might have been manufactured among ourselves. Our public and private debts are not paid, but are increasing. A spirit of discontent and murmuring, and jealousy of our rulers, and complaining of them, has spread among us; and in some places insurrections and open violent opposition to government have taken place, which have proceeded to plunder and shedding blood. Divisions and contentions have taken place among ourselves, and seem to be hastening to universal confusion and anarchy. There is a general complaint of *evil times*; and where is the family or man to be found, which does not sensibly share in the general calamity, and is not involved in some peculiar difficulty? The British are so far from being at peace with us, that they have done much to bring on the before mentioned evils. They are attempting to ruin our trade, as much as is in their power; and refuse to deliver up to us the Western Posts, which we claim; and put on a hostile appearance, which may soon issue in an open war. The Indians are making war upon us, and kill and captivate the inhabitants of the Western settlements, and threaten to be yet a more dreadful scourge to us. The Algerines, without any provocation, are captivating our ships, and carry our men into slavery; and we have no power to redeem them, or to put a stop to their farther depredations.

The State of Rhode-Island in particular, which, as has been observed, has had a distinguished hand in the slave trade, is fallen into a disagreeable and very calamitous situation. Great animosities and contentions with each other have arisen. They are divided into parties, and biting and devouring one another. Public injustice is established by law. They have lost their credit abroad, and are become the subject of ridicule, reproach and contempt. Their trade and all business are discouraged, and almost ruined. And Newport, the metropolis, is fast going to poverty and inevitable ruin, unless some unforeseen event should take place to prevent it.

Wherefore is all this come upon us, so suddenly, and in such a remarkable and unexpected manner? Is not the hand of GOD very visibly stretched out against us? And must there not be some *Achan* found with us, which has provoked the Most High to bring all this evil upon us, after he had wrought for us, and



delivered us in such a remarkable manner, and which must be put away, before we can reasonably expect to prosper? And is not the renewal of the slave trade, and our continuing to hold so many thousands of our fellow-men in slavery, one principal ground of the divine displeasure? Surely none can doubt of this, who view it in the light in which it has been represented above. Other sins and follies have been the means of the evils which are come upon us; such as idleness, intemperance, luxury and extravagance, in a variety of ways: A neglect to encourage and carry on manufactories, and discourage the importation of unnecessary foreign articles; and opposition to the impost proposed by Congress, &c. But may not this folly and infatuation itself be justly considered as a judgment which has come upon us, as the just consequence of our persisting in this aggravated, capital, and horrid crime?

If this trade and the slavery of the Africans can be vindicated, and proved to be consistent with ourselves, just and laudable, we again declare we wish to see it done: But if this cannot be done, and we must be allowed at present to be confident it cannot, then there is no other hopeful way to escape yet greater evils, but by repentance and reformation. Of what importance then is it, that all ranks and orders of men among us should turn their attention to this matter, and repent, and do works meet for repentance, by reforming, and exerting themselves in their several places, and according to their advantages and abilities, entirely to suppress this evil practice!

Is it not to be wished that the Convention of these States, now sitting at Philadelphia,<sup>(a)</sup> may take this matter into serious consideration, and, at least, keep it in view, while they are forming a system of government, that the supreme power of these States may be able effectually to interpose in this affair? If the above representation be in any measure agreeable to the truth, in vain are the wisest counsels, and the utmost exertions, to extricate ourselves from present evils, or avoid greater, unless the *slave trade*, and all the attendants of it, be condemned and suppressed. If we persist in thus transgressing the laws of Heaven, and obstinately refuse to do unto these our brethren, as we would all men should do unto us, we cannot prosper.

It has been, with justice, publicly lamented that Congress has not power to redeem those of our brethren who have fallen into the hands of the Algerines, and are reduced to slavery by them; and as an intolerable evil to have them neglected, and left in wretched circumstances, for so long a time. But why do we "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel?" Why should we be so stupid and partial, as to turn all our attention to these *few sufferers*; and wholly overlook the sufferings of so many thousands among us, and of the thousands who are brought from their dear native country, and all their relations, and fixed in perpetual slavery, by a sett of pirates and banditti from among ourselves, as hardened against the groans and sufferings of their fellow-men, as unjust and cruel, as the most abandoned among the Algerines? In the name of reason and true benevolence it is asked, why the latter, which is before our eyes, and an evil incomparably greater than the former, is wholly overlooked, as not worthy of any regard; and the former fixed upon as a most affecting, intolerable instance of suffering? which, at the same time, may be justly considered as a small degree of retaliation, for our enslaving the Africans; and is suited to remind us of it,

and to open our eyes to see and make us feel our unrighteousness and cruelty towards them; and our gross inconsistency and self-contradiction, in condemning these Algerines, the inhabitants of Africa, and at the same time not condemning ourselves, who are infinitely more criminal; but by our conduct are really justifying them.

Had we any supreme legislature in these States, could they not easily restrain all the subjects from being concerned in the slave trade? and would they not bring the guilt of it on themselves, should they not do it? and why have not the several legislatures in these United States done it? why do they tolerate and connive at it, while it is carried on, at least in some States, in their sight? is it because it is thought to be the most profitable trade of any now carried on, and they are unwilling to prevent the introduction of the money which is brought into some of the States by this means? some have suspected this to be the truth, but we will not admit it. Is it then because they do not attend sufficiently to the matter, and are not sensible of the unrighteousness and cruelty of the trade? or is it because they judge it not in their power, and that they have no right and authority to interpose in this affair? this has been asserted by some, whether with reason or not it may be worth while seriously to consider.

The Quakers, who have done more than any others to acquit themselves of the guilt of the slave trade, and have discovered more humanity and regard to the laws of Christ, in this instance, than any other denomination of Christians, to the praise of the former and the shame of the latter it must be spoken; they have, among their many other exertions in opposition to this trade, lately applied to the General Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island, praying them to devise some way to put a stop to the slave trade, which is carried on by a number of persons in that State; which petition is now under consideration: And it is said they determine to petition all the legislatures in these United States to do the same. It is hoped they will not refuse to do any thing they have a right and power to do, utterly to abolish this iniquity in these States, lest they should fasten the guilt of it more than ever on themselves, and on their constituents. It is said by some, that this trade does not properly come under the cognizance of any legislature in these States, as they cannot make laws to bind their subjects when out of the limits of their jurisdiction, or punish them for what they do in Africa or the West-Indies, especially as the slave trade is there tolerated and protected by law, custom and general consent. This perhaps is the only objection that has been or can be offered against the legislatures of these States interposing to suppress this trade. It therefore deserves a particular examination.

It is granted by all, that common pirates may be punished by the laws of any State, when apprehended, wherever or in whatever part of the world their crimes were committed. There is good reason for this, it will be said, because these men are guilty of intolerable crimes, which are reprobated by all nations, and have really turned enemies to mankind, and therefore ought to be punished wherever they can be apprehended. To this it may be replied, that the slave trader, who buys and sells his fellow-men, by which traffic he is the means of the death of

many, and of reducing others to the most miserable bondage during life, is as really an enemy to mankind as the pirate, and violates common law, which is or ought to be the law of all nations; and is guilty of crimes of greater magnitude, exercises more inhumanity and cruelty, sheds more blood, and plunders more, and commits greater outrages against his fellow-men, than most of those who are called pirates. In short, if any men deserve the name of pirates, these ought to be considered in the first and highest class of them. And if there be no laws against this commerce of the human species in Africa, or in Britain and in the West-India islands, and this trade is tolerated in all these places, and elsewhere, does this make the practice less evil in itself, or more tolerable? Is this any reason why it should be tolerated by the legislatures in America? If it was the custom of those who carry on the slave trade to put to death one half of the men who sail in their ships, when they arrive to the coast of Africa, and sell the other half of them, and this were tolerated there, and these traders found means to entice great numbers of our men to sail with them to Africa every year, by which thousands of our people were murdered or enslaved; would it be thought our legislatures had no right to restrain them, and at least banish every sea-captain who was guilty of this, because the crime is not committed where they have jurisdiction, and where such cruelty and murder are tolerated, and not considered as crimes? For in such an instance the crime would not consist in shipping men on board their vessels, but in their treatment of them after they arrived at Africa. Could there be found a man, not interested in such a business, who would make this objection, or a legislature who would think it of the least weight? Surely no! But it would be of as much weight, in the case proposed, as in that under consideration.

The Algerines have taken a number of Americans, and sold them into slavery. Have we not right, ought we not, had we power, to oblige them to deliver them up and set them at liberty, and lay such restraints upon them, as to put it beyond their power to perpetrate such crimes in future? Would the plea of their being out of the limits of our jurisdiction be a good reason to suffer them to go on in their injuries without restraint? These American States ought to vindicate the rights of mankind, and promote their liberty and happiness to the utmost of their power. Every State ought to pity the ignorance, weakness and wickedness, of the Africans, and afford them all the relief, protection and assistance, in their power; and do their utmost to restrain those of their subjects from hurting them, who, otherwise, would take advantage of their distance from us, and of their ignorance and weakness. How then can they sit still, and suffer their subjects to carry on this horrible commerce, big with so much cruelty and murder, and be guiltless!

On the whole, will it not appear to every impartial, benevolent man, who well attends to the matter, that if our legislatures refuse to interpose in this case, and will not, at least, outlaw those who are concerned in this trade, and persist in it, it must be owing either to their not attending to and realising the magnitude of the crime, and the evil involved in this commerce, or to some less excusable cause, if such there may be?

But if the legislature should neglect to do any thing, which it is thought they might and ought to do, will this excuse the people at large? Might they not, if they were alarmed and engaged as they ought to be, if the above representation be in any measure just, do that which would effectually suppress among us this hideous, threatening evil? When our contention with Britain was coming on, the man who openly appeared active on their side was abandoned as unworthy the rights and privileges of society; and, in many instances, his neighbours withdrew all connexion and commerce with him. And this was justified as a proper and important measure. And are not these men, who are carrying on this trade, and enslaving and destroying their fellow-men, without any provocation from them, and hereby bringing guilt on these States, and the awful judgments of Heaven; are they not unworthy the privileges of freemen? Ought they not to be considered as enemies to mankind, and murderers of their brethren, for the sake of gold, and real pests and plagues to society? And would not treating them as such effectually reform them, or banish them from among us?

It has been observed, that when the war with Britain was coming on, we resolved not only that we would wholly discontinue the slave trade ourselves, *but that we would not "hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures, to those who are concerned in it."* If this resolution was reasonable and important then, it is as much and more so *now*. And this fully put into practice, would put an effectual stop to it. Shall we not then, by this neglect, bring the guilt of this trade, and the blood of the Africans, on our own heads, and on our children? And how dreadful will be the consequence, who can tell!—The warning is given, and that is all that can be done by CRITO.

(a) *This essay was written before the Convention rose.*

1. Stephen Hopkins was the author of "Crito" (RCS:R.I., 49).

## 62. Joseph Nightingale to Silas Talbot Providence, 8 October 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

I sincerely thank you for your Attention, to my request while at your house; finding it will put you to much Trouble, and uncertain wheather it Can be accomplished, and the hopes of a New form of Government being soon Established, Induces me to wait a little time, in hopes if the latter is Complied with, all will be on more respectable footing. . . .

1. RC, Talbot Collection, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Conn.

## 63. Providence United States Chronicle, 18 October 1787<sup>1</sup>

"It is with Satisfaction we communicate the 12th Article of the Minutes of the Baptist, or Warren Association, at their yearly Meeting, held at Chelmsford, last Month, composed of 45 Churches, to our Readers, as follows:—

"Notwithstanding the great Expense of Blood and Treasure during the last War, to ward off Slavery from ourselves, we are informed, That in various Parts

of this Country, many have recurred to the horrid Practice of sending our Shipping to Africa, to bring from thence the Natives, and to sell them as Slaves in the West-Indies: And as *Man-stealing* is a capital Crime by the Laws of God—See Deut. vii. 1. Tim. i. 10.—We, therefore, earnestly desire all our Brethren, to guard against giving the least Countenance to that Heaven-daring Wickedness.”

1. Reprinted: Boston *American Herald*, 22 October.

#### 64. Providence Gazette, 27 October 1787

On Monday next the Honourable General Assembly of this State will meet at South-Kingstown.

By a Gentleman from Boston we learn, that a Convention is to meet there on the second Wednesday of January next, to take into Consideration the Plan of the new federal Government. This Subject was taken up in the General Court on Wednesday last, 160 Members being present, when 129 voted in Favour of calling a Convention.

#### 65. New Hampshire Spy, 6 November 1787

The General Assembly of Rhode-Island met at South-Kingston, in that state, on Monday the 29th ult. May Heaven smile upon their deliberations, and give them a *federal disposition*.

#### 66. An Act for Reprinting the Doings of the Federal Convention 3 November 1787<sup>1</sup>

Be it Enacted by this General Assembly and by the Authority thereof it is enacted That there be One thousand Copies of the Report of the late Federal Convention be Printed as soon as may be, and Sent to the several Town Clerks within this State ~~to be distributed among the freeholders of said Towns~~

To the Town of Newport ~~fifty~~ Ten Porthmouth Twenty five Middleton fifteen New Shoreham fifteen Jamestown sixteen Tivertron forty Little compton Thirty six Providence Ten Smithfield ~~fifty~~ Seventy five Situate ~~seventy~~ fifty five Foster fifty five Gloucester Sixty Cumberland forty Cranston fifty Johnston thirty North Providence twenty Westerly thirty one North Kingston fifty South Kingston one hundred Charleston ~~thirty~~ twenty five Richmond twenty five Exeter thirty one Hopkinton thirty Bristol twenty Warren ten Barrington Ten Warwick fifty six E Greenwich twenty five West Greenwich twenty two Coventry thirty; which Copies are to be distributed to the Inhabitants of said Towns as soon as may be. That the Freemen may have an opportunity of forming their Sentiment of the Said Proposed Constitution

Voted & passed

By ord. RJ Helme Clk

1. MS, Acts and Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly, p. 150, R-Ar.

**67. William Heath Diary****Roxbury, Mass., 8 November 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . It is Said that the Rhode Island assembly in their late Sessions rose without recommending to the People the ~~Calling~~ appointing a Convention to Consider the New federal System,—

1. MS, Heath Diaries, MHi.

**68. Providence United States Chronicle, 8 November 1787**

The Honorable General Assembly of this State, which convened at South-Kingstown last Week, adjourned on Saturday to the last Monday in February next, then to meet in this Town.—Besides the Acts passed at this Session which are published in this Day's Paper, a Resolve was passed directing the Secretary to have 1000 Copies of the proposed Constitution for the United States printed, and distributed in the different Towns in the State.

A Correspondent informs, that “the Memorial of the Society of Friends, which has for some Time been lying before the General Assembly, having been taken into Consideration at the present Session, an Act has been passed agreeable thereto, by an almost unanimous Vote, four Members only dissenting in the House of Representatives, and in the Upper House none.—The Friends to Humanity and the natural Rights of Men are congratulated on this Occasion, as it affords a promising Hope, that, in Time, the nefarious Trade to Africa, for Slaves, will be abolished in the United States.

**69. Providence Gazette, 10 November 1787**

The General Assembly of this State, which met last Week at South-Kingstown, adjourned on Saturday to the last Monday in February next, then to meet in this Town.

At this Session an Act was passed to prohibit the Slave-Trade, which was inserted in our last.—A Motion was revived for altering the Representation in Assembly, by having two Members sent from each Town, which was referred to next Session.—A Motion was made for printing the Report of the late Fœderal Convention, sending Copies thereof to the several Towns, and recommending the Appointment of Delegates to meet in Convention, for the Purpose of deliberating thereon. This was negatived by a large Majority; it was however finally determined that 1000 Copies of the Report should be printed and dispersed.—A Resolve also passed, directing the Holders of the Six per Cent. State Notes to apply for a second Quarter Part of the Principal and Interest within two Months, under Penalty of forfeiting the same.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Mercury*, 23 November.

**70. John Francis to Nicholas Brown  
Philadelphia, 11 November 1787<sup>1</sup>**

On my first arrival here from the Northward, I found that my Father had received two Years Interest on your funded Securities in Paper of this State which then was depreciated to 50 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Cent—And as in all probability a few Weeks would appreciate it again, I preferr'd the Sale of it untill my return from Virginia—To my Satisfaction my prediction is verified and your Interest within 26 or 27 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Ct. of its Nominal Value—Tomorrow I shall endeavor to purchase some Articles with it and Ship them on board a Sloop (I have past Charter'd) for Providence on your Account and Risque—This I hope will meet your Approbation, and though of small Consequence to your large property, yet I flatter myself it will convince you how happy I ever shall be to gratefully repay part of the many Friendly Attentions I have received in such abundance from your amiable Family—Tell Mrs. Brown that a knowledge of her Veneration for Virtuous patriotic Characters, persuaded me to present her with an innimitable likeness of the Great Willm. Penn, which I have taken the Liberty sending to the care of my Abby—A [ - - - ] of those plates remain'd among the papers in my Fathers care, and luckily presented to me the other Day in searching among them—politicks are the only Topics in all Companies—Tories were never detested with half the Zeal, that Antifederalists are now—And there needs no greater confirmation of a Villain than an Opposition to the Favorite Government—

Franklin not very Sagaciously has let the Cat out of the Bag—and indirectly confirmed the World in their Opinion of his want of public *disinterested* Spirit—You must know for some time past he has been suspected, the Wealth he acquired in Europe begins to make its appearance, and Suspicions derogatory to his Honor are publicly Sported—How true I as a Silent Spectator cannot Vouchsafe—South Carolina by a large Majority have approved and appointed Members for the Convention—And all the Southern States except Maryland have Nominated the Day of Election—

The War in Holland causes great Speculations some prognosticate a European Contest, others that it will soon be terminated—A Report Yesterday Circulated that an Engagement between the Dutch and English Fleets had really been in the Channel, Letters as late as the 25th Septr. mention not a Word—

Your Unhappy deluded State still adds Infamy to Infamy, no new projects of Villainy are any where brought to such rare perfection as in your Political Assemblies—Well, times must alter, the Virtuous have tumbled, the Wicked cannot ever ride Triumphant—Patience you must exercise, to keep comfortably Happy—I shall address you by the Sloop, though I please myself with the satisfaction of seeing you in [a] few Days after the Receipt of this—My best Respects make acceptable to Mrs. Brown & Hope, and the remainder of your Fire side

No. 370	—	£187.10	—	In from 25th Feby. 82
13,953	—	191.10.3	—	do—26th March 84—
13,954	—	<u>103. 6.2</u>	—	do—23rd. May. 81
		£482. 6.5		

Amount Consolodated and Funded the Property of Nichs. Brown Esqr.—Two Years Interest is received, half a Year is due but no Money in the Treasury £482.a[t] 6.5 ~~3~~ C: for 2 Year £57.17.6

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

## 71. Newport Herald, 22 November 1787

*For the NEWPORT HERALD.*

There is a French proverb that says, *truth alone is offensive to the guilty.*

If the Correspondent in the United States Chronicle for the last week, in Providence, had recollected the truth and force of this saying, it might have saved him the trouble of writing his *squib* against the junto (as he is pleased to call them) who write in the Newport Herald. The writers in this Herald express the feeling and sentiment of all the respectable citizens of the place. If they have published any untruths against the present administration, or any of their *promptors*, supporters, &c. let them be contrasted with truth—they wish for no other tribunal than that of *truth* and justice, and upon that issue they only desire to rest their cause, and from this they will not be diverted by the impudence of any *petty* correspondent of Mr. *Whealers*.

In England (says a great French authority) the true patriots are those who exert their utmost force against the *abuse* of government; but to whom do they give that title in Portugal? To him who most *servilely* adulates the man in power! yet what a citizen! what a patriot!

Upon whom would this *modest* correspondent and his coadjutors bestow this appellation in *Rhode-Island*? on men of irreproachable private character, who have been uniform in supporting our *national* faith and that of individuals—the true honor, dignity and interest of this and the United States? No:—upon the pimps promptors and panegyrists of those who intoxicated with office do not distinguish (in their practice) between the constitutional exercise of a righteous authority founded upon *chartered* rights and the eternal order and fitness of things, from a lawless display of usurpation and savage force.

Go gild with adulation's feeble ray  
The usurpation of the *present* day,  
Nor hope to stain on base detraction's scrawl,  
A Tully's morals or a Sydney's soul.



**72. Newport Herald, 22 November 1787**

A Correspondent, on reading a paragraph in Mr. Wheeler's paper, reflecting on the HERALD, observes, he is not surprised that an impartial detail of a fraudulent system and the consequent measures, would be "*disagreeable*" to the fautors of them.—It was also to be expected that a delineation of the leading characters would be termed "*scurilous*" by their hirelings—The author of the paragraph and all others of the same sentiments may be assured that it is not a "*junto*" here who oppose licentious power, but all virtuous and good citizens are firmly united against it. The simile of the "*Bird which bewrayeth her own nest*" is totally inapplicable to the opposers of the present unjust and unconstitutional measures—they have not been accessory to the loss of public faith and of national character: this is chargeable on those only who are the leaders, and have so warmly advocated the present system. The opposition finding their honest and well-meant attempts ineffectual, have been obliged publicly to avow their sentiments, that a discrimination might be made by the good people of our Sister States; and it is with pleasure they have remarked that in all their publications and in all companies in which the conduct of this State is discussed, while her public measures are reprobated credit is given to those who are by this writer term'd the *junto*. With propriety then do they spurn the idea of belonging to a nest built by birds of prey, which is feathered by violence and sullied by every impurity.—What can be more disgraceful to government, says our Correspondent, than the range of KNOW YE's which blacken the weekly page, and the iniquitous bills which are pending before the Courts? What sarcasm can be more poignant than the declaration of members in our most solemn bodies that the paper emission hath not depreciated, although they are selling their produce at the rate of six for one? To endeavor to cover such wickedness committed in high places, is a crime against Deity, and treason against the liberty and rights of the people. Therefore KNOW YE, That the pen of truth shall not be stained by bestowing unmerited praises, nor the press of freedom prostituted by varnishing over crimes, but unto every man will be justly rendered his dues.

**73. Massachusetts Gazette, 23 November 1787**

Rhode-Island, we hear, has so far adopted the recommendations of the Convention and Congress, as to direct that copies of the proceedings of the Convention be struck off, and sent to all the towns in the state.

**74. Pittsburgh Gazette, 24 November 1787**

From the eastward we learn, that the state of Rhode Island, in general assembly, have determined to send no delegates to Congress, nor accede to the constitution proposed by the convention.

**75. Brown & Benson to Hewes & Anthony  
Providence, 27 November 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . we sincerely hope the respective States may adopt the new Constitution which may restore & animate our Languishing Trade. . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**76. New York Journal, 27 November 1787<sup>1</sup>**

We rejoice to hear, that notwithstanding the general depravity of the inhabitants of the state of Rhode-Island, there are yet remaining some few individuals, who pay a sacred regard to honour and honesty.—Having been favoured with a Providence paper of last Thursday,<sup>1</sup> we are enabled to amuse the public with the following curious proceedings, viz.—

“At a meeting of the Wardens, Vestry, and other members of the episcopal church, in Providence, on Monday, the 12th day of November, 1787.

“Voted unanimously, That we conceive it to be the indispensable duty of all churches, carefully to watch and superintend the conduct of its members; and in case of violations of the precepts of morality, and revealed religion, privately in the first instance to admonish; and if the offender prove refractory and irreclaimable, then to proceed to public censure.—This opinion is founded in reason, in revelation, and on the immemorial usage and practice of all christian churches, since the first establishment of christianity. In conformity, therefore, to this necessary and useful part of our discipline, we are obliged to proceed to the public censure and excommunication of David Brown, of Johnston, in the county of Providence, yeoman, a member of this church; whose conduct in attempting to discharge an honest debt, due to John Clifford, in specie, with one-sixth part of its value, is the immediate subject of our present animadversion, and has led us to this public vindication of our church discipline.—The fulfilling of agreements voluntarily entered into, with honesty and good faith, is enjoined by the clearest principles of reason, and the express commands of our most holy religion—and the obligations arising from these laws are superiour to, and not releaseable by, any municipal statute or institution whatever.—The conduct of the said David, in the above transaction, appearing to us highly culpable, private admonition hath been tried, but unfortunately without success. For the vindication therefore of the church, and to deter others from committing the like offences, and with the hope of still reclaiming our offending Brother, we do declare, that his aforesaid conduct is a scandalous breach of the laws of our most holy religion, and directly opposite to the most obvious principles of morality.—We do therefore hereby manifest our disapprobation by thus publicly censuring our said Brother.

“Voted, That the Clerk of the Vestry do enter the above vote and declaration of this meeting in the public register-book of the church, and that the same be published.”

1. The account of the meeting first appeared in the *Providence United States Chronicle*, 22 November, with the following preface: “Mr. WHEELER, *you are requested by several of your Readers to publish the following in your next Chronicle.—It is likewise their Desire that it should be placed immediately after Mr. David Brown’s KNOW YE. Z.*”

The text of the preceding Know Ye is

*State of Rhode-Island, &c.*

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That DAVID BROWN, of Johnston, Yeoman, on the 7th Day of September, 1787, at my Dwelling-House at Smithfield, lodged with me the Sum of £34 10s, lawful Money; being the Principal and Interest of a Sum of Money, due from the said David Brown to John Clifford, of said Johnston, Inn-holder, on a certain Note of Hand: That the said David Brown hath in all Respects complied with the Law respecting the Paper Currency; and that the said John Clifford hath been legally and duly notified thereof.

Witness,

A. MATHEWSON, J. C. P.

### 77. Newport Herald, 29 November 1787

*Fashion*, says a correspondent, the life and soul of gaiety, for whom all people of taste have so peculiar a veneration, is now in the zenith of her glory.—But alas! how can it be sufficiently lamented that Fashion should be obliged quietly to submit to these glaring insults, which are daily and hourly offered to her fair person from the malevolent hands of vanity. *Fashion* has a good and graceful mind, and although she has declared that she places her whole delight in pure gentility, and that she will absolutely hold no connexion whatsoever with *paltry* imagination, yet does *vanity*, with her brazen front, envious from the hour of her birth, impudently endeavour to assume her air, gait, gesture, attitude and look; and although she be obviously the scorn of *wisdom*, and the sport of *sense*, yet is the wretch so blind and ignorant, that she forcibly pursues her follies through the wild mazes of corruption’s flowery grove, until she at length inevitably falls down into that deep vale of destruction.

### 78. David Ramsay to Henry Laurens Charleston, S.C., 30 November 1787 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

... Mr Houston of Georgia late of Congress passed through Charleston this week having travelled by land from New-York: He informs me that all the states through which he has passed are for the new constitution. Another person informs me that Rhode Island will probably accede to it. The present Congress is the last I ever expect to convene under the old confederation. . . .

1. RC, Miscellaneous Papers, New York Public Library.

**79. St. John, New Brunswick, Royal Gazette, 4 December 1787**

In the Assembly of Rhode Island a motion was made and question put “recommending the several towns to appoint Delegates to meet in Convention, to consider and determine on the merits of the New Constitution.” which was negatived by a large majority. The tender act remains in force.

**80. Newport Herald, 6 December 1787**

PLATO, when he saw his death approaching, thanked his good genius and fortune:—first, that he was born a man and not a brute;—secondly, that he was born a *Greek* and not a *Barbarian*;—and in the last place, that he happened to live in the days of *Socrates*.

Have not the people of this State higher reasons to thank kind *Providence* than *Plato* had?

We are not only born men; but do we not act like men, like christians, and not like brutes?

At the farthest remove from barbarism, do we not at this moment exhibit most striking evidences of polished civilization?

Do not justice and judgment run down our streets like a stream, and righteousness as an overflowing river?

And are not all the members of the administration under which we live and flourish, more wise, more just, and benevolent than *Socrates* or *Plato*?

Blush ye foul bewrayers of your own nest!

Shut your mouths ye envious curs who bark at the brightest star in the constellation of the United States!

**81. Newport Herald, 20 December 1787<sup>1</sup>**

ANECDOTE.

The day on which the Convention agreed to the Constitution presented to the Public, the great Dr. Franklin asked a gentleman who sat next to him whether he had taken notice of the picture of the sun in the recess at the back of the President’s chair?—He replied that he had, but not with a particular attention. The Doctor then observed that painters had been puzzled to paint a single sun in such a manner that the spectator could determine whether it was a rising or a setting sun,—he added that he had viewed the picture before mentioned as often as he had been in the Hall, and never had been able to come to a determination, but *now* he was sure it was a *rising sun*.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Spy*, 28 December; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 4 January 1788; *Salem Mercury*, 8 January; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 10 January; *Charleston City Gazette*, 25 February.

## 82 A-V. Controversy Over John Carter and the Impartiality of the Providence Gazette, 22 December 1787-9 February 1788

82-A. *Cid Hamet*

*Providence Gazette, 22 December*

*To the EDITOR of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.*

Mr. *Wilson's* Speech (No. 2) was originally printed at Philadelphia in a pamphlet; from which circumstance, with all due deference to the opinions of others, I humbly conceive it was *there* judged too lengthy for the limits of a news-paper, though you inserted it to gratify a number of your readers.—This week and next I find your paper is to be *crammed* with the contents of another pamphlet in favour of the proposed Constitution. Surely these *modest collectors of pamphlets* expect *too much* from a Printer, whose wish I am persuaded is to give all parties a fair hearing. If the new Constitution is fraught with so many blessings *for its advocates*, they certainly ought to have drawn their purse-strings, and had a few thousands of these pamphlets printed and dispersed, instead of crowding the papers with their voluminous contents.—From the acknowledged freedom and strict impartiality of your press, I am induced to request a republication of the following *short address*. Pray endeavour, this week or next, to *squeeze* it into your Gazette *edge-ways*, on a small type.—*A propos*, I have by me a *pamphlet* containing about 400 quarto pages. Should the *pamphlet-mongers* attempt any thing further in *their way*, what think you of republishing its contents in the Gazette? Six months only will be required to get through with it, and when finished, I have it in contemplation to send you the *Talmud* and *Alcoran*. The former is comprized in seven folio volumes, the latter not quite so bulky; and time will probably admit of giving a news-paper edition of the whole before the new Constitution is fully adopted.

82-B. *A Pamphlet-Monger*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 27 December*

Mr. WHEELER, *Your publishing the following in your Paper will much oblige one of your Customers.*

In the Providence Gazette, of the 22d, there appeared a piece, under the signature of *Cid Hamet*, which merits a short reply.

I was one of three persons, that applied to Mr. Carter to publish extracts from a pamphlet printed in Philadelphia, recommending the plan of the Federal Government to be accepted by the people through these States.—I found it an ingenious, honest, well-done performance, and in my opinion well calculated to throw light upon the great subject it treated on; and in particular, it was adapted to the understanding of the yeomanry of New-England in general;—under these ideas I carried it to the Printer of the Providence Gazette, and made known my business to him, and shewed him the book; he seemed in a very ill humour, thought it too lengthy to be inserted in a *news-paper*, and withal informed me, that the paper was engaged for that week. I told him, that I had no desire to ask

any thing that was unreasonable, and if he did not choose to print it, I would depart:—He then queried, whether extracts would not answer my purpose.—I told him it would; and on my promising to furnish them, we parted. Before the time came for publishing the extracts, Mr. Carter applied to me to know if I would give way to have Mr. Wilson's speech printed in his next paper—to which I readily consented. The public have seen Mr. Wilson's speech, and a specimen of the extracts from the other pamphlet, in the front of the same paper, that contains the piece that I complain of. Let the world judge whether there is any thing in this whole transaction, which merits the treatment that is given the gentlemen that presented the pamphlet to be published. Mr. Carter is the author of *Cid Hamet* himself, or got some person to write it, after *betraying private and confidential discourse* to his Amanuensis, that his arrow dipped in gall might take place. Mr. Carter makes great professions of keeping his press *free*—if so, why is he out of humour, at being requested to publish pieces which may be serviceable to the great cause of liberty.—A free press is the glory of a free people—but when Printers have not spirit or stability sufficient to direct them, for the public good, in times of difficulty, they had better be suppressed. On the whole, I will venture to say, that the public in general were as well and as profitably entertained by the matter taken from the Pamphlets, as from the two Cincinnatuses, that he lately gave the public, at one meal.

*Providence, December 25, 1787.*

82-C. *One of the Pamphlet-Mongers*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 27 December*

To CID HAMET and Co. in the last *impartial* Providence Gazette.

AMAZING! a Pamphlet containing 400 Quarto Pages! Well said for a Turk or Mahometan. Surely, most sacred *Seignior*, you alluded to a Dictionary, or *Cooke* on Littleton! For know ye! a Pamphlet of 100 Pages, an American (ignorantly) would term a Volume; and to squeeze that Quantity into a LITTLE *News-Paper*, with *bad* Types, set Edgeways, would be unintelligible indeed. I therefore humbly conceive, if he wishes to be comprehended by a Majority of his Readers, the *Alcoran* or *Talmud* claim a Preference.

Wilson's Speech (No. 2)! well marked and numbered—the second since his Birth perhaps is meant—Mr. Wilson having favored the Public twice on the same Subject, previous to the last Mr. Carter *graciously* indulged a few of his Subscribers with. But query can this Grand Turk (in Miniature) deliver a better? I dare say No! Though between him and his Assistant (a *disappointed Patriot*) something might be brewed worth tasting.—Now to the *main* Spring of all his Actions,—would he (Cid Hamet) draw the Purse-Strings? Yes, without a Moment's Delay, and so close—Doctor Slop would be puzzled to untie them in a long Six Months—let the Voice of Charity or Generosity call *e'er* so loud.

Attend to this Caution, *Cid*.—Learn Manners, before you commence the Study of Arabic;—if the Desire of virtuous Applause ever stimulated your Bosom, act openly and above board, as a Man; and not like a *Jerry Sneak*, in Mask, endeavour to injure those who *yet* wish you well.

*Providence, December 26, 1787.*

82-D. J. Carter

*Providence Gazette, 29 December*

*The PRINTER to the PUBLIC.*

It is with reluctance and real pain that I obtrude on my readers any thing relative to myself; but the *illiberal* and *abusive* attack made on me, in the Chronicle of Thursday last, I hope will in some measure apologize for laying before the impartial public a just representation of *facts*.

On the 5th instant, a person who in the Chronicle subscribes himself "A *Pamphlet-Monger*" called at my office, and produced a pamphlet of 55 octavo pages in favour of the proposed new Constitution, requesting that the *whole contents* might be published in the Gazette. I acknowledge that I was struck with the impropriety of such a request, and observed that my paper for that week was full, which was actually the case—that I was at all times ready to comply with any *reasonable* expectation—that although I had freely and impartially published on both sides whatever had been presented, yet that the *Antifederalists* complained loudly that they were not indulged with a fair hearing, which complaints would increase, were the contents of large pamphlets admitted; and concluded by saying, that perhaps extracts of the most material parts might answer every purpose intended.—This was not said with any degree of warmth, or "*ill humour*," as the gentleman is pleased uncandidly to assert. Something of that kind was however very visible in the countenance of the *modest* applicant, and he replied, with a supercilious frown, that *my friends* were greatly surprized at observing some publications in my paper *against* the Constitution. I remarked, that they must likewise have observed at least as many *in favour of it*. He finally concluded that *extracts* from the pamphlet should be published.

On Friday the 7th instant, *late in the afternoon*, Mr. Wilson's lengthy speech was sent me by another person, accompanied by a note, requesting that it might appear in my paper of *next day*. As the Gazette was then nearly ready for press, to comply was impossible. Wishing however to oblige each of the gentlemen, I waited on the first, mentioned the circumstance of Mr. Wilson's speech arriving, and obtained his consent to defer the extracts one week, in order that they might appear in *two succeeding papers*, as I well knew they would prove far too lengthy for *one*. The speech was accordingly published December 15, the long extracts were began December 22, and this day's Gazette concludes them.

The "*Pamphlet-Monger*" not only gives a very *unfair* statement of this transaction, but is inconsistent with himself.—He says, to use his own words, "I was one of *three* persons that applied to Mr. Carter to publish *extracts*;" and a few lines below, "he" (Mr. Carter) "queried whether *extracts* would not answer my purpose." If application was really made to publish *extracts only*, such a "*query*" would have been as absurd as the gentleman's performance. The truth is, that *two* persons only applied; that the request was to publish the *whole contents* of the pamphlet, which would have filled the Gazette for at least three weeks; that I readily consented to publish *long extracts*, and to this moment have never *refused* copying *the whole pamphlet*.

The last week a lengthy performance was presented by an *Antifederalist*. I informed him that the Gazette would be full for at least two weeks, and that the piece he offered could not be immediately inserted consistent with previous engagements, having promised to publish some long extracts from a pamphlet. No person's name was mentioned, but it was certainly incumbent on me to assign a satisfactory reason for not complying with his request; yet this the "*Pamphlet-Monger*," with that disingenuity which pervades his doughty performance, is pleased to call "*betraying private and confidential discourse*." The gentleman remarked, that it was highly improper to fill a public paper, week after week, with the contents of pamphlets, especially at a time when two contending parties were impatient to be fully heard on a very interesting subject; and that he was willing to subscribe liberally towards printing an edition of the pamphlet. He afterwards enquired for the late western news-papers, from one of which he requested me to insert a *much shorter* piece than that he first presented. This was accordingly inserted in the Gazette of Saturday last, and was introduced by the following lines:

*To the EDITOR of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.*

"Mr. Wilson's Speech (No. 2) was originally printed at Philadelphia in a pamphlet; from which circumstance, with all due deference to the opinions of others, I humbly conceive it was *there* judged too lengthy for the limits of a news-paper, though you inserted it to gratify a number of your readers.—This week and next I find your paper is to be *crammed* with the contents of another pamphlet in favour of the proposed Constitution. Surely these *modest collectors of pamphlets* expect *too much* from a Printer, whose wish I am persuaded is to give all parties a fair hearing. If the new Constitution is fraught with so many blessings *for its advocates*, they certainly ought to have drawn their purse-strings, and had a few thousands of these pamphlets printed and dispersed, instead of crowding the papers with their voluminous contents.—From the acknowledged freedom and strict impartiality of your press, I am induced to request a republication of the following *short address*. Pray endeavour, this week or next, to *squeeze* it into your Gazette *edge-ways*, on a small type.—*A propos*, I have by me a *pamphlet* containing about 400 quarto pages. Should the *pamphlet-mongers* attempt any thing further in *their way*, what think you of republishing its contents in the Gazette? Six months only will be required to get through with it, and when finished, I have it in contemplation to send you the *Talmud* and *Alcoran*. The former is comprized in seven folio volumes, the latter not quite so bulky; and time will probably admit of giving a news-paper edition of the whole before the new Constitution is fully adopted.

CID HAMET."

After this just statement of plain facts, I leave the "*Pamphlet-Monger*" in full possession of all the *credit* acquired by his performance, and to the reflections of his own mind—informing him, that *Cid Hamet* has left his *real name* at my office, for the gratification of the *curious*; and that should he, on the *present*



occasion, think proper to embark in an author-hunting expedition, he will assuredly meet with success.—To every unprejudiced mind it will appear, that to *Cid Hamet* only should the “*Pamphlet-Monger*” have addressed himself, instead of ungenerously accusing a *Printer* with commencing *author*, and by this *new mode* of doing business lugging me unnecessarily into a disagreeable controversy.

Whatever may have been my private sentiments respecting public measures, I have never suffered them to interfere with what I conceive to be the indispensable duty of an impartial *Printer*; nor have I at any time suffered myself to become the *dupe* or *tool* of a party. My sentiments are well known in this and most of the other States, particularly on the subject of paper money (to which an allusion seems intended by another writer on this occasion) and the suggestions of my adversaries cannot fix a stain on my reputation. Although a *Fæderalist*, and perhaps zealous as the “*Pamphlet-Monger*” himself, yet my conduct as a *Printer* would certainly merit the severest reprehension, were I impertinently to attempt the preclusion of *free enquiry*. For this purpose was the Constitution sent to the several States. The cause of truth can never suffer from argument; indeed argument would of course cease, were the papers partially to hold up *one* side of a question only.—On the broad basis of an *uncontrouled* and *liberal* press, I found a humble claim to public patronage. On these principles I have hitherto had “*spirit*” and “*stability*” to conduct it, and I trust that the frowns of *disappointed ambition* will not swerve me from the path of rectitude.

*Providence, Dec. 29, 1787.*

82-E. *A Disappointed Patriot*

*Providence Gazette, 29 December*

FOR THE PROVIDENCE GAZETTE

To all PETER-PARAGRAPHS, SQUIB-THROWERS, “PAMPHLET-MONGERS,” and others whom it may concern.

KNOW YE, That my pen hath not been dipt in the cause of the new Constitution—nor hath any production on that subject, originally written in this State, or imported from abroad, made its appearance in any of the news-papers at my special instance and request.

“A DISAPPOINTED PATRIOT.”

*Providence, December 28, 1787.*

82-F. *Providence Gazette, 29 December*

\*\* Two Pieces are unavoidably omitted this Week, one in Favour of, the other against the new Constitution.<sup>1</sup> The *Printer* assures the Gentlemen who sent them, that it was impossible even to “squeeze” them in “*Edgeways*.”—They shall appear in the next *Gazette*.

1. A reference to the *Federalist* essay “A Landholder” IV (CC:335) and the *Antifederalist* essay “Philadelphiensis” V (CC:356) which appeared in the 5 January 1788 issue.

82-G. *A Pamphlet-Monger*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 3 January 1788*

To the EDITOR of the United States Chronicle.

SIR,

*By publishing the following, you will much oblige one of your Customers.*

The public have seen Mr. Carter's defence, and can judge whether he has exculpated himself from the charge brought against him in your last.—He certainly entertains a high opinion of *Cid Hamet*, otherwise he would not have obtruded a second publication of it on the public, in his defence:—By the way, his great fondness for it, is a shrewd sign that he is the true and real father of it.

I shall just inform the public, that immediately after the appearance of *Cid Hamet (first edition)* I waited on Mr. Carter, and let him know the opinion I entertained of his conduct towards me—and then told him, I was very sure that he was the author:—He confessed that *Cid Hamet was wrote in his house*, but not by himself.—In reply I told him, that if he had not approved the piece he would not have published it; that in any other case he would not have mal-treated three of his old friends, for the sake of obliging any one man, if he had not at the same time a wish and desire to gratify some private pique or spleen thereby.

Mr. Carter's conduct in this whole transaction is strange and unaccountable, as it could not be for his interest or reputation, to treat any of his customers in this manner; if he will suffer cool reason and reflection to assume their wonted places in his breast, he certainly must confess, that he has transgressed those rules of decorum, which every good member of the community will allow are necessary to be observed and kept up, for the good both of the public and individuals.

*Providence, January 2, 1788.*

82-H. *A Country Customer*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 3 January*

MR. WHEELER, On seeing in Mr. Carter's lengthy Performance in his last Paper, a Paragraph, asserting he had never been the *Dupe* or *Tool* of a Party,—it brought to my Mind a Story of a Man who had murdered another—and meeting a Person in the Street the next Morning, accosted him,—“Sir, a Man was murdered last Night, but I *did not* do it, nor I *never* murdered a Man in my Life.”—I should think (replied the Person addressed) it would be Time enough to endeavour to clear yourself when you are charged.—“But,” replies the guilty Person, “I thought you *looked* as if you suspected me.”—In Order to get back a few of the Customers this *Knight of the Types* has lost, by his evident *Partiality*, he would now, in Reply to a Piece in which he is not charged, endeavour to make People believe he had never been a *Dupe* or *Tool*—but the Gentlemen whom he has lately ill-treated, could, I am confident, if they thought proper, prove to the World he has been the *Tool* of a Party.—*Don't quarrel with your Bread and Butter, CID.*

*January 2, 1788.*

## 82-I. Thorn

*Providence United States Chronicle, 3 January*

Mr. WHEELER, I cannot conceal my Joy on finding, in a Piece published in the last Gazette, signed "A disappointed Patriot" a Declaration, that he has "not dipt his PEN in the Cause of the new Constitution." One Thing more I could wish the Gentleman would add, that is, that he *will not* dip his Pen in said Cause. I freely confess I have hitherto been in the most painful Anxiety lest that *surprising Pen* should have been dipt, and dipt on the *wrong Side*—which, considering the natural Propensity of the Gentleman, was a reasonable Fear. I do not agree with many People, who suppose the Variety of Matter which comes from this Quarter proceeds from the Gentleman's *Head*—for my Part I am convinced, that his *Genius* lies wholly in his *Back*, and that the genuine *Spirit* and *Effluvia* of his Productions reside in this astonishing PEN—A sharp and bitter Instrument it has been, I acknowledge, but I believe something blunted in a late *Collegiate* Dispute.

Under a Conviction of its amazing Powers, I entreat that some of the Gentleman's Friends do wait on him, to induce him not to dip this Pen in the present Dispute,—but to let it remain "*in statu quo*" till it may be employed in more harmless Exertions.

## 82-J. Upland Thorn

*Providence United States Chronicle, 10 January*

For the CHRONICLE.

To Cozy-Ground THORN, Esquire.

Although a Brother Thorn, I have been careful never to lay a Briar in your Way—for I kept in Mind the old Proverb, that *in contending with a Chimney-Sweep one is sure, in all Events, to get dirty*. You have therefore attempted to prick your Thorns into my Flesh *without Cause*, and must be considered in the Eye of the Law, according to the Opinion of a great Lawyer of Old, as *the Messenger of Satan*. Whether you are immediately employed by him, or by his *Viceregent* in this State, might be more doubtful, did not your Genius lead you naturally to *Subserviency*.—No Cause so dirty but you are ready to plunge into it, and buffet it through—If you can but hold your Nose out of the Mud, and see your Masters on the other Side, you dash on, and feel as much in your Element as the Bristol Geese in a Horse-Pond, and when you arrive on the other Side you stroke off the Mud, and swear there never was a cleaner Cause.

Suffer a Word of Advice—While you have two Shirts to your Back attempt not to carry a Point by *sheer Lying*—It is better to loose a little Business than all one's Honour,—and the less one has of the latter the more need of guarding it.—Whenever you shew yourself in public appear in *clean Linen* if you *borrow it*.—The World is wide enough for all its Inhabitants.—You cannot have spend so much Time at Billiard-Tables, and *other Amusements*, without having contemplated the Doctrine of Action and Re-action—the sharper one Thorn pricks the more Occasion for another.—Two Thorns, therefore, if they do not spend too much Time in pricking one another, as naturally play into one another's Hands

as two Pickpockets—so far ought one to be from a Spirit of Rivalship against the other. You are already eminent, I can only hope to become so in Time—*Nam nemo repente ffuJit turpissimus.*

The Advice with which I shall conclude may sound harsh, but I hope the Spirit of it will sink into your Soul, if you have any.—“*Cease, Viper, you know a File.*”

P. S. You may expect to hear from me again, when Leisure permits.

82-K. *Providence United States Chronicle, 10 January*

☞ We have received two Pieces against Mr. Carter, and one against his Opponents, on the Subject of his Dispute with some Gentlemen of this Town;—but as we have ever avoided (where it could possibly be done) *personal* Attacks, we have omitted them this Week, earnestly requesting the Authors to withdraw their Pieces; more especially as a Number of our Customers have expressed their Determination to drop *both* Papers, unless Publications of this Kind are excluded. We make this Request with the more Confidence as it is certain these Pieces were not penned by either of the Parties originally concerned.—If, however, the Writers after this insist upon their Pieces appearing, we will sacrifice our own Interest, as we ever have done where it has come in Competition with *the most perfect Freedom of the Press.*

82-L. *Providence Gazette, 12 January*

☞ The Printer acknowledges the Receipt of three Pieces, signed *Hampden, Timothy Trimsharp,* and *One of the insulted “Yeomanry of New-England,”*—all on the Subject of a late *Coup de Maine* against the Freedom of his Press.—As the Printer is *personally* concerned (having been unfairly *lugged* as it were by Head and Shoulders into a Controversy) he declines at present publishing the above mentioned Pieces, especially as, from Appearances, the adverse Combatants seem inclined to retreat from the Field. He cannot however but return his Thanks to these Correspondents, for the Disposition they have manifested to protect and defend the Freedom of his Press.

*As a Citizen,* he professes to be a *Federalist*; but *as a Printer,* neither *federal* nor *antifederal.*—On all congressional Measures heretofore proposed—on the Subject of Paper Money—on the Subject of the proposed new Constitution, and other interesting political Questions, he has *faithfully* and *impartially* handed to the Public every Performance, *pro* and *con,* that has been committed to him; and persevering in this Line of Rectitude, and discharging what he conceives to be the indispensable Duty of *an impartial Printer,* he shall ever with great Chearfulness submit his Conduct to the Judgment of the Public, and by the Decision of that respectable and revered Tribunal stand acquitted or condemned.

82-M. *A Customer**Providence United States Chronicle, 17 January*

Mr. WHEELER, When News-Papers become the vehicles of scurrility and personal invective, instead of public useful information, it is much to be regretted; publications of this stamp answer no valuable purpose either to society or individuals; they tend only to gratify him whose unhappy genius delights in attempting to detract from the reputation of his fellow men, and in exciting feuds and quarrels in society. Under the impression of these sentiments I cannot prevail on myself to descend and enter the field of scurrilous contention with your correspondent, *Upland Thorn*; it has become necessary, however, that the Public should know that Mr. Upland Thorn has mistaken his object—that the person said to be alluded to never wrote the piece signed *Thorn*, or any other publication whatever, which in the most remote degree referred to the person said to be the writer under that signature. The author, when he presented his scurrilous performance for publication, was assured by the Printer, upon his honour, that the person against whom he declared his muck to be directed, was not the author of the piece signed *Thorn*;—therefore, his low, dirty squib must be imputed solely to the writer's propensity for scurrilous performances, or some other motive more dishonorable, and not to any principle of self-defence or retaliation. I do not mean by these observations to censure your correspondent for indulging his genius on this occasion; for who can fault a Jack-Ass for kicking, when he considers it is the nature of the beast so to do.—My only object is to caution the Printers against keeping their presses open to private slander and low invective.

82-N. *Providence United States Chronicle, 17 January*

Mr. WHEELER, *Although you may think the following Strictures bear hard on your Fraternity, as well as some of your Correspondents, I must insist on their Publication, when no previous Engagements interfere.*

A CUSTOMER.

## TO THE PUBLIC.

The treatment we have met with of late from individuals, in the news-papers, while we are deliberating on a matter of the greatest importance that was ever before us, has caused me to take up an instrument, to which I am almost as unaccustomed as to the sword, but not so averse.—On the great question now before the public, I have made it a point to read all that is wrote in the news-papers, for and against the proposed Constitution; whereby I have been obliged with pain to read so many personal invectives as have excited in me a very serious thought from whence they originate—whether from the depravity of the human mind in general, the Printers in particular, or the want of a proper officer of government to superintend the presses; (from the last of which may we be kept, although our papers of late have seemed to need it.) It is evident, however, that but very few who have essayed to reason on the propriety or impropriety of the proposed plan of government, but more or less have sent out to the public a proportion of filth, that ought to be cast into the crater of some volcano before

they took up the pen: For every man of tolerable capacity (let alone your Solomons for wisdom) knows, that soft words turn away wrath;—for when those personal invectives are thrown in with arguments that are well founded, it gives a sting somewhere—and he that is stung must pay with compound interest, until (as we have lately experienced) the great question is lost, and our news-papers fraught with personal squibs, by pens dipt in gall.—This, my countrymen, is our bill of fare at present; for the truth of which the papers justify me. How do you like it, my friends?—Is it not too sour?—Must we always carry our liberties to licentiousness?—Is the liberty of the press to be thus prostituted by pretended federalists and anti-federalists? pretending to treat on public measures, when above half their writings are personal, or (Milton-like) airy phantoms of happiness or misery to be derived from the proposed plan of government. What matter is it to the public who argues for or against the proposed plan, if it be done with modesty?—This must be the means of preparing our minds to receive or reject it; but it is absurd and ridiculous to supply the place of argument on a great national question, with personal invectives. The Printers I know are in a delicate station, as every author is fond of his own performance, which is not to be wondered at, whereby they are often embarrassed when applied to for publications; for which reasons a Printer may not be faulty, although some pieces may be puerile; but publishing private squibs in a public paper is an insult on the majesty of the public, and ought to be borne testimony against by every good citizen.

82-O. *Nemo me impune lacesset*  
*Providence Gazette, 19 January*

The late news-paper *fracas* seems to resemble a play among children, called *cross-questions and silly answers*. The papers themselves demonstrate that a certain person, very decently and politely called “*a kicking jack-ass*” in the last Chronicle, by a person who says he will NOT *descend to the field of scurrilous contention*,” was and continued to remain in *the peace of the Governor and Company*, till an inhuman and most *unsavoury attack* was made on him *vi et armis*, by some disguised and unprovoked *assassin*, under the signature of *Thorn*. It seems *my Lord Fribble*, for so I shall stile Mr. *Thorn*, greatly irritated by a writer under the signature of *Cid Hamet*, and fearing a woful eclipse and obnubilation of his power and glory, in the paroxysm of his rage, shot his deadly arrow at a *wrong mark*.—The devoted victim, fearing no harm from that quarter (as well knowing that the aforesaid assailant was secure on other accounts, besides his total incapacity to write) in retaliating, made a similar *faux pas* it is suggested. In apology therefor, it ought to be observed, that even the most quiet and *stupid animals* make some effort to resist atrocious violence; and if a kick aimed at *a hog*, has hit a dove, a duck, or *a goose*, it is only to be regretted that the goose should have *squawked* aforetime, in such a *doubtful tone* as to have rendered her friendship *suspicious*—and by her *offensive hissing* deserved a *moderate chastisement*.

It is remarked by Æsop, that before lying came into use among the animals, the lion, who ruled them, seldom misplaced his punishments; but after that

practice was adopted, he held it good law, that after the *goose* had lied for *the jack-daw*, the *jack-daw* was not to be credited as a witness for *the goose*.

P.S. The aforesaid *jack-ass calling* writer seems for the first time in his life offended at "*muck*," as he calls it; it must therefore be concluded that his *olfactory nerves* have lately been rectified and sublimed, and it is hoped that the work has been done in a manner effectual to secure him against *a relapse*.

82-P. *Original Thorn*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 24 January*

To Ci——D H——amet, Esq; alias "Disappointed Patriot,"  
alias "Upland Thorn."

*Male si palpere, recalcitrat undique tutus.* Hor[ace].

Touch him and he'll kick, being armed on all Sides.

SIR, Surrounded by the Cares of other Men; and wholly involved in Attentions that permit no Relaxation, I had not Time to answer your polite Billet in the Chronicle of the 10th Instant.—I now assure you, Sir, that the Gentleman you alluded to in your "Muck," was not only not the Author of the Piece signed "Thorn"—but that he has never *spoken* to the real Author, and indeed scarcely knows his Face.

Having settled this Affair, I must next confess my Surprize at your Powers of Ribaldry—A Squib appeared in the Gazette, signed "A disappointed Patriot."—in the following Chronicle I noticed it tenderly, under the Name of "Thorn," though then doubtful whether I pointed right; but to my Wonder the next Chronicle ushered to the Light, in all the Pride of Billingsgate, the "Upland Thorn."—This Piece bore too strong Impressions of you, Sir, to be mistaken—and I found that, like Ithuriel in Milton, I touched a *Toad*, and up started the DEVIL.

There are many People, Sir, who suppose, that *you* wrote and published the Genealogy of your Family printed in the Gazette, but I think not so.—I cannot believe you would advance a Claim to a Principality distant and uncertain, while there is a Dominion that lies under your Eye, to which you have been elected by the unanimous Suffrages of your Fellow-Citizens—I mean, Sir, the supreme Dominion and Command in the Regions of *Dirt and Blackguard*.

Since I have totally cleared the Gentleman you pointed at, it may seem proper to give some Account of *myself*—but this I shall defer for the present. In the mean Time I am under no Apprehension from your *Intrigue*; for be assured I am—*Procul à Jove, Procul à fulmine*—there's Latin for you old Boy.

82-Q. *Satietas*

*Providence Gazette, 26 January*

A Curious meteorological observer remarks, in a late communication laid before the *Grubstreet Society*, that on every Thursday, for several weeks past, about the middle of the day, a rare phænomenon has appeared in the air over Westminster-street—it rises to appearance at first like a little cloud—it condenses, dilates, thickens, darkens, rises, spreads, and *stinks*. On chymical analysis,



its elementary parts are found to be fuliginous, nitro-acid, bituminous and sulphureous exhalations, from *the periodical opening and emptying of the* CHRONICLE.

On entering the town on the West, late in the afternoon, a day or two ago, that sense which has its principal seat in the middle of my face soon informed me that it was Thursday; but to account for the *extraordinary odoriferousness* of the day I was at a loss; and being thereby alarmed in no small degree, I called on Mr. —, *the operator in this novel charm*—he informed me, “*upon his honour*” (which cannot with propriety be called swearing *by any thing*) that the *ordure* of the day was not by —, Esquire. Another person came up, and asked him if it was by — —? He replied no. A third came up, and asked him if it was by — —? He replied no; and in like manner he was interrogated by nineteen of us; and after he had cleared nineteen authors *on his honour*, he took nineteen pieces from us, and promised to publish them, all against the persons by him cleared—and finally gave us to understand, what we already knew by an argument called *induction* (which we found a sure key to unlock the secrets of his occupation) that the *stercoration of the day* was by my Lord Fribble—a *la mode de Philadelphie*—whereupon we put handkerchiefs to our noses, and spurs to our horses, and never took breath again till we had got over the great bridge.

#### 82-R. *The Operator*

*Providence United States Chronicle, 31 January*

TO SATIETAS, *alias* Cid Hamet, *alias* Disappointed Patriot, *alias* Upland Thorn, *alias* Impartiality, *alias* Nemo me impune lacesset, &c. &c.

“What I once said of SILAS DEANE, I now say of you—*You have risen like a Rocket, and you’ll fall like the Stick.*”—Common Sense to a certain *would-be* popular Character.

SIR, Had you kept the above *Prophecy* in your Mind, and conducted yourself with Prudence, perhaps you would not now have had to bewail *its Fulfilment*—But that *Itch for Popularity* which has been the Cause of *your* Downfal, has ruined many a better Man than yourself, and it is probable you may not be *its* last Victim.

You would not have heard from me in this Way, had you not abused the Truth in your last Performance, under the Signature of *Satietas*.—Your *Filth* I despise—but your *Attempt* to injure my Reputation deserves Notice—and I have no Doubt it will redound as much to your *Honour* as a similar One you made sometime since on the Rev. President [James] Manning.

When you presented your Piece against Mr. B. under the Signature of *Upland Thorn*, I told you he was not the Author of *Thorn*—I never cleared any other Person—nor was any other Person mentioned—nor did I, as you *basely* and *falsely* assert, “*give you to understand,*” that *that* Piece was written by a Gentleman from Philadelphia, who you politely call Lord Fribble. Your Insinuation concerning a “Key to unlock the Secrets of my Occupation” is equally *base* and *false*.

“Suffer a Word of Advice.”—As you have undertaken to study Law—attend to your Books, and “*let Politics alone, till you see which Side is the strongest.*”<sup>(a)</sup> Your



rapid Fall, indeed, if you would make a *right* Improvement of it, might teach you never to meddle again in the political Way—but *this* cannot be expected.

The Transition from a Member of the Honorable Congress to a *petty-fogging* Attorney, it is true is great, and no Doubt mortifies you—but when we *deserve* Punishment it is magnanimous to bear it like a Man, and not like an ill-natured Cur *yelp* at every Person that comes near one.

(a) I beg your Pardon, if I have not quoted your Words accurately.

82-S. D. Howell

*Providence Gazette, 2 February*

I do hereby certify, that I did not write, or cause to be written, nor directly or indirectly request the publication of the piece under the signature of *Cid Hamet*, which appeared in the Gazette on the 22d of December last—nor did I see or hear of said piece before I saw it in print.

I have thought proper to make this declaration relative to the aforesaid piece, so directly charged on me, and on account whereof a news-paper war has been levied and carried on against me: At the same time *protesting* against being under the necessity, *in future*, of making a *similar* declaration, in case of a like *groundless* charge—many of which have been *heretofore* made.

82-T. Satietas

*Providence Gazette, 2 February*

FOR the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.  
TO the EDITOR of the CHRONICLE.

SIR, I must applaud the spirit and vigour of your attack, as Cuffee said of the wasp—“*see de curridge of de little ting!*” while the main strength you employ imports self-conviction that *your wit wants edge*.

As the Printer of a public paper, you may seem however entitled to some reply, at least relative to what concerns *your occupation*—for you must excuse me in not considering you either as *a writer* or *a politician*.

Had you confined yourself to the *duties of a Printer*, you had escaped my censure. I blame you for *blabbing* to Mr. B. *the private confidential conversation* that passed betwixt us in your office, at the very instant you assured me of *the most scrupulous secrecy*: And as you thereby furnished him with a weapon against me, I could view it in no other light than as *a reprehensible breach of faith* on your part, and *a side-taking against me*.

As you consented to insert U. T. I had good right to consider either that your suggestion in the first instance was *merely evasive*, or that your indiscretion in giving it a place, under such circumstances, was *unaccountable*. You are mistaken in saying, “*nor was any other person mentioned;*” for I well remember, that after you had cleared Mr. B. I replied—“*Mr. F. has been named to me; but as he has every reason to be my friend, I cannot charge him with such rashness,*” or to that effect—

whereupon you did not clear *him*, but turned round, and remarked that "*Mr. F. was very angry at Cid Hamet.*"

It is truly laughable for you to pretend that any secrecy can remain in your office, when it is your practice to clear every person but the right one, as soon as he is charged by a piece in answer. What is it but saying—*If you guess right, you shall have all five* ——! However, as you are a young man, I spare you on this head, in hopes that experience may supply the deficiencies of nature.

I charge you furthermore with a breach of your particular engagement, made with me some months ago, in publishing that *infamous invective*, THORN, without giving me notice, and an opportunity to reply in the same paper—and with degrading your paper, and offending *the public ear*, by cramming it week after week with abuse unmeritedly aimed at me—as if I was the only *Atlas* who had set my shoulders against the new Constitution, and *your promotion under it*<sup>(a)</sup>; whereas I have written nothing about it.

I charge you, lastly, with continuing your violence against me, by admitting into your Chronicle, of the 24th ult. another piece written in the same style, and by the polite author of the *Original Thorn*, aimed at me as the writer of *Cid Hamet*; notwithstanding I had before that time positively assured both yourself and that writer, in private conversation, that I was not the author of *Cid Hamet*.

You seem at a loss for language to paint my *woful and marvellous downfall—as a public man*: A downfall predicted, it seems, long since, by a raven of *croaking memory, in the bitterness of his disappointment*.<sup>(b)</sup>—Ominous presage!—Sad fulfilment!—Equalled only by the *Ides of March—the death of Caesar—or the destruction of Jerusalem!*—Peaceful rest the ashes of my political existence, and let it be inscribed on the tombstone—*Here lies the remembrance of ONE who never enjoyed, or asked for, a lucrative place—and who wished not to survive the liberties of his country.*

You seem apprehensive, Sir, that I am in danger of falling "*still lower*" than my present situation; in this I presume you are mistaken.—To be reduced to the necessity of taking up the "*pettyfogging*" business—of bringing actions for *Sole-Leather*, and thereby provoking the choler of *a little angry Exciseman*, and thus entering into a news-paper quarrel with *him*, in types *trusted to his own care*, I think the most mortifying situation in which the power of fortune can place me.

P. S. When you liken your dispute with me to that of Doctor Manning (which by the way was settled much to my mind) methinks I see you stand a-tiptoe, and stretch to swell your belly to *a reverend protuberance*; like *the cock-sparrow* in the fable, that laboured to rival the dimensions of *the ox*—but unfortunately *burst*.

(a) Should you obtain *a place* under the new Constitution, it is to be hoped that your salary will not be paid in *paper money*, lest you *resign, quit the party*, and *wheel* about; for your paper money friends have found out that you are *a wheeler*.

(b) After the Impost scheme was defeated, T. P. had a grant of 3000 dollars in specie for his *prophecies*, and returned to England, for want of an office here.

82-U. *Nicholas Brown et al. to Bennett Wheeler*  
*Providence, 4 February*<sup>1</sup>

We your customer[s] take this method to Acquaint You, with our Disapprobation of the personal invectives with which the news papers printed in this Town at Present Abounds—

Therefore least [i.e., lest] some future day, we the subscribers may be reflected on as contributing to the Publications of Such pieces as of late has Appeard so in this Friendly Manner Inform you that Such personal invectives must be Discontinued for the future or you Must Discontinue the sending us your papers—  
 Jos. Nightingle

Wm. Peck—

Archd. Stuart

~~Gersham Jones~~

~~Nathl [-----]~~

Isaac Greenwood

Lewis Peck

Saml. Aborn

John Mathewson

Amos Atwell

Elijah Bacon

Henry Bacon

Nicho Sheldon

Thos. Perry

James Hammond

Nathan Arnold

Jere. Arnold

Wm. Waterman

Benja. Glading

Abiel Smith—

Zephah. Andre[w]s

Nichos. Brown

Hopestill Mc.Kneal

Ebenr. Thompson

Ricd. Jackson

James Burrell

Saml. Davenport

John I Clark

Wm. Russell

Ambrose Page

Robert Newell

Jos. Comstock

Nichos Easton  
Wm. Holroyd  
John Mason  
Jacob Whitman

1. MS, Brown Papers, RPJCB. Endorsed: "Copy of what Wrote to The Printers Agt. There Publishing Personal Reflections 1788—"

82-V. *Providence Gazette*, 9 February

☞ The late disagreeable News Paper Disputes, which commenced by a violent Attack on the Liberty of the Press, have been *altogether unavoidable* on the Part of the Editor of this Gazette.—Six of the Gentlemen who signed a Paper addressed to him have since called and erased their Names.—However respectable the Characters whose Names remain on said Paper, and however much the Editor would on any other Occasion revere their Opinion, he can never submit to the humiliating Condition of publishing a Paper under the Influence of what might perhaps be termed *Instructions* or *Directions*.—For more than twenty Years has he published the Gazette, to general Acceptance.—It has ever been *perfectly free*, and must so remain, or cease to exist.—The Gazette will be discontinued to those Gentlemen, unless contrary Orders should be received.

### 83. *Newport Herald*, 13 December 1787<sup>1</sup>

It is reported that a celebrated Universalist, upon being informed that the Hon. Superior Court while sitting as a *Court of Equity*, had received tenders in depreciated paper at par to discharge bona-fide specie mortgages, renounced his favorite principles of Universal Salvation, and now firmly believes in the future punishment of the wicked.—Where then is the hope of the *unjust* and the *fraudulent*?

1. Reprinted: Hartford *American Mercury*, 24 December.

### 84. Abraham Baldwin to Enos Hitchcock New Haven, 27 December 1787<sup>1</sup>

Before I left New York I received your letter on the subject of bounty land and should have written you before, but was not satisfied on the point. General Knox has given out the list of persons entitled agreeably to the original resolution of congress. I have examined and have not yet been able to find any thing to oblige him to add our names to the list. I have consulted brother Barton, who is not apt to neglect his rights, he says there is no chance. To obtain any new regulations for past services would be a very unpromising attempt. Should any thing occur to you by which to establish our claim, or should I be able to find any thing I will make the most of it, but I believe the point is against us. I was much pleased with the address to the Cincinnati as I always was with the sentiments of my friend Nash. When I shall return you such a compliment I know not. Praum's fine speeches of late all go off in fume.

The virtuous few of your state, you see, are become the toast, poor folks they richly deserve it; and when the number of the virtuous increases as we are taught to expect in proportion to their trials, I hope will be their reward.

Please to present my compliments to Mrs Hitchcock and believe me with great respect Dear sir your friend and humble Servt

1. RC, Miscellaneous Manuscripts, 1786–1789, Enos Hitchcock Papers, RHi.

### 85. *New York Journal*, 27 December 1787<sup>1</sup>

A gentleman was expressing his wonder, why Rhode-Island did not take up the new constitution for consideration, to which a wag replied, “What the devil business have they with it, since only TWELVE guns were fired at Philadelphia upon its adoption by that state.”

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 2 January 1788; *Salem Mercury*, 8 January.

### 86. *The Printer’s Boy: New Year’s Verse* Newport, pre-1 January 1788

A Happy New Year.  
The Year’s revolv’d;—the Printer’s Boy,  
On this occasion wishes joy,  
To all to whom the *News* he bears,  
May ye have many happy Years! ! !

May that blest hand which *Israel* fed,  
Give to us all our daily bread!—  
May honest tradesmen bus’ness find,  
And to the poor the rich be kind!—  
May liberty forever bless,  
Her greatest guard, the Printing Press!  
May Customers, by punctual pay,  
Make smooth, and glad the Herald’s way,  
And I *poor Boy*, among the rest,  
Receive your favours, and be blest!

May States aside lay all contentions,  
And members chuse for State Conventions;—  
And all the noble plan approve,  
Which WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN love!  
Then Shaysites cannot raise a storm,  
Nor civil broils our States deform.  
No more will widows, orphans mourn,  
Their property unjustly torn  
By debtors vile, rapacious claws,

Under, Oh shame! the show of laws.  
 No more our States a mutual pest,  
 Of foreigners will be the jest.  
*Britain* no longer hold our posts;—  
 Imperious drive us from our coasts;  
 But opening to us every port,  
 Will then our trade and friendship court.  
 All nations then will us embrace,  
 Commerce assume a brighter face,  
 Trade, arts, and agriculture hand in hand  
 Proceed, and scatter plenty o'er the land.  
 These Federal States with growing honours rise  
 'Till rolling suns shall cease to light the skies.

### 87. Little Compton Town Meeting, 1 January 1788<sup>1</sup>

To Cpt George Simmons & Nathaniel Searle Esq Deputies for the Town of Little Compton: We ye Inhabitants of the Town of Little Compton Being Lawfully Assembled in Publick Town Meeting This first Day of January 1788 for the Purpose of Taking into Consideration The Proceedings of the Late Honorable The Continental Convention & Being Deeply Impressed With a Sence of The Extreeme Need We stand in of a Well Organized Energetic National Government and Viewing the New Federal Constitution as a Plan of Government Well Adapted to the Present Critical Situation of our National Affairs We Do therefore Injoy it upon you Gentlemen as our Positive Instructions that you & Each of you Do use your utmost Endeavours at the Next Sessions of the General Assembly of this State to have an Act Passd Recommending it to the Several Towns in this State to Chuse Delegates to Meet in a State Convention as Soon as May Be for the Purpose of Adopting or Rejecting The New Federal Constitution Agreeable to the Requisition [i.e., Resolution] of the Late Honorable The Continental Convention: And these our Positive Instructions Gentlemen you Must Not faile to Execute on Paine of Incurring our Highest Displeasure—  
 Submitted By your humble Servt

David Hilliard	}	Committee
Peris Richmond		
John Davis		

1. MS, Town Records, 1759–1855, Vol. 2, Town Hall, Little Compton, R.I.

### 88. Massachusetts Gazette, 1 January 1788

MR. ALLEN,

*Please to publish the following card in your next paper, and  
 you'll much oblige one of your constant readers.*

A CARD.

An American *fox* presents his compliments to the little *ram* of Rhode-Island, and acquaints him, that he is much surprized to find him still butting and pushing northward, westward, and southward against powers vastly superiour to his own. Therefore advises him to discontinue his opposition immediately, and not vainly dote upon his own independence, lest the he goat, moved with choler at such arrogance, runs suddenly against him, in the fury of his power, and break his little horns in pieces, thereby depriving him of his political existence.

### 89. Newport Herald, 3 January 1788

(To convince the public in general, and our new correspondent in particular, that the Newport Herald is open to all parties is the only inducement the Printer has for publishing the following—and in doing which he has paid particular attention to the copy.)

*Mr Printer Please to give the following a Place in your Paper*

Sr.[.] The first of my thoughts this Morning, was the Proceedings of Continental Convention. Let the Day Perish, wherein their Proceedings was drawn up, and the night wherein it was said it is finished, Let that day be Darkness, Let it not be regarded amongst the Sons of Liberty; neither let any rejoicing be therein; Let Shame Stain it, and horror terrify it. As for that night, let no joyful noise be therein, Only the Croaking of Frogs, and Screaming of Owls be heard: Let not that day, be joined to the Years of Independency; not that night numbre'd in the Months, Let them Curse it that Curse the Proceeding of the Convention, and are ready to Rise in Arms against it, Why was not the Court House Doors at Philadelphia Shut? that the Delegates Should not enter? Then their Proceeding would not have terrified our Ears, nor troubled our Minds. Why died not the Delegates in their Own Towns, or Why did not they give up the Ghost in their Own States? Before Tyranny had Tempted them or the Devil Corrupted them? Then they would have Lien Still and Been at Quiet. They would Slept, and Been at Rest, With, Kings & Councillors of the Earth Who Built Cities of Freedom: or with Princes who gave Liberty to their Subjects. Or that as an Untimely Birth they had never Been. Or as Infants who never Saw Light. The Thing that the Sons of Liberty greatly feared The conventioners are trying to Bring upon them. & that which they were affraid of, is Come nigh to them, O ye Delegates who hath Bewitched you? That you would not Serve the Cause of Liberty, Which before your Eyes hath been Evidently Set forth in all its Beauties. This Only would I Learn of you, was not you Chosen by the Sons of Freedom & appointed by the Sons of Liberty. and have you not Suffered many things in the Cause of Liberty. Why then have you forsaken it, You now appear to the Sons of Freedom to be Politically Dead, & to the Sons of Liberty to be Temporally Damn'd. You say in the Preface of your Proceeding. that you are forming a More Perfect Union; to Secure the Blessings of Liberty. And in a few Lines After you Direct that the Officers, Shall fix their Own Fees According to their Own Avarice. What mean you thus to eat up those men Who appointed you. Was not tyranny at your right Hand and Oppression Looking over your Shoulders as a Dictator.

Let not this be told in Nova Scotia, nor Published in the Streets of Hallifax, Lest the Daughters of Tyranny rejoice, and the Daughters of Oppression Triumph. O ye Washington and Franklin, Ye that Once was as Swift as Wild Geese, & as Fierce as Weesels in the Cause of Liberty, What Wicked Demon Bewitched you. that you Should forsake her. If you Wanted Corn, the Sons of Liberty would have filled your Barns. If you Wanted Wine, they Would have fill'd your Cellars. If you Wanted Offices, they would have Heap'd them On you, If you wanted Money, they Would have Shovelled that into your Pockets, as fast as the General Assemblies or the Congress does Shovel it out of their several Treasurys. If you was Enemies to Freedom, She would have Guarded against you. But ye have put forth your Proceeding against them that would have Been at peace with you, You are Striving to brake the Covenant, even the Covenant of Confederation. You was Guides and Companions in the Cause of Liberty, But you are now Bowing down your Heads to Serve Tyranny & Oppression. Your Expressions in your Proceeding, is as Soft as Butter, and as Smooth as Oyl: Yet, are they like Drawn Swords pointed at the very Vitals of Liberty, Alas Two Mighty men are at this Time fallen in America. I say fallen it the Esteem of every Lover of Freedom their feet was not put into Stocks nor their Hands Bound with Cords. But as Abner Died, so Died, Washington, and Franklin, not by Violence, But by Cunning Craft. If a man takes away his Neighbours Liberty for the Sake of Gain. Vengance Ought to be taken Seven fold, But when a Number of men, that is intrusted With the Prevediges & Liberties of their Country. Wantonly Squandered it away, than Vengance ought to be Seventy and Seven fold Tho' the Delegates Departed from Liberty and was Driven with Tyranny and did eat Oppression & Corruption till their Hearts was Hardned against Liberty. Yet I hope when they Look up toward Liberty. They may have Humane Hearts & reason Given them again, That they may Praise Honour and Extol the Beauty of Liberty, Which is the Greatest Temporal Blessing, that mankind Can enjoy, in this Life

#### 90. Providence Gazette, 12 January 1788

##### A SCRAP.

*Hale's history of the Common-Law. Runnington's edition, page 201.*

“Edward was not only desirous of having the laws of Wales reviewed, but of having them compared, and if possible rendered consonant with those of England; and to accomplish so noble a regulation, he directed proper enquiries to be made before certain Commissioners, over whom the Bishop of St. Davids was appointed to preside. The certificates of the returns of these Commissioners are printed in the appendix to the laws of *Hoel, Dha*, or the good, the Legislator of the Britons, and contain many curious particulars.”

Page 300. “There is a passage in Clerk's preface to the laws of *Howel, Dha*, which, at the same time that it shews that this mode of trial was in use among the Welsh, accounts in some measure for the unanimity of the Petit Jury, which is not required from the Grand Jury.”



*James Howell's familiar letters, vol. 4, page 474, letter 30th, to Howell Guyn, Esquire.*

*Extract.*—"And now that I am upon British observations, I will tell you something of this name *Howell*, which is your first and my second name; passing lately by the cloysters of the abbey at Westminster, I stepped up to the library that Archbishop Williams erected there; and lighted upon a French author, *Bertrane a Argentre*, Lord of Forges, who was President of the Court of Parliament in *Renes*, the chief town in Little-Britany, in France, called *Armorica*, which is a pure Welsh word, and signifies a country bordering upon the sea; as that doth, and was first colonized by the Britons of this island, in the reign of Theodosius the Emperor, *Anno*. 387, which language they yet preserve in their radical words: In that historian I found that there were four Kings of that country of the name *Howell*, viz. *Howell* the First, *Howell* the Second, *Howell* the Great (who bore up so stoutly against Ætius, the famous Roman General) and *Howell* the Fourth, that were all Kings of *Armorica*, or the Lesser Britany, which continued a kingdom till the year 874, at which time the title was changed to a Dutchy.—Touching the castle of good King *Hoel*, hard by you, and other ancient places of that name, you know them better than I; but the best title that England hath to Wales, is by that castle."

In *Perrin's* history of England mention is made of *Hoel*, King of Areclute, near Scotland, comprehending the counties of Cumberland and Lenox, in the year 470.

For many years was the throne of Wales filled by the race of *Howell*, or *Hoel* (for historians are not better agreed in the spelling of this name than they are of other great names in antiquity); and it was not till after long and bloody wars, that the principality of Wales was annexed to the British Crown, under Edward the First.

There is a family tradition, that the first settler, in this country, of that name, *Llewellyn ap Howell*, was lineally descended from the good Legislator of the ancient Britons, or Welsh;—that he had put himself at the head of a large body of his countrymen, during Cromwell's usurpation, with a view to resume his patrimonial Crown; but that meeting with a final overthrow from Cromwell's troops, he at length was obliged to retire to America;—that the vessel in which he took passage was shipwrecked on the south side of Long-Island;—and that he, with a few others, escaped therefrom, and settled on the fertile lands at the east end of the island, where we find that name more numerous than any other, and from whence branches of the family have spread into all the eastern and middle States.

Their family *traits* are—they are of a good stature;—and possess an uncommon firmness of spirit and perseverance in their undertakings. It is among their foibles, to betray a fancied superiority over others, on account of their *blood*. Though many branches of the family are reduced in their circumstances, they plume themselves on their origin to such a degree, that in alliances with more wealthy families they affect to make amends, by *improving the blood*, for charging their estates with a *real incumbrance*.

When the new Fœderal Constitution shall be adopted, and complete justice done to all the citizens of the United States (a most desirable event) the writer of this scrap proposes to examine more critically into his genealogy, and if he shall be able to trace it lineally down from the aforesaid *royal stock of Wales*, he will rely on *the efficiency of government* to vindicate his re-claim to that principality.

It will however, in that case, be proposed to relinquish all claim to the kingdom of *Armorica*, or *Lesser Britany*, to the Crown of France, to which it is at present annexed, as a mark of gratitude for the magnanimous conduct of his Most Christian Majesty in the late revolution in this country, without which the ancient family of the *Howells* might never have had a prospect of being reinstated in the sovereignty of the aforesaid hereditary principality.

*January 7, 1788.*

### 91. A real Son of Liberty

**Newport Herald, 17 January 1788**

*To the Anticonventioner in your Herald No. 45.*

Shall not the multitude of thy words be answered? Shall a man full of talk be justified; Shall thy lies make men hold their peace? When thou mockest shalt thou not be made ashamed? Surely vain man is like the wild asses colt.—Why wilt thou write that which can answer no good? Be not deceived, the hypocrite shall be desolate, and the tabernacles of bribery shall be consumed: wherefore are worthy characters derided, and mighty men said to be fallen? It is that the wicked may triumph and that the just may be held in derision; but Know Ye, vain, presuming man, for all thy hard sayings thou shalt be brought into judgment, and the triumphing of the wicked is short. Do not think thy curses will avail thee or injure those worthy names thou hast taken in vain, they will be revered when thine needs only to be known to be despised. Stand in awe and sin not, lest justice assign thee to commune with owls, cormorants and bats. Learn this, it is in vain for thee to kick against the pricks; to contend against a government that heaven hath pointed out, if thou doest, thou must answer it—Hearken unto me and be wise, far be it from W——n and F——n to do injustice or recommend iniquity—why wilt thou condemn those that are just? shall they which hate right, govern. When they do, the people mourn—think not to say thou art a son of liberty and so impose upon the brethren. Thou keepest thyself in the dark because thy deeds are evil and that thou mayest not be reprov'd; but darkness cannot cover thee, nor can lies be a refuge for thee. Thou art a child of confusion and son of disorder, generated from a viper; the poison of asps is under thy tongue, and gall of bitterness is in thy words: thy father was an Amorite, thy mother a Hittite, and thou art a *Nimshi*. Thou hast sown wickedness and shalt reap iniquity, thy destruction shall come without any one to lament it; then thou shalt call and none shall answer, who then of thy associates in injustice, can relieve thee? vengeance will take hold of them, and thou with them will be crushed in the gates: tho' the foolish have taken root, yet thou hast reason to curse their habitation; they shall not have time to complete their wicked devices, for the day approacheth when they shall be as pale as ghosts, and there shall be

none to deliver: It shall be said in that day there goeth a devourer of widows and orphans, a friend to Know Ye's, and a perverter of justice. All this hast thou seen with thy eyes by vision, and the horrible prospect hath produced thy lamentation in imitation of one who was tempted in like manner. Doth the ass bray when he hath grass? no more would thou if there was food in the stall; but the harvest is over, the grass is gone, and thou art likely to be damn'd; this must account for thy thus braying.

**92. Poor old Honesty**  
**Newport Herald, 17 January 1788**

Mr. PRINTER, *In hopes the paper-monied gentlemen have nearly run out their full quota of Know Ye's, I flatter myself, that room may be found in your impartial paper, for a Know Ye, of a somewhat different complexion: which is humbly recommended to my dear fellow-citizens, as follows:*

Know Ye, whom it doth or may concern (especially all those who by their infamous Know Ye's, have tendered paper money for specie debts) That, the dreadful happy day draweth nigh, when America shall be blest with the best civil constitution under heaven—A happy day for all her honest, industrious inhabitants, who are disposed to live, by the fruits of their own labors, in their proper callings—But a dreadful day indeed, to such of us, who by fraud or violence, have been, or are disposed, to accumulate wealth, for no other end than to gratify the flesh with the affections and lusts—I have the best warrant to say, that riches so gotten, will eat our flesh as doth fire! and that we are heaping up a treasure (of wrath) against the last day!—But I fear, we are too much hardened against divine threatenings, how awful soever they be—Know Ye, therefore, that if we are suffered to live, to see that glorious dreadful day, we shall (without a speedy reformation) assuredly find our present pursuits will fail us—the art of deceiving will entirely run out—our power to oppress and defraud, will be wrested from us, and we shall become, not only as weak, but much weaker than other men.—If we should happen to speak truth, no man will believe us—If we are in debt, our creditors will be tempted to shew us no mercy—In a word, we shall be looked upon as a recluse from human society and be treated as fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth!—therefore in the sincerest good will for our present, as well as future happiness, let us take warning to beware in due time, and do no more so wickedly, lest all that I have spoken, and much more, come speedily upon us, and there be none to deliver!—But, by timely repentance, and thorough reformation<sup>(a)</sup>, it is more than possible, heaven may reverse our doom, as he did the first born of women, our great grand-father Cain; and with him we may enjoy the divine protection: be allowed to emigrate to the land of Nod, or elsewhere, and build us cities, &c. or, if we choose, we may with the full consent of our injured brethren remain here, and bring forth the fruits of repentance in our native land—which is the hearty wish of your unfeigned friend, and fellow citizen,

POOR OLD HONESTY.

(a) By thorough reformation I mean nothing less than to make full restitution to all those you have injured.

**93. Pennsylvania Mercury, 9 February 1788<sup>1</sup>**

It is currently reported, that Mr. Martin's account of the proceedings in the federal convention, has so endeared him to the KNOW YE gentry of Rhode-Island, that they have given him a formal invitation to accept of the office of *Chief-Justice*, in that state; and from his known attachment to *paper-money emissions*, *legal tenders*, and *ex post facto laws*, it is more than probable that he will close in with the proposal; especially, when we consider, that he is become *odious*, and *contemptible*, in Maryland, even to a proverb—insomuch that, when they would brand a *rascal* with infamy, it is common to hear them say, "He is as great a *scoundrel* as L——r M——n."

1. Reprinted: *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 27 February.

**94. New Jersey Journal, 13 February 1788**

During the session of the federal convention, when seven states only were represented in Congress, application was made by two companies for the purchase of lands, the sale of which would have sunk seven or eight millions of dollars of the continental debt; yet this flattering overture could not be taken up, because that oposite sister Rhode-Island had, by a solemn resolution, previous to it, recalled her delegates; and notwithstanding the most pressing letters were sent, urging the necessity of their attendance; yet that state dogmatically refused, to the great injury of the union.—O' Rhoda! the day of retribution is at hand, when for this, and other misdemeanors, you will receive the attic lash of an efficient government.

**95. Newport Herald, 14 February 1788**

## THE WISH.

I Wish you all may live in peace,  
 May see the public discords cease;  
 Each State, with speedy resolution,  
 Adopt the Federal Constitution;  
 Mechanic Arts and Trade revive,  
 And Agriculture spread and thrive;  
 That Peace and Plenty, hand in hand,  
 Once more may travel through the land;  
 That Money may again abound,  
 And Crowns and Dollars pass around,  
 As thick as drops of falling rain,  
 As thick as sands that strew the plain,  
 As thick as atoms fill the air,  
 Or Lawyers throng about the bar.

**96. Brown & Benson to Thayer, Bartlett & Co.  
Providence, 16 February 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . we shall not be unmindful of you & flatter ourselves that the New Constitution will promote & facilitate our intercourse . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**97. Massachusetts Gazette, 19 February 1788**

A correspondent observes, that if "*perseverando it gnoramus*," is a *qualification* sufficient to recommend a person for a member of the legislative department of Rh—I—d, Massachusetts can furnish her sister state with a valuable acquisition to her already numerous hosts of *unparalleled patriots*. And it is more than probable, continues our correspondent, that Rh—I—d will be obliged to receive the *patriot* alluded to, upon some condition or other, if he perseveres in his nearly insurgent-like conduct.

**98. James Brown Diary  
Providence, 29 February 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Still as cold, our Genl Assembly reject the Constitution as recommended by Congress and refer it to the people

1. Printed: Clarkson A. Collins III, ed., "James Brown's Diary (1787–1789)," *Rhode Island History*, 6 (1947), 104.

**99. House of Deputies Proceedings, Saturday, 1 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Vote of this House passing an Act for laying the proposed Constitution before the People was Read & Passed. . . .

1. MS, House of Deputies Journal, R-Ar.

**100. House of Magistrates Proceedings, Saturday, 1 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . No. 56 Vote of the Lower House directing the Constitution proposed by the Genl. Convention held at Philadelphia for the United States to be laid before the House at large in Town Meeting assembled was read and concurred . . .

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

**101. Massachusetts Centinel, 1 March 1788**

☞ *Accounts from Rhode-Island respecting the call of a Convention, want confirmation.*

**102. Pelatiah Hitchcock to Enos Hitchcock  
Brookfield, Mass., 2 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I have not that ingredient which generally makes a Letter more palatable—*News* seems much out of the question since the Constitution was adopted in this Commonwealth—Hope soon to hear that R. Island have in some measure retrieved their Character, or rather obtained a *good* Character, as a State, by following the laudable example of six of her Sister States. . . .

1. RC, Enos Hitchcock Papers, 1786–1789, RHi.

**103. John Brown Cutting to William Short  
London, 10 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . But the sons of Belial that go a [whoring?] after strange Gods—communing together after the [manner?] of Rhode-Island—saying let us seperate ourselves [from?] the congregation of the states—doing that which is [right?] in our own eyes—they will remain in outer darkness where will be weeping and wailing & gnashing of teeth. . . .

1. RC, Short Papers, DLC.

**104. William Heath Diary  
Roxbury, Mass., 11 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, have Submitted the federal Constitution to the Consideration and decision of the freemen of the respective Town in that State, who are to assemble on the fourth monday of the present month, the 24th. instant when after discussing they are to give their assent, or disapprobation of it by yeas and nays which are to be Sealed up by the Town clerk and forwarded to the General Assembly at their meeting on the last monday of march. . . .

1. MS, Heath Diaries, MHi.

**105. Connecticut Norwich Packet, 13 March 1788**

The General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, have passed an act, appointing the fourth Monday in March instant, the day for all the Freemen and Freeholders within that State, to convene in their respective Towns, in Town-Meetings assembled, and to deliberate upon, and determine each Individual (who has a Right by Law to vote for the Choice of General Officers) by himself by Poll, whether the Constitution for the United States shall be adopted or negatived.

**106. A Mechanic****Newport Herald, 13 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

There is no circumstance in life that affords a laboring man a better prospect of accomplishing his wishes than that of agriculture. In antient times Kings laid their sceptres prostrate on the earth and turned the tufted sod; their nobles followed closely on, and strove which first should cast the seed into the bosom of a faithful soil, and wait for gracious Heaven to bless their labors with a fruitful crop.

Could we divest our minds of trifling views of traffic, and confine ourselves to tillage and manufacturing, we should at once become a happy, potent, and greatly independent people.—But it is in vain to wish for plenty or for wealth, let our situation be ever so eligible, ever so capable of gratifying our wants or wishes, while we disdain to guide the plough, and falsely call the peasant's task laborious, servile, mean.

To you, my honest countrymen, who feel the want of business—to you who wish to be serviceable to your families, to yourselves, and an honor to the country that gave you birth—a noble prospect opens to your view—The gentle streams—Ohio—Muskingum—and Hockhocking, present themselves to you; 'tis but to ask, and you possess—numbers are hastening to these fertile banks to grasp the jewel in its native form, and there enjoy the calm, enchanting scenes of rural life—an assylum for virtue, liberty and peace.

It has been doubted by some, whether the small difference of lattitude in New-England, and our settlements upon the Ohio, &c. can make any material difference in the climates.—In answer to which I would observe; that I suppose the difference of latt. does not operate much in favor of our Western settlements: but every person who is capable of making observations must notice that the prevailing winds in North-America is the S. W. this does not so evidently appear in winter as in summer, tho' in the higher regions it continues its unremitted course throughout the year; therefore the difference of climate arises principally from those winds blowing from the Pacific Ocean over a warm tract of land, and it is from this cause that the spring comes on earlier, and the winter is kept back for a month or six weeks. We are credibly informed, that the farther we go Westward the climate grows warmer, tho' the latitudinal direction be the same.—Let us then, my countrymen, be foremost in possessing ourselves of this Eden of America. If we neglect it, foreigners will avail themselves of so easy an acquisition—a trifling sum will purchase, and a lesser trifle will bring it to maturity.

Besides all the blessings that arise from a fertile soil and mild climate, we have reason to hope that a government will be established as agreeable as its situation.

Leave—leave this insupportably melancholly State,

*“Where commerce grows sick of her tide,  
Where religion—religion expires on the ground,  
And virtue sinks down by her side.”*

It may with the strictest propriety be asserted that paper money gave the fatal stab to one half the business since 1786.—The want of an efficient government

is reducing the other half as rapidly as its enemies can wish. Farewell, vain environs, if your capital falls—you will then recollect that all your silver and gold came from the merchant through the medium of trade—the merchant received it from the West-Indies, he handed it to the mechanic (when he could find any thing for him to do) & they more rapidly consigned it to the farmer for his produce—witness our markets. Thus you see, my country friends, it behoves you to lend an helping hand to establish a government whose wisdom will direct in this tempestuous day, and on whose energy and just administration, depends our political and commercial existence. Beware that we do not neglect these things until it is too late—till this once flourishing country is stripped of its most valuable inhabitants, the hardy laborious men.—Resources must be had to supply the exigences of life—If they are not to be procured here, we must seek for them in a more propitious clime.

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Centinel*, 22 March.

### 107. “Z.”

#### **Providence United States Chronicle, 13 March 1788**

MR. WHEELER, It appears that there is Printing in Philadelphia, a judicious and candid Reply and Refutation to the “Address and Reasons of Dissent of the Pennsylvania Minority”—which you have published in your Paper; you are therefore requested to publish said Reply, when it comes to Hand,—which (notwithstanding the antifederal Conduct of our Rulers) will be very acceptable to a large and respectable Number of your Customers.

P. S. As the “Address and Reasons of Dissent, &c.” has appeared in the Providence Gazette, ’tis expected, that the boasted Freedom and Impartiality of that Press, will induce the Printer to favour his Customers with the Answer.

### 108. Winchester Virginia Gazette, 14 March 1788

Rhode-Island, which, as a State, merits an everlasting exclusion from the confederacy, by their former opposition to an *honest* government, appear now to be awakened to a sense of their duty, several towns having instructed their Representatives to move in General Assembly, at their next session, that a proclamation be issued with all possible expedition, for the purpose of adopting the Federal government.

### 109. “Y.”

#### **Providence Gazette, 15 March 1788**

MR. CARTER, A writer in the last Chronicle, under the signature of Z, has *prophesied*, that “a judicious and candid REPLY AND REFUTATION TO the Address and Reasons of Dissent of the Pennsylvania Minority” (now printing at Philadelphia) will be very acceptable to the public.—I am, Sir, neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; and must therefore wait the arrival of this promised performance, before I can give it my *entire* approbation.—“As the *Address and*



*Reasons of Dissent, &c.* HAS appeared in the Providence Gazette," I hope you will also publish the expected "REPLY AND REFUTATION TO," for the information of those of your readers who are not *gifted in prophecy*—even though the publication should require a period of TEN WEEKS, the time taken up by the Editor of the Chronicle in printing or rather *mangling* said *Address and Reasons of Dissent*, which I observe were comprised in THREE of your papers.

P. S. After the proposed new Constitution shall have been adopted, it is hoped that the individual States will pass laws, making it at least *misprision of treason* for public writers to *maim*, *metamorphize* and *evil intreat*, the American language.—Were such laws now in force, Mr. Z would probably have been taken into custody, and the Attorney-General directed to file a bill of indictment against him at the next Superior Court.

### 110. An Observer

**Providence Gazette, 15 March 1788**

*To the EDITOR of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.*

By a performance in the last Chronicle, signed Z, I strongly suspect that we are soon to have another importation of *Pamphlets*, in order to *muffle* our public papers, to the exclusion of every other kind of matter. The *second sighted* Mr. Z approves the work he speaks of, while it is yet supposed to be in the press at Philadelphia!—He has not however thought proper to inform the public, whether the proposed answer to the Pennsylvania Protest will be published *pamphletwise* or *otherwise*, and this he must certainly have known, from his *wonderful gift of second-sight*.

Should the performance prove to be a pamphlet, I have no objection to an edition here, *in a like form*.

The late newspaper quarrels having been happily terminated *by subscription*, is it possible that Z, or any other person, can have a wish to revive them, by renewing personal invectives, contrary to the express terms of the *treaty of peace*?—If so, and the old ground is to be trod over again, there is yet a *large balance* due on account to *some* of the parties concerned, which will probably be *fully paid, with interest*.

### 111. James Cogswell Diary

**Scotland, Conn., 17 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

read the Prov. Paper. the assembly of R: Island have appointed a Day for the people at large to meet in Town Meetings & to adopt or reject the Constitution. pray that God would turn their Hearts to receive it. . . .

1. MS, Cogswell Diary, CtHi.

**112. Massachusetts Centinel, 19 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Great numbers of families still continue to emigrate to the northward, as well as to the westward, from this State, Rhode-Island and Connecticut—so that Vermont, (which we hope will soon be admitted into the union) will be a very good exchange for our little froward neighbour, should she in her folly reject the boon now proffered her.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 31 March; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 1 April; *Charleston City Gazette*, 24 April.

**113. Newport Herald, 20 March 1788**

A Publication under the signature of Lycurgus, in the United States Chronicle, of last Thursday,

— “*Is of so odious a mien  
As to be hated, need but to be seen.*”

This incendiary writer endeavors to perpetuate the flames of discord and injustice, in this state, by artful insinuations and false assertions, by vilifying a society respectable for its morality and religion, and blasphemously invoking the Deity, to continue and succeed an iniquitous system.—If this writer was actuated by honest motives, why did he lurk under the privacy of an anonymous signature, to attack a body of men who were not ashamed to sign their names to a memorial, supported on indisputable facts, viz. *The depreciation of the paper money—the inadequacy of the tender to support its credit—the great injustice of the tender,—and the unconstitutional principles of the Limitation act.*—Is there an HONEST MAN within this state who has attended to public measures for two years past, that will deny the truth of these principles? I am confident there is not one,—he who advocates them must consequently be a fool or a knave.

*The publisher of the Herald* is therefore requested to republish in his impartial paper, this extraordinary production of *Lycurgus*, and let the people judge—besides, a republication of it will be of no injury to the society who presented this memorial.—“The worthy part of them cannot aspire to truer glory than to become the contempt of those who are become the contempt of the world.”—For praises from him who impiously prostitutes the name of his GOD, would be the highest censure.

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To the patriotic Republicans of Rhode-Island, &c.

“*The Turning of Religion’s made,  
The Means to wind and twist a Trade.*”

Although I really respect the people called Quakers, as a religious society, and think it highly probable they were actuated by conscientious motives, in remonstrating against the Slave-trade;—yet, when they so far deviate from the true principles of their profession, as to lend their names to a set of venal wretches, who have speculated on the public credit, and by that mean protracted a ruinous

war, and of course accumulated the public debt—who have made, and still are making use of every mean in their power to realize, in gold and silver, their ill-gotten securities, at the expence, and even destruction of the worthy yeomanry of the country:—I say, when they so far depart from their primitive uprightness, I cannot, nor can candor itself, but disapprove of their conduct in this instance. If they have been drawn unwarily into this error, it is in their power to rectify the mistake, by withdrawing their petition presented to the General Assembly, praying a repeal of the tender law, &c. which, if granted, would prove of ruinous consequences to this state. I have little more to say at present, than to warn my countrymen to be upon their guard against this sly, insidious petition, and to consider it, not as originating with real Quakers, but with men that put on any coat to serve a turn. It is more than probable, if the people consent to the repeal of the law respecting the paper-money, before the expiration of the time prescribed by the emitting act, that it will involve our country in utter ruin,—fix unreasonable and everlasting taxes on us, and our posterity, and finally terminate in eternal and insupportable slavery. Which I pray GOD, in his infinite mercy, may prevent.

LYCURGUS.

*North-Kingstown, March 1, 1788.*

#### 114. Providence Gazette, 22 March 1788<sup>1</sup>

Monday next is the Time appointed, by Act of Assembly, for Town-Meetings to be held in this State on the Subject of the proposed Constitution.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Recorder*, 25 March; *New York Journal* and *New York Daily Advertiser*, 31 March; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 2 April.

#### 115. Senex

##### Providence Gazette, 22 March 1788

*To the PRINTER of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.*

SIR, I am a real friend to the interests of *morality*, and from the exordium of Z, in the last Chronicle, expected to have been gratified with a sublime as well as *original* composition on that interesting subject; but felt disappointed in observing only an extract from the writings of Dr. Watts.—The works of that eminent and truly pious divine certainly have great merit, and I mean not in the least to detract therefrom: But it must be allowed that they are already in the hands of many people—and I would recommend to Z, as an improvement on his plan, to let the future numbers of the *Monitor* have at least the appearance of originality. We have gentlemen of leisure among us, who might furnish *original essays*, especially the clergy; and as this subject more particularly appertains to the latter class of citizens, I am persuaded that such of them as are not engaged in the din and bustle of *political warfare*, would cheerfully contribute their assistance.

### 116–131. TOWN MEETINGS

#### 116. Charlestown Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At A Town Meeting Held in Charles Town at the Dwelling House of Lucy Kinyon this 24 day of March AD 1788 agreeable to the act of the General Assembly for approbating or rejecting the federal Constitution as proposed by the National Convention; the Warrant being read; and Peleg Cross Esqr being chosen Moderator, and the Question being put whether the Said constitution for the United States Shall be adopted or negatived

yeas James Congdon, Stephen Hoxsie Junr, Christopher Babcock, Gideon Hoxsie Junr, Gideon Hoxsie, Robert Congdon.

Nays Joseph Stanton Junr, Thomas Greene, Jonathan J Hazard, Samuel Cross, Gideon Johnson, Jonathan Hazard Junr, William Card, Joshua Card, John Greene, Joseph Holloway, Thomas Healy, Isaac Saunders, Amos Greene, Thomas Greene Junr, Simeon Clarke, Jonathan Clarke, Joseph Sheffield, Thomas Hoxsie, John Collier, Gideon Holloway, William Clarke, Rowland Clarke, Griffith Hazard, Nathan Tucker, Christopher Wording, Joseph Pettee, Bradick Greene, Ichabod Closson, William Purkin, Benja; Potter, Allen Greene, James Peckham, Joseph Davis, John Kinyon, Stephen Stanton, Joshua Card Jur, Jonathan Macomber, Josiah Utter, Oliver Clarke, Thomas Knowles, William Clarke, Samuel Wording, John Closson, Joshua Kinyon, Kinyon Lerkin, Benjamin Wording, Rhodes Hall, Thomas Sheffield, Stephen Nay, Joshua Kinyon, Benja; Hoxsie Junr, Voted that Samuel Clarke be propounded, in order to be made free

the proceedings of the Town Meeting in respect of the Friends Memorial Voted that the Tender of the paper Emission be not repealed and it is Voted and recommended by Said Town that the Statute of Limitation for two years making Notes & Book accounts forfeited be repealed . . .

Voted that this Town Meeting be desolved

Benja. Hoxsie Junr Town Clerk

1. MS, Town Council and Probate Record, 1767–1787, Vol. 3, Town Hall, Charlestown, R.I.

#### 117. Cumberland Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting held in and for the Town of Cumberland in the County of Providence on the fourth monday in March (being the 24th. day of said Month) A. D. 1788—in pursuance of an Act of the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island &c. passed at their Session in this present Month intituled “An Act for submitting to the consideration of the Freemen of this State the report of the Convention of Delegates for a constitution for the United States as agreed on in Philadelphia the 17th. of September A. D. 1787”—and to do any other business which might appear expedient to be done—

Levi Ballou Esqr. chosen Moderator—

The said Constitution being read and considered—Upon the question Shall the said Constitution be adopted or not?—The Yeas and Nays of the Freemen and Freeholders thereon are as on file in this office. . . .

1. MS, Council Records, 1746–1816, Vol. 1, City Hall, Cumberland, R.I.

**118. East Greenwich Town Meeting, 24 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Called and Held at East Greenwich by Act of Assembly on the 24th day of March AD 1788. To Take into Consideration the Report of the Convention of Delegates for a Constitution for the United States, as agreed on in Philadelphia the 17th of September AD 1787.

Voted That Thomas Aldrich Esqr is Chosen Moderator.

A Motion was made for a Vote Whether This Town Will Act upon the Said Report for a Constitution for the United States, the Vote was then Put and Voted To Act. A Vote was then Had upon the Purposed Constitution, and two Persons Voted in favour of the said Constitution and Ninety one against it—

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1752–1793, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, East Greenwich, R.I.

**119. Jamestown Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

James[town] at a Mee[t]ing Legly held in said Town March 24 1788

John Eldred Esqr. chosen Moderator

Whereas the act of the General assembly as was Ordered was Read in open Town Meeting which was accordingly Taken unde[r] consideration

It is voted by this Meeting that the Deputies be Instructed to vote For Repealing the act whch makes void Notes of Hand and Book accounts. . . .

1. MS, Jamestown Town Records, 1744–1796, R-Ar.

**120. Middletown Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Middletown March the 24 day AD 1788 Especially Called by an act of the General Assembly passed at their sessions held in Providence February AD 1788 Entitled an act submitting to the consideration of the freemen of this State the report of Convention of Delegates for a Constitution for the United States as agreed on in Philadelphia the 17th day of September AD 1787: Oliver Durfee Esqr. Moderator

The following Votes were passed for and against Said Constitution agreeable to the afore Recited act in yeas and nays as followeth

Yeas

Nicholas Easton  
 Stephen Peckham  
 James Potter  
 Salisbury Stoddard  
 Elisha Barker  
 Isaac Stoddard

Nays

Thomas Coggeshall  
 William Peckham  
 Joshua Barker—

John Rogers—  
Elisha Peckham—  
William Peckham Junr.  
Peleg Allen—  
Samuel Wyatt—  
Peleg Peckham—  
John Gould—  
George Irish—  
Pardon Brown—  
David Albro—  
Silas Peckham—  
Edward Barker Junr.  
Caleb Peabody—  
John Wood—  
Weston Clarke—  
Benjamin Peabody—  
David Barker—  
John Beavin—  
Edward Easton—  
Peleg Brown—  
Peleg Barker—  
John Coggeshall  
Easton Bailey—  
Gideon Brown—  
William Brown—  
Joseph Weaver—  
Joseph Coggeshall  
Matthew Weaver—  
Daniel Weaver—  
William Coggeshall  
Richard Peckham  
Samuel Cornell—  
Joshua Peckham—  
Jeremiah Barker—  
Wanton Slocum—  
Samuel Peckham—  
Joseph Peckham. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1743–1808, Vol. 1, Town Hall, Middletown, R.I.

**121. Newport Town Meeting, 24 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

At a Meeting of the Freemen and Freeholders in said by Warrant, agreeably to An Act of Assembly Passed February Session last past Entituled an Act submitting to the Consideration of the Freemen of this State the Report of the Convention of Delegates for a Constitution for the United States as Agreed on in Philadelphia the 17th of September AD 1787, by Poll, whether the said Constitution for the United States shall be Adopted, or Negatived: Legally Convened this day at 11 o'Clock in the fore Noon at the State House; Also to Consider the Petition and Memorial of the Representatives of the People Called Quakers in New England that the Act which makes the Paper Currency of this State a tender at par in payment of Just Debts, And the Act which makes Void Notes and Book Accounts not settled in two Years may be repealed or Amended—That the sense of the Freemen at large may be taken upon the same

Henry Marchant Esqr. Moderator

the Act of Assembly read for Calling the Meeting

Upon the Petition of the Freemen called quakers

Voted that the tender Act; and the Petition for making Void Notes &c be Repealed—each by a very great majority.

A LIST of the Yeas and Nays of the Freemen and Freeholders of the Town of Newport, taken in Open Town Meeting the 24th. of March 1788 Agreeably to An Act of the General Assembly of this state, made and passed at their Session in Providence February Session last past, upon the Question, Shall the Constitution as Agreed upon by the Convention lately held at Philadelphia, and Reported by said Convention to the Congress of the United States, and by the Congress transmitted to the several Legislatures, be ADOPTED OR NEGATIVED.

Names	Yeas
Thomas Webber	Yea
Names	Nays
John Wanton	Nay
Thomas Freebody	Nay
John Wanton	Nay
Joseph Whipple Tweedy	Nay
John Rogers (son of Thomas)	Nay
Edward Murfey	Nay
Samuel Thurston/Cordwainer	Nay
William Gardiner	Nay
Thomas Arnold	Nay
Nathan Luther	Nay
Andrew Freebody	Nay

The Meeting then Adjourned to Fryday next then to meet at this Place at 10 oClock AM (After the foll[owin]g Resolve)

Witness Peleg Barker Junr. Town Clk

Resolved

NB The Resolve at said Meeting of a Co[m]ttee (See Oversight)

1. MS, Newport Town Records (Proceedings), Vol. 1, 1779–1816, RNHi.

**122. North Providence Town Meeting, 24 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in North Providence in the County of Providence &c. on the Twenty fourth Day of March AD: 1788.—Especially called and Convened by Order of an Act of the Honourable the General Assembly at February Session AD: 1788. for the Purpose of taking into consideration the Fœderal Constitution

Capt. Stephen Jenks is Chosen Moderator for said Meeting

Whereas There being a Petition and Memor[i]al of the People called Quakers laid before this Meeting in order that the Sense of the People at Large might be taken on the Subject: It is Voted that Acting upon the same be and hereby is Referred to the Annual Town Meeting to be held in June next

Whereas The Honourable the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island &c. at February Session AD: 1788; Being favoured with a Copy of a Form of a Constitution for the United States and the same being taken into consideration by the House it is Voted that the said Form of a Constitution be Referred to the Several Towns in this State in Order that the Opinion of the Freemen at Large might be Taken in Town Meetings Respecting the said Form of a Constitution by Yeas and Nays.

And the said Constitution being Read and taken into Consideration agreeable to the Order of the said General Assembly, the Vote passed Unanimous for the latter—

☞ Hope Angell T. Clerk

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1765–1808, Recording Office, City Hall, Pawtucket, R.I.

**123 A–B. Providence Town Meeting, 24, 26 March 1788**

*123-A. Providence United States Chronicle, 27 March<sup>1</sup>*

The Hon. General Assembly of this State will convene at East-Greenwich on Monday next.

On Monday last the Freemen and Freeholders of this Town convened, in Town-Meeting, agreeable to the Act of the General Assembly for submitting to the People at large the proposed Federal Constitution—but it appearing, after some Conversation, that the Freemen in general did not feel themselves sufficiently informed to decide by Yea or Nay—and that they did not conceive this to be the proper Mode of conducting this Business—it was determined to appoint a Committee, to draft a Petition and Memorial to the Honorable Legislature, stating the Reasons why this Town did not proceed in the Way pointed out by the Act—and requesting that a Convention of Representatives from all the Towns in the State might be called, to take up and decide upon this important Subject.

The Town then proceeded upon the other Business referred to them by the General Assembly, viz. the Petition from the Society of Friends, on the Subject of the Tender and Limitation Acts—upon which it was voted, That the Deputies from this Town be instructed to use their utmost Endeavours, that the Limitation Act (so called) be repealed; and that the Tender of the Paper Money be so far altered, that, instead of being a Tender at Par, it be so at the current Exchange;



and that other specific Articles at an appraised Value, be also a Tender, in Discharge of Executions.

Yesterday the Town met, agreeable to Adjournment, when the Committee, appointed on Monday, reported the Form of a Petition to the Hon. Legislature;—which, after having had two several Readings, was *unanimously* agreed to.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part seven times by 28 April: Vt. (1), N.H. (1), Mass. (3), Conn. (1), Pa. (1).

*123-B. Providence Gazette, 29 March*<sup>1</sup>

On Monday next the Honourable General Assembly of this State will meet at East-Greenwich.

A Town-Meeting was held in this Town last Monday, in Pursuance of the Act of Assembly, passed at their last Session, for taking the Yeas and Nays of the Freemen of this State on the proposed new Constitution—and, in Pursuance of a special Warning, for the Purpose of giving Instructions to their Representatives relative to the Memorial and Petition presented to the General Assembly, at said Session, by the Society of Friends, on the Subject of the Tender-Act and Statute of Limitations (so called.)—There was the most numerous and respectable Meeting which has been for a long Time. After the new Constitution had been read, and Objections offered from all Quarters of the House against voting thereon by Yeas and Nays, a Committee was appointed to report a suitable Petition to the Legislature on the Occasion: And the last mentioned Business being taken up, it was resolved, that the Deputies for this Town use their Endeavours, at the next Session of Assembly, to procure a Repeal of the said Statute, and of the said Tender-Act, and that the Bills of Credit at their current Value, as well as specific Articles, be made a Tender to satisfy Executions. The Meeting adjourned to Two o'Clock the next Day, and without doing Business adjourned to Two o'Clock on Wednesday, when there again assembled a very full and respectable Meeting, to which their Committee made Report; and the Petition reported, after two several Readings, was adopted by *an unanimous Vote*, and ordered to be presented by the Deputies of this Town to the Honourable the General Assembly, at their Session next Week, at East-Greenwich.—The Purport of the Petition is, that as many of the Freemen of this State decline voting by Yeas and Nays, some being desirous of amending, and some for other Reasons, a Convention, representing all the Freemen, will sooner or later become necessary to pronounce the *Ultimatum* of the State on this Subject—and praying the Legislature to recommend the holding one, at such Time and Place as may in their Wisdom seem most proper.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 15 April; *Pennsylvania Journal* and *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 16 April.

**124. Scituate Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Scituate in the County of Providence &c. by Virtue of a Warrant from the Town Clerk. in Consequence of an act of the Honbl. Genl. Assembly of this State for the Purpose of Taking the Sence of the Freemen &c. in Regard to the Proposed new Constitution for the United States.—

Held on the 24th Day of March AD. 1788—

Peleg Fisk Esqr. Chosen Moderator. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1787–1824, Vol. 2, Scituate, R.I.

**125. Smithfield Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Held in Smithfield in the County of Providence &c. by Warrant, In Order to Take into Consideration & Give their Votes—Respecting the Proposed Constitution, &c On the 24th. Day of March AD 1788

John Sayles Esqr. Chosen Moderator. . . .

Whereas Agreeable to an Act of the General Assembly this Day being Ap-  
pointed to Give in their Yeas & nays in Reguard to the proposed Constitution—  
& proceed[e]d, Accordingly—Which Voted for the Nays 159 &. Yeas. only 2—

And The Friends Petition (So Called) was Taken in a Vote—Which was  
Taken—Appeal of the Papr Money Tender or not—and. Passd—Repeal—  
not—

Voted that this Meeting be Desolved—

Witness Danl. Mowry the 3rd. Town Clk

1. MS, Smithfield Records, Town Meetings, 1771–1816, City Hall, Central Falls, R.I.

**126. South Kingstown Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held at South Kingston (by a special Act of the Genl. Assembly of the State of Rhode Island) the 24th. day of March AD. 1788—

Benja. Peckham chosen Cler ~~or~~ Tempore. . . .

Nathaniel Helme junr. Chosen Clk pro tem. . . .

Voted that Samuel Gardner junr. take the names of the persons Voting for the Constitution submitted to the people by the General Assembly of this State, in addition to the Clk that the list may be compared with the clerks list. . . .

Voted that the deputies of this town to the General Assembly be and they are hereby instructed not to Oppose the repeal of any part of the emitting Act for the paper Currency of this State,

Voted that the deputies of this town be and they are hereby Instructed to move to the General Assembly that the Statute of Limitation which makes Void all accounts and demands that are not settled within ten Years from the passing the same be amended and that the same be lengthened to three Years, and that the Deputies use their influence to have said amendment passed. . . .

The following are the Persons Names with the Yeas & Nays Respecting the proposed Constitution for the United States of America

Yeas

Joseph Perkins

Nays

Joseph Hazard, John Franklin, Robert Champlin, Samuel Segar, Stephen Hazard, Caleb Tefft, Saml. Gardner, Thomas Champlin junr, John Gardner B. N [Boston Neck], Ebenezer Tefft, Simon R. Mumford, Sam J. Potter, John Robinson, Caleb Chappel, Robt. Hazard, Timothy Peckham, Tenant Tefft, Robert Hazard of Jos, Thomas Segar, Stephen Potter, Jeffry Watson, Wilm. Dyre, John Watson of Jefy, Thomas Robbins, Isaac Tanner, Saml. Whaley, Wm. Barber, Stephen Champlin, John Larkin, Wm. Steadman, Tennant Tefft junr, Gardner Tefft, Clarke Hopkins, Benja Perry, James Steadman, Nathl Mumford, Chrisr. Robinson junr, Benjamin Robinson, Saml. Whaley Junr, Benja Hazard, Henry Reynolds, Rowland Brown, John Cross, James Shearman, Silas Wheeler, Chrisr. Robinson, Joseph Gould, George Babcock, Wm. Perry, Henry H. Holland, David Babcock, Thos. Steadman junr, James Tefft, Samuel Babcock, Allen Gardner, Wilkinson Browning, Gedeon Babcock, Benja Potter junr, Daniel Tefft 3d., Elisha Watson of Jefy, Thomas Champlin, Saml. Perry junr, Sands Perkins, Joseph Carpenter, Robert Knowles, Moses Barber, Nathan Peterson, Gedeon Gardner, Josephus Peckham, Elisha Watson of Jno, Augusts. Babcock, Ezekiel Watson, Isaac Shelden, John Weeden, Wm Rodman, Joseph Browning, Robert Browning, Thos. Browning, Jeremiah Carpenter, Jeffry Watson junr, Joseph Segar, Thomas Eldrd, Edward Lock, Peleg Kinyon, Caleb Gardner, Gedeon Lillibridge, Peleg Babcock, Barber Peckham, John Hopkins, Josias Tanner, James Barber, Paris Gardner, Walter Watson, Daniel Steadman, Gideon Greenman, William Peckham, John P. Peckham, David Shearman, Francis Tanner, Thomas Hopkins, Thos. H. Hazard, Richard Gardner, John Segar, James Card, John Champlin, Christy Potter, Rowse Potter, Saml Hoxsie, John Greenman, William Willcox, Henry Potter, Silas Gardner, Benja. Peckham, Elisha R Potter, Jeffry H Browning, John Babcock, Timothy Peckham (blacksmith), John Albro, David Larkin, John Congdon, Wm. Taylor, Lawrence Pearce, Robert Rodman, Ray Sands, Freeman Perry.

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1776–1836, Town Hall, South Kingstown, R.I.

### 127. Tiverton Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

At a meeting of the Freem[en] of the Town of Tiverton Legally warnd. & held at the House of Nathl. Briggs on the fourth monday in March 1788  
voted Gilbert Devol Esq moderator

for Taking under Consideration the report of the Convention of Delegates Made for a Constitution of the United States agreed upon at Philadelphia the 17th. of Septemr. 1787 AD.

upo[n] the Question being Taken there was 23 yeas & Nays 92. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1754–1798, Town Hall, Tiverton, R.I.

**128. Warren Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting on the fourth Monday in March AD 1788 for addopting or negativeing the Constitution Proposed by the Convention at Philidelphia September 17th. 1787

The Yeas & Nays being Taken As Follows Viz.

Gidion Luther Nay  
 John Kinnicutt Jur. nay  
 Wm. Arnold Jur nay  
 Ebenezer Luther nay  
 James Child—nay  
 Joseph Barton—nay  
 James Short—nay  
 Isaac Cole—nay  
 Samuel Fisk—nay  
 Stephen Bowen—nay  
 Cromell Child—nay  
 Benjamin Barton—nay  
 Edward Gardner 2nd—nay  
 John Kinnicutt—nay  
 Gardner Mason—nay  
 Jacob Sanders—nay  
 Cromel Child 2nd nay  
 David Barton—nay  
 Fredrick Luther—nay  
 James E Bowen—nay  
 Samuel Bowen—nay  
 Smith Bowen—nay  
 James Bowen—nay  
 Edward Kinnicutt—nay  
 Wm. Arnold—nay  
 Richard Haile—nay  
 Nathan Barden—nay  
 Benjamin Cole—nay  
 John Brown Yea  
 George Sisson—Nay  
 Samuel Luther—nay  
 Caleb Child—nay  
 James Miller—nay  
 Caleb Child Jur—nay  
 Jonathan Carr—Yea  
 Shubael Kinnicutt—nay  
 James Sisson—nay  
 Benjamin Sanders—nay  
 Jesse Baker—nay  
 Edward Chase—nay

Samuel Mason—nay  
 Hezekiah Butterworth—nay  
 Holden Mason—nay

Voted that the Act Making the Papermoney in its Dipreciated State a tender at Par for Just Debts Be Repealed agreeable to the Pettition of the People Called Quakers. . . .

1. MS, Town Records, 1746–1811, Vol. 1, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Warren, R.I.

### 129. Warwick Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

In Town meeting held in Warwick in the County of Kent &c on the 24th day of March AD 1788.—

Voted that Benjamin Greene Esqr: be and he is hereby Chosen Moderatoir of this meeting. . . .

This Town being especially Convened to deliberate upon and determine by their Voices individually to be taken, whether the new Constitution be adopted or negatived. the Moderator proceeded to take the Voices of the freemen as they gave their Voices for and against the Constitution and their appeared to be three for adopting the Constitution and one hundred & forty against it

Upon the Petition of the people Called Quakers which was preferred to the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island &c. at their Session in February last. the prayer of which is to Repeal or amend an act of the State Afore[mentione]d which makes the paper Currency of said State, under its depreciated value, a Tender at par, in payment of Just debts. Also the act which makes void notes and book Accounts, that are not Settled within two years from the passing of the Same, which with the said Petitioners, apprehended to be very greivous which petition was Received by the General Assembly, and Referred to the Several Towns in the State afore[mentione]d in order that the Sense of the freemen at large might be taken upon the Same, The petition were Read at Town meeting, and Sundry debates had thereon, after which the Moderator put the same to Vote, to know whether the prayer of said petition ought to be granted or not when their appeared twenty four for granting said petition, and Ninety Eight against. It is further Voted that a Copy hereof be Transmitted to the General Assembly to be Convened at East Greenwich on the last monday of March instant. . . .

Voted that this meeting be and it is hereby desolved.

Witness James Jerauld Town Clk

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1779–1794, Vol. 3, City Hall, Warwick, R.I.

### 130. Westerly Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town meeting held in Westerly at Mr. Arnold Blivens March the 24th 1788 being Especially Convend by Order of the General Assembly for the Freemen and freeholds to Give their Voices Respecting the New Constitution &c

Capt Nathan Barber Chosen Moderator

Voted that this Town meeting be Desolved or Adjourned at 5 of the Clock this afternoon . . .

Voted that the Act making the Paper Currency a Tender (it is the sense of this Town meeting) that the same be Continue[d] a Tender

Voted that the Act Limitting Notes and Book Accounts to be Settled within two Years (& it is the sense of this Town meeting) that the same be Repealed . . .

Voted that this Town meeting be Disolved

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1779–1819, Vol. 4, Town Hall, Westerly, R.I.

### 131. West Greenwich Town Meeting, 24 March 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting Conveaned and Held at West greenwich in the County of Kent at the dwelling House of Joseph Nichols's Innholder on the 24th of March AD 1788 being Especially Called by an act of the General Assembly

Samuel Hopkins Jur Esqr. Moderator

Voted that Stephen Allen and Colonel Briggs be and hereby are additional freemen of the Town and Took the oath against Bribery & Corruption.

Voted that Clarke Greene and Samuel Gorton Jur. Stand purpounded to the Next Town Meeting in order to be admittted free or Rejected—

The New purposed Constitution for the United States being Submitted to the freemen of this Town either to be adopted or Negitived the vote being put to adopt or Not and Recorded by yeas and Nays—

James Reynolds nay  
 Benjamin Greene nay  
 James Convis nay  
 Nicholas Whitford nay  
 Henry Tanner nay  
 Augustus Ellis nay  
 Joshua Carr nay  
 George Potter nay  
 Caleb Hall nay  
 Thomas Albro nay  
 Alexr. Hopkins nay  
 Caleb Greene nay  
 John Weathers nay  
 Elisha Johnson nay  
 Wm. Henry Davis nay  
 William Matteson nay  
 Uriah Matteson nay  
 David Austin nay  
 Nathaniel Pulman nay  
 Robert Carr nay  
 Job Herenton nay  
 Aurther Aylsworth nay  
 Joseph Matteson nay

Simeon Whitford nay  
Jonathan Matteson nay  
William Richmond nay  
Daniel Peirce nay  
Abel Greene nay  
Ames Reynolds nay  
Caleb Bently nay  
Ezekiel Matteson nay  
John Straight nay  
Pardon Tillinghast yea  
William Ellis nay  
Thomas Nichols nay  
Joseph Weaver nay  
William Nichols nay  
Samuel Tanner nay  
Rufus Kittle nay  
Thomas Rogers nay  
William Spencer nay  
Thomas Joslin nay  
Jeremiah Matteson nay  
John Carpenter nay  
Ephraim Letson nay  
John Hopkins nay  
Pentacost Sweet nay  
Jacob Lewis nay  
Robert Carpenter nay  
Joseph Niles Junr. nay  
Edward Burleson nay  
Joseph Burleson nay  
William Burleson nay  
Joseph Wood nay  
John Reynolds nay  
Thomas Straight nay  
Thomas Matteson nay  
David Aylesworth Jun. nay  
Joseph Dolliver nay  
Ruben Whitford nay  
Henry olin nay  
Benjamin Weaver Jun. nay  
Samuel Greene nay  
George Dyre nay  
Caleb Bailey nay  
William Sweet nay  
Colonel Briggs nay  
John Sweet nay

Joseph Draper nay  
Rufus Ellis nay  
Caleb Carr nay  
William Davis nay  
Joseph Dolliver Jun. nay  
Joseph Potter nay  
David Culver nay  
Josiah Brown nay  
Abel Matteson nay  
Elisha Sweet nay  
William Spink nay  
Thomas Hall nay  
Jonathan Matteson Jun. nay  
Joseph Hopkins, Junr. nay  
David Matteson the 3rd nay  
Thomas Callens nay  
Benjamin Johnson nay  
John Johnson nay  
Rufus Matteson nay  
Jonathan Dean nay  
John Parker nay  
Thomas Wait nay  
Edmond Matteson nay  
Charles Carr nay  
John Hall nay  
Thomas Willcox nay  
Caleb Matteson nay  
Job Matteson nay  
Amos Jakways nay  
Peleg Sweet nay  
Thomas Whitford nay  
Henry Sweet nay  
John Comstock (of C) nay  
Robert Hall nay  
Adam Richmond nay  
Nathan Straight nay  
Thomas Colegrove nay  
Benjamin Gardiner nay  
Joseph Gardiner nay  
John Matteson nay  
Levi Whitford nay  
Nathaniel Niles nay  
Joseph Bailey nay  
Isak Carr nay  
Joseph Case nay



Silas Matteson nay  
 Jeremiah Austin nay  
 Henry olin Junr. nay  
 Burton Sweet nay  
 Pardon Tillinghast Jur. yea  
 Thomas Matteson of uriah nay  
 David Matteson nay  
 James Congdon nay  
 Josiah Matteson nay  
 Jesse Sweet nay  
 Thomas Manchester nay  
 Hezekiah Gorton nay  
 Rufus Wait nay  
 Benjamin Austin nay  
 David Hall nay  
 Samuel Hopkins nay  
 Thomas Young nay  
 Josiah Matteson Jur. nay  
 Obediah Matteson nay  
 John Briggs nay  
 Elisha Arnold nay  
 Jonathan Coms[t]ock nay  
 William Sweet nay  
 Gid. Wait nay  
 Judiah Aylsworth nay  
 Daniel Howard nay  
 Lodowick Greene nay  
 David Matteson Jur. nay  
 James Weaver nay  
 Silas Bailey nay  
 John Greene Jur. nay  
 Ellis Austin nay  
 Jeremiah Stone nay  
 Hazard Boss nay

One Hundred and forty five of the above is Nays and Two Yeas—

Voted that Thomas John Esqr. be and Hereby is appointed to Carry forward to the General Assembly the proceedings of the freemen of this Town Respecting their voices and Sentiments on the new purposed Constitution for the United States—

Whereas the petition of the people Called Quakers being Submitted to the freemen of this Town for their Sentiments thereon Relative to Having Two Certain acts of Assembly Repealed one of which making the paper money a Tender at Par and the other Shorting the Limmation of Notes of hand and Book Debts

Whereupon Resolved Unanimously that the Said acts be not Repealed, but the Same to Stand and Remain in force further Voted that our Representatives when Convened in General Assembly be and they are hereby Instructed to report the Same accordingly. . . .

1. MS, Town Meeting Book, 1773–1811, Vol. 2, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, West Greenwich, R.I.

**132. Boston American Herald, 31 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

The Towns of Providence and Newport, Rhode Island, we are informed, have drafted “a Petition and Memorial to the Hon. Legislature, stating the Reasons why they did not proceed in the Way pointed out by the Act—and requesting that a Convention of Representatives from all the Towns in the State might be called, to take up and decide upon the Federal Constitution.”—The General Assembly is to convene at East-Greenwich this Day.

1. Reprinted minus the last sentence: Newburyport, Mass., *Essex Journal*, 2 April; Exeter, N.H., *Freeman's Oracle*, 4 April.

**133. Boston American Herald, 31 March 1788<sup>1</sup>**

A Letter from a Gentleman in Providence to his Friend in this Town, dated 25th Instant, says, “The Constitution will be voted out here about FIVE to ONE, and be sent where it ought to go.”

1. Reprinted: Newburyport, Mass., *Essex Journal*, 2 April.

**134. Winchester Virginia Gazette, 2 April 1788**

The assembly of the state of Rhode-Island in their late session appointed the fourth Monday in March, last for all the freemen and freeholders within their state, to convene in their respective towns, in town-meetings assembled, and to deliberate upon, and determine each individual (who hath a right by law to vote for the choice of general officers) by himself, by poll, whether the constitution for the United States shall be adopted or negatived.

**135. Rhode Island General Assembly  
Report of the Committee on Yeas and Nays, 3 April 1788<sup>1</sup>**

We the Subscribers being Appointed a Committee To examine the Yeas & Nays from the respective Towns,—And upon Examination of the same, we find the number of Yeas to be two Hundred thirty seven, & the Nays to Amount To two thousand Seven Hundred & Eight,—which gives a Majority of two thousand four Hundred & seventy One nays All which we Humbly beg leave to report.

Thomas Durfee	}	Committee.
John Sayles		
James Shelden		
Shearj. Bourn		
Gideon Arnold		

In the Low House—April 3rd. 1788

Resolved that the report of the Committee for ascertaining the Yeas & Nays of the Freeman of the respective Towns for a Constitution for the United States be and the same is hereby received—And that Messrs. Jonathan J Hazard Thomas Joslyn & Rowse J Helme, with such others as shall be—appointed by the Upper House be a Comm to draft a Lre to the President of Congress notifying the returns of the Yeas & Nays upon said Constitution.

Voted & Sent up

By Rowse J. Helme

In the Upper House—[ - - - ] 4th April read & Concurred with the addition of [rest of paragraph is unreadable]

A List of the Yeas & Nays from the respective Towns are as follows—

	No. Yeas	No. of Nays
Newport	1	10
Providence		1
Warwick	3	140
Portsmouth	12	60
Westerly	12	56
South Kingston	1	125
New Shoram		32
North Kingston	2	160
East Greenwich	2	91
James Town	5	11
Smithfield	2	158
Scituate		156
Glouster	9	228
Coventry		180
West Greenwich	2	145
Charleston	6	51
Exeter	6	136
Bristol	26	23
Tiverton	23	92
Little Compton	63	57
Warren	2	41
Cumberland	10	113
Richmond	1	68
Hopkinton	33	95
Johnston	1	79
Cranston		101
Middle Town	6	40

North Providence		48
Barrington	9	34
Foster		<u>177</u>
	<u>237</u>	2708

1. MS, Reports, 1778–1788, no. 122, R-Ar. The numbers are sometimes different from the manuscript records of the House Committee (See RCS:R.I., 233).

### 136. Columbia

#### Newport Herald, 3 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

*Extracts from a celebrated Miscellaneous Publication, revised and adapted to this meridian.*

For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head. 1 Cor. xi. 10.

The ear of the public has for two long years been daily stunned with loud and violent complaints of *Male-Administration*,—I would therefore humbly propose that a *Female Administration* should for once among us take its turn and be allowed a fair and candid trial on the slippery pinnacle of power.—Policy must dictate the propriety of such a change—its legality is rendered indisputable by the opinion of a great Civilian in these words, “*The Salic Law is unknown in this Republic: It is custom only, founded on female diffidence and a long succession of good male rulers, which hath prevented a rotation of power, the resumption of this right is not lost, but may be made at pleasure.*”—It is also evident that the kingdoms in Europe have made the most illustrious figure during the reign of females; witness the reign of Queen Anne and Elizabeth in England, of Catharine in Russia, &c. &c. &c. it is therefore presumed that a *Female Administration* may raise up our departed honor and credit, and revigorate our decayed Constitution.

I foresee many good consequences resulting from this scheme—it will infallibly put a stop to the inundations of an iniquitous paper money, for this sex are not pleased with the *shadow of a substance*—it will check the progress of injustice, and make the widow and orphan once more leap for joy—it will rescue us from being the butt of merited disgrace, and effectually restrain all political bickerings, for the *male* sex can’t in honor draw their pens, nor exercise their tongues against a *Female Administration*, so that we shall no longer be distracted with controversy. Besides the *real* strength and riches of a State, consists in the number and industry of its inhabitants.—To *increase* the number of people, and to find them sufficient employment will *naturally* be the great object of a *Female Administration*. Sottish or indolent husbands will be efficaciously obliged to mind their business and be sober—all unnecessary restrictions and bars in the matrimonial road, will be removed; the *involuntary* maiden will be virtually considered as the wife of the *unsocial* batchelor, by having a separate maintenance, in proportion to his useless hoards of wealth: the exigencies of government will be supplied by heavy taxes on bachelors, dogs, horses for sport, and Bacchanalian entertainments.—The wheels of government being unclogged from the shackles of injustice, a *Female Administration* will thus regulate the business of the Re-

public for the general good—Commerce will wave her colours of success, whilst the men of industry, instead of *being forced to idly parade in town-meetings to give their YEAS and NAYS*, will find sufficient employment in pursuing their respective occupations.

I am very sensible that many objections may be brought against every scheme that is offered for the public good.—As to this my scheme, I shall be told that women in general want learning, and have no heads for business; in answer to the first, I am sure that I have never heard much of the learning of *our administration*. The second objection is that women have no heads for business, but it is well known that it requires “*no conjuration or mighty magic*” to go through the common routine of office—Integrity and virtue are preferable to Machiavelian artifice.

It may be urged perhaps in behalf of some *veteran leaders and upstart officers*, that they have spent all their emoluments of office, and are too indolent to labor, and to beg ashamed, and therefore it would be cruel to turn them adrift pennyless into the wide world,—to obviate this weighty objection, I would propose that this honorable class of men be enrolled in the list of ADMIRALS OF THE YELLOW FLAG (*as they are called in England*) that is to enjoy the titles and pay of office, without being entrusted with any of the powers—or if the finances of the Republic will not admit of pensions to so many *dead men*, let them become *house-keepers, necessary-men, or dry nurses, and receive* the pay accordingly: as a further compensation for so painful an abdication of power, let the first Female Administration be composed of the wives and daughters of the present *Male Administration*, it would change the reins of government in public and domestic concerns, and the Republic need not fear any secret influence, as the governed being governors in the *beds of justice*, would exercise their powers without control.

Thus have I sketched out a rough draught of my plan—I appeal to every impartial American whether it does not exhibit a most rational mode of extricating ourselves from our present disorders and difficulties; for it is evident to all that nothing but *a real change of men and measures will restore this Republic*, and honest men not being in popular vogue, this plan is our dernier resort.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 7 May.

### 137. New Haven Gazette, 3 April 1788

The town meetings of Rhode-Island have rejected the Federal constitution.

### 138. William Ellery to the Commissioners of the Treasury Newport, 4-6 April 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . [6 April] . . . The Genl. Assembly closed their Session last saturday evening.—The Session was short and but little business done.—The decision as it is called of the question on the new Constitution, by the yeas and Nays by individuals in Town-Meetings, with the reason for adopting that mode was ordered to be transmitted to Congress in a letter signed by the Governor.—

The towns of Newport & Providence, and ~~Bristol~~ which had declined giving their voices in any other manner than by delegates in Convention, had instructed their deputies to move and urge that a Convention might be called.—They did so;—but their motion was negatived by a great majority.—

Nothing was done relative to the requisition of Oct. last.—

At the last February Session the legislature directed the third Quarter part of the six per cent Securities to be exchanged for paper bills or to be forfeited.—The Time for the exchange is extended to the 10th. of May next, when that part which is unexchanged is to be forfeited.—

The Quakers at Feby. Session petitioned for the repeal of the tender and limitation act, their petition was referred to the last Session.—The limitation act was repealed;—but the tender law is preserved in its full force.—

These as I am informed by our deputies were the material proceedings of the last Session. . . .

1. FC, Ellery Letterbook, 1786–1794, RNHi.

### 139. House of Magistrates Proceedings, Saturday, 5 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

No. 23 Vote of the Lower House approving the Draught of a letter to the President of Congress respecting the federal Constitution proposed was Read & Concurd.

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

### 140. House of Deputies Proceedings, Saturday, 5 April 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . Vote of this House approving the draft of a Ltr to the President of Congress &c . . .

1. MS, House of Deputies Journal, R-Ar.

### 141. Newport Mercury, 7 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

The Honourable GENERAL ASSEMBLY of this State, on Saturday Evening, adjourned to the first Wednesday in May next, then to meet in this Town.

We hear that, during their Session, they have extended the Limitation Act four Years—that the Affair of equal Representation is *again* referred to a future Assembly—and that by the Returns made of the Yeas and Nays for the Adoption or Rejection of the proposed Federal Constitution (agreeable to a late Act of Assembly) there appeared to have been given in, throughout the State, 232 Yeas—2708 Nays.

1. Reprinted thirteen times by 7 June: Conn. (3), N.Y. (3), N.J. (1), Pa. (4), Ga. (2).

### 142. Litchfield, Conn., Weekly Monitor, 7 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

The town meetings of Rhode-Island have rejected the Federal Constitution.

1. Reprinted: *Fairfield Gazette*, 9 April.

**143. New York Packet, 8 April 1788<sup>1</sup>**

A Gentleman from the State of Rhode-Island informs us, that the referrence of the proposed Constitution to the people at large in that State, originated from a full conviction in the Legislature, that it would be rejected. The minority persuaded of the impossibility of effecting a change, refused to vote in town-meeting, upon the question. Newport, Providence, and two or three more towns being decidedly right, carried the business submitted to them by forming memorials to the General Assembly, requesting them to appoint a Convention, agreeably to the recommendation of Congress. In other towns the minority protested against the propriety of the proceedings, and withdrew, so that the State at large will appear to be unanimous. The fact however is, that seven-ninths of the people adhere to their paper system, and consequently are opposed to every measure of a general nature. They exhibit an example that will soon be followed by the other States, if the habits of government should be a little more relaxed. All men are alike; circumstances only form the general character.—The policy of Rhode-Island is repugnant to hypocrisy. They blush not at six for one, while seven percent discount is within the vortex, though not so perceptibly of the same disposition.

The freedom of the human mind in its various operations is exemplified on no subject in a greater degree than in its reflections on the opinions on matters of government. The wise and good have been more dissentient on political topics, than on any other which have exercised their understandings, or excited their honest feelings. Hence the variety of opinions on the proposed Constitution ought not to surprise us, nor indeed should we even regret a diversity of sentiment, that will, ensure our safety, if regulated by reason, integrity and moderation. We see and feel the indispensable necessity of union among the States. We know, too, that our present articles of confederation are faulty on some important points and do not extend to many others which are requisite to the existance and administration of government. Let not then a too excessive jealousy prevent *a trial* of the proposed plan. Amendments have been proposed in the way the Constitution points out. The most jealous friends of liberty in America have acquiesced with a frank and noble spirit in the adoption of the government, when they found amendments, were to be recommended to the first assembly of the States under the new Constitution. They saw that the edifice contained may valuable materials, judiciously combined, and though they were of opinion that it was not perfect, yet they thought it more easy and more safe *to attempt to complete this*, than to overturn the whole, and attempt to build one anew. We know, without doubt that this Constitution is a well intended attempt of men, many of whom possessed our sincerest affections and high esteem before the revolution, and who possessed them afterwards. If we were to form a list of characters to whom America owes in the most eminent degree her freedom and independence, omitting the worthies of whom Providence has been pleased to deprive us, we shall find a great proportion of them on the list of the Convention, and a great part of the others may be counted among the friends and supporters of the Constitution. Let us not then suppose that these men

could combine to *cheat* their country of property—liberty—and all happiness. 'Tis too unkind, too harsh a suggestion. It cannot be agreeable to a just and grateful people, that the yet tender wounds of patriot valor should be excoriated by the *brand* of traiterous conspiracy.

'Tis said by the votaries of *the divinity of Kings*, that we have chosen forms of government which cannot be administered. Let us take care that we do not become melancholy examples, by which the *supposed* truth of their assertions may be apparently established. Republics, we trust in Heaven, can be energetic, wise and upright. Yet we must candidly acknowledge, that *it yet remains* for America to establish, by her example, the truth of this position. Hitherto our governments have wounded our best feelings, by their alternate want of efficiency, honesty and wisdom. Mark well, then, ye patriot members of the State Conventions, the present condition of things, and consider, before you throw away the opportunities of this your day, the future prospects of your country.

1. Reprinted in part in the *Newport Mercury*, 28 April, and in whole or in part in six other newspapers by 16 April: N.Y. (1), N.J. (1), Pa. (4).

#### 144. Massachusetts Centinel, 9 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

The Assembly of Rhode-Island, we are informed by a gentleman from Providence, at their session last week, at East-Greenwich, REFUSED TO COMPLY with the requests of a number of towns, to call a CONVENTION for taking the federal Constitution under consideration.—*Laus Deo!*

1. Reprinted ten times by 24 May: N.H. (2), Mass. (3), Conn. (3), Pa. (2). Four reprints omit the "*Laus Deo!*"

#### 145. Newburyport, Mass., Essex Journal, 9 April 1788

MR. HOYT, *The following humourous and sensible piece, it is said, was written in Rhode-Island, and more particularly calculated for the Meridian of that State—but as it suggests some thoughts very pertinent to the present important Crisis of these Confederated States, it is hoped it will be agreeable, if not useful, to your readers.*

To the PUBLIC.

That the political body, like the animal, is liable to violent diseases, which, for a time, baffle the healing art, is a truth which we all acknowledge, and which most of us lament. But as most of the disorders, incident to the human frame, are the consequence of an intemperate indulgence of its appetites, or of neglecting the most obvious means of safety; so most of the popular tumults which disturb government arise from an abuse of its blessings, or an inattention to its principles. A man of a robust constitution, relying on its strength, riots in gratifications which weaken the *stamina vitæ*—the surfeiting pleasures of a few years destroy the power of enjoyment; and the full fed voluptuary feels a rapid transition to the meagre valetudinarian. Thus people who enjoy an uncommon share of political privileges, often carry their freedom to licentiousness, and put it out of their power to enjoy society, by destroying its support.



*Too much health* is a *disease*, which often requires a very strict regimen—*too much Liberty* is the worst species of *Tyranny*—and *Wealth* may be accumulated to that degree as to *impoverish* a state. If *all* men attempt to become *masters*, the *most* of them must necessarily become *slaves* in the attempt—and could *every man* on the earth possess millions of joes, *every man* would be poorer than *any man* is now, and infinitely more wretched, because they could not procure the necessities of life.

My countrymen, it is a common saying now, that *the Devil is in you*. I question, however, the influence of the devil in these affairs. Divines and Politicians agree in this, to father all evil upon the devil—but the effects ascribed to this prince of evil spirits, both in the moral and political world, I ascribe to the wickedness and ignorance of the human heart. Taking the word *devil* in this sense, he is *in you* and *among you* in a variety of shapes.

In the first place, the *weakness of our Federal Government is the Devil*. It prevents the adoption of any measures that are requisite for us as a nation—it keeps us from paying our honest debts—it throws out of our power all the profits of commerce, and this drains us of *cash*—is not this the devil? Yes, my countrymen, an *empty purse* is the devil—and many such devils we have among us.

You are jealous of your rights, and afraid to trust Congress—well, jealousy is an evil spirit, and all evil spirits are devils—so far the devil is *in you*. You act in this particular, just like the crew of a ship, which would not trust the helm with *one* of their number because he might *possibly* run it ashore—when by leaving it without a pilot they were *certain* of shipwreck. You act just like men in raising a building, who would not have a master-workman, because he *might* give out orders—You will be masters yourselves, and you are not all ready to lift at the same time—one labours at a stick of timber, then another, then a third—you are then vexed that it is not raised.—Why, let a master order thirteen of you to take hold together, and you will lift it at once. Every family has a master (or a *mistress*—I ask the ladies' pardon.) When a ship or a house is built, there is a master—when high-ways are repaired, there is a master—every little school has a master—the continent is a great school, the boys are numerous, & full of roguish tricks, and there is *no master*. The boys in this great school play truant, and there is no person to chastise them. Do you think, my countrymen, that America is more easily governed than a school? You do very well in small matters—extend your reason to greater ones. Would you not laugh at a farmer who should fasten a three inch cable to a plough, and yet attempt to draw a house with a cobweb? “And Nathan said unto David, *thou art the man!*” You think a master necessary to govern a few harmless children in a school or family, yet leave thousands of great rogues to be governed by *good advice*.—Believe me, my friends, for I am *serious*—you *lose* rights, because you will not give your magistrates power to *protect them*—your liberty is despotism, because it has no controul—your power is nothing, because it is not united.

But further, *Luxury* rages among you, and luxury is the *devil*. The war sent this evil dæmon to impoverish the people, and embarrass the public. The articles of rum and tea alone, which are drank in this country, would pay all its taxes. But when we add, sugar, coffee, gauzes, silks, feathers and the whole list of

baubles and trinkets, what an enormous expense! No wonder you *want* paper-money! My countrymen are grown very tasty! Feathers and jordan's must be imported! Certainly, gentlemen, the *devil* is among you. A Hampshire, or Berkshire-man, who drinks forty shillings worth of rum in a year, and never thinks of the expense, will raise a mob to reduce the Governor's salary which does not amount to three pence per man per annum. Is not this the *devil*?

My countrymen, *an industrious man* appeared, not long ago, informing you how to redress grievances. He gives excellent advice. Let every man make a little box, and put into it *four pence* every day. This in a year will amount to six pounds one shillings and eight pence, a sum sufficient to pay any poor man's tax. Any poor man can pay three or four pence per day, though no poor man can at the end of a year pay six pounds. Take my advice every man of you, and you will hardly feel your taxes.

But further, a *tender-law* is the *devil*. When I trust a man a sum of money, I expect he will return the full value. That legislature which says my debtor may pay me with one third of the value he received, commits a deliberate act of villainy—an act for which an *individual*, in any government, would be honored with a whipping-post—and in most governments, with the gallows. When a man makes dollars, one third of which only is silver, and passes them for good coin, he must lose his ears, &c. But legislatures can with the solemn face of rulers & guardians of justice, boldly give currency to an *adulterated coin*—enjoin it upon debtors to cheat their creditors, and enforce their systematical knavery with legal penalties. The difference between the man who makes and passes counterfeit money, and the man who tenders his creditor one third of the value of the debt, and demands a discharge, is the same as between a thief and a robber.—The first cheats his neighbour in the dark, and takes his property without his knowledge—the last boldly meets him at noon-day, tells him he is a rascal, and demands his purse.

My countrymen, make *paper* as much as you please—make it a tender in all *future contracts*, or let it stand on its own bottom—but remember that past contracts are *sacred things*—that legislatures have no right to interfere with them—that they have no right to say, that a debt shall be paid at a discount, or in any manner which the parties never intended. It is the business of justice to fulfil the intention of parties in contracts—not to defeat them.—To pay bona fide contracts for cash, in paper of little value, or in *old horses*, would be a dishonest attempt in an individual—but for legislatures to frame laws to support and encourage such detestable villainy, is like a Judge who should inscribe the arms of a rogue over the seat of justice, or Clergymen who should convert into bawdy-houses the temples of Jehovah. My countrymen, the world says, *the devil is in you*—Mankind detest you as they would a nest of robbers.

Again, *the devil is in you* for opposing the Federal Constitution. This system is calculated to establish justice and promote the general *good* of the community—Now, whatever is opposed to *good* is *evil*—and all evil is of the *devil*. While you attempt to trade to advantage, without a *Head* to combine all the states into systematic, uniform measures, the world will laugh at you for fools—While the

merchants take and give credit, the world will call them ideots, & laugh at their ruin—While farmers get credit, hire money, and mortgage their farms, the world will call them simpletons, and laugh at their embarrassments—While all men live beyond their income, and are harrassed with duns and sheriffs, no man will pity them, or give them relief—

But lastly, mobs and county conventions are *devils*. Good men love laws and legal measures—Knaves only, fear law and wish to destroy it. The man who encourages a mob to prevent the operation of law, ceases to be *free* or *safe*—for the same principle that leads a man to put a bayonet to the breast of a Judge, will lead him to take property where he can find it—and when the Judge dare not act, where is the loser's remedy? I would shoot the leader of a mob, sooner than a midnight ruffian.

My countrymen, when mobs and county conventions oppose the course of justice, and legislatures make *paper* and *old horses* a legal tender in all cases, the world will exclaim with one voice, *You are Rogues, and the devil is in you!*

My countrymen, I am a private and peaceable man—I have no office of any kind—I have nothing to win or lose by the game of *paper-money* and *tender-laws*—But I revere justice. I would sooner pick oakum all my life, than stain my reputation, or pay my creditor one farthing less than his honest demands.

#### 146. New York Journal, 10 April 1788<sup>1</sup>

On Monday the 24th ult. the several towns in the state of Rhode-Island, agreeably to a resolve of the general assembly, convened, for the purposes mentioned in the act of that state, published in this Journal of Thursday the 20th of March, viz. to determine, each individual (qualified voters) by himself, whether the said constitution for the United States shall be adopted or negatived. We learn, that on this important subject the towns of Newport, Providence, and one or two others, resolved to instruct their representatives, in assembly, to move for a recommendation of an appointment of a convention to decide on the grand question. It is said, that a great majority of the towns in that state, at this meeting, totally rejected the constitution.

1. Reprinted: New Brunswick, N.J., *Brunswick Gazette* and *Hudson Weekly Gazette*, 15 April.

#### 147. Providence United States Chronicle, 10 April 1788

Proceedings of the Town of Providence on the FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

*At a TOWN-MEETING of the FREEMEN of the Town of PROVIDENCE, legally assembled on the 24th Day of March, A. D. 1788.*

The Hon. JABEZ BOWEN, Esq; Moderator.

RESOLVED, That David Howell, John I. Clark, Thomas Arnold, Theodore Foster, and Benjamin Bourne, Esquires, be, and they are hereby appointed, a Committee to draught a Petition to the Honorable the General Assembly, that a Convention of Delegates may be recommended by the Legislature of this State, to be convened, agreeably to the concurrent Resolutions of the Convention of the United States and of Congress, for considering and deciding on the new Constitution.

A true copy:

Witness, DANIEL COOKE, T. Clerk.

**148. Samuel Huntington to Stephen Mix Mitchell  
Norwich, Conn., 24 April 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . You will doubtless be Informed by the public papers of the mode & event of the proceedings in Rhode Island relative to the new Constitution; which appears very Irregular & altogether undecisive

1. RC, original owned by S. Howard Goldman of Weston, Conn.

**149. Providence United States Chronicle, 24 April 1788<sup>1</sup>**

A Correspondent has favoured us with a few late Papers, printed at St. John's (New-Brunswick) formerly Part of the Province of Nova-Scotia.—They contain nothing of any Importance to us, except the Remarks made by their Writers on the late Riot at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, on Account of the new Constitution—particular Details of which are published in them all, apparently with great Satisfaction. The Eyes of these envious Neighbours are upon us—and they are secretly hoping, that by rejecting the proposed national Government we shall be thrown into Convulsions and civil War.—After stating in one of their Papers the Proceedings had on this important Subject by the Convention of Massachusetts, the following is added, viz.—“At the same Time, however, nine Articles were stated, as requisite to be considered by the Federal Convention, and admitted as Provisions into the new Constitution—These seem extremely necessary to curb the Power of the Senate and Representatives of the Union from interfering too much in the Government of the States respectively: *And in all Probability will be the Cause of future Disturbance.*—These, with the Form of Ratification were published in our Gazette of the 7th Inst. Upon the whole, it seems evident, that the People have to fear from their own, as well as the Federal Senate. We may expect in a few Years the very same Complaints urged against Congress, as were made the Ground of the late Disturbances, which separated America from Great-Britain—*and perhaps similar Consequences.*”

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Gazette*, 29 April; *Albany Gazette*, 15 May; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 23 May (excerpt); *Charleston City Gazette*, 30 May; and *Pennsylvania Carlisle Gazette*, 3 July.

**150. Boston Independent Chronicle, 24 April 1788**

## A RECENT ANECDOTE.

A Gentleman of this town, lately conversing with an inhabitant of Rhode-Island, observed, that he believed many of the citizens of that state, had gone further in the practice of dishonesty, with impunity, than any set of men who were permitted to remain in a state of society—You are greatly mistaken replied the Rhode-Islander, the M——g——s of the Boston N——h M——s L——tt——y, have lately given proofs of their being a full match for the worst Member of our General Court; and that they have been allowed to escape, not only without the punishment they deserve, but to be permitted to boast there is no law which can touch them, is not a little surprising to every honest man in the Union. The Boston gentleman, with a blush, dropt the conversation.

**151. Abraham Baldwin to Seaborn Jones**

New York, 26 April 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . Rhode Island has rejected. . . .

1. RC, Henry Ford Museum Bicentennial Collection, Edison Institute, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich.

**152. Spirit of Phocion, post-April 1788**

AN ADDRESS to the Honble. *Theodore Foster, Thomas G Hazzard and Oliver Durfee*, Esquires, late Three of the Governors Council, in the State of Rhode Island, occasioned by their being left out of Office, at the Last Election there, on account of their Federal Principles, and their opposition to the Paper Money System of that State.

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O FOSTER! Still whilst others you transcend,  
 'To Virtue only and her Friends a Friend';<sup>(a)</sup>  
 Whilst firmly you support the Fed'ral Cause,<sup>(b)</sup>  
 Base tender Acts oppose and "*Know Ye*"<sup>(c)</sup> Laws;  
 And thou O HAZZARD, whilst you wish to please,  
 Contend for Freedom and the Peoples<sup>(d)</sup> Ease:—  
 Of Good Ambitions, where alone resides,  
 What Justice Vindicates and Wisdom Guides:—  
 And thou, O HONEST DURFEE!<sup>(e)</sup> too, attend,  
 For Justice is your Motive and your End,  
 And in pursuit of Justice' Sacred Call,  
 Secur'd in Innocence, ye cannot fall:—  
 Hear then the humble Muse assume the Lay,  
 Which Fed'ral Gratitude demands to pay.—  
 What though a while Ye unrewarded are,  
 You'll still perceives a providential Care,

*“For Blessings ever wait on virtuous Deeds,  
 “And tho a late a sure Reward succeeds.”—*  
 Great Minds are ever pleased in doing Good,  
 Tho’ oft by those they serve not understood;  
 Yet Virtue’s Sacred Counsel they pursue,  
 Unmoved by Faction, still persist like You.—  
 Virtue the Strength and Beauty of the Soul,  
*Is Heaven’s strong Armour clad o’er the whole:—*  
 It breathes a Felt Divinity within  
 True Conscious Worth, Sublime, unmar’d by Sin;—  
 It gives the Bliss that Innocence bestows,  
 And warms the Heart that Feels another’s Woes:—  
 It’s very Silence speaks a Solemn Awe,  
 Proclaims its Dictates Great JEHOVAH’s Law;—  
*‘Gives what naught else can give, or can destroy,  
 The Soul’s Calm Sunshine and the Heartfelt Joy:—  
 The Self approving Hour which Year’s out weighs,  
 Of Stupid Stazers and of loud Huzzas’.—*  
 This is the Solid Pomp of Prosp’rous Days  
 The firm Foundation of e’erlasting Bays.—  
 Then moan not lack of popular Applause,  
 But still pursue *the virtuous, Fed’ral Cause;—*  
 The Popl’ar Voice is often wrong, and odd,  
 ‘It may or may not be the Voice of God’.—  
 Thus as old Grecian Chronicles relate  
 Good PHOCION,<sup>(f)</sup> their fam’d Minister of State,  
 SOCRATES *the Wise*<sup>(g)</sup> and <sup>(h)</sup> ARISTIDES too,  
 Were public Men but Set aside like You.—  
 In all their Acts they sought the Public Weal,  
 Alas! How ill requited was their Zeal!  
 Condem’d by Sentence of the Public Breath,  
 To Confiscation, Banishment and Death.—  
*Unstable MAN!* Soon chang’d the Public Mind,  
 To do them Justice then They all inclin’d;—  
 Statues, and Pillars,—all that Love could give  
 Were thought too mean to make their Memories live.—  
 Short liv’d and vain’s the Breath of human Praise,  
 Oft Cause-less lost or gain’d, an empty Blaze;  
 Act well your Part, and merit thus the Bays.—  
 See *Great WASHINGTON*, let his Conduct Show,  
 From active Life what various Blessings flow.  
 In him a Just ambition Stands confess’d,  
 It warms but not inflames his equal Breast.  
 See him in Senates act the Patriots Part,  
 Truth on his Lips the Public at his Heart;

There neither Fears can awe, nor Hopes controul,  
 The Honest Purpose of his Steady Soul.—  
 Unmov'd by foul Detractions venom'd Spite,  
 Placid and mild, he still pursues the Right.—  
 He Sees the *Ingrates* with Pitying Eyes,  
 Calmly hears *Philadelphiensian*<sup>(1)</sup> Lies,  
 As wise Physicians, with compassion bear,  
 Abuse they from their *Frantic Patients* hear.—  
 No mean Attachments e[']er seduc'd his Tongue  
 To Gild the Cause, his Heart suspected wrong;  
 But deaf to Envy, Faction, Spleen, his Voice  
 Joins here or there, as Reason Guides his Choice.—  
 To one great Point his Faithful Labours Tend,  
 His Country's Interest & her Bliss the End.—

*Then learn from him the Course by which to move,  
 Above yourselves your Country always love;  
 And tho' some blame you now, they'll soon approve.—*

(a) *Uni æquus Virtuti atque ejus Amicis.* Hor.

(b) Mr FOSTER belongs to Providence. He was nominated by the *Minority* as a Member of the Upper House and appointed at the Election in May 1787. He exerted himself in Favour of Calling a State Convention for considering the New Constitution, and for taking of[f] the Tender of the Paper Money in Extinguishment of Debts.—

(c) Alluding to the Conspicuous Words “*Know Ye*” in the Advertisement of the Tender of the Paper Money required by the Tender Act.—

(d) Mr HAZZARD belongs to Newport has been a Number of Years a Member of the Upper House and at Octr Session 1787 with a View of *obtaining a Repeal* of the Paper Money Tender proposed an Instalment Act on Similar Principals with that of South-Carolina.—

(e) MR DURFEY belongs to Middletown on Rhode Island. He was Moderator of a Town Meeting when a Question was taken whether the Deputies of the Town should be instructed to endeavour to procure a Repeal of the Tender and the Freeman being equally divided he turn'd the Vote in Favour of the Repeal, observing “*They might as well vote for Highway Robbery as for continuing the Tender of the Paper Money when its Exchange for Silver was more than Six for one.*”—

(f) PHOCION was one of the Greatest and best Men Greece ever produced. He was Forty Five times appointed General by the People:—was universally esteemed. His admirable Virtue pro[c]ured him the Appellation of *The Good*. “*Ob Integritatim Vitæ bonus est appellatus*” *Cor. Nep.* For in him was centered every kind of Merit. Notwithstanding which, after the most Signal and Important Services done his Country he was by an Assembly of the People condemn'd to die and ended his Life by Poison—319 Years before Christ. His infatuated and ungrateful Country were afterwards Sensible of the Injury they had done him and erected a Statue of Brass to his Memory and honorably interred his Bones at the Public Expence.—

(g) SOCRATES was pronounced by the Oracle, at Delphos, the Wisest Man of his Time. He was a Man of most extrao[r]dinary Virtue—But was accused before a prejudiced Assembly of the People and very unjustly condemn'd to Death 401 Years before Christ. Plutarch says that the Cases of Socrates and Phocion were exactly parallel and that both provd the Shame and the Cause of Punishment to the Athenians. But perhaps there never was so great a Revolution of Sentiment respecting any person as, in Athens, respecting Socrates—Those who had accused him and Caused his Death were held in the greatest Possible Execration, and were some condemn'd to Death others to Banishment—All Business Stopped for some time and the City went into General Mourning, and erected a Statue of Brass to the Memory of Socrates and even dedicated to him a Chapel called the Chappel of Socrates. Madam *Dacier*, in one of her Notes upon Plutarch, observes “That it was Four Score and Two Years from Socrates’s Death to Phocions—After the Athenians had committed so great an Error as the Condemnation of Socrates after they had been sensible of it and what is more after they had been punished for it one would think they never could have been guilty of the like again. But Such is the Nature of the Populace. After the Commission of one Crime it is not long before they commit another. They will run headlong into an Error in the Morning be sorry for it at Noon and as soon as they have din’d be guilty of Just such another.”—

(h) ARISTIDES was an Athenian General Surnamed *The Just*, in the Highest Estimation but being envied on Account of his Superior Eminence and Reputation and some secret Practice against him he was unjustly banished by the Ostracism.—A mode of Punishment where every Citizen when an Ostracism was declared necessary, took a Shell (in Greek Ostracismos) and wrote on it the Name of the Person he would have banished which was carried to a Place in the Market and if the Number of Shells amounted to 600 he whose Name was found on the Greatest Number of Shells was banish’d—Aristides was afterwards recalled.—

(i) A Number of Scandalous and abusive Publications have appear’d in the Newspapers within the Year past under the Signature of *Philadelphiensis* which are alluded to.—

**153. Jeremiah Wadsworth to Henry Knox  
Hartford, Conn., May 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I agree with you that Rhd Island will serve to try experiments on and my resentment if not my judgement would reconcile me to trying an experiment on New York. . . .

1. RC, Knox Papers, GLC02437.03881, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, at the New-York Historical Society.



**154. Providence United States Chronicle, 1 May 1788**

The LANDHOLDER to Luther Martin, Esq;—also a Piece in a Philadelphia Paper, signed LUTHER MARTIN, shall be published in our next.

**155. Providence United States Chronicle, 1 May 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Monday last being the Anniversary Election of Officers to command the United Company of Train of Artillery of this Town, the Day was ushered in by a Discharge of *Six Cannon*, in Honor of the *Six States* which have adopted the *Federal Constitution*.—In the Forenoon the Company paraded in complete Uniform—and at 12 o'Clock fired 13 Cannon, in Honor of the United States of America.—At Half past One, they partook of an Entertainment at Mr. JAMES GREEN'S.—After Dinner the following Toasts were drank, viz.—

1. Liberty without Licentiousness.
2. May the States be convinced that their Safety lies in a *well-regulated Militia*.
3. May the Stripes in the Flag teach us to hold the Staff in our own Hands.
4. May we never have a *War* without a *Washington*.
5. May we never have a *Shays* without a *Lincoln*.
6. May we never have *Money* without a *benevolent Heart*.
7. May we never have *Poverty* without *Hope*.
8. May we never have a *Parson* without a *Parish*.
9. May we never have *Cannon* without *Powder*.
10. May we never have a *Party* without one Side being *right*.
11. May every *Prodigal* be the Son of a *Miser*.
12. May the Girls never have Cause to mourn with Jephtha's Daughter.
13. May the Discipline of the Militia supercede the Necessity of a standing Army.

The following Gentlemen were elected Officers for the ensuing Year, viz.—

DANIEL TILLINGHAST, Esq; Colonel.  
 LEVI HALL, Esq; Lieutenant-Colonel.  
 ROBERT TAYLOR, Esq; Major.  
 GERSHOM JONES, Esq; Captain.  
 JOSEPH BURRILL, Lieutenant.

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 3 May, and in whole or in part in seven out-of-state newspapers by 26 May: Mass. (1), Conn. (2), N.Y. (1), Pa. (3).

**156. Thomas Tudor Tucker to St. George Tucker  
New York, 2 May 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

My ever dear Brother

. . . We have a Letter from the Governor of RhodeIsland informing of the Proceedings of that State upon the Business & it's Rejection, which you have seen in the Public Prints. They alledge that the Singlilarity of their Mode proceeded from no Disrespect either to the general Convention or to Congress but from a Regard to pure Republican Principles. . . .

1. RC, Tucker-Coleman Papers, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

**157. Charles Thomson to Governor John Collins  
New York, 3 May 1788<sup>1</sup>**

I have the honor to inform you that your letter of the 5 of April with the papers enclosed have been recd. & communicated to Congress. I herewith transmit to your excellency to be laid before the Legislature a State of the representation in Congress for the Months of March & April & am sorry to observe that for the last twelve Months your State has not been one day represented.

1. FC, PCC, Item 18, Letterbooks of the Secretary of Congress, 1779–89, DNA.

**158. Winchester Virginia Centinel, 7 May 1788**

The petition and instructions to the Assembly of Rhode-Island, from the towns of Newport and Providence, praying that a Convention might be appointed, were, on Saturday, the 5th of April, ordered to be thrown off the table.

**159. Warren Town Meeting, 8 May 1788 (excerpts)**

At a Town Meeting By Adjournment May 8th. 1788 . . .

To John Brown for Warning Town Meeting to adadopt or Reject the Constitution 0-4— . . .

**160. Mentor**

**Providence United States Chronicle, 8 May 1788**

Mr. WHEELER, *You are desired to publish the following in your next Paper.*

The Difference between an HONEST and a CRAFTY ADMINISTRATION.

The *honest administration* sees, and are induced to examine into the justice and equity of their laws, because government is deeply interested therein; they view the objects that are distant, as well as those that are near, with all their remote consequences, and even their indirect tendencies, and like Aristides of old, they hold fast their integrity, in preference to popular applause, and prefer that which to be enjoyed must be given, to that which may be bought; they consider their administration as a single day in the great year of government—but as a day that is affected by those which went before, and must influence those which are to follow; they combine, therefore, and compare all those objects, relations and tendencies—and the judgment they make on a liberal, not a partial survey of them, is the rule of their conduct. That scheme of the reason of State which lies open before a wise administration, contains all the principles of justice and good government, and all the great interests of their country; so that, as they prepare for some events, they guard against others, whether they be likely to happen during their administration or at some future period.

The *crafty administration* neither see nor are willing to see any further than their personal interest, and the support their measures require. If such men surmount any actual difficulties, avoid any immediate distress, or without doing

either of these effectually, gain a little time, by all the low artifice which cunning is ready to suggest, and baseness of mind to employ, they exult and are flattered by their mercenary train, on the great event, which amounts often to no more than this, that they got into distress by a series of blunders, and out of it by a series of iniquity; they will thus continue themselves in office, till the veil is removed, and expose to their deluded constituents the baseness of their hearts, and the fallacy of their measures: But when the people (let us hope not too late) shall be convinced of the iniquity of their schemes, they will then hurl from office those base men, who have ruined the State by making unjust laws, authorizing its citizens to defraud the widow and the orphan, and corrupting the morals of its inhabitants, by encouraging them to pay no regard to the most solemn contracts, and forfeiting both public and private credit.

### 161. Providence Gazette, 10 May 1788

*To the PRINTER of the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE.*

SIR, *Your inserting the following Extract, taken from a late Publication, will perhaps be agreeable to many of your Readers.* A. Z.

Few people are able to form an adequate idea of the extent of the districts ceded to the United States of America, at the conclusion of the late war: It will not be amiss, therefore, to compare them with countries, with whose situation and extent we are more acquainted. The following measurements are made with accuracy:

The river Ohio is navigable from Fort-Pitt to its mouth, which is 1164 miles. The lands on the banks of the Ohio, and between the Alleghany mountains, the Lakes Ontario and Erie, and the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, contain 233,200 square miles, nearly equal to Great-Britain and France, whose contents are 235,237 square miles.

The lands between the Illinois, Lakes Huron and Superior, and the Mississippi at the Falls of St. Anthony, contain 129,030 square miles, nearly equal to Great-Britain and Ireland, which are 131,800 square miles.

The lands from St. Anthony's Falls to the south line, from the Lake of the Woods to the head of the Mississippi, contain 59,000 square miles, which is more than Holland, Flanders and Ireland, which are 57,908 square miles.

The Thirteen States of America contain 207,050 square miles, nearly as large as all Germany, Flanders, Holland and Switzerland, which contain 207,483 square miles.

### 162. Newport Herald, 15 May 1788<sup>1</sup>

#### CHRONICLES.

*Wednesday*, the 7th, being the annual General Election, his Excellency the Governor and his Honor the Deputy-Governor, with the Assistants, were escorted by the High-Sheriff and his Deputies to the Court-house.—The Speaker, who possesses the lungs of Stentor, proclaimed with an audible voice those who were

elected in office for the year ensuing. A *fracas* happened, but we are glad to find that it terminated without the loss of life, although it occasioned for a short time the *loss of liberty*.—In the course of the afternoon, a certain —, being highly elevated by an acquaintance with a genius who stiles himself POP (a deity to whom a large number of the people of this country on said day pay peculiar adoration) to the infinite delight of the spectators, displayed his agility on the parade by jumping, twisting his limbs in various contortions, and other feats of *inebriation*; after exercising himself, and entertaining the by-standers for the space of a full half hour, he entered the shop of a hair-dresser, and generously rewarded him with the immense sum of FOUR COPPERS for *setting his head to rights*.

*Thursday*. Ran mad a *new-fangled writer of Poetry*, under the signature of B—e, the occasion of which was a too severe flagellation that B—e received from one Mr. DAB.—Frantic with pain, and resolute through despair, this *Son of Literature* (for we don't suppose the writer to be a female, as the language is rather too rough and indelicate for a lady) turned upon his aggressor with redoubled fury, breathing forth the *imbecility* of his mind, and the *distraction* of a *weak* brain; notwithstanding we have had infallible specimens of B—e's intimacy with good-breeding and the *graces*, we cannot believe that he was ever acquainted with the *muses*, however, with due care and industry, he may perhaps gain a place in the *kitchen* of Apollo.

*Friday*. The General Assembly convened and proceeded to business.—They issued a warrant for apprehending — for uttering contemptuous words against that Hon. Body.—Their Honors elected their militia officers, &c. — was appointed *gunner* of the fort.—As this man is known for his *great courage*, we presume he will not suffer any vessel to pass without her credentials, upon pain of experiencing the weight of a FORTY POUNDER.

*Saturday*. A Commodore preferred a petition to the Assembly, praying to be liberated from gaol, as he was afflicted with *paralytics*, &c. but he was not permitted to come out lest he should die before they could get him in again, and therefore *justice* would not be done to the injured.—Blush inhumanity, else hide thy head w[h]ere thou canst not be seen by mortal man.—In the afternoon a *minor* was exceedingly irritated, or, as some say, *aspirated* by a *major* pursuing him too closely in the *road of argumentation*.—This person has, we presume, accustomed himself to walk every morning on the beach to collect *pebble stones* to help his oratorical powers.—Tremble Demosthenes, for one has sprung up who, by his *erudition*, will rival *thee* in thy eloquence.

*Sunday*. The ministers of the several churches made their appearance, and delivered their sermons to a very few hearers.—It is to be hoped that those who tarry at home on Sundays, either on account of rain, or on account of their over sleeping themselves, will not expend the remainder of the day in reading *romances*, but improve it to religious exercises. Some members of an Hon. Body returned into the country *betwixt the drops*.—*Parva cum magnis*.—Xantippe, whose tremors and vibrations frequently verberate the air in Thames-Street, *echoed* to the thunder, which animating music for some hours, incessantly agitated the *apparatus* of that admirable organ of hearing, the ear.

*Monday.* A spruce beau, in the mercantile line, by easy address and pleasing manners, drew all the belles to his counter.—Money is not the motive of this *peregrinating* merchant; he is actuated by the glory of furnishing the robes which shall encircle the form, *brachia, teretesque suras*, of the Fair.

*Tuesday.* The weather was all this day as unsettled and capricious as a female. Rain, cloud and sunshine succeeded each other perpetually, like tears, frowns, and smiles from the pretty face of a whimsical lady.

*Wednesday.* Being very pleasant, a lady devoted a few hours in the forenoon to ambulation. —We will not attempt to depict the heighth of the *crown* of her hat, with its variegated *plumage*, but only observe that it is fortunate for her that she is not fond of riding in a carriage, otherwise it would require three or four feet elevation to make it commodious.—We beg leave to recommend to the Fair, the FEDERAL HAT;—the form of this hat may be neat and genteel,—the *Thirteen States* may be represented by *Thirteen Rings*, these may be constructed in such a manner as will answer for the *rim*;—the poll and crown may denote the GRAND FEDERAL EDIFICE, while the ribbons and wavers with stars interspersed, which decorate it, might be so disposed of as to represent the United States and the several Kingdoms, and how they are in alliance.—A hat of this form would certainly command respect, it would discover that the Fair are patrons of the *Federal cause*, and that the federal patriot will ever meet with their approbation.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 28 May.

### 163. Newport Mercury, 26 May 1788<sup>1</sup>

*From a Correspondent.*

#### INTELLIGENCE EXTRAORDINARY.

By the WANTON Disposition of a newly appointed Cannoneer, an old Whig Gunner (who served in the American Army a great Part of the late War) has been drove, with his Family, from the Barracks into the open Air, and the Fortress delivered up to B——sh Emissaries—in Consequence of which Event Fort W——n is overwhelm'd with TEARS.

Great Bets are offered, that the Guns of the above Fortress will not be discharged on the 4th of July, in Honor of the Day—That glorious Anniversary not being a *Red-Letter-Day* in the British Callendar.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

LOST in the Year 1783, a G. R. Branding-Iron for Horses. Any Person who may have found it, and will restore it to the Subscriber, shall be handsomely rewarded and all Charges paid, by

*Jack of both Sides.*

N. B. The above Iron is well known on the Island of Conanicut.

WANTED, a Number British-made cold-chissels, suitably tempered and formed for cutting the *Broad Arrow of England* on round Shot and great Guns.—Paper Money, old Bunting, and second-hand Colours, will be given in pay. Apply as above.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 2 June; *State Gazette of South Carolina*, 24 July.

**164. Philadelphia American Museum, June 1788**

Advices from Rhode Island inform, that the party there, in favour of federal measures, is gaining ground rapidly.

**165. A Patriot  
Newport Herald, 5 June 1788**

*To the Inhabitants of the town of Newport.*

The cry of distress and hard times echo from mouth to mouth through your streets.—A stranger who hath lately dropped among you, was surprised to find a place, blessed with all the rich bounties of nature, by its charming situation and climate, laboring under such a general complaint.

If the maxims of Poor Richard were more strictly adhered to, and industry and economy introduced, ease and affluence would be the certain reward, and every face smiling in cheerful content—Under the new government we may expect a happy revolution in times, as the carrying trade of the Southern States will necessarily fall into Northern bottoms—hence we may expect full employ for our vessels. A general prohibition upon foreign butter and cheese, and the growing repute of those two articles made in this State will of course enable us to monopolize supplying the Southern States to as great an extent as we shall be able to furnish with double the present industry of our farmers. In Europe nothing is more common than to see a rich manufacturing town, far less than this—every child and infirm person are there able not only to support themselves, but to promote the prosperity of their country.—By enterprize and application, with the patronage of the leading men, you may in process of a few years become a manufacturing town, either in cotton or in iron work—the materials are as much within your reach as in England; and the success of the manufactories lately established, must give you every encouragement. Poor Richard tells us “GOD helps them that help themselves.” I sincerely hope the spirit of manufacturing will speedily prevail, and instead of seeing trunks of foreign knickknacks imported, we shall be enabled to supply the Southern States, which in the nature of things must take place in a few years.

**166. Newport Herald, 5 June 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Every patriotic man must pour out incessant execrations on the devoted heads of those who machinate, advise, aid, abet, or assist in laying sacrilegious hands upon that most invaluable blessing—THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, that palladium of all the rights, privileges, and immunities, dear or sacred to any body of men worthy to rank above the brute creation!—that dispeller of the till then impenetrable clouds, which overspread the world for ages anterior to the auspicious era of its discovery,—that scourge of tyrants, whether *monarchs*, *aristocrats*, or *demagogues*!—Should any wretch pollute the air with a proposal to restrict the *Liberty of the Press*, may the plagues of Pharaoh await him!—may he

wander a vagabond about the earth like the murderous Cain! and may he be accurst, sitting, standing, lying, and in every action of his detested life!

— “Hear, just Heav’n!

Pour down your curses on his wretched head

With never ceasing vengeance! let despair,

Dangers, or infamy—nay all—surround him!

Starve him with wantings! let his eyes ne’er see

A sight of comfort! nor his heart know peace!

But dash his days with sorrow, nights with horrors!”

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Gazette*, 10 June; *New Hampshire Gazette*, 12 June; *Boston American Herald*, 16 June; *New York Journal*, 19 June (without poetry); *Charleston City Gazette*, 29 July.

### 167. *Massachusetts Centinel*, 7 June 1788<sup>1</sup>

#### KNOW YE.

⟨It is but justice to be inexorably severe towards the eminently guilty—we will, therefore, continue to delineate the characters of such with the point of the diamond—and thus *blazoned in the face of the day*, the abhorrence and execrations of mankind will consign them to infamous immortality:—Therefore—*Citizens of America*, KNOW YE,⟩ That a certain J. L. [John Lamb] a placeman, pensioner, and noted antifederalist, in the city of New-York, stimulated with a prospect of gain, and a lust of power, hath lately had the audacity to transmit to the Governour of a *little State*, and some others, a large and fresh packet of pamphlets against the proposed Constitution of the United States, accompanied with anonymous letters, insidiously calculated to excite jealousies, to disturb the peace of the union, and subvert the rising FABRICK of order, justice and liberty.

1. Originally printed in the *Newport Herald*, 29 May, without the text in angle brackets (see RCS:R.I., 266–67n), this item was also reprinted in the Connecticut *Norwich Packet*, 12 June, and the *Pennsylvania Packet*, 21 June.

### 168. *Brown & Benson to Hewes & Anthony* *Providence*, 12 June 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . Messrs. Holroyd & Tillinghast have made every exertion to remit you for the flour to which you refer but they have never recd. the Money tho’ the Person who owes us suppose very secure but such is the effects of Paper Money & Tender Laws.—that even honest Men cannot or will not pay—but we hope & expect a speedy period to the Triumphs of Injustice. . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**169. Paper Money**  
**Newport Herald, 12 June 1788**

*The final Petition of expiring Paper Money, to her friends and patrons in the State of Rhode-Island.*

Ever dear and respected Partisans,

You know for what purposes you called me from the regions of darkness, and what unremitting application I have used for the speedy and effectual accomplishment of your darling designs—with relentless fury I have ravaged every part of your territory, tearing from the famishing mouths of widows and orphans, the few remaining crumbs that supported their feeble lives, fraud and rapine have long directed my way, poverty and despair followed my footsteps, till at length the cries of innocence and supplications of distress have pervaded Heaven's wide expanse, and thick hovering round the mercy seat, demand vengeance upon my execrable existence for occasioning such complicated scenes of misery to the pitiable objects of my visitation. Have I not mocked the prayers of the aged, the tears of the necessitous, and the wailings of the starving infant lifting its feeble palms to its country and its GOD for commiseration? these, my dear and beloved adherents, are the services I have done, and for which I have received your most hearty approbation, an ample recompense for all the curses heaped on my name—in spite of the just I would serve you longer—but alas! fatal necessity hastens my end—That curse to all my nefarious designs, the new constitution, has signed my death warrant and the grim messenger makes rapid strides—I must soon, too soon, sink to the realms of malevolence, never to rise again—suffer me, therefore, my dear friends, to make a voluntary exit, before justice, commissioned from the courts above, hurls me headlong to perdition, whence I shall not return, but you must come to me—there shall we richly enjoy the fruits of our labor on earth, where our names shall for ever flourish in characters of genuine contempt, and where we shall eternally

“Grin horribly with a ghastly smile.”

**170. Newport Mercury, 16 June 1788**

There is *little* interesting Intelligence of a domestic Nature; in a few Days, it is probable the Public will be informed, thro' this Channel, of the *Fate* of the new proposed Constitution in the several States which have now, and soon will have, that important Subject under Consideration. South-Carolina commenced their Session, in Convention, on the 13th ult. of whose *final* Decision we this Day give our Readers.—The Convention of Virginia met the 2d inst. and Accounts of their Proceedings are momentarily expected—New-York and New-Hampshire Conventions convene to-morrow.



**171. Newport Herald, 19 June 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

*History of the Proceedings of the second Sessions of the Honorable General Assembly of this State, in the third year of our present administration.*

Published by PETER EDES, without bribe, fee, or expectancy of office.

The LAST QUARTER part of State Notes consolidated to specie value, and orders upon the Impost for the interest arising thereon, is to be forfeited if the holders of them do not apply within one month from the rising of the Assembly and receive the paper emission at its nominal value. Those who have received the first or second quarter, are indulged in receiving the third and last quarter, provided they apply within the time above prescribed. . . .

On application from the *Delegates of Congress*, a further grant was made in their favor.

The GUNNER of the Fort having deputed and placed there a person who was proscribed as an enemy and banished the State, a motion was made for his removal. The House in general reprobated the conduct, but passed no vote, taking his word that he would remove from there and resign his employment. . . .

A Bill was drafted for consolidating *four per cent.* notes to specie value, and paying them in the paper emission at the nominal value, but was referred to next sessions. . . .

The officers and waiters were paid their fees, at the rate of six for one, without hesitation. . . .

Upon the question of Adjournment a leading member who had been violently opposed against the New Constitution, urged a short adjournment as it was probable we should be called upon in regard to the New Constitution:—To obviate this reason it was moved that a Convention should be now appointed to meet at some distant period, but the motion was not noticed. The adjournment was made *to the last Monday of October next at Providence.*

1. Reprinted in whole or in part nine times by 9 July: Mass. (4), N.Y. (2), N.J. (2), Pa. (1).

**172. Providence United States Chronicle, 19 June 1788<sup>1</sup>**

“A Correspondent congratulates the Inhabitants of this State on the Honor done them by the Attention paid one of their Delegates at Congress by a certain antifederal G—v—r.—It is said this is the first Instance of any Gentleman of public Character dining with his *Excellency* since the Residence of that Hon. Body in the present Seat of Government, so it is to be considered as a particular Mark of Respect to the State that Gentleman represents.”

1. Reprinted seven times by 16 July: Mass. (2), Conn. (3), N.Y. (1), Pa. (1).

**173. John M. Green to Enos Hitchcock  
post-21 June 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

Reverend & Respected Sir

. . . Accept my warmest thanks for your kind congratulations on the happy prospect of our public Affairs, for though my humble station in life may seem to forbid my interesting myself in the business of the Nation, yet from a love of order, from a regard to public Justice, and from love to that Country, in whose service I spent several years, I cannot but rejoice at the prospect of her being yet happy in a Government, so wisely calculated to restore harmony, to establish National Credit,—to render her as conspicuous for excellence in the Arts of peace, as she was glorious in those of War, and which will insure foreign & domestic tranquility, and make her as respectable, as she has lately made herself contemptible. . . .

Monday Morning

1. RC, Enos Hitchcock Papers, RHi.

**174. James Brown Diary  
Providence, 24 June 1788<sup>1</sup>**

news of N. hampshires accession to the new Constitution came to town. Bells instantly rang & cannon were fired—being the 9th. State

1. Printed: Clarkson A. Collins III, ed., “James Brown Diary (1787–1789),” *Rhode Island History*, 7 (1948), 9.

**175. Zephaniah Thompson Diary  
Providence, 24 June 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Great rejoicings to-day on account of a new Constitution being framed and sent out to see if it will be ratified by the people.

1. Printed: Ellen D. Larned, ed., *Historic Gleanings in Windham County, Connecticut* (Providence, R.I., 1899), 155.

**176. New Hampshire Recorder, 24 June 1788**

The DEVIL’S SOLILOQUY:

Addressed to the State of R—e I—d.

Hail most auspicious! hail thou glorious day!  
When shining *Gold* to *Paper* must give way;  
When needy mortals, cloak’d in friendship’s ’guise,  
Delude the multitude with artful lies:  
When fawning sycophants descend beneath  
The state of man—and with tainted breath  
Corrupt the innocent—deceive the good,  
And aim to gain the Achevoutic Flood.  
Hail glorious day! when rich and poor agree,

To rob each other of their Liberty.

*Paper* all hail, for now thy power I find  
 Can more than *Gold* corrupt the human mind:  
 Can creditor's defraud, the orphan's right destroy;  
 Make bankrupts rich, and honest men decoy.

LUCIFER.

**177. Benjamin Huntington to William Ellery  
 Norwich, Conn., 26 June 1788 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The News o f New Hampshire's adopting the new constitution which makes No. 9—is just arrived,—on this event I congratulate you heartily & hope to see the day when our *little Sister State* will be added to the number. . . .  
 I am Sir with Esteem & Regard

1. RC, Ellery Family Papers, RNHi.

**178. London, England, Gentleman's Magazine, July 1788**

The Assembly of Rhode Island, instead of calling a Convention to decide on the new constitution, referred it to the vote of the people. These assembled in their town meetings on the 24th of March, and rejected the constitution by about 2700 against 200.

**179. Zephaniah Thompson Diary  
 Providence, 4 July 1788<sup>1</sup>**

A great feast at Providence, they roast a whole ox. There are two parties here Federalists and Anti-federalists.

1. Printed: Ellen D. Larned, ed., *Historic Gleanings in Windham County, Connecticut* (Providence, R.I., 1899), 155.

**180. Hugh Williamson to James Iredell  
 New York, 7 July 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Virginia having confederated N Carolina in Opposition, should she be disposed to stand out, can only expect countenance from Rh: Island or N York. Let me state in a few Words the politics of Rh Island. You have heard of the Effects of the Know Ye Law by which every Creditor [i.e., debtor] is enabled to wipe off a Debt by paying 2/6 in the Pound, for their Paper is now at 8 for 1. & the money being paid into the Hands of a Magistrate remains there for some Time for the Use of the Creditor and if he neglects taking it The State Treasury becomes heir general. Thus private Debts by this Time are nearly discharged in that State. The State Certificate Debt is also nearly paid off by similar Means. The domestic or private Debts of the State were to the best of my Recollection about 566 Thousand Dlsr. A Law was made for paying one fourth of their Debt & all holders of

Securities were called to bring in their Claims and receive 1/4 of the Amount. Every man who neglected tendering his Claims forfeited the Amount that was offered that is one fourth. But the Creditors in general neglected. A second & a third Payment was offered and made in the same manner and now they have advertised for paying the fourth and last Portion of the Debt. Thus the whole of the State Debt is soon to be expunged by a kind of Leger de main. For little or no money has issued during this Process out of the Treasury. It is thought that Rh Island will pretty soon be ready to confederate, but a [i.e., I] was told some days since by a Leader of the Know Ye men that the good People in that State have two capital objections against the new Constitution; first, they think that every Slave should be taxed as a white man & not represented. Second, they think that the Ratio for taxing is not proper, the States should not be taxed according to the number of Inhabitants but according to the amount of the Produce exported from each State or grown in it and exported from any other State. I asked him what did Rh Island grow & export, he answered nothing except a little Cheese & Pot ash. You see how reasonable a Plan his would be, Maryland Virga. & So. Cara. would be delighted with it. . . .

1. RC, Iredell Papers, Duke University.

### 181. Providence United States Chronicle, 10 July 1788

Friday last was celebrated in this Town, as the ANNIVERSARY of AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, and in COMMEMORATION of the ADOPTION of the FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, by NINE STATES, agreeably to the Notice given in our last. At Sunrising 13 Cannon were discharged.—At 11 o'Clock a very numerous Assembly attended at the Baptist Meeting-House, for the Purpose of religious Exercises, and hearing an Oration delivered by the Rev. Mr. HITCHCOCK.—The Oration was preceded by a Prayer by Dr. MANNING, and followed by another by the Rev. Mr. SNOW.—Some select Pieces of Music were interspersed, and well performed, instrumentally as well as vocally, in the latter of which some female Voices added inimitable Grace; and the Rev. Mr. STANFORD dismissed the Assembly by a very pertinent and solemn Benediction.

The Oration was full of manly Eloquence and Learning—on the late Revolution—the State of public Affairs, and the NEW CONSTITUTION, together with the Ratification thereof by NINE STATES.—The most profound Attention marked at once the Abilities of the Speaker, and the Politeness of the Audience.

About 2 o'Clock the Procession was formed, and moved to FEDERAL PLAIN, where the Entertainment was provided.—The Fall of Rain just at that Time detracted somewhat from the intended Regularity of the Procession, but the Rain fortunately ceasing, the People partook of the Repast at a Table upwards of a Thousand Feet in Length, the Whole overspread with a Canopy of Canvas.—Two well-fatted Oxen had been provided for the Occasion, one of which was roasted whole, besides Hams, Wine, Punch, &c. &c.—The Number of People who partook of the Entertainment was not accurately ascertained, but was estimated to be between Five and Six Thousand, many of them from remote Parts of the State, and some from the neighbouring States.—Fortunately no Accident

took Place to marr the Festivity of the Day, every Countenance beaming with Heartfelt Joy, which discovered itself also by repeated Huzzas and Acclamations during the Time of drinking the Toasts.

About 6 o'Clock the People retired from the Plain to the State-House Parade, and after Nine Cheers, in Honour of the Nine States which had adopted the Constitution, returned to their several Homes with Decency and Order.

The following Toasts were drank, under a Discharge of Cannon, viz.—1. The Congress.—2. Our great and good Ally LOUIS XVI. and the other friendly Powers of Europe.—3. His Excellency GEORGE WASHINGTON, Esq;—4. His Excellency JOHN ADAMS, Esq; late Minister at the Court of London.—5. The brave Officers and Soldiers of the late American Army.—6. The Memory of the Heroes who have fallen in Defence of American Liberty.—7. The Memory of General GREENE.—8. Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce.—9. The virtuous Daughters of America.—10. A speedy Coalition of Parties in Pursuit of the public Good.—11. *May the United States enjoy Freedom, under a JUST AND EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT.*—12. Liberty and Happiness to all Mankind.—13. THE DAY.

A Body of near 200 Volunteers, of the Militia of this Town, who appeared on the Plain in the Morning, under Colonel Whipple, did themselves much Honour.

The Celebrity of the Day was heightened by the Attendance and Alertness of the United Company of the Train of Artillery, under the Orders of Col. TILLINGHAST, who closed the Celebration by a Discharge of 13 Cannon from FEDERAL HILL.

## 182. Not Perfection

### Providence Gazette, 12 July 1788

Mr. CARTER, For many years past I have made a considerable saving in my beef and pork, by catching large quantities of those excellent amphibious animals called bull-frogs: But this summer I have spent some time in search of them to no purpose, not having been able to procure so much as one meal of them. On reading in your last Gazette the toasts drank at Windham, in the State of Connecticut, I concluded that all the bull-frogs had resorted thither, and caused another general "*Confusion to Amendments*" and the lawyers.

## 183. Providence Gazette, 12 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

The interesting Intelligence that the State of Virginia had ratified the New Federal Constitution arrived in this Town last Saturday, about Two o'Clock, P. M. by Capt. George Allen, in the Polly Packet, from New-York. As that State raised the Tenth Pillar in the great Fabric of Government, the Event was announced to the Town by a Discharge of Ten Cannon from Col. Tillinghast's Artillery, and the Ringing of all the Bells. A vast Concourse of People being thereby assembled on Federal Hill, Ten Discharges of heavy Cannon were made from the Continental Pieces lying there. The People on the Hill, accompanied by the Students from the College, immediately formed themselves into a Procession, and with Drums beating and Colours flying marched over the River to a Plain on the West

Side of the Town, where being formed into a Circle, they gave 3 Huzzas.—The Procession then marched down Westminster-street, recrossed the River, and proceeded to the lower End of the Town, then through the Back Street to the upper End of the Town.—In passing the Rev. Mr. HITCHCOCK's, the whole Line gave 3 Cheers, to testify their Approbation of the Oration he had pronounced the preceding Day.—The Procession then moved down the Main Street, until it came opposite the State-House—having in the March through all the Streets received large Accessions of Numbers. Near the State-House, and opposite Mr. Daggett's Tavern, the Procession formed in a Line, and were regaled with Punch—after which they marched to the Bridge, where being formed in a solid Column, they gave 10 hearty Cheers, in Honour of the 10 States which have adopted the Constitution, and then dispersed to their respective Homes. The Procession was formed without any previous Arrangements—the Old and Young—the Rich and Poor, united together in hearty Acclamations on this happy Event.—Nearly 1000 Persons were present.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Herald*, 17 July; *Connecticut Norwich Packet*, 17 July.

#### 184. Massachusetts Centinel, 12 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

The city of Newport, and the town of Providence, in the district of Rhode-Island, will, we are told, petition the first Congress to divide the State between Connecticut and Massachusetts.

1. Reprinted eight times by 30 July: N.H. (2), Mass. (3), Conn. (1), Pa. (2).

#### 185. Newport Mercury, 14 July 1788

Mr. BARBER, You are requested to publish the following versification of the story of William West, who lately headed a number of Reformers to prevent unlawful eating, drinking and cannonading, in the great town of Providence.

*It is best to be merry and wise.*

On the twenty-fourth of June as story doth tell,  
 In a certain great town they ding, donged the bell,  
 At Hampshire's adopting the new Constitution,  
 Which threw all the country in greatest confusion:  
 Not contented with this, they concluded a day  
 To solace in mirth, and then full joy to display,  
 On a plain near the cove a fat ox were to roast,  
 And from nine sounding cannon proclaim their lov'd toast,  
 In the next public papers publish'd wide their intent,  
 And to all the great men gilded billets were sent,  
 And, O doleful! beside, they warned by drum,  
 All the rich and the poor, by outcry, to come.  
 When the country at large had this brought to their view,  
 They declar'd it an insult that never wou'd do,

The town's folks with feasting design us to lull,  
 And suppose we have nothing but sap in our skull,  
 That our birthright (like Esau) we freely will sell,  
 And how charming 'twill sound in the *Herald* to tell,  
 That the peasants and cits did in union combine,  
 The new Constitution to toast in good wine—  
 This maturely consider'd, the country did rouse,  
 And four fifths appear their good cause to espouse,  
 Sure schemes so *nefarious* and insults like those,  
 Must not pass unnotic'd and die in repose;  
 Whereupon in the night next approaching the day,  
 That the ox and its guests were to shine in full sway,  
 A *thousand* arm'd peasants assembled in throng, }  
 To prevent the rejoicing of two things in one, }  
 The Independence of all, and Constitution of some. }  
 The town's folks alarm'd at their coming so near,  
 Were thrown into panick and seized with fear,  
 In the shade of the night, a Committee was sent,  
 To search out the meeting and know what it meant:  
 See here our arm'd men said the Chiefs of the wood,  
 And these are not half that wou'd come if they cou'd,  
 By to-morrow at twelve three thousand may come,  
 And who then can *answer*, for what may be done?  
 Then with firmness the Chiefs of the country declar'd,  
 The new Constitution must not be observ'd,  
 Not content to restrain thus, the joy of the day,  
 They directed in future what words they should say,  
 Controuled their pens and restrained the press,  
 And what with the town could the country do less?  
 This contract confirm'd the peasants agree,  
 To march off the field and right merry to be,  
 Part repair'd to a plain and drank their own toast,  
 Without any mar, Independence did boast.  
 Thus ended the bustle of the fourth of July,  
 And what you have read, may be truth, or a lie.

### 186. New York Journal, 17 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Providence, Rhode-Island, July 7.*

"The fourth inst. was festivated by a large concourse of people on account of the adoption of the constitution by ten states, &c. It was reported, that they intended to give, as a toast, confusion to the states who refuse to adopt the constitution; this circulated, a body of men collected in the country, to the number of between 2 and 300. In consequence of which the people armed themselves in the town, and sent a deputation to know the intentions of the body

without, who informed them, that unless they would relinquish the idea of giving such a sentiment, they were determined not [to] be quiet, if they would comply with this requisition, notwithstanding the ridiculousness of their joying for other states, they would retire in peace. To gratify them, and maintain peace, this was complied with, and all was quiet, many of the body joining the festival.”

1. Reprinted: *Maryland Journal*, 25 July; *Virginia Herald*, 31 July.

### 187. Newport Herald, 17 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

A Correspondent is happy that WILLIAM WEST, ESQ. ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT in this State, has published the reasons of his collecting and heading a body of men,<sup>2</sup> some of whom appeared in arms, to prevent the inhabitants of the town of Providence from demonstrating their joy at the ratification of the NINTH PILLAR by the State of New-Hampshire. This Hon. Judge is now before the public.—We tremble for the *gallant General*—the *wise Judge*.—You may, being in a *desperate* situation, take pleasure in leading forth a mob—venture to prohibit other celebrations, and with the sword suspended over the head of a fellow-citizen, threaten him with immediate death, should he feel a *federal flame* glowing within him.—Your *wisdom* may dictate a line of conduct which, in your own *fancied* knowledge, you may deem equally *judicious*, as *brave*; but remember, that, as you have come forth to vindicate your conduct, with those under your command, the whole affair will be unravelled; and, though PRUDENCE, with her fears, may heave a *political* sigh, and think it best to be *quiet*, yet be assured that *scriptures* will be passed upon your unprecedented conduct, lash will succeed lash, and your *true* character, stripped of every false covering, will be exhibited to the public, who will either acquit or condemn you.

1. Reprinted eight times by 25 August: Mass. (3), N.Y. (2), Pa. (1), Va. (1), S.C. (1).

2. See Providence *United States Chronicle*, 10 July (RCS:R.I., 297–300n).

### 188. Newport Herald, 24 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

#### ORIGINALITY.

Some General's *Fort* consist in Parade, others in Council, others in the Field, but none have signalized themselves in Originality of Passes equal to the Rhode-Island SHAYS—To rescue from the ravages of time the celebrated production of this Officer, and to immortalize his name, is a tribute to merit that the HERALD most cheerfully pays.

#### A PASS.

Permit the *Barrow*, Susanner Dulittle, to P\*ss from hence to *Konicut*, and from thence to the *Mane*, without *Stoppige*.

W—— W—— Brig. Gen.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 28 July (“A PASS” only); *Boston Independent Chronicle*, 31 July; *Pennsylvania Mercury*, 5 August; *Baltimore Maryland Gazette*, 12 August.



**189. Will with a Whisp**  
**Newport Herald, 24 July 1788<sup>1</sup>**

*To W. W.*

From your first entering the political career, knowledge found herself supplanted by chicanery—virtue shrunk from your touch, and courage, left you stockaded in whortle-berries.—A Jobber in lands, and a Sluggard in the fields, Bankruptcy marked you out as a victim, and led you to acts more magnified in iniquity than crimes which have led others to the pinnacle of Haman.—Your L—— was obtained by finesse,—Your C—— were the dupes of your artifice—Your M—— gave no bonds for faithfulness and responsibility;—the public being strangers to this perfidy, and lured with prospects of gain, seized with avidity the bait of prizes, but have found them to be the fancies of deceit—Your proffered lands were either previously sold or mortgaged—Your designated cattle were not to be found, and your prizes in cash have been delayed payment, until the paper hath depreciated to a song—by this dishonesty you have fleeced the community of their money, and wantonly triumphed in the sink of iniquitous success.

Hardened in injustice, you aspired to a discharge of your accumulated debts by iniquitous bills, and for that purpose obtained a seat upon the *Know Ye tripod*;—Thus elevated, the plaudits of your fellows cajoled your vanity, and the prospects of acquisition from plunder, gave a new spur to licentiousness, which led you on to that inglorious insurrection when you degraded the dignity of office by swaying the sword of Shays, and from being a preserver of public peace became a notorious violater of it;—By inflammatory and false reports you scattered sedition in the country, and by stratagem excited a number of people to riot and treason—Zealous in your plans, you went to the hoggish GOTHURNIEL and obtained his influence in seconding your attempts—You assumed powers that you did not possess, and with a farcical parade, levied an army and besieged a town,—trusting to the weakness of government and the power of your influence, you bid defiance to justice by publicly avowing the illegality of your measures, and that you feared no consequences.

It was imagined that you would gladly have shrouded this *mobbish* exploit in obscurity, that as you was the *head* you would have retired like the tortoise in your shell;—but you have presumed far on the candor of the public by venturing a scrutiny of your conduct—Honest men view your impudent and exaggerated detail with astonishment—while the cautious knaves regret that you were wanting in discretion—Facts that would sully the remaining purity of a convict rise up from your own account to condemn you—but alas! you have a consolation, that you had no character to lose, and that flattery, however gilded, could have given no plumage to conceal the wreath of infamy which incircles your brow.

But trust not to such adventitious gales of fortunate villainy, fairer prospects than these have been clouded before the objects reached the meridian—Shays who once stalked with his legions towards monarchy, is now a wanderer in the wilds of Canada—the gallows and the gibbet which have been long his destined

portion may soon be yours—yet if you should escape with impunity from public justice, the glow worm of your bushes will be a torch to unveil the plots of conspiracy, while conscience will harrow up your guilty soul in your sweetest slumbers with a WILL WITH A WHISP.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 28 July; *Hartford American Mercury*, 4 August.

### 190. A Friend to the Rights of Mankind Newport Herald, 24 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

“The principal aim of society is to protect individuals in the enjoyment of those absolute rights which were vested in them by the immutable laws of nature.”

“The absolute rights of man are usually summed up in one general appellation, and denominated the natural liberty of mankind.—This natural liberty consists properly in a power of acting as one thinks fit without any restraint or control, unless by the law of nature.”

“Civil liberty is no other than natural liberty so restrained by human laws (and no farther) as is necessary and expedient for the general advantage of the public. Hence we may collect that the law which restrains a man from doing mischief to his fellow-citizens, increases the civil liberty of mankind; but every wanton and causeless restraint of the will of the subject, whether practised by a monarch, a nobility, or a popular assembly, is a degree of tyranny.”

“Our rights may be reduced to these principal articles; the right of personal security, the right of personal liberty, and the right of private property; because as there is no other known method of compulsion, or of abridging man’s natural free-will; but by an infringement or diminution of one or other of these important rights; the preservation of these inviolate, may justly be said to include the preservation of our civil immunities in their largest and most extensive sense.”

“The right of personal security consists in a person’s legal and uninterrupted enjoyment of his life, his limbs, his body, his health, and his reputation.”

“Next to personal security our laws regard, assert and preserve the personal liberty of individuals. This personal liberty consists in the power of loco-motion, of changing situation, or removing one’s person to whatsoever place one’s own inclination may direct, without imprisonment or restraint, unless by due course of law.”

*“The confinement of the person in any wise, is an imprisonment. So that keeping a man against his will in a private house, arresting or forcibly detaining him in the street is an imprisonment.”*

“The right of property consists *in the free use, enjoyment and disposal of all his acquisitions, without any control or diminution, save only by the laws of the land.*”

These are the principal and primary rights of individuals, and, permit me to add, that it is the duty of *Legislators, Judges*, and all other civil officers to preserve peace and good order in society, and to carefully guard and protect these rights.

Of these rights individuals ought to be frequently reminded; otherwise through inattention or forgetfulness they may be gradually deprived of them. A

people possessed of a thorough knowledge of their rights, and their inestimable value will not suffer them to be infringed in any one instance without manifesting a proper resentment; and so far from assisting ignorant or designing men to invade the rights of their fellow-citizens, they will justly consider them as common rights, and guard them when assailed as faithfully as their own.—“True self-love and social are the same.”

Some Legislators and Judges too, perhaps, may need to be informed or reminded of the rights specified in the foregoing extracts, as well as individuals at large, and of their duty to preserve them inviolate; otherwise they may ignorantly trample upon what they ought to cherish and support. Official men impressed with a lively sense of their duty, and the rights of their fellow-citizens,—and at the same time convinced that the people entertain proper sentiments of their privileges will not dare to infringe them, or even interrupt peaceable citizens in the lawful enjoyment of them.

The reader by this time will more than conjecture the peculiar reason which has occasioned the foregoing extracts and general observations.

To put the most favorable construction on the conduct of our fellow-men is a debt we owe to humanity. This principle, some circumstances, and the publication of Judge West have induced me to think that the late invasion of the rights of personal security, personal liberty and property in the town of Providence was the result of ignorance in him and those Legislators who excited and conducted that lawless attempt, and in the people whom they inflamed and employed.

Is it possible to conceive that, in this day of civilization and urbanity, a sett of men either in or out of office, who had a proper sense of those precious rights, could, in an hostile manner, attack them even in the persons of those who differed from them in political sentiments? It is impossible.

Could they with their eyes open, have exposed themselves to disgrace and danger, in order to acquire the honor of having dared to invade those rights? or presuming upon their numbers and prowess could they have expected to have robbed their fellow-citizens of their property, their liberty, and lives without opposition from them, or impunity from those whose duty it is to guard the rights of society? Possessed of a knowledge of the privileges of individuals, and the feelings of men, they could not expect the former; and I am confident they had no warrant or assurance of impunity from the guardians of our liberties.

It is said, in order, I suppose, to vindicate the people who assembled in arms, and to throw an odium on their leaders, that the latter told the former they were authorised by law to oppose the rejoicing at Providence. The very appearance of Judges and Legislators might lead inconsiderate men to think that robberies and murders perpetrated at the command of such honorable guides would lose their criminality, and become lawful acts; but pursuing my principle of the most favorable construction I cannot think so hardly of Judge West, and his associates, as to suppose that they would have recourse to lies in order to accomplish their purposes. Indeed if they made that declaration, they might have imagined that they were invested with authority to do wrong, and such a mistake of authority must clearly be attributed to folly.

If I had any doubt in my mind whether this business originated in and was prosecuted by ignorance the publication of William West one of the Committee, in a late paper of Mr. Wheeler, would evince that melancholy truth. From that publication it plainly appears that Judge West, and the rest of the Committee did not know the ground on which they went. In his statement, which was intended I suppose as a vindication of his and their conduct, he says, that the new Constitution had received the disapprobation and disgust of at least four fifths of the inhabitants of the State, when in fact not more than one third of those who had a right to give their voices had voted on the question of the new Constitution—and he adds, as well as the Legislative authority. Judge West may not be acquainted with Vulgar Fractions, and he might not know that the Legislative authority had nothing else to do with that question but solely to call a Convention of the people by their delegates to examine and decide upon it. He proceeds and says that the country at large perceived that the celebration was intended as a public insult on the Legislative authority of the State. He may be as ignorant of the other laws of the State, as he certainly is of those which establish the civil rights of the subject. The Legislative authority had no more to do with the new Constitution than has been mentioned; to the people at large was it proposed and submitted by the federal Convention; and yet the country at large perceived that the celebration of the fourth of July, conjointly with the adoption of the new Constitution by nine States was an insult upon the legislative authority.—That is the country at large perceived what did not, and could not exist, but in the contemplation of the learned and sagacious Judge West.—He further ignorantly mistakes a conciliatory invitation for an insult to the dignity of the State, and an endeavor to allure the unwary into nefarious schemes.—Suspicion and folly are nearly allied, and that one particularly of the Committee who raised and conducted the Westæan riot should be suspicious of a trap is not, if fame speaks the truth, much to be wondered at.

But how can Judge West and his associates reconcile their suspicions, arising out of a generous invitation to dine, &c. with their concluding toast,—“May the merchants and landholders be convinced their interest depends on the support of each other;” this is the wish it seems of him & them, & yet an invitation of the merchants to the landholders to partake in their festivity, with a view to reconcile merchants and farmers, and to promote union and harmony is forsooth an insult to the dignity of the State, and a trap for the unwary.—If Judge West and his associates were honest in that toast, as I trust they were, they must have blundered egregiously in their suspicions.

The General Judge West formed it seems a very accurate estimate of the number of his Myrmidons.—He has made a thousand out of about two or three hundred, and to shew his dexterity in metamorphosis, to be equal to his skill in arithmetic, he has converted cudgels into muskets.—That some Judges and Legislators should in these days be ignorant of the rights of men, and the laws of their country is not very surprising; but that a man versed in arms, and a quondam General should make such a capital blunder with regard to numbers is really wonderful. The next time he strutteth forth at the head of this embattled host

to disturb the peaceful, cheerful scenes of conviviality, and attack the roasting ox, it is hoped that he will, if he can, make a more accurate computation, or he may involve himself and them in inextricable danger.

Upon the whole I think I have clearly shewn that General Judge West, and his associates were utterly ignorant of the rights of the citizen, the law of the land and their duty.

The stopping and detaining persons passing innocently by their encampment, is so trivial a circumstance, when compared with the other parts of their conduct that I only mention it here as a small instance of their ignorance.

To insult the ignorant is no more a mark of wisdom, than to insult the weak is a mark of courage.—Highly commendable therefore are the humanity and meekness of the gentlemen of Providence who (if Judge West, &c. would have permitted it) intended to have thrown a veil over their proceedings.

But if fools will meddle they will sometimes provoke men of another cast to promulge their folly.

There are some persons, it seems, who think less favorable of Judge West and his comrades than I do—they believe that they sinned against light and knowledge, if so let them impeach them.—But these persons ought to be informed that it is extremely difficult in this State to convict even small offenders although evidence against them be clear and plenary.

Sins of ignorance should be winked at, and such I have declared, and do declare I think those to have been on which I have ventured to animadvert;—especially when what some men would think a proper treatment of the offenders might delay that union between the landholders and merchants which I hope will soon take place.

My design in making the foregoing extracts, observations and comments, was to instruct and reform; I shall think myself well rewarded for my pains if they should in any degree produce these happy effects.—My mode of vindicating or palliating the conduct of Judge West and the rest of the Committee, may possibly not be so well liked by them, as I could wish; for such is the foolish pride of many that they had rather be accounted knaves than ignoramusses. For one I can say that he had rather be deemed an honest simpleton, than an artful villain.

The peace, prosperity and honour of this State are objects that occupy my heart, and constantly employ my thoughts.—These can never exist in that State where the preservation of the rights of the people is entrusted in the hands of ignorant or wicked men.—Some governments may be more favorable to the rights of individuals than others; but social happiness cannot exist under the best form of government, unless justice is impartially administered, and the rights of the people are cherished and supported.—That these great objects may engage the attention of every citizen,—that it may be the universal endeavor to wipe out the disgrace we have incurred, and that this State may recover her pristine reputation, and shine an ornament to the new Constellation, is the sincere wish of A Friend to the Rights of Mankind.

1. Reprinted: Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 31 July.

**191. Pro bono Publico****Newport Herald, 24 July 1788**

Mr. EDES, In times like the present every new discovery should be improved for the public good, and home manufactures particularly encouraged in a way commensurate to their importance.

A writer in the last Chronicle who modestly conceals his real name under that of Phocion, has discovered the wonderful art of making islands, and has already compleated a number of them. Such an opportunity for the aggrandizement of this State, may perhaps never again offer. I therefore humbly propose that at the next Session of our Honorable General Assembly, this matter be taken into serious consideration, and a sufficient sum appropriated for the encouragement of this ingenious and astonishing artist—Were a suitable sum allowed, and the manufactory conducted for public benefit, we might not only have our own insular territory greatly extended, but also supply the other States with as many islands as should be thought necessary. There is already a large sum of forfeited money in the Treasury, and should this prove insufficient, another bank may be immediately ordered, and Know Ye's entirely cease.

P.S. Should proper encouragement be given, Phocion proposes to construct a peculiar species of islands that may be made to rise above the water's surface, or sink at pleasure. In case of a war with any naval power, the great utility of these in rendering the harbor of Newport perfectly secure, need not be mentioned.

*Foster, July 18, 1788.*

**192. Newport Herald, 31 July 1788<sup>1</sup>**

*To our Trusty and Well-beloved Testy Gruff, Esq. Greeting.*

At a Nocturnal Convention held at South-Kingston, this 20th of July, by our redoubtable fraternity of Anti's and Know Ye's.—The strange revolution in the Constitution of the major part of the citizens of this quarter of the globe (which is thought to be epidemical) was taken into consideration, when after every other mode which has or could be devised was found insufficient to stop the rapid progress it still continues to make, it was unanimously (though reluctantly) deemed necessary, to use the only means which nature has left in our power to baffle the fatal ravages, it is judged by physicians, it would make in those habits where the blood has been heated and vitiated, should it be taken the natural way,—Therefore, KNOW YE, It is ordered in our said Nocturnal Convention, that a Hospital be forthwith erected upon Cubit Hill, and that a Federal Physician be appointed to superintend the same for the purpose of inoculating with Federal matter, such of our brethren whose obstinate habit of body has as yet resisted the impression of the aforesaid grievous malady, or change of Constitution, and that the charges of the same be paid in those paper bills that escaped through the pores of that memorable Pad Lock you furnished at the birth of our now expiring emission.

It is also Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted you, and that you be required to repair without delay to our said Hospital, on Cubit Hill, in

order to undergo the operation, it being thought expedient from the known inflexibility of your nature, that you be put under a previous preparatory course—The Federal Operator thinks it will be necessary to shave your head dry, and bleed you under the tongue; blister you, glister you; hawl you, maul you; teize you, squeeze you; bang you, and perhaps—finally to hang you.

By Order of the Convention,

W. W.	}	Committee of Correspondence.
Hermit,		
Gothurniel,		
Steel Trap,		

*South-Kingston, July 20th, 1788.*

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Centinel*, 6 August.

### 193. W. W.

**Newport Herald, 31 July 1788<sup>1</sup>**

*Confession of W. W.*

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME.

KNOW YE, That I, W. W. of — in the county of — Esq. not having the fear of GOD before my eyes, nor the interest and happiness of the union at heart, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, and urged on by a number of unprincipled wretches like myself, on the third day of July, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, at — aforesaid, in the county of — aforesaid, with force and arms, and in open violation of the laws of the state, did assemble and collect a body of men, and march them to Providence, in order to prevent the inhabitants of Providence from celebrating the ratification of the New Constitution adopted by nine states—That being in *desperate* circumstances, and animated by a thirst for glory and renown—I *foolishly* imagined my gallant conduct would entitle me to those laurels which entwine the hero's brow—However, I have since been convinced, that I had no right to assemble a mob to prevent others from enjoying themselves in innocent mirth, and as I am bound by my office to keep the peace, I should have been careful to have studied those things which make for peace.—This my folly has been my ruin, for those things which I had fondly hoped would have been concealed from the public, are disclosed by some person who is well acquainted with my real character.

Although I have at sundry times been guilty of manifold iniquities, deceits, treacheries, frauds and other mal-practices, to the great detriment of my reputation, and which disgraces the character of a Judge, yet I know of nothing that has given me greater concern, than the affair of the Lottery—I blush when I mention the word *Lottery*, for racking conscience obliges me to confess that in that affair I am guilty of the blackest crimes, by defrauding many of my fellow creatures;—this piercing truth chills my blood, and my heart trembles when *dishonesty* is mentioned.

I do most sincerely and solemnly promise that I will endeavor by some fair means (for I have been so long addicted to *unfair* means, that I confess the *self-*



*denial* will be great) to satisfy all those whom I am indebted to, also do I ask pardon in a very humble manner for having brought dishonor on the state, by appearing as a General to a mob, when holding the office of a Judge—an office, which from my very small abilities, and unacquaintance with the rights of citizens, and of law, I can never hope to support with dignity.—And I do further confess, notwithstanding the doubts and suspicions of some persons, who are willing to think better of me than I deserve, that I do verily and indeed believe, that my worthy chastiser in the last Herald can prove *all* he has advanced against me to be TRUE—And all this have I confessed in hopes, that by my being fully sensible of my many abominable transgressions, and a determination to reform, I may regain a good character, which has been forfeited and sullied by the most aggravated instances of injustice—In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand.

N. B. *This Confession shall continue as conscience prompts.*

1. Reprinted: Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 7 August.

#### 194. Newport Herald, 31 July 1788

A Correspondent wishes to know why Judge West is made the butt of ridicule and the keenest satire, while *Gothurniel* is only slightly noticed;—what is meant by whortle-berries, lottery, and soliciting and obtaining the influence of the hoggish *Gothurniel*.

The person intended by the hoggish *Gothurniel* he knows; but that his influence was *obtained* by Judge West he is yet to learn.—He believes that he was a principal and volunteer in the late riot in Providence.—It is true he did not appear on the ground of encampment;—but he raised as many men as he could for the service,—and joined heart and hand, hat and wig in the rejoicings on the plain before Hoyle's tavern.

It is supposed by some that, if instead of an ox an hog had been roasted for the festivity at Providence, lured by the effluvia, and attracted by a certain congeniality between him, and the brute last mentioned, notwithstanding his hoary years and the coolness of his courage, he would have taken the field, and if necessity had required it would have fought desperately at the side of his associate.

If he did ride whole nights, and otherwise exert himself to raise men, and excite a mob;—if he did in fact raise some, and was as active in the riot as his age and other circumstances would admit; why in the name of justice, doth not satire couple him with Judge West.—In the eye of law he is equally culpable with his associate, and with respect to the riot, deserves equal castigation.

If it should be thought fair, in displaying a proper resentment against any particular part of a man's bad conduct, to bring up to view other matters than those immediately connected with the offence, a review of the conduct of *Gothurniel* only, for three or four year's past, might, perhaps, furnish subjects of as severe if not as laughable reprehension as any that disgrace and blacken the annals of the w[h]ortle-berry hero.—Can Judge West have plunged himself deeper in iniquity than *Gothurniel*.—What crime can be greater than to have



been a principal in that system of paper fraud, which has robbed the widow, and the fatherless,—prostrated the morals of the people, and almost ruined the State?

*Gothurniel* too may be as ignorant of the art of spelling, as Judge West; but I question whether if he had been in as favorable a situation as was the hero of the north, when he assisted Miss *Dulittle*, he would have discovered as much gallantry.—Is it criminal or disqualifying for a Judge not to know how to spell,—or for a General to give a pass to a lady?

Let satire rail, and ridicule sneer; but as long as bad spelling shall be fashionable, while whortle-berries grow, at dewy eve when glow-worms shed their twinkling light, the fair will not cease to pour out their generous libations to the gallant son of Mars.

Our Correspondent declares, that after weighing the characters of the whortle-berry hero, and the hoggish *Gothurniel* in the balance of impartial justice, he is in the same predicament with the poet who was to decide between a child and its parent,

Whether the worst  
The Child accurst  
Or else the cruel mother,  
The Mother worst  
The Child accurst  
As bad the one as t'other.

### 195. Newport Herald, 31 July 1788<sup>1</sup>

#### MOON CURSING.

By the Man of the Moon we are informed that a waterman, in attempting to steal an Ox that was roasting on Federal Plain, in that planet, was caught in a steel trap that was set to catch conies.—The Moonites drummed the rogue out of their festive encampment, the march, "*He's caught in the Trap Boys.*"

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazette*, 7 August; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 11 August.

### 196. Newport Herald, 7 August 1788<sup>1</sup>

#### AN ODE,

*On the Anniversary of INDEPENDENCE, July 4, 1788.*

Once more old Time, with steady pace,  
Has run his wonted annual race,  
Around this changing earth:  
Twelve circling years have roll'd away,  
Since free-born millions blest the day,  
That gave this nation birth.

Great day! when our assembled sires,  
Whose names and deeds the world admires,  
Pronounc'd Columbia's fates;

And boldly sign'd that wise decree,  
Which chang'd the Colonies to Free  
And Independent States.

Amidst the patriotic band,  
Who on the list of glory stand,  
Their country's hope and pride;  
In WASHINGTON at once we view,  
A Moses and a Joshua too,  
In war and peace our guide.

From Britain's house of bondage free,  
And led thro' war's ensanguin'd sea,  
By Heav'n's o'er ruling hand;  
Now, after wand'ring twelve long years,  
Thro' wilds of faction, fraud and fears,  
We hail the promis'd land.

A government of public choice,  
Propos'd, in peace, by Wisdom's voice,  
And weigh'd in reason's scale;  
Will raise our credit from the dead,  
Bid justice lift her drooping head,  
And law again prevail.

The rustic swain, whose honest hands  
Are taught to cultivate our lands,  
And ply the humble spade;  
May henceforth sit and smile at ease  
Beneath his vines and fruitful trees;  
For none shall make afraid.

While commerce spreads unnumber'd sails,  
Which swell before the wafting gales,  
With stars and stripes unfurl'd;  
And carry our superfluous stores,  
To neighboring isles and distant shores,  
Around the courting world.

Mechanic labors now will thrive,  
Now all the arts of peace revive,  
And thousands learn to toil;  
The liberal sciences still rise,  
And spread and flourish to the skies,  
In freedom's fertile soil.

1. Reprinted: Providence *United States Chronicle*, 4 September.

**197. Newport Mercury, 11 August 1788<sup>1</sup>**

A correspondent observes, that the honest scribblerus in the Herald, (prompted no doubt by a wish to excel all the handsome encomiums that have been made on the new constitution) makes use of the epithet *heartfeltedly*. Whether this adverb is known in the English language, we leave to the casuists to determine; but it seems this good federalist was educated in that old English academy, where, according to the facetious Mr. Stevens, they never abbreviate, but talk of *breakfastes* and *toasteses*, and running their *fisteses* against their *posteses*.

1. The Exeter, N.H., *Freeman's Oracle*, 23 August, reprinted this item under a "NEW-PORT, August 11," dateline, indicating that it first appeared in the no longer extant issue of the *Newport Mercury* for that date. The transcription is from the *Freeman's Oracle*.

**198. Pennsylvania Packet, 11 August 1788<sup>1</sup>**

They write from Philadelphia, that the state of Rhode-Island having submitted the new American constitution to all the freemen of the state, it was rejected by a large majority: and the motion which was made in the assembly for calling a convention to examine this heterogeneous form of government, was also negatived by a majority of twenty seven. The new constitution is therefore cast out of the state, as a wicked conspiracy to enslave the good people of Columbia.

1. The *Packet* reprinted this item from Kingston, Jamaica, 14 June. The *Packet's* version was reprinted in the *New York Morning Post*, 13 August, and New Brunswick, N.J., *Brunswick Gazette*, 26 August.

**199. Newport Herald, 14 August 1788**

In the ingenious fable of Protagorus, he represents men as having gathered themselves together and built cities to defend them against their enemies; but, says he, "when they were collected in societies, not having knowledge of civil laws, they offered violences to one another, and for that reason were obliged to disperse again, and became once more exposed to the fury of the beasts.["]

*Jupiter* fearing the race of mankind should be extirpated, sent *Mercury* to carry *Shame* and *Justice* among men that they might be ornaments to cities, and confirm the bonds of love and friendship among them.

*Mercury* ask'd *Jupiter* in what manner he should distribute *Shame* and *Justice*, whether in the same as the Arts were?—Shall I distribute *Shame* and *Justice* according to this rule, or give them indiscriminately to all?—TO ALL, replied *Jupiter*; they must all be partakers of them; for no city will ever be able to exist if they are only communicated to a few, as the arts are.—Besides, you shall proclaim this law in my name, that *he who has not Shame and Justice shall be cut off as a plague to society*.

What will be the final doom of the shameless and unjust I leave to their *Judge*; but if all shameless and unjust rulers should be cut off from the face of the earth, how terrible wou'd be the excision in a certain State under the moon.

**200. James Madison to James Madison, Sr.  
New York, 18 August 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We just learn the fate of the Constitution in N. Carolina. Rho. Island is however her only associate in the opposition, and it will be hard indeed if these two States should endanger a system which has been ratified by the eleven others. Congress have not yet finally settled the arrangements for putting the new Government in operation. The place for its first meeting creates the difficulty. The Eastern States with N. York contend for this City. Most of the other States insist on a more central position. . . .

1. RC, Madison Papers, DLC. Printed: Rutland, *Madison*, XI, 235–36.

**201. Providence United States Chronicle, 21 August 1788**

A Correspondent desires us to publish the following—a *Toast* drank at an Entertainment at Plymouth the 2d Instant, on Account of the Adoption of the Federal Constitution by the State of New-York.—“11. *The virtuous Minority of Rhode-Island, —may the Conduct of her Majority exhibit the last sad Example to the World, of political Depravity and Error.*”

**202. Federalist**

**Massachusetts Centinel, 27 August 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. RUSSELL, It is an extraordinary observation, though frequently made, that *certain* moral, as well as physical qualities, a *peculiar* to *certain* countries, and even *districts* of a country—which their neighbours experience not the least traits of. For instance, in one part of France the people are universally *open, hospitable, and brave*—in another part of the same kingdom they are as universally *close, niggardly* and *pusillanimous*.—In England a man of general observation need not be told to what particular county a person belongs, he acquires this knowledge from observing his conduct for a few minutes. Is it, Mr. Russell, owing to the climate, or to the particular situation of the countries and districts thus characterized, that good or evil, is thus butted and bounded? Or, is it, that persons of similar dispositions, like birds of the same species, love to live and to flock together? The question is a curious one—and I wish some of your correspondents would take such little pains to investigate the matter—and to assign a rational cause for the phenomenon.—If a remedy could at the same time be prescribed, the person would be entitled to the thanks of every one who wishes well to society—at least he would particular oblige the States of America at the present juncture.

I was led into this train of thinking, on reading, in a volume of papers printed about 60 years since, in this town, by Mr. *B. Green*, a “*Letter from a merchant in Boston, to his employer in London; and the Answer*”—on the subject of the *then* knavish conduct of the colony of Rhode-Island. In this letter, the writer assigns as a cause why he could not make regular returns, the disturbance which the paper-money of Rhode-Island made in this then Province. This money passed at

the same rate with the bills of this Province, which bills were on an equitable foundation—and were to be called in in seven years.—“Whereas the Bills of *Rhode-Island*, (to use the writer’s own words) have no government security, neither are they ever to be paid in by any tax on that people; but that government seem to me to be a new sort of usurers, who make bills of credit which cost little more than pen, ink and paper, and let them out to any who will borrow them, at a small interest and who will mortgage a little land for a great deal of them, and which has no other credit than these give them who mortgage their Land for them, so that they pay perhaps 4 or 5 *per cent.* interest for their own credit; which Lands they have twenty years time to redeem, and the redemption money to be paid in the same sort of bills.” The amount of these bills then passing in this Province was about 200,000*l.* At the date of this letter, (*June 6, 1734*) attempts were making for putting a stop to their circulation. But, says the writer, “we are *threatened* by Rhode-Island that if we refuse *them* here, *they* will do so there, and thus leave them a *dead loss* in the hands of their Massachusetts’ possessors”—and by such means *obliged* the government to desist from the measure.

This conduct, Mr. Russell, is so exactly of a piece with the late conduct of the State of Rhode-Island, that it can be safely said, that knavery is indigenous to the soil: And that, therefore, Moralists cannot adduce the late proceedings of the *majority* of that little district, as a proof of the degeneracy of the present times.

The English merchant, in his answer to the above mentioned letter, gives the following opinion—“As for Rhode-Island people,” says he, “refusing their own bills, it is unreasonable to think so; they must be a people abandoned of all honour and honesty, and their names must stink in all parts of the civilized and trading world, if they offer any thing like it. If they do, depend upon it, the King and Parliament must interfere.”

However, this merchant may think on the subject, the Rhode-Islanders *threatened* the mischief he thinks improbable—and it is said, not only *threatened*, but put the *threats* into execution: Whether they did or did not, their *then* conduct is a striking proof of the great want of a controuling power in the United States—such power as the honest part of the continent have lately entrusted to Congress—to check their knavish dispositions, and to hold the balance of justice between them and their neighbours. Yours,

FEDERALIST.

1. Reprinted: *New York Morning Post*, 5 September.

### 203. Newport Herald, 28 August 1788

In each bless'd clime to crown industrious toil,  
 See every product spring from every soil,  
 Virginia's fragrant pride whose fleets convey,  
 And fields of rice float cumbrous o'er the sea,  
 While all our wealth the world of waters yields,  
 And treasures fill the subterranean fields,  
 Our produce to waft where'er expands the wind,  
 To bless, and to sustain the human kind.

Be then our counsels, as our subject great,  
 A world our sphere, and time's long reign our date.  
 Each party-view—each private good disclaim,  
 Each petty maxim, each colonial aim;  
 Let all Columbia's weal your views expand,  
 A mighty system rule a mighty land;  
 Yourselves her genuine sons let Europe own,  
 Not the small agents of a paltry town.  
 Learn cautious what to alter, where to mend;  
 See to what close projected measures tend.  
 From pressing wars the mind averting still,  
 Thinks good remotest from the present ill:  
 From feuds anarchial, to oppression's throne,  
 Misguided nations hence for safety run;  
 And thro' the mis'ries of a thousand years,  
 Their fatal folly mourn in bloody tears,  
 The private interest of each jealous State,  
 Of rule th' impatience, and of law the late.  
 The mean ambition of unworthy sons at best,  
 Of Wronghead, F——, T——, & Judge W——t,  
 But oh! from narrow springs these evils flow,  
 A few base wretches mingle general woe.  
 Still the same mind her manly race pervades,  
 Still the same virtues haunt her hallow'd shades;  
 But when the peals of war her centre shook,  
 All private aims the anxious mind forsook,  
 In dangers iron bond her race was one,  
 Each separate good, each little view unknown,  
 Now rule unsystem'd, drives the mind astray,  
 Now private interest points the downward way:  
 Hence civil discord pours her muddy stream,  
 And fools and villains float upon the brim;  
 O'er all the sad spectator casts his eye,  
 And wonders where the gems and min'rals lie.  
 But ne'er of freedom, glory, bliss despond,  
 Uplift your eyes to those little clouds beyond,  
 'Tis yours to bid those days of Eden shine;  
 First, then, and last the fed'ral bands entwine:  
 To this your every aim, and effort bend,  
 Let all your efforts here commence and end;  
 O'er State concerns let ev'ry State preside:  
 Its private tax controul; its justice guide;  
 Religion aid; the moral ties secure;  
 And bid each private right through time endure.  
 Columbia's int'rests public sway demand,  
 Her commerce, impost, unlocated land;

Her war, her peace, her military pow'r;  
 Treaties to seal with ev'ry distant shore;  
 To bid contending States their discord cease;  
 To send through all the calumet of peace;  
 Science to wing through ev'ry noble flight,  
 And lift desponding genius into light.  
 Through every State to spread each public law,  
 Int'rest must animate and force must awe,  
 Persuasive dictates realms will ne'er obey;  
 Sway uncoercive, is the shade of sway,  
 Slow by degrees, politic systems rise;  
 Age still refines them, and experience tries;  
 This, this alone consolidates, improves,  
 Their sinews strengthens, their defects removes:  
 Hark, how th' alarms of civil discord roar!  
 "To arms" the trump of kindled envy cries,  
 And kindred blood smokes upward to the skies,  
 Seize then, Oh! seize Columbia's golden hour;  
 Perfect her fed'ral system, public pow'r,  
 For this stupendous realm, this chosen race,  
 With all the improvements of all lands its base,  
 The glorious structure build; its breadth extend;  
 Its columns lift; its mighty arches bend!  
 On freedom, science, arts its stories shine,  
 Unshaken pillars of a frame divine;  
 Far o'er th' Atlantic wild its beams aspire,  
 The world approves it, and the heav'ns admire;  
 O'er clouds, and suns, and stars, its splendour rise,  
 Till the bright top-stone vanish in the skies.

#### 204. Newport Herald, 28 August 1788

##### THE OLIO.

On the day North Carolina rejected the Constitution,  
 the Barometer rose to Nine drams.  
 The Hon. D—— took a French leave of ——,  
 —— No Douceurs were offered;  
 A number of public letters remain in the Post-Office,  
 —— shan't read without the chink.  
 Gen. Pictokonicut hath immortalised his name  
 by Know Ye's, Land Lotteries and Riots.  
 The Hon. Gothurneil is to preside,  
 knavery on the Seat, and honesty at the Bar.  
 £1500, pirated by Know Ye's,  
 Witness ourself, at our Fulling Mill,

S. P.

To be sold to the Poor at Sixpence per bushel,  
 £100,000, New Fog;  
 SOHO! He that hath Ears let him hear;  
 HALLOO BOYS! Euripides is not dead but dreameth.  
 There is to be a Tragi-comi, Panto-farcical Entertainment,  
 No Battlements on the head, nor Farthingales on the tail will be admitted.

### 205. Newport Herald, 28 August 1788

*The following sentiment, extracted from the works of a celebrated author, is so different from the idea of what is, by some persons, called the Vox Populi, that we are requested to insert it in the Herald for their advantage.*

“It may sound oddly to say that the majority is a faction, but it is nevertheless literally just—If the majority are partial in their own favour, if they refuse or deny a perfect equality to every member of the minority, they are a faction: And as a popular assembly, collective, or representative, cannot act, or will, but by a vote, the first step they take, if they are not unanimous, occasions a division into majority and minority, that is into two parties, and the moment the former is unjust, it is a faction.”

### 206. A Real Farmer

**Providence United States Chronicle, 28 August 1788**

Mr. WHEELER, You are desired, by a Number of your Country Customers, to mention in your Chronicle, That the FARMERS in general in this State never were in so flourishing a Situation, since the State was settled, as they have been since the present Administration took the Reins of Government—That Taxation has been very light, compared with what it was a few Years back—and nearly all the Taxes they do pay goes towards exonerating them of the State-Debt—the greatest Part of which is already sunk, and this Year will complete that, which, but for the present Administration, would have been an insupportable Burthen upon us, and our Children for Generations to come.—This is no Chimera, every Man who has the least Knowledge of the political Conduct of the late and the present Administration must be convinced of the Truth of what is here advanced—and I hope the good People of this State will keep the present Rulers in Office, so long as they pay the same Attention to the true Interests of the great Body of the People they have as yet uniformly done.

The ill-natured Attempt to injure the Reputation of the present Administration, and that of the Officers appointed by them, under the Signature of “*A By-Stander*,”—published in the last Thursday’s Paper, I have no doubt was penned by one of the “*virtuous Minority of Rhode-Island*.”—I wish some Person of competent Abilities, and Leisure to peruse the Records of the State, would give the Public an Account of the Proceedings of this same “*virtuous Minority*,” for 6 or 8 of the last Years of their Administration.—Their *virtuous* and *disinterested* Conduct brought on all the Calamities of the Year ’85.—Their *Virtue* and *Disinter-*



*estedness* no Doubt led them to collect nearly all the 4 *per Cent. Notes*, while passing with Continental Money at SEVENTY-TWO FOR ONE, and then to consolidate them AT PAR—a pretty Spec. truly, and perfectly *disinterested!*

The 14th of last June there were public Monies in the Hands of several Collectors of Impost and a Number of the Judges, and by the 9th of August (only about 20 Days after the *very short* Time allowed by the Assembly for settling the Accounts of all these Persons) there were but TWO (according to this Writer's Account) who were in Arrear—one of them has been in a very ill State of Health, and the other lives at the extreme Part of the State from the Treasury, and there is no Doubt both had the Money by them, but had not convenient Opportunity to get it to the Treasury—but some People will find Fault, unless they can handle the public Money themselves.

The last Tax (says this ingenious By-Stander) was opposed by the Minority—they have uniformly opposed every Exertion to keep up the Credit of the Money—and it is not surprizing they should oppose this Tax. The £40,000 he mentions as lying by, was, part of it Monies unloaned in the Grand Committee's Office, and part of it Monies forfeited in the Hands of the Judges,—and the Assembly did not propose at present to appropriate either of those Monies,—but a Sum was wanted to pay off the 4 per Cent. Notes, which it is expected will be accomplished this Summer.—If the Tax was concluded on in “*nocturnal Convention*,” it was more for the Advantage of the State, than many Things concluded on by the “*virtuous Minority*,” in their “*nocturnal Conventions*.”

*Richmond, August 25, 1788.*

## 207. Charleston City Gazette, 30 August 1788<sup>1</sup>

Rhode-Island, it is said, intend immediately to call a convention, for the purpose of ratifying the new constitution. If they do not accede to the Union, they are fearful that the state will be divided between Massachusetts and Connecticut.

1. Reprinted: *State Gazette of South Carolina*, 1 September.

## 208. James Gordon, Jr., to James Madison Germanna, Va., 31 August 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

... The conduct of N. Carolina you have seen should they be fortunate enough to be seconded by Rhode Island from their local situation, their knowledge in Political science and numbers the eleven confederated States have every thing to fear; good God what can they promise themselves! being the consumers of two Importing states, and so unable to stand upon their own ground I should have thought they would have greedily caught the union; it is reported Mr. Henry has influenced their councils considerably since the rising of our convention, the truth of which I have not sufficient knowledge. . . .

1. RC, Madison Papers, DLC. Printed: Rutland, *Madison*, XI, 245–46.

**209. William Ellery to Benjamin Huntington**  
**Newport, c. 1–16 September 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

... P.S. There has been a meeting of some Anti-Feds in this town. Among them was Hazard the Delegate. The particular occasion of their meeting and what they did have not yet transpired. Some have supposed that they met to consult about calling the assembly, and some about sending on the delegates. The Governor who was at the meeting has asked, by a country deputy, whether he intended to call the assembly, and answered in the negative, and added that he saw no occasion for it. Hazard has mentioned that, if his son, who is now sick, should get well be able to attend upon business, he would set out for New York next Sunday week; but there is no depending upon what he says.

I have conversed with gentlemen of the best information on the subject of our Delegates going on to Congress, and they are of opinion, that this State will not be represented in Congress again unless the General Assembly should at their session in October order their delegates to attend; and that will be too late to give any assistance respecting the place of meeting of the new Congress.

If this meeting should produce anything of moment I will communicate it to you by the first opportunity. Major Hashnell was in this town last Saturday. He waited upon the Governor and informed him that unless our State accounts were immediately prepared for adjustment, the State would be foreclosed. In consequence whereof the Governor sent an express to South Kingstown for one of the gentlemen who was appointed to prepare them. The Major I understand came lately from New York. It is possible he may have brought letters to the Governor requesting that our delegates might immediately attend Congress. You can find out whether he was charged with any such request; and what he has written to those who gave him that charge, if any such charge he had. If he was here only on the affair of our accounts, it would not have produced the meeting I have mentioned.

1. Typescript, Huntington Autograph Book, NRom.

**210. Olney Winsor to Samuel Winsor**  
**Providence, 8 September 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Hond. Sir,

By permission of divine Providence I expect in a few days to set Sail for Virginia.—

I have made as good an arrangement of my affairs, as has been in my power.— My Books, Deeds, Notes Accots. Papers &c in a small Chest, a Chest containing Sunday apparel &c. as ~~is~~ list therewith, belonging to Nancy, my Desk, a large & a small Bedstead I have left with Mr. Silas Covell—six high back black Chairs with Father Thurber.—A Case of Drawers belonging to Nancy with Mr Jos. Comstock's wife.—I have let my Garden for next year to Mr. William Thurber—my Pew in the Meeting House in this Town in care of Mr Wm. Holroyd to let.— thus have I prepared to remove to a distant land, where I hope for the blessings of heaven on my honest endeavours to support myself & family in character and

reputation, which if my health is continued, the prospect warrants me to expect.—If it should please GOD to lay his afflictive hand on me, or to remove me by death, before I again see your face, or visit my native place, I hope through the mediation of his dear Son our Savior, for admition into his blessed presence, where are pleasures forever more; and have to request that you will remember my dear Wife & Daughter, & that you will do for them, as you propose to do for me, they being my immediate Heirs & representatives.

I make this Request on the same principles that I mentioned the case of Lucy Spears some days ago—principles of equal justice.—

Hond. Sir, Permit me at this time to say that I address you with due filial respect & reverence, & that I have the sincerest wishes for the happiness of yourself & every branch of your numerous family, which it ever has been my study to promote whilst among them; however my weak endeavours may have been construed.—Indeed Sir, I feel so peculiarly interested in your peace & happiness, & such a fervent wish that the evening of your sojourn here on Earth may be spent in such a manner, as to be a happy prelude into the never ending joys of Paradise—above, that I cannot take my leave of you without regretting the unhappy situation in which I leave you, in regard to Civil & Church Government—distracted & divided—iniquity established by law—and the sword, (which au't to be the emblem of justice) ceases to be a terror to evil doers—even when I cast my eyes around among the several branches of the Church of Christ, where I should expect to see peace & harmony prevail, alas! how does strife & envying abound—whence comes it? surely from the evil passions of depraved nature—this tho a true, is a gloomy picture of the situation of the people of this Nation, & of this State in particular, & has for several years layn on my mind with great weight, for I profess not only to be a true friend to a good, just & well regulated Civil Government, but to have in a measure a true sense of the Importance of Religion both as it respect[s] time and eternity, individuals & Society; and hope ever to pay due respect & reverence to those whose lives & conversation prove that they have been taught by its divine author—May that GOD who rules & governs in the Heavens above, and among the sons of Men on earth, vouchsafe his blessing to all the people—reform their morals, and establish them in peace, good order, & an equal just and stable Government both in Church & State.—that every one may set under his own vine & Fig tree in peace, there being none to make him afraid.—I shall be very happy to hear from you, as often as you can find time & opportunity—Letters left at Mr. Jenckes . . .

1. RC, owned by John P. Kaminski, 2020.

**211. Paine Wingate to John Langdon**  
**New York, 11 September 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . A delegate in Congress lately from Rhode Island, and who has heretofore been antifederal, says that state is now in a fair way of calling a convention, and he is of opinion that they will ratify. So that we may hope once more to see a union of the thirteen states, and I trust in a government that may make us a great and happy nation. . . .

1. RC, State Papers Relating to the Revolution, Vol. II (1785–89), 181–84, New Hampshire State Archives. Printed: Smith, *Letters*, XXV, 354–55.

**212. Charles Thomson to Governor of Rhode Island**  
**New York, 13 September 1788<sup>1</sup>**

I have the honor to transmit to Your Excellency herewith enclosed An Act of the United States in Congress Assembled for putting into operation the Constitution now ratified by the Conventions of eleven States—

1. MS, Letters to the Governor, Vol. 20, no. 111, R-Ar. Thomson enclosed a printed copy of the 13 September ordinance calling for the first elections under the Constitution (CC:845).

**213. William Ellery to Benjamin Huntington**  
**Newport, 16 September 1788<sup>1</sup>**

I this moment received your letter of the 13th by a packet-boat, and am extremely pleased to find that Congress have at last fixed upon a place for the first meeting of the Congress under the new Constitution.

I had written a letter to Mr. Baldwin almost entirely upon that subject, which the receipt of your letter has rendered unnecessary and I have not time now to write another.

Please to inform him of this circumstance and to desire him to answer the queries I put to him in my last letter as soon as he may find it convenient. I heartily congratulate him on his being appointed one of the Commission for finally adjusting Continental Accounts.

How did you bring about an accomodation respecting the place of the first meeting of the New Congress? The Yankees I suppose were obstinate. Who gave way? If you had waited until a Delegate from this State should have turned the vote you probably might have waited a long time. I see no prospect of Hazard's going on. Some Feds have been maneuvering to get a Mr. Gardner to take his seat in Congress, but I have not yet heard whether he was disposed to go on, or would proceed without an order of the General Assembly which will not meet until the last Wednesday in October. You have decided a grand point, or what you made a grand point, without any assistance from this State; and I believe you will not want the presence of (some) delegates in any other business.

I hope you will endeavour to prepare the minds of the members of Congress to give a favourable reception to the report of the Board of Treasury may make on the application of the Loan Officers; so that if you should have left Congress when it is made we may not fail of our just expectations for want of necessary information and assistance.

Mr. Baldwin goes out of Congress I suppose in consequence of his appointment.

Will letters directed to him now go free of postage. If I must loose his correspondence in consequence of his office, tell him he must find some member if he can to supply his place; and give me leave, Sir, to expect the same favour from you.

1. Typescript, Huntington Autograph Book, NRom.

**214. Samuel A. Otis to Welcome Arnold  
New York, 18 September 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

I hope you will not abate your influence and exertions to bring your people forward. They are under the strange delusion to believe a — Pray think of Vermont at leisure. Tis of great importance to have them in the Union. . . .

1. Printed: *Autograph Letters: American and Foreign*, Carnegie Book Shop Catalogue 231, Item 419.

**215. Newport Herald, 18 September 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Liberty, says a correspondent, without which we might almost venture to repent at our existence, as an useless and baneful gift of GOD, cannot be understood or valued, and consequently will not be supported, without a competent share of improvement, moral and intellectual.—The vain, the vicious, and the mercenary, seldom extend their cases beyond themselves; and the ignorant Plebeian, though he may vociferate the word LIBERTY in a riot, knows not how to give it an effectual support.—I venture then to assert, that the writer, who effectually recommends pure morals, manly virtues, and the culture of the intellectual powers, by a liberal and virtuous education, not only serves the cause of learning, morality and religion, but effects *political* good, of a species the most permanent and substantial.—His labours tend to advance the members of society to all the perfections of which humanity is susceptible.—He enlightens their understandings, that they may see the great and solid objects of public good; and he emboldens their hearts to pursue it like men—Exhortations to virtue, & every excellence to which an ingenious nature can aspire, are peculiarly seasonable.—They will brace the nerves and the sinews of the body politic.—They will add strength to the foundation of the Federal Edifice, so that the assaults of united nations shall not shake the noble Fabrick.

1. Reprinted: Worcester, Mass., *American Herald*, 2 October; *Pennsylvania Journal*, 4 October; Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 10 October.

## 216. Newport Herald, 18 September 1788

“HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR LET HIM HEAR.”

*That in the booksellers Shop, as well as in the Inn, there must be entertainment for men and asses.—*

Impressed with the truth of this observation, as figuratively applied to the present subject, and reflecting upon the perishable nature of the common weekly News-Papers; and that they never were calculated for the *sole* repository of such *learned* labors, as the *immortal* Euripides has furnished the Newport Mercury with for a series of revolving months—The Antifederalists, Shaysites, Anarchites and wrong-heads of every denomination, are advertised.

That a correspondent who wishes to do the author and his admirers ample justice, is about to collect and republish, in the original *order*, that they first appeared in public, *all the polemical, metaphysico-theological, and mystico-political* labors of the indefatigable modern Euripides, that hath appeared under this signature or otherwise since the commencement of the *ever* memorable *papyrean* administration, down to the present time—Which now lie buried in the wreck of property and ruin of *Know Ye's*.—The work will be intitled the ORACLES OF EURIPIDES; with the following scrap of antient literature significantly expressive of the work inserted in the title page taken from the celebrated Irrinæus lib. 1. chap. 18.—Which we are told was a form of initiation used antiently by the *Marcosian* sect of heretics. It is equally applicable upon the admission of members into the State *nocturnal* conventions.—viz.

*Bassma cacabasa eanaa irraumista diarbada caeota basoba camelanthi.*

The *dedication* will be to the MAN IN THE MOON, not doubting his favorable patronage of a production calculated for those who are under the particular influence of the great luminary of the night.—And after the moddle of great Hogarth, a Mezzotinto print of the author will be executed in the front of the book, setting upon the *tripod*, besmear'd up to the ears in *atramentum*, *preparing the way* for his successor the famous Gotherniel, or the *Oran Outang* of Warwick woods. A lighted lamp will be represented as burning directly under his nose—doubly emblematical.—First of the advantages he received, from the *odoriferous* steems, arising from this machine, in subliming his ideas up to the true pitch of the *Bathos*, while employed in this *Opus Magnum*; and secondly of the ingratitude of the present majority in turning him out after he had consumed so much of the *midnight oil* in their service.—Under this engraving will be inscribed the following device:

TO FAMES POSTERIOR TRUMPET.

*In perpetuam rei memoriam.*

As the Editor of this *immortal* work, expects to be at considerable cost and pains, in the execution, it is hoped that the friends of this *profound* author, will shew their munificence, by their avidity in the purchase—especially as it will be an American production; of *infinite* use to posterity; and intimately connected with the *honor* of the present *men and measures*. No pay will be considered as adequate to the *intrinsic* merit of this performance except *Paper Money* upon par—in complaisance to the *learning, justice, and magnanimity* of the great civilians who are now receiving it on mortgages, bonds, &c. upon principles of *equity* and *justice!!*

**217. John Carter to James Bryson  
Providence, 29 September 1788<sup>1</sup>**

Inclosed I send an Almanack, containing a List of the Duties payable in this State, which you wish to be made acquainted with.—Note, that since this was printed, the Duties on Goods of foreign Growth and Manufacture have been raised from 2½ to 5 per Centum.—Note also, that these Duties are paid at Par in Money of the Growth and Manufacture of this State, which now passes from 8 to 10 for one.—This you will perhaps say is undervaluing *Home Manufactures*—but so we go!

1. RC, Jonathan Williams Manuscripts, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

**218. Litchfield, Conn., Weekly Monitor, 29 September 1788**

FEDERAL SONG,

*To a new Tune, named "Union."*

Far as the northern from the southern pole,  
Be sadness banish'd, exil'd selfish cares,  
While Freedom's Genius animates each soul,  
To hail the rising of her fed'ral stars.

*In rapt'rous lays*

*Your voices raise;*

*Columbia's song,*

*In accents strong,*

*Shall echo to our joys, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.*

Nine fed'ral states politically join'd,  
With glorious rays our hemisphere adorn;  
As splendid stars in amity combin'd,  
Rise, the auspicious harbingers of morn.

*In rapt'rous lays, &c.*

Hail, radiant Constellation! spring of day,  
Ye stars of magnitude in splendour rise!  
Come, chase the night of discord far away,  
And break the morn of peace to joyful eyes.

*In rapt'rous lays, &c.*

Confederated Justice hence shall poize  
Her equal balance through the fav'rite land;  
And heav'n born Truth, with Seraph's mildest voice,  
O'er this new world shall hold supreme command.

*In rapt'rous lays, &c.*

Hence local animosities shall cease,  
Insurgency no more shall find a name;  
Nor civil discord interrupt our peace,  
Nor check, AMERICA! thy rising fame.

*In rapt'rous lays, &c.*

Here science shall her genial rays impart;  
 The arts of peace shall bless the fertile soil,  
 And wide extended commerce find a mart,  
 For all the fruits of cheerful labour's toil,

*In rapt'rous lays, &c.*

In perfect concord shall our councils move;  
 And wond'ring nations bend the list'ning ear;  
 While wisdom, justice, harmony & love,  
 Complete a concert heav'n itself might hear.

*In rapt'rous lays*

*Your voices raise;*

*Columbia's song,*

*In accents strong,*

*Shall echo to our joys, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.*

## 219. Newport Herald, 2 October 1788

FEDERAL SACRED ODE,

To be chaunted by a Chorus of Boys and Girls.

*Grand Chorus.*

Great First and Last! enthron'd above!  
 Propitious hear our ardent prayer,  
 Defend with power, protect by love,  
 And be these SOVEREIGN STATES thy care.

*Chorus of Boys.*

Almighty Lord! the source of day!  
 Roll forth bright glory's noon-tide ray,  
 And pour on Virtue's hallow'd seat  
 The richest blessings known in time;  
 Nor rise on earth a nobler clime,  
 Than Heaven-born Freedom's last retreat.

*Chorus of Girls.*

Whilst ev'ning grey, or morn,  
 Delightful change remains,  
 Let modest worth adorn  
 The fair who tread these plains:  
 Come ev'ry mild, celestial grace,  
 Columbia's beauteous daughters crown;  
 Ye Mothers! lead your infant race  
 To emulate their Sire's renown.

*Grand Chorus.*

Loud trumpets sound, and swift-wing'd Fame,  
 The glorious tidings far proclaim;



Firm, solid bas'd, by WISDOM plann'd,  
 And rear'd by UNION's giant hand.  
 The FEDERAL DOME ascends on high:  
 Rise, COMMERCE rise, unfurl the sail,  
 Rich golden harvests, bless the vale;  
 ARTS, SCIENCE, GENIUS spring to light!  
 RELIGION beam on realms of night!  
 And FREEDOM's TEMPLE reach the sky!

*Chorus of Boys.*

Immortal Supreme!  
 Eternal I AM!  
 Protect and defend  
 COLUMBIA forever.

*Chorus of Girls.*

Eleven twin'd in one,  
 Second Eden divine;  
 Peace and plenty be thine,  
 Forever, forever.—Amen.

*Grand Chorus.*

Arouz'd at JEHOVAH's command,  
 Bursting fetters of steel,  
 Flying Bigotry's zeal,  
 Our Father's embark'd for this land:  
 The Pilgrims conducted of GOD,  
 O'er the loud storming main,  
 On the terror-cloath'd plain,  
 As Spartans undauntedly trod.  
 BRITANNIA avenging pursu'd,  
 The fierce HESSIAN arose,  
 And fell CANNIBAL foes,  
 ARESKOUÏ pour'd on from the wood.  
 AMERICA summon'd the brave,  
 Wars thunders were driven,  
 And the sword bath'd in Heaven,  
 Stern FREEDOM to WASHINGTON gave:  
 Triumphant he wav'd it around,  
 Armies melted away,  
 And the legions of prey,  
 As dew were swept from the ground.  
 Hark! trumpet-tongu'd Angels proclaim,  
 Rise, COLUMBIA, arise,  
 See inscrib'd in the skies,  
 INDEPENDENCE, EMPIRE and FAME.

*Chorus of Boys.*

Lord of Heaven and earth,  
 May piety, truth,  
 Strong morals and worth,  
 Ennoble our youth;  
 And calm in the West,  
 Age tranquilly rest;  
 And world without end,  
 Freedom's triumphs extend.

*Chorus of Girls.*

Come ye nations from far!  
 COLUMBIA's bright star,  
 Eclipses the blaze  
 Of Sol's lucid rays:  
 See, descend from above,  
 Peace, harmony, love,  
 And the virtues again,  
 Advance with their train.

*Grand Chorus.*

High seated supreme as a God,  
 Hostile kingdoms shall bow at thy nod;  
 Rule, COLUMBIA, rule land and sea,  
 Whilst AFRICANS bursting their chains,  
 Shout, shout, and re-echo those strains,  
 AMERICA bade us be free.

*Chorus of Boys.*

GOD, Father, and Friend,  
 Bow down thine ear,  
 Most graciously hear,  
 And Freedom's fair temple forever defend.

*Chorus of Girls.*

Raise to glorious renown  
 This happy, happy clime,  
 The phœnix of time,  
 And give to COLUMBIA the sceptre & crown.

*Grand Chorus.*

It is done! It is done! the grand Federal Dome,  
 Transcends the full splendors of Athens & Rome.  
 Defying arms, fraud,  
 If united at home,  
 Reign triumphant abroad.  
 And the *Virtue*-bas'd,  
*Wisdom*-plann'd,  
*Union*-rear'd,  
*Order*-built,

Glory-crown'd,  
GRAND FEDERAL DOME  
Forever, forever, forever, eternal shall stand.

## 220. Newport Herald, 2 October 1788

### A FRIENDLY HINT.

It has been observed, that *certain persons* have for a *short time* past hovered around the *press*, and shewn a desire of diving into its *arcana*.—Such conduct is *imprudent* and *dishonorable*—Imprudent, as it will excite the resentment of all the true votaries of an unfettered press—Dishonorable, as it argues an unmanly curiosity.

## 221. Northampton, Mass., Hampshire Gazette, 15 October 1788

Advices from America (via France) say, that eight of the American States have agreed to the new form of Government: and New-York was daily expected to come in. Rhode-Island never sent Deputies. Most probably this State will, in a little time, be divided between Connecticut and Massachusetts.

## 222. Quid Nunc

### Newport Herald, 16 October 1788<sup>1</sup>

An enemy to the HERALD sneeringly observed, “*that it had run down one administration, —made Euripides a madman, and now attacked a Priest;—when this source fails, what next?*” Why, replied I, the HERALD will dive into the *matrix* of science,—cull flowers from stems that have been hitherto unproductive,—hunt up game from unexplored parts.—For *novelty*, Mr. Edes gives a zest to a paper—it illumines the writer—fires the reader—and immortalizes the TYPO.—’Twas this rich vein of novelty that made Common Sense uncommon,—and the HERALD a *belle* among her sisters.—’Tis not so much the theme as the newness of matter, that captivates attention; for instance, if you would excite a detestation of avarice, instead of portraying the miser in the hackneyed way, as a grinder of the poor, and a wheedler of his friends out of their money—mark him on his knees at prayer in his family; yet in the midst of his devotion, see him breaking off from his vows and his GOD to throw his missal at a heedless servant who had pushed down a pair of tongs,—hear his lecture on the occasion, “*Don’t you know, you rascal, that a dropping of water will wear out a stone, and a very fall of the tongs must wear them or the hearth.*”

If vanity is your subject—instead of making a man strut like a duke, or detailing amours with ladies of a court, that had sold their honor a thousand times to my lord and his footmen, paint a *bull frog* in the attitude of swelling and the *fop* would burst.

If fraud and injustice is the theme—instead of shewing the depreciation of the paper money, how unjust the tender, how ruinous it would be to the widow and orphan, how destructive to the reputation of the tenderer, lead the *knave*

as a spectator to the pillory or gallows, and remorse would goad him to restitution.

As for fear of offending, I am convinced, Mr. Edes, that it is best to act with SPIRIT, with HONOR, and with IMPARTIALITY; and to exemplify the goodness of this advice I shall close these eccentric remarks with a TALE.

When WOOD was hustling his base *half pence* into the pockets of the deluded people of Ireland, he had silenced every press—'twas then a patriotic Printer of London was invited to remove thither and maintain a strict impartiality—the effect answered the benevolent design, for DRAPER, *in these new sheets*, destroyed WOOD and his *half-pence* together; but before this dispute was well terminated, a new contest arose between the lineal descendants of PETER and the humbler followers of MARTIN, and like all other family quarrels, involved the whole country in flames—'twas *Huzza Peter!* and *Huzza Martin!* At this crisis the Printer refused to publish for either side; but he was soon driven from this neutrality; he then avowed his usual impartiality, but only one side published, the other deemed it a pollution of their purity to make a newspaper the theatre of discussion, and were consequently displeased with his interference in a matter which was alone between *God and the two brothers*.

The Printer, who was a man of wit, to evince the impossibility of pleasing all in such unhappy disputes, advertised that he should *print* his next paper a BLANK—All Ireland was enflamed with curiosity to see it: The Printer sent his paper as usual to his customers, but it was *blank* all to the title, "THE HIBERNIAN GAZETTE."—Men of sense felt their country wounded by the *bull*—Partizans saw in the blank *scandal* that the Printer was afraid to print; and among the whole mass of that people there was none approved it but prudes, who construed it as a compliment to their *vestalism*, and dishonest men that saw a stop to the registry of *bad actions*.

The patrons of the press, convinced from the experiment, that no line of conduct, however regulated, would please, remounted the Printer on his hobby, A FREE PRESS, and bid him drive on, regardless of the malice or revenge of party.

1. Reprinted: *Connecticut Gazette*, 24 October.

### 223. Secretary Charles Thomson to the Governors of New Hampshire and Rhode Island, New York, 22 October 1788<sup>1</sup>

The above is a copy of the letter which I had the honor to write to your Excellency in pursuance of the enclosed act of Congress, but have not yet had the pleasure of rec[e]iving your laws. If they are in print or can be collected, I shall be much obliged if your Excy will order them to be forwardd. If they are out of print I shall take it as a favour if you will cause copies to be made & sent on, of the laws passed pursuant to the recommendations of Congress, & particularly that of the 13 April 1787 which is herewith enclosed

As the government which is soon to commence under the New Constitution is vested with the power of regulating Commerce with foreign nations & of laying and collecting duties and imposts, it will be of importance to them to be informed of the actual state of the commerce & the laws of each state imposing

duties or regulating trade; I shall therefore take it as a favour if your Excy will cause copies of such laws of your state as relate to this subject to be forwarded to this Office as soon as possible

1. FC, PCC, Item 18, Letterbooks of the Secretary of Congress, 1779–89.

## 224. Cato junior

**Providence United States Chronicle, 30 October 1788**

Mr. WHEELER, AS many of those Gentlemen who stile themselves Federalists, have frequently asserted, that Matters of Government, and particularly the new Constitution, ought not to be canvassed by the *common People*, but by the *well-born Few*, or in other Words, *by the Multitude of Office-Hunters*, with which this Town abounds; please to publish in your Chronicle of next Week the 38th Number of CATO'S LETTERS.

Let US hear what old CATO saith.

Your's, &c. CATO JUNIOR.

*Transit-Lane, Oct. 22, 1788.*

The Right and Capacity of the People to judge of Government.

The world has, from time to time, been led into such a long maze of mistakes, by those who gained by deceiving, that whoever would instruct mankind, must begin with removing their errors; and if they were every where honestly apprized of truth, and restored to their senses, there would not remain one nation of bigots or slaves under the sun: A happiness always to be wished, but never expected!

In most parts of the earth there is neither light nor liberty; and even in the best parts of it they are but little encouraged, and coldly maintained; there being, in all places, many engaged, through interest, in a perpetual conspiracy against them. They are the two greatest civil blessings, inseparable in their interest, and the mutual support of each other; and whoever would destroy one of them, must destroy both. Hence it is, that we every where find tyranny and imposture, ignorance and slavery, joined together; and oppressors and deceivers mutually aiding and paying constant court to each other. Wherever truth is dangerous, liberty is precarious.

Of all the sciences that I know in the world, that of government concerns us most, and is the easiest to be known, and yet is the least understood. Most of those who manage it would make the lower world believe that there is I know not what difficulty and mystery in it, far above vulgar understandings; which proceeding of theirs is direct craft and imposture: Every ploughman knows a good government from a bad one, from the effect of it: He knows whether the fruits of his labour be his own, and whether he enjoy them in peace and security: And if he do not know the principles of government, it is for want of thinking and enquiry, for they lie open to common sense; but people are generally taught not to think of them at all, or to think wrong of them.

What is government, but a trust committed by all, or the most, to one, or a few, who are to attend upon the affairs of all, that every one may, with the more security, attend upon his own? A great and honourable trust; but too seldom honourably executed; those who possess it having it often more at heart to in-

crease their power, than to make it useful; and to be terrible, rather than beneficent.—It is therefore a trust, which ought to be bounded with many and strong restraints, because power renders men wanton, insolent to others, and fond of themselves. Every violation therefore of this trust, where such violation is considerable, ought to meet with proportionable punishment; and the smallest violation of it ought to meet with some, because indulgence to the least faults of magistrates may be cruelty to a whole people.

Honesty, diligence, and plain sense, are the only talents necessary for the executing of this trust; and the public good is its only end: As to refinements and finesses, they are often only the false appearances of wisdom and parts, and other tricks to hide guilt and emptiness; and they are generally mean and dishonest: They are the arts of jobbers in politics, who, playing their own game under the public cover, subsist upon poor shifts and expedients; starved politicians, who live from hand to mouth, from day to day, and following the little views of ambition, avarice, revenge, and the like personal passions, are ashamed to avow them; small wicked statesmen, who make a private market of the public, and deceive it, in order to sell it.

These are the poor parts which great and good governors scorn to play; their designs, like their stations, being purely public, are open and undisguised. They do not consider their people as their prey, nor lie in ambush for their subjects; nor dread, and treat and surprize them like enemies as all ill magistrates do; who are not governors, but jailors and sponges, who chain them and squeeze them, and yet take it very ill if they do but murmur; which is yet much less than a people so abused ought to do. There have been times and countries, when public ministers and public enemies have been the same individual men.—What a melancholy reflection is this, that the most terrible and mischievous foes to a nation should be its own magistrates! And yet in every enslaved country, which is almost every country, this is their woful case.

Honesty and plainness go always together, and the makers and multipliers of mysteries, in the political way, are sh[r]ewdly to be suspected of dark designs. *Cincinnatus* was taken from the plough to save and defend the Roman State; an office which he executed honestly and successfully, without the grimace and gains of a statesman. Nor did he afterwards continue obstinately at the head of affairs, to form a party, to raise a fortune, and settle himself in power: As he came in with universal consent, he resigned it with universal applause.

It seems that government was not in those days become a trade, at least a gainful trade. Honest *Cincinnatus* was but a Farmer: and happy had it been for the Romans, if, when they were enslaved, they could have taken the administration out of the hands of the emperors, and their refined politicians, and committed it to such Farmers, or any Farmers. It is certain, that many of their imperial governors acted more ridiculously than a board of ploughmen would have done, and more barbarously than a club of butchers could have done.

But some have said, *It is not the business of private men to meddle with Government.* A bold, false, and dishonest saying; and whoever says it, either knows not what he says, or cares not, or slavishly speaks the sense of others. It is a cant now

almost forgot in *England*, and which never prevailed but when liberty and the constitution were attacked, and never can prevail but upon the like occasion.

It is a vexation to be obliged to answer nonsense, and confute absurdities: But since it is and has been the great design of this paper to maintain and explain the glorious principals of liberty, and to expose the arts of those who would darken or destroy them; I shall here particularly shew the wickedness and stupidity of the above saying; which is fit to come from no mouth but that of a tyrant or a slave, and can never be heard by any man of an honest and free soul, without horror and indignation: It is, in short, a saying, which ought to render the man who utters it for ever incapable of place or credit in a free country, as it shews the malignity of his heart, and the baseness of his nature, and as it is the pronouncing of a doom upon our constitution.—A crime, or rather a complication of crimes, for which a lasting infamy ought to be but part of the punishment.

But to the falshood of the thing: public truths ought never to be kept secrets; and they who do it, are guilty of a solæcism, and a contradiction: Every man ought to know what it concerns all to know. Now, nothing upon earth is a more universal nature than government; and every private man upon earth has a concern in it, because in it is concerned, and nearly and immediately concerned, his virtue, his property, and the security of his person: And where all these are best preserved and advanced, the government is best administered; and where they are not, the government is impotent, wicked, or unfortunate; and where the government is so, the people will be so, there being always and every where a certain sympathy and analogy between the nature of the government and the nature of the people. This holds true in every instance, public men are the patterns of private; and the virtues and vices of the governors become quickly the virtues and vices of the governed.

*Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.*

Nor is it example alone that does it. Ill governments, subsisting by vice and rapine, are jealous of private virtue, and enemies to private property. *Opes pro crimine; & ob virtutes certissimum exitium.* They must be wicked and mischievous to be what they are; nor are they secure while any thing good or valuable is secure. Hence it is, that to drain, worry, and debauch their subjects, are the steady maxims of their politics, their favourite arts of reigning. In this wretched situation the people, to be safe, must be poor and lewd: There will be but little industry where property is precarious; small honesty where virtue is dangerous.

Profuseness or frugality, and the like virtues or vices, which affect the public, will be practised in the city, if they be practised in the court; and in the country, if they be in the city. Even *Nero* (that royal monster in man's shape) was adored by the common herd at Rome, as much as he was flattered by the great; and both the little and the great admired, or pretended to admire, his manners, and many to imitate them. Tacitus tells us, that those sort of people long lamented him, and rejoiced in the choice of a successor that resembled him, even the profligate Otho.

Good government does, on the contrary, produce great virtue, much happiness, and many people. Greece and Italy, while they continued free, were each of them, for the number of inhabitants, like one continued city; for virtue, knowl-

edge and great men they were the standards of the world; and that age and country that could come nearest to them, has ever since been reckoned the happiest.—Their government, their free government, was the root of all these advantages, and of all this felicity and renown;—and in these great and fortunate States the people were the principals in the government;—laws were made by their judgment and authority, and by their voice and commands were magistrates created and condemned. The city of Rome could conquer the world; nor could the great Persian monarch, the greatest then upon earth, stand before the face of one Greek city.

But what are Greece and Italy now? Rome has in it a herd of pampered monks, and a few straying lay inhabitants; the *compania* of Rome, the finest spot of earth in Europe, is a desert. And for the modern Greeks, they are a few abject contemptible slaves, kept under ignorance, chains, and vileness, by the Turkish monarch, who keeps a great part of the globe intensely miserable, that he may seem great without being so.

Such is the difference between one government and another, and of such important concernment is the nature and administration of government to a people. And to say that private men have nothing to do with government, is to say that private men have nothing to do with their own happiness and misery.

What is the public, but the collective body of private men, as every private man is a member of the public? And as the whole ought to be concerned for the preservation of every private individual, it is the duty of every individual to be concerned for the whole, in which himself is concluded [i.e., included].

One man or a few men have often pretended the public, and meant themselves, and consulted their own personal interest, in instances essential to its well-being; but the whole people, by consulting their own interest, consult the public, and act for the public by acting for themselves: This is particularly the spirit of our constitution, in which the whole nation is represented; and our records afford instances, where the house of commons have declined entering upon a question of importance, till they had gone into the country, and consulted their principals, the people: So far were they from thinking that private men had no right to meddle with government. In truth, our whole worldly happiness and misery (abating for accidents and diseases) are owing to the order or mismanagement of government; and he who says that private men have no concern with government, does wisely and modestly tell us, that men have no concern in what concerns them most; it is saying that people ought not to concern themselves whether they be naked or clothed, fed or starved, deceived or instructed, and whether they be protected or destroyed: What nonsense and servitude in a free and wise nation!

For myself, who have thought pretty much of these matters, I am of opinion, that a whole Nation are like to be as much attached to themselves, as one man or a few men are like to be, who may by many means be detached from the interest of a nation. It is certain that one man, and several men, may be bribed into an interest opposite to the public; but it is as certain that a whole country can never find an equivalent for itself, and consequently a whole country can never be bribed. It is the eternal interest of every nation, that their government should be good; but they who direct it frequently reason a contrary way, and find



their own account in plunder and oppression; and while the public voice is pretended to be declared, by one or a few, for vile and private ends, the public know nothing what is done, till they feel the terrible effects of it.

By the bill of rights, and the act of settlement, at the Revolution, a right is asserted to the people of applying to the king and to the parliament, by petition and address, for a redress of public grievances and mismanagements, when such there are, of which they are left to judge: and the difference between free and enslaved countries lies principally here, that in the former, their magistrates must consult the voice and interest of the people; but in the latter, the private will, interest, and pleasure of the governors, are the sole end and motives of their administration.

Such is the difference between England and Turkey; which difference they who say that private men have no right to concern themselves with government, would absolutely destroy; they would convert magistrates into bashaws, and introduce popery into politics. The late revolution stands upon the very opposite maxim; and that any man dares to contradict it since the Revolution, would be amazing, did we not know that there are, in every country, hirelings who would betray it for a sop.

## 225. A Friend to this State

### Philadelphia American Museum, October 1788

*Address to the citizens of the state of Rhode Island.*

Strangers of information and patriotic principles were greatly astonished at the conduct of our general assembly, during their last session, in refusing to join in the federal convention, and in rejecting the recommendation of congress, for repealing all laws repugnant to the treaty of peace with Great-Britain. As a spectator, I attended with impartiality to their debates; and as a citizen of this state, I found myself deeply wounded by their determinations. I have endeavoured to investigate the causes of their unheard-of obstinacy, and shall suggest my opinion to you, my countrymen, without reserve.

The great object of the present administration is to relieve the people from debt. So far they are to be applauded. To effect this object they emitted the paper currency. The measure was innocent, but not political or prudent. The manner of funding the bank, and the enormous sum emitted, rendered it impossible that the paper should bear an equal proportion to specie. It was therefore unjust to declare it an equivalent in payment for specie contracts. But the amazing disparity which has since taken place, might not have been foreseen or expected. Invincible ignorance is excusable; but no man is pardonable for placing himself in a situation to judge and decide for others, in matters whereof he is incapable. Experience, however, has taught the administration, that it requires six or eight pounds in paper to purchase any article which is sold for twenty shillings in specie; and that there is not probability of a change for the better: yet they continue the tender laws, and affect to avoid all distinctions in the different kinds of lawful money in the state. Here, then, is a clear proof of dishonest intentions; and the charge cannot be avoided or mitigated: but what is much to be lamented, the more glaring the evil appears, the more inflexible is the obstinacy by which it is supported.

It is well known that many of the framers and supporters of the present system, were greatly involved in private debts, when it was first adopted; and it is also known they have availed themselves of its iniquitous and dishonourable advantages. Hence it is obvious, that the abolition of debts, without rendering an equivalent, is the intention of the leading members of assembly; and therefore they reject every measure, however just and necessary, to accomplish their views. Such is their attachment to this favourite, though disgraceful scheme, that they seem determined to run all hazards, and involve the state in every kind of calamity, rather than relinquish their pursuit.

Why have they refused to join in the federal convention? do they not know that the united states cannot exist as a nation, while they, and the legislatures of other states, have it in their power to frustrate every public measure, by their local, their absurd, and unconstitutional policy? and do they not know, that it would be impossible for them to defraud the citizens of other states, if the articles of confederation were carried into full effect? have they not permitted a number of towns to discharge, in paper, arrearages due upon continental taxes, assessed so long ago as the year 1783, when other towns have paid their proportions in silver and gold? and is not this a direct violation of the articles of confederation? have they not declared the paper currency a legal tender to discharge all debts, when, by the treaty of peace, debts contracted and due before that period, to British subjects, were to be paid in sterling money? congress have required of them to repeal all laws repugnant to that treaty; and have they not refused? and is not this refusal a most flagrant breach of national faith?—why have they refused? they say, because such a repealing law would affect their emitting act. Then it is plain and evident, that rather than depart, in a single instance, from their present measures, they will trample upon the most sacred obligations, and defy the united states to arms!

Think, my countrymen, think for yourselves!—we are deprived of an amazing tract of western territory, ceded to us by the treaty of peace, Great Britain refusing to surrender the posts belonging to the united states. We are deprived of the prodigious advantages of the fur trade, and are continually exposed to the ravages of the Indians, upon our frontier settlements; we are involved in enormous expences for the support of troops to protect them, and cannot sell or dispose of the lands, in ease of taxation. And why are we thus embarrassed? because we have violated the treaty of peace, and Great Britain will not comply on her part, till we comply on ours. Do you think that the united states will be so lost to every principle of honour, virtue, and public faith, as to suffer their engagements, solemnly entered into with Great Britain, to be disregarded? or can they answer it to themselves, to posterity, or to their God, to suffer the stupendous fabric of freedom and independence, reared by the best blood and treasure of their citizens, to be demolished by the defection of any one or more states in the union?—why have they contended, through seas of blood, against the power of Britain, and the base opposition of many of their own disaffected inhabitants, to obtain the glorious prize of their conflict, if they are again to be involved in all the horrors and calamities of war, by the treacherous conduct of any part of the empire? if this state should continue in opposition to the rights of the union, and to violate the articles of treaty, the vengeance of the whole

nation will fall upon them. Neither will reprisals be made upon mercantile property, as some may vainly imagine!

There are people in this state, who, during the war, were in the interests of the common enemy, and acted as spies: these people, through the lenity of government, were suffered to remain with us, are now cordially embraced by the leaders of party faction, and are in the exercise of offices of profit and trust. Their hearts are still replete with bitter revenge. They wish to see this country in slavery to Great-Britain, and their influence is too apparent in concerting the means that might lead to such a degrading situation. Be it known unto them, that they cannot escape from the punishments of a second treason; nor will the hand of justice be slow in pursuing their warm supporters!

Unfortunately for the happiness and glory of this country, the articles of confederation were formed at a time when the feelings were directed to a single object, the conflict of the moment. Fear and common danger cemented the affections, and united the efforts of the friends to their country; there was then no scope for the displays of jealousy, or the daring encroachments of separate interests. As the ties, which united the states and the citizens, were politically few, so were the conditions by which they were to be connected. The political mind was restrained in its researches into the new prospects of arts, manufactures, commerce, revenue, finance, national conventions, and the spirit of enterprize, to be unfolded by emerging from a state of dependence, into an equality with the sovereigns of the earth. And as opposition to the great interests of society, arising from turbulent passions and repugnant views, the offspring of peace, business, and reflection, was not then contemplated; the framers of those articles, relying too much upon the virtue of the people, and the mutual affection of the states, formed an excellent civil institution, without providing in any measure for its security and support. Slender, indeed, were the ties by which the union of the states was to be perpetuated, and fatal experience has taught us, that ever since the peace, we have been drawn more and more from the common centre. At this moment we are the laughing stock of all Europe; and, what adds the most painful chagrin to the reflection, is, that we are comparatively, the laughing stock of fools!

At the close of the war, our character was universally revered—four years of peace and leisure have plunged us into the deepest abyss of infamy. Philosophers have triumphed upon the happy prospect of seeing mankind rescued from civil thralldom and enjoying the blessings of polished society, under the influence of republican virtue. How great has been their disappointment, to behold us, in so short a space of time, the most degraded of any civilized nation to ancient or modern story!

We are indebted to foreign nations; we promise the principal, but do not pay even the interest. We enter into treaties of commerce, but cannot enforce compliance with a single article. We have ships, and materials for ship building in abundance, but other subjects than our own, transport even our articles of exportation. Our debts are continually accumulating, while, for the want of effective powers in the federal head to regulate trade and commerce, the sources of revenue are as rapidly diminishing. Can we remain long in so dishonourable as well as destructive a situation? Will not foreign creditors demand payment? And,

upon refusal, will they not make reprisals? Will the real friends to their country remain idle spectators, or rather will they not unite, by all the means in their power, to avert the evil?

Is it not wise, is it not prudent, is it not necessary, to provide in time, against the worst of consequences, by consenting to and joining in a candid revision of the federal constitution; and in framing and adopting such a general system, as may be adequate, under the smiles of heaven, to every rational purpose? This is in our power; peace, happiness, and safety, are in our power; the fairest inheritance ever secured by the wisdom of ages, is in our power, and may be transmitted unsullied to posterity! but if we continue to harbour and cherish discord and jealousy among ourselves—if we divide, by sordid, local views, the united interests of the states, our resentments will be inflamed against each other, till from cabals, mobs, riots, and tumults, we shall fly to arms; and, after experiencing all the miseries of civil contention, embittered by keen resentments, a government will be dictated at the head of an army, covered with wounds, and familiar to slaughter!

To this dreadful alternative, we need not be subjected, if we duly attend to the following circumstances. His excellency our governor is highly federal, and in this respect averse to the wild conduct of the majority in administration. Many of the upper house are decidedly against them in this point of view. We have a sensible, federal and spirited minority; while some of the majority are hesitating between the stings of conscience and the false lures of injustice—your own good sense may soon be rescued from the grossest imposition, and the wisdom of the federal councils will devise the means of your political salvation.

*Newport, June, 1787.*

## **226. Rhode Island House of Deputies Proceedings**

**Saturday, 1 November 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Vote of this House for publishing the Letter of Govr. Clinton and the Amendments of New York to the Constitution Concurred . . .

1. MS, House of Deputies Journal, R-Ar.

## **227. Rhode Island House of Magistrates Proceedings**

**Saturday, 1 November 1788<sup>1</sup>**

No. 55 Vote of the Lower-House upon Govr. Clinton's Letter was read and concurred

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

**228. Jeremiah Olney to Henry Knox  
Providence, 5 November 1788 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

... This State have again Refused to appoint a Convention for Considering the New Constitution in the Legal mode—the Question was put on Saturday last in the House of Deputies for a Convention, when after much Debate it was Negated by a Majority of three to one—after which (Mr. Hazzard an Implacable & potent Enemy to the New System & the Leading Character in all the Vile Politicks Carrying on in this *Devoted* State) brought forward a motion for Distributing Copies of the Circular Letter from the New York Convention, throughout this State—and Submitting to the People at large the Propriety of Choosing Deligates to meet a proposed Convention for Considering amendments agreeably to the Recommendation of the above Circular Letter—which being put after Considerable Debate it obtained three to one in favr. of the Motion—

The Minority both in and out of the House took unwearied pains (during the Session) to obtain a Convention for Considering the New System in a Constitutional way—but Sir Reason & Argument avails nothing with those Vile Opposers to order & Good Government—Hazzard having Done all the Mischief here in his Power for the Present—is ordered forward to take a Seat in Congress, with a Colo. John Gardner who is Intirely under the power & Influence of Mr. Hazzards *Cursed* Politicks—we have the Consolation that there is but very few Antis in Congress So that he Cannot possibly Carry any point in that Honorable Body—

I have the Honor to be with great Esteem

1. RC, GLC 0-2437.04027, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New-York Historical Society.

**229. Providence Gazette, 8 November 1788<sup>1</sup>**

At the October Session of the General Assembly, held in this Town last Week, the Hon. Major-General STANTON was elected Speaker, and ROWSE J. HELME, Esq; Clerk of the Lower House.

During the Session, an Act was passed for *discharging* a Quarter Part of the Four per Cent. Notes (so called). An Act also passed for preventing foreign Nations from sending convicted Malefactors into this State.

Questions were taken on the Propriety of proposing a State Convention, and for Repeal of the Tender Law (so called) but they were both negated by a dead Majority.

The several Town-Clerks are ordered to issue Warrants for holding Town-Meetings, to instruct the General Assembly, at their next Session, on the Subject of Governor Clinton's circular Letter;—which, by the Way, it was suggested to the House, was addressed only to such States as had or should have adopted the New Constitution.

The Honourable JONATHAN J. HAZARD, and JOHN GARDNER, Esquires, are to proceed to New-York, and take their seats in Congress.

The General Assembly stands adjourned to Monday the 29th of December next, then to meet at South-Kingstown.

1. Reprinted: *Connecticut Gazette*, 14 November; *Connecticut Journal*, 19 November; *Maryland Journal*, 28 November (paragraph 4).

### 230. Massachusetts Spy, 13 November 1788<sup>1</sup>

On the circular Letter from the Convention of Newyork it was ordered, that the Secretary send printed Copies of the same to each Town Clerk in the State, who on receiving the same are directed to convene their several Towns, by Warrant, to give Instructions to their Deputies at the next Session, Whether they will have Delegates appointed to meet Delegates from Newyork and such other States as appoint them in General Convention on the Subject of the proposed Federal Constitution.—Or to give such other Instructions as may be conducive to the publick Good.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 17 November.

### 231. Warwick Warrant, 16 November 1788<sup>1</sup>

Notice is hereby given to the freemen of the Town of Warwick, to meet together at the dwelling house of Mr. Gideon Arnold's on the last monday of November instant, at ten of the Clock in the forenoon, in order to draw Jury-men for next January Inferior Court of Common pleas. Also to take into Consideration His Excellency George Clinton Esqr. proposal, that a General Convention of the States should take place, in order that such necessary Amendments may be made in the Constitution proposed for a federal Government, as will secure to the people at large their Rights and Liberties, and instruct the Deputies Accordingly. &c. &c

James Jerauld Town Clk

appoint Delegates to meet other Delegates that may be appointed by other States to make alterations & amendment[s] in the proposed federal Constitution, and in Case there should be a General Vention that their doings shall be Transmitted back, for the approbation of the people at Large.

1. MS, Warwick Papers, Vol. 4, no. 1304, RHf.

### 232. Massachusetts Centinel, 19 November 1788<sup>1</sup>

In a statement reported to the House of Representatives on Monday, of monies not accounted for by persons, &c. who have drawn them out of the Treasury, *Benedict Arnold*, in the sum of 260*l.* and the *State of Rhode-Island*, in about 400*l.* are stated to be publick defaulters.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 27 November, and in six other newspapers by 10 December: N.H. (1), Mass. (2), N.Y. (1), N.J. (1), Pa. (1).

**233. New York Journal, 20 November 1788<sup>1</sup>**

The general assembly of Rhode-Island have again negatived the question, whether the state should call a convention to consider the proposed constitution, by a majority of 26.

It was also resolved, in that assembly, that the letters from the New-York convention, be referred to the people, recommending to them to empower their deputies to appoint delegates to meet those which might be appointed by the state of New-York, or other states, to consider and determine the proposed amendments to the constitution of the United States of America.

1. Reprinted: *Hudson Weekly Gazette* and Poughkeepsie, N.Y., *Country Journal*, 25 November.

**234. New York Daily Advertiser, 25 November 1788<sup>1</sup>**

*Extract of letter from a gentleman at Newport, R. I. dated Nov. 3, to his friend in this city.*

“At the last session of assembly which closed last Saturday night, it was moved to call a convention to take into consideration the new constitution, when the question was lost by a great majority. One quarter part of the 4 per cent. state notes was ordered to be exchanged for paper bills at par, or be forfeited to the state. The assembly adjourned to meet at Little Rest (South Kingston) the last Monday in December; then probably they will order the second quarter to be exchanged; the third quarter to be exchanged at the usual February session; the last quarter at May session, so that the whole state debt may be extinguished by next August, when the legislature may think of a convention. It was proposed by the minority, as there was paper enough in the treasury, to exchange the whole at once—but this could not take. When the state debt is paid, many who adhere to the majority will probably drop off; it was therefore politic in them to preserve a part of the state debt, until after the next election.”

1. Reprinted: Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 9 December.

**235. Providence United States Chronicle, 27 November 1788**

STATE of RHODE-ISLAND, &c.

In General Assembly, Oct. Session, 1788.

Whereas his Excellency George Clinton, Esq; President of the Convention of New-York, hath transmitted to the Legislature of this State a Proposal that a General Convention of the States should take Place, in order that such necessary Amendments may be made in the Constitution proposed for a federal Government, as will secure to the People at large their Rights and Liberties, and to remove the exceptionable Parts of the said proposed Constitution:—And whereas this General Assembly conceive it to be the indispensable Duty of the Citizens of this State to be connected in the Union with their Sister States, if it can be done upon the Principles of good Government: And as it is necessary

that when any Alterations are to be made in Government which may affect the People at large, the same should originate with and be derived from them:

It is therefore Voted and Resolved, That the Secretary forthwith cause to be printed a sufficient Number of Copies of Governor Clinton's Letter, with the Amendments proposed by the Convention of the State of New-York, and transmit one as soon as possible to each Town-Clerk in the State; who is hereby directed upon Receipt thereof to issue his Warrant to call the Freemen of such Town to convene in Town-Meeting, to take the same into Consideration, and thereupon to give their Deputies Instructions, whether they will have Delegates appointed to meet in Convention with the State of New-York: and such other States as shall appoint the same; or such other Instructions as they may deem conducive to the public Good; that this General Assembly may know their Determination at the Session to be holden by Adjournment, on the last Monday in December next.

It is Ordered, That the Secretary also transmit therewith a Copy of this Act to each Town-Clerk in the State.

A TRUE COPY:

Witness,

HENRY WARD, Secretary.

### 236. *Virginia Journal*, 27 November 1788<sup>1</sup>

ALEXANDRIA, November 27.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Providence (Rhode-Island) to his friend in this town, dated the 1st instant.

"Our assembly is now sitting here—little business has been done—the important questions for calling a state convention, and for repealing the iniquitous Tender Law, have each been negatived by a majority of 29.—Thus you learn, that our rulers still persist in their unrighteous system, notwithstanding the unremitting exertions of our respectable minority—God knows where it will stop—may it be short of total destruction."

1. Reprinted: *Virginia Herald*, 4 December; Winchester *Virginia Gazette*, 10 December. The *Virginia Journal* for 27 November is not extant. This item was transcribed from the *Virginia Herald* which reprinted it under an "ALEXANDRIA, November 27," dateline.

### 237. *New York American Magazine*, November 1788

Rhode-Island perseveres in her system of political knavery. On a motion for a repeal of their iniquitous tender law, it was found that the advocates for such a detestable law were to the honest men as 40 to 15. These advocates however begin to talk of *amendments* in the new Constitution. They have appointed the Hon. Jonathan J. Hazard, and John Gardner, Esq'rs. delegates to Congress.



**238. Othello****Philadelphia American Museum, November 1788 (excerpt)**

Essay on negro slavery, No. 1,

. . . On all occasions impartiality in the distribution of justice, should be observed. The little state of Rhode-Island, hath been reprobated by the other states, for refusing to enter into measures respecting a new general government; and so far it is admitted that she is culpable. But if she is worthy of blame in this respect, she is entitled to the highest admiration for the philanthropy, justice and humanity, she hath displayed, respecting the subject I am treating on. She hath passed an act prohibiting the importation of slaves into that state, and forbidding her citizens to engage in the iniquitous traffic. So striking a proof of her strong attachment to the rights of humanity, will rescue her name from oblivion, and bid her live in the good opinion of distant and unborn generations. . . .

**239. Warrant Calling a Town Meeting, 4 December 1788<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island & Providence Plantations—

To the Town-Serjeant or either of the Constables of the Town of Providence in the County of Providence in said State—Greeting—

In Conformity to an Act of the Honorable the General Assembly of the said State passed at the Session on the last Monday in October last you are hereby required in the Name of the Governor and Company of the said State to warn the Freemen of the said Town to meet in Town-Meeting at the State-House in said Town on Saturday the Sixth Day of December instant at Two of the Clock in the Afternoon, then and there to take into Consideration a Proposal transmitted by His Excellency George Clinton, Esqr. President of the Convention of New-York to the Legislature of this State, that a General Convention of the States should take Place in Order that such necessary Amendments be made in the Constitution proposed for a federal Government as will secure to the People at large their Rights and Liberties, and to remove the exceptionable Parts of the said proposed Constitution. And thereupon to give their Deputies Instructions whether they will have Delegates appointed to meet in Convention with the State of New-York, and such other States as shall appoint the same; or such other Instructions as they may deem ~~necessary~~ conducive to the Public Good: That the said General Assembly may know their Determination at the Session to be holden by Adjournment on the last Monday in December instant—And also to transact such other Business as shall then and there be thought necessary Hereof fail not and true Return make. Given under my Hand and Seal at said Providence this Fourth Day of December, A. D. 1788, and in the Thirteenth Year of Independence

Daniel Cooke, Town-Clerk  
Providence 5th Decmr. 1788.

In obedience to the within Command I have Warn'd the Freemen to Meet at time & place Within mentioned—

Henry Bowen T. Serjt:

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5042, RH1.

**240. Portland, Maine, Cumberland Gazette, 4 December 1788<sup>1</sup>**

## POLITICAL LITANY.

From seekers, shifters and trimmers—from such as have no opinion of their own, but are of every one's opinion, *Deliver us Good Lord.*

From the sin of Antifederalism—the iniquity of Rhode Island rulers—and the plots of anarchy, and its disciples, *Good Lord deliver us.*

From the evil of our times—from the *plentiful lack* of cash—and the abundance of luxury, which makes the want of it, *Deliver us good Lord.*

From stupid, left handed preachers—whose only system is backbiting—and whose whole conduct is baseness, *Libera nos Domine.*

From scolding wives—from ever prating wives—and wives who are not huswives, *Good Lord deliver us.*

From old maids, and old bachelors—from late marriages, and long courtships, *Good Lord deliver us.*

From all unclean women—from street walkers, whether by day or by night—from coquettes without brains—and from prudes without virtue, *Good Lord deliver us.*

AMEN.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Spy*, 16 December.

**241. State Gazette of North Carolina, 11 December 1788**

In the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, at their late sessions, a motion was made for the calling a Convention to consider of the proposed federal constitution, when there appeared 40 nays, 14 yeas; majority 26 against calling a Convention.

**242. New Hampshire Recorder, 23 December 1788**

At the last session of the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, a motion was made for the appointment of a Convention to consider of the proposed Constitution—when there was a majority of 25 against the motion.

**243. Henry Knox to James Swan  
New York, 3 January 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The New Constitution of this Country will soon take place—much good is presaged to result from its operations—Its' opponents are diminishing daily—The Majority of the legislatures of New York and Virginia wish for a new general convention, but the other states which have accepted it seem to desire that experience should be the director of any future alterations.

North Carolina after rejecting the Constitution has called another convention to assemble next November—Rhode Island is still holding out but it must ultimately conform to the great majority of the Country. . . .

1. FC, GLC02437.04068, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, courtesy of The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New-York Historical Society.

**244. Providence Gazette, 3 January 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The General Assembly of this State, now sitting, have again negated the Proposal for calling a State Convention.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 15 January; *New York Packet*, 16 January; *Philadelphia Federal Gazette*, 17 January; *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer and Pennsylvania Packet*, 19 January; and *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 12 February.

**245. William Ellery to the Commissioners of the Treasury  
Newport, 5 January 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The Genl. Assembly at their Session, the last week, rejected a motion for submitting the New-Constitution to a Convention of the States;—passed an Act for an exchange of the remainder of the Four pr. Ct. Notes for paper at par by the first of March next and adjourned to the second monday of that month.—That act completes the discharge of the State debt.—

1. FC, Ellery Letterbook, 1786–1794, RNHi.

**246. Hartford American Mercury, 5 January 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

A VISION of the Printer's Boy.

As late soft slumber clos'd my eyes,  
A lovely form shot from the skies,  
Approach'd my bed with aspect meek,  
And thus it spake, or seem'd to speak.  
    'Go with the New Year's sun, my boy,  
Go, bid your anxious country joy;  
*This* is the year ordain'd by fates,  
To rear the glory of the States.'  
    Raptur'd I gaz'd—The voice and mien,  
Methought, I knew: I erst had seen  
*Columbia's* genius—'Twas the same  
Who spake, and thus pursu'd the theme.  
    'I, who *Columbia's* heroes fir'd  
To arms, more lately have inspir'd  
Th' assembled Sages with a plan  
To finish what those arms began.  
Thence thro' the States I wing'd my way,  
To scatter wisdoms sacred ray:  
I kindled up the glowing flame  
Of zeal, to raise *Columbia's* fame.  
The fed'ral States to union drew,  
And bade *The glorious work pursue*  
    'One state is doom'd awhile to be  
A mark, by which the rest may see

And shun the gulph, which quick embrogues  
Blind paper-mongers, cheats and rogues. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Centinel*, 7 January.

**247. Providence United States Chronicle, 8 January 1789**

To the EDITOR of the CHRONICLE.

*You are requested to publish the following in your next Paper*      *Your's, &c.*      *Z.*

The Tyrant's Pandæmonium.

Hail, source of knavery! all subjecting clan,  
By lust inspir'd to blend the rights of man;  
O'er ruin'd realms to raise the kindling lyre  
Bid freedom mount, and avarice touch the fire;  
While groaning nations sink beneath your hand,  
Hurl'd in desolation crims'ning o'er the land,  
In one broad tide all human rights to whelm,  
While peace resigns, and knavery guards the helm.  
Thrice happy morning! all reviving sun;  
That sees the day, that knows the business done,  
When every realm hard bound in slavery's ties,  
Like falling stars shall sink no more to rise;  
When each republic yields to fed'ral laws,  
And heav'n-born freedom mourns her vanquish'd cause.  
I see the giddy throngs licentious rise!  
Hell in their souls and knav'ry in their eyes!  
Grigarious round from ev'ry distant shore,  
In black'ning crouds the assembling miscreants pour.  
From Phil—a sounds the spreading din,  
There toil my sons, and there my joys begin:  
There tyranny first gave destruction birth,  
To nations slavery and to freedom death,  
From that fair clime, enroll'd in mystic guise,  
I see unchain'd that blood-stain'd monster<sup>(a)</sup> rise.  
As when old Vulcan on his fiery throne,  
From Etna's top descends the flaming zone:  
Around his oar the flaming sulphur plays,  
And streams on streams reflect the red'ning blaze.  
Swift down the skies between the sounding poles,  
Through fields of air the thund'ring chariot rolls.  
Deep from the center pours a boiling flood,  
Falls down the steep and brightens round the god:  
While from his eyes the blazing tempest hurl'd,  
Bend the long deluge o'er the trembling world;  
The distant nations plung'd in flame expire,

And earth and heaven seem kindling with the fire.  
 So round the monster's head confus'dly roll'd  
 In awful pomp the black'ning storms unfold;  
 His shadowy brows in binding mountains curl'd,  
 Spread o'er each realm, and shade the western world,  
 Blaze after blaze indignant from his eyes,  
 Move like a meteor through the vesper'd skies;  
 While his wide jaws with flames sulphurous swell,  
 Heave the dark gulph and spread the expanding hell.  
 High moves the vultur'd ghost—his hideous form,  
 Swells like some clouds before an evening storm;  
 Grasp'd in his hand expiring empire lies,  
 Peace groans in death, and yielding virtue dies.  
 Before his shrine in sacred order spread,  
 CONSOLIDATION rears her horrid head.  
 Involv'd in blood the infernal structure stands,  
 And desolation waves her crimson'd hands,  
 Here dread Discordia sounds the dire alarms,  
 And there Braizens lifts his hundred arms;  
 His parting heads in space immense divide  
 Like winding cliffs on Etna's craggy side;  
 Dark Vidius pamper'd with exhaustless guile  
 From treach'ry's source impell'd th' unwilling smile  
 While blinded Plutus rears his form before  
 And leads the insidious dupe from shore to shore.  
 Hail sacred era! long expected scene,  
 Fair freedom's death-watch, & the tyrant's screen;  
 No more shall justice lift her golden scale,  
 Her sons no more over tyrants prevail;  
 Virtue no more shall gild the blissful reign,  
 Nor smiling peace expunge the crimson'd stain:  
 But whelm'd, obscur'd, each heav'n-born right must dwell,  
 Sav'd by these hounds to feed the new-form'd hell,  
 While these blest eyes, with conquest's aid endu'd,  
 Sees fed'ral empire rais'd on human blood.

(a) *Constitution.*

248. *New York Daily Gazette*, 10 January 1789

PHILADELPHIA, December 30.

A Correspondent recommends, to the citizens of the United States, a general review of the important events of 1787 and 1788, which will afford them the best proofs of what they may reasonably hope to take place in 1789. In May, 1787, the grand convention assembled, in Philadelphia, with a view to rescue their distressed country from the miseries in which she had been involved by a weak and despicable form of government. The collected wisdom of the union, in that august body, after four months deliberation, proposed a new constitution, as the best remedy that could be devised for the distresses under which they, in common with their fellow-citizens, laboured. The people at large have since approved of their conduct; and, after having fully discussed the merits of the constitution, eleven States have adopted it; another has agreed to call a convention; and even in Rhode-Island, which sent no delegates to the federal convention, there is a prospect of its ratification.

Such is the astonishing unanimity with which a form of government has been formed for the greatest empire on earth! and such the unexampled discussion and adoption of it, by the various jarring interests throughout these extensive States, without civil commotions of any kind!

The members of the federal convention were chosen by the state legislatures, who have testified their approbation of the constitution, by calling the conventions of the people, who ratified it in their respective states; and further, by choosing *federal* senators in seven of the States, *one only* having elected men of a different complexion.

Add to all these the prospect that we have, of *federal* senators being chosen in the other states, and we shall find, that the state legislators are far from being apprehensive for their sovereignty, notwithstanding the inflammatory declamation of the *factionous few*, who are opposed to the peace of their country and general voice of the people.

As the great body of the people are *federal*, and have adopted the constitution, we need scarcely doubt of their *consistency* in choosing, like Pennsylvania, men of their own principles to represent them in the general government. For the same reasons, the patriots of America will unite their suffrages in favor of a WASHINGTON and an ADAMS, as president and vice-president of the United States. From a federal government, composed of such men, what may we not expect? Certainly we cannot be too sanguine in our hopes, when we anticipate the centered wisdom of America, in the utmost harmony, consulting for, and anxious to promote, her and her citizens' happiness and glory; and those endeavours crowned with merited success. Such, concludes our correspondent, are the prospects of America. Posterity shall revere the memory of the present age; and the nations of the earth shall, with envy and astonishment, behold their greatness eclipsed by the superior lustre of Columbia's justly-acquired glory.

**249. Providence United States Chronicle, 15 January 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

*Extracts of Letters from Georgia, dated in November and December last. . . .*

“Our old State Constitution, which is much like that of Pennsylvania, consisting of a single House of Assembly, is found so defective that a Convention is ordered to frame a new One; our present Ideas are, that the new one shall be nearly similar to the new federal Constitution—am sorry to hear that your State still continues averse to the new Government.”

1. Reprinted: *New York Weekly Museum*, 31 January; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 2 February; *Pennsylvania Mercury*, 3 February; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 4 February; and *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 18 February.

**250. Wilmington Centinel, 22 January 1789<sup>1</sup>**

A correspondent observes, that he is happy to find the political character of this state is daily emerging from the opinion our sister states have hitherto had of it. Our federal disposition, they say, is evident by calling another convention; and as a majority in the last, from *fear*, not having had a sufficient knowledge of the constitution, rejected it, so the one to come, seeing the example of the other states, and having a longer time to consider of the subject, will undoubtedly adopt a plan so replete with the essentials of a good government.

The observation, that this state and Rhode-Island are the only states of the thirteen that are averse to a good government, is obviously erroneous on the part of the former. The majority in the latter, the *paper money junto*, alias *Know Ye faction*, we will allow are strenuous against any form but what shall tend to their unjust Tender Laws and Acts to alter the nature of contracts.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Herald*, 5 March; *Providence United States Chronicle*, 12 March (2nd paragraph); *Pennsylvania Packet*, 6 April; *New York Morning Post*, 9 April.

**251. Wilmington Centinel, 22 January 1789**

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Newport, (Rhode Island)  
to his friend in this town, dated December 1, 1788.*

“I am pleased that North-Carolina begin to repent of their antifederal conduct, and could heartily wish our state would follow their example, but there are little hopes at present. At our last sessions in October, a motion was made for calling a convention, which was rejected by a large majority, as was a motion to repeal the *Tender Law*; and at the same moment, without a blush, vote money for present services, at 6, 7, and 8 for one. The majority make great dependence on support from North-Carolina and New-York. The three New-England States are appointing their representatives with great harmony; their best men are in nomination.”

**252. New York Daily Gazette, 26 January 1789<sup>1</sup>**

*Extract of a letter from New-Port, (Rhode-Island) dated Jan. 12, 1789.*

“I wish both branches not only of your legislature, but of all the legislatures would unite, and give the new constitution a fair trial: If upon experiment it should require any amendment, it might be easily made, where a love of union and harmony prevailed.

[“]They who are afraid to be enslaved by the new system, may thereby perhaps discover the jealousy of freemen, but in my opinion they betray a want of the genuine spirit of liberty; for they who are possessed of this, (and I trust it still pervades the mass of the people) would not patiently submit to a constitution of government which in its operation should prove oppressive, but unite in proposing and effecting any necessary alterations.

[“]Whether North-Carolina or this State will first embrace the new government, I cannot determine:—They both are actuated by pretty much the same motives:—The accursed paper money system is at the root, and poisons the fair tree of liberty. When our state debt is wiped away with paper, (and that will soon be effected, as you may see by the act of this State, published in the last Newport Herald<sup>(a)</sup>) our wisecracs will, I fancy, begin to think more seriously of the ill consequences which will flow from their finally rejecting the new constitution;—and as the interval between next spring and next fall will afford much time for serious reflection, and some for the new constitution to operate, I will embrace your opinion, and hope that this State will not be the last in the Union.”

(a) *See our Gazette of the 23d instant.*

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette* and *Pennsylvania Packet*, 29 January; Lansingburgh, N.Y., *Federal Herald*, 16 February; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 18 February.

**253. Portius****Newport Herald, 29 January 1789**

Mr. EDES, Some friends to the present administration have been heard to say, that the pieces in your paper against certain characters in this State, were wrote by malicious persons, and that there was no man of common sense and honesty but what would feel himself hurt by them—That they were calculated to heighten the divisions that subsist among us, and increase party contentions—That they tended to evil, and disgraced those persons who constantly endeavored to place certain Legislators in an unfavorable point of light.

It is the duty, as it is the interest, of every free citizen, to give his opinion, relative to the public good, with freedom, more especially when measures are pursued which he thinks are detrimental to the State where he resides,—to this end the liberty of the press has ever been held sacred by a free people, and the least infringement thereon has met with deserved resentment—Influenced by the above motives, the following is offered to the public through the channel of your useful miscellany.

Those persons who have assumed the pen, being divested of malice, have arraigned some Legislators before the public tribunal, and have with firmness



and intrepidity, pourtrayed their characters in a just point of light.—While they have done this, they have shewed themselves to be men of integrity and honesty.—Have they stopped here? No.—They have justly lashed the KNOW YE GENTRY: But when persons are lost to all sense of shame and honesty, it is no wonder that *whips* do not make a proper impression, and that they proceed to defraud widows, orphans, and honest creditors.

See the base wretch, attended with witnesses to support him in his iniquity, tendering paper money at par to a person, who has loaned him gold or silver, for which he received his note.—If you do not take the paper I will lodge it in the General Treasurer's office to be appropriated to the public.—The note, he says, is discharged.—I have amply satisfied it. Honest and brave is the creditor who dares look his debtor in the face, and tell him, I will not receive it. When he does this, he shews himself a man.

Are there not such base wretches in this State as I have represented? Do not daily experience evince the truth of the above observations? Are such characters to be applauded? rather, ought they not to be held forth to public view, and have imprinted on their foreheads the mark of a defrauder?—Avaunt thou miscreant—hide thyself in the dust, for be assured every honest man will reprobate your conduct. If you should ever think of your iniquity, and possibly you may, the twinges of conscience will harrow up your soul, and goad you with the most acute pain.

When Legislators frame and enact unrighteous laws, by which every principle of justice is subverted, what honest man,—what friend to justice and righteous laws will remain silent?—Will not every faculty within him be roused into action? Will the fear of increasing divisions, and party contentions deter him from publishing his sentiments? When the *fraudulent tenderer* comes forth under the sanction of a KNOW YE, what man, who has a spark of integrity glowing in his heart, will not feel it enkindle, and burn with just indignation? Shall he fear to speak? Will he not come forth, being clad with the helmet of integrity, and avenge his right?

To you, ye *virtuous few*, who have expended many of your hours in endeavoring to promote the good of society, the happiness of this State, and to discountenance unrighteous laws, what praise is due to you! You have bore a regard to national honor and justice, you have exerted yourselves to introduce honesty among us; your names will be applauded by honest men while you continue in life, and posterity will call you blessed.

It remains with ourselves whether we will pay a due regard to the principles of justice, or go on in the paths of iniquity.—Let us attend to the pieces which have been offered to the public by men of capacity, of honor, and honesty—Let us throw aside party prejudices; adopt the Constitution, join heart and hand to strengthen the Federal Temple, and then shall we be in a fair way to retrieve our lost honor.

#### 254. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 30 January 1789<sup>1</sup>

*Paper* money, *state* funding systems, and *black*-lists, says a correspondent, are now the only obstacles in the way of the general adoption, and support of the new government. All objections to its supposed defects have been refuted. It

would be the greatest of all objections to it, if men who have paid 20,000*l.* of British debts, with 25*l.* or who can pay 500*l.* specie, with 100*l.* paper; or who draw 3000*l.* a year (extorted by a ruinous *land-tax*) from officer's and soldier's certificates, should concur in measures for carrying this honest government into effect. In China there is no land-tax; hence China is the best cultivated and most populous country in the world. The land-taxes which have been imposed to support state-funding-systems have been the principal cause of the immense migrations of our citizens to Kentucke: and yet these state-funding-systems are one of the principal causes of modern antifederalism.

1. *New York Daily Gazette*, 5 February; *New York Packet*, 6 February.

**255. John Trumbull to Thomas Jefferson**  
**London, 5 February 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . My Brother informs me that every thing relating to the new System of America advances with as much unanimity & rapidity as can be expected. The opposition which existed in the assenting States daily decreasing; and the early accession of North Carolina expected, & nothing but the perverse Conduct of R. Island to be regretted. . . .

1. RC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XIV, 524–25.

**256. Newport Herald, 5 February 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The opposers to the New Constitution in this State having professed an attachment to the old Confederation, and their determination to support it,—how far their professions are sincere may be learnt from the following authentic information.

The Hon. JOHN GARDNER, Esq. one of the Delegates from this State, proceeded to Newyork about six weeks past to take his seat in Congress: By some inattention he took no credentials of his appointment with him, and was refused a seat accordingly: he thereupon wrote to his friend in this town requesting him to apply to his Excellency the Governor for a certificate of his appointment and to forward it by the first opportunity; his Excellency refused to deliver the certificate to any other person than to his colleague the Hon. JONATHAN J. HAZARD, Esq. although it was of public notoriety that Mr. Hazard did not intend going forward, nor hath he yet gone.—Mr. Gardner finding his application unsuccessful, wrote to the Deputy Governor upon the subject, and not till then, being by the last post, were his credentials forwarded; his situation therefore must have been extremely painful to him as a man of honor, and disgraceful to us as a State.

We also learn that Mr. Gardner, in a letter to a gentleman here, advises that there wants but one member from the State of Rhode Island to make a Congress.

1. Reprinted: *Hartford American Mercury*, 16 February (2nd paragraph); *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 23 February (2nd paragraph); *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 11 March (2nd and 3rd paragraphs); *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 26 March.

**257. Wilmington Centinel, 12 February 1789**

In the general assembly of Rhode-Island, at their late session, held at South-Kingston, on the question for calling a state convention, there appeared for the measure 34, against it 12. That assembly is now adjourned to the 2nd Monday in March, then to meet at East-Greenwich.

**258. William Ellery to Benjamin Huntington  
Newport, 17 February 1789<sup>1</sup>**

It gives me the highest pleasure to find that your State has appointed such worthy characters to sustain the offices of Senators and Representatives under the new Constitution;—and it is a gratification to my ambition that I can reckon the Senators, and two at least of the Representatives among my friends. I count upon father [Roger] Sherman as one of the latter, and need I mention as the other the gentleman [i.e., Benjamin Huntington] who has honoured me with his correspondence and rendered me many acts of kindness.—

Men of the first abilities and of the strictest integrity are peculiarly requisite to form the first Session of Congress; for then regulations of commerce and of the Impost must be framed, the Judiciary powers systematized, all the various arrangements made, and due motion be given to the grand Federal Machine. Men of less abilities may afterwards answer; but not of less integrity.—

I presume that both your Senators and all your Representatives will be present at the very first meeting of Congress. If you, Sir, should be absent then, I might have private as well as public reasons to lament, for then I shall want your recommendation and influence.—

I wish to hold some office under the new government, the profits of, with what remains of the wreck of my fortune by the war and paper money, might render the residue of my life comfortable, and such an office my past services and losses give me a title to expect.—

As this State is not in the union, no new offices probably will be erected in it. The Loan office may be continued; because the present mode of paying the Interest of public Securities may be pursued, and because it will be necessary that Congress should have an officer in this State to receive the monies due from it.—What arrangement will be made in the federal Judiciary I cannot tell. If Judges should be appointed to districts, I should be happy to be a member of the Eastern Bench; and in that case, that my son William Ellery, who has assisted me in the Loan Office ever since I first opened it, and of whose capacity, fidelity and attention to business I can give ample pledges might succeed me in that office.—If the having been Chf Justice of the Superior Court in this State, in better times than the present, could be any recommendation to the federal Judiciary it might be mentioned that I have held that office.—

As this State hath adopted the Impost, Collectors of Impost may be established here, although it hath not adopted the new Constitution. If that should happen it would be agreeable to us to be appointed Collectors.—I should prefer the

office of a Judge for myself, and that my Son might be, in that Case, Loan Officer or Receiver;—but, if I cannot attain a Judges seat and the Loan Office should be continued for some years, it would be my wish still to hold that office, and that he might be appointed a Collector of Impost, or an assistant in one of the great Departments.—He is a single man, and can easily go any where Interest invites him.—I am sensible that solicitors for Offices should not be chusers; but as I cannot, for want of Information, fix upon any, and as I am writing to a Friend I hope that this freedom will be excused.—I leave it with you Sir and my other Friends (I shall write to Mr. Ellsworth & Mr. Sherman and Mr. Partridge, a representative for Massachusetts) to use their influence with the President and Senate that we may be appointed to offices that will, in a word, bring the greatest profit with the least trouble.—

I wish you would take that letter to Congress with you, which I wrote to you about my salary &c as Loan Officer, if it should not have gone the way of much mortal paper; and that you would inform me on your arrival at New York whether you are possessed of it or not.—

Whether there will be any solicitors for offices from this State except my Son & myself I cannot tell.—

If any of the paper-money, anti-federal gentry should presume to solicit for offices from a Government they have treated with Contempt I hope they will be treated as they deserve.—Paul Mumford Esqr. and Joseph Tweedy Esqr. are the only anti-federal, paper-money gentlemen [of] this town who have brass and meanness enough to ask favours from those they have abused.—

The former of these is the author of a number of scandalous, distracted pieces under the signature Euripides;—and the other who is Impost master of this district, has been very busily employed, and very strenuous for paper money and against the New-Government.—They have both been quiet lately.—

Whether it is because like whirling tops they have been lashed asleep;—or that they hope their sins may be forgotten, and that their moderation may be construed into a disposition to quit the side and party they have warmly espoused, and they may thereby stand a better chance for offices under the New-Government I cannot determine.—But *Hic nigri sunt hoc tu Romane caveto.*—

With great esteem Eqr

1. RC, Ellery Letters, R-Ar.

## 259. A Citizen

### Providence Gazette, 28 February 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

... The Foe to Oppression, with the combination under his Presidentship, will please to observe one clause in the New Constitution, which was made solely to prevent the injustice that this society and their adherents, from continuing the same unkind treatment to their neighbours and the citizens of these States at large, have been guilty of for many years, I mean that shameful practice of encouraging slaves to leave their masters and mistresses. The words are these: “No person held to service or labour in one State, under the laws thereof, escap-

ing into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due.”

This is one of the necessary protections that the New Constitution affords the inhabitants of one State, against the laws that may be passed in this or any other State, from the influence of the abolition society or their adherents, who seem to be disposed (to use their own words) to rob their fellow-citizens of all their property in slaves. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Newport Herald*, 12 March.

## 260. Newport Herald, 5 March 1789<sup>1</sup>

On Monday next the Hon. General Assembly of this State convene at East-Greenwich in pursuance of their adjournment.—It is probable the confession on the Sunday following may with propriety contain these words,—“*We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us.*”

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 23 March; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 25 March; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 1 April.

## 261. Providence Freemen Request to Town Clerk to Call a Town Meeting 9 March 1789<sup>1</sup>

To Daniel Cooke Esqr. Town Clerk of Providence

You are hereby requested to convene the Freemen of this Town tomorrow at 3 oClock in the afternoon to take their sense and opinion on making an application to the Genl Assembly at their present session on the present very critical ~~situation of our public Affairs~~ & Insecure state of our Commerce & Navigation and to solicit the immediate passing of Acts for the calling a State Convention to decide on the ~~new~~ present Constitution of the United States and for altering or ~~abolishing~~ repealing the present Tender Law and ~~paper money~~ Laws any other business which the Town may think proper to act upon

Nichos Brown  
Nathan Angell  
John Brown  
Philip Allen  
Welcome Arnold  
Edward Thurber  
Nicholas Power  
Jere. Olney  
Eph: Bowen  
Geo Benson  
Pardon Bowen  
Benjn. Bourne

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5120, RHI.

**262. Providence Warrant to Call a Town Meeting  
9 March 1789<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations

Providence &c, To the Town-Serjeant or either of the Constables of the Town of Providence in the County of Providence—Greeting—

Pursuant to a Request of more than Seven of the Freemen of the said Town you are hereby required in the Name of the Governor & Company of the said State to warn the Freemen of the said Town to meet in Town-Meeting at the State-House in said Town on Tuesday the Tenth Day of March current at Three of the Clock in the Afternoon for the Purpose of taking their Sense and Opinion on making an Application to the General Assembly at their present Session on the present very critical and insecure State of our Commerce and Navigation, and to solicit the immediate passing of Acts for the calling a State-Convention to decide on the present Constitution of the United-States, and for altering or repealing the present Tender-Law, and also to transact any other Business which the Town may think proper to act upon—

Hereof fail not and make true Return with your Doings hereon, Given under my Hand and Seal at said Providence this Ninth Day of March A.D. 1789, and in the Thirteenth Year of Independence—

Daniel Cooke, Town-Clerk

Providence &c. 10th. March 1789.

In obedience to the above Direction I have Warn'd the Freemen of Said Town to meet at time & place above Directed

Henry Bowen. T.Serjt.

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5121, RHi.

**263. Providence Town Meeting, 10 March 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town-Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Providence legally warned and assembled at the State-House on the Tenth Day of March, A.D. 1789—

Nicholas Brown, Esqr; is chosen Moderator—

The following Instructions to the Deputies, from this Town to the General Assembly were read, approved, and Voted, to wit:—

To John Jenckes, Jabez Bowen, and William Barton, Esquires, and Doctor Amos Throope—

Gentlemen, Eleven States having acceded to and fully ratified the New-Constitution, and the Government of those States under that System being completely organized and in full Operation, a new Æra in the Political Affairs of this Country has taken Place. The Situation of the State of Rhode-Island in this Conjunction is perfectly novel, seperated as we are, from the States which compose the present Union, we stand perfectly alone, unconnected with any State or Sovereignty on Earth: As we can claim no Right to the Flag of the United States, our Commerce and Navigation are deprived of National Protection. The Benefit of Commercial Treaties formed by European Nations with the United States, will no longer be extended to the Citizens of Rhode-Island: All Trade

with the new Confederated States will probably be soon interdicted to the Citizens of this State, except on the Footing of Foreigners and of Course, on the Payment of exorbitant Duties; subjected to these injurious Restrictions and Disadvantages our Commerce and Navigation already extremely embarrassed must be annihilated, and the Ports of the State of Rhode-Island, which but a few Years since were crowded with Shipping will afford Shelter only to a few Fishing Craft. The Loss of our Commerce will inevitably be attended with the most ruinous Consequences to Agriculture and Manufactures. To this Stage of Degradation and Wretchedness will this State in all Probability be reduced should the Legislature persist in refusing to call a State Convention for the adopting the New-Constitution. Indeed in the Apprehension of your Constituents a Perseverance in this Refusal will indanger the very Existence of the State; should the State negative again the calling a Convention, your Constituents are fully persuaded that some of their fellow Citizens will apply for the Protection of the New Government to be extended to their Trade and Navigation under such Discriminations as the Wisdom of Congress may suggest—Your Constituents anticipate the most ruinous Consequences both to the State and Individuals, in a Continuance of our Separation from the other States. We most ardently wish that this State may soon be re-united with their late Sister States under a Form of Government calculated to promote their mutual Welfare and Prosperity. As this State was deprived of a Voice in the Origination of the New-Constitution We are the more solicitous that we may have some Agency in the Revision and Amendment of it, which will probably soon take Place; not in a National Convention as some have supposed, but in the Congress, in the first Instance, who will form and propose the Amendments to the State Legislatures, and by them in the Second, on whom it will be incumbent to ratify or reject the Amendments proposed. Impressed with these Sentiments, anxious for a Revision with the other States and dreading the ruinous Consequences of a Separation, We do again enjoin it upon you to use every legal and constitutional Mean in your Power at the present Session to obtain a Legislative Act for the calling immediately a Convention of Delegates from the several Towns in this State for the Purpose of deciding on the New-Constitution—

Viewing as we do a further Continuance of the Law making the Paper Bills a Tender in Payment of Specie Contracts at Par, in the Form and Manner as now established, to be abominably wicked and unjust, We do again instruct you, as we have done repeatedly before, to exert your Influence at the present Session to obtain a Repeal or Alteration of that unrighteous Law. The Paper Bills are passing Twelve for One in Specie, and as the Legislature have declared the State Debt to be cancelled, We hope and trust the General Assembly, in their Wisdom will be induced, to put it out of the Power of dishonest Persons any longer to persecute and distress their honest Creditors. It is well known that the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut have placed the Citizens of this State in Respect to the Collection of Debts due from the Inhabitants of those States, nearly in the Condition of Outlaws, The Tenor of these Acts which are no less disgraceful than injurious to the good Citizens of this State, are such that they are both to cease and determine the Moment the Tender is repealed with us.

This must have additional Weight with our Legislature to induce a Repeal of the Tender Act.

Gentlemen, your Constituents having the fullest Confidence in your Zeal and Abilities rest assured that no Endeavours will be wanting on your Part to effect those important Objects which make the Subject Matter of these Instructions.

Resolved, That the Clerk copy the preceding Instructions and transmit the same as early as may be by Express or otherwise to the Deputies of this Town as their Instructions at the present Session of the General Assembly of this State . . .

The Meeting is Dissolved—

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 7, 1783–1804, City of Providence, R.I.

#### 264. Newport Herald, 12 March 1789<sup>1</sup>

Last Friday arrived from New-York the Hon. John Gardner, Esq. one of our delegates to the late Congress.—Singular indeed hath been the situation of this honourable gentleman while upon his important mission,—for a long time the door of Congress was shut against him, for want of his commission, which he had accidentally omitted, which was afterwards detained from him in an astonishing manner:—For a short period he enjoyed his seat in that Honourable Assembly, but for want of his colleague, his vote could not be counted;—to close the drama;—on the first Wednesday of March he found himself the only living member of a departed body, and returned here a delegate to a power that is no longer known.

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 14 March, and in six out-of-state newspapers by 23 April: N.Y. (2), Pa. (3), N.C. (1).

#### 265. A true Friend to the present Administration Providence United States Chronicle, 12 March 1789

MR. WHEELER, *Please to publish the following in your impartial Chronicle, and you will much oblige a Friend:*

I observed, Mr. Printer, a piece in your paper of the 12th of February, signed *A Tradesman*.—The gentleman says, he was for making Paper Money to discharge the State Debt, and his idea was that £.60,000 should be made and placed in the Treasury, and that the holders of securities should be directed to call and take out the money for the same.—I was for making Paper Money to relieve the poor and pay the State Debt, upon a principle that would best accommodate the State in general; and as lodging the money in the Treasury and allowing the holders of the securities to take it out would throw it all into the hands of those who held the securities, it certainly would be of no advantage to the distressed part of the community; and as relieving the distressed was my only motive from the beginning—I believe there was no better way to discharge the public debt than to loan the money out upon land security, and call it in by taxes, as the General Assembly have done; but as a number who wanted to rule could not have it as



they wished they were determined to destroy it if possible, but they failed, it has passed, and I believe done more good than any thing which could have been done—for the Farmers in general never were in so flourishing a situation since the State was first settled, as they have been since the present administration took the reins of government;—taxation has been light compared with what it was a few years back, and we have already paid the State Debt, which had it not been for the present administration would have been an insupportable burthen upon us and our children for generations to come; and every man that has the least knowledge of the political conduct of the old administration and the present must be convinced of the truth of what is here inserted; and I hope the good people of this State will keep the present Rulers in office so long as they pay the same attention to the true interest of the great body of the people as they have uniformly done.—I am not at all surprized, that the gentleman would wish the General Assembly to order every man to pay in his money, and take up his mortgages, that has got the money—for that will leave the poor, that do not at present hold it in a most deplorable situation, and oblige them to come to him and buy it, with silver and gold—and I have no doubt he would wish to put the commonal[i]ty into as bad a situation as he could, in order to force the adoption of the new Constitution.

March 9, 1789.

#### 266. Providence United States Chronicle, 12 March 1789

“The Members of the Convention held at the *Sign of the Anchor*, observes a Correspondent, would do well to consider, that Part of the *Utensils* used at the *Federal Feast*, last July, are not yet paid for;—and before *they* think of Protection under the Wing of the Federal *Hen*, it highly becomes them to throw out some *loose Crumbs* to her Chickens.”

#### 267. Newport Herald, 19 March 1789<sup>1</sup>

The detention of Mr. Delegate Gardner’s commission as related in our Paper, No. 102 and 107, having been disavowed by the Governor—our Correspondent observes, that he would pay all deference to a Chief Magistrate, but his attachment to truth forbids his sacrificing it to titles or to power; for it is a fact that Mr. Gardner wrote to his agent in this town to apply for his commission and to forward it by first post; that this agent, in pursuance of the request, did apply to the Deputy-Secretary, who gave him the commission ready filled for his Excellency to sign; that he sent it immediately to the Governor, with a request that he would be pleased to sign it and return it to him by the bearer, as it was post day; that his Excellency retained the commission and returned for answer that he would see him the next day; that accordingly his Excellency saw him, and told him he should deliver the commission to no other person but Mr. Delegate Hazard his colleague, although it was of public notoriety that Mr. Hazard did not intend going on to Congress nor hath he been since the above application—these are facts related by the gentleman who was employed, a man of undoubted veracity.—Surely his Excellency must have forgot these circumstances.

It having been the established *ceremonial* for the Delegates after their return from Congress, to attend the General Assembly, in order to answer such questions as might be put to them, and to report the doings of that Honorable Body; a member at the last Assembly observing Mr. Delegate Gardner was in the House, moved that he might be requested to relate the proceedings of Congress while he was there, the motion not being immediately attended to, Mr. Gardner suddenly withdrew, and when the motion was noticed by the Chair, Mr. Delegate could not be found.

Bad indeed must be the antifederal and paper money causes, to require such unprecedented means to conceal our federal concerns.

We learn from the Nocturnal Convention convened last Friday night at East-Greenwich, to make arrangements for the ensuing election, that it is intended to continue the farce of appointing Delegates to the old Congress.—The members took an oath for secrecy; but what are oaths to men void of principle! their deliberations were fully known.

The language of some of our courtly characters is, “that the Eleven States have revolted from us, and we alone are the United States.”

We are informed that associations are forming in the several towns in the neighbouring States, not to purchase the barley, cheese, flaxseed, or any country produce of this State.

When Hannibal, with his victorious army, after having overcome many obstacles—was under the walls of Rome, that city was unconquerable, because her citizens were free and valiant; but when he returned to Capua (a town at an inconsiderable distance from Rome) and abandoned himself and his army to ease and luxury, then was Carthage conquered, although the Romans were incapable at that time of sending a single legion into Africa. The states of America resemble in some degree the Carthaginian army at this period.—Successful in that, they have listened too attentively to the Syren luxury, and it is feared will experience the evils of a Capua in a ruinous commerce.

Agriculture and the mechanical arts have had nearly the same fate. While the latter were confined to men without genius or education,—there were no inventions to lessen labor. But from the application of philosophy to the mechanical arts, one man can do the work of one hundred. The same observation applies to agriculture. Since science has diffused its rays upon our fields and barns, and the plough has been directed by genius and education, the products of the earth have been multiplied an hundred fold, by the same portions of labour. It is with great pleasure we behold the agricultural life becoming respectable and fashionable in the United States. May it soon be the first profession in rank, of American citizens.

1. Partial reprints in four out-of-state newspapers by 30 April: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 4 April; *Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, 8 April; *Virginia Centinel*, 22 April; *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 30 April.

**268. New York Journal, 26 March 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The general assembly of Rhode Island, now convened, on the renewal of the question, for calling a state convention, to take into consideration the new constitution, have again rejected it by the usual majority.

1. Reprinted: Lansingburgh, N.Y., *Federal Herald*, Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, and *Pennsylvania Packet*, 30 March; Edenton *State Gazette of North Carolina*, 23 April. Similar items were reprinted in four other newspapers: Mass. (2), Pa. (1), S.C. (1).

**269. William Ellery to John Adams  
Newport, 30 March 1789<sup>1</sup>**

I wrote a letter to Mr. Dana sometime ago, in which I desired him to request your influence, that I and my son might be appointed to offices under the New Government. In his answer he informed me, that he had spoken to you upon the subject;—that you was pleased to express yourself handsomely of me, and desired that I would write to you, least a multiplicity of business might prevent your thinking of us in season.

I wish, Sir, to hold some office under the New Government, the income of which, with what remains of the wreck of my fortune by the war, and our paper emission, might render me comfortable;—and such an office my past services and losses entitle me to hope for.

As this State has not yet acceded to the New Constitution, it is not probable that any new offices will at present be erected in it.—The Loan-Office, which I now hold, may be continued; because it may be thought eligible to pursue the present mode of paying the interest of the public securities with indents, and it may be necessary to have an office here to receive the monies due from this State to the United States.

What arrangement will be made of the federal Judiciary I know not. If Judges should be appointed to district I should be glad to be a member of the Eastern Bench;—and if that should take place that my son William Ellery should succeed me in the Loan-Office.

If the having been a Chief Justice of the Superior Court in this State, in better times, could be any recommendation to a seat in the federal Judiciary it might be mentioned that I have sustained that office;—and my son, who has long assisted me in the Loan Office, has shown such fidelity, attention, accuracy, and such a turn for business as will render him a good Loan-Officer; and I will venture to affirm that he is qualified at least for an assistant in any of the principal public departments.

As this State hath adopted the Impost, it may admit officers to collect the duties, if Congress should think proper to appoint them.

It is impossible for me to know what appointment will be in the contemplation of Congress, and therefore I can point out particularly what offices to solicit for.—If it were proper for a solicitor to be a chuser, I would prefer the place of a Judge for myself, and the Loan-Office for my son. If I should not attain to a Judge's seat, and the Loan-Office should be continued, I could wish to remain in that office, and that he might be appointed an Impost officer, if

such officers should be appointed; otherwise that he might be an assistant in one of the capital departments.—The President will doubtless come supplied with a Secretary.

The desire you was pleased to express that I would write to you, and the acquaintance which formerly subsisted between us in Congress, have encouraged me to request more directly, that you would use your influence with the President and Senate that I and my son might obtain offices under the New Governmental favour which I had before requested through our mutual friend.

I have written to Mr. Ellsworth, and Mr. R. H. Lee on this subject, and should write to the Senators from your State if I was acquainted with them. I have also written to Father Sherman, Mr. B. Huntington, and Col. Partridge, and propose to write to Mr. Gerry.

I sincerely congratulate you, Sir, and my Country on your being elected Vice President, and wishing you health and every blessing,

I am, with great respect and esteem Your most obedient servant

P. S. If you should wish to be informed of any thing respecting this State I will readily give you any information in my power.

1. RC, Adams Papers, MHi.

**270. Francis Hopkinson to Thomas Jefferson  
Philadelphia, 2 April 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Rhode Island has lately again moved the Question whether they should join the federal Union—& has again rejected it with the usual Majority in their House of Assembly—North Carolina says nothing about it. . . .

1. RC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XV, 16–17.

**271. Providence United States Chronicle, 2 April 1789**

The Legislatures of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania have not acceded to the Proposals of Virginia and New-York, for the Appointment of a Continental Convention to revise the new Federal Constitution—it is therefore not probable? that one will be appointed; but it is generally supposed, that the Propositions for Alterations in the Constitution will be taken up, among the first Business to be acted on by the new Congress.—*Query*, As Mr. *Gerry* (from Massachusetts) and some other Gentlemen from that and the other *large States*, are Members of the new Congress, who think with him, that the *small States* ought not to be equally represented in the Senate—Is it not probable *that* may be *one* of the first Alterations proposed? and if so, ought not the State of Rhode-Island to be immediately represented in the new Congress, to throw her Weight into the Scale against such an Alteration.

**272. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 3 April 1789<sup>1</sup>**

To the Honorable and Right Honorable Members of the CONGRESS of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, now convened at New-York.

The Remonstrance, Memorial and humble Petition  
of the Inhabitants of Rh\*\*\*-I\*]\*\*\*d.

Most Respectfully Sheweth, That your remonstrants, memorialists, and humble petitioners, are well informed, that a certain building, lately repaired in the city of New-York, known by various names, and celebrated by many pompous titles, is considered by the inhabitants of said city, as the ne plus ultra of munificence, to your dignified body; and that of course, no other determination, will ever be adopted, but that of your everlasting residence with them.

Now, in the first place, we remonstrate against the adoption of any such determination, being convinced, as how we have not had fair play in this business: for, if you are to be determined, where to stay, solely by the pretty things, that are given to you, without any regard to the convenience of the continent, or the political effects that may follow, come on then. Now you shall hear what we will do.—

We will employ—not infants, to fit up baby-houses for you. No; no;—the gravest among us, shall go to work, and we will build you such an house, with so many windows and doors, and corners and loop holes, that all your Honorable Body may play bo-peep, hide and seek, or any thing else, for a whole twelve-month in it, without being found out. And then, as to the outside; you shall *see it*, Gentlemen; you shall *see it*. We'll have none of your birds or buzzards, emblems of flight and dissipation, on the top of it;—no, but you shall have a cow and calf; a cock and bull, and something better still. For, and so be, as trinkets please ye, let us New-England men alone for notions; and not a farthing for the whole of it; but then you know, you must pay us, what we please, for every thing else. This, however, follows of course; for Gentlemen never dispute their bills.

Then, as to living, have we not fish and oysters too? And have we not hills, to look at the sea from? And if an enemy should come, it is only to runaway, as you must do from New-York. Our federalism, indeed, is somewhat more than suspected. Let not New-York say one word on this subject. She is but a sister of the half-blood, at any rate—and, if you will but come, and give us your money, we will be any thing you please, and that is more than she can say as yet.

They therefore humbly pray, that this Remonstrance, &c. may be taken into serious consideration, and that we may have a fair bid at this bargain, before it is struck off to any one else.

And we, as in duty bound, &c.

Y. Z.

X. W, &c. &c.

1. Reprinted: *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 15 April; *Newport Mercury*, 27 April.

**273. A Friend to the Town****Providence United States Chronicle, 9 April 1789**

MR. WHEELER, I have observed in the Boston and New-York Papers a custom introduced of holding up to public view, candidates for public offices—I like the plan much, and herewith present a list of gentlemen, who, a number of respectable freeholders in this Town wish might be elected to represent the Town in General Assembly at the ensuing Choice, viz.—

JOHN JENCKES, Esq;  
Col. BARZILLAI RICHMOND,  
AMBROSE PAGE, Esq;  
Col. LEVI HALL.

The first of these Gentlemen has been in the General Assembly a number of years, and from his known abilities and moderation, is universally respected—two of the others are respectable Mechanics,—friends to good government, and universally known and valued by our country brethren, as well as by all their neighbours,—the other, Mr. Page, is well known in town and country, and generally esteemed.—With this Representation, Mr. Printer, I think we shall be able to meet the Representatives from the country, with more prospect of restoring harmony and peace to this distracted government, than by choosing men (however good they may be) of whom the country are universally jealous and distrustful.

*Providence, April 9, 1789.*

**274. A Freeman****Providence Gazette, 11 April 1789**

The author of a piece in the last Chronicle, signed *A Friend to the Town*, I doubt not prides himself in having hit upon a most admirable expedient for throwing the town into confusion and strife, at the ensuing choice of their Representatives.—Would it not have been equally necessary that the freemen throughout the State should be made acquainted with the names of the gentlemen that are proposed for their general officers for the year ensuing? Was not this same Friend to the Town a principal character in the nocturnal convention at East-Greenwich, when the prox was agreed upon; and was not every one that attended laid under such strong injunctions of secrecy, that it is not known to this day what names the prox contains? Is this the way to administer a free government? Is this the way to establish liberty, and secure property? Did ever any former administration conduct in this manner? Was it not their constant practice to notify in a public manner, that on a certain time a meeting would be held for the forming of a prox for the ensuing year, when a general attendance was requested of the freemen, as well as the members of the General Assembly, when every one present had a right to speak and vote in every question? When this was the practice, the names of the candidates were known throughout the State, and if other characters were supposed by any to be more suitable, every part of the State was at liberty to print a prox, with the alterations of any particular

members; but by the late secret mode of conducting the business, no one is to know who is held up for the public trust, and who is not, till the moment he comes to town-meeting.

*Providence, April 9, 1789.*

**275. Providence Gazette, 11 April 1789**

ESSEX PETITION.

Oh hear us, ye Judges, we're baffled, we're crost,  
 And vex'd, that we scarce can support the reflection!  
 Horse and foot we are routed, our ticket is lost,  
 Unless you can help us to damn the election.  
 But ye are the *Judges*, and sure ye surpass  
 A Daniel in judgment, in spirit young Jotham!  
 Not juster of old was the famous Judge Midas,  
 Nor wiser, believe us, the wise men of Gotham.  
 This Election we're certain can ne'er stand the test,  
 That *we* are the *People* we clearly can show;  
 Those vile western counties are heathen at best,  
 But we are the children of *Abram* you know.  
 Deliver us, good Judges, from men of high station,  
 From rich men, who clatter about in their coaches;  
 From lawyers—those *VARMIN*—the pests of the nation,  
 From the payment of debts, and our own hearts reproaches!  
 From him who can leave all our lies in the lurch,  
 From the man who good beef to the idle begrudges;  
 Who impiously sits with his hat on in church,  
 From him, we beseech you, deliver us, good Judges.  
 May it please you to give us one free from controul,  
 Who to bless us with plenty of *PAPER* is willing;  
 Who hates the *New Roof* and its friends in his soul,  
 And who nobly can live for a week on a shilling.  
 May it please you to give us the man of our choice,  
 Who, to free us from debt, a most faithful drudge is;  
 That we in his *Tenders* may ever rejoice,  
 In this, we beseech you to hear us, good Judges!  
 In our own pit we fell, and are vex'd to the soul,  
 We are caught in the snare our wise ones proposed;  
 Yet in you is our help—if ye close not the poll—  
 Why then, do ye see,—the poll *WILL NOT* be closed.  
 To assist us, dear Judges, ye must strive day and night,  
 Nor must ye on Sundays in idleness sit;  
 For sure on the sabbath 'tis lawful and right  
 To help the poor Ass that falls into a pit.

Tho' we, by our tricks, have destroyed our ticket,  
 Yet still by those tricks we'll that ticket restore;  
 Like the wise man we read of, who jump'd in a thicket,  
 To scratch in his eyes it had scratch'd out before.  
 Then huzza, dear Judges, keep open the poll,  
 While there's life there is hope—and the trick is so clever—  
 Since no time is fix'd, you are free from controul,  
 And the poll may be open for ever and ever.

*Chorus by all the Judges.*

Then keep the poll open, keep open the poll,  
 It ne'er shall be closed,—nor in foul nor fair weather;  
 Huzza! we will judge without rule or controul,  
 And we'll keep the poll open for ever and ever.—

### 276. Newport Herald, 16 April 1789<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday being the annual election of officers to the General Assembly, the following gentlemen were unanimously re-chosen representatives for this town, viz. *George Hazard, Henry Marchant, George Champlin, Peleg Clarke, William Tripp,* and *George Sears*, Esquires.

A respectable committee were unanimously chosen to draft instructions for our representatives, instructing them to renew their motions in General Assembly, for the immediate appointment of a State Convention for the purpose of adopting the New Constitution, agreeably to the recommendation of the late Hon. Congress—The report of instructions was made accordingly and unanimously agreed to.

The Convention Prox (so stiled) met with public and merited censure.—For men in office to meet under the dark cover of night in secret junto's, and arrogantly undertake the arrangement of a new election, was justly deemed a daring insult on the privileges of the Freemen, and an illegal attempt to perpetuate themselves in office.—The oath of secrecy taken by the members of this Nocturnal Convention, to prevent their proceedings from being known until the day of proxing, bore the treasonable complexion of a plot against good government, and seemed, like the assassin's weapon, concealed only to effect the removal of a deserving man, which could not be done in open day.—The continuation of candidates for delegates to Congress, when the old Congress ceased to exist, and we disclaimed all connexion with the new, was not only a deception, but the most ridiculous farce ever acted by a set of men:—the Federalists were therefore requested not only to erase the names of delegates, but it was hoped that no freeman would under any alterations whatever, put in the paper on which was printed so insulting an arrangement as the one stiled "Convention Prox."

There being no candidates in opposition to the present upper house (excepting one of the assistants) the major part of the freemen, as a testimony of their disapprobation to such officers either erased their names or put in a written prox with only one Assistant, the present Secretary and Treasurer.—At the close of the prox it appeared there were 305 voters, of which his Excellency John



Collins, Esq. as Governor; and the other candidates for the upper house (John Dorance, Esq. excepted) had 30 votes.

Henry Ward, Esq. as Secretary,	297
Rowse J. Helme, Esq, do.	<u>6</u>
Majority for Mr. Ward,	291

We hear that Mr. Ward also obtained majorities in Middletown 24, Portsmouth 41, Tiverton 34, Bristol 70.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 20 April (1st and 2nd paragraphs); *Cumberland Gazette*, 23 April 1789 (1st and 2nd paragraphs); *Pennsylvania Packet*, 2 May (2nd and 3rd paragraphs); Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 2 May (1st and 2nd paragraphs).

### 277. A Friend to the Town

**Providence United States Chronicle, 16 April 1789**

To the FREEMAN in the last Gazette.

The *Friend to the Town* had no idea of “throwing the Town into confusion and strife,” by his nomination of some gentlemen of respectable characters to represent us at the next General Assembly—but supposes (with many of his neighbours) that the *Freeman*, and *the party he endeavours to be* the leader of, rather than be interrupted in the mode they have *assumed*, and so long practised, of agreeing upon and nominating, not only our Representatives, but *all* our Town Officers, would endeavour to excite “confusion and strife.”—Before this appears in public the Election will be over, I shall therefore postpone further observations on this subject to a future opportunity—just informing *Mr. Freeman*, that I never attended a Convention of either *hard* or *paper money* men in my life—although I cannot think there is any *more* impropriety in a number of gentlemen meeting together to agree on a nomination for General Officers at a public Inn, at Greenwich, than at an Apothecary’s Shop in Providence.

*April 17, 1789.*

### 278. A Freeman

**Providence Gazette, 18 April 1789**

*To the FREEMEN of the State of RHODE-ISLAND.*

As it must, undoubtedly, be a gratification to every voter for a General Officer, to be made acquainted with his success in due season, it is thought proper to advise you, on this occasion, that the majorities in all the southern towns, two excepted (when added to the accounts previously received from the northern and middle towns) make a majority in favour of Henry Ward, Esq; as Secretary, of about 1300—against Rowse J. Helme, Esq;—and it is generally believed, that John Dorrance, Esq; has a considerable majority against John Mawney, Esq; as an Assistant.—How the contest has terminated between Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Howell, for the office of Attorney-General, is yet uncertain.—May we not flatter ourselves, that the ill-fated experiment of a secret Convention-prox will manifest,

that though the prox may be kept a profound secret till the hour of proxing, yet that the freemen possess too much virtue and understanding to be made the dupes of so shallow an artifice? It must therefore be admitted by all honest men, that the name of every candidate for a public office should be as generally and seasonably known by the people at large as possible, that every freeman may have time to make due enquiry into his political and moral character, and govern himself accordingly.

**279. Providence Freemen to Town Clerk of Providence  
Providence, 28 April 1789<sup>1</sup>**

To the Town Clerk of Providence—

The subscribers Freemen of said Town fully impressed with the sentiment of the necessity of Repealing the Act of the Genl. Assembly making the paper Currency a Tender for the discharge of Private Contracts and also of procuring the enactment of a Bill for convening Delegates to decide on the new Constitution agreeably to the concurrent resolutions of the National Convention & the late Congress, do hereby request you will cause a legal Town Meeting to be convened for the purpose of taking into Consideration Instructing the Deputies from this town to the Genl. Assembly relative to the Important objects abovementioned and to Transact any other Buissness & further it is our request that said Town meeting may be held on Wednesday the 29th. Inst. at 3 oClock in the afternoon—

Providence April 28, 1789.

Jos. Nightingale	Nichos. Brown
Js Gramon	John Brown
Jereh. Olney	John Francis
John I: Clark	Welcome Arnold

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5165, RHi.

**280. Providence Warrant, 28 April 1789<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations

To the Town-Serjeant or either of the Constables of the Town of Providence in the County of Providence in said State Greeting—

Pursuant to a Request of more than Seven of the Freemen of the said Town you are hereby required in the Name of the Governor and Company of the said State to warn the Freemen of the said Town to meet in Town-Meeting at the State House in said Town on Wednesday the Twenty-ninth Day of April instant at Three of the Clock in the Afternoon for the Purpose of instructing the Deputies from the said Town to the Honorable the General Assembly of the said State for the Repealing the Act of the said General Assembly making the Paper Currency a Tender for the Discharge of private Contracts, and procuring the Enactment of a Bill for convening Delegates to decide on the New Constitution agreeably to the concurrent Resolutions of the National Convention and the late Congress: And also to transact any other Business that shall then and there be

thought necessary. Hereof fail not and true Return make. Given under my Hand and Seal this Twenty-eighth Day of April A. D. 1789, and in the Thirteenth Year of Independence—

Daniel Cooke Town-Clerk  
Providence 29th. April 1789

Agreeable to the within Direction I have warn'd the Freemen of Said Town to meet at time & place Within Mentioned by beat of Drum &c. Henry Bowen T Serjt.

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5166, RH.

### **281. Providence Town Meeting, 29 April 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town-Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Providence legally warned and assembled at the State House on Wednesday the 29th. Day of April, A. D. 1789

Welcome Arnold, Esq; Moderator.

Resolved, That Messrs Welcome Arnold John I. Clark John Francis and the Clerk be and they are hereby appointed a Committee to draught Instructions to the Deputies chosen to represent this Town in the Honorable the General Assembly at the next Election and the ensuing Six Months; and that they make Report at the Adjournment of this Meeting. . . .

The Meeting adjourned to Saturday 4, O'Clock P. M. then to meet at this Place

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 7, 1783–1804, City of Providence, R.I.

### **282. Providence Mechanics and Manufacturers to New London, Connecticut Mechanics and Manufacturers, Providence, 30 April 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Gentlemen, The Mechanics and Manufacturers of the Town of Providence, convinced of the Propriety and Importance of placing the Manufactures of our Country on the most respectable Footing, at a Meeting lately held here did agree to form themselves into an Association, and petitioned the Honorable General Assembly of this State for a Charter of Incorporation, which was unanimously granted unto them.

Some of the principal Objects we have in view are, to countenance and encourage each other in the lawful Pursuit of our several Callings—to bear public Testimony against, and suppress as much as possible, all unlawful and fraudulent Practices, whereby the Reputation of the American Mechanics may be tarnished.—In fine, to do our Part towards placing the Manufactures of America on that eminent Footing which those of older Countries have Acquired.

Associations formed in all the capital Towns in America, on a similar Plan with ours, we conceive would be a happy Means of effecting the above important Objects—and we beg Leave to recommend the Subject to your serious Attention.

What Steps you may have already taken in this important Business, we are ignorant of—or, if you have not taken any, how far it may be agreeable to you, or thought necessary, to adopt a similar Plan with ours must be left to your Determination—we should however be happy to correspond with the Mechanics

and Manufacturers of your respectable City, in whatever Form they may choose to appear.

There cannot be a Doubt but that the new Continental Legislature will early take into Consideration the Situation of the Manufactures of the United States—and will certainly wish to have the fullest Information from all Parts of the Union, on that important Subject. And in no other Manner in our Opinion can they receive it so accurately as from Associations of all the Mechanics and Manufacturers in the capital Towns.

We have to lament it is true, that this State is not considered at present as one of the United States under the new Gover[n]ment, yet we cannot long remain separated from the Union.—And you may rely on it, Gentlemen, that the Mechanics and Manufacturers of this Town are not in principle separated from their Brethren in the other States; and that it is our most anxious Desire and fervent Prayer, that this State may speedily take Measures to be reunited under the Federal Head—and thereby enjoy the Benefits of that Gover[n]ment, under which we have every Reason to expect the Manufactures, as well as the Agriculture and Commerce of the United States of America will receive every Encouragement.

The Regulations of our Association, and any other Part of our Proceedings you may wish to be informed of, we shall be happy to communicate on all Occasions.—In the mean Time we shall with Pleasure receive any Communications you may think proper to make, with Respect to the Situation of the Mechanics and Manufacturers of your City.

We are, Gentlemen, with the highest Esteem, Your Friends and Brethren,

Gershom Jones	}	Committee of Correspondence
Amasa Gray		
John Gibbs		
Nicholas Easton		
Saml. Thurber Jun		
Wm. Richmond		
Danl. Stillwell		
John Davis		
Elijah Bacon		

1. Printed: Providence *United States Chronicle*, 11 June.

### 283. Newport Herald, 7 May 1789 (excerpts)

At the annual General Election held in this town yesterday, the following Gentlemen were elected to the offices affixed to their names. . . .

*Delegates to the old Congress.*

1. Hon. Peleg Arnold, Esq.
2. Hon. Jonathan J. Hazard, Esq.
3. Thomas Holden, Esq.
4. John Gardner, Esq. . . .

As usual, his Excellency the Governor with the Hon. members of both Houses, preceded by the High Sheriff bearing the mace, walked two and two to the State-House.—After the Hon. Lower House were organized and a committee appointed to tell the votes, both Houses adjourned to 5 o'clock, A. M.—A select number embarked at one, in his Excellency's yacht and sailed to the cove contiguous to his Excellency's seat, where they went and partook of an elegant collation.—At 5 o'clock they returned to the State-House, when proclamation was made of the general officers for the year ensuing, which was reverberated by a discharge of 13 cannon from the castle of the State. The powder we hear was generously paid for out of his Excellency's privy purse. To weak minds it appeared ominous that only eleven of the thirteen guns were regularly discharged, the other two not being fired until after a very long interval.

#### 284. New York Journal, 7 May 1789

The inhabitants of the town of Newport have instructed their representatives in the general assembly of Rhode Island, to renew the motion for calling a state convention for the purpose of adopting the new constitution.

#### 285. Republican

##### Providence United States Chronicle, 7 May 1789

MR. WHEELER, Not being fond of news-paper scribbling, it is with the greatest reluctance that I ever attempt any thing of the kind—but am now induced to do that which otherwise I would not have done, if I had not seen a *hint* in one of your papers that I thought rather *infringed* on Federalism, and my feelings, being *almost* a Federalist;—I could not help disbelieving your correspondent with regard to the arrearages on the *Federal feast*, for I had strongly persuaded myself that those men who would be *thought* Federalists were possessed of sufficient *honor*, *veracity*, and *punctuality* to discharge debts of so delicate a nature without going greatly beyond the time agreed on.—This being a good *touchstone* to ascertain *Federalism* I committed it to memory, and when in Providence the day before yesterday, I made particular inquiry of several persons whom I thought could give *good* information respecting the matter, and who informed me for fact that a considerable sum is due to persons who supplied materials for the feast, and who ought in justice to have been paid *nine months* ago.—Alas! Federalism—but of short duration was *thy word*—like the *thunder* from the mouth of thy cannon, that *roared for a moment* but passed off in *fume*—and from this time forth I *abjure thee and thy doctrine*, and am your humble servant a

REPUBLICAN.

*Johnston, May 5, 1789.*

**286. Joseph Jones to James Madison**  
**10 May 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The papers inform us the Committee of the whole had gone through the system of impost—although in the progress of the business some instances of local attachment were exhibited and it is to be expected will always be exhibited yet upon the whole it appears to have been conducted with temper and moderation and such middle ground generally taken as will probably in the outset prevent clamour and submit to time and the conviction of experience such changes as shall be found for the common welfare. R. Island not being subject to the regulations & so convenient a place to the eastern and N. York States may interpose difficulties to the faithfull collection of the revenue and North Carolina in this quarter wod. do the same but for the obstacles to navigation—these interruptions will be only temporary as I presume they cannot long remain out of the Union. . . .

1. RC, Madison Papers, DLC. Printed: Rutland, *Madison*, XII, 148–50.

**287. Boston Herald of Freedom, 12 May 1789<sup>1</sup>**

*Of RHODE-ISLAND.*

His Excellency *John Collins* is elected Governour, and the Hon. *Daniel Owen*, Deputy Governour, of the state of Rhode-Island.

The Legislature of Rhode-Island have made choice of the Hon. *Peleg Arnold*, *Jonathan J. Hazard*, *Thomas Holden*, and *John Gardner, Esq's*. as Delegates to the *Old Congress*.

In the four papers printed in the state of Rhode-Island the last week, advertisements were inserted, announcing the deposit of between five and six hundred pounds paper currency, in the hands of different *Justices* of the Peace, as a legal tender for debts contracted previous to the Legislature of that State's issuing a paper Currency, that bane to publick and private honesty. Some weeks past similar advertisements have appeared, giving information of sums deposited for the same purpose, to double the amount mentioned above.

By the choice of Delegates to the *Old Congress* (a body which exists not in reality or idea, except in the minds of the "*Know Ye*," and *paper money gentry*) from the state of Rhode-Island, it appears that antifederalism is still the governing sentiments with the majority of that infatuated state.

1. Reprinted: *New York Daily Gazette*, 19 May; *Pennsylvania Mercury* and *Pennsylvania Packet* (2nd and 4th paragraphs), 21 May; *New Hampshire Recorder*, 28 May.

**288. New York Daily Advertiser, 13 May 1789**

The Committee of Correspondence have received the following communication, and they flatter themselves that the publication of it will be agreeable to their fellow citizens.

*(Circular.)*

By order of the Committee,  
ANTHONY POST, Chairman.  
*Providence, April 30, 1789.*

GENTLEMEN, The mechanics and manufacturers of the town of Providence, convinced of the propriety and importance of placing the manufactures of our country on the most respectable footing, at a meeting lately held here, did agree to form themselves into an association, and petitioned the honorable general assembly of this state for a charter of incorporation, which was unanimously granted unto them.

Some of the principal objects we have in view are—to countenance and encourage each other in the lawful pursuit of our several callings—to bear public testimony against, and suppress as much as possible, all unlawful and fraudulent practices, whereby the reputation of the American mechanics may be tarnished. In fine, to do our part towards placing the manufactures of America on that eminent footing which those of elder countries have acquired.

Associations formed in all the capital towns in America, on a similar plan with ours, we conceive would be a happy means of effecting the above important objects, and we beg leave to recommend the subject to your serious attention.

What steps you may have already taken in this important business, we are ignorant of—or, if you have not taken any, how far it may be agreeable to you, or thought necessary, to adopt a similar plan with ours, must be left to your determination; we should, however, be happy to correspond with the mechanics and manufacture[r]s of your respectable city, in whatever form they choose to appear.

There cannot be a doubt but that the new continental legislature will early take into consideration the situation of the manufactures of the United States, and will certainly wish to have the fullest information from all parts of the Union, on that important subject. And in no other manner in our opinion can they receive it so accurately as from associations of all the mechanics and manufacturers in the capital towns.

We have to lament it is true, that this state is not considered at present as one of the United States under the new government; yet we cannot long remain separated from the Union; and you may rely on it, gentlemen, that the mechanics and manufacturers of this town are not in principle separated from their brethren in the other states, and that it is our most anxious desire and fervent prayer, that this state may speedily take measures to be re-united under the Federal Head, and thereby enjoy the benefits of that government, under which we have every reason to expect the manufactures as well as the agriculture and commerce of the United States of America will receive every encouragement.

The regulations of our association, and any other part of our proceedings you may wish to be informed of, we shall be happy to communicate on all oc-

casions; in the mean time we shall with pleasure receive any communications you may think proper to make, with respect to the situation of the mechanics and manufacturers of your city.

We are, gentlemen, with the highest esteem, your Friends and Brethren,

AARON MASON,  
 AMASA GRAY,  
 JOHN GIBBS,  
 NICHOLAS EASTON,  
 GERSHOM JONES,  
 JOHN DAVIS,  
 WM. RICHMOND,  
 DANIEL STILLWELL,  
 MARTIN SEAMAN,  
 ELIJAH BACON,

} Committee of Correspondence

Committee of Correspondence.

*To the Mechanics and Manufacturers of the City of New-York.*

### 289. Massachusetts Centinel, 13 May 1789

A gentleman from Providence informs us, that the citizens of Newport and Providence have *again* petitioned their Legislature to call a Convention for the purpose of ratifying the Federal Constitution—which if not granted, they will immediately apply to Congress for the protection of the Union, &c.

### 290. Newport Herald, 14 May 1789<sup>1</sup>

*Instructions from the Town of Newport.*

*To George Hazard, Henry Marchant, George Champlin, Peleg Clarke, William Tripp, and George Sears, Esqr's. Representatives of the town of Newport, to the Hon. General Assembly of the state of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations.*

GENTLEMEN, Impressed with a sense of the necessity and justice of an immediate compliance with the recommendations of the Honorable the Congress, respecting the new form of government for the United States of America, we cannot forbear *renewing* our instructions to you on this interesting subject.

We are now arrived at a period, when the principles which have actuated an opposition to the calling a State Convention in this state, cannot operate.

All the States (this and North-Carolina excepted) have acceded to the New Constitution, and the latter hath ordered a Convention to be called.—The unanimity which hath prevailed in the acceding States, in the election of a Federal President, Vice-President, Senators and Representatives, hath fully evinced their approbation of the present system of government:—The new Congress is formed, and the new government will be soon in regular motion, and operate



with suitable energy: The opposers of it in this State must therefore be convinced, that their opposition to it hath proved and will prove ineffectual.

Let us now advert to some of the ruinous consequences which will result from the *obstinate* continuance of an opposition to a measure which has been so generally adopted by the United States, and is now established.

This State cannot exist without commerce, agriculture and manufactures; these are naturally connected, and must rise and fall together, however the bad policy of some men may have endeavored to disunite them. But can we expect that our trade with the United States will be continued if we still refuse to unite and harmonize with them, or that it will be favorably received by foreign nations?

Have we not reason rather to conclude, that we shall be viewed by both as an impotent, refractory State, which has forfeited all pretences to a friendly intercourse with them? We may therefore be assured that our foreign trade must cease for want of federal protection, and that the ports of our once Sister States will be shut against us.

The Inhabitants of the principal maritime towns, and of this in particular, will then suffer the severest distress:—We receive the first necessaries of life, bread and firewood, chiefly from the other States; and a large proportion of the inhabitants, entirely depend for their subsistence on Commerce, and must perish with its destruction.—In this wretched situation, necessity will oblige them as the last alternative to apply to the Federal Government for relief and protection, and it will be undoubtedly afforded to them.

Anxious to avoid the calamities, which threaten us, and desirous to participate in the advantages, which in the opinion of the WISEST and BEST MEN in the United States, will result from an adoption of the New Constitution, and at the same time solicitous for the existence, happiness and prosperity of this State;—We your constituents renew our Instructions, and urge you by every consideration that is dear and valuable, to continue your strenuous and laudable exertions, to obtain at the next session of the General Assembly, an Act for calling a Convention in this State, for the purpose of adopting the Constitution as recommended by the late General Convention at Philadelphia.

Voted unanimously.

P. BARKER, jun. Town Clerk.

1. Reprinted: New York *Gazette of the United States*, 16–20 May; New York *Daily Advertiser*, 20 May; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 23 May.

## 291. Providence United States Chronicle, 14 May 1789 (excerpts)

Wednesday last Week the annual General Election was held at Newport, when the following Gentlemen were chosen to the Offices annexed to their respective Names, viz. . . .

*Delegates to Congress.*

The Hon. PELEG ARNOLD, Esq;  
 JONATHAN J. HAZARD, Esq;  
 THOMAS HOLDEN, Esq;

JOHN GARDNER, Esq; . . .

At the Session of the Honorable General Assembly of this State last Week at Newport, an Act was passed, for levying and collecting within the Ports of this State, the same Duties and Imposts as shall be levied by Congress within the Eleven States under their Jurisdiction;—to be paid in the same Monies or Articles.—The Act to take Place at the same Time as the Continental Act for that Purpose.

**292. New York Journal, 21 May 1789**

The state of Rhode Island have enacted, that the same duties and imposts shall be levied and collected in that state, as may be levied and collected by the general government of the other eleven states, to be deposited in their treasury, for similar purposes.

**293. Massachusetts Centinel, 23 May 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Rhode-Island being a *foreign State*, a correspondent would query, whether the *Sergeant at Arms* lately appointed, ought not previous to his appointment, to have been NATURALIZED.

1. Reprinted: *New York Packet*, 30 May; *State Gazette of North Carolina*, 11 June.

**294. Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina, 28 May 1789**

*Extract of a letter from Newport (Rhode-Island) to a gentleman in this town, dated April 21.*

“Our Assembly meets in May and June. This town has given their Deputies very spirited instructions to use their influence for the appointment of a Convention to adopt the Constitution of the United States, which, if not attended to, we intend remonstrating against the Assembly, and to petition Congress for protection.—Providence, and some other parts of the state, will join us.”

**295. Providence United States Chronicle, 11 June 1789**

*At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE of the PROVIDENCE ASSOCIATION OF MECHANICS AND MANUFACTURES, June 5, 1789.*

A letter from the Mechanics and Manufacturers of Newbury-Port was laid before the Committee, by the Secretary to the Society.

*Voted and Resolved*, that Mr. Wheeler be and he is hereby requested to publish, in the United States Chronicle of the next Week, the circular Letter sent by this Committee to the Mechanics and Manufacturers of the capital Towns in America—and also the Letter received and laid before the Committee at the present Meeting, from the Mechanics and Manufacturers of the Town of Newbury-Port, in Massachusetts.

AARON MASON, Chairman.

(Circular.)

Providence, April 30, 1789.

GENTLEMEN, The Mechanics and Manufacturers of the town of Providence, convinced of the propriety and importance of placing the manufactures of our country on the most respectable footing, at a meeting lately held here, did agree to form themselves into an association, and petitioned the Honorable General Assembly of this State for a charter of incorporation, which was unanimously granted unto them.

Some of the principal objects we have in view are—to countenance and encourage each other in the lawful pursuit of our several callings—to bear public testimony against, and suppress as much as possible, all unlawful and fraudulent practices, whereby the reputation of the American Mechanics may be tarnished. In fine, to do our part towards placing the manufactures of America on that eminent footing which those of older countries have acquired.

Associations formed in all the capital towns in America, on a similar plan with ours, we conceive would be a happy means of effecting the above important objects, and we beg leave to recommend the subject to your serious attention.

What steps you may have already taken in this important business, we are ignorant of—or, if you have not taken any, how far it may be agreeable to you, or thought necessary, to adopt a similar plan with ours, must be left to your determination; we should, however, be happy to correspond with the Mechanics and Manufacturers of your respectable town, in whatever form they may choose to appear.

There cannot be a doubt but that the new continental Legislature will early take into consideration the situation of the manufactures of the United States, and will certainly wish to have the fullest information from all parts of the Union, on that important subject. And in no other manner, in our opinion, can they receive it so accurately as from associations of all the Mechanics and Manufacturers in the capital towns.

We have to lament it is true, that this State is not considered at present as one of the United States under the new government; yet we cannot long remain separated from the Union; and you may rely on it, Gentlemen, that the Mechanics and Manufacturers of this town are not in principle separated from their brethren in the other States, and that it is our most anxious desire and fervent prayer, that this State may speedily take measures to be re-united under the Federal Head, and thereby enjoy the benefits of that government, under which we have reason to expect the manufactures as well as the agriculture and commerce of the United States of America will receive every encouragement.

The regulations of our association, and any other part of our proceedings you may wish to be informed of, we shall be happy to communicate on all occasions; in the mean time we shall with pleasure receive any communications you may think proper to make, with respect to the situation of the Mechanics and Manufacturers of your town.

We are, Gentlemen, with the highest esteem, your Friends and Brethren.

AARON MASON,	JOHN DAVIS,	} <i>Committee</i> <i>of</i> <i>Correspond.</i>
AMASA GRAY	WM. RICHMOND,	
JOHN GIBBS,	DANIEL STILLWELL,	
NICHOLAS EASTON,	MARTIN SEAMAN,	
GERSHOM JONES,	ELIJAH BACON,	

*To the Merchants and Manufacturers in —*

[Merchants and Manufacturers of Newburyport, Mass., 27 May 1789]

*Newbury-Port, 27th May, 1789.*

GENTLEMEN, We received your circular letter of April last, addressed to the Mechanics and Manufacturers of this town. In consequence of which, a notification for a meeting was published, and a number of the Mechanics and Manufacturers of this town met, and took into consideration the purport of your letter;—and upon considering the deranged and irregular method of conducting the mechanical and manufacturing business of our country, are convinced, that some general plan, as well as particular method, is necessary, in order to place our manufactories, upon a more reputable footing.

Your objects are laudable and benevolent, and must, we think, meet the approbation of every virtuous citizen.—At a day like this, every effort is necessary, to support the sinking spirits of the mechanical and manufacturing part of the community.—Illegal and fraudulent practices, are the bane of society; and if fostered, will inevitably destroy all harmony and confidence, which are the only ligaments that bind commercial and civil society:—Therefore, faithfulness and honesty, must be adopted as radical principles, in order to give a proper tone to the several branches, and to secure to ourselves that eminency which older countries have acquired.

We sympathize with you, in your peculiar situation with respect to the Union; and regret that your State, as well as the other sister State not in the Union, could not view the necessity of a closer and more coercive National Constitution, than that of the old Confederation, in the same light that you and we do: But we flatter ourselves, that the time hastens, when your legislative Assembly (and also the other not in the Union) will be convinced, by the firm, virtuous, and patriotic government of our National Congress, that their political and private happiness, is inseparably involved in the National Compact.

We have not, we confess, gone into the spirit of associating, as many of our brethren in the capital towns on the Continent have done, but are convinced, that the nearer to system the business is reduced, the easier the object may be obtained.—By judicious and regular associations we conceive many advantages may arise, not only as proper vehicles by which our National Legislature may obtain the best information with respect to the state of the mechanical and manufacturing busines of the country (which is not a trifling object, in a young nation like ours) but also, it may be of public utility, in devising and executing the best schemes and models for fabrications through the several branches, and likewise diffuse a spirit of emulation and industry.

We thank you, Gentlemen, for your kind communication, and shall feel ourselves under great obligations if you will favour us with a copy of your Regulations and Proceedings.

With the greatest esteem, we are, Gentlemen, your Friends and Brethren.

EDWARD HARRIS, JOSEPH WHITTEMORN, JONATHAN MORSS, WILLIAM HOYT,	}	<i>Committee of Correspond.</i>
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*To the Mechanics and Manufacturers of the Town of Providence, State of Rhode-Island, &c.*

**296. Abraham Baldwin to Joel Barlow**  
**New York, 14 June 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

[In discussing amendments to the Constitution, Baldwin writes:] . . . There is no such thing as antifederalism heard of. R.I. and N.C. had local reasons for their conduct, and will come right before long. . . .

1. RC, Baldwin Collection, Yale University Library. Docketed: "Recd.—Paris—Aug 25, 89."

**297. William Ellery to the Commissioners of the Treasury**  
**Newport, 15 June 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . At the last Session the motion for calling a State Convention was renewed and urged; but was negatived by a majority of eleven voices.—

An embargo was laid on wheat, rye, indian corn, barley, rye and barley flour, or meal, and Indian meal to continue until sometime in Augt.—A motion was made for altering the tender law so as to prevent its working an extinguishment of debts,—and also for protracting the period of the redemption of mortgages, both which were negatived.—A bill was brought in, proposing an addition to the last Impost Act, by which the present duty of five per Cent: was to be augmented to thirty per Cent:—This was objected to by the minority and they had address enough to get it referred to the next Session.—

I do not recollect that the week produced any thing more of a public nature.—

1. FC, Ellery Letterbook, 1786–1794, RNHi.

**298. Newport Mercury, 15 June 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The Hon. GENERAL ASSEMBLY of this State adjourned, on Saturday last, without Day.

Thursday last the House took into Consideration the Motion made for calling a Convention, to adopt the new Constitution; and after some Time spent thereon, the Vote was taken, when there appeared a Majority of 11 against calling a Convention.

The Motion made for altering the Tender Law was also taken into Consideration, and passed in the Negative, by a Majority of 7.

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 20 June, and in eight out-of-state newspapers by 23 July: Mass. (1), N.Y. (4), Pa. (2), Ga. (1).

### 299. Providence United States Chronicle, 18 June 1789

The following LETTER to the MECHANICS AND MANUFACTURERS of this Town has been received by the Committee of Correspondence;—and will no doubt be pleasing to their Fellow-Citizens.

AARON MASON, Chairman.

Providence, June 15, 1789.

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*New-York, May 29, 1789.*

GENTLEMEN, The Mechanics and Manufacturers of the city of New-York hereby acknowledge with satisfaction the receipt of your letter of 30th Ultimo. The truly laudable zeal which appears in the mechanical Association of your patriotic Town adds considerably to the felicity we feel from observing the universal prevalence of a spirit to promote our internal wealth,—to draw from the luxurious bosom of our country its native resources, and to rescue our character from the disgrace of a commercial dependence:—From one extremity of the continent to the other, this spirit seems to be awakened to embrace the flattering opportunity, and to take the first and fullest advantages of that auspicious system of politics, already extending its fostering hand to the agriculture, the trade and manufactures of this country. We are confident, that it will meet with a success proportioned to the importance of its object, and the force with which it acts.

The measures which have been adopted by the Congress of the United States we presume have in some degree been the result of various applications addressed to them, expressing the sense and explaining the wants of our manufacturing brethren throughout the Union. On the general Government, to whose care the American Arts and the American Commerce are now committed, we place the most flattering expectations.

We lament with you that your State has not yet acceded to that compact in which the hopes of our best patriots are concentrated. We remember with the warmest feelings those early ties with which we were bound together. Our undiminished affections are still expanded to embrace you; and we look with anxious impatience to the period, when all the members of this great community who have heretofore acted in concert, will be united again in the same interests and views, and in the enjoyment of the same political and civil blessings.

Your polite invitation to open a correspondence we acknowledge, and shall always be happy to afford you every possible information.

We are, with the highest respect and esteem, your Friends and Brethren,

ANTHONY POST,  
FRANCIS CHILDS,  
JOHN GOODEVE.

*To the Mechanics and Manufacturers of the Town of Providence, Rhode-Island.*

### 300. Providence United States Chronicle, 18 June 1789<sup>1</sup>

The Honorable General Assembly of this State, which convened last Week at Newport, adjourned on Saturday to the Third Monday in October next—then to meet at South-Kingstown.—On Thursday, the Question was taken, *Whether this State will appoint a Convention to consider of the federal Constitution*—and there appeared, for a Convention 22, against it 32,—Majority 10.—On a Motion for the *Repeal of the Tender* the Numbers stood, for the Repeal 23, against it 30—Majority 7.

1. Reprinted: *New Jersey Journal*, 8 July.

### 301. Providence Gazette, 20 June 1789

At the Session of the General Assembly last Week at Newport, a Motion for calling a Convention, to take into Consideration the federal Constitution, was negated by a Majority of 11; and a Motion for repealing the Tender Law (so called) was negated by a Majority of 7.

### 302. New York Daily Gazette, 20 June 1789<sup>1</sup>

Thursday se'nnight being the day for the General Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island, agreeable to a resolve passed at their last session, to take into consideration a motion made for calling a convention to adopt the new constitution—the same was accordingly taken up, and after the matter was discussed, the vote was taken, and there was a majority of eleven against calling a convention. The motion made for repealing the tender law was also taken into consideration, and it also passed in the negative, by a majority of *seven*.

1. Reprinted: *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 1 and 15 July; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 2 July; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 7 July; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 8 July; *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 23 July.

### 303. New York Gazette of the United States, 20 June 1789<sup>1</sup>

The 11th inst. being the day for the general assembly of the State of Rhode Island, agreeable to a resolve passed at their late session, to take into consideration a motion made for calling a convention, to adopt the new constitution—

the same was accordingly taken up, and after the matter was discussed, the vote was taken, and there was a majority of eleven against calling a convention. The motion made for repealing the tender law was also taken into consideration, and it also passed in the negative, by a majority of *seven*.

The diminution of the majority against the Federal Constitution in the State of Rhode-Island, is indicative of the complete triumph of reason and common sense over the power of anarchy, selfishness and party views: Rhode-Island and North-Carolina will undoubtedly soon be restored to the Union, when there will be more joy over two returning wanderers, than over eleven dutiful sons, who have never strayed from the Temple of Union.

The friends to the constitution of the United States, may rejoice in every circumstance that has attended its progress, from the beginning: The opposition to it, called forth in its defence and support the noblest faculties of the human mind: The full, free and unbounded discussion of its merits and defects, has served to emblazon its preponderating excellencies in such manner, that its foundation is extended, and made more firm and durable, than its most sanguine friends could have anticipated.

1. The last two paragraphs were reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 2 July. Other reprintings occurred in the *New Hampshire Spy*, 27 June (second paragraph); *Pennsylvania Packet*, 30 June (second paragraph); *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1 July (last two paragraphs).

#### 304. Providence United States Chronicle, 25 June 1789

The following LETTER has been received by the COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE in this Town,—and the Publication of it they have no Doubt will be pleasing to their Fellow-Citizens.

AARON MASON, Chairman.

*Providence, June 22, 1789.*

*Portsmouth, May 26, 1789.*

GENTLEMEN, The patriotic sentiments contained in your Favour of the 30th Ultimo, have been laid before the Mechanics and Manufacturers of this Town, who have chosen us as a Committee of Correspondence to confer with you and other manufacturing towns in the neighbouring States, on the subject of Associations;—a subject truly important, and which we conceive may by judicious regulations be rendered *beneficial* as *important*, not only to the individuals associating, but to the community at large.

All endeavours for encouraging the arts, and suppressing those fraudulent practices which tarnish their reputation, are equally laudable and politic; and we fully join your opinion, that Associations for those purposes will be the most happy means of effecting them.

With you we lament that your State is not in the Union, but are happy to find that the Mechanics and Manufacturers are in principle anxiously desirous to be reunited to the other States under the federal Head.

We beg to be favoured, as soon as convenient, with a copy of your Charter of Incorporation, and the Regulations of your Association, with any other of your



proceedings you may choose to communicate, which may contribute to our forwarding a design originating in motives so commendable, and shall with pleasure comply with your polite invitation to a future correspondence, on any circumstances which may be beneficial to the manufacturing interest.

With the most respectful esteem, we are,

Gentlemen, your Friends and Brethren,

BENJAMIN DEARBORN, ELISHA HILL, SAMUEL DROWNE, GEORGE J. OSBORNE,	}	<i>Committee of Correspond.</i>
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*To Mess. Aaron Mason, &c. Committee of Mechanics and Manufacturers. Providence.*

**305. Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch  
New York, 28 June 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

My dear sister

I wrote you from providence some account of my polite reception there & closed my Letter just as I had accepted an invitation to dine with Mr Brown & Lady. The forenoon was pass't in receiving visits from all the principal Gentlemen and Ladies of the Town who seemed to vie with each other, to convince me that tho they were inhabitants of an Antifederal State, they were themselves totally against the measures pursued by it, and that they entertained the highest Regard and Respect for the Character with which I was so intimately connected, altho to their great mortification they had been prevented the Honour of having any Share in placing him in His respected Station. . . .

1. RC, Abigail Adams Letters, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. Printed: Margaret A. Hogan, C. James Taylor et al., eds., *Adams Family Correspondence* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), VIII, 377–80n.

**306. New York Gazette of the United States, 1 July 1789<sup>1</sup>**

One of the most important topics of political conversation, at the present hour, is the refractory opposition of the State of Rhode Island against joining the general government. In whatever light the subject is viewed, no reasonable man can find any apology for such obstinacy and perverseness. Perhaps no part of the United States is so illy situated to maintain a separate independence. The hour is approaching when Congress will be under the necessity of some kind of interference; and though we entertain the most exalted ideas of the justice and moderation of that illustrious body, we still believe they will not quietly suffer the Revenue to be defeated by the iniquitous conduct of a State, which they can so easily controul.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald*, 16 July, and in nine other newspapers by 8 August: N.H. (1), Mass. (1), Conn. (2), Pa. (2), Va. (1), Ga. (2).

**307. James Sullivan to John Adams  
Boston, 2 July 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Perhaps some Individuals, unworthy, unprincipled, and distressed in their pecuniary circumstances, and who were in the Minority in the Convention of this state, may prompt the Majority in Rhode Island to wrong and destructive Measures. but I do Most solemnly assure you, that I beleive the report to be fabricated to serve particular purposes, and that the people in general of this Commonwealth, Minority as well as Majority, are as ready to support and defend this Constitution as they would the Revolution of the states if it was in danger. The sentiments contained in the first production in the paper inclosed are those of the people in general. let me add here, that I am assured that there are some men who have a hand in sowing these Jealousies, that would be very willing to bury the Constitution of the united states, in the ruins of our Independence in short these misrepresentations originate from men who have an habitual hatred to the old Whigs, and are used by men who have no other politicks, than office and emolument, and who circulate the reports to wound those who stand in their way.

I will intrude no longer upon your Excellencys goodness; Time will discover who are the friends of the people, and of the Government the people have Established

I am with the most perfect sentiments of Esteem your Excellencys most obliged & most Humble Servant

1. RC, Adams Papers, MHi.

**308. Newport Herald, 2 July 1789<sup>1</sup>**

“MIND YOUR BUSINESS” said the Congress under the old Confederation. This is a most useful injunction: Let every one attend assiduously to the duties of his particular calling—for it is as true as it is obvious, that the peace and prosperity of the WHOLE are constituted by the happiness and tranquility of individuals.

1. Reprinted: *Georgia Gazette*, 30 July.

**309. Boston Gazette, 6 July 1789<sup>1</sup>**

*Extract of a Letter, dated Newport, June 18, 1789.*

“We hear from Providence, that a very singular affair lately happened in that town. A Gentleman from Baltimore having purchased some lands in this State, left the Deeds thereof with a friend of his to have them recorded, who inadvertently laid them on a table in a room adjoining the street, and stepped into another part of the house; in his absence a Goat jumped into the room through one of the windows then open, and eat so much of the Deeds up as scarcely leaving any remains of them—The paper-money advocates on hearing that Goats fed on paper, became greatly alarmed for the safety of their darling currency, lest the mischievous Goat should eat it up in like manner as he did the gentleman’s deeds; they therefore at the late sessions of Assembly held in this town agreeable

to their mode of transacting public business, had a night convention, when the unruly Goat was taken under consideration, and by their unanimous vote against him, he was doom'd to confinement, and an Act of G——t past confirming the same.—What a happy situation the inhabitants of this state must be in, when the ruling power are so watchful of their interests, as not only to guard them against the defects in the New-Constitution; but hath secured us from any further depredations of the purlorning Goat.”

1. Reprinted in the Providence *United States Chronicle*, 9 July, and in seven other newspapers by 5 August: Vt. (1), N.H. (2), Mass. (1), N.Y. (2), Pa. (1).

### 310. Boston Gazette, 6 July 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

Of JULY 4th,  
*The 13th Anniversary of American Independence.*

Saturday, being the Anniversary of our INDEPENDENCE, was celebrated by the Inhabitants of this metropolis with every demonstration of Festivity and Joy. . . .

*The TOASTS of the Cincinnati.*

1. Our Country.
2. The Day—and the Congress of Patriots who gave it Birth.
3. WASHINGTON. *(Three Cheers.)*
4. The Vice President and Congress of the United States.
5. The Allies of America.
6. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
7. Our Brethren of the Cincinnati in Europe and America.
8. Our Fair Country Women. *(Three Cheers.)*
9. Spirit to the Oppressed, and Freedom to all who deserve it.
10. The Memory of those who fell to make their Country free.
11. The Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates of the late American Army.  
*(Three Cheers.)*
12. A Restoration of the two Stray Sisters of the Federal Family.
13. May Ambition never Invade, nor Licentiousness destroy the Liberties of America.

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Centinel*, 8 July; Providence *United States Chronicle*, 9 July; New York *Gazette of the United States*, 11 July.

### 311. Georgia Gazette, 9 July 1789 (excerpts)

On the 4th instant, being the Anniversary of American Independence, the Members of the Cincinnati assembled at Hamilton's Long Room. . . .

The Members dined together on an elegant dinner prepared for the occasion, and passed the day in great harmony and conviviality. After dinner the following toasts were drank: . . .

13. May North Carolina and Rhode Island, by a speedy Adoption of the Federal Constitution, complete the Number of the Thirteen United States.

**312. John Adams to James Sullivan**  
**New York, 14 July 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

I have received your favor of the second of this month. The report I mentioned to you in a former letter, was spoken of to me by gentle[me]n from Rhode Island, who are good citizens. One of these assured me of the fact as of his own knowledge, that there was an intimate intercourse between some of the leading antifederalists in their State and some of the same character in Massachusetts, belonging to the neighboring counties, particularly Bristol. I do not believe however that there is any general encouragement given by those who were against the constitution, or those who voted for it with amendments, tho the Gentn. from Rode Island assured me that the majority in their State kept up the spirit of party, by roundly affirming that in case of a contest they should be supported by half Massachusetts. . . .

1. FC, Adams Papers, Letterbook, MHi.

**313. Newport Herald, 16 July 1789 (excerpt)**

. . . The progress which *America* has already made in manufactures, in the polite arts, in legislation, and in science is so great and surprising that our correspondent conceives he may safely prognosticate, that, under the fostering care of their present happy frame of Government, the *United States of America* will, in less than a century become the praise and the glory of the whole earth.

**314. John Trumbull to Thomas Jefferson**  
**London, 21 July 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Thursday 11th June having been appointed for the General Assembly of R Island agreeable to a resolve of the last session to take into consideration a motion made for calling a Convention to adopt the new Constitution.—the same was accordingly taken up, and after the matter was discussed, the vote was taken & there appeared a majority of Eleven against calling a Convention:—A motion for repealing the Tender Law was also made & taken into consideration, & passed also in the Negative by a majority of seven.

The same day Governor Collins of RI publishd a proclamation prohibiting the exportation of Corn or Flour of every kind from that state, on penalty of forfeiture of the articles & twice their value.—

4th of June—in Congress—Mr Benson mov'd that the House should then form itself into committee of the whole, & take into consideration propos'd resolution respecting R Island, (of which you have a Copy). this occasion'd a short discussion, when the previous question was mov'd,—which pass'd in the negative, & the proposd resolution was lost.

1. RC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XV, 297.

## 315. Newport Herald, 23 July 1789

## MISCELLANIES.

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*“The interests of men are various, but not incompatible with each other.”*

The wise and benevolent Creator of the world effects the best good of mankind, by the variety of his operations: The differences of climate—soil, and produce, of the several parts of the earth—the diversity of genius—habits, and objects, which distinguish the inhabitants of one country, from those of another, are circumstances which conduce to this great design. We could scarcely conceive of any necessity for the existence of enterprize, activity and ingenuity, from which mankind derive their most refined enjoyments, did nature exhibit a perpetual, and perfect uniformity in all quarters of the globe. This would supercede the commercial intercourse of distant nations; and prove an effectual preventive of improvements in trade, arts and navigation. It would repress the ardour of the human mind in all those pursuits which spring from a spirit of emulation, and laudable ambition—it would “*chill the genial current of the soul*”—confine to narrow limits the sphere of action, and extinguish the prospects of human life.

The American traveller, whose object is to acquire an adequate knowledge of the various parts of this continent, will be struck with the bountiful provision which the Author of Nature has here made for the foundation, and completion of the most independent empire that the world hath ever beheld. America in herself contains the seeds of her own greatness,—all that is necessary to constitute strength, confer power, and give dignity and happiness to an independent empire; and should the time arrive, when her transatlantic connections shall become of trifling importance to her, as will very probably be the case, she will then possess exhaustless resources for an extensive, and flourishing commerce. There will always exist certain local circumstances to form a line of distinction between the inhabitants of the different parts of the Union: These distinctions will be so far from militating with the best interest of the *whole*, that they will most essentially contribute to promote it: Under the auspices of ONE GOVERNMENT, which shall be constituted by the genius, abilities, and patriotism of the UNION, a salutary direction will be given to the spirit of competition, and rivalry in the several States; by which, their resources will be brought forth, their growth and improvements greatly accelerated, and their wealth individually promoted.

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Our rulers have in general been the reverse of what inspiration says they should be, they have been “the terror of *well* doers, and the praise and reward only of those who have done ill.” After the experience of these facts, who can doubt the qualifications of the citizens of the United States, for the excellent republican form of government they have adopted. Hitherto our government have resembled a clock without the necessary weights to set them in motion—The power given by the federal constitution to the supreme EXECUTIVE Magistrate, is the great secret that will remove every obstacle from the clear and easy movement of all the wheels of the new government. —As soon as the States invest

their President and Governors with similar executive powers, they will be free and happy, and an end will be put to the oppression and persecution of faction in each of them.

However we may differ in political opinions (and such differences are probably conducive to happiness) it is, at present, the duty of every man to regulate his actions, and even his ideas according to the new system of Federal Government. We have been long tossing on the waves of conjecture, and even misery. Why therefore not enter that port which promises security and honor?—a port formed by nature and improved by art—a port where we may safely rest at anchor; and where we may invite others to equal security.—However some men may argue, and others may wrangle, it is the duty of every man who wishes well to his country, to save that vessel from shipwreck of which under GOD, WASHINGTON is commander.

### 316. Providence United States Chronicle, 23 July 1789

*Taunton, July 10th, 1789.*

MR. WHEELER, If you think the following account of the performances at Raynham (County of Bristol) on the Fourth Day of July inst. will not be disagreeable to your readers, you are requested to publish the same in your next.

J. C.

By the previous exertions of Col. Hall, the necessary preparations being made, the Day was introduced by the discharge of 13 Cannon.

At 1 o'clock the two companies, commanded by Captains Hathaway, and Hall, whose exertions in teaching the military art, have done honor to themselves and to the town, met at the house of the latter, where a procession to the meeting-house, took place in the following order, viz.

1. The troops, clad in a complete uniform of white.
2. The High Sheriff of the County, General Williams, and Mr. Alden, Preceptor of the Latin School, Col. Wilbore, Col. Hall, and Major Sever; together with a large and respectable number of Gentlemen, and Officers, both civil and military, from that, and the adjacent towns.
3. Thirteen young Ladies, belonging to the musicial choir,—eleven of whom were dressed in white.
4. Thirteen young gentlemen, belonging to Mr. Alden's school,—eleven of whom were prepared to take active parts in the exercises of the day.

When arrived at the meeting-house, the troops opened and paid the salute, while the gentlemen and ladies walked in, and took the seats previously assigned them; the troops then marched in, while the fifes, violins and bass-viol were tuned in symphonious accord to the martial step. When seated, a select choir of Musicians under the direction of Capt. Hall, their instructor, introduced the exercises by singing the tune called Amity, set to the following words, viz.—

How pleasant 'tis to see,  
Kindred and friends agree,  
Each in their proper station move, &c.

After which, on a stage erected for that purpose, eleven pieces well adapted to the occasion, were pronounced (by the above-mentioned eleven scholars) in

such a manner, as reflected the highest honour on the Instructor, while the performers met the universal applause of a large and respectable assembly of ladies and gentlemen who were collected from various towns, on the occasion. In the meantime at proper intervals, eleven pieces of music, both vocal and instrumental, were excellently performed, all conspiring to heighten those joyous sensations, the natural result of the occasion. The exercise lasted about two hours. After which, the troops marched out,—passed a review,—performed the manual exercise with skill and adroitness,—discharged 13 cannon, and as many platoons, and went through a number of manœuvres; all in such a manner, as evinced that the attention and assiduity of their officers, during the short time they have held their commissions, must have been indefatigable.—The Procession again formed, and marched to Concert-Hall, where the troops being paraded in front, the following toasts were drank, under the discharge of 13 cannon, viz.

1. The American Republic.
2. The illustrious WASHINGTON, President.
3. His Excellency JOHN ADAMS, Vice President.
4. The Federal Senate, and House of Representatives.
5. May the duration of the American Republic run parallel with that of time.
6. The Allies of America.
7. The Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
8. The Hon. David Cobb, Esq; Major-General of the fifth division.
9. Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce, with the liberal Arts.
10. The enlightened and virtuous Minority of the State of Rhode-Island.
11. May the valour of the brave ever protect the virtue of the fair.
12. May the perpetuity of our Federal Government convince the advocates for monarchy, that Republics do not necessarily contain within themselves seeds of their own dissolution.
13. May this auspicious Day, the birth-day of America, be holden in grateful commemoration until the final dissolution of Kingdoms and States.

The general joy inspired by the occasion was conspicuous in every countenance.

### 317. Edward Carrington to James Madison Richmond, 3 August 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

. . . I have employed some thoughts upon it—the result of my reflections, is, that the State Courts, where they are well established might be adopted as the inferior Federal Courts, except as to Maritime business. . . . at the same time this plan presents itself to my mind as the best, I would yet have Congress provide for separate appointments of inferior Courts in States who may not have good establishments for themselves. In Rhode Island were she in the Union there might be a necessity for such a partial provision. . . .

1. RC, Madison Papers, DLC. Printed: Rutland, *Madison*, XII, 322–24n.

**318. Abraham Whipple to George Washington  
Providence, 11 August 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I earnestly wish some Appointment in the Naval Department under the new Government of the United States, in which case I doubt not of giving by my services, such satisfaction as shall gain the approbation of the Authority under whom I may hold such an Appointment; And altho' at present I am an Inhabitant of a State which has not as yet acceded to the new Constitution of the States, yet I consider myself not a Citizen of any particular State but as a Citizen of the States at large, and sincerely wish for the Good of the particular State in which I at present reside that they would as speedily as possible Join in Union with the Sister States—And Altho' this State does not at present approve of the present Federal Government yet this is not the case with every individual in the State.— It may not be improper for me Just to observe that from an inviolable Attachment to my Country and my wishes for its Prosperity and Dignity; I have ever been friendly to the Principles on which the present Government is founded, And am conscious that the Consideration of its salutary consequences to the Country will be a sufficient Inducement to cause my utmost exertions in its Behalf; and should there be a necessity of a Naval Establishment of any kind, I should think Myself happy in receiving an Appointment therein, which would be gratefully Accepted by your Excellencys very Respectful and Devoted Humble Servant—

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington, Presidential Series*, III, 420–21.

**319. Providence Gazette, 15 August 1789<sup>1</sup>**

A Correspondent observes, that both Reason and sound Policy point to an immediate Call of our Honourable LEGISLATURE, in order to the Appointment of a CONVENTION, that one *fair* Trial may be made, at this interesting Crisis, for the Adoption of a Government, on which so essentially depends the political Salvation of this State.

1. Reprinted: Connecticut *Norwich Packet*, 21 August; *Connecticut Courant*, 24 August; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 27 August; *Virginia Centinel*, 9 September; *Vermont Journal*, 16 September.

**320. Bristol Town Meetings, 17, 28 August 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

*17 August (excerpts)*

At a Town Meeting duely Notified and Hold at Bristol on Thursday of the Seventeenth day Augt. AD 1789

Shearjb. Bourne Esqr. Chosen Moderator

Voted ~~That a Committee~~ That John Usher. Daniel Bradford. Josiah Finney, & Jonn. Russell Esqrs. be a committee, to Draught a petition to be preferd. to congress for Relief from the Execution [of the?] Impost & Tonnage Laws Respecting [this?] State and make Report at the Adjournment [of this?] meeting . . .



[Voted this?] meeting Stands Adjourn'd. till [9?] O'clock tomorrow morning and then met accordingly

*28 August*

Friday 28th. of Sd. month of Augst. 1789—

Voted that the Petition draughted by the committee chosen for that purpose be immediately forwarded and preferd. to Congress.—

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Bristol, R.I.

### **321. Providence Warrant, 26 August 1789<sup>1</sup>**

To the Town-Sergiant or either of the Constables of the Town of Providence in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode-Island &c—

Greeting—

Pursuant to a Resolve of the Freemen of the said Town in Town-Meeting legally assembled at the State House on Tuesday the 25th. Day of August current you are hereby required in the Name of the Governor and Company of the said State to notify the Freemen of the said Town that the said Meeting Stands adjourned to Thursday the 29th. Day of August Inst. at 3,O'Clock P.M. then to meet at the State House in said Town in order to receive the Report of a Committee appointed on the 25th inst. to draught a Petition to the Hon'ble the Congress of the United States praying for Relief from the Acts subjecting us to foreign Tonnage Impost, and other foreign Restrictions—at which Time and Place the said Freemen are hereby notified to attend

Fail not but make true Return. Given under my Hand and Seal at said Providence this 26th Day of August A.D. 1789

Daniel Cooke Town-Clerk

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 12, no. 5252, RHi.

### **322. Newport Town Meeting, 27–28 August 1789<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting legally Convened by Warrant August the 27th. 11n. o'clock AM 1789

Henry Marchant Esqr. Moderator

Voted that this Town Petition the Honourable Congress of the United States, to be relieved from Forreign Tonnage &c:

Voted, that the Moderator, John Bours, George Champlin, Walter Channing, George Sears, and Doctor Isaac Senter, be a Committee to draft, a Petition to the Honourable the Congress of the United States, Praying an exemption from forreign Tonnage &c; And that Provision be made by Congress Previous to their Adjournment for admitting this State to all the Advantages of the Acceeding States. Immediately upon the Adoption of the Constitution if it should happen in the Recess of Congress; And that the same Committee report to the Adjournment of this Town Meeting.

Voted that this Meeting be Adjourned until fryday the 28th. Instant at 10 oClock AM.

Peleg Barker Junr. Town Clk

Newport August 28th. 1789

Voted the above, and foregoing Memorial & Petition reported by a Committee of the Town this day Read and Agreed to be fairly Copied, and that the same be signed by the Moderator, and be by him transmitted to the Congress of the United States in such manner as he shall think Proper.

Peleg Barker Junr. Town Clk

Newport Augt. 28th. 1789

Copied from the records & Compared by Peleg Barker Junr. Town Clk

1. MS, Henry Marchant Papers, RHi.

### 323. Providence United States Chronicle, 27 August 1789<sup>1</sup>

At the Town-Meeting held here on Tuesday for Election of Representatives, the following Gentlemen were re-elected, viz.—John Jenckes, Esq; Jabez Bowen, Esq; Benjamin Bourne, Esq; and Mr. Amasa Gray.

At this Meeting a Vote was passed, appointing a Committee to draft a Petition to the Congress of the United States, praying that the Vessels of the Citizens of this State may be exempted from the foreign Tonnage Duty—and Goods shipped from this State from the foreign Impost, for such Time, and under such Regulations, as they in their Wisdom shall deem meet.—The Committee is to report this Day, at 3 o'Clock, to which Time the Meeting stands adjourned.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 3 September; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 8 September; *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 16 September.

### 324. Warren Town Meeting, 28 August 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting August 28 1789—

Voted that a Petition be Prefered To Congress respecting the Tunage and Impost Laws & that Nathan Miller John Child William T Miller & Edward Chase Esqr. be a Committe To Draught a pet[i]tion for the above purpose—

Voted the Draught of a petition Presented by the above Sd Committe Be Received and Signed by the Town Clerk and forwarded to Congress by a Messenger from Providence. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 1, 1746–1811, Town Hall, Warren, R.I.

**325. Amasa Learned to Jeremiah Wadsworth  
New London, Conn., 29 August 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Yours of the 18h Instant, I received last Evening having just returned from Providence I shall consider myself jointly interested with you in the Tea at a quarter of a dollar pr pound and dispose of it for our common benefit as soon as possible—some credit upon interest must be given, but cautiously—Altho' I am not in Cash to the Amount of £200 on Account of Tea I shall endeavor to raise the sum & reimburse myself the next sales—If there should be such an opening as you suggest & a probability of Success, in Case Application was made—I will thank you for Information—I could not however, dance attendance long,—nor be dependant on many for mediating Influence

As to the subject of News, I can communicate nothing but what your are appraised of already—The Civil List, so far as hath appeared, has staggered the Faith of many weak Believers & been a matter of triumph to avowed Heriticks—But your warmest Friends can make no palliation for your neglect to compleatly organize the executive & Judiciary Departments—If the Constitution was sufficiently perfect & safe, for Acts of Legislation most unquestionably, no danger could arise from the other two constituent parts of Government they being under the modification & direction of the Legislature—

The Distillers & sugar Bakers in Providence expect to send thier Rum & sugar into the united States free of Duty, being they say within the exception, a Manufacture &c If this is permitted, they will soon distill all the Melasses & boil all the Sugars—the raw materials with them paying no duty & with us a duty half equal to the Manufacture

I shall thank you at all times for such communications as leisure & Inclination permit you to make—

1. RC, Wadsworth Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.

**326. From James Manning  
Providence, 29 August 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Prevented, for some days, by necessary attentions to the College, from coming forwards, with the bearer, Benjamin Bourne Esquire with whom I am charged in a joint commission by the Town of Providence, I beg leave to introduce to your Excellencys notice & attention my colleague, and the business with which he is charged;—to introduce to Congress the unanimous petition of the Town of Providence, praying a speedy relief from the insupportable burthens imposed on thier Commerce, by thier being considered as Foreigners in the late Acts regulating the Tonage & collection of the Imposts in the United States—All the Seaport Towns, of consideration, in this State, vizt. Newport, Bristol, Warren & Barrington unite in this application.

We contemplate the day of our accession to the Federal Government, now, near at hand. At the election of the members of our lower house of Assembly,

held on Tuesday last, we calculate on a decided Majority of Federalists chosen to represent us in the Assembly to meet in October next, when, we flatter ourselves, that a Convention will be called to adopt the Constitution. Any assistance towards obtaining this, to us, most interest[ing?] object, which your Excellency may please to lend, will confer a peculiar obligation on the Federalists of Rhode Island; and more especially on him, who with the most perfect consideration has the Honour to be Your Excellency's most humble and most Obedient Servt.

1. RC, RG 360, Item 78, DNA.

### 327. Massachusetts Centinel, 2 September 1789<sup>1</sup>

A *new* election has taken place in Rhode-Island, but of the *old* sentiment are chief of the members chosen. *Newport*, and *Providence*, still send independent and federal characters.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazette*, 3 September; Portland, Maine, *Cumberland Gazette*, 4 September; *New Hampshire Gazetteer*, 5 September.

### 328. Rhode Island Society of the Cincinnati to George Washington Providence, 3 September 1789<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

To the President of the United States

Expressions of respect and attachment are a tribute, which the Citizens of America owe to your prudence, your patriotism and valour; to the successful display of which they are already indebted for their freedom; and from a continuance of the exercise of those qualities, they may anticipate a permanent enjoyment of the highest state of political happiness.

Under these impressions, Sir, we the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of Rhode Island, most sincerely congratulate you upon your appointment to the Chief Magistracy of the union by the unanimous suffrage of more than three millions of free-citizens:—and appointment rendered the more dignified by the manner in which it was conferred, and the more pleasing to your fellow-citizens from a conviction that they could no where place the sacred deposit, for which they have so long and arduously contended, with equal safety to themselves and honor to their country. We cannot help expressing, at the same time, the strong obligations we feel for the sacrifice of domestic ease and retirement, to which we are sensible the love of your country alone could have prompted you—And although we are not admitted to a participation of the good effects of the government over which you so deservedly preside, yet we fondly flatter ourselves that the period is not far distant, when the mistaken zeal, which has lately prevailed in this State, will give way to a more enlightened policy.

We can only add, Sir, our ardent wishes for your health and happiness—Long may the United States be blessed with a life to which they are so highly indebted! and may the close of your days be as peaceful and happy to yourself as the meridian of them has been useful and glorious to your Country.

Signed by the unanimous order of the Society.

Isaac Senter—President.

Robert Rogers Secretary.

1. FC, Washington Papers, DLC.

### 329. *New York Journal*, 3 September 1789

Accounts from Rhode Island of August 27, say: at the town-meeting held here on Tuesday for election of representatives, the following gentlemen were re-elected, viz.—John Jenckes, Esq. Jabez Bowen, Esq. Benjamin Bourne, Esq. and Mr. Amasa Gray.

At this meeting a vote was passed, appointing a committee to draft a petition to the Congress of the United States, praying that the vessels of the citizens of this state may be exempted from the foreign tonnage duty—and goods shipped from this state from the foreign impost, for such time, and under such regulations, as they in their wisdom shall deem meet. The committee is to report this day, at 3 o'clock, to which time the meeting stands adjourned.

### 330. *New Hampshire Gazette*, 3 September 1789<sup>1</sup>

The town of Providence have appointed a committee to draft a petition to the Congress of the United States, praying that vessels belonging to the citizens of the state of Rhode-Island, may be exempted from the foreign tonnage duty, and goods shipped from that state from the foreign imposts, for such time, and under such regulations, as they in their wisdom shall deem meet.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazetteer*, 5 September; *Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, 9 September; *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 24 September.

### 331. *John Quincy Adams Diary* Providence, 9 September 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

I walked out with Lanman this morning, and went to the College, which consists only of one building, nearly as long as two of the halls at Cambridge. This being a time of vacation the tutors were absent from the College; so that we had not an opportunity of seeing the library, which however is very small. The chambers are not, I think so well arranged; they are certainly not so decent as those at Cambridge.—Mr. John Brown's house is likewise a very conspicuous building. We only saw the outside of it; which is the most magnificent and elegant private mansion, that I have ever seen on this continent. The Baptist church in this town, is said to be the handsomest house of public worship in America, and there are a large number of very good private houses; The streets appear to be

busy; and every thing exhibits evidence, that this is a flourishing and a thriving town[.] But the people appear much aggrieved by the proceedings of their government; who for several years past have given the sanction of law, to every species of iniquity. Their Supreme judicial Court are now in Session at Providence[.] I went into Court twice this forenoon, they were doing nothing; and the appearance of the Judges, was a perfect burlesque upon justice. . . .

1. MS, Adams Papers, MHi.

### 332. *New York Gazette of the United States*, 9 September 1789<sup>1</sup>

Recent accounts state, that NORTH-CAROLINA and RHODE-ISLAND will very probably soon come into the federal Family: In the meantime the Legislature of the Union, are paying all due attention to their representations and petitions upon those parts of the revenue Laws which bear hard upon them, by reason of their present alien situation.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 10 September; Lansingburgh, N.Y., *Federal Herald* and *Pennsylvania Packet*, 14 September; *Baltimore Maryland Gazette*, 15 September 1789; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 16 September; *Cumberland Gazette*, 18 September; *New Hampshire Gazetteer*, 19 September 1789.

### 333. *George Cornell to George Washington* *Portsmouth, R.I., 10 September 1789 (excerpt)*<sup>1</sup>

The Memorial of George Cornell of Portsmouth On Rhode Island—Your Excellency Humble Memorialist is the first of all this State that yet appears To Congratulate your Excellency Too the Appointment of Their President and he Thinks Himself forever Happy Now under Your Excellencys Reign and Good Government, and To whome with a faithfull heart he wishes Long life and all Happiness—and your Memorialist Looks up To your Excellency as a father To his people—and he as One of the Children, who have Been Ever faithfull Begg Leave To inform Your Excellency that Our State will Soon Be Joined To the union and as there Must Be Custom House Officers appointed within the State—he would Most Humbly Beg your Excellency To Confer the Collectorship of the Custom house of Newport upon him, Or any Other appointment as your Excellency in his Clemency will Be Graciously Pleased To appoint. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington Papers, Presidential Series*, IV, 11–12n.

### 334. *Providence United States Chronicle*, 10 September 1789<sup>1</sup>

His Excellency Governor COLLINS has issued his Warrants for convening the Members of the General Assembly of this State, at Newport, on Tuesday next, the 15th Instant.

It is generally supposed, that a Repeal of the TENDER-LAW (so called) which has so long disgraced the Politics of this State, will take Place at the approaching Session.

1. Reprinted: New York *Daily Advertiser*, 19 September; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 24 September (1st paragraph). An alternate version was printed in the *Providence Gazette*, 12 September.

**335. Thomas Jefferson to C. W. F. Dumas  
Paris, 12 September 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . my last information from America is of the 25th. of July. our new government was then going on with great harmony, and all opposition to it expired, except in the state of Rhode island. I do not know whether there remains still any in North Carolina. . . .

1. FC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XV, 421.

**336. Adam Stephen to James Madison  
Berkeley County, Va., 12 September 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . For that Reason the Seat of government, and the treasury is not Safe on Tide water—Where the Seat of Government is; the monied Interest will reside—What dreadful Consequences would a Squadron of Algerine Corsairs produce in our Cities and on our Coasts, Navigated by American Renegadoes, and the Rhode islanders are excellent Navigators, and by their behaviour to one another, Seem Calculated for Such Service. . . .

1. RC, Madison Papers, DLC. Printed: Rutland, *Madison*, XII, 398–99.

**337. Scituate Town Meeting, 12 September 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At Town Meeting held in Scituate in the County of Providence by adjmt. on the 12th. Day of Sepr. 1789

Jos[ep]h Carpenter Wm. Knight Ruben Horton Propounded  
Rufus Hopkins Esqr. Moderator. . . .

this meeting being also adj'd. for the Purpose of Instructing their Deputies in Regard to Choosing a State Convention—which subject being taken up and Duely—Considered it is Voted that the same be Refereed to a future Day. . . .

Voted this Meeting be adj'd. to Saturday the 26th. Day of this Inst. then to meet at the Baptist Meeting at 12. O.Clock in said Day—

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1731–1825, Nos. 1 & 2, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, North Scituate, R.I.

**338. Massachusetts Centinel, 12 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

It is said, that the Admiral of his Most Christian Majesty's squadron intended to have passed this season at Newport, but learning that Rhode-Island was not now one of the United States, he altered his intention.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Mercury*, 16 September; *Newport Herald* and *Providence United States Chronicle*, 17 September; *Providence Gazette*, 19 September; and in six other newspapers by 22 October: N.H. (1), Mass. (2), N.Y. (1), Pa. (1), Ga. (1).

**339. George Washington to the Rhode Island Society of the Cincinnati  
New York, 14 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

To the President and Members of the  
Rhode-Island State Society of the Cincinnati.

Gentlemen,

In returning my grateful thanks for the flattering and affectionate sentiments, expressed in your address of the 3rd. instant, I beg you will do justice to the sincerity of my regard, which reciprocates, with great pleasure, the warmest wishes for your happiness, political and personal.

Under a persuasion of the candor and support of my fellow-citizens, I yielded obedience to the voice of my country—and, impressed by a sense of duty, I forsook the pleasures of domestic retirement to promote, if my best exertions can have such tendency, the objects of a dearer interest.—Those expectations of support have been amply fulfilled, and my fondest hope of their candor has been gratified by a kind and partial country.

I am much pleased, Gentlemen, with the hope which you entertain that mistaken zeal will give way to enlightened policy—And I desire to repeat to your Society assurances of the most affectionate esteem.

1. FC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**340. Boston Herald of Freedom, 15 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

A Providence paper of the 10th instant, contains "*Know ye*" advertisements of the deposit of *fourteen hundred and twenty nine pounds, nineteen shillings and four pence, one farthing*, of the paper currency of Rhode-Island, for the payment of specie bona fide debts. In one paper we have thus advertised the ruin, perhaps of a dozen helpless orphans, and the most flagrant injustice sanctioned by laws. Whilst the poor, helpless, ignorant stranger is condemned to death for extorting from the traveller a few pence, more finished villainy, under protection of iniquitous laws, erects her infernal plume, and smiles at the mischief which she has created. To the legislature of Rhode-Island, we would say, "*Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, to turn aside the needy from judgement, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless.*"

1. Reprinted: Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 17 September; *New Hampshire Gazetteer*, 19 September; *New York Daily Gazette*, 21 September; *Philadelphia Federal Gazette*, 23 September; *Massachusetts Spy*, 24 September; and *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 30 September.



**341. Massachusetts Centinel, 16 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Notwithstanding the Rhode-Island paper bills, have depreciated to 18 for one, there were in one Providence paper of last week, no less then *legal* tenders of paper trash, at par, to the amount of £1429. 19s. It is said, that the prospect of the speedy death of paper money, in the accession of that State to the Union, is the cause of these *strides in iniquity*.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazetteer*, 19 September; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 21 September; *New York Packet*, 22 September; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 24 September; and *Edenton State Gazette of North Carolina*, 15 October.

**342. New York Gazette of the United States, 16 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The conciliatory temper discovered by the Federal Legislature in their attention to the embarrassed situation of the trade of Rhode-Island and North-Carolina, and granting those States that relief which their memorials stated to be necessary to their interest and accommodation, must make the most favorable impressions on the minds of the citizens of those States—they must be struck with the enlarged, liberal, and generous policy, which governs the Congress of the United States.

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 26 September; *Newport Mercury*, 30 September; *Newport Herald*, 1 October; and in four other newspapers by 3 October: Pa. (2), Va. (2).

**343. House of Magistrates Proceedings, 18 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

No. 2 Vote of the Lower House ordering Town Meetings to be called on the 3d Monday of October next. to give Instructions to their Representatives at their Meeting the last Monday in Oct next respecting the Appointment of a State Convention, Was Read & Concurred with an Addition—& Sent Down & Concurred.

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

**344. Rhode Island General Assembly, Letter to Congress Approved  
[19] September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

It is Voted and Resolved, That the Draught of a Letter from this Assembly to the President, Senate and House of Representatives of the Eleven United States of America, in Congress assembled, be and the same is hereby approved: And that his Excellency the Governor be and he is hereby requested, to cause a fair Copy thereof to be made, and sign and transmit the same to the President of the said United States.

1. MS, R-Ar.

**345. Jeremiah Olney to Henry Knox  
Providence, 24 September 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

... The General Assembly of this State had a Special Session last week at Newport, among other things they Negatived the Question for Calling a State Convention by 14 majority[—]Mr. Sterry will be able to give you every Information Respecting our Politics [by?] whom I beg leave to Refer you.

1. FC, Shepley Library Collection, RHi.

**346. Scituate Town Meeting, 26 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held in Scituate on 26th. of Sepr. according to the Adjmt—

Rufus Hopkins Esqr. Moderator—

Whereas this meeting took into Consideration the Subject of making a Town Tax & Instructing their Deputies in Respect to Appointing a State Convention &c. It is Voted that the same is Referred to a future meeting of this Town—

Voted that this meeting be adj'd. to the 3rd. Monday in October next it being agreeable to Act of Assembly there to meet at the Meeting house at 12 O.Clock—

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1731–1825, Nos. 1 & 2, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, North Scituate, R.I.

**347. Providence Gazette, 26 September 1789**

In Consequence of the Petitions lately presented to Congress from the Seaport Towns in this State, an Act hath passed the Legislature of the United States, exempting the Ships and Vessels of Rhode-Island and North-Carolina from the Payment of foreign Tonnage, and allowing the Importation of foreign Merchandize from those States into the United States, exempt from the Payment of the foreign Impost. In short, by this Act, all Benefits and Advantages which by Law belong to Ships and Vessels of the United States, are extended to Ships and Vessels of Rhode-Island and North-Carolina. The Act is to continue in Force until the 15th of January next.

**348. Providence Gazette, 26 September 1789**

The General Assembly of this State, which met at Newport on Tuesday last Week, adjourned on Saturday to the 12th of October, then to be convened at East-Greenwich.

At this Session an Act was passed directing Town-Meetings in the several Towns throughout this State, on the third Monday of October, for the Purpose of giving Instructions to their Representatives, at the annual Session the fourth Monday of October, on the Subject of calling a Convention, for adopting or rejecting the Constitution of the United States.

A Vote passed both Houses for suspending Tenders of Paper Money until the next Session.

An Impost Act was also passed, similar to the Act of Congress for collecting Duties on Goods, &c. within the Union. Newport and Providence are thereby established Ports of Entry and Delivery—and Pawcatuck River, North-Kingstown, East-Greenwich, Pawtuxet, Warren and Bristol, Ports of Delivery only.—The following Officers are appointed for carrying the Act into Execution, which took Place immediately after the Rising of the Assembly, viz. For the District of Newport, John Wanton, Collector; Gideon Wanton, Naval-Officer; Edward Thurston, Surveyor and Searcher.—Providence, Ebenezer Thompson, Collector; Theodore Foster, Naval-Officer; William Tyler, Surveyor and Searcher.—Warren and Barrington, Samuel Miller, Surveyor.—Bristol, Samuel Bosworth, Surveyor.—North-Kingstown, Bowen Card, Surveyor.—East-Greenwich, Job Comstock, Surveyor.—Pawtuxet, Zachariah Rhodes, Surveyor.—Pawcatuck River, Thomas Brand, Surveyor.

**349. Moses Michael Hays to George Washington  
Boston, 28 September 1789<sup>1</sup>**

For The Freedom I use in addressing you, I shall rely on The Friendship of General Knox to offer Such Opology, as will impress on you a favorable reception of this Letter. its Motive is to Solicit the appointment of the Collectorship for the Port of New Port Rhode Island—When That State shall embrace the Feederal Constitution and appearance Indicate Such measure not to be farr distant; It will not be improper, I presume to Inform your Excellency, That I am a Native of this Country, Much attacht to its interests & welfare, a Merchant and resident for many years at Rhode Island, where I should have remained untill this Moment, had it not been possessed by British Forces. When I left it and Since their departure From thence, The Trade has been so interrupted & Much lessned That I Have not as yet, Been induced to return;—

I shall Leave my Friends to Say How Farr I merit attention and your Countenance, and will beg Leave to Assure Your Excellency, That any Confidence, placed in me, will Be fully justified, by a Steady Pursuit of rectitude and Integrity

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**350. Newport Mercury, 30 September 1789 (excerpts)**

The General Assembly of this State, at their last Session, passed an Act directing Town-Meetings in the several Towns throughout this State, on the third Monday of October, for the Purpose of giving Instructions to their Representatives, at the annual Session the fourth Monday of October, on the Subject of calling a Convention, for adopting or rejecting the Constitution of the United States.

An Impost Act was also passed, similar to the Act of Congress for collecting Duties on Goods, &c. within the Union. By this Act there is to be two Districts,

to wit, Newport and Providence: The District of Newport to include all the Shores and Waters South of Conimicut; the District of Providence all to the North.—Newport and Providence are to be the Ports of Entry; and a Collector, Naval Officer, and Surveyor, to be appointed to reside at each Port: to the District of Newport is annexed as Ports of Delivery only, Bristol, Warren, East-Greenwich, Wickford and Pawcatuck; and to the District of Providence, Pawtuxet; and at each Port of Delivery shall be appointed a Surveyor. The Act took Effect from the Rising of the Assembly, when all Goods, Wares, and Merchandise, imported into this State, excepting from either of the twelve States that were in Union with us, are Subject to the same Duties as by the Congressional Act: the Monies arising therefrom are to be paid into the State Treasury, and are yet unappropriated. . . .

A Letter to the President, Senate, and House of Representatives of the United States, stating the Reasons why this State has not yet acceded to the new Form of Government, was read in the House, and directed to be signed by the Governor, and sent to Congress immediately.

A Bill was presented to suspend the Tender of Paper Money, and substituting Articles to discharge Debts, &c. which was referred to next Session.

A Vote passed both Houses for suspending Tenders of Paper Money until the next Session. . . .

### 351. Providence United States Chronicle, 1 October 1789<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a Letter from a very distinguished Member  
of Congress to a Gentleman in this State, dated  
"New-York, September 15, 1789.*

"We are all very sanguine in our Hopes, that you will send us Members of both Houses, before the 15th of January, indeed on the First Monday of December. All unkind Questions will then be done away. But if unhappily Rhode-Island should not call a Convention, or calling one, not adopt the Constitution, something much more serious than has ever yet been done or talked of, will most probably be undertaken.

"We have very often been irritated with Rumours of Correspondences between the Anti's in your State and those in Massachusetts, New-York, Virginia, North-Carolina, &c. and even with Insinuations of Intrigues with British Emissaries.—These are very serious Reports: Such Intercourses are extremely criminal in the Citizens of the Union, and hostile at least in those who are not.—If the Citizens of Rhode-Island place themselves in the light of Correspondents with criminal Citizens of the Union, or in that of Enemies to the United States, their good Sense will suggest to them, that the Consequences will be very speedy and very bitter.

I rely upon it, therefore, unless your State is devoted and abandoned to the judicial Dispensations of Heaven, that your People will open their Eyes before it be too late. This is the very serious Advice of one who has ever been and still is their hearty Friend, but who must cease to be so when they become the Enemies of the United States. There can be no Medium: Enemies they must be, or Fellow-Citizens, and that in a very short Time.

[“]I am, Sir, with much Esteem,  
Yours, &c. — — —.”

1. Reprinted in the *Providence Gazette*, 3 October; *Newport Mercury*, 7 October; *Newport Herald*, 8 October; and in five out-of-state newspapers by 21 October: N.Y. (3), Pa. (2).

### 352. Newport Herald, 1 October 1789

*Extracts of a letter from a gentleman in Congress, to his friend in the State of Rhode-Island, dated Sept. 17, 1789.*

“Congress have passed a law as solicited. It is now the universal expectation that your State will come in before winter.—But if the public should be disappointed, something very unpleasant will undoubtedly be the consequence. It would not be difficult for Congress to make the unsocial Rhode-Island see, and feel, that the Union is of some importance to their interest and happiness—Winning however by mildness and condescension is much more desirable.—Deacon Sayward of York (Massachusetts) who was a timid Tory, said to me at dinner with the Judges on the eastern circuit, in June, 1774, “Mr. —, you are chosen to go to Philadelphia, as a member of Congress; it is a weighty trust; and I beg leave to recommend to you as a rule of your conduct, the doctrine of our former minister Mr. Moody. At the declaration of the war of 1745, he preached a sermon from these words, *And they know not what to do.*—*His doctrine from these words was, that in times of private or public calamity, distress or danger, it was the duty of a person or a people to be very careful that they do not do, they know not what.*”

“This doctrine of Mr. Moody I would very humbly and earnestly recommend to the faith and practice of every member of the Rhode-Island Legislature and Convention.”

### 353. Alexander Hamilton to John Davidson New York, 3 October 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

In reply to your letter of the 24th of last month . . .

On the point you mention respecting the States of North Carolina and Rhode Island, it is necessary to inform you that by an Act of the 16th of last month the priviledges to Ships of the United States, are extended to vessels of those States to the 15th of January next A copy of this Act will be sent to you by next Post

1. FC, Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Treasury to Collectors of Customs (Small Ports), RG 56, DNA.

**354. Newport Mercury, 14 October 1789**

*State of RHODE-ISLAND, &c.*  
PORT of NEWPORT, Oct. 14, 1789.

Notice is hereby given, that it is necessary all Vessels coming into this Port should enter, clear, and have the necessary Passes and Permits, as required by Law:—But that *no Fees or Duties are demanded from any Vessels laden with WOOD only*, coming from any Part of this or the neighbouring States.

JOHN WANTON, *Collector.*

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The following Extract from the “Act for levying and collecting certain Duties and Imposts in this State,” is published for the Information of Masters of Vessels: “And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that the Master or Commander of every Ship or Vessel bound to a Port of Delivery only in either of the said Districts of *Newport* and *Providence*, shall come to at the Port of Entry of such District with his Ship or Vessel, and there make Entry, deliver a Manifest of her Cargo, and pay or secure to be paid all legal Duties, Port-Fees, and Charges, in Manner by this Act provided, before such Ship or Vessel shall proceed to her Port of Delivery.”

**355. House of Magistrates Proceedings, 15 October 1789<sup>1</sup>**

No. 1 Vote of the Lower House ordering Copies of the Amendments proposed by Congress to the new Constitution to the several Towns was read and concurred

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

**356. Providence Gazette, 17 October 1789<sup>1</sup>**

We learn that his Excellency the Governor has received a Letter from the President of the United States, inclosing a Copy of the proposed Amendments to the new Constitution; and that the General Assembly of this State, now sitting at East-Greenwich, have ordered them printed, and sent to the several Towns for Consideration.

1. Reprinted in ten out-of-state newspapers by 11 November: Vt. (1), N.Y. (5), Pa. (3), Va. (1).

**357. Newport Herald, 22 October 1789<sup>1</sup>**

The printer of the Newport Herald with the highest satisfaction announces to the public the following sketch of the proceedings of the Legislature of this State at their last session, as affording a prospect that the discordant sentiments which have too long agitated the minds of the citizens of this State will soon subside. On this occasion he begs leave to observe, that addicted to no party, he has repeatedly declared his press to be impartial—*It is to contradiction, consequently to the liberty of the press, that physics, morality and politics, owe their improvement*, is the motto of this paper; and he conceives that the sentiment is founded in

truth—he shall therefore, in consistency with his motto, continue to publish any pieces which may be offered to his press on these subjects, leaving it with the public to decide who has the best of the argument, or on which side the truth lies—all he wishes from his readers is, that they would not attribute to him any impropriety in such publications, remembering that they, and not the printer, should be the judges of their propriety.—If printers were to undertake to determine upon the fitness of pieces for publication, they would certainly give offence to many writers, and might, by forestalling the public judgment, deprive the community of many useful observations.—Agriculture, manufactures, morality and politics, not party politics, but politics in general, considered as the science of legislation and government, are themes copious and beneficial:—and pieces on these subjects, he trusts, will embellish his paper when harmony and concord shall commence their peaceful reign.

*Proceedings of Government.*

The Hon. General Assembly of this State, in pursuance of their adjournment, convened at East-Greenwich the last week. This meeting having taken place for the purpose of deciding on a bill introduced at the former session, for suspending the operation of the tender law, and providing a substitute for a more equitable discharge of debts: This business was taken up soon after the two houses were formed, and was, by the agreement of all parties, referred to a committee of ten, appointed for this purpose, and consisting of members from the different counties. The committee were soon agreed on the principles of a bill, agreeably to which a draft was made and reported to the House on Friday morning.—Some amendments were then proposed and acceded to, and on the question for its passing into a law, the yeas and nays were taken, and there were

yeas	26
nays	<u>13</u>
Majority in favour of the bill,	13

The bill having passed in the lower was sent to the upper house and was there concurred with—there being only one dissentient in that house.

This bill repeals so much of the emitting act, as makes the paper money a tender at par—It directs all judgments to be entered up in gold or silver and authorises a discharge of them with real estate of not less value than 40*l.* or certain enumerated articles of personal estate, gold or silver, or paper money at the rate of 15 of paper for one of silver.—The articles of country produce are generally valued, and though it may be considered as beyond the present cash price, yet the allowances are such, as will in many instances induce an amicable accommodation of debts—in case of any dispute respecting the quality (the act providing that they must be good and merchantable) an inspector is appointed in each town to decide it, and in tenders of real estate or articles not valued, in case of a disagreement as to their value, the parties are each to appoint one appraiser, and the nearest judge of either of the courts, the third if necessary.

To remove all ground of future uneasiness, the bill has provided for a discharge of the mortgages given the State for the money borrowed at its first emission, either with the bills emitted or gold or silver, estimating one silver dollar of the value of fifteen of paper.—This clause met with opposition from some who were in favour of the tender.—They also contended for the insertion of a clause which would authorise the appraisers to enquire into the consideration of debts, and give a power to liquidate the demands—but this was rejected by a very large majority—in the affirmative on the bill were united the late minority and the most influential of the late majority.—The business was conducted with great candor and coolness, and it is hoped and believed, that the decision will prove highly beneficial to the State.—A letter was received from the President of the United States enclosing the proposed amendments of the new constitution—These were referred to the house, to be taken into consideration when they should convene for the purpose of instructing their deputies on the subject of calling a convention.

An act was passed repealing the act limiting the time of commencement of personal actions.

On Saturday the assembly finished their business.—The fall sessions commences on Monday next, when the new House attends.

1. Reprinted in whole or in part in five out-of-state newspapers by 19 December: *New York Daily Gazette*, 2 November; *New York Daily Advertiser* (no prefatory statement) and *New York Packet*, 3 November; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 6 November (no prefatory statement); and *Augusta Chronicle*, 19 December (no prefatory statement).

### 358. Newport Herald, 22 October 1789<sup>1</sup>

On Monday last the freemen of this town were convened in town meeting, agreeably to an order of assembly, for the purpose of instructing their deputies on the subject of calling a convention to decide on the proposed constitution for the United States of America—at this meeting the instructions given at the last annual meeting were renewed, by which their deputies are instructed to continue their strenuous and laudable exertions, to obtain at the next session of the General Assembly, an act for calling a Convention in this State, for the purpose of adopting the Constitution as recommended by the late General Convention at Philadelphia.

1. Reprinted in eight out-of-state newspapers by 26 November: N.Y. (4), Pa. (3), N.C. (1).

### 359. Providence United States Chronicle, 22 October 1789

The General Assembly, which sat last Week at East-Greenwich, have during the Session passed the following Acts, viz.

An Act for *repealing the Statute making the PAPER-CURRENCY A LEGAL TENDER*, and for substituting real Estate and specified Articles of personal Estate, under certain Restrictions, for the Payment of Debts in Lieu of Specie.—By this Act provision is made, that the Bonds and Mortgages given to the State



to secure the Payment of the Paper-Money, which was loaned, may be discharged by the Payment in Specie of One-Fifteenth Part of the Amount of the Money borrowed.—The Paper-Currency, by the same Act, will satisfy Judgments of Court at the Exchange of *Fifteen* for *One*.

An Act for repealing the Statute for the Limitation of personal Actions; and also, for repealing the Act which limited the Redemption of Mortgages (after being sued out) to five Years; and for lengthening the Period of Redemption to 12 Years.

An Act for admitting Coasting Vessels arriving from any of the Branches of the Narraganset-Bay, and all other Coasting Vessels, laden with Fish, Wood, Stone and Brick, not having dutiable Goods on Board, to Entry and Clearance, exempt from the Payment of any Fees whatever.

### 360. Providence United States Chronicle, 22 October 1789<sup>1</sup>

The Town-Meeting which was convened here on Monday last, by Order of the Honorable General Assembly, to give Instructions to their Representatives at October Session, on the Subject of a Convention, was adjourned to Saturday next, 3 o'Clock, in the Afternoon.

1. Reprinted with slight variations in the *Providence Gazette*, 24 October, and *New York Journal*, 5 November.

### 361. Providence Gazette, 31 October 1789<sup>1</sup>

On Thursday the interesting Question was taken, whether the House would recommend a Convention, for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States, when it was determined in the Negative. The Votes were, for a Convention, 17; against it 39—Majority 22.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Mercury*, 4 November, and with slight variations in sixteen out-of-state newspapers by 10 December: Conn. (2), N.Y. (5), Pa. (6), Md. (1), Va. (1), N.C. (1).

### 362. Benjamin Franklin to John Wright Philadelphia, 4 November 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

Dear Friend

. . . We have now had one session of Congress, which was conducted under our new Constitution, and with as much general satisfaction as could reasonably be expected. I wish the struggle in France may end as happily for that nation. We are now in the full enjoyment of our new government for *eleven* of the States, and it is generally thought that North Carolina is about to join it. Rhode Island will probably take longer time for consideration. . . .

I am, my dear friend, yours very affectionately,

1. Printed: Albert Henry Smyth, ed., *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (10 vols., New York and London, 1905–1907), X, 60–63.

**363. Providence United States Chronicle, 5 November 1789**

At the Town-Meeting on Saturday, last Week, JOHN INNES CLARKE, Esq; was chosen a Representative in Assembly for this Town, in the Room of JOHN JENCKES, Esq; who resigned.

Monday last Week the General Assembly of this State met at South-Kingstown. The Honorable William Bradford, Esq; was chosen Speaker, and Daniel Updike, Esq; Clerk of the Lower House.

On Thursday the interesting Question was taken, whether the House would recommend a Convention, for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States, when it was determined in the Negative. The Votes were, for a Convention, 17; against it 39—Majority 22.

The Hon. General Assembly of this State stands adjourned to the Second Monday in January, then to meet in this Town.

**364. Montgolfier**

**New York Daily Gazette, 6 November 1789**

*Sic transit gloria mundi.*

O MERCURY! Mercury! Wherefore art thou Mercury?—Neither in the garden, the parlour, nor the garret, could I trace one glimpse of the nimble heel'd little messenger.—The philosophers are blind with blinking deep into the muzzle of the sun, through their telescopes: the ladies have broken all the green bottles in town, for solar opera glasses: and the very porters on the wharves have lost a day, by smoaking old broken windows to take their observations on the transit.—The day was fine; no intervening clouds appeared; and yet no Mercury came.—The Almanack-makers must be wrong, said one: the calculations are false, said another: the world is at an end, said a third.—The Comet, too: why has not the Comet appeared, as was expected?—Oh! now I have it: Mercury is the running footman in Heaven; and, as sure as you are alive, Mr. Printer, he has been dispatched express after the Comet; and they will come galloping together very soon, unless they should take Boston in their rout, where they would certainly be detained for a day, in case they arrived there last Sunday—for, you know, travellers are never permitted to journey on the Sabbath at Boston: besides, the procession was so entertaining, and the psalmody so fine; that it may have ravished the ears of even celestial bodies: I would not be surprized, if both the Comet and Mercury had been thrown into a delightful trance and slept ever since.

But what apology can Mercury make, for not keeping his appointment of breakfasting in New-York yesterday—especially, as there was an elegant collection of most beautiful ladies waiting for him all the morning?—Oh! “ ’twas strange, ’twas passing strange, ’twas pitiful.”—There is but one mode of reconciling his conduct with Chesterfield’s doctrine of the graces and good breeding—

It is well known that he bribed Apollo once with an old Irish harp, for which he received a present of a long hickory stick, which had a great power of deciding

all controversies; and Mercury soon discovered its power in the following manner:—As he was flying over Rhode-Island one day, he saw two huge rattle-snakes [tearing?] each other to pieces: he put his stick [between?] them, and they instantly embraced each [other,?] and have stuck close to Mercury's stick [ever since.?] Now, of these loving snakes Mercury generally makes ambassadors, or *caduceaus*; and I think it is highly probable he may have sent one of them to France, to make peace there among the people—the other to Rhode-Island, to convert them to federalism—and he [is?] delayed by nothing, himself, but the people of North-Carolina, who are upon the point of adopting the new constitution, of which news Mercury will certainly be the bearer.—For my part, if he does not make his appearance very soon, I would recommend it to the Post-Master General to send an express after him; and I beg leave to make a tender of my services, of which I hope this will be thought a sufficient notification.

**365. William Bingham to Benjamin Vaughan  
Philadelphia, 9 November 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Interested as I know you are in the Welfare of this Country, I am convinced it must give much pleasure to you to be informed, that under the Auspices of the federal Government, it will Soon attain all those Advantages civil & political, of which it is Susceptible in So great a Degree—

It is expected that the Union will be Soon compleat by the Accession of No Carolina & Rhode Island, whose Interests must Strongly impel them to become constituent Parts of the American Confederacy—The Views of factions, & the Arts of designing Men have hitherto postponed their Junction—but the Delusion can exist no longer. . . .

1. RC, Vaughan Papers, American Philosophical Society.

**366. Boston Herald of Freedom, 10 November 1789 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

(From the New-Brunswick Advertiser.)

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia,  
to his friend in this city, dated Sept. 25th, 1789

“. . . From Boston I went in a stage coach to Providence, and from there to New-Port, which state will not come into the Union; and is, if possible, in a worse condition than any of the other states. . . .[”]

1. Reprinted: Portland, Maine, *Cumberland Gazette*, 23 November; *New York Journal*, 3 December.

**367. New York Packet, 10 November 1789**

On the 20th ult. the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, decided the important question respecting recommending a Convention for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States. The votes were; for a Convention, 17—Against it, 39—Majority, 22.

The legislature of the State of Rhode Island, have appointed Thursday the 26th inst. to be observed as a Day of Public Thanksgiving and Prayer.

**368. New York Journal, 12 November 1789**

The question for calling a convention to deliberate on the constitution of the United States was lost in the assembly of Rhode Island by a majority of 22, the 29th ult.

**369. Richmond Virginia Gazette and Weekly Advertiser  
26 November 1789**

NEW-YORK, November 12.

The question for calling a Convention to deliberate on the new Constitution of the United States, was lost in the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, on the 29th ult. by a majority of twenty-two: Notwithstanding which, they have appointed the twenty-sixth inst. as a day of thanksgiving.

**370. Fleets Pocket Almanack for the Year 1790  
Boston, c. December 1789 (excerpt)**

*RHODE ISLAND.*

This state, which has not, as yet, acceded to a union with the afore mentioned states, is 68 miles in length and 40 in breadth, and contains about 52,000 inhabitants.

The civil dissensions in which this state has of late years been involved, have occasioned many emigrations; and unless they are composed, the number will increase.

Rhode Island suffered much by the late war; some of its most ornamental country seats were destroyed, and their fine groves, orchards, and fruit trees, wantonly cut down. The soil is of a superior quality, and the island has been called by travellers the Eden of America. Before the war 30,000 sheep had been yearly fed there; but at present there are scarcely 3000 on the island.

The exports from this state are flax seed, lumber, horses, cattle, fish, poultry, onions, cheese and barley. . . .

**371. Virginia Almanack for the Year 1790  
Richmond, c. December 1789**

*RHODE-ISLAND*

Including the island of that name and Providence Plantations, is bounded on the North by Massachusetts-Bay, on the East by the Atlantic, on the West by Connecticut, and on the South by the Atlantic; is 68 miles in length, and 40 in breadth, contained, according to a census in 1783, 51,896 inhabitants. This state has refused to accede to a union with her sister states, and is now almost wholly

estranged from them; and from appearance will continue so, unless the measure of the iniquity of her “*know ye*” gentry should be speedily filled up—or the delusion which has so long infatuated a majority of her citizens, should be removed—Anxious of enjoying the protection of the Union, the inhabitants of Newport, Providence and other places, are determined to sue for its protection, and to be annexed to Massachusetts or Connecticut. This dismemberment of the state it is to be desired, may be prevented by her being wholly grafted into that stock from whence through blindness she has been broken off. The principal towns are, Newport, the capital, situate on Rhode Island, which has an excellent harbour; and Providence, situated at the head of navigation on a large river or arm of the sea, thirty miles from Newport, at present in a flourishing condition. The business of this state consists principally in the Whale Fishing and West-India trade.

**372. Theodore Foster to Caleb Strong  
Providence, 2 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The Leaders of the opposition to our Joining the Union are waiting to See whether the Constitution is adopted by the State of North Carolina and to observe what will then be the Complexion of the Political Hemisphere.—Should that much wished for Event take place I suppose it probable that this State will then make serious Advances towards an Adoption of it likewise. A Measure anxiously wished for by the most enlightend Part of the State.—It is hoped that the present Situation of this State will not be an Objection to the Appointment of Mr. Dunn.—Rhode Island has belonged to the Confederacy.—She did her part towards gaining the Independence of our Country. Her Reputation in the Time of the War ought somewhat to influence in her Favour now. There is no Doubt but that she will soon be under the same General Government as her Sister States.—Should the Matter of the Appointment of a Consul for these States to Reside in the French West Indies come before the Honorable Board to which you belong and it should be concluded on to establish such an Office I do not think it probable that a more Suitabe Person than Mr. Dunn will be found to fill it. I therefore hope you will excuse this Recommendation and Application in his Behalf and that if agreeable to you, you will favour his Appointment.—

Wishing you Health, Prosperity, & Happiness I am, Sir, with the highest Sentiments of Esteem and Respect with great Sincerity Your Obedient Servant

1. RC, Historical, Natural History and Library Society of Natick, South Natick, Mass.

**373. New York Journal, 3 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Under the head of Poet’s Corner in this day’s Journal, is an Anecdote headed thus—“To shame a Lyar, tell a great Lye.”—Whether this was the motive of the writer of the following extract from the St John, New-Brunswick, ROYAL GAZETTE, of Aug. 13, our readers will please to judge.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia, to his friend in this city, dated September 25.*

"I embrace this very favourable opportunity of writing to you, and giving you a short account of my proceedings since I left you. After a very unpleasant passage of ten days, I arrive at Boston, which place I found very pleasant, the country beautiful, but the inhabitants oppressed with taxes, and the country in a ruinous unsettled state. From Boston I went in a stage coach to Providence, and from there to New-Port, which state will not come into the union; and is, if possible, in a worse condition than any of the other states. From New-Port I went to New-York, which place is in a more flourishing state than any other; more so than this city; in every part I have been through, I have experienced the most polite and friendly attention; in this place I could live a pleasant life for a short time, if — was with me, but the confused state of affairs is such, that no consideration could induce me to settle and live under their republican government. Whoever takes an impartial survey of the present condition of these states, must be of opinion, that a multiplied curse rests upon them, and that their inhabitants are under the displeasure of their creator: trade languishes, money is totally banished from the country, and public credit is at a very low ebb.

"Every kind of villany and vice reigns here; look round the streets, and there presents at one view a miserable train of squalid slaves to barrows chained, who drag on a life of labor from morn until night, who are whipt like the dull unfeeling ox by merciless and inhuman masters: thus these people are rendered desperate, and whenever they break loose they are guilty of the most cruel murders; several murders and robberies have been perpetrated within this month. My stay at this place will be much longer than I expected it would, owing to the scarcity of cash; the paper currency of the state is now of no value; specie is very scarce."

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 30 December.

**374. Joseph Howell, Jr., to Josiah Harmor  
New York, 5 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . the Gazette of this day will inform you of the adoption of the Constitution by the State of North Carolina by a very large Majority—Rhode Island is now the only link wanting to a compleat Union, but it is greatly to be feared they will not for some time come into the measure—Domestic we have none, for the Foreign I refer you to the Papers—make my compliments acceptable to Mrs. Harmor & believe me most sincerely your friend & Hble servt.

1. RC, Harmor Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

**375. John Murray to Horatio Gates  
Alexandria, Va., 5 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . What our Assembly are about I know not & care but little as we are in a great measure out of their clutches,—Rhode Island's Obstinacy is owing to the

majority of her inhabitants being weak or dishonest men—I have not time to enter into politics but refer you to the Baltimore paper for French disturbances, which are truly distressing & I must add, however fond I am of freedom, truly degrading to the Patriotic Party—

1. RC, Gates Papers, Emmet Collection, New York Public Library.

**376. Accounts of Custom Duties Collected, District of New Haven  
5 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

Date of Entry: Decr. 5

Denomination of Vessels: Schooner

Names of Vessels: G.

Masters Names: Saml. Johnson

Place from Whence Sailed: Providence

To What Nation Belonging: D[itt]o [i.e., U. States]

[Not subject to foreign duties; all columns for this purpose are blank]

American Coasting Vessels at 6 Cents per Ton . . . : 56 tons

Amount Dolls. & Cts. 3.36

1. MS, RG36, Records of the Bureau of Customs, Entry 121, District of New Haven, Accounts of Moneys Collected, 3 July 1788–30 March 1802, DNA.

**377. Veritas**

**Providence Gazette, 5 December 1789**

We frequently observe, in the “*United States Chronicle, political, COMMERCIAL and historical,*” the snarlings of certain demagogues of power, who appear to be extremely uneasy in their present situation. Dreading to lose an undue influence too long exercised over the freemen of this State, and anxious to keep up dissensions, they endeavour, by reiterated publications on the subject of “*Due-Bills, Truck Pay,*” &c. to set the mechanic interest of this town at variance with the mercantile, as they have already done with respect to farmers and merchants,—making discord the constant source of their importance. Happy for the community, the delusion must soon cease to operate, and those arch deceivers be unkenelled. In the interim, it may be fortunate for the public, that the overflowing gall of these restless beings has vent, by discharging its venom so often and copiously in the said *political, COMMERCIAL and historical* repository.—Were the case otherwise, they might soon be afflicted with a species of canine madness, and bite not only the *merchant* whom they have long snarled at, but the *mechanic* also, whom they *pretend* to favour.

If the industrious mechanics or farmers are at a loss to know the true cause of the failure of employ, or the want of cash or good pay for their labour or produce, I would inform them that these evils have arisen from the nature and present situation of our government, which has sunk both public and private credit in one common vortex of destruction.

Those who raise themselves into consequence by setting one class of citizens at variance with another, may answer the purpose of screening themselves from their creditors during the operation of such a government; but will certainly be considered as bad members of society, and disturbers of the public peace.

**378. New York Daily Gazette, 5 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Notwithstanding the intestine divisions inevitable in a republic, and which even appear necessary to its preservation, since, by furnishing food to the democratic spirit, they keep the state in health, by giving it life and activity; notwithstanding the public debt and increasing luxury of the people; and notwithstanding all the vices and imperfections which are the unhappy lot of human nature: The people of North-Carolina have at length given a proof of their wisdom and affection for the Union of America. This example, we sincerely hope, may soon be followed by the good people of Rhode-Island. The inhabitants of these states enjoy a felicity worthy to be envied, and of which other nations, perhaps, have no conception: so difficult it is, in living under the mildest yoke, to form just ideas of National Liberty, grounded on the Rights of Humanity.

Let us adopt fair reasoning with the people; let it be made clear to them, the great advantages which they will derive from a junction with their sister states; and we may soon expect to see the United States more firmly bound by all the bonds of interest as well as friendship. Then shall we see happy days and political liberty established beyond the power of intrigue to shake it. The United States will not be regulated by partiality, but by general acquiescence, and with the full view of augmenting the general good. No other restraint will be laid upon human actions, than what is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the commonwealth. No respect will be paid, but to distinguished merit, in the choice of officers; and we have every reason to believe, that, under the present administration, the greatest powers of our greatest men will at once display themselves and act in concert.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 14 December; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 16 December; *Connecticut Norwich Packet*, 18 December.

**379. Massachusetts Spy, 10 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

ORIGINAL BON MOT.

A few days since a gentleman on hearing that the General Assembly of Rhode-Island had appointed a day of Thanksgiving, observed that he could not conceive what they had to be thankful for—Another gentleman present replied, *They have reason to be thankful that they are all out of Hell.*

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 16 December; *Vermont Journal*, 6 January 1790.



**380. Thomas Jefferson to William Short  
Eppington, Va., 14 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Rhode island has again refused the new constitution. antifederalism is not yet dead in this country. . . .

1. FC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XVI, 24–28.

**381. Jeremiah Olney to Henry Knox  
Providence, 14 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . we have Just Recd. the very agreeable Intelligence of the accession of North Carolina to the Genl. Government, permitt me Sir to Congratulate you on this important Event, I hope it may produce a Happy Change in the Politicks of this State—our Assembly are to meet in this Town on the Second Monday of Janry. next—when I hope the mistaken zeal that has too long prevailed ~~pervaded~~ ~~this State~~ will give way to a more Enlightened Policy—every Exertion will be made by the Minority to Effect the Calling a State Convention at the Next Session—Colo. Jno. S. Dexter the Bearer of this is a member from Cumberland—I hope he will be able to Return in time for the Assembly—as he is a True Fedderalist and has great Influence with many of the Country members—

being under the Necessity of Dischargeing a Debt in New York, I take the Liberty to Draw on you infavr. of Colo. Jno. S. Dexter for Fifty Dollars in part of my acct. against the United States Since 1st. July 1788—which Sir please to pay & place to my acct—

1. FC, Shepley Library Collection, RHi.

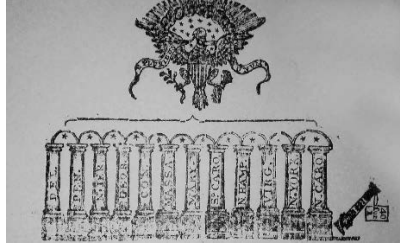
**382. Jeremiah Olney to Philip Schuyler  
Providence, 16 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

I now have the Honor to address you on an Interested Subject, and I presume Sir on your Friendship and Influence to promote my Interests (So far as it shall be Consistent with your Ideas of Propriety and the public Good) in Support of the application I now make to be appointed Collector of Impost for the Port of Providence. So soon as this State Shall have the Just & Enlightened Policy to adopt the New Constitution which I presume is not far Distant, as the accession of North Carolina to the General Government will in all Probability have a happy Influence over the minds of our Legislatures who are to Convene in this Town on the 2nd. Monday of Jany. next, when the Minority will push all points to Effect the Calling a State Convention to Dicide on the New Constitution, and Should our *Blinded Rulers* have at last the Good Sense to become a member of the Union—my Intention is to wait on Congress in person in hopes of obtaining the above appointment—I have Some months past, addressed the President on

the Subject & I indulge the pleasing Hope that he will favour my wishes—This will be handed you by our Friend Colo. Dexter who is a member from Cumberland & I hope he will be able to Return in Time for our Assembly as he will be very usefull when the Question for a State Convention is brought forward. . . .

1. FC, Shepley Library Collection, RHi.

**383. Massachusetts Centinel, 16 December 1789**



The GREAT PALLADIUM of our happy land  
Connects “*the Union*” by a “*golden chain*,”  
Which kept entire, these Federal States shall stand  
As long as Time’s old annals shall remain:  
And nations see with joy, the beauteous Dome,  
“COLUMBIA’S boast, and FREEDOM’S hallow’d home.”

BOSTON, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 16, 1789.

*THE EDIFICE COMPLETED.*

We had the satisfaction to announce in our last, the ratification of the American Constitution by the State of NORTH-CAROLINA. By the last Mails from New-York, we have a confirmation of the intelligence. The Twelve States of America, convened in Federal Convention, which proposed the Constitution, have now all adopted, ratified and confirmed it. The Edifice may now be declared complete—and on its completion we most cordially felicitate our country.

The following are the periods at which the several States adopted the Constitution of the United States, viz.—

*Delaware*, Dec. 3. *Pennsylvania*, Dec. 13. *New-Jersey*, Dec. 19, 1787. *Georgia*, Jan. 2. *Connecticut*, Jan. 9. *Massachusetts*, Feb. 6. *Maryland*, April 28. *South Carolina*, May 23. *New-Hampshire*, June 21. *Virginia*, June 25. *New-York*, July 25, 1788. And *North-Carolina*, Nov. 20, 1789—

*RHODE-ISLAND.*

QUOS DEUS VULT PERDERE PRIUS DEMENTAT.\*

There are many *old* historical Anecdotes of Rhode-Island—all of which are far from being honourable—and which are peculiar to the genius of a majority of its *present* citizens.

During a former war, Rhode-Island crowded so many loads of paper money on Massachusetts, that a law was enacted, by which no person could hold any office under this government, unless he qualified himself by swearing, “*that he had not directly or indirectly received any of the Rhode-Island bills for the year past.*”

A celebrated writer has said, that a great deal depended on *Names*. In 1663, King Charles II. of England, appointed *one* BENEDICT ARNOLD, Governour of *Rhode-Island!!! A fact.*

If in morality the *Rhode-Islanders* have appeared *singular* indeed—they have not appeared less *singular* in their politicks—Five years since they were *singular* in not adopting the 5 per cent. requisition of Congress. And, as if they were to be the verification of the adage, “*Whom God wills for destruction he first makes mad*”—they are *singular* in having refused to help form or ratify a government, which all good men confess calculated to promote their happiness.

To shew of how little importance, as it respects the Union, their refusal or acceptance is—it may not be amiss to observe, that Rhode-Island contains only 52,000 souls—is 68 miles long, and 40 broad—making 2560 square miles—which deducted from 1,000,000 square miles, and 3,500,000 souls, the numbers contained in the territory of the United States, would be but as the dust in the balance. One of the counties of Massachusetts (*Worcester*) is larger than the whole State—and when it is considered that the towns of Newport and Providence wish to be rid of the tyranny of ignorance and fraud—it will not admit of a doubt, but that if the measures of Rhode-Island should be found pernicious to the commercial or other interests of the Union, and it were necessary on the principle of self-preservation, to use the “*ultima ratio,*” that the above mentioned County could reduce the State in three weeks.

The Legislature of Rhode-Island meet the second Monday of January.

**384. Brown & Benson to David L. Barnes  
Providence, 24 December 1789 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We will thank you to inform us if there is any impediment in your State that would operate against an action from a Citizen of this State to recover money due from a Citizen of yours as we have several Demands on some Persons in Massachusetts. Where reiterated promises and as often failures in Performing will Compel us to apply a Legal process—With Due Esteem We are Sir Your Obedt. friend

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**385. Massachusetts Spy, 24 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

By accounts from Rhodeisland, we learn that that state will in all probability, speedily adopt the Federal Constitution.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 7 January 1790.

**386. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 28 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

At the annual election of the incorporated German Society of Pennsylvania, held at the Lutheran Schoolhouse in this city, on Saturday, the 26th instant, the following gentlemen were elected officers of said society for the ensuing year, viz.

*President*—Frederick A. Muhlenberg, Esq.

*Vice-President*—Peter Miller, Esq.

*Treasurer*—John Steinmetz, Esq.

*Solicitor*—Mr. Henry Kammerer.

*Secretaries*—Messrs. Leonard Keehmle and Melchior Steiner.

*Diaconus*—Mr. Daniel Brautigam.

*Overseers*—Messrs. Philip Hall, George Wœlper, Conrad Haas, Jacob Mayer, Leonard Jacoby, and Frederick Hailer.

In the evening the officers and a large number of the members of the society met at the sign of the King of Prussia, in Market-street, and partook of an entertainment, provided for the purpose, at which the following Toasts were drank, viz.

1. The twelve United States.
2. The President of the United States.
3. The State of Pennsylvania.
4. The President of the state of Pennsylvania.
5. Success to agriculture, arts and manufactures of Pennsylvania.
6. May the commerce of Pennsylvania continue to increase in proportion to the true interest of the state.
7. May the altar of freedom, now erecting in France, prove as eminent and illustrious as that established in America.
8. May the speedy conversion of Rhode-Island to its true interests, shortly compleat the federal union.
9. May that union be as lasting as its basis is glorious.
10. The Convention of Pennsylvania: may their wisdom and unanimity be attended with success.
11. The German Societies of New-York and Maryland.
12. The German Society of Pennsylvania, and our brethren throughout the world.

The evening was spent with the utmost harmony and good humor.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet* and *Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, 30 December; *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 31 December.

**387. Pennsylvania Packet, 30 December 1789**

CHARLESTON, (S.C.) Dec. 5.

It is not a little remarkable, that the governor of Rhode-Island, who is an enemy to the union of America, should, in his official character pretend to be

anxiously solicitous for their safety and happiness. Thus ends his proclamation for appointing a day of thanksgiving—“*God save this state, and the other states of America, lately united under the same confederation.*”

**388. Providence United States Chronicle, 31 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE PROSPECT BEFORE US.

To encourage our dependence on Divine Providence, we are assured by the pen of inspiration, that “while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, day and night, winter and summer shall not cease;” and to animate our hopes that the blessings of freedom shall be ours, and descend to our posterity, let us reflect on the present spirit of enlightened patriotism that animates the citizens of these States. Behold them coalescing under a wise, a just, and liberal form of Government—A system, which while they contemplate its perfections (as a skilful artist does the happy result of his labours) gratitude expands their bosom to the fountain of all wisdom, who hath inspired them to shelter the ark of their liberties beneath its protecting wings.

Behold their demonstrations of attachment and veneration to the illustrious personages whom their free suffrages have placed at the head of the confederated republic—a circumstance highly evincive of their affection to their public, and personal characters—and of those principles on which the union of the States, and the prosperity of the government are suspended.

Behold the harmony, peace and plenty, with which Heaven has blessed our country—the extension of our agriculture, arts, and commerce—the increase of our schools, and seminaries of learning—diffusing the beams of knowledge far and wide—cementing and brightening our union and prospects and raising the human mind to degrees of improvement and refinement hitherto unknown.

Behold, under the auspices of good government, extensive plans and Manufactures are formed, and the American genius, in discoveries and inventions bursting upon the world with a lustre that astonishes mankind—while our men of wealth, relieved by the Constitution, from the dread of paper-money, and tender-laws, are dilating their purse strings, throwing their long dormant specie into circulation, extending their commercial enterprises to every clime, where men are found, or where ships can sail.—Thus, while commerce enlarges the demand for exports, our resources are brought forward—the arm of industry is nerved [i.e., strengthened]—the hopes of the farmer and artizan are animated—and our capacity to annihilate our public debts, is made abundantly apparent—These, among a thousand other ideas, rush upon the mind in contemplating our situation and prospects—and while “our eyes are upon the faithful of the land,” in electing our civil rulers—so long as we are just to ourselves, and suitably prize the Constitution, which is the pledge of every blessing—while the earth remains—“PEACE, LIBERTY and SAFETY” shall be our rich inheritance.

(*Happy should we be could we say Rhode-Island realized this Prospect—but we are still in Hopes.*)

1. These paragraphs were originally printed in the *New York Gazette of the United States*, 4 November, and reprinted in the *Massachusetts Centinel*, 14 November. The *Providence United States Chronicle* added the closing editorial comment in parentheses.

**389. A Friend to the State of Rhode-Island**  
**Providence United States Chronicle, 31 December 1789<sup>1</sup>**

STATE OF RHODE-ISLAND.

THE PROSPECT BEFORE US.

*To the Freemen of the State of Rhode-Island.*

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS, NORTH-CAROLINA having adopted the CONSTITUTION of the United States of America, makes the Twelfth out of the Thirteen States under the late Confederacy.—This being the Case, every wise Man, that desires the Security of his Life, Liberty and Property, and wishes well to the Freedom and Independence of America, must think it high Time for this State to call a Convention, and commit the important Matter to Delegates specially appointed for that Purpose.

There are Numbers of our Citizens that are yet opposed to the Constitution—not because they think it a bad one, but because they know it will compel Men to pay their just Debts (some perhaps oppose it from better Motives, but I believe their Number is small.) The Constitution in itself is undoubtedly the best any Nation was ever blessed with; as it secures all that a rational Man can ask or expect from a good Government.—If at any future Time those who may be intrusted with the Execution of it, should misbehave, the People have it in their Power to displace them, at certain short Periods, and put more worthy Persons in their Steads.

Those in this State who have opposed the Adoption of the Constitution from the Beginning, are shifting their Ground,—and their grand Objection now is, *that the Salaries of the Officers are too high: That it will take the Whole of the Revenue arising from the Impost to pay them; and consequently, that the Interest of the national Debt must be paid by dry Taxation on the real Estates of the Farmers and Tradesmen.*—It so happens (as indeed it has on almost every Objection made against the Constitution) that the Friends of the Government have it in their Power to prove by clear Demonstration the Fallacy of the above Objection.—It may be known by every Person who will take the Trouble to inform himself, that the Fact is, the Amount of the Impost collected annually in either ONE of Six of the largest States, will more than pay the Civil List, or the Salaries of the Officers, and what is collected from the other States will nearly pay the Interest of the national Debt; and the Principal will be yearly diminishing by the Sale of the Western Territory, which is pledged to pay it, and is amply sufficient for the Purpose.

On the 15th of January next, the Indulgence granted to the Vessels belonging to the Citizens of this State will expire;—after which we shall be viewed as Foreigners, and shall be obliged to pay *Fifty Cents*, or *Half a Dollar*, per Ton, on all our Vessels which enter the Ports of the United States; and it is more than probable, that a Duty will be put on all the Productions of this State entered in any of their Ports;—add to all this, by the Impost Law of the United States, all dutiable Goods, sent BY LAND from this State into any of the other States, together with the Teams, Horses, &c. on which the same is laden, are liable to Seizure and Condemnation.

This being a true State of our Case, what, my Country Brethren, must be the Situation of the Seaport Towns, if we continue to act, after that Period, as heretofore? Certain Ruin to the Merchants, and every Difficulty to the Mechanics and Labourers, attendant on a Want of Bread, &c. which too many experience already.—If an Enemy had done this we could have borne it—but from Friends and Brethren it is too much. The Matter at present rests with the Country Towns—if a sufficient Number of the Deputies from them will join those from the Seaport Towns, at the next Session of the Assembly, a Convention may be called—the Constitution adopted, and we elect and send on our Senators and Representative to Congress in a short Time,—which will put an End to our Difficulties at once.—But if the Assembly should refuse to call a Convention, the Seaport Towns must take such Steps as will ensure to themselves the Protection they so much stand in Need of.—They must and will put themselves under the Protection of Congress; by which their Trade and Commerce will be released from its Burdens, and they be enabled to support themselves and their Dependants.—This Step they will be justified in taking on the Principle of SELF-PRESERVATION, and the Consequences that may ensue, be they ever so disagreeable, must be attributed to the unreasonable Obstinacy of the Inhabitants of the Country Towns.

I hope and trust that my Countrymen will coolly and dispassionately think of their present Situation, and act wisely, and then good, peaceable and happy Days will follow.

*December 28, 1789.*

1. Partially reprinted in the *Boston Gazette*, 11 January 1790.

**390. Brown & Benson to Hewes & Anthony  
Providence, 4 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We daily suffer in being excluded from the Union in Several of the Southern States Rum Command a good Price & quik sale but the Alien duty Amounts to a Prohibition, Our Assembly Convenes in this Town next Week We hope the Accession of No. Carolina will have a proper influence—Shall be glad to hear from you & to be favoured with a State of your Markets tho we Cannot enjoy the advantage of them. . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**391. Charleston City Gazette, 7 January 1790***Extract of a letter from Philadelphia.*

“By recent accounts from the northward, we are informed, that the state of Vermont will in all probability be recognized as a member of the federal union in the course of February next; also, that the tonnage act will be rigorously enforced upon the Rhode-Island traders after the first of March, 1790, should they still prove refractory. It is however suspected, that should their counsels be directed as heretofore, a division will take place amongst them, the mercantile party coming over to congress, and the country interests supporting itself as well as it can under the benign influence of paper money and the politics of David Howell.”

**392. Pennsylvania Packet, 7 January 1790  
(Reprinted from New York, 4 January)**

This is the day appointed for the meeting of Congress, and the commencement of the second session of the legislature of the United States. It is thought they will not make a quorum of both houses for some days; but, when they are formed, it is generally believed that they will sit for several months.

In the first session, a very great quantity of business was transacted; but there is still an amazing quantity to be entered upon. Uniform laws of naturalization and bankruptcy will take up much time; and the subject of providing ways and means for the payment of the public debt is a momentous task.

The additional members from North-Carolina will open a new field of observation to our politicians; and the daily expectation of Rhode-Island's joining in the general union, is not such a trifle in the scale of harmonization as some people have thoughtlessly esteemed it.

**393. Hewes & Anthony to Brown & Benson  
Philadelphia, 16 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We are aware how much you do and must Suffer by being out of the Union and Sincerely hope your Legislature will in the Course of the present Sessions Consider their True Interest and Confederate—if Not we Really Shudder at the Consequences. . . .

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**394. Providence Gazette, 16 January 1790**

*Mr. CARTER,* To gratify the Curiosity of the People, you are requested to publish the following Scale of Depreciation of the Paper Currency in Circulation in this State.—This Scale was reported by a Committee, appointed by both Houses of Assembly at their late Session at South-Kingstown; and, on a Question taken thereon last Thursday, after a lengthy Debate in the Lower House, was negatived by a Majority of four Voices. *Yours, Z.*



1786.	<i>July,</i>	9 s.	for 6 s.	1788.	<i>April,</i>	42 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Aug.</i>	10 s.	for 6 s.		<i>July,</i>	54 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Sept.</i>	12 s.	for 6 s.		<i>Nov.</i>	60 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Oct.</i>	18 s.	for 6 s.	1789.	<i>Jan.</i>	66 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Nov.</i>	20 s.	for 6 s.		<i>Feb.</i>	72 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Dec.</i>	24 s.	for 6 s.		<i>April,</i>	90 s.	for 6 s.
1787.	<i>Jan.</i>	27 s.	for 6 s.		<i>July,</i>	96 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>Feb.</i>	30 s.	for 6 s.		<i>Aug.</i>	108 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>March,</i>	33 s.	for 6 s.		<i>Sept.</i>	90 s.	for 6 s.
	<i>April,</i>	36 s.	for 6 s.		<i>Oct.</i>	90 s.	for 6 s.

### 395. Rhode Island House of Magistrates

16 January 1790<sup>1</sup>

Vote of this House calling Town-Meetings for instructing Representatives & respecting a Convention Voted & passed for Concurrence Non-Concurred

Vote of the Lower-House for calling a Convention in this State to consider the New-Constitution Read and Non-Concurred—

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

### 396. Rhode Island House of Magistrates Proceedings

17 January 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

. . . No. 43 ☞ . . . Vote of this House calling town-Meetings for instructing Representatives respecting a Convention Voted & past to the Lower-House for Concurrence

Non-Concurred . . .

No. 44 Vote of the Lower-House for calling a Convention to decide on the New-Constitution of the United States Read and Concurred—

No. 46 Vote of the Lower-House ~~directing~~ requesting the Govr. to write to Congress for further Indulgence &c Read & Concurred

No. 47 Adjournment

1. MS, House of Magistrates Journal, R-Ar.

### 397. William Allin to Abijah Whiting

17 January 1790<sup>1</sup>

Our General Assembly met at Providence last week, a paper in the lower house for calling a convention—non-concurred in the upper house and sent back to the lower—and by them sent back to the upper house again, in statu quo things remain.

1. Printed: John E. Pomfret, ed., “Student Interests at Brown, 1789–1790,” *New England Quarterly*, 5 (1932), 141.

**398. William Few to George Washington  
Newport, 18 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

The General Assembly of this State at their Sessions held last Week, have agreed (at last) to Call a Convention Which is to Meet the first Monday in march Next, and as the matter is beyond a Doubt that they will Adopt the Constitution. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington Papers, Presidential Series*, V, 19–21.

**399. Boston Gazette, 18 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

By the post from Rhode-Island we are informed that on Friday last the Lower House of Assembly voted (by a majority of five) to call a Convention, to meet at Little-Rest the last Monday in February next, for the purpose of taking into consideration the adoption of the New Constitution.—It was not doubted but that the Upper House would concur.

1. Reprinted: Boston *Herald of Freedom* and *Salem Gazette*, 19 January; Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 26 January; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 29 January; Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 30 January (excerpt); and in the January issue of the *Gentlemen and Ladies Town and Country Magazine*.

**400. Aaron Draper to Abijah Whiting  
19 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

It was voted this day to have a convention carried by five of the majority.

1. Printed: John E. Pomfret, ed., "Student Interests at Brown, 1789–1790," *New England Quarterly*, 5 (1932), 141.

**401. Daniel Lyman to William Heath  
Newport, 19 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

You will probably be informed before this reaches you, that this State have at last resolved to call a Convention for the purpose of adopting or rejecting the Constitution of the United States when from the prevailing disposition the decision will be undoubtedly for adopting—In that case a number of appointments must necessarily take place for collecting the revenues &c. and I am prevailed upon by the Kindness of my Friends, & my own inclination to offer myself a Candidate. I shall receive letters of recommendation to the President from several leading Characters in this State who have offered me their influence, but I should think myself unhappy to receive a favor from that quarter without your particular recommendation indeed the President must suppose that my conduct since I left the Army had been such as to forfeit your good opinion unless my application should be accompanied by your express approbation. My wish is to receive an appointment in the choice of Officers to collect the Revenue for the Port of Newport—I know not on what principles pretensions to those appoint-

ments are founded—but if having quited the most flattering prospects of literary promotion at the first commincement of the war, & entering a Volunteer in the cause of my Country & continuing thro every vicissitude of the war to the establishment of Peace & Independence may be admited as a recommendation I am not without hopes of succeeding—Since the peace, I think I may say with safety that no one in this State has exerted himself more zealously both by speaking and writing for the establishment of a permanent government which might secure happiness to the subject & a consolidation of the Union.—I have expressed myself, Sir, thus freely on the subject from the confidence I feel in your friendship & wishes for my prosperity and if it is agreeable to you to favor me in this instance I will be much obliged to you for your letter on the subject to the President, enclosed under cover to me, by the next Post. . . .

1. RC, Heath Papers, MHi.

**402. Governor John Hancock to the Massachusetts General Court  
Boston, 19 January 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

Gentlemen of the Senate & Gentlemen of the House of Representatives. . . .

I congratulate you Gentlemen, on the accession of another State [North Carolina] to our Union; and am happy to say, that, I am persuaded, that the wisdom, and tried patriotism of the Citizens of Rhode Island, will very soon compleat the Union of all the Independent States of America, under one System of General, National Government[;] the due administration of which, cannot fail to render them respectable abroad, and to establish peace and harmony between them at home. Every patriot will rejoice to see all these States, which have most nobly contended for civil freedom, uniting in their endeavours to preserve, and in their measures to enjoy, the invaluable blessings which flow from it. . . .

1. MS, Miscellaneous Legal Papers, Senate File, M-Ar.

**403. Connecticut Litchfield Monitor, 19 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

A FAMILIAR EPISTLE.

*To Mrs. VIRGINIA, alias the ANCIENT DOMINION.*

*Dear Sister,* We have lately seen some letters, which two of your confidential servants have sent you, calculated entirely to make mischief in the family. We have always allowed your claim of rank, as our eldest sister; and when your children and servants have pretended that your power was the greatest, your purse the heaviest, your farm the largest, and yourself a woman of more sense than any of your Sisters, we have never contradicted them, because we did not wish to quarrel about the matter—though we were sensible that a great part of your farm was untenanted and going out of repair, that you were constantly running in debt for your annual expences, and whenever the robbers have broke into your house, you were poorly able to defend yourself, and could only alarm the neighbourhood, by dismal outcries, of “Help, Murder and Rape.” But you ought to remember that we established our Co-partnership on terms of perfect

equality, and that we have advanced at least our equal shares in the public stock. You cannot therefore pretend any right to govern us in the business. As for your boy, Dickey,<sup>1</sup> we have known him many years. He is a good natured fellow when he can have his own way, but as fractious as Satan when he is contradicted. Besides, you are sensible, that he never could endure it, that we formerly appointed your son, George, Steward of the household, and have lately given him a full Power of Attorney, to manage the concerns of the company—when Dick in the simplicity of his heart, always believed himself the fittest man of the two—Whereas you and all the world know, that George is worth as many of him, as omnipotence could create to all eternity, if it had no other business to attend to. And now Dick and Bill are finding fault with the contract of Copartnership, because it does not give you a controuling power over the whole transactions; and they are out of all patience and temper, because we are not willing to alter it. In the same manner some of your servants lately threatened that you would break your contract, and set up for yourself, unless we could send all our head servants and agents to reside in your dominion under your immediate eye and inspection. We have always wished to proceed in business in perfect union and equality; and notwithstanding those foolish speeches sometimes thrown out by your people, we have no idea, that you are in the least inclined to follow the example of our profligate Sister, who has run-away from the family, and now keeps a house of evil fame, at the sign of C\*\*\*\*ns's head in Rhode-Island. We are still willing, as a matter of etiquette, to allow your superiority in point of age, rank and precedence, but shall not submit to the insults of your domestics. We wish you to take these matters into your serious consideration, and teach some of our servants a little better manners.

We have the honour to be, With the most cordial esteem, Your affectionate Sisters,

NEW-ENGLAND.  
NEW-YORK.  
PENNSYLVANIA.  
CAROLINA, &c.

1. Reprinted: New York *Daily Advertiser* and the *Massachusetts Centinel*, 20 January; Northampton, Mass., *Hampshire Gazette*, 10 February; *State Gazette of North Carolina*, 13 February 1790. The references to "Dick" and "Bill" refer to Virginia's two Antifederalist U.S. senators, Richard Henry Lee and William Grayson.

#### 404. Massachusetts Centinel, 20 January 1790

By a gentleman who arrived here last evening from Providence, we have been favoured with an ACT of the Legislature of RHODE-ISLAND, for calling a CONVENTION "*to consider, investigate, and decide on the Constitution of the United States*"—which passed in the lower House on FRIDAY last—Yeas 34—Nays 29—Maj. 5; and in the Upper House, on Sunday following, was concurred with. The Convention is to meet at *South Kingstown*, the first Monday of *March* next.

**405. Massachusetts Centinel, 20 January 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

## The Governour's Speech.

At Twelve o'clock, His Excellency The Governour, agreeably to assignment, came down to the Chamber of the House of Representatives, attended by The Secretary of the Commonwealth; and where the Senate had previously assembled—when His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:

*Gentlemen of the Senate, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives, . . .*

I congratulate you, Gentlemen, on the accession of another State to our Union; and am happy to say, that I am persuaded, that the wisdom and tried patriotism of the Citizens of Rhode-Island, will very soon complete the Union of all the Independent States of America, under one system of general, national Government; the due administration of which, cannot fail to render them respectable abroad, and to establish peace and harmony between them at home. Every patriot will rejoice to see all these States, which have most nobly contended for civil freedom, uniting in their endeavours to preserve, and in their measures to enjoy, the invaluable blessings which flow from it.

The Acts, and proceedings of Congress, which the Secretary has laid before you, contain propositions for amendments in the Constitution of the United States: These are submitted to your deliberations, on the part of our constituents; and there can be no necessity of any other call to awaken your attention, than the interest they have in them.

I shall not be particular in my remarks on these propositions.

As Government is no other than the united consent of the people of a civil community, to be governed in a particular mode, by certain established principles, the more general the union of sentiment is, the more energetick and permanent the Government will be: Upon this idea, the adoption of some of the proposed amendments becomes very important; because, the people of this Commonwealth, felt themselves assured by the proceedings of their Convention, which ratified the Constitution, that certain amendments, amongst which were some of those, would be effected: The seventh, eighth and ninth articles, appear to me to be of great consequence. In all free governments, a share in the administration of the laws ought to be vested in, or reserved to the people; this prevents a government from verging towards despotism, secures the freedom of debate, and supports that independence of sentiment, which dignifies the citizen, and renders the government permanently respectable. The institutions of grand and petit Juries are admirably calculated to produce these happy effects, and to afford security to the best rights of men in civil society: These articles therefore, I believe will meet your ready approbation: Some of the others appear to me as very important to that personal security which is so truly characteristick of a free government. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Providence Gazette*, 23 January.

#### 406. Newport Mercury, 20 January 1790

The following is the Substance of the Bill which was presented and moved in the Lower House of Assembly, at the last Session at Providence:

That it be recommended to the Freemen of the several Towns in this State, on the second Monday of February next, to convene in legal Town-Meetings, and to elect the same Number of Delegates as they are entitled to choose Deputies, to meet at South Kingston, in the County of Washington, in a State Convention, on the First Monday of March, then fully and freely to consider investigate and decide on, the New Constitution proposed for the United States, by the Convention held at Philadelphia, on the 17th Day of September, A. D. 1787; and that said Convention cause the Result of their Deliberations to be transmitted to the President of the United States, as soon as may be, after they shall have come to a final Resolution relative to the Ratification or Rejection of the aforesaid Constitution.

On taking the Question upon this Bill, there appeared

For it	32
Against it	11
So it passed by a	—
Majority of	21

In the Upper House the Members were equally divided, his Excellency the Governor gave his Voice for concurring, and the Bill passed to be enacted into a Law.

A Resolution passed, that his Excellency the Governor advise Congress of this Appointment of a Convention, and request a further Suspension of the Acts which affect our Trade, from the Probability of an Adoption of the Constitution.

The Assembly adjourned to the First Wednesday of May next, but his Excellency the Governor was requested to convene them upon the rising of the Convention, in case they adopted the Constitution, in Order that they might appoint the Senators and regulate the Election of a Representative to the Congress of the United States.

A Correspondent is happy to learn, that there was a Majority in the General Assembly, at their last Session holden at Providence, for calling a Convention.

This pleasing Circumstance opens the Way for this State's adopting the Federal Constitution; a *Constitution which is fully adequate to remedy the Evils under which we labour, and the Adoption of which will procure to us every national Blessing.*

Our Correspondent adds, that his *Fellow-Citizens will do well to examine with the strictest Care into the present State of their Situation, and he flatters himself, that the Result of that Examination will convince them, that they are too feeble as a State to subsist alone, and that it will be for their political Happiness to support the Pillars of the Federal Temple. And when the Temple is completed, the Lover of Laws founded on Justice and Equity, may rest securely under his own Vine and Fig Tree, and have none to make him*

*afraid.—While the Wretch who with a sacrilegious Hand attempts to dam up the Streams which flow from that Source from whence the People derive their Safety and Security, will have Cause to fear and tremble.*

**407. Brown & Benson to Thayer, Bartlett & Co.  
Providence, 21 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . our being unhappily excluded from the Union has been the only impediment to our Lodging sufficient saleable Property in your hands to pay the full Amot. of the Rice without your Waiting for the Rum from St. Croix—We hope we shall not have Occasion to ask the favour of any Credit another Year our hope is founded on the important & Pleasing Event of our Legislature's having at their Sessions of assembly last Week recommended a State Convention to assemble—the first Monday in March When no Doubt we shall adopt the new Constitution which we expect will greatly facilitate our ~~business~~ intercourse with the ~~our~~ ~~federal~~ other States When we flatter ourselves our business with your house may increase & Conduce to our reciprocal emolument—relying therefore on your Obliging attention to ship the Rice immediately

[P.S.] What will good Hyson Tea sell for with you—how are Publick securities, Peirces Notes &c. do favour us with an explicit price Current.

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**408. Henry Wynkoop to Reading Beatty  
New York, 21 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The eastern papers this day inform us that the Assembly of Rhode Island have agreed to call a Convention. . . .

1. RC, Wynkoop Letters, Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa.

**409. Massachusetts Spy, 21 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

By a gentleman from Providence we are informed, that on Friday last, a bill passed the Lower House of the General Assembly of Rhodeisland, by a majority of five, for calling a Convention, to meet at Southkingstown the last Monday of February next, for the purpose of taking into consideration the Federal Constitution.—After a very lengthy debate upon the bill, in the Upper House, on Saturday, the question for concurrence being called for, it passed in the *negative*—however, the Assembly adjourned until *Sunday* morning, when a reconsideration of the vote for nonconcurrence took place, and the bill was again debated—the question being once more called for, the House were equally divided, and his Excellency the Governour gave a casting vote in favour of the bill.

1. Reprinted: *Massachusetts Centinel*, 27 January; Portland, Maine, *Cumberland Gazette*, 1 February; Charleston *City Gazette*, 17 February.

**410. New York Daily Advertiser, 21 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Extract of a letter from Providence, Rhode-Island, Jan. 15, 1790.

“With very great pleasure I congratulate you on the vote of our Assembly for calling a convention, to meet the second Monday in February; it passed by a majority of five, at o’clock this day.”

1. Reprinted eight times by 17 April: Mass. (1), Pa. (5), Md. (1), Ga. (1).

**411. New York Gazette of the United States, 23 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island have voted to call a Convention for the purpose of adopting the Constitution of the United States.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 27 January; Lansingburgh, N.Y., *Federal Herald*, 1 February.

**412. Providence Gazette, 23 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

In our Gazette of Saturday last we announced to the Public, that a Bill presented by Mr. Bourne, recommending the Appointment of a Convention, had on Friday passed the Lower House of Assembly of this State by a Majority of 5; and that the Consideration thereof was referred by the Upper House to next Day.

On Saturday Evening, after a lengthy Debate, the Bill was non-concurred in the Upper House by a Majority of 1; 4 Members voting for, and 5 against it.

While this Bill was pending in the Upper House, they passed, and sent down for Concurrence, a Bill for ordering Town-Meetings called, to instruct the Deputies at next Session, whether a Convention should be recommended or not. This was non-concurred in the Lower House by a Majority of 14, and both Houses adjourned till next Morning.

At the Meeting of the Lower House, a Bill was presented by Mr. Marchant, a Member for Newport, similar to that passed on Friday, with some Alteration as to the Time of holding a Convention, &c. which passed by a Majority of 21; 32 voting for the Bill, and 11 against it.

Just as this Business was completed in the Lower House, a Bill was passed in the Upper House, and sent down for Concurrence, similar to that sent down on Saturday, with the Addition of a Preamble, &c. This was negatived in the Lower House, by nearly the same Majority as that for passing the last Bill.

At about 12 o’Clock, the Upper House took the Question on a Concurrence with the last Bill sent from the Lower House; when there appeared 4 for a Concurrence, and 4 against it—this left it with his Excellency the Governor to decide; who, after stating, in a Speech of some Length, the extreme Distress we were reduced to by being disconnected with the other States, and the probable Accumulation of such Distress by a further Opposition to an Adoption of the Federal Constitution, gave his Vote for a Concurrence.

His Excellency’s prompt Decision, on this truly important Occasion, has done him much Honour.—A great Concourse of Spectators attended the Session of



Assembly, and were highly gratified by the Event.—The State at large may now anticipate the Dawn of happier Times, as in all Probability we shall soon experience the Blessings of a firm and efficient Government.

The General Assembly of this State is adjourned to the first Monday in May; but should the Constitution be adopted, will be specially called immediately after the Rising of the Convention.

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State of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations.

*In GENERAL ASSEMBLY, January Session, A. D. 1790.*

*An ACT for calling a CONVENTION, to take into Consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States, passed on the 17th of September, A. D. 1787, by the GENERAL CONVENTION held at Philadelphia.*

*Be it Enacted by this General Assembly, and by the Authority thereof it is hereby Enacted,* That the New Constitution proposed for the United States, passed on the 17th of September, A. D. 1787, by the General Convention held at Philadelphia, be submitted to the People of this State, represented in a State Convention, for their full and free Investigation and Decision, agreeably to the Resolve of the said Convention: That it be recommended to the Freemen of the several Towns, qualified to vote in the Election of Deputies to the General Assembly, to convene in their respective Towns, in legal Town-Meeting, on the Second Monday in February next; and then to choose the same Number of Delegates as they are entitled to elect Deputies, to represent them in the said Convention; and that the said Convention be holden at South-Kingstown, on the First Monday in March next.

*And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid,* That the said Convention be and hereby is empowered, and fully authorized, finally to decide on the said Constitution, as they shall judge to be most conducive to the Interests of the People of this State; and that the said Convention cause the Result of their Deliberations and Proceedings, relative to the aforesaid Constitution, to be transmitted to the President of the United States of America, as soon after the Rising thereof as may be.

*It is Voted and Resolved,* That his Excellency the Governor be and he is hereby requested, to transmit a Copy of this Act to the President of the said United States immediately.

*It is Ordered,* That the Secretary cause Copies hereof to be transmitted to each Town-Clerk in the State, without the least Delay.

*A true Copy:*

Witness, HENRY WARD, *Sec'y.*

1. Reprinted in seven out-of-state newspapers by 6 February: Vt. (1), Mass. (1), Conn. (3), N.Y. (1), Pa. (1).

**413. Boston Gazette, 25 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Legislature of Rhode-Island passed an Act for calling a Convention “to consider, investigate, and decide on the Constitution of the United States”—to meet at South-Kingston the first Monday in March.

1. Reprinted: Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 2 February.

**414. Champion & Dickason to Brown & Benson  
London, 26 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The foregoing is Copy of our last respects and being still deprived of the pleasure of hearing from you is no small concern to us, by the New York Packet we forwarded to Mr. Burgess your Account Current with us for the last Year, We now enclose you Duplicate to serve in Case of need the Balance £23706.17—in our favor is placed to your Debit in New Account which we doubt not will be found free of Error and Noted accordingly, of which you will be pleased to advise us—By the last Accounts from Charleston we find No. Carolina had very wisely come into the General Union we shall hope to hear the same of your State shortly, and that all will shortly be Harmony, the Repeal of the Tender Act in Rhode Island is surely gaining something, it will doubtless give Facility to Recoveries from your Debtors, who will not now be able to avail themselves of Depreciated Paper in Payments—

We do not mean to pain you by a Repetition of our sufferings from our great and long advance on your Account we rather choose to throw ourselves on your Friendship—to do all you possibly can for us, you will bear us in mind and that even £100 will be very acceptable to us, with this observation we shall take our leave for the present only adding our best wishes that you may experience the return of many happy Years & remain &c

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**415. Edward K. Thompson to Tobias Lear  
Providence, 26 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . You are not unacquainted that this State for a number of years past has been agitated with the spirit of party & domestick divisions—That my father is considered by the citizens of this State in general, as a person of integrity will appear from his being elected by the inhabitants of this Town, as their chief magistrate or president of the Town Council—and on the part of the present administration, he has been appointed Chief Judge of the County & Collector of the revenue offices he now holds—

I am Sir with sentiments of real esteem Your most Obdt. Servant

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**416. Brown & Benson to May & Payson  
Providence, 27 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

We do ourselves the Pleasure to acknowledge the reception of your acceptable favr. of the 22d. Octr. (with the 15 barrels flour) & observe the Contents—We approve the sales of the Tea but was a little disappointed in not receiving the remainder of the flour by Capt. Childs hope it is ere this in your hands & will be shipt by the first oppy., and in order to increase the quantity as well as to Cultivate our intercourse with your house we now shipt you by the Brig Providence Capt. Brigs Two Hhds of Rum & two Casks of Nails the former we flatter ourselves will [Neat?] a good profit you will sell it together with the Nails for the highest price you can & ship the proceeds in good superfine flour you will please to transmit in Accot. sales of the Nails & rum as soon as Completed and as our Business will Annually require large supplys of flour it is probable our intercourse with your house may be extended to Mutual Emolument especially as the Legislature of our State have order'd a Convention to assemble the first Munday in March the result we hope will introduce us into the federal Family—will thank you to advise us frequently & fully of the state of your Markets and assure yourselves that We are with due Esteem

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**417. Massachusetts General Court's Answer to Governor John Hancock's Message  
Boston, 27 January 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

May it please your Excellency. . . .

The Accession of another State [i.e., North Carolina] to our Union by so large a majority of its Citizens is a happy presage of those blessings we wish to obtain by the adoption of the foederal Constitution.—We are convinced that the Strength & Respectability of the Confederation essentially depend on the United Exertions of all the Independant States of America. From this consideration we sincerely hope that the Citizens of Rhode Island will at their insuing Convention exercise their wonted patriotism & by their decisions compleat the Union—Thus allied under one foederal Gover[n]ment, & by paying a strict attention to its administration, we cannot but anticipate Peace, Liberty, & every National Happiness. . . .

1. MS, Miscellaneous Legal Papers, Senate File, M-Ar.

**418. John Taylor  
Newport Mercury, 27 January 1790**

MR. BARBER, *The following piece was intended for the Newport Herald, but for reasons at present unnecessary to mention, I request you to publish it in your useful paper.*

MR. EDES, in perusing the Newport Herald of yesterday's date, 3d page, column 3d, a correspondent of yours, as you say, but I shall always consider, *you*

the real author of every piece you publish against me, unless the author's christian and sir-name, and place of abode, are fairly annexed, or, you will, on application, deliver him up, that he may be dealt with according to his deserts, which I have requested—you refused—saying the author will not consent, and you will not deliver him up—No wonder he is unwilling to be known—Back-biters, slanderers, &c. love the works of darkness.

You quote a passage of Doctor Gordon's partial history of the American war, which is greatly in favour of British tyranny, wherein he endeavours to vent some of his sulphur against me.—He did the same against the General Court of Massachusetts, in the year 1778, and asserted in the public papers, that the General Court were guilty of legerdemain, &c. &c. both Houses of Assembly appointed a committee to consider and report what was proper to be done, Doctor Gordon was then Chaplin to the Court, I was one of the Committee, and proposed that Dr. Gordon should be dismissed, as Chaplin, the Committee agreed thereto, both Houses of Assembly confirmed the same—the Doctor was soon informed of the Resolution of the Court, and that I made the motion for his dismissal; from whence it is easy to conclude what influenced him to insert said paragraph in his history, to wit, malice and revenge.—Among other matters he mentions something about religion, if I really thought he had any, I would answer him seriously, at present I only say—a Pharisee.

All who are not acquainted with Doctor Gordon's character, by perusing the Boston papers, printed by Messrs. Adams & Nourse, printers to the Court, will see him in his proper dress.—Mr. Edes, you dip your pen in gall and spit your unprovoked malice against me—asking many questions, queries, and inquiries, relative to my character—it is a sure sign you know your own character to be bad, for misery loves company, otherwise why does the Devil take so much pains to destroy mankind—First pull the beam out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to take the mote out of my eye.—You say they (meaning the public) are requested, nay exhorted, not to listen to the mischievous plotting, and wicked councils of ignorant, restless, and artful demagogues; surely an ignorant man cannot be so plotting, artful and dangerous, as you represent me to be?—But why had you not adopted the golden rule, and have done by me, as you would be done by I—instead of throwing about arrows, fire-brands and death, in your infamous paper, which spares none, low nor high, not even the General Assembly nor Governor of the State, where you are every day dependent for bread and water; wherefore I think every one would do well to do by you as the Court of Boston did by Doctor Gordon, and employ you no longer as a public printer.

As some difference in our sentiments relative to the New Constitution seems to be the foundation of your malice against me, I will give my sentiments thereon, that the public may know them much better than you at present seem to do:—The new form of government, as first reported by the Convention, I always thought, and now do, that it was very imperfect, and not safe for the people at large, but the amendments proposed by Congress, if adopted, will make it more eligible; and should the amendments proposed by North-Carolina, and a few others be added, and the General Government wisely and prudently administered, in that case, I fully believe the United States of America, may yet be the

most rich and happy people on earth, which I most sincerely pray may be the happy portion of America—To assist with my mite in establishing her liberties, I have expended and sunk thousands of pounds sterling, by loaning monies to the public and otherways, and I would do the same again, if the liberties of America required it and my abilities were sufficient to do it.

JOHN TAYLOR,

Now a resident in Middletown, on Rhode-Island.

*Friday, 15th January, 1790.*

Mr. Edes, I wrote the above before I saw your publication of the 21st, and I intended to have published it this week (but was prevented by sickness of which you was informed on Tuesday the 19th)—If you are not governed by the spirit of the roaring Lion, who daily goes about seeking whom he may devour, why did you not wait until I had an opportunity to answer what you said on the 14th, which might, perhaps, saved you the trouble of publishing on the 21st, wherein you quote your Reverend Divine, Doctor Gordon—He is the sandy foundation on which you build; but as he is not now in America to answer for himself, let what I have already said relative to him suffice for the present—Mr. Edes, you say, however, it was in the days of Abraham, there is no great probability at this day of our being visited by angels; to which I say if Impartialis (as you falsely term yourself) was not visited and closely attended by one or more fallen angels, why are you so often doing the works of the Devil—in your paper of the 21st inst. you say, one Dr. John Taylor, armed with a pair of pistols, lately demanded of you the author of the Correspondent—you mention pistols three different times, first “armed with a pair of pistols”—secondly, “his pistols”—thirdly, “a brace of pistols,”—Do you mean to make the public believe I had six pistols—are you not ashamed of yourself, and will not the public be ashamed of you, when the real facts are known, which are as follow, to wit, on Monday the 18th I came to your office and requested you to inform me who was the real author of the piece you published against me on the 14th inst. but before I entered your office, I thought it would be prudent to have some impartial gentlemen present to hear our discourse, least you should afterwards misrepresent the matter, accordingly I asked two gentlemen to step in and hear what I had to say to Mr. Edes, and his reply; they went and heard the whole matter, in case I had any pistols, they had as good a chance to see them as Mr. Edes; but I positively deny having or seeing one or more pistols that day, or since I have been on the island of Rhode Island, according to my remembrance; but as you have asserted, that I, armed with a pair of pistols, made a demand on you, stand ready to prove it, or suffer for your high crime.—I am extremely happy, I and Mr. Edes were not alone, for had that been the case, he might with as much truth, and less probability of being detected, asserted that my brace of pistols was loaded with powder and balls, that I discharged them at his head, and that the only reason he was not instantly killed, was the thickness of his skull, which prevented the balls from penetrating his brains!—Mr. Edes, did you not mean by what you have so falsely said, relative to the pistols, if possible, to ruin me forever; and grossly and wickedly to impose on the public.—Now when any Printer pays no more regard to sacred truth, and would ruin any one without the least provocation, what con-

fidence can the public place in him—Remember the advertisement you published relative to Isaac Stratton, on the 14th inst. also peruse the answer thereto, made by his brother Mr. John Stratton your noble and generous benefactor, and the letter you mentioned left by Isaac Stratton—you may see them all in Mr. Barber's Newport Mercury of the 20th inst. now if the relation they have given, and in very solemn terms have attested, and published to the world, be true, which I have heard no one doubt, what could be your design, unless it was maliciously to destroy that young man's character, and what was your provocation? Why, truly, nothing but the want of two years labour more, after he had served you more than five years faithfully, honestly and expertly, as appears by what you said very lately, if the publication referred to is true, which Mr. John Stratton offers to make oath to, what did Isaac Stratton receive for more than five years faithful, honest, and active service? Why, as the publication says, ungrateful treatment, and in every respect, if possible, treated worse than a negro, scanted for food and raiment, when sick neglected and reproached with profane language, &c. &c. The publication says much more, but I forbear, neither should I ever have mentioned any publication against you, had not you began with Doctor Gordon's publication against me, you caution me not to assume the bully, had you not acted the part of a bully to me, do you think I ever should had anything to say to thee. Finally, you threaten, even to neglect me, I think it is high time the public should not only neglect, but despise you forever, as a Printer at least—If any gentlemen Printers, have inserted the pieces referred to, in Mr. Edes's papers of the 14th and 21st inst. I hope they will be candid enough to insert the above in their papers—Mr. Edes I expect you will, agreeably to your promise, publish the above in your next.

*Middletown, January 23, 1790.*

**419. Tobias Lear to Roger Alden**  
**New York, 28 January 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The President of the United States has directed me to transmit to you to be deposited in the Office of the Secy of State an Act of the Legislature of Rhode Island & Providence Plantations for calling a convention to take into consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States passed on the 7 day of September AD. 1787, by the General Convention held in Philadelphia;—and likewise a Letter accompanying said Act from John Collins Gov. of the State of Rhode Island to the President of the United States praying on behalf of the people of said State for a further suspension of the operation of the Impost & Tonnage Laws of the United States with respect to the State of Rhode Island—

1. FC, RG 59, Communications with the State Department [1789–1791], Vol. 1, State Department Records, DNA.

#### 420. Newport Herald, 28 January 1790

☞ A piece signed “JOHN TAYLOR, *residing at Middleton,*” is not admissible into the Newport Herald.

Had Doctor John Taylor answered the Correspondent, who furnished the extract from Dr. Gordon’s History, in Herald No. 151, or even attempted a refutation of that characteristic infamy which the Historian hath affixed to him, the impartiality of the publisher of the Herald would have prompted him to give it a place—But instead of invalidating those specific charges, Dr. John Taylor, in the aforesaid piece, attacks the publisher of the Herald with personal invectives, charges him with being the author of the aforesaid article from a Correspondent, and after introducing the ribaldry of an *ignoble* character, hath the effrontery to offer it for a place in the Herald.

The publisher of the Herald, therefore, views this performance either as a daring attempt to check the freedom of inquiry into men and measures, by making the printer of a paper a party in its controversies; or, as an artful evasion of a vindication from the charges laid against him by the Historian, lest the thin cobweb of his defence might serve as a glossary to unveil other distinguishing traits that are yet known but to few.

As Dr. John Taylor appears to be ignorant of the principles on which a paper is conducted, and of the duty of a printer, the publisher of the Herald declares, that he is not the author of the article by him referred to, nor of any other, purporting to come from a Correspondent, or to which an anonymous signature is affixed: he also declares that the secrecy enjoined by a writer, shall never be disclosed without his consent; and that so far from being intimidated by menaces, or curtailing the invaluable freedom of his press, from fear of pecuniary injury, he will persevere in that uniform line of impartiality and liberty, which he flatters himself has ever marked the Newport Herald.

#### 421. William Maclay Journal

New York, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . The Carolina bill was now taken up and Specially committed to Hawkins[,] Elsworth & Butler. Mr. Lear from the President communicated the Act of Rhode Island, appointing a Convention. there was a request, also from some public Characters of the State requesting a Suspension of the Effects of the funding law respecting that State. Elsworth moved that the same committee might bring in a Clause for the Rhode Islanders. I voted against this and gave as a reason that as it respected the Revenue, altho’ not *raising* Yet it should be left to the other house. . . .

1. Printed: *Journal of William Maclay*, DHFFC, IX, 193.

**422. Jeremiah Olney to Henry Knox**  
**Providence, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . As the Convention that are to meet in this State on the 1st Monday in March next, will in all probability have the Enlightened policy to accede to the New Constitution—if so my wish and intentions are to make a Tour to New York with a hope to Secure the appointment of Collector of Impost for this District. . . .

1. FC, Shepley Library Collection, RHi.

**423. George Washington Diary**  
**New York, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Sent a letter (with an Act of the Legislature of the State of Rhode Island, for calling a Convention of that State, to decide on the Constitution of the Union,) from Governor Collins, to both Houses of Congress—to do which, was requested by the act, of the President. . . .

1. MS, Detroit Public Library. Printed: *Washington Diaries*, VI, 23.

**424. William Short to Thomas Jefferson**  
**Paris, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . It has been a long time since we have had news from America—a paper here has published that R. Island & No. Carolina have adopted the constitution—I suppose it false as to one & premature as to the other. . . .

1. RC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XVI, 130–35.

**425. Paine Wingate to Timothy Pickering**  
**New York, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Verry little business has yet been compleated in congress. No confident opinion can be formed what will be the determination of congress respecting the public credit. It needs no great penetration to foresee very perplexing difficulties in this matter—The act of the state of Rhode Island passed Janr. 17., for calling a convention to meet on the first monday of march has been communicated to the Senate this day with a very respectful letter from the governor to the President & a desire that the suspension of the Tonnage & Impost laws may be still prolonged in favour of that State. I hope that we shall soon see the Union of the thirteen states compleated. . . .

1. RC, Pickering Papers, MHi.



**426. Oliver Wolcott, Sr., to Oliver Wolcott, Jr.  
Litchfield, Conn., 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

By accounts Rhode Island will soon adopt the Constitution, which every sensible man in that state ought to wish for, if it was only to give stability to their own local police. When this shall be effected, we may consider the National Government, as I trust, fixed upon an immoveable basis. But what will be its real complexion, will probably depend more upon the conduct of the present session of Congress, than upon the last, or any subsequent one. . . .

1. Printed: George Gibbs, ed., *Memoirs of the Administration of Washington and John Adams, Edited from the Papers of Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury* (2 vols., New York, 1846), I, 36.

**427. Henry Wynkoop to Reading Beatty  
New York, 28 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

The papers accompanied will inform you of the News & Polliticks here, except that a Letter was this day delivered [to] Congress by the Secretary of the President, from the Governor of Rhode Island accompanied with an Act of the Legislature of that State appointing the first monday in February for the people to elect Representatives in Convention to meet the first monday in March. . . .

1. RC, Wynkoop Letters, Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa.

**428. Charleston City Gazette, 29 January 1790**

By an arrival yesterday from Rhode-Island, we learn, that the legislature of that state had agreed to call a convention for the special purpose of discussing the constitution of the United States, and to determine on the propriety of their acceding to the union.

**429. Samuel Johnston to James Iredell  
New York, 30 January 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . Be pleased to present my affectionate Respects to Mrs. Iredell and the Girls, kiss your dear little Children for me and present me respectfully to all our other Friends. I had forgot to mention to you that Congress has received official Notice that Rhode Island has ordered a Convention, the Assembly was equally divided and the Governor gave the casting Vote in favor of the Convention.

I am with sentiments of the warmest Friendship & Affection Yours

1. RC (Typescript), Charles E. Johnson Collection, North Carolina Department of Archives.

**430. Theodore Sedgwick to Henry Van Schaack  
New York, 31 January 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

My dear sir,

. . . The accession of Rhodeisland is in my mind no longer a doubtful event. . . .

1. RC, Sedgwick Papers, MHi.

**431. Archibald Crary to George Washington  
East Greenwich, R.I., 2 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

The undoubted Prospect we now [have] that this State will recognize the Federal Government at the meeting of the Convention the first Monday of March next induces me to trouble your Excellency at this time. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington, Presidential Series*, V, 90–92n.

**432. Providence Warrant, 3 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

To the Town-Serjeant or either of the Constables of the Town of Providence in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations—

Greeting—Whereas the Honorable the General Assembly of the said State at the Session in January last passed an Act entitled “An Act for calling a Convention, to take into Consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States, passed on the 17th. of September A.D. 1787, by the General Convention held at Philadelphia.

You are therefore hereby, in Conformity to the said Act required, in the Name of the Governor and Company of the said State to warn the Freemen of the said Town to meet in Town-Meeting at the State House in said Town on Monday the Eighth Day of February instant at Two of the Clock in the Afternoon for the Purposes in the said Act mentioned and contained; and also for transacting such other Business as may be then and there thought necessary[.] Fail not but make true Return hereof.

Given under my Hand and Seal this Third Day of February A.D. 1790 & in the 14[th] Year of Independence

Daniel Cooke, Town-Clerk

Providence 5th. Febr. 1790.

In obedience to the above Command I have Warn'd the Freemen of Sd. Town to meet at time and place above mentioned

Henry Bowen, T. Serjt.

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 13, no. 5479, RHi.

**433. Buccinator****Newport Herald, 4 February 1790**

How long, my virtuous citizens, shall we suffer our patience to be abused by the basest characters?—How long shall we suffer this once garden of *America* to be the receptacle of the disaffected, the seditious, the bankrupts of other States?—Is not this State sufficiently polluted with vice of its own growth, that it is cherished from whatever quarter it may be imported?—Shall this State become the *Botany Bay of America*?—Forbid it honor! forbid it virtue! forbid it heaven!

A Hercules was found to cleanse the stable of Augæus from the accumulated filth of thirty years; and I trust there is still virtue and magnanimity enough to check, if not remove the mass of pollution collected in this State in the course of the last six years. The sons of Belial indeed are numerous, the contamination general, and it is a task much more laborious to wash away moral pollution from a State, than the filth even of Augæus's stable.—But a combination of one hundred virtuous men, is in my estimation, more than a match double that number of villains;—There is nothing so difficult which perseverance cannot overcome; and in proportion to the exertions of the virtuous, will be their praise.

A gang of thieves, by the vigilant attention of a few good officers, has lately been detected, and if the examination of the culprits is conducted with cautious secrecy, if none are admitted to them who are connected with suspected characters, it is more than probable that some transgressors of a higher class, will be discovered, and brought to condign punishment. This would give a fatal wound to iniquity; and the discovery already made should, and I do not doubt will operate as an encouragement to the virtuous to proceed.

Let such exalted villains as the law cannot reach be gazetted to public view and contempt.—Let the officers of justice keep up a watchful attention—Let the Town-Councils of the several towns send out of the State such as have no right to a residence in it,—and all the virtuous assist them, and unite in hunting down every worthless person who lives, or shall seek a shelter here, and in the course of a few years this State may recover its lost reputation, be visited again by wealthy and reputable foreigners, as well as citizens of this description from the United States, and again be a happy people.

I would by no means discourage that spirit of hospitality for which this State has been exemplary; but when we are so evidently avoided by the good and the wise, and infested by the bad, ought we not to be cautious how we entertain strangers? We certainly ought, and perhaps a little attention may enable us to make a proper discrimination of characters.—Mark that big stranger, with a big white wig—With whom doth he associate?—What places doth he frequent?—Birds of a feather flock together. Doth he associate with men who have abetted as fraudulent a system of policy as ever was devised? Doth he frequently call at dram shops and intermeddle with politics?—If he doth, hunt him out of society. A wild beast is not so dangerous. Indeed, if he should have been accustomed to

*legerdemain*, he is as much more dangerous to society, than a wild beast, as a sly, insidious foe is more dangerous than an open enemy.

Especially are such characters to be guarded against, as, besides the foregoing distinguishing marks, assume the garb of religion, and venture to propose amendments to Constitutions of Government manifestly calculated to restrain fraud and immorality, and to introduce peace, order and happiness.

The New Government is *not safe for the people at large*; but if the amendments proposed by Congress and *North-Carolina* should be adopted, and *a few others* be added, and the General Government be *wisely and prudently* administered, then, says the matchless Dr. John Taylor, in one of his scurrilous, confused letters lately published in the Newport Mercury, *I fully believe the United States of America may yet be the most rich, and happy people on earth, which I most sincerely pray may be the happy portion of America.*—This long sentence stripped of its disguise, may be fairly rendered in a few words thus,—give me an opportunity to defraud my creditors by an Act of Bankruptcy, or by paying them with paper bills, and create me a Senator, and notwithstanding the New Government of the United States, is the worst government on earth, yet under it the United States may be the richest and happiest people on earth, which I sincerely pray, &c.

What a disinterested, philanthropic, pious creature is this lovely Dr. John Taylor;—and Lo! he prayeth.

The close of the sentence on which I have animadverted, in my opinion justifies what Dr. Gordon has written respecting his affectation of piety, and brings to my recollection the manner in which a Newlight Negro closed his sermon. This blackman had observed that ministers frequently finished their sermons with—“which GOD grant may be the happy portion of us all;” and in imitation of them, as he thought, after having warned his audience that unless they amended their ways, and became as pious as he was, they would all go to Hell, he concluded with, which GOD grant may be the happy portion of us all.

What would be the condition of America if the New Government should be amended and administered by such skillful, wise and prudent geniuses as Dr. John Taylor and Co. I will not attempt particularly to describe—it would be too painful; but if I may be permitted to form a general idea of it, from the effects of a bad government, badly administered, which I have heard of, it would most certainly not be an heaven upon earth.

I shall leave it to others to remark upon Dr. John Taylor’s vindication of himself, and to criticise upon his bad grammar, false reasoning, and dirty abuse of the Printer, who he knows was not the author of the Correspondent, and Impartialis.

I have finished what I had in view, which was to rouse my fellow-citizens to pursue all vicious characters with unabating ardor,—to cleanse our Augæan stable, and expel from it all such strange cattle as Dr. John Taylor.

**434. Moses Brown to Isaac Lawton, Jacob Mott, and Sampson Sherman  
Providence, 4 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Esteemed Friends

It having been permitted by the Governor of the Universe that a great revolution should take place in the gov't of this country & that a Const. for the National Gov't should be formed by the common counsel, & peaceably established by the common consent of the people of 12 of the 13 states, it is now the period when this state must decide whether it will be one of the Union or not. A period perhaps as interesting as any the state has known—so much so that did I not hear the contrary I should suppose there would not be any opposition to the adoption of the Const. with the amendments that are proposed by Congress or on the proposal of others may be thot necessary. But hearing there is likely to be an attempt in your town to choose such persons for Members of the Convention as will *reject the Constitution*, I tho't it would be well for our F[rien]ds to manifest their desire of uniting with our sister states in the *adoption* of the Const. & those who have been opposed to some parts thereof like Danl Howld & myself will like him do themselves & the public the justice to show in town mtg or otherwise that the amendments proposed & the distressed situation of this state (should we long continue separate) require that we manifest our opinion as a people of some influence in the state among our neighbors & that we think the time is come when our acceptance of the new gov't will be better for us than to any longer stand out being alone & there can be no possibility, in my view, of any advantageous alteration in our favor. But were we represented by good men at Congress we should then have a voice equal to any state in the Union to propose & to adopt any alteration that may appear best

Having been a tour around as far as E. Greenwich with our esteemed friend Isaac I have conversed with Dan'l Howland on this subject & we are agreed that however our opinion has been that the Constitution might be [a]mended it is now only to be first adopted before we can attempt amendments. Indeed we think some of those proposed by Congress so important that the Governm't will be the best & the most peaceably founded, perhaps, of any in the world. The administration will depend upon the people that are sent & stand appointed to administer it, who if they are men of wisdom & integrity we have reason to hope & expect as much happiness under the form agreed upon as under any form whatever. I wish, therefore, our Friends would consider this matter; a matter on which perhaps it may never hereafter be in their power to act, & do what may contribute to the best interest of this poor, lonely, divided State in such manner as may appear best. If it should be alleged that it is uncertain whether the amendments will be adopted

a passage here hardly legible [– – –] at present

Friends address to Gen'l Washington I esteem as designed principally to manifest thier cordial acceptance of the Gov'tmt I am united with them therein &

hope that none may conclude this letter is designed to serve any political party or to encourage Friends therein, but in practically manifesting our prospects & unitedly using our freedom in this cause as a right I have no doubt we may innocently exercise

With love to Freinds I conclude Your affectionate Freind

To Isaac Lawton, Jacob Mott, Sampson Sherman or any other Freind to whom they may think proper to communicate

1. FC and Copy, Austin Collection, #12, RPJCB. The file copy appears to be a nearly illegible press copy. A copy of the letter seems to have been transcribed by Samuel Austin. An "N. B." reads "This contains an important letter, scarcely legible, together with a copy made by Samuel Austin—See also the accompanying copy from S. A.'s MS. which traces the probable influence of the letter."

#### 435. Providence United States Chronicle, 4 February 1790

*Extract of a Letter from a Member of Congress to his Friend in this Town, dated New-York, Jan. 28, 1790.*

"This Day the Act of your General Assembly for calling a Convention, and the Letter from the Governor accompanying the same, was by the President sent to the House of Representatives, which were read, and a Committee appointed thereon; shall give you the earliest Notice of the Proceedings thereon."

#### 436. New York Daily Advertiser, 4 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

A VIEW OF RHODE ISLAND.  
(Extracted from a new Poem, entitled the  
Rising Empire, not yet published.)

WASH'D by surrounding seas, and bold her coasts,  
A grateful soil the fair *Rhode Island* boasts.  
The admiring eye no happier fields can trace,  
Here seas are crowded with the scaly race,  
Nature has strove to make her native blest  
And owns no fairer Eden in the west:  
Here loveliest dames, in frequent circles seen,  
Catch the fine tint of health from beauty's queen,  
No aid they want to seize the enraptur'd view  
Nor art's false colours to improve the true;  
Here, love the traveller holds—loth to depart  
Some charming creature stays his wandering heart,  
Bids him forget from clime to clime to rove,  
And even dull prudence—here—submits to love.  
On grassy farms, their souls enslav'd to gain,  
Reside the masters of the rural reign;  
Vast herds they feed, that glut the abundant pail,  
Break the stiff sod, or freight the adventurous sail;  
The nervous steed, the stateliest of the kind

Here walks his rounds in pastures unconfin'd:—  
 Half that the lands produce or seas contain  
 To other shores transported o'er the main  
 Returns in coin, to cheer the miser's eye,  
 In foreign *sweets*, that fancied wants supply,  
 Or tawdry fluffs, to deck the limbs of pride,  
 That thus expends what avarice strove to hide.  
 But, hostile to themselves, this jarring race  
 In separate interests, different plans embrace—  
*One*, bold in wrong, his paper fabric rears  
 And steels his bosom to the orphan's tears  
 To those he ruin'd grants no late relief!  
 But leaves the wretched to subsist on grief!  
 In lost advice his days the gownsman spends,  
 He gives his prayers and preachings to the winds—  
 In vain he tells of virtue's sure reward;  
 No words but this attract a swain's regard—  
 Talk not of Laws!—where innocence must fall,  
 One spark of honor more than damns them all;  
 And vainly Science her assistance lends  
 Where knavery shapes it to the basest ends,  
 Fraud walks at large—each selfish passion reigns,  
 And cheats enforce what honesty disdains  
 Hurt at the view, I leave the ungrateful shore  
 And thy rough soil, Connecticut explore: &c.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 8 February; *Newport Mercury*, 15 February; *Delaware Gazette*, 20 February; *Providence Gazette*, 27 February; and *Edenton Gazette of North Carolina*, 20 March.

**437. William Heath to Daniel Lyman**  
**Roxbury, Mass., 5 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I am happy to find that the Good People of the State of Rhode Island are at length about to exercise their wonted good Sense, and Judgment and therefore assure myself the federal Constitution will be adopted by a handsome majority in the approaching convention . . .

1. RC, Heath Papers, MHi.

**438. William Heath to George Washington**  
**Roxbury, Mass., 5 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

I am confident that the great probability of an adoption of the federal Constitution by the State of Rhode Island, in their approaching convention has given you pleasure. When this event takes place several persons must be appointed for the Collection of the revenue in that state . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**439. Caleb Strong to Enos Hitchcock  
New York, 6 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Revd. and dear

I thank you for your Letter of the 20th. Jany. and am extremely happy to hear there is so fair a prospect of the speedy Accession of the State of Rhode Island to the General Government. This measure I was confident the People must soon discover to be necessary to their well being, and certainly it will be highly gratifying to all the other Eastern States

I shall be happy to serve the Interest of any Gentleman whose Character you can place in so favourable a Light as you have Mr. Olney's, but I presume the appointments will very much depend on the disposition of the Gentlemen who may be appointed to represent the State in Congress, if they should be unfavourable to Mr. Olney, perhaps an Application from respectable Citizens to the President might effect his Appointment

1. RC, Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Hitchcock Papers, 1786–1789, RHi.

**440. Providence Gazette, 6 February 1790**

By Advices from New-York, of a late Date, we learn, that in Consequence of the Representation from our Legislature that this State would probably soon accede to the General Government, there is a fair Prospect of our obtaining a further Indulgence with Respect to the Payment of foreign Tonnage and Duties.

**441. Massachusetts Centinel, 6 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

*ANSWER of the LEGISLATURE of MASSACHUSETTS to the  
GOVERNOUR's SPEECH.*

*May it please your Excellency,*

Agreeably to your direction, the Secretary has laid before the two Branches of the Legislature, the proceedings of Congress, and other papers, which will be noticed with that attention their importance demands.

We are happy to find that your health is so far restored as to enable you to meet the General Court and by a personal interview to deliver your communications.

The accession of another State to our Union, by so large a majority of its citizens, is a happy presage of those blessings we wish to obtain by the adoption of the Federal Constitution.—We are convinced that the strength and respectability of the Confederation, essentially depend on the united exertions of all the independent States of America. From this consideration we sincerely hope, that the citizens of Rhode-Island will, at their ensuing Convention, exercise their wonted patriotism—and by their decisions complete the Union. Thus allied under one Federal Government, and by paying a strict attention to its administration, we cannot but anticipate Peace, Liberty and every National Happiness.



The propositions for amendments in the Constitution of the United States will be carefully considered by the Legislature. We are anxious that the whole body of the People should have the fullest confidence that their rights and liberties are secured to them in the General Government, by the most explicit declarations, which have a tendency to give energy to its authority and laws. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 15 February.

**442. Peter Van Schaack to Henry Van Schaack  
Kinderhook, N.Y., 7 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Br.

. . . The Accession of Rhode Island he [Alexander Hamilton] thinks next to certain. . . .

1. RC, Van Schaack Collection, Columbia University.

**443. Solomon Drowne to Joseph Gilman  
Providence, 8 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . The Legislature of our State is at length convinced of the necessity of calling a Convention to deliberate on the federal Constitution, which is to meet the first Monday in March: So that we are in a fair way of becoming again, one of the United States. . . .

1. RC, Drowne Deposit (Box 1786–1831), Special Collections, John Hay Library, Brown University.

**444–464. TOWN MEETINGS**

**444. Barrington Town Meeting, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting Barrington Monday February. 8th. AD 1790—

Solomon Townsend Junr Esqr. Moderator

Collo[ne]l Thomas Allin was Chosen first and Samuel Allen Esqrs. Second Deligates To Represent this Town in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingston on the first monday in March next for the Purpose of Takeing into Consideration, And Desideing upon the Constitution for the United States &c—

Town Meeting Adjourn'd without Day—

1. MS, Barrington Records, 1770–1793, Vol. 1, Town Hall, Barrington, R.I.

**445. Bristol Town Meeting, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting duely Notified and Convened on monday the Eighth day of Febr. AD. 1790

The Honbl. William Bradford Esqr Chosen moderator—

The Honbl. William Bradford Esqr and Shearjashub Bourne Esqr. were Chosen Delegates to Represent Said Town of Bristol in Convention to be holden at South Kingston on the first monday of March Next—

1. MS, Bristol Town Meeting Records, 1781–1811, Vol. 3, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Bristol, R.I.

#### 446. Charlestown Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At A Town Meeting held in Charles Town, at the dwellings House of Joseph Kinyon Junr. on the 8 day of February AD 1790 agreeable to an act of the general Assembly, to chuse two Deligates to represent this Town in the State Convention to be held at So Kingston on the first Monday of March next, in order to investigate the New-Constitution,

Jonathan Macomber Esqr. chosen Moderator . . .

Thomas Hoxsie Esqr. is chosen first and Joseph Stanton Junr Esqr. Second deligates both to represent this Town in Said State Convention. . . .

Voted that this Town Meeting be desolved,

Benja. Hoxsie Junr T Clerk

1. MS, Town Council and Probate Record, 1788–1793, Vol. 4, Town Hall, Charlestown, R.I.

#### 447. Cranston Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town meeting held at Cranston, Specially Call'd and legally assembled, on monday the 8th. day of Feby. 1790, for the purpose of Choosing Delag[ate]s to Represent this Town in the Genl. State Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the first monday in March next.

George Waterman Esq Moderator. . . .

Peter Stone Esq Chosen the first Delagate, & Jonathan Sprague Jur. the second Delagate to represent this Town in State Convention to be holden on the first monday in March next.—

Voted that the Delagates Chosen this day, be paid one Dollar ~~39~~ day each, while Tending the Convention. . . .

This meeting Dissolv'd

Witness N. Knight T. C.

1. MS, Record of Town Meetings, Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Earmarks, 1754–1828, Vol. 1, Cranston, R.I.

#### 448. Cumberland Town Meeting, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting legally warned and held at Cumberland in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode-Island &c. on the 8th of February A.D. 1790, in pursuance of an Act of the Honorable General Assembly of said State passed at January Session last, intituled “An Act for calling a Convention to take into consideration the Constitution proposed for the United-States, passed on the 17th of September A.D. 1787—by the General Convention held at Philadelphia.”—

Holiman Potter Esquire chosen Moderator—

John Singer Dexter and Levi Ballou Esquires, chosen Delegates to represent the Freemen of said Town of Cumberland in a State Convention to be holden at South-Kingston in the County of Washington in the State aforesaid on the first Monday in March next, for the purpose of fully and freely investigating and deciding upon the said Constitution proposed for the United States, agreeably to the aforesaid Act of said General Assembly.—

Att. Jno. S. Dexter ☞ Town Clerk.

Voted that this present Town Meeting be dissolved.

Att. Jno. S. Dexter ☞ Town Clerk.

1. MS, Council Records, 1746–1816, Vol. 1, City Hall, Cumberland, R.I.

#### 449. East Greenwich Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting Legally Called and held at East Greenwich &c by order of the Honle. the General Assembly of this State on the 8th. Day of February AD1790—

Voted That Sylvester Sweet Esqr. be Moderator

Voted That Col: Archibald Crary & Benjn. Howland Esqr be appointed to Receiv[e] Read & Count the Votes—

Mr Pardon Mawney is Chosen the first and Job Comstock Esqr. the Second Delegate to meet in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the first Monday of March Next, to Take into Consideration the New Constitution Proposed for the United States. Passed on the 17th. of September AD 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia. . . .

Voted That this Meeting be Adjd. without day—

1. MS, Town Meeting Record, 1752–1793, Town House, East Greenwich, R.I.

#### 450. Glocester Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting Held at Glocester by Warrant on the 8th. Day of February AD. 1790.

Zebee. Hopkins Chosen Morderator . . .

Voted that Daniel Owen and Stephen Steere Esqrs. are Chosen Delegates to Represent this Town in the State Convention to be holden at South-Kingstown on the first Monday of March next. . . .

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1786–1865, Vol. 2, Town Hall, Glocester, R.I.

#### 451. Hopkinton Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting held at Hopkinton the 8th. Day of February AD 1790. at Col George Thurston's dwelling House—

Voted that Col: Jesse Maxson be Moderator. . . .

Voted that Mr. John Brown & Col: Jesse Maxson be the Delegates to Represent this Town, in a State Convention, to be holden at South kingstown the first Monday in March next.

Copy given . . .

1. MS, Town Records, 1786–1824, Vol. 2, Town Hall, Hopkinton, R.I.

#### 452. Jamestown Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

Jamestown at a Meeting Legally held in Sd. Town February 8th. 1790

John Eldred Esqr. chosen Moderator

It is voted By this Meeting that Capt. Benjamin Remington and Mr. Nicholas Carr are hereby chosen as Deligates to Represent said Town in a state convention to be holden at southkingstown in the County of washington on the first monday in march Next Insueing . . .

Thereupon this Meeting Desolvd

1. MS, Jamestown Town Records, 1744–1796, R-Ar.

#### 453. Johnston Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting (Legally Convened and) held in Johnston in the County of Providence on Second Monday in February AD. 1790—

Andrew Harris Esqr. Moderator . . .

Noah Mathewson Esqr. and Mr. William B. King are Chosen Delegates, to represent the Town of Johnston in a State Convention, to be holden at South Kings-Town in the County of Washington, on the first Monday in March Next. . . .

1. MS (Transcript), Johnston Town Meeting Records, 1754–1791, RHi.

#### 454. Little Compton Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting Legally Warned and held in Little Compton february 8th AD 1790

Voted that Peris Richmond Esqr Be Moderator of this Meeting . . .

Voted that Cpt William Ladd Be the first Deligate and Cpt John Davis Second Deligate to Represent this Town in Convention to Be holden at Southkingstown on the first Monday of March Next . . .

1. MS, Town Records, 1759–1855, Vol. 2, Town Hall, Little Compton, R.I.

#### 455. Middletown Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting held in Middletown Feby. 8th day AD 1790 Especially Called by order of the General Assembly

Joseph Peabody Esqr. Morderator. . . .

Joshua Barker was Chosen the first Deligate & William Peckham Junr. the Second. To Represent the Town in the Convention to be holden in South kings

town on the first monday in March next as appointed by the General Assembly at their session in Jany. 1790—

Voted that the Deligates be allowed and paid out of the Town Treasury three pounds paper Currency Each for every day while they Set in Said Convention as afore Said . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1743–1808, Vol. 1, Town Hall, Middletown, R.I.

#### 456. New Shoreham Town Meeting, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting Legally Convened at New Shoreham this 8th Day of Febuary AD 1790

John Sands Esqr. Moderator

Then by a Major Vote of the freemen of Said Town Capt. Edward Hull and Col. Ray Sands was Chosen Delegates to Represent the Town of Newshoreham in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingston in the County of Washington on the first Monday of March next

Voted and Past

Witness Walter Rathbun Town Clerk

1. MS, Land Evidence, 1778–1803, Vitals, 1757–1809, Vol. 5, Town Hall, New Shoreham, R.I.

#### 457. North Providence Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At at Town Meeting held in North Providence in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode Island &c. on the Eighth Day of February AD: 1790,— Convened by Order of a Special Act of the Honble. the General Assembly of said State at January Session AD: 1790 for the Purpose of Choosing Delegates to Sit in a State Convention to be held on the First Monday in March next at South Kingstown in said State

Capt. Stephen Jenks is Chosen Moderator for said Meeting. . . .

Elisha Brown Esqr. is Chosen first Delegate—

Mr. Esek Esten is Chosen Second Delegate—

To Represent the Town of North Providence in the State Convention to be held at South Kingstown on the first Monday in March next as aforesaid.—

Voted that the Delegates above named by Allowed Three Shillings and Six Pence pr. Day to be paid each of them out of the Town Treasury for the Time they are Attending the State Convention as abovesaid . . .

Witness Hope Angell Town Clerk—

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1765–1808, Recording Office, City Hall, Pawtucket, R.I.

#### 458. Providence Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town-Meeting of the Freeman of the Town of Providence legally warned and assembled on Monday the Eig[h]th Day of February A.D. 1790

Colo: Amos Atwell, chosen Moderator

This Meeting being convened in Consequence of an Act of the Honorable the General Assembly of this State passed the Session held in January last entitled "An Act for calling a Convention, to take into Consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States, passed on the 17th. D[ay] of September, A.D. 1787, by the General Convention held at Philadelphia" the following Gentlemen are duly elected Delegates to represent this Town in the said Convention to be holden agreeably to the said Act in South-Kingstown in the County of Washington on the First Monday in March next, to wit:

The Honorable Jabez Bowen, Esqr;  
 Benjamin Bourne, Esq;  
 Colo. William Barton,  
 John Innis Clark, Esq; . . .

The Meeting adjourned without Day—

1. MS, Town Records, City Clerk's Office, City Hall, Providence, R.I.

#### 459. Scituate Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting held in Scituate in the County of Providence by Virtue of an Act of the Genl. Assembly at their Sessions held in Jany. last for the Purpose of Choosing Delegates for a State Convention for the Adoption or Rejection of the new Constitution now Proposed, it being the 8th Day of Feby. 1790—

William West Esqr. Chosen Moderator

. . . James Aldrich & Nathan Bates Chosen Delegates to Represent this Town in the State Convention to be holden in the County of Washington on the first monday in March next. . . .

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1731–1825, Nos. 1 & 2, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, North Scituate, R.I.

#### 460. Smithfield Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

At a Town Meeting held in Smithfield in the County of Providence &c. Called by Request of Government on the 8th. day of February Anno. Dom. 1790—

Peleg Arnold Esqr. Chosen Moderator . . .

John Sayles & Andrew Waterman Esqrs. Were Chosen Delegates to Represent the Town of Smithfield in a State Convention to be Holden at South Kings Town. On the first Monday in March Next. There to Deliberate & Determin Upon the Constitution proposed for the United States . . .

Voted that this Meeting be Desolved—

Witness. Danl Mowry the 3rd. Tn Clk

1. MS, Smithfield Records, Town Meetings, 1771–1816, City Hall, Central Falls, R.I.

**461. South Kingstown Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting (Especially) called held in South Kingstown the 8th Day of February 1790

Colo Joseph Hassard chosen Moderator

Warrant Read . . .

Voted Samuel J Potter and Jonathan J Hassard Esqrs be and they are hereby Chosen Delegates to represent this Town in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingstown the first Monday in March next to take into Consideration and fully Determine on the Constitution for the United States recommended by the Convention held at Philadelphia the 17th. Sept 1787. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1776–1836, Town Hall, South Kingstown, R.I.

**462. Tiverton Town Meeting, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Att a meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Tiverton Convend. at the house of Philip Manchester on the 8th. day of February 1790

Voted Lemuel Taber Chosen Clerk for the day

Voted Pardon Gray and Benjamin Borden be chosen to receive and Count the votes of this meeting—

Voted Joseph Durfee is chosen moderator of this meeting

Voted Isaac Manchester is chosen the first and Abraham Barker the Second Delegates to represent this Town in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the first monday in March next to take into Consideration the Constitution Proposed for the United States of america

Voted this meeting Dissolvd. &c.

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1754–1798, Town Hall, Tiverton, R.I.

**463. Warwick Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held in Warwick at the house of Mr. Gideon Arnold's on the 8th day of February AD 1790.—

It is voted that His Excellency William [Greene?] Esquire,  
be and he is hereby Chosen Moderator of this meeting. . .

It is voted & Resolved, that Thomas Rice Junr. Esquire, be and he is hereby Chosen the first Delegate, Mr. Gideon Arnold the Second, Coll Benjamin Arnold Junr. the third, & Christopher Greene (Son of Nathaniel) the fourth to Represent this Town, at a Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the first Monday in March next. . . .

It is Voted & Resolved that this meeting be & it is hereby Desolved.

Witness Jas. Jerauld Town Clk

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1779–1794, Vol. 3, City Hall, Warwick, R.I.

**464. Westerly Town Meeting, 8 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held in Westerly at Mr. Arnold Bliven's February the 8th Day 1790

Being Especially convened by an Act of the General Assembly to Choose Delegates to set in Convention the first Monday of March Next to decide Respecting the Constitution &c

Voted that Rowse Babcock Esq be & he is Chosen Moderator

Voted that this Town meeting be Dissolved or Adjourned at 4 of the Clock this afternoon . . .

Voted Adjourned for half an hour

Capt Walter White Chosen first Delegate

George Stillman Esq Chosen Second Delegate to set in the Convention to be holden in South Kingston the first Monday of March Next to Deliberate on the New Constitution for a final Descission as ~~an~~ Act of Assembly &c . . .

Voted this town Meeting Dissolved

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1779–1819, Vol. 4, Town Hall, Westerly, R.I.

**465–493. ELECTION CERTIFICATES****465. Barrington Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town-meeting Legally Warned and held in Barrington on the Eighth day of February AD. 1790

Collo[ne]l Thomas Allin was Chosen first and Samuel Allen Esqr. Second Delegate to Represent Said Town of Barrington in a State Convention to be Convened in South Kingston on the first monday in March Next for the purpose of Taking under Consideration the proposed Constitution for the United States

Witness Samuel Allen T Clerk

Barrington Feby. 25th. 1790

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**466. Bristol Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I Hereby Certify That at a Town meeting duly Notified and Convened at Bristol, on the Second Monday of February A D 1790—That The Honble. William Bradford Esqr and Shearjashub Bourne Esqr. were Chosen Delegates To Represent said Town in a Convention To be holden at South-Kingtown on the first Monday of March Next agreeable to an act of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island &c—intituled an act for calling a Convention To take into Consideration The Constitution proposed for the united States, passed on the 17th. of September A.D 1787 by the general Convention held at Philadelphia  
Bristol, State aforesd. Febr. 27th. 1790

witness Jona. Russell Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.



**467. Charlestown Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At A Town Meeting held in Charles Town on the 8 day of February AD 1790—

Thomas Hoxsie, Esqr, is chosen first and Gen'ral Joseph Stanton Junr. Second Deligate both to represent this Town in the State convention to be holden at So Kingstown, on the first day of March next Benja. Hoxsie Junr. T Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**468. Coventry Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Legally Assembled in Coventry in the County Of Kent and State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations &c.

At the Dwelling House of Charles Cumstock Inn-holder on monday The Eighth day of February AD 1790 Pursuent to an act of the General assembly of Said State January Sessions AD 1790—

These may Certify that at Said Meeting were Chosen Benjamin Arnold Esqr. and Leut. Job Greene Son of Charles as Deligates to Represent the Town of Coventry at the State Convention to be held At South-kingstown on the first monday in March Next—

Witness William Stone T:Clk—

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**469. Cranston Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island &c

These Certify, that at a Town meeting held at Cranston, on the 8th. day of Feby 1790 (Specially Call'd; by order of the Hoñble General Assembly of said State) Peter Stone Esqr. and Jonathan Sprague Jur. Esqr. were Chosen Delegates, to represent said Town of Cranston, in the State Convention, to be holden at South Kingstown on the first monday in March next.—

Witness N. Knight T. Clk

Cranston 26th. Feby. 1790.  
(all Concern'd.)

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**470. Cumberland Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island &c.

I do hereby certify that at a Town Meeting legally warned and held at Cumberland in the County of Providence on the 8th. day of February A.D. 1790, in pursuance of an Act of the Honorable General Assembly of said State passed at January Session 1790 entitled "An Act for calling a Convention to take into consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States passed on the 17th. of September A.D. 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia," John Singer Dexter and Levi Ballou Esquires were duly elected Delegates to represent

the Freemen of said Town of Cumberland in the State Convention to be holden at South Kingston on the first Monday in March 1790 for the purposes mentioned in said Act—

Attt. Jno. S. Dexter Town Clk.

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**471. East Greenwich Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Legally Called and held at East Greenwich in the County of Kent. By order of the Honl. the General Assembly Of this State, on the 8th. Day of February AD 1790—

Mr. Pardon Mawney is Chosen the first. & Job Comstock Esqr. the Second Delegate, to meet in a State Convention to be Holden at South-Kingstown on the first Monday of March Next, to Take into Consideration the New Constitution Proposed for the United States. Passed on the 17th. of September AD 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia,—

Witness H. Cooke T. Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**472. Exeter Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Exeter in Town Meeting February 8th AD 1790

Voted Mr Joseph Reynolds Cap Job Willcox

Be & are hereby Chosen Deligates to Set in a State Convention to Be Holden at South Kingstown in the County of Washington the first Monday of March

Witness Stephen Reynolds T:Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**473. Foster Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held at Foster in the County of Providence on the 8th. Day of February AD 1790 Duly Warned and Legally assembled in pursuance of an Act of the Hone. General assembly of the State of Rhode Island &c at their Session in January Last for the purpose of Choosing Delegates to Represent Said Town in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the first Monday in March Next to Finally Decide on the proposed Constitution for the united States passed on the 17th of September AD 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia Capt. William Howard was Chosen the first Delegate and John Williams Esqr. was Chosen the Second Delegate to Represent Said Town in the said State Convention at the time and place aforementioned

Attest John Westcot Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**474. Gloucester Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Glocester February the 8th. 1790  
 In Town-Meeting Daniel Own Esqr. and Stephen Steere Esqr. Were Chosen Delegates to Represent this Town in the State Convention to be holden at South Kingston on the first monday of March Next

Witness. R. Steere Town CLK

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**475. Hopkinton Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held at Hopkinton the 8th. Day of February AD 1790.— was Voted that Mr. John Brown, and Col. Jesse Maxson be the Delegates to Represent this Town in a State Convention to be holden at South kingstown within and for the State of Rhode Island, the first Monday in March next—

Witness Caleb Potter T. Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**476. Jamestown Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Jamestown ☞ This certifyeth that Capt. Benjamin Remington and Mr. Nicholas Carr is chosen Delegates to Represent Sd. Town in a state covention to be holden at Southkingstown in the county of Washington on the First monday in March 1790.

Jamestown, February 26th. 1790

Witness Freeman Hull Town clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**477. Johnston Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I hereby Certify that at a Town Meeting (Legally Convened and) held in Johnston in the County of Providence on the Second Monday in February 1790— Noah Mathewson Esqr. and Mr. William B. King were Chosen Delegates, to Represent the Town of Johnston, in State Convention, to be holden at South-Kingstown on the first monday in March next.

Witness Joseph Borden Jr. Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**478. Little Compton Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Legally Warned and Held in Little Compton february the Eighth AD 1790

Voted that Cpt William Ladd Be first Deligate and Cpt John Davis Second Deligate to Represent This Town in Convention to Be holden at Southkingstown on the first Monday of March Next

A true Copy as appears on Record

Witness Adam Simmons Town Clk—

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**479. Middletown Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

These may Certify all Whome it may Concern that at a Town Meeting held in Middletown Feby. the 8th. AD1790 Especially Called by order of the General Assembly.

Joseph Peabody Esqr. Morderator.

Joshua Barker Esqr. was Chosen the first and Mr. William Peckham Jur the Second Delegates to Set in the Convention to be holden in Southkingstown on the first monday in March Next Ensuing as Appointed by the General Assembly at their Sessions in Jany. 1790.

A true Copey Taken from the Records in Middletown Feby. 8th AD1790—

Witness Elisha Allen Town Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**480. Middletown Election Certificate, 29 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Middletown May the 29th AD 1790 Especially Called—

Mr. William Peckham Jur Appeared in Town Meeting this day and Resigned his office as a Deligate in the State Convention Now Siting at Newport; And the Meeting Accepted of his Resignation And Voted that Elisha Barker be Appointed A Delegate in the Sted of the Said William Peckham Jur who Resigned

A true Extract taken from Record the day & date above [Expressd?]

Witness Elisha Allen Town Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**481. Newport Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island &c

Newport February 8th. 1790

At a Legal Meeting of the Freemen this day held Agreeably to An Act of the Honble General Assembly at their Session in January last for the Purpose of Choosing Delegates to represent them in Convention to be holden in South Kingstown on the first Monday in March Next to take into Consideration the CONSTITUTION Proposed for the UNITED STATES Passed on the 17th. of September AD 1787, by the General Convention held at Philadelphia: The Following Persons were Unanimously Chosen,

George Hazard Esquire. first Delegate

Henry Marchant Esqr. Second

George Champlin Esqr. third

Peleg Clarke Esqr. fourth  
 Mr. William Tripp fifth  
 George Sears Esqr. Sixth

Newport, Feby 8th. 1790

Copied from the Records & Compared

by Peleg Barker Junr. Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**482. New Shoreham Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Legally Convend. in New Shoreham this 8th Day of February AD 1790

Then by a major Vote of the freemen of said Town Capt. Edward Hull and Col. Ray Sands was Chosen Deligates to Represent the Town of New Shoreham in a State Convention to be holden on the first Monday of March Next, at South Kingston in the County of Washington, as appers by Record

Witness Walter Rathbun T:Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**483. North Kingstown Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I Hereby certify that at a Town Meeting held at Northkingstown (Agreeably to Act of assembly) on the Eighth Day of February A.D. 1790 that William Congdon Esqr. was Chosen first Deligate & Bowen Card Esqr. Second Deligate both to Represent this Town at a State Convention to be held in Southkingstown in the County of Washington on the first Monday in March Next—In order to take into Consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States of America Passed on the 17th. Day of Septemr. AD 1787.

Geor. Thomas Tn. Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**484. Portsmouth Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

These are to certify that

At a Town Meeting of the Freemen of Portsmouth in the County of Newport and State of Rhode:Island &c. Held on the eighth Day of the month called February AD 1790 Agreeable to an Act of the General Assembly passed at their last Sessions—

Voted that Burrington Anthony Job Durfee Giles Slocum & Peter Barker are Chosen Delegates to represent this Town in a State Convention to be held in South-Kingstown, on the first day of the month called march next, And for the purpose of taking into their, full & free Investigation & Decision,—And finally to decide on the Constitution proposed for the Government of the United

States passed the 17th of the month called Sept. AD 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia

A true Copy

Witness Abram Anthony Junr. Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**485. Providence Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Providence February 25th. A.D. 1790—

I hereby certify that at a Town-Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Providence legally warned and assembled at the State-House in said Town on Monday the Eighth Day of February instant in pursuance of an Act of the Honorable the General Assembly of this State passed at the Session held in said Providence in January last, entitled "An Act for calling a Convention to take into Consideration the Constitution proposed for the United States passed on the 17th. of September, A.D. 1787 by the General Convention held at Philadelphia" the following Gentlemen were duly elected Delegates to represent the said Town of Providence in the said Convention to be holden at South Kingstown on the First Monday in March next agreeably to the said Act, to wit:

The Honorable Jabez Bowen, Esqr.

Benjamin Bourne, Esqr.

Col. William Barton

John Innis Clark, Esqr.

Witness Daniel Cooke, Town-Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**486. Scituate Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Scituate in the County of Providence State of Rhode Island on the 8th. Day of February 1790

Ct. James Aldrich & Mr. Nathan Bates were Legally Chosen and Appointed Delegates to Represent Said Town in a State Convention to be held at South-Kingstown on the first Monday in March next Agreeably to an Act of the Genl. Assembly of Said State at their Sessions in January last

Witness John Harris Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**487. South Kingstown Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting (Especially called) held in South Kingston 8th Feby 1790

Voted that Samuel J Potter & Jonathan J Hazard Esqrs. be and they are hereby Chosen Delegates to Represent this Town in a State Convention to be holden at South Kingston the first Monday in March next to take into Consideration and

fully determine on the Constitution for the United States Recommended by the Convention held in Philadelphia the 17th. September 1790

A true Copy

Witness James Helme Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**488. Tiverton Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

These Certify that at a Town Meeting Legally warnd. & held in Tiverton on the 8th. Day of February AD 1790

Isaac Manchester was Chosen First & Abraham Barker Second Delegates to represent the Said Town of Tiverton in a State Convention to be Convend. in South Kingston in the County of Washington on the first mondy in March Next for the purpose of Taking under consideration the Proposed Constitution for the United States &c

Witness Walter Cook Town Clerk

Tiverton the 25th of Februy. 1790

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**489. Warren Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting in Warren Legally Conveened on the Second Munday in February AD 1790—

Mr. Nathan Miller & Mr. Samuel Pine Was Chosen Delegates To Represent the Sd Town of Warren in a State Convention To be holden at South Kings Town on the first Munday in March 1790 agreeable To an act of the General Assembly—

Attest William Barton T Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**490. Warren Election Certificate, 22 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

These May Certify that at A Town Meeting in Warren Legally Conveened on the twenty Second Day of May 1790 Mr. Benjamin Bosworth was Chosen a Deligate for the State Convention in the Room of Nathan Miller Esqr. Deceased, To addopt or Reject the Constitution of the United States Now Under Consideration—

Attest William Barton Town Clerk

Warren May 24th: 1790

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**491. Warwick Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held in Warwick in the County of Kent & on the 8th day of February 1790

Voted that Thomas Price Junr. Esqr. Mr Gideon Arnold, Mr Benjamin Arnold Junr. and Mr Christopher Greene Junr. be and they are hereby Chosen Dele-

gates, to Represent this Town at a Convention to be holden at South Kingstown, on the first monday of March next ensuing:—

A true Copy as of Record

Witness James Jerauld Town Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

#### 492. Westerly Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

At a Town meeting held in Westerly February 8th 1790. being especially convened by a Special Act of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island at their Session held January 1790 to choose Delegates to sit on Convention the first Monday of March Next at South Kingston in the County of Washington to represent said Town in a Convention—

Voted Capt Walter White Chosen first Delegate George Stillman Esq Chosen Second Delegate to Represent said Town in Sd Convention—

Witness Joseph Crandal Town Clerk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

#### 493. West Greenwich Election Certificate, 8 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

I hereby Certify that at a Town Meeting Legally Convened and held at West Greenwich in the County of Kent and State of Rhodeisland &c on the 8th. day of February AD 1790. Mr. William Matteson was Chosen the first Delegate and William Nichols Esqr. was Chosen the Second Delegate to Represent Said Town in the State Convention to be held at South Kingstown on the first Monday in March Next for the purpose of Taking under Consideration and finally Deciding upon the New proposed Constitution

Witness Benja. Johnson Tn. Clk

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

#### 494. Stockbridge, Mass., The Western Star, 9 February 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>

FROM

*Our* CORRESPONDENTS at New-York,  
dated FEBRUARY 2, 1790.

“. . . All letters from Rhode-Island announce that the adoption of the American Constitution by that state has now become certain, and that all ideas of serious opposition are abandoned. Governour *Collins* has written the PRESIDENT a letter highly federal, which has been communicated to Congress, the probable result of which will be a further indulgence to Rhode-Island, 'till the Convention of that state may have time for deliberation.

“The advocates for a discrimination between the original holders and purchasers of Publick Securities, will I trust be very few. In fact, every principle, if not of justice, of sound policy, is against it. The great question is, SHALL THE



DEBTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL STATES BE ASSUMED? THIS MEASURE IS SO INDISPENSABLE TO THE BENEFICIAL OPERATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT, SO ESSENTIAL TO THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE, AND SO INSEPERABLE FROM THE EXECUTION OF JUSTICE, THAT, INDEPENDENT OF IT, I WOULD NEVER CONSENT TO ANY SYSTEM OF FUNDING WHATEVER.

“Two facts I have ascertained since I came here, in which the interests of the United States in general, and the eastern in particular, are interested—1st. That the coarse woolen and linen cloths which have this year been exported from Connecticut to the Southern states, have there a decided preference given to them, both on account of the quality and price, to European manufactures of the same kind—and 2dly. That the quantities exported have been considerable. It is however true, that the want of great capitals in our dealers, will in a considerable degree balance what would be otherwise the natural effect of that preference.”

1. Reprinted seven times by 10 March: N.H. (2), Mass. (2), Pa. (2), Va. (1).

#### 495. *New York Gazette of the United States*, 10 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

On Monday the Grand Jury for the United States of this district, gave a very elegant entertainment to the Chief, Associate, and District Judges, The Attorney General and the officers of the Supreme and District Courts, at Fraunce’s Tavern in Courtlandt-Street. The liberality displayed on this occasion and the good order and harmony which presided gave particular satisfaction to the respectable guests. After dinner the following toasts were drank.

1. The President of the United-States of America.
2. The Vice President of the United-States of America.
3. The National Judiciary.
4. The Senate of the United-States.
5. The Speaker and House of Representatives of the United States.
6. The late National Convention.
7. The Constitution of our Country: may it prove the solid Fabrick of American liberty, Prosperity and Glory.
8. The Memory of those Heroes who fell in the defence of the Liberties of America.
9. His most Christian Majesty and the People of France.
10. Their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands.
11. The friendly powers of Europe and the friends of liberty throughout the Globe.
12. May the blessings of peace be long the happy lot of our Country, and every Citizen of America, feel himself deeply interested, in the due execution of the laws of the Union.
13. The Convention of Rhode-Island. May their wisdom and integrity soon introduce our stray sister to her station in the happy national family of America.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 13 February; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 16 February.

**496. Providence United States Chronicle, 11 February 1790**

At a Town-Meeting held here on Monday last, the Gentlemen whose Names follow were elected Delegates to the State Convention, which is to meet at South-Kingstown on the First Monday in March next, viz. JABEZ BOWEN, Esq; BENJAMIN BOURNE, Esq; Col. WILLIAM BARTON, and JOHN INNIS CLARK, Esq;

**497. Alexander Hamilton to Charles Lee  
Treasury Department, New York, 12 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Your letter of the 31st. of December came duly to hand.

A vessel partly the property of Citizens of Rhode Island can neither be registered as, nor admitted to the privileges of an American bottom.

My circular of the 28th. decemr. 1789 will have furnished an answer to the last clause of your letter.

1. Copy, RG 56, Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Treasury to Customs Collectors (Small Ports), DNA.

**498. Jeremiah Olney to Alexander Hamilton  
Providence, 12 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I am Sorry to inform you that the Convention which is to meet in this State on the first monday in March next for the purpose of Deciding on the New Constitution, has not so Federal a Complection as I Could wish. Last monday was the Day for Electing Deligates throughout the State. We have heard from all the Towns and find on the Closest Calculation that we Can Recon only 32 Feds & 38 Antis. This makes our prospect Doubtful indeed. However the Federal Interest will Exert Every nerve to Effect if posible the Adoption of the Constitution, for without it Poverty & Distress of Every Kind will be our unavoidable lot. The antis have a plan for adjourning the Convention & posponing the Consideration of the Question to September next. Could any thing Come from Congress or Influential Characters in New York to their Friends here in time to lay before the Convention, it would have the Happiest Effect.

◆ *To view this document, visit the University of Wisconsin Digital Collection at <https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Constitution>*

1. FC Olney Papers, RHi.

**499. Providence Gazette, 13 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The following is a List of the Delegates chosen in the several Towns, on Monday last, to represent this State in Convention, viz.

*Newport*, George Hazard, Henry Marchant, George Champlin, Peleg Clarke, George Sears, William Tripp.

*Providence*, Jabez Bowen, Benjamin Bourne, William Barton, John I. Clark.

*Portsmouth*, Job Durfee, Burrington Anthony, Peter Barker, Giles Slocum.

*Warwick*, Benjamin Arnold, Christopher Greene, Gideon Arnold, Thomas Rice.

*Westerly*, Walter White, George Stillman.  
*North-Kingstown*, Bowen Card, William Congdon.  
*South-Kingstown*, Samuel Potter, Jonathan Hazard.  
*East-Greenwich*, Job Comstock, Pardon Mawney.  
*Jamestown*, Benjamin Remington, Nicholas Carr.  
*Smithfield*, John Sayles, Andrew Waterman.  
*Scituate*, James Aldrich, Nathan Bates.  
*Glocester*, Hon. Daniel Owen, Stephen Steer.  
*Charlestown*, Joseph Stanton, jun. Thomas Hoxsie.  
*West-Greenwich*, William Nichols, William Mathewson.  
*Coventry*, Benjamin Arnold, Job Greene.  
*Exeter*, Joseph Reynolds, Job Wilcocks.  
*Middletown*, Joshua Barker, William Peckham.  
*Bristol*, William Bradford, Shearjashub Bourne.  
*Tiverton*, Israel Manchester, Abraham Barker.  
*Little-Compton*, ——— Davis, William Ladd.  
*Warren*, Nathan Miller, Samuel Pearce.  
*Cumberland*, John S. Dexter, Levi Ballou.  
*Richmond*, James Sheldon, Thomas James.  
*Cranston*, Peter Stone, Jonathan Sprague.  
*Hopkinton*, John Brown, Jesse Maxson.  
*Johnston*, Noah Mathewson, William King.  
*North-Providence*, Elisha Brown, Esek Esten.  
*Barrington*, Thomas Allen, Samuel Allen.  
*Foster*, John Williams, William Hayward.

(*No Account received from New-Shoreham.*)

1. Reprinted: Providence *United States Chronicle*, 18 February; *Newport Mercury*, 22 February; New York *Daily Advertiser*, 26 February.

## 500. Providence Gazette, 13 February 1790

*To the impartial PUBLIC.*

In Mr. Carter's Paper of November 25, 1775, the Subscriber published the following Advertisement:

"Every Person indebted to the Subscriber, by *Bond, Note or Book*, whose Debt has been of more than two Years Continuance, is requested to make Payment, or renew his Security, as soon as is possible with Convenience, in order to prevent Trouble, and maintain just Friendship: And all who have had the like Request made to them by former Advertisements, and have not complied, are earnestly requested to comply with this Notification. Those whose Debts are even of the shortest Standing, are requested to make Payment, which would be most desirable from all; as I am rendered utterly unable to pay my Creditors, who throng for Payment to such a Degree, as renders it unnecessary for me to invite them, and whose Patience I shall be under a Necessity to abuse, if Payment is not made to me."

Directly after this Publication, the Thirteen British Colonies of North-America were all forced into extreme Perturbations and Convulsions, originating from their united and arduous Struggle in opposing the arbitrary Mandates of Great-Britain. The public Confusion and Anguish were so great, as to render it impossible for the Inhabitants of said Colonies to attend to their private Affairs, which continued after Peace was declared with Great-Britain, and after said Colonies were acknowledged to be independent States by the Powers of Europe—but they continued from another Cause, viz. from a Misunderstanding betwixt the Ruled and Rulers of said States.—This Contest became much more alarming than the Contest with Britain:—This threatened not only a Dissolution, but an universal Desolation of said States, which caused every thinking Person to learn that they were under a Necessity of forming a *federal Head*, which should have Energy and Power to restore Union, Concord, and universal Benevolence, founded on the invariable Laws of Truth, Mercy and Justice—to which all said States have acceded, except the State of Rhode-Island, which is now in a hopeful Way of acceding to the same.—The Completion of which prophesyeth, that the People of said States shall become the happiest on Earth, and free from public Perturbations; which will enable all the Inhabitants of said States to settle all their private Affairs honourably and peaceably, &c.

To this End, the Subscriber doth hopefully, joyfully and earnestly request, that every Person who is indebted in anywise to him, would come and settle immediately.—He also desires all to whom he is justly indebted, to come to a speedy Settlement.—His Intention is, to attend at his Brick House, in Providence, every Thursday, from One to Five o'Clock in the Afternoon, with Submission to the all-disposing Power.

JOSEPH HEWES, *Physician*.

*Providence, February 1, 1790.*

#### 501. Massachusetts Centinel, 13 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

Dr. JOHN TAYLOR, late of this State, is now in Rhode-Island, publishing against the federal Government—and it is thought, if that State adopts the Constitution, he, as a reward for his labours, will be chosen a Federal Senator.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazette*, 17 February; *Newport Herald*, 18 February; Pittsfield, Mass., *Berkshire Chronicle*, 25 February; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 1 March; *New Hampshire Concord Herald*, 3 March; and *Charleston City Gazette*, 22 March.

#### 502. Jeremiah Olney to Philip Schuyler Providence, 15 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>

. . . I am Sorry to inform you that the members who are to Compose our State Convention on the first Monday in March next have not so Federal a Completion as we Expected—we have had the Returns from the Towns since the Elections on Monday last, and we Cannot Recon upon the Strictest Scrutiny more than 32 Federal members & the Remaining 40 are all antis, we however are not without hopes, that the Encreasing Necessity of our becomeing a member of

the Union & the unremitted Exertions of the Federal Interest will have a happy influence in the Convinton & Direct their views to an Enlightened Decision on this Important Question. . . .

1. FC, Shepley Library Collection, RHi.

**503. John Taylor**  
**Newport Mercury, 15 February 1790**

Mr. Edes, in your paper of the 28th ult. you say a piece signed John Taylor is not admissable into the Newport Herald, you know, and I stand ready to prove, you told me on Monday the 18th January last, that whatever I would write, sign, and send, you would publish, be the same what it may, saying your press was impartial and should be open to all parties whatever—a gentleman standing by, said, Mr. Edes, will you publish a piece against yourself? Yes, says Mr. Edes, I will; after all this, you say I have the effrontery to offer my piece for a place in your Herald, which you have refused to publish as above; notwithstanding your offer and solemn promise—neither of which I find are the least binding on you; therefore I will now leave it to the impartial public to determine what you are, but in the mean time will publicly say, a man of truth you are not—Peter, you boldly assert you are not the author of the Correspondent, or any thing of the kind—I believe there is not a man of sense or honor on earth who would not blush to own he was the author of either of them—Remember the matter for which you first came into this State is nearly over, to wit, paper money, &c. &c. and when the potatoes are all out of the fire, the monkey may retire—Peter, why do you not in this piece once mention the pistols which you so often mentioned in your last? Although my balls did not penetrate your brains, did they so fracture your skull, that you have forgot the whole matter?—Or rather do you quite despair making the public believe one word you said relative to the pistols was true?

Secondly, In perusing the Newport Herald, of the 4th inst. I observed another of your dying kicks, which is truly a small and most miserable performance, much like the author, scarcely worth taking notice of—but we are bid to answer a fool according to his folly, least he be wise in his own conceit—you say, “Is not this State sufficiently polluted with vice of its own growth, that it is cherished from whatever quarter it may be imported? Shall this State become the Botany-Bay of America?—Forbid it Honor! Forbid it Virtue! Forbid it Heaven.”—Peter, I will tell you how to cure the whole matter, only return to the place from whence you came, and this State will no more resemble a Botany-Bay, than you do a man of truth and honor.—You say, a Hercules was found to cleanse the stable of Augaeus of the accumulated filth of thirty years, and you trust there is virtue and magnanimity enough to check, if not remove, the mass of pollution collected in this State in the course of the last six years—Why had you not equally divided the thirty years, mentioned by your celebrated author Hercules?—Why, truly, if you had, fifteen years would have included the first residence of the thick scull’d Peter and his dear friend and Constant Correspondent the well-known Athiest.

Peter, you say, mark that big stranger with a big white wig—Do you mean to attack both me and my wig only? or are you still more rascally and mean to attack the authors of both man and wig? first the barber who sold hair by weight and made his work complete, and no fault was found by the purchaser; or, secondly, would you find fault with the Almighty, whose works are all perfect, notwithstanding he made my body much larger than your skelleton.—Peter, you say, “Especially are such characters to be guarded against as assume the garb of religion,” no wonder you are averse to every thing of a religious nature, as light and darkness cannot dwell together—I am very sorry to find you cannot hear the mention of pistols, religion, or prayers, without running mad—Pistols you mentioned no less than three times on the 21st ult. Prayers three times on the 4th instant, Religion once only—I am extremely glad Religion has penetrated your brains once, though my pistol balls could not—Peter, I will recommend to you and your athiestical company, a careful, serious, and religious perusal of the sixth chapter of Daniel, observe in particular the 7th verse, which says, “Any man who should ask of God a petition for 30 days was doomed to be cast into the den of lions.”—Read on—The hellish plot did not prevent Daniel’s praying,—neither shall yours prevent my prayers and supplications for my unprovoked and malicious foes—Verse 24th, observe the just punishment of these wicked men, and how the lions broke all their bones in pieces, or ever they came to the bottom of the den; and after their death King Darius wrote to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell on all the earth, peace be multiplied unto you—26th, Darius giveth glory and honor to God: May I always do the same, and never fear Infidels or Athiests, who only can kill the body; but may I always fear and obey Him, who after he has killed the body, has power to cast both soul and body into hell, yea, I say let me always fear him, and him only.—Peter, take care lest you and your African brother should finally have a sad meeting in hell.

JOHN TAYLOR.

*February 5, 1790.*

#### **504. Lansingburgh, N.Y., Federal Herald, 15 February 1790**

The convention of the state of Rhodeisland is to convene at South-Kingstown, on the fourth Monday of this month, in order to adopt the constitution.

#### **505. Salem Gazette, 16 February 1790**

In the last session of the Legislature of Rhodeisland, the Federalists in that Body had well nigh been defeated again in their object of calling a Convention for taking into consideration the Constitution of the U.S. by the obstinate anti-federalism of the Upper House. On Friday the 15th ult. a bill for that purpose passed the Lower House, by a majority of 5—which, at eight o’clock on Saturday evening was nonconcurrent in the Upper House by a majority of one, the Deputy Governor. After much time spent in a conference of the two Houses, proposed by the Upper, without effecting any thing, the latter passed a resolution for referring the constitution again to the people at large, which was nonconcurrent

in the Lower House by a majority of 14. This House then passed a bill similar to the former, only varying the time for the meeting of the Convention to a week later, that it might be in order as a new bill: this was sent up, with an adjournment of the Assembly to May: the Upper House nonconcurred this bill as the former, and proposed an adjournment to the next day, which was agreed to by the other.—Sunday, a third bill was passed in the Lower House, by a majority increased to 21, varying from the two former only in point of time. In the Upper House there was a secession of one of the members in opposition to a Convention, so that on the question on this third bill, the House was equally divided, and it fell to the Governor to decide it. His Excellency came forward like a man—made some pertinent observations on the situation of the State, and the necessity of the measure—and with decision gave his voice for concurring—and the bill passed to be enacted into a law.—The Convention is to meet on the first Monday in March.

#### 506. Massachusetts Centinel, 17 February 1790

GEORGE HAZARD, HENRY MARCHANT, GEORGE CHAMPLIN, PELEG CLARKE, GEORGE SEARS, Esq's. and Mr. WILLIAM TRIPP, are elected Members of the Convention of Rhode-Island for ratifying the Federal Constitution, from the town of Newport.

#### 507. Theodore Foster to George Washington Providence, 18 February 1790<sup>1</sup>

To His Excellency the President of the United States.

Sir

Knowing your Excellency to possess that Benevolence of Disposition which so much contributes to the General Happiness of the United States, and in which all the Citizens of the Union so much confide, I cannot refrain from soliciting your Attention to a Matter, which though more especially interesting to Me personally, is yet attended with such Circumstances connected with the Public, as will I hope serve to apologize for the Application.—

At the Session of the General Assembly of this State holden, at Newport, in September Last an Act was passed for levying and collecting, within this State the same Duties, and in the same Manner as in the United States, a copy of which Act for your Excellency's Information I shall forward by one of the first Packets bound from this Place to New York. By this Act the state was divided into two Districts for the purpose of collecting the Revenue Viz. those of Newport and Providence and it is probable that the same Districts will be continued in future.

At the same Session of the General Assembly I was appointed by Unanimous Consent Naval Officer for the District of Providence. The Honorable Ebenezer Thompson Esqr. was appointed Collector and William Tyler Esqr. Surveyor for the same District which offices we now respectively hold. The object of this Address is therefore to intercede with your Excellency for our continuance in the

same Offices after the New Constitution shall have taken place here which we expect will be in the Course of a few Weeks.—

I am not insensible of what was once remarked, in the Reign of the Emperor Theodosius, by Symmachus the Prefect of Rome in a Letter to the Emperor Valentinian 2d. "*That men of Honor could always be found to supply the Offices of State: that in order to discover them the first Step was to reject all Solicitors for Places and among the Rest would certainly be found people who deserved them.*"—But as we are already in Office, by appointment of the Representatives of the People at large, and expect to remain under our appointments respectively until the Adoption of the New Constitution by this State, We cannot but hope that we stand on a Footing a little better than common Seekers of Office referred to in the above mentioned Quotation, more especially as it has been remarked that your Excellency in the Appointments to Offices, under the New Government has generally favoured those Elected by the States, where similiar Offices had been established under the State Governments. And as we hope that our Appointments from the State will be considered at least as a Recommendatory Nomination, having more Weight inasmuch as the Act before mentioned, which we were appointed to carry into Execution, was passed purposely to pave the Way for the Adoption of the Constitution by this State, and which has been faithfully executed in the District of Providence to universal Satisfaction, so far as I know, and in such a Manner as to bear the most scrupelous Enquiry.—

I have been informed that Representations unfavourable to us, or to some of us, have been made to your Excellency, you will thirefore the more readily pardon the present Address or any parts of it which otherwise might appear as indelicate in being too lengthy, too particular or too personal, especially as relating to myself.—

My Appointment to the Naval Office for this District which I now hold arose not by any Means from my having advocated or in any Respect adhered to the Measures of the prevalent Party in the Legislature of th[is] State for Several Years past.—It is universally known th[r]oughout this State that I have ever been considered since the introduction of the paper Money here as belonging to that Description of the Citizens, who have been called the Menority, As a Proof of this I beg leave to mention to your Excellency that the office of First Assistant, who is the Third officer in the Government of this State, became vacant, at the Election in May 1787, by reason of the Non-Acceptance of William Waterman Esqr. who was chosen by the People, in which Cases it falls upon the Assembly to fill up the Vacances, and as Mr Waterman lived in Providence, the Assembly informed the Gentlemen who represented this Town that the Persons whom they should nominate from the Menority should be chosen. I had the Honor of being nominated by Mr John Brown who was then a Representative for Providence and of being unanimously elected and on the Persuasion of the Representatives I accepted the Office with Reluctance knowing that my Political sentiments differed from those of a Majority of the Members. It had been a Question at the same Session of Assembly whether Delegates should be sent to the Convention then about meeting at Philadelphia. It was voted by the lower House to send them, but negatived by a Majority of one in



the Upper House before I took my Seat as a Member which was the Day but one before the Close of the Session.—At the Session in June following I introduced a Bill in the Upper House for Sending Members to the Convention and was happy enough to obtain a Vote for it there, but such was the Effect of Party Spirit and Party Measures that the Lower House in their Turn then negatived it and no Delegates were sent from this State—After the Proceedings of the Convention were published I was pleased with the General Tenor of the Government, and did all in my Power to obtain a Convention of the People for considering and adopting it. This induced the Leaders of the Opposition to the Adoption of the Government here to counteract my Election with the People at large at the next choic[e].—They succeeded on the Idea of my being too much attached to the New Constitution of which I have been assured by the Present Deputy Governor and other Members of the Legislature.—Many of them however have since expressed Regret for the opposition made against Me then, and I have the satisfaction of believing that I now have the Good Opinion of the State at Large having as a Proof of it received my present Appointment to the Naval Office.—

I was educated at, and had the Honors of the College of this State conferred on Me in the Year 1770—I married and Settled in the Town of Providence where I now have a Family—During the most gloomy Periods of the Late War and the whole of the Time that the Enemy had Possession of Rhode Island I was a Member of the General Assembly for Providence and after having Served Six Years as a Representative on my Resignation received from the Town a Vote of Thanks of which I shall take the Liberty of forwarding a Copy being the only vote of the Kind on the Records of the Town.

Mr Thompson was appointed Collector at the same Time I was appointed Naval Officer of the District and with Respect to Morality and integrity of Conduct is a Gentleman of most irreproachable Character.—He was for a Number of Years a Merchant of Eminence in this Town before the War. He has served with Satisfaction to the Public in a Number of important Offices in this State Civil and Military. He was sometime a Representative for the Town in the General Assembly and during the War one of the Upper House a Number of Years.—He is now Cheif Justice of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Providence and President of the Town Council which Offices he hath sustained with Reputation; His Loses by the War were great occasioned by his Property having been vested in the Continental Securities which depreciated to that Degree that he has been a great Sufferer and as he has a la[r]ge Dependent Family and is otherwise out of Business he seems to have some Claim for his Continuance in the Office unless a more worthy Competitor appears which I do not expect will be the Case not to disparage any one.—

Mr Tyler is a Gentleman Younger in Life than Mr Thompson—is married and Settled in this Town, he does now and for sometime past has sustained the Office of a Justice of the Peace. From his Abilities, Vigilance, Activity, independent Principles of Conduct and agreeable Manners I have no Doubt of his Serving the Public with Reputation and Strict attention to the Duties of the Office should he be continued under your Excellency's Administration.—

The only objection to the Continuance of these Two Gentlemen in their respective offices here of which I have heard is that they have not been in Sentiment with those who were for immediately adopting the New Constitution without Amendments and in this respect have favoured some of the Measures of this State in procrastinating the calling a Convention.—This I beleive will have little weight in your Excellencys Mind when it is considered that so large a Part of the People of this State have been opposed to the New Government.—It is rather an Argument in Point of Federal Policy in Favour of their being continued in their Offices as they now have the Confidence and Friendship of the State at large.—To Continue them would therefore have a Tendency to concilliate the Mind of the State to the New Government and to obtain the Confidence of the People at large when they see that the Officers whom they have elected and confided in are continued under the New Administration.—On the contrary the appointment of any Persons to these Offices who might Reasonably be supposed to be under the immediate Influence of some of the principal Mercantile Characters from their personal intimate Friendships and Connexions would excite uneasiness and give occasion for Distrust. With respect to their Fidelity to the United States and to Congress in the Strict unremitted and uninfluenced Execution of the Duties of their respective Offices should they be continued there is not in my Opinion any Doubt.—

I feel happy that amidst all the Difficulties attendant on the Supreme Executive Power of the Nation arising from Misrepresentations formed from interested Motives, Deception can have no Place and that whatever may be the Event of this Application the Offices will not be conferred on the unworthy or those who do not deserve Confidence.—That this Address may appear to your Excellency in a favourable Point of View:—That the Cares and Perplexities ever attendant on the Government of a Great Nation may be alleviated by that Just Return of Gratitude and Confidence due to him who employs his Life and his Talents in promoting the Public Good and that you may long be inabled to dispense to a widely extended and flourishing empire the Blessings of a Mild Just and Equitable Government, enjoying the best of all earthly Treasures the Hearts of the People and that you may ever be happy here and hereafter are the Sincere Prayers of him who begs leave to Subscribe himself with the highest Sentiments of Esteem & Respect Your Excellency's most Obedient Servant

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**508. Brown & Benson to Seth Wheaton  
Providence, 20 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . our Legislature have appointed a Convention to assemble the first of March should they adopt the Constitution it will give a spring to our Business. . . .

1. Copy, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**509. Henry Jackson to Henry Knox**  
**Boston, 21 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

dear Harry

There is almost a certainty that the State of Rhode Island will adopt the Federal Government, the moment their convention come together, in that case Officers will be appointed to execute the Laws of the General Government. . . .

1. RC, Knox Papers, GLC 02437.04516, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, courtesy of The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, at the New-York Historical Society.

**510. John Carter to George Washington**  
**Providence, 22 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

On a Presumption that this truly distressed State is at length on the Point of joining the Union, and that a new Arrangement of Officers will in Consequence take Place, permit me, with all Deference, to ask of your Excellency a Nomination to the Naval Office for this District. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington, Presidential Series*, 166–68n.

**511. Hewes & Anthony to Brown & Benson**  
**Philadelphia, 22 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . for your Particular and Very Intresting Intelligence Respecting the Prospect you have of Joining the Union. we are much Oblig'd, and Sincerely hope the Leaders of the Faction will Not have Sufficient Influence to proc[r]astinate that Desireable Event, for we pant for a Lively and agreeable Intercourse between the States, which we wish may prove Perpetual. . . .

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**512. Castigator**  
**Newport Herald, 25 February 1790**

In looking over the Newport Mercury of last week, I observed that the dismal child of *discord* and *dullness*, who bears the signature JOHN TAYLOR, hath again persisted to defile a News-paper, and hath endeavored to injure the Printer of the Newport Herald. Doctor Taylor may pray, yea he may publish his ribaldry against Mr. Edes; but he will remember, that Mr. Edes stands not on such a sandy foundation as he does—Although a skeleton, as John Taylor calls him, yet he standeth firm, and defies the *laboring* MOUNTAIN, which, it is evident, cannot produce any thing, but a *mouse*, to injure him in the smallest degree.—Mark that big stranger, with a big (*yellow*) *white* wig—How nobly doth he bestride his Rosinante, grown thin by carrying such a mass of crude, undigested matter—With what pomposity doth he elevate his head, thinking that by this way to render himself of some notice to the spectators, who look to see this *wolf in sheeps cloathing*.

Without pretending to the magic art—or to more than ordinary conclusions of human reason, we may safely pronounce Dr. John Taylor most perfectly independent of ever[y] ray of genius, sentiment, connection and common sense—But lo, he prayeth!

I am almost ashamed, to enter the field against such a poor, weak, silly devil as he is, nor could any thing but his superlative impudence, vanity and conceit, have induced me to hold him up to that ridicule which his egregious folly and assumed consequence hath justly brought upon him.

To what shall I liken his Idea-pot? Let me see! I think a kettle-drum will be no improper simile; for a kettle-drum is an instrument of BRASS, concave within, and partly convex without, and is covered with the skin of an ASS, and notwithstanding its emptiness, when beaten upon, or struck upon its head with wooden sticks, produceth a confused noise, almost equal to what, within a short time since, he has twice knocked from his own drum-skull, to arrest the attention of the public, but not to confound the understanding of the weakest mind. Thus I have “*answered a fool according to his folly, lest he should be wise in his own conceit.*”—But go, poor Devil, why should I *kill* thee? there is room enough in the wide world both for me and thee.

### 513. A Monitor

Newport Herald, 25 February 1790

That a man who, on account of his base conduct, has been obliged to quit the State where he lived, and who has had the confidence to deny his own handwriting, should have the audacity to charge an honest man with a breach of his promise is not all surprizing;—but that such a bungling scribler as John the Accoucheur should attempt to be witty is as wonderful as it would be to see a buffaloe affecting to fly or a man laboring to force sunbeams from cabbages.—As there is nothing more impious than an affectation of piety; so there is nothing more ridiculous than an affectation of wit.—Determined as it seems you are to pray even for your foes, do not I beseech you, pious Doctor, murder them with your wit.—Say not a word more about *pistols* and *fractured skulls*, *monkies*, *potatoes* and *dying kicks*.—Have mercy upon us good Doctor, have mercy upon Us! ! !

How a man who could use his tongue so *indecently*, and his pen so scandalously as you have done, could assume a modest face, and talk of honor and *blushing*, cannot I believe be accounted for in any other way than this, that you are as destitute of a sense of shame, as you are of virtue and understanding.—Your reasoning faculties, John, are as feeble, as your wit is groveling.—Of this in your long piece, which *Edes* refused to print, and *Barber* printed with reluctance, you have given a striking specimen.—There you say that *Peter* had mentioned a brace of pistols *three times*, and thence logically infer that he charged you with going armed with *six* pistols.—Suppose a person, John, was to call you a thick-skulled

blunder-buss, twice, would any man of common sense thence conclude that you were twice as great a blunderbuss as you are?—Indeed if such an one should condescend to become acquainted with you he would soon find that your stupidity is incapable of any addition.—If you were capable of reflection, and were possessed of any sense of shame, your indecency and baseness would impose upon you a perpetual silence.—

*“As for your religion it is fit*

*“To match your learning and your wit.”*

Fools may think, to cover their own vices, by criminating others;—but men of sense know that a charge of hypocrisy is not to be wiped away, by charging others with atheism.—If it can afford you any consolation that there are in America hypocrites besides yourself it will not be denied, but you must not expect to derive comfort from imputing atheism to others;—for nobody believes that there is a single Atheist in this quarter of the world; and besides if there was, let me inform you, John, that at the tribunal where you must answer for your conduct State evidences are unnecessary and inadmissible.

If you had not already given plenary proof of that affectation of religion with which Dr. Gordon has charged you, your *thing* in the last Newport Mercury would put the matter entirely out of doubt; for therein you have the confidence to compare yourself to the prophet Daniel, and to proclaim that you are determined to offer up *your* prayers and supplications for your unprovoked and malicious foes: Nay even to pray that you may give glory to God that you may never fear Infidels or Atheists; but fear and obey him who hath power to cast both soul and body into hell.—Remember, John, it is the effectual fervent prayer of the *righteous* man only that availeth much;—and know that this short prayer best becometh you—“Lord be merciful to me a sinner.”

The writer of this piece entertains no malice against your person or your wig.—He envies you neither the prominency of your belly, nor the immensity of the covering of your capital. The former may have been distended at your own expence, and the latter may have been paid for.—It is your moral character;—your hypocrisy, your abominable principles and practices for which you are detested; and for which I hold it to be the duty of every good citizen to deny you a residence in this State.—If you have any regard for your peace depart,—go to the place from whence you came, and there by serious penitence expiate your crimes;—go,—your conversation is infectious,—you are a nuisance to society.—But if you are obstinately determined to remain in this State, keep your *tongue within your teeth*, and a guard upon your pen.—Your tongue is an offence to common decency, and your black-guard writings are disgusting to the public. Not one half of your story has yet been related.—The worst part of your character remains to be disclosed, and, if what has been already written should not prove sufficient to induce you to depart, or to observe a strict silence and a decent deportment, it shall be disclosed.

## 514. Newport Herald, 25 February 1790

MEMOIRS OF *DOCTOR TAIL*.

Seven cities pretended to the honor of giving birth to Homer the Prince of Poets, and seventy times as many may have vied for the honor of being the birth-place of this Doctor of Doctors, yet the biographers know nothing more of him but the *tail* of his life.

He came to this montpelier of America in the year one thousand seven hundred and odd, and made it his residence not in order to recruit a sun-burnt carcase, as the parched Tropicrites do, but as that notorious tatler Fame, says, to recruit his purse, his bed, and his character:—This by the bye is nothing to his injury, for many are the travellers on the same route.

The Doctor is tall—corpulent, and of a ruddy complexion; very erect for one who has passed the grand climacteric,—he is dressed something in the antique stile of the faculty—and his head is graced with a large protuberant furze white wig, which gives a grand medical phiz, like the owl which the Appollonian oracle adopted, as an emblem of wisdom, from its peeping through a small aperture in the bushy ivy.—The Doctor rides a steed that is descended laterally and collaterally, without any lapse, from the famous Rosinante, and though naturally mettlesome, yet by a check with the bit, is so grave and steady, that the Doctor can cogitate, triturate, and decompose while riding, with as much ease as if he was sitting in a stuffed bottomed chair—No wonder then curiosity was all a gig, to know his name, when he first made his entrance in the city, but it was not satisfied until he had thus paraded for some weeks, when the public were [— — —] that he appellated himself Doctor [— — —]. As he was so great in the outward [— — —] the people (like all New-England [— — —] began to guess about him; and they [— — —] [— — —] was equally great in the inward [— — —] [— — —] [— — —] in a thousand, their guesses [— — —] [— — —] [— — —] we learn from some of his [— — —] [— — —] [— — —] is celebrated as a *religious*—[— — —] [— — —] [— — —] *jobbing—and medicating character* [— — —] [— — —] few particulars we will give of each.

Imprimis—*Of his religious character*—Dr. G. the Historian denies this, by charging him with being hypocritical; but this might arise from some private pique, or rather because Doctor Tail was more religious than he was, as he was obliged often to suspend a performance of the duties of his function, to collect materials for his history; or rather, the long and short of it was this, the two Doctors held different creeds—Doctor Tail's was like a purse of elastic gum, which contracts or distends according to the stock in it—a pliant creed, which is happily subservient to temporal wants.—In illustration thereof, we beg leave to narrate a fact:—Our Æsculapius sold a pair of oxen to Col. G. of P——, and received the value of them—the same night he privately took one of them back, and converted it to his own use, for Col. G. was not orthodox in political sentiments, and no faith ought to be kept with heretics—This action, according to the hundredth Canon of the Church of Rome, is lawful, and is, agreeably to an act of that Hiera[r]chy, entitled “An Act of Replevin.” Had the Doctor therefore, tabernacled within the pale of that Church, he would have been canonized as a Saint, instead of being stigmatized as a Hypocrite and a \*\*\*\*\*.

Secondly—*His domestic character*:—Some have charged him with an acerbity of temper, but this arose from an ignorance of him; for he certainly knew how to succeed with the Fair, who never sip nectar but from sweets.—The Doctor having been married almost as many times as the Man represented in the Gospel, of whom it was questioned, which of his seven wives would appertain to him hereafter?—His last courtship and marriage was to a Miss —, of —, in good troth, a fine woman—Her friends were prejudiced against the Doctor, but he gained her and her dowry too.—This beloved wife being in travail, the Doctor, like a kind husband, would let no one *obstetricate* but himself, as he had studied and performed with great success, according to the celebrated Doctor Slop's system; but, alas! she died—The Doctor felt the loss like a man of sensibility; but he had the satisfaction to reflect, that she was treated *secundum artem*—After she was laid out (so solicitious was he to honor her remains) that he measured the corpse himself, mounted his steed, rode to the carpenters, and gave directions for her coffin: But this attention was so uncommon, in that part of the country where he lived, that envy began to whisper her calumnies against him, and the sudden death of Mrs. — a short time after ( the only woman who attended) served as a corroborating proof that all was not right; but malice could never substantiate a charge—It is therefore impossible there could be any truth in the suggestions; for

\*\*\*\*\* *though it hath no tongue,  
Speaks with most miraculous organ.*

Thirdly—*In public life*:—He is the highest of republicans—His attachment to liberty is so great, that in his idea, the sinews of government ought to be as fragile as the filmy gossamer.—In a political club (of which he was a member) he displayed great brilliancy in supporting this sentiment and opposing the contrary, but he was beat; and like all wise politicians, appeared to acquiesce, until he returned home, when he spirited up opposition as much as ever; and now, out of pure regard to this people, hath generously come among them, to fix the wavering and hearten up the strong.

Fourthly—*In jobbing*—He hath succeeded beyond all expectation:—The great Fordyce, of London, was celebrated for having made 46,000 guineas in one day in the Alloy-Fordyce had a capital to do it with; but our Doctor made a spec—in the purchase of a manor, for which he contracted to pay £15,000 sterling, at a time when he could not command £100—He some how or other has paid four fifths of the sum, and the remainder he will probably never pay, as he has made over his lands to his son, and left the States which countenance the recovery of property—The fifth part that is unpaid, he considers is only an interest, which he as debtor, derives the benefit of, instead of his creditor.

Fifthly and lastly—*As a medical character*—He is justly celebrated.—Like the self-taught natives of America, he prescribes only herbals and roots—He found out the nature of purslain without books; and extracts the titillating virtues of the cuckoo pintle, without having served an apprenticeship at chemistry: And so friendly is he to man, that he never goes out without loading his pockets and his bags with every alexipharmick that can check or remove, the poison of disease—With all these solid qualities, he is the most gallant man alive—Tho' not elo-

quent, no one could use his *tongue* more mellifluously than he.—In a word, he is the Wonder of the Age—And if we may be allowed to judge of his *exit* from his entrance, we can with safety predict, that his death will be illustrious, and that all people who may have heard of his fame, shall lament for him, saying, Ah Doctor! and he shall be interred with all that Eastern magnificence, that was displayed at the burial of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah King of Judah, viz—He shall be buried with the burial of an Ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the Gates of the City.

**515. Brown & Benson to Severin Erickson  
Providence, 27 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We are pleas'd to be inform'd that you have made such arrangements as may in future facilitate our ~~business~~ intercourse with you ~~as we expect to have~~ and with your friends at Charlston for an introduction to Whom we now return you our thanks and as the Legislature of our State have appointed a Convention which assembles next week to discuss the federal Constitution we hope a few days will introduce us into the Union after which we shall avail ourselves of an early opportunity to ship some Rum to Messr. Man & Foltz of Charlston & we have no doubt their Conduct will fully Justify your Commendations of them, which may produce a Connection that may be extensive & Permanent & operate to our Mutual Emolument. . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**516. Isaac Senter to George Washington  
Rhode Island, 27 February 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

From the change of sentiment, gradually taking place, in this state, in consequence of the accession of the State of North Carolina, & the happy Effects of the Government, which begins to operate so favourably, under the Auspices of your Excellency's administration; we have the pleasing expectation of this State's soon becoming a member of the federal Republic; in consequence of which a number of officers will probably be appointed to collect the revenue &c. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**517. Providence Gazette, 27 February 1790<sup>1</sup>**

On Monday next the Convention of this State, for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States, will meet at South-Kingstown.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 1 March.



**518. Theodore Foster: Minutes of the Rhode Island Convention  
1-6 March 1790**

Monday March 1st. 1790.—

The Convention met at the state House in the County of Washington at 3 oClock in the Afternoon

Tuesday Morning—The House assembled and called—

Mr. Marchant from the Committee appointd to draw up Rules made Report—  
The Sixth Rule objected to by Job Comstock as not being sufficiently explicit—  
Supported in the objection by Mr. Jonathan Hazzard

Mr. Champlin says he does not consider that there is not any material Difference  
in the Report and the amendmnt proposd—explain the Nature of the  
Term “Previous Question”—says the Gentleman is alarmed without Cause—

John sayles will observe one Thing—

It is confessed by both the worthy Members that the Report and the Amendmt  
mean the same Thing—

He does not think so that the Amendmts. is most clear and is for adopting it—

Mr. Bourne says That the Report is [best?] because it allows the Whole Business  
to be taken up at large—That the Amendmt will confine the House to the  
Two particul[a]r Questions mentiond in the Amendt.

J: Hazzard. did not intend to say any thing on the Mater—that the Gentlemen  
both mean the same thing—That he does not suppose the Gentlemen advoc[a]ting  
the Report will depart from what they profess

B. Bourn calls for Reading the Amendt. proposd by J Comstoc[k] confirms  
what he had said

And. Waterman There has been much said about the Previous Question: That  
if a Motion is made to Postpone or adopt there can be no previous Question—

J. Hazzard explains the Nature of the Previous Question—

And. Waterman mentions the famous Dispute on the Proceedings at the Last  
Sess[i]o[n]

B. Bourne says We have a Right to adopt the Rules of the House

J. Comstock: is not alarm[ed]—not startld—not afraid—We make Rules that  
no adva[n]t[a]ges may be taken—Moves for Vote—

Elisha Brown moves that the Amendmt. be added—That the Prisd. [Presi-  
dent] has a Right to determine

Mr. Marcht. says Mr. Comstock has observd that from the Expression adopting  
the Rule of the Lower [House] will preclude what was intendd to be remi[di]ed  
has known as many as 8 or 10 Previous Questions put in Congress for maturing  
and Ripening the Business—The Report is agreeable to parlamenta[r]y Proceedings

Andrew. Waterman

J. Hazzard has known that in Congress There was a Question in Congress  
where the seat of Congress should be

Wm. Congdon What need of all this Contention if both mean the same  
Thing—Let us adopt the Amendt.

Report and Amendment both Read—

Geo. Hazzard We may lead ours[e]lves into an Error—*That* the Report is more extensiv than the Amendt.—That the Ament. is confin[in]g the Business to Two Motions—Why shou[ld]d we thus fetter ourselves—is sorry to see publick Acts made for particu[lar] purposes—wishes The Laws may like the sun shine on all—can see no Reason for making an Am[endment] Confin[in]g ourselves.

J. Comstock. says he made the Draft of this Rule before Mr Marchant inserted any thing respecting it[.] move[s] the Word Especially be insertd in the Room of [Never?]

Gen. Staint[on] we cannot be too explicit[.] supposed at the End of the week There should be a Question whether there should be a Question Adopt or adjourn—Can the Prisdent then dispense of putting the Question—

President. explains how he understands the Report—and then on.

Pardon Mawney moves again for adoption of the Amendt.

Presid[en]t. about to put the Vote when Mr. Sheldon moved to know what Rules of the Lower House are intended.

Mr Marcht. explains. Notes &c on the Table

She[l]don moves that the por[tion] of the Report respecting the Rules and orders of the Lower House be struckd out—agreed to by the House—Struck out—

The Rules read again—

J. Comstock still moves that his Ament. be added—Says He That makes the Law his Rule May bend it like a Leaden Tool—That Disputes may arise—To av[o]id them adopt

Pardon Mawney Seconds him—

~~Vote at a Taken~~—conversation. Elisha Brown &c

J. Comstock. Is not so apt to see sights as to suppose a Lyon in the Way—But there has been so much said he is still further induced to wish the Amendts. may be adopted—

J. Hazzard Gives the History of the Dispute between Mr. Marcht. and Mr. Comstock all Three of them having been on the Committee—conclud[e]s that both mean the same Thing—

Mr. Comstock makes an Amendt.

B. Bourne again objects to the Amendt.

~~Vote Taken~~

Govr. Bradford. Suppose J Comstock moves immediat[e]ly on the Rules being adopted That We adjourn and Govr Bradford moves that We adopt—can the Question be put—President says he should not be at Liberty to give the Vote for the Adoption

J. Comstock. Fair Play is a Jewel—He wants no Advantage

Mr. Marct. Will one man explain the Nature of the Previous Question—The Gent. mistakes the Previous Question for the Main Question—Goes at length into the Nature of it by illustrations—

J. Comstock is not fond of being afraid—but they will force him to be afraid—He is more zealous than ever for adopting the Amend[m]ent.

M Champlin—Enquires whether the Adoption of the Amendment will not preclude those who wish the Main Question to be put—

President says If there are any Rules & orders Mr. Comstock has said enough Comstock however goes on to enlarge—He wants not to trick any Body—Wishes to act agreeable to the Wishes of the People—The Voice of the People is the Voice of God—If it was the best Constitutio[n]—it wou[ld] be a bad one if disagreeable to the Minds of the People, and he will not agree to it till the Minds of the People are reconciled to it—

Gen. Stanton Thanks the President for having the Patience to hear Mr. Comstock.

Mr. Bourne Says. That if a Motion is made and seconded it is inconsistent with Rule that any Previous Question should be made—

J. Sayles calls for Vote

Jon. Hazzd. answers Bourne

Ad[op]t 39

Not. 27

#### Twelve Majority for the Adoption

M. John Williams moves that the Vote be now finished.—

John Sayles says he has a Motion in writing.

Col. Barton moves That Monitors be appointed[.] objected to by Gov. Bradford—Barton says Monitors appointed in Masachussets.—Motion agreed to—

Monitors. Mr. Bates, Col. Barton.—

Mr. Sayles. Moves That a Committee be appointed to draw up a Bill of Rights and Amendmts. and that this Convention be adjourned—to a future day.

B. Bourne. moves for the Previous Question That the Constitution be first Read—

Instructions from Portsmouth deliverd to the Prest. by Mr Elam read—by Mr Channing—

Adjourned till afternoon.

Wednesday Morning March 3d. In Convention

Mr Marchant. Gives a History of the Difficulties attending the Mode of apportion[ing] taxes in Congress—Has observed on the Difficulties of an Actual Enumerati[on]—

Says it would operate against us to have this mode altered—That he has Fear on the subject—That he will submit to the Determination of the Majority—Says that Mr Hazzard has been so Candid as to acknowledge that as the Numbers increase to the Westward the Taxes will lessen here—That there is no custom in the World of a Country like this—That the Wealth of a Country will not increase in Proportion to the Numbers—That therefore as we shall not increase in Numbers Equal with the other States it will be advantageous to us to agree to the propos[ed] Mode—We find by Experience that no System of Government can be at once established—None of the New England States have proposed an Amendment in this Respect—

Jos Stanto[n]. says the Reason why no State has objected to this mode of Taxation by Numbers was because they were represented in the Convention and made the best Bargain they could[.] That 20 Planters in the Southern States are worth 30 of Us.

Genl. Miller says That there is no wieght in the Gentleman's Motion—That he will grant this 20 Planters have more Property than 300 Of our Farmers—This is no Time now to object to the Constituti[on] we are now to take—

Col. Barton We have met on a very interesting Peice of Business as much so as any ever within the[se] Walls—agreed to hear the Constitution Discussed by Paragraphs.—He is open to Conviction if it appears Detrimental he will be against this.—the section before us[—]the Power of Direct Taxes—asks If the state of Rhode Island was ordered to raise 20,000 Dollars?—

Mr Marchant Answers him—That

Barton says if there is not

George Hazzard says enough has been said on this Head—But we have always found it Difficult to make the Estimate and apportion Taxes agreeable there to in this State—In [— — —] this Clause the best way—our own Experience has shewn that it is impossible to obtain a Just Estimate—Could not obtain a Just one[.] It Has been made clearly to appear that on the Principl[e] of Numbers we shall be advantaged by an Adoption—we shall gain in a future day—Mr. Jon. Hazzar[d] observed that this Clause is the most [national?] part of the Constitution—which he had objections—Shall we Risque putting our Country into Difficult Situation for—

We know our Country is over loaded with Debt—It Draws his Attention—This Debt of 54 Millions of Dollars is like a Cloud cast upon us—it eats like a Canker Worm Night & Day—Mr. Wm Congdon objects to Mr Hazard going on—He goes on to Observe that the Landed Interest ought to agree to this Measure—The Farmers objected to the 5 per Cent Act—

He heard a Merchant say before he would go through a Revolution before he would agree to the 5 per Cent

Wm. Congdon says it has been observed that the apportionment of Taxes in this state has been by Estimate—That if Taxes were to be ass[ess]ed on our Jamestown & Portsmouth by Numbers how unequal would it be—

Mr Marchant answers him that the Quota will be assessed by Numbers but will be Detaild.

Gen. Miller says we stand with the United States as Jamestown is to this state—The mode of Estimate is therefore most advantag[eou]s to us

Gen. Stanton. says we ought to be honest that Gen. Miller has given us this Argu[men]t

Mr Bourne. says That the other New England States have not objected to this mode—Their silence on the occasion is a strong Argument in favour of this Mode for am[endment].—

says the Reason assignd in North Carolina against this Clause was because they supposed it was in Favour of the [New] England States.

Elisha Brown—says we have been at great Expens[e] to have an Estimate taken in our State—Why should this Expen[se]

Says they are

Col. Champlin Answers That he was a Member on the Committe of appor-tioning the Taxes—That the Estimate was not right—That no Tax has been

assessed by it—no Regard had to the Estimate—There cannot be a Just Estimate Taken.

Mr. Marchant proposes that no vote should be taken—

The President rises and agrees to it[—]mentions Col. Sayles's Motion—That it is given way that Col. Sayles Motion be postponed to give opportunity for Discussion—

Elisha Brown says his Town was Honest—He gave a Just account of his Mon[e]y.—

Conversation Desultory—Stanton says the Flying Committes for taking the Estimate were like Jack with a Lanthorn.

Jona. Hazzard says the Estimate of 5 [percent] was a Just one—it was taken when the Enemy were on Rhode Island—That the Flying committes were appointed to Rectify Mistakes.

President proposes to get rid of this Section—by proceeding—

J. Sheldon. inquires whether an Amendment is to be proposed on this subject—He has been attentive to the observations.—The principal objections he had heard is the Difficulty of obtaining a Just Estimate—He does not think this a suffic[i]ent Just object[i]o[n]—suppose Taxes were assessed in this State by Numbers.—would it be so good as the Mode now proposd—says that Mr. Marchant observed that the Inhabitants of the Land of Canaan—

Gen. Mil[le]r why need we quarrel with our own Bread & Cheese—

Sheldon Replies—Is this the way that we are going to establish a Government for the United States by taking an Advantage

Mr Bourne—says That Mr. Sheldon ought to show that the[n] his Mode is best—Reads an objection made in the south

Gov. Bradford. Is pleased that so much Candour has been shown—That he is brought Up by some observations made by some of the Gentle[me]n that we ought not to see the other Parts of the Union—That he is clearly of opinion That the Mode objected to is the best for us[.] our Wealth will encrease and be greater in Proporti[on] than their Numbers—We were one great Seaport—our Navigation encreasing—Why shoud We be concernd Respecting the other States if they are contentd—shold be glad that Mr Sheldon could point out a Mode of obtaining a Just Estimat—Can he find a Committee to go through the Con[tinen]t. If it is to be done by the states can it be dependd on—No plan so well fixed as this for Commerce—He has objections to the Constitution—But it [is] best for us to adopt it—

He does not know whether it will appear perfectly right in the Eyes of him who sees through all things—There are indeed Men in the City of London [who] are worth more than whole Towns in the Kingdom

Sheldon answers That Gov. Bradford has mention[ed] if we advert to the Kingdom of England—We shall find no Instance there of taxes assessed by Numbers—and no Instance in the United States—There is great difference in the states—The southern states

Gov. Bradford—Says—That he acknowledges That it will not do to tax individuals by Numbers—But in apportioning taxes to Countries it is the best way—it will not do to tax an Inhabitan[t]

Jona. Hazzard. Proposes That the Mode of ~~Estimating~~ apportion[in]g the Taxes should be by their Exports—

Gov. Bradford Answers him that the Imports of Provisions must be also considered—

Jona. Hazzard mentions Virginie Negroes—interruptd.—He is glad no Virginieman is present.

This Section of the First Article read—no objection.

4th. Section read. John Sayles says that this Section is very exceptionable—It has been objected to by the States which have Ratified the Constitution—Congress never ought to have the Power of altering the Mode of Elections—It ought to be Reserved to the People—

Mr. Marchant says the Gentleman has mistook the Point—*The Tim[e]s Places & Manner*—not the *Qualifications*—Not a Word said about the *Qualifications* otherwis[e] than that they shall be the same as for choosing Representatives in their own states—

Jo Hazz[ar]d—says That every Part of the Election is at the Discretion of

Mr. Bourne—says this is the most exception[able] part of the Constitution—No Amendment has yet been proposd which is likely to take Place—Proposes that the Congress should not interfere unless the Legislature neglect to make Provision—

seems to be agreed to by the House—

Col. Barton. Vindicats this Clause of the Constitu[tio]n—Says the Mercantile Influence is always great—such the Case of a ~~Person~~ an Election orderd in Newport—The People may then apply to Congress for Redress—  
agreed to go on

5th Section.

J. Sheldon. says that it ought to be more explicit—That the Words 'from Time to Time[']—are indefinite—It may be from 50 Years to 50 Years.

Jon. Hazzard. says there is no Danger—The Congress have published & will be published—Let us make no objections but such as are necessary—The Congress are responsible to the Senat[es] and Assemblies

agreed to be referred to the Committee

Section 6th.

Jona. Hazzard objects—proposes that a Person should be appointed from Each State to determine what shall be allowed—proposed to be referred to the Committe

7th. Section. Jos. Stanton objects to the Power of the President to reject a Bill—says that he has the Power of one Third of Congress—That it would [be] Sufficient for the President to refer it back and if both Houses of Congress and if they adherd that the Law should be pass[ed]

Mr March[an]t. says the Gentleman on Reflect[ion] will be conv[inc]ed?][.] The English Constitution admird by the World—States the Nature of the Balances in Govt. and the checks necessary—The British House of Commons may be consu[l]td—States the "Process of an Act through Congress and the Advan-

tages which will arise to the People—This the most be[a]utiful Part of the Constitu[tion]—we ought [to] be careful how we destroy it.

Gen. Miller says it is well as it is—There are Two Interests in this Government—a Northern & Southern Interests—The Presid[en]t to head the Balanc[e]—Therefore let Two Thirds of Congress determin

Mr. Bourn When it is Considerd that [the?] President is Electd by the People—That he state[s] his objection in Writing—He is responsible to them—Mentions that Massachuset[s] has a veto

Gov. Bradford Confirms what Genl. Miller had observd.—hopes Genl. Stanton will give up his objection.

Gen. Stanton says there is a Disposit[i]o[n] in all the Race of Adam to assume Power[—]It may be obse[rve]d—is sorry we so often Refer to the British Govent.—The present President is a Republican & the Gentleman who menti[one]d it is a Republican—

Mr. Marchant explains—further the Advantage their Negatives may postpon[e] Business when to[o] suddenly passed

Referred to the Committee to be appointd to draft Amendments.

Afternoon.—

8th. Section of the Constitution read—and now under Consideration—no objections made and Govr. Bowen moving to proceed—the 9th. Section is therefore read—

Gen. Stanton. says that the 9th Section tends to encourage the African Trade—He there[fore] disapproves of it—and wou[ld]

B. Bourn. says it is singular that a Gent who has advocatd that no powers of Congress ough[t] to have been giv[e]n more than were allowd by the old Con[gress]—That the old Congress had no Power to interfer by this Constitution[.] the Congress may abolish that Trade in 20 Years a valuab[le] Acquisit[i]o[n]

John [Job] Comstock—Mr. Bourne has missed the Mark he does not find that the Congress can in 20 Years—put an End to the [trade]—The [clause] allowing the 20 Year Impo[rta]tion will extend to the End of this Generation—The First Congress wou[ld] not allow their Vessels to be used in the Trade[.] The Trade iniquitous—Righteousness exalt[eth] a Nation But Iniquity is a Reproach to any People

Jon. Hazzd Wishes to propose Amendts in which we may be interested—The south[er]n states must answer for themselves—They must Conduce their own Legislation as they please—They can regulate their Trade as they pleas[e]—We are not interested [on] one Hand nor answerable in our Consciencs on the other—They must answer for [their] own Crimes—The southern states will separate from us before they will agree to this Alternate proposed—They will say that they do not interfer with our [Northern?] Legislatures why should we with theirs—The Constitution does not prevent any of the states from suppressing the Trade—to move for this Amendt. will be to abridge the sovereignty of the states

J[ob] Comstock. according to Gentleman[’s] Doctrin[e] He will permit his Neighbor to murder his Neighbor—We give up things indiff[er]ent—why should we not insist on the Southern states giving up an iniquitous Measure—

We are commendable for the Laws we have made—We ought to address Congress on the subject—to bear Testimony against. Shall the same Community of which [we] are a part Join in Abomin[ati]on[s].—

Mr. Champlin agrees with J. Hazzrd[.] The Convention of Philadelphia were dis[p]osed even discussed to suppress slavery—They found great Diffic[ul]ties[.] Did what they could—could agree on no other Measure.—At the End of 20 Years they ca[n]—If we move for an Amendt. on this Head it will lessen our Influence on the Account of oth[er] Amends. This Constitu[tion] has no Influence on the Laws of the states—Mentions the Laws we passed—They are sufficient—if any have more tender feelings

Col. Barton. I think this a Mater of very great Consequ[ence.] We are all on bo[a]rd of one ship—The Ship of Liberty—to enjoy it ourselves but that it may spread through the World—he concluds it is the Wishes of every person composing this Convent[ion]. inad[e]qu[ate] to the Task. Sometimes uses improper Words—Sometimes Mistakes—hopes not now.—I beg Liberty to call the Attention to the Res[olution] of C[ongress] in 1776—They were then sensible of the situ[ation] this Country was in—What did they do[.] they Resol[ve]d that no Vessels sho[u]ld be usd—Sorry I am that any thing should appear to countenance this statute Order—wishes all men may be free—can any one Justify the Trade to Guinea—no one can—Mr. Jo. Hazzard says the Iniqu[itie]s must rest with them & their Child[ren] I say no if we come into the Compact—we partner with them[.] as I love the Con[stitution] let us therefore show our Disappr[o]bati[on] of that Trade—

Jona. Haz. I am Sory to rise again. I am Sure it is not for the Interests of this State to ask for Amendt. concerning—The Gentlemen who have spoken have acted on right Principle. I must Rely on it that the Motion is contesting the Advantag[es] we now have—It will be Stabbing to the Vitals [of] the S. States—Do they not mean to pay their Quota of the Debts acquired with them—begs the Gentlemen to let the South. States act for thems[elve]s—why shall we struggle [for] what we can never obtain[.] Impollitic to ask for too much—we may obtain something but not all.—There is another objection—a Number of Gentlemen[.]the Aboli[tio]n Soc[ie]ty[.] in this state have attemptd to Join [in] influenc[ing] the Whites—That is turning the world upside dow[n]—Let the southern states alone—He is a Land Holder—We cannot injure one order of Men without injur[ing] all

Mr. Geo. Hazd. This General Law—why should we bring a particular Matt[er] into Consideration—Laws have been made in this state Against the Slave Trade.—When the convention came to consider the Mat[ter] on General Principl[e]s they consid[er]d that a Part of the Community were more inter[est]d than others—

We will give notice to this Part of the Community that they must Submit in Time to the General Regu[la]tion—would our own Experience warrant an immed[iate] Law for abo[li]tion of all slav[er]y—we have in part undertaken it—Was all to be dealt with as they re[a]son, who cou[ld] be Justified—He has been in the Trade[—]he is not convi[n]ced of its Wickedness—But will Submit to it has been so much expectd he will no further pursue.—Man is but Man[—]His Feelings are affectd by his Interest—Touch a Man here he will be affectd—as



the Evil spirit said of Job—may be aplyed to the Possessor of Slaves. as Congress has consid[e]rd it [in] this Light as they have done—as such Reasonab[le] Measur[e]s have been proposd let us make the best of it—let us improve—mentions the Measur[e]s we have adoptd—Let us go on—

If we totally ab[o]lish Slav[e]ry it will Ruin many persons.—We have read of Persons of old who made great outcry but were not altogether blameless—Time and Season for all Things—we may go to[o] fast—will not be possible to effect the Full Ab[oli]tion of Slav[e]ry at present—after all the Reflections

Gen. Stanton cannot but observe what a Beautiful Introduction the Constitu[t]i[o]n commen[ces] w[i]th—Reads it—Why in the Nam[e] of Com[mon Sense?] should not this Liberty be extended to the Africans[?] sorry it has been urged that it greatly affect[s] the southern states—It has been a capital object with them.

Gen. Miller. says that he has the Word of God in his House—It does not prohibit Slavery—Why should we make Laws for the Africans for the French for the Dutc[h]—From now it will [- - -] here the Number of Inhabitants—If we may now secure Innovations—This Gentlm. may make a Law that he should look like him which god forbid[.] Paul was willing to pay for the Labor of his Serv[an]t.—

Gen Stanton said Paul treatd him as a Brother—if General Miller will treat his Africans as his Brethren he will be contented—

Mr. Marcht. Millers Time mispent—if the Gentleman from Charlest[on] had advertd to the Last Clause in the 4th & 9th Clauses[.] Does the Gentleman suppose that we can obtain an Amendm[en]t which if obtained would dissolve this Compact—stands at all Times as Advocate for Liberty public & Private—Respects the Gentlemen who have adv[o]cated the Abolition of Slavery—we have a Right to encourage the Abolition if we can do it without infringing the Laws of particular State[s.] The old Congress made an Agree[m]en[t] which they personally Adhered to—but it was only recommendat[o]ry. The old Congress had no power to make a Law—The Convention generous wise and Candid did all that could be done.—Wishes to see as much candour in those who have now here to determin[e] in this Consti[tutio]n—mentions the Complying Disposi[tio]n of Southern Members—The Slaves in South Carolin[a] equal to Half their real Estate—This Property was obtaind when it was not Suppress[ed;] not lawful even in this State—They acquird a Right which they supposd to be Equal to that to their Real Estate—

President calls to order—That the pt. is only whether the Imports from Africa shall be stopped[.] [Marchant] says he will confine himself to the Importation—not all been done that could be done—We had Right to insist on any such Regu[la]tion—A Number were dissatisfied when the Constitu[tio]n first was forward[ed]—but are now Reconc[i]ld to it—thinking that here is a Disposit[i]on that there shall be a gradual Abolition—That in 20 Years it will [be] time to take.—Nothing further can be gaind on account of the Provisional Clause So far mentioned.—Why should we propose Amendments which will disaffect the Southern States when we cannot accomplish our purpose—

J. Comstock. says. He will treat the Subject coolly[.] Mr. Marcht was warm—hope to see the Time when he will be a [- - -] old man. will mention his

Sentiments. Mr. Marcht. says that the 5th Article is part of the Constitut[ion] and unalterable.—He does not think so—Every Part of the Constitution may be alterd[.] we are not going to take Arms or to see the Virginia Slav[e]s free—The object wishd is only to Show our disappro[ba]tion of the Length of Time allowed by Congress for the Impor[ta]tion—It is a Barga[i]n we are about to make—[Every?] Family a Pact. We [make?] the Proposal if we see fit—Have we not some show of Charact[er]—Are we not intrestd—The abolition Society imarked in a Good Cause.—will not be lengthy.—Submits—

Elisha Brown is sorry to hear [ - - - ] [ - - - ]—It is well known that the [Neighboring?] States have made Laws agai[n]st the Trade[.] The southern states have not—by that Means our Citizens get away their Vessels—and thus Defy it—all the Regu[la]tions that may be made[—] hopes that this House will not preclude the Committe from Reporting on it—Massachuset[s] have made Law

Col. Barton says Mr. Hazzrd was right to have the Motion passd ov[e]r—has yet heard no [Argument] Against on the Real Right or Wrong of—it—The Principal argum[en]t That it cannot annihilate it because the southern States are so much Inter[e]sted[.] shall we be thus led of[f] the Ground—We will press & Argue—is sorry to hear Genl. Miller express himself as he Did—That he quoted some Scripture—He did not distinctly hear all—But he seemed to Justify slav[er]y from the scriptures—He has Read som[e] Scriptur[e.] There was many among the Jews a Year of Jubilee when those who were servants were to be called on and be freed if not[.] The New Testament directs that we do to all as we would have them do to us—Will the Gentleman be willing that his tender Grand Children should be take[n] and carried away as he sees Afr[icans]. He trusts the Committe will report in fav[or] of this Am[endment]t[.]

Genl Miller. If the Gentleman will read in Levit[ic]us That the Childrn of the Heathen and the Stranger we may have them for servants to kee[p].

Geor Hazzard says we ought to be modest and cool in offer[in]g our Argumt. That the Right of Trade has not been gon[e] into—They sh[o]uld Consider whether they wou[ld] be willing by the General Governt. we were all men & have our being—And shall we propose a Measure to injure the Union. Hopes no Gentleman will blame those who are against the Amendt.—Let us not use untemperd Motions—He has an open Heart and Good will to all. if it is the opinion of the Committee he will be Perfectly Resigned—it is Right for all freely [ - - - ] [ - - - ]

Gov. Bradfrd says Time enough has been[.] The Argumt. can be of no [ - - - ] it is not before us whether slavery was allowd in the Days of Christ[.] The Convention was composed of a Number of Gentlem[en] who had Slaves—They have expressly said that there shall be no alterat[i]o[n] Until the year 1808—We cannot effect any alteration. That the Gentlemen may display their Abilities to ingratiate themselves with a particular [ - - - ] of [ - - - ]—

Jon Hazzard Speakes not to display his Oratory—The Reason he gave befor was: we wish for Amendments interesting to us—Then I would not move for Amendmt. we are sure we cannot succeed in—The Instant we move on it we Stick a Dag[g]ler in the Hearts of the southern Members—and shall immedia[te]ly have 29 Members against us

Elisha Brown movd to adjoin—

10th Section read.—

Col. Barton says we are now to investigate this Matt[e]r fully That we have passd ov[e]r—Says he has an objection to the Poll Tax[.] He always consid[er]d it gr[i]evous—There are People in the seaports who have not a foot of Land and will pay more than many large Farmers—That he cann[ot] consent that Congress shall have the Pow[e]r of Capitation Tax—The Congress men of Fortune do not feel for the Common People.

Gentle. [Genl.] Stanton Seconds col. Bartons.

Mr. Marchant. says there is no Poll Tax allowd—

Govr Bradford: Reads the Clause referrd to by Col. Barton[—]says it is only to shew in what Manner the Apportionm[en]t shall be made

Jon. E Hazzrd of the same opinion

Stanton says it implies there may be such a Tax

Gen. Miller The Clause was inserted for gr[e]ater Caution no Doubt at the Instigation of some of the New England States—and rather implies that a Poll Tax is not to be allowd—

Mr Marcht. says as Congress do not mean to intermeddle with the Internal Legislation of the States—they have provided that no Capit[at]ion—it will not appear well to make such an Amendmt.

Gen. Miller says in the first Clause it is said that Taxation and Represen[tat]ion should go tog[e]th[er]—That when the Convent[i]on came to this Part of the Consti[tu]tion—they recom[men]d[ed] that Tax [- - -] sho[u]ld be laid unless.

Col. Barton says the Congress have an undou[b]ted Right to levy a Capit[at]ion Tax—It is greivous in the Kingdom of Gr[e]at Brit[a]in—every man pays a Tax for every Drink of Grog—

Genl. Stanton. This is on[e] of the obscurist Parts of the Constitut[i]on—Wishes to have it explained—and is for hav[ing] the Mater fully expl[ai]nd—and the Congress prohibited from making a Poll Tax

B. Bourne. The Congress have the Right by Virtue of the preceding Clause to levy this Tax—The Gentleman ought to have mentio[n]d it in the proper place.

4th Day

Thursday Morning—Judge Steere moves that a Committee may be appointed to draft Amendt.

John W[illia]ms. It will not be benefici[al] to appoint the Commi[ttee]—The Com[m]it[tee] will hear what the House have to say—can gain Informat[i]on by it

B. Bourn.—The Committee will be glad to hear the Debates of the House. it will not be Saving Time. The Commi[ttee] will Derive advantag to hear the Debate

Stant[on] rises to support the Motion of Judge Steere—The Com[mittee] can meet at the Intervals of the Meetings—and in the Even[ing].

B. Bourn. it will not save time

Elis[ha] Brown. Says if We can get throu[gh] befor noon it will be wis[es]t to appoi[n]t

Mr. Mathewson. Thinks, we had better appoi[n]t now—The Committee can hear what is said

Geo. Hazzard moves that we proceed—says the Gentlemen are Reason[a]bl[e] Men—That we have begun the Business regularly—it will

W. Congdon. says if we get throu[gh] the Constitution this Forenoon—moves to appoint the C[ommittee].

Gov. Bradf Is immaterial whether the Committee be appointed now—or befor.

Ste[e]re will agree that they be appointd any Time this forenoon—papers will [be] wanted

B. Bourne says we have Papers transmitd by the Secretary—The Ratifications of the States &c have not been read

Sayles gives up the Motion for the Present agreeing that they be appointed this Forenoon—

Last Section Read—no objections.

Second Article 1st Section read—no objections.

Second Section read.—no objections—

Third Section read—Section 4th. Read.

Article 3d. 1st Section read.—Second Section Read and so on to the End of—

Col. Barton. says we are altogether going one Side—This Clause Article 5th ought to be written in Letters of Gold—We ought to observe the Excellencies of the Constituti[on]—There is a Fair Opportunity furnishd Amendts. provided by the States. enlarging

Gen. Miller calls the Gent[lema]n to order—we are to point out the Bad Things—The Matter to be taken up at length—

President says He does not know—

Jona. Hazzard. says He is glad that the Gent. has called his Attention to this Article.—notwithstanding he praises it—Hazzd. objects. We want a Consti[t]i[o]n not to be alterd—The Rich and powerful States will be uneasy till they alter it for their Benefit—That so far from Thinking the Clause ought to have been written in Letters of Gold—he is sorry it was ever written in Letters with Ink and is sorry that it has appeared as a Part of the Constitution

Genl. Stanton Supports Barton But objects to the Last Clause of the Article

B. Bourn Says the Last Clause is the Great Bulwark of the Privileges of this State, which cannot be alterd without our Consent—enumerats the Adva[n]tages we have by Reason of the Senate—enlarges on the Benefits of Amendts. and agrees with Mr. Barton in Sentiment, Though not quite in order to point out the Beauties[—]That his Genius and Abilities may be excer[ci]sed in Pointing out the Beauties when it is taken up at Len[gh]

Gen. Stanton says Mr. Bourn is not candid[.] He did not object to the Last Article—but only to a Clause towards the Latter part of the Clause  
The Remainder read—

Mr. Marchant moves that the Amendts. recommend[ed] by Congress be read—  
—They are read accordingly—

Mr Sheldon—Thinks That ev[e]ry State ought to [be] precluded from making any Law respecting Religion or abridging the Rights of Consci[ence]

Mr Marchant.—says it will be dangerous to attempt such a Measure—every state will

Sheldon. If it is right that Congress should not make any Laws respecting it no State ought to have the Right

B. Bourn Says there is no Danger of an Establish[men]t of any Mode of Religion whether we ~~bought not~~ wou[ld] not appoint a Chaplin The Persecutions in the other States of our Ancestors was an Advant[a]ge to this state—and shou[ld] they persecute them it will be a Means of Accession to this state

Mr. Mart. wishes all Men would agree not to establish any Religion—enough for us to keep it out of the Gen. Govt

B. Bourn. Provisi[on] made by Const[itution].

That no Establish[men]t shall not be made to No Danger of any of the States taking Measur tending from the high[es]t practis[e] and the present General Sentiments of the World on this Subject—all the Amendmts. Read—

B. Bourne These Amendt. read not to go to the Committee, but only to Shew them what has been done already towards amending the Constitution. Enquiry what states have agreed to these Amends.

J Sheldon—It was his Opini[on] That the Constituti[on] and the Amendt wou[ld] be referrd to the Committe—and that he supposd the Committee would incorpor[a]te them with their Report—

Marchant. It will be best that the committee report in the Manner proposd by Mr. Sheldon as it will be a Constitution Ratification by the People themselves—who are in this respect Superior to the Legislatu[re]

B. Bourne says that it belongs to the Legislature to Ratify them by Reason of Congress having pointd out that mode—therefor impropr[e]r for us to refer the Amendments proposd by Congress

J. Hazzard moves That the Amendments of New York be read[.] Seconded by James Sheldon

They are read—

President observes that all the Papers called for have been Read.—Genl. Stanton moves that the Amendts. proposd by North Carolina be read—Enquird for[.] Mr. Sheldon says he has them in a Newspaper—They are read from the United States Chronicle, of Jan. 14.

Mr. Marchant. moves That the Amendments proposed by Massachusetts be read for the Information of the Committee—and that as the Congress have already provided for some of the Amendments—

They are read from the Pamp[h]let containing the Proceedings—

J. Sayles. Moves That the Amendments proposed by Virginia be read—They are read from the Copy sent to the secretary—

Gov. Bradford says The Gentlemen have had an opportunity of Reading the Amendt. in the Papers and others and much Time has been taken. moves that the Committee be appointed—agreed to on all sides That Two from Each County be a[ppointed.]

Newport: Ray Sands nominated and Mr Marchant nominated—

Moved by Mr. Champlin That the Committee be appointed from those who are opposd to the Constitution.—

Mr Marcht. desires that those may be appointed who are most agreeable to this House—and who will give Satisfaction abroad.

Ray Sands nominated by Mr Abraham Barker he nominatd Mr. Burr[in]g-[ton] Anthony—

Newport. Ray Sands

Joshua Barker

Providence Judge Steph[en] Steere

John Sayles

Washington Jon. Hazzard

James Sheldon

Committee Voted in—

Bristol. Genl Miller nominated but

\_declines says he shou[ld]

Thomas Allen

Saml Pearc[e].

Kent Gid[eo]n Arnold

Pardon Mawn[e]y

Govr. Bradford recommends That this Committe proced as soon as may be—

Moved That the House adjourn to 3 oclok P. M.—

adjournd

Friday After noon 3. oClock [March] 5

—March 6th. 1790—

This Forenoon the House met at 9 oClock but the Committee appointed to draft Amendments not having been able to agree upon a Report—the Convention therefore adjournd to this Time—and The House being now formd and having waited Sometime sent to the Committee to know if they shall soon report—They send Word by Mr Douglass the Waiter that they will report in 15 Minutes.—

They come into the House accordingly.—

And the Business now begins—a Time of Expectation and the House very much crowded—Generals Colonels Delegates &c. being obliged to Stand—The House now calling—Thus Life Passes and carries along the Tide of Time to land us in Eternity of what consequence will then be all this Parade—

The Secretary reads the Report of the Committee.—

The Bill of Rights read.—

Mr. Marchant moves that the Bill of Rights be discussd & finished—

The Amendments read.—

Mr Marchant moves that Two Articles excepted against be read.—They are read—

Govr. Bowen Calld for Information whether it was the Recommendation of the Committee that the Bills of Rights

Marcht moves an Alteration of the 11th. Article[.] That instead of the Words Common Law of England reported—it be altered to read as follows and hath been exercised by us and our Ancestors from the Time whereof the memory of Man is not to the Contrary—

Job Comstock says this Business of high Importance has taken the Committee sometime to prepare the Bill of Rights—and moves that before the Bill of Rights be discussd—Moves that the Bill of Rights and Amendment[s] be Referrd to the People at large to have their Opinion & Sentim[en]ts thereon—

Mr. Marcht. Shews that the Gentl. is out of order[—]refers to the Vote of Mr Sayles[—]that he is very appre[hensive]

Jona. Hazzard says that When the Amendts. are made to the Bill of Rights Gov. Bowen seconds the Motion of Mr. Marcht. that the Bill of Rights be proceeded on and finished before the Consideration of the Amendments

Voted that the Amendt. proposed by Mr. Marchant be agreed to and the Report alterd accordingly.

Mr. Marchant moves that the Bill of Rights be again read [by] Paragraphs—  
They are all agreed

Mr. Marchant observes That the Bill of Rights being agreed to it appears agreeable to our Minds—That it contains our Professed Sentiments and is agreeable to the Constitutions of the United [States] That We ought to make the Bill of Right as perfect as possible[.] moves that We now have a Vote wheth[e]r we approve of this Bill of Right—

Mr. Waterman Seconds the Motion of Mr. Comstock

Comstock says that it is his Meaning that no

Elisha [Brown] Clear in opinion that this be like we have gone through the Amend[m]ents—That both share the same Fate—that both go to the People together to be consider by this Bill—

Gen Miller. The Bill of Rights and the Amendt. are distinct—But the People have sent us here to Do a particul[a]r Business—This [Declaration?] is our Business—We have Ourselves a Right to decide on this Bill—and seconds the Motion of Mr. Marchant

Jn. Haz. Well enough to take the opinion of the House whether they approve of the Bill of Rights—But thinks it well that the Bill of Rights be referrd to the People because they may propose other additional Articles

Marcht. It will have an odd appearance to send out this Bill of Rights to the People without it being recommended—He wishes to act with fairness and to take no Advantag—

Comstock—Common for the Assembly to Refer Acts to the People before they then Pass into Laws for their Consent.

J Hazzd. says the Vote of Approbation will not be conclusive—on the Vote upon the Amendts.—It is best to Let the People know that it is

Comstock We ought to Referr the Bill

President asks how the Bill of Rights is to be sent to the People

Champlin Begg liberty to have an Opportunity here in his Seat to express his Sentiments on the Bill—How will Mr Comstock appear when he goes home and the People ask him how he likes the Bill of Rights and he shall say tha[t] it was not Considrd

J. Hazzard—says that there is a Differen[ce] in sending out the Bill with a Vote of Approbation and without a [consideration.]

Champlin. agrees with Genl. Stanton that the Vote on the Bill be postponed till after the Considerati[o]n of the Amendments

1st. Amendt. read & agreed to.

Second Article Read.—Mr. Bourne move[s] that the First Article of the Amendt proposed by the Congress be read—Gov. Bowen calls on the Committee for Information from their Sentiments.

Marcht says If we reckon 3/5ths of all the Blacks in the southern states in proportion[in]g the Taxes and will not allow a Represent[at]ion according it will have an unfavorable appearance[—]wishes the Gentle[man] to expl[ai]n

J Hazzard. We are not so fond of the Mode of Representation as pointed out by the Constitution. We think that the Taxes ought [to] be proportion'd to the States according to the estimated Votes as will appear by a [— — —]

3d. Article read and agreed to.

4th. Article read

Bourne calls for reading aga[i]n the 3d Article which is done

5th. Article read—

Genl. Miller calls for a second Reading of it—

J Hazz[a]rd says the Reason why this Ament is proposed is because there is a vast Extent of Territory—more than all the Eastern States which when they come to be settld will create a Number of states—

G. Miller Woud not ask for a Thing which would probably obtain—It will take ha[l]f the New England States

March. has no Objection but this. When we propose Amendts. merely local it excites Jealously[—]the Amendt respecting the Blacks of this Kind—The southern states think it of grat Consequ[ence] to them that No Innovations be made on this Policy Respecting their states—having been driving hard to obtain a Representati[on] of them—Wishes not to hold up any thing which gives ground of uneasiness—and recommends that this do not pass as an Amend.

J Haz It rests on this whether we value the Representati[on] of the Blacks in the southern states of more Consequence than the Liberty of our selves

We had better let the southern states trade to Africa than to expose our own Liberty[.] We ought to take Care at home befor we look abroad—

Mr. Marcht. gives up the

Gov Bradford calls for Reading it.

I presume if we ever adopt the Consti[tution] in this Govt it is to be before these Amendts[.] asks if the Gentleman from South Kingston can shew any Ament proposed by any of The stat[e]s so pointed against the Union as this—asks if the southern state[s] had proposed no alterat[i]on should be made—with the Contine[ntal]—It seems that we are too Jealou[s]—We ought to enter into the Govt. on a Broad Basis—Happy if the Southern States do not overrun the Eastern State[s]. it will tend to attract their Attention to the Matter—

E. Brown proposes that this Article remain for Considerat[i]on[.]

J Hazzrd. Doubts not but the Honb Gentl. from Kingston means the Good of us all[.] The Gentl of the Committe liable to Errors Wishes not to be pointed by any Mann[e]r—ought not to leave it in their Power[.] obliged to a Worthy Member for a Suggestio[n] That the Constitu[tio]n when agreed to be not altered without the Consent of Eleven State[s.] Gov Bradford had the same Ideas and intends to mention the Matt[e]r at a proper Time—this Article agreed to be postponed.



Article 6th. Read. Genl. Miller observes that he has no objection only to the Expense of the Ratification of the Constitut[ion].

Article 7th 8th & 9th & 10 Read—and no objections

Article 10th—Mr Marcht. This subject was fully Discussd before the Committee went out[.] Says he then observed on the Difficulties which occurd on this Matter in the First Congress it took them six Months—The south[ern] States were opposd to the Blacks be[ing] consid[ered] in the Rule of Apportion[ment]—That many members were willing that the Taxes shou[ld] thus be appor[tione]d by Numbers but absolutely refused unless the Blacks were deducted—Will it be worth While now at this Late Day [to] undertake to renew the Proposal which has been f[ou]nd impracticable to be carried into Execut[io]n—But now since the South[ern] States have been br[ought] with grat Difficulty to consent to this Mode shall we adhere to a Mode

These Two Points[—]The Impracticability and how it would operate on us if practicable[.] The Impracticability and the Inexpdnt have largely been gone into—We are Circumscribd—our Numbers will not increase but litle—The Invitations abroad will lead our Inhabitants to the Southern States—Our Wealth will encr[e]ase and our proportion of Taxes will encr[e]ase in Proporti[on]—Wishes the Gent. would consider the Matt[e]r fully—Though there may be a small arithmatical Error in the Proport[io]n we had better—

Mr E. Brown moves to have this postpond till Morning

J. Hazz Can assure the Honbl. Member that he did not make the object[ion] for the Sake of object[ing]—Had the Taxes been assesd in proporti[on] to our Freeman and the

Marcht. not so well acquainted with the southern states as he is—

True that Difficulties arose on Mr. Marcht.—But we had bettr support the Expencc of making the Estimate—The Produce of Virginia Equal to the 4 New England States New York & New Jersey—That state solus has more Negroes than all the other stat[es]—a Planter seen rides in a Coach with 4 or 5 Attendts. Drinks Wine lives Extravagantly—and therefor in Debt—lives on the Principles of the Jamaican—Bounty as Extravigan[ce]. Wishes the House could be infor[me]d—

Miller sorry he cannot agree with the Gentleman—Confident as he is that it is now in fav[or]r of the State—we are a seaport—We Export and trade

calls for [– – –]

with the Produce of Connecti[cut] & Massa[chusetts]—Have Attempted for Years to try the other Measur[e]s—a Bad Pilot who will run twice foul of the same Rock—We have fo[un]d the Rock by Expe[rience] has Candour for the Gentlem[a]n.

Gov. Bradfor[d] says if we ever come to Union it must be befor we have the Amend:—has no Dou[b]t of the Gentlemans sincerity from his token Experien[ce]—no inconveni[ence] to let the Matter lye—should the Gentleman hereafter go to either of the Houses of Congress—He will be confirmd by Reason of the Amendt. now proposed—as Mr. Elisha Brown proposed to let it lie till Morn[in]g.—Joins in the Motion.

Art. 11th. Read. 12th. Do. 13th. Do. 14th Do. 15th Do. 16th. ~~17 to Lie till the Morning~~ Do. 17th. all agreed to.

18th Do.

19th. to lie on the Table.

20th. Article agreed to—The Convention adjourned

Saturday Morning—March 6.—1790—

Gov. Bowen calld for Proce[edings]

The Amendts. Read[.] Mr. Marcht and Mr. Bourn object against the clause in the Amendt. which mentions the States retaining their State [courts]—

Mr Sheldon says that the Cause of the Amendt. was the Clause in the Constitut[io]n which empowers Congress to appoint Inferior & Supre[me] Cou[urts.]

Mr Marcht. explains the Nature of the Constitu[tion]

Job Comstock says the Constitution wants explanation in various Parts

Gov. Bowen Moves that we finish the Paragraphs one by one till we get thru

Mr. Marcht. will give his Sentiments but if it is the Sense of this House he will acquie[sce.]

Bourn Says the Gentleman moves that this Amendt. be inserted from the Clause which he Reads—We are perfectly safe without any such Amendt so absurd as the one proposed

J. Sayles. says that Congress may by General Laws—Viz “But the Congress may by Law appoint such inf[er]ior [Courts.]”

Bour[ne] Certainly this extends to the Appoint[men]t of the same [– – –].

Gov Bradford. Says that the worthy Gentleman who was last Speaking will not be responsible—but he has heard Persons repeatedly say Congress could

Bourne—Says we come her[e] to discuss the Constitution—and ought to have it fixed right

J. Hazzd. says Mr. Bourne is right but the People at large have an Idea that Congress have this Pow[er]—They have [Construed?] this opinio[n]. The Ament. will quiet the Mind of the People at large—if there was no other Reason this would be Sufficient—A Govt. established with the Consent and Confidence of the People will be mor[e] firm

Gen. Mill[e]r. The Mind of the People ought to be quieted But to do that we ought not to insert Nonsense in the Constitu[tio]n and wishd it expungd

Gen. Stanton says now is the Time to quiet the Mind of the People—Much has been said [against?] the State that we are a little Refractory State—ought to be divided or annihilated—This will quiet them and [– – –]

J Comstock. It is a poor Excuse agai[n]st the Am[e]ndt. that other States have not moved for the same Amendt.—by this Rule we should have no need [of] Amend.

B. Bour[n] Moves that the Amendt. be included in the Bill of Rights instead of Standing as an Amend.

J. Hazzard seconds the Motion. J. Comstock object[s]. Bradford thot we agree[d] to let it [. . .] President [i.e., Daniel Owen] calls on the Members That if they have still any objection he would have them declare[d].

Gov. Bradford asks the Gentleman fr[o]m E. Greenwich if he would sell him a Farm and give him a Deed—

President. observes That we ought not to suffer any th[i]ng improper—because if aft[e]rwards expunged hav[i]ng been Referred

Champlin. observes that the Presi[den]t has put this Matter in a Just light.—

Stanton says the People will strike it out—

Ma[r]cht. Says Good God—this is saying I am Beat—objected to Send

Gen: Miller cannot consent to this.

J. Williams appears to him this Convention states the Am[en]dt. ought to come from the Place where it is and to be insertd in the Bill of Rights—

J. Haz. It will stand much better to be inserted in the Bill of Rights—  
agreed to be inserted there.—

Second Amend. read—

G. Miller. says this is striking again at the Slaves

Mr Bourne Reads the Clause of the Bill of Rights and the Alteration is made—

Gov Bradford moves that the Paragraph of the Constitution respecting the Representation—(Which is read)

The Amendt. of the Bill of Rights read and agreed to.—

Marcht. moves that the Second Am[en]dt. on the Representa[tion] be Read.  
3d. 4th. 5th.

5th. Marcht. says it was agreed last Evening that it was agreed it shou[ld] be alter[ed] to Elev[en] stat[es].

Mr Bourne says That this Motion will embar[r]ass the very object we have in Vew—is willing that such an Amend shou[ld] take Effect some Years hence

Haz. The object of the Motion is that this shou[ld] Not operate until all the Amendts. proposed have become a Part of the Constitution.—

Marcht. observes it will be best to offer a Period.

Hazz. Moves that the Period be fixed to the Year 1793.

The Amendt. altered so as to read thus ~~without the assent of Eleven of the United States~~ after the Year 1793 without the Assent of 11th of the States heretofore united under one Confederat[ion]

Art. 6th. Read.

Bourne Enquir[es] whether any other State has proposed a Similar Amend.

Mr Sayl[er] replies that North Carolina has made a Simi[lar Amendment]

Barton Hopes he is in order and will endev[or] to keep so—He was thought out of order which [means was for?] Legislation[.] I shou[ld] by no means consent to this Tax did not mean that Congress should not have the Power because he viewd them with a Jealous Eye but he would alway[s] view them with a Watchful one

8th. 9th & 10th. Read

Bourn objects to it[.] It has been demonstratd that this could not be carried into effect—It has been shown that the Congress did all that co[u]ld be done to carry—It has been shown that it wou[ld] operate much agai[n]st [us.] Wrong for us to raise an object[i]on to a Measure favourable to us. It appear[s] to Me that unless Gentlemen will suggest a Mode more Just and pru[dent.]

G. Mill[e]r I can put a Case somewhat simil[ar]—suppose this State is 800000 Acres of Land and suppose 200 Planters and in Virgin[ia] had 400 slav[e]s—The Slav[e]s themselves pay as much as all the Whit[e]s.

J. Comstock It is roundly asserted can way one side of the Qu[est]ion[—] jurses the Impracticality of it—says the southern states rather than have their Slav[e]s Numbered agreed to the Measures they recom[me]nd—not from being conv[in]ced but from a Convict[i]o[n] that it was most for their Inter[est] or on Evidences[—] mentions this Conduct with regard to the old Continent[al] bills[.] moves that it lie till the Adjourn[ment].—

Mr. Marcht. says the Gentlem[an] is greatly mistaken the Facts If he has Stated—Those states did not prevail agai[n]st the Northern—with regard to the old Continent[a]l Mon[ey]—it has remain[ed] because Congress had not Pow[er] to carry into Exec[ut]io[n] any ord[er] Respect[ing]—This an Argum[ent] for the Adopt[i]o[n] of a Govt. which makes and Effectuat[es] ord[er]—

It cannot be conceiv[ed] that we shall encrease in Wealth more than in Numbers.

Hazzard. says he disputes not the Facts Stated by the Gentlem[an] with regard to all Matters before the last Congress—But Most States have neglect[ed] to redeem their Proportion of the Continent[a]l Mon[ey] is sensible that the Expence of taking an Estimate is more than that of the Numeration—But the Advantages will be grate—being sensible that it will make an Amazing odds to the New England States—Will blame no man for thinking differ[ent] fr[o]m him[.] [he?] must.

Gov. Bow[en]. More said in this A[r]ti[c]le before they went out than on any other Matter did not expect that it would be reported—Relates what was before[ ] stated by him—suppose That a sum of 800000 in proportion to this stat[e] and goes Am[on]g the—also Mentions the Impracticability[.]

Mr. Geor. Hazzard.—Observes that if this Measure is adopted the Committee who shall be appointed by Congress will in Case of an Estimate have Referr[en]c[e] to the Estimate heretofore taken in this State notwithstanding it has sunk 5 per Cent.—

Thinks it will operate agai[n]st us—I see where they are increasing numbers while we do not increase—This Mode prop[os]ed by Congress—

Gov Bradford. The Members have freed their Minds—has Gentle

Elisha Brown. Never knew an Estimate taken otherwise than by Value—is surprized that so many worthy Gentlemen will argue against

Comstock—says the People are uneasy—wou[ld] have them consider it—

Marcht. It is possible that a Gentleman should suppose it large

President. If this state suffers by this Mode of Tax 9 others will also

Pass 32

Not 36

So it passed in the Negative

Article 11th of the Amendt.

12th 13th. 14th. 15th. & 16th. 17th.

18th. Bourn moves that this be extended to all other officers appointed by Congress—agreed to—

19th. Article read—

Mr Marcht. says we can do no good to make such an Amendt.—

Mr. Bourne says it cannot operate till after the Year 1808—It will be necessary that ev[er]y State should.

Gov Bowen—It is now looked upon by the Body of Fr[i]ends throug[h]out all the Stat[e]s that a great Point has been gained that such an Ament may be made in the Year 1808—The Friends were opposed to the Constitution at First because they supposed it in some Degree countenancd the Slave Trad[e]—It was a Matt[er] of Difficulty in the Convention—a Delicate Subject.

Stanton. Think we ought to bear Testim[on]y against such a Trade—If we do not we shall participate

Bour[ne] We are not a Society of Friends to publish our Testimonials to this. The southern states concedd the Regulati[o]n.

J. Comstock. says That the Amendt. does not ask for extend.

E. Brown moves to have it Read—

It is read

Jon. Hazzard. Says he was not present in the Committee when this Amend was [drafted]—has been informed that a Gentleman

Barton Sorry to rise with Differ[e]nt Sentimnts from his Hon. Colle[a]g[u]es from Pr[ovidence.] He objectd befor—our Duty at all Times to declare our Sentim[e]nts respecting Freedom and Liberty—Thinks the Article allowing the Import[at]ion of Slaves wrongh—That our Citizens carry on that Traffick—calls the Attention of the Convention to the Resolut[i]on of Congress—How beautiful was that[?] We were then afraid of being enslavd ourselves—a Vessell soon aft[e]r arrived in No. Caroli[na] with a [cargo]—Let us take to our Minds our Anxious Moments—In the Times of Danger we were anxious for our Tender affairs[—]is Sorry to hear his Honbl. Fr[ie]nd Mr. March[ant] espouse such a Cause—will not [— — —]—

Mr. Miller—Does not rise [to] display his oratory but if he had such Sentiment[s] ever since that Year 1776 and had Sent his Slaves to Carolinas.

Gov. Bradford. Rises to bring this Matter to a Close if he thought any Person in the Court House he would run out of the Court House—The Lawfulness of the Slave Trade not in Question—The Worthy Member from Newport as much as Col. Barton—The Gentlemen from the Massachusetts were in the Convention would the Members of that Convent[i]on have ever agreed to it if this Preamble to this Ament “That this Trafic is Disgracefull to Human Nature”—enlarges on the Imp[rop]riety of a Measur can only serve to affront a [state?.] Hopes that those who vote for suppressing this Ament[.]

Barton. says he shou[ld] not have risen if Genl. Miller had not suggested some Matters [to] acquiesc[e.] he has brought up a Matt[er] which he had no Busin[ess] to—Suppose he had done wrong why should it be mentiond her[e]—is willing the Matter should be enquired into—it would be disreputable if we did not agree to this Amendt. as it now Stands—

J. Sayles. It is said That Congress cannot take Cognizanc[e] of this Matter till the Year 1808—He agrees that this Construction may be put on the Measure—But thinks it proper

Stanton It is apparent why it is continued by the Southern States to the Year 1808. They [i.e., the] Power and Influen[ce] of the southern states—If the Angells shou[ld] decree such a Trafick in Heaven he should

Champlin. says he hopes that those who vote ag[ai]n[s]t the Ament. will not be considerd. as Friends to Slav[er]y.—He has done much towrd. the Freedom of the Blacks. He is Friend to Genl. Liberty and the Happiness of all Men will offend

Mr. Mathewson moves to alt[e]r

E. Brown is sorry the Attornies will advoc[a]te the Cause

Gov. Bradford respects Gov. Brown the very Hair of his Head—This is not the First Second or Th[ir]d Time—He abhors the Slave Trade—has as much Regard as any Man to the Liberties of the Poor and the Depressed.—This Measure promoted only for the Purpose of Party in this State—The southern States so tenacious of the Trade

B. Bourne says he has been branded as being adv[o]c[a]te for Slavery—Highly injurd by th[is] Reflect[i]on—He is fr[i]end to the Freedom of all Men if he could accomplish the Plan before he slept—

G. Stanton. This is a Material Objection to the Constitu[tion] with the People where he lives on account of the Idea—The Principl[e] will bearing [i.e., bear] [examining?].—

Mr. Thos Allen. Was one of the Committee but did not agree to this part of the Report.—

Mr. Geo. Hazzard—Speaks largely on the Subject—we will do as lit[t]le Harm as may be and as much good as may be—convincd that Congress had respect to both Parties—How unhappy should we have been if Congress had been carried away by the cries about Slavery—Should you offend them it will injure us—Wishes the House to be candid and Thoughtful on this Matter—never knew it good way to best a Man—[— — —] and then asks a Fav[or] of him—

Mr. James Sheldon. The Arguments have Centerd on Two particulrs the Impracticability of the Measure and The Fear of offending the southern states—The Congress of 1776 resolvd That They wou[ld] discontin[ue] then the Trade—

passed by one Majority

Second Article read again.

Mr. J Hazzard. says the Mode of Representat[i]on ought not to be calcula[te]d on Slaves—is in Favor of the Mode—

Mr. Sheldon says the Negros are personal Property

Mr Marcht. observs on the Impropriety of this Article standing as it does.

J Hazzard The Convention hav[ing] determ[in]d against the mode of appor-tioning the Taxes reported by the Committe deprives him of Argmt.

Geo. Hazz Wou[ld] act in Public Life as in Private on fair and Just Grounds.

Second Article to be Struck out

The 20th. Amendt. of the Committee read—

There on moved that First Article of the Amendts. recomm[en]ded by Congress—

Gov. Bradford moves to pass the Bill of Rights. second by Mr. Marcht.

Mr. J Williams moves that it be sent to the People. conversation—on this Matter.

And. Waterman Seconds the Motion of Sending the Bill of Rights—

Mr. Champlin argu[es] in Fav[or] of approbating the Bill of Rights previous to sending the Bill to the People—

Desultory Debates on the Propriety of Sending out the Bill of Rights previous to an Approbation of this House—

Mr Champlin's calls for a Vote after hav[ing] Made sundry pertinent observations—and that it seemd as if the House were themselves afraid to declare their approbation of them—

Mr. Geo Hazzard follows with Additional Arguments

J. Comstock This Convention undertakes to make a Bill of Rights—It is the Work of the People to make them—What is to be done—We can do no more than to refer the Bill to the Bill [i.e., People] and to take their opinion on the Matter.—The Gentleman has [ - - ] much about the Previous Question conclud[es] by moving as before

Sheldon. It is curious to observe the Situat[io]n on This Matter—one Gentleman says it has been Rec[eive]d. another that it is not Rec[eive]d.—

Mr. Marchant points out the absurdity of sending the Bill of Rights to the People before it is approbatd by the People [i.e., House]—(It is now 1 oClock P.M. Saturday March 6)

Marcht. States how the Question

Mr Wm. Congdon moves that this Bill of Rights that this Convention

Elisha Brown moves that we have the Vote whether we adjourn or not before any other Vote is passed.

Desultory [discussion] whether

Mr. Marcht. reduces his Motion to writing.

J. Comstock.—We are an Assembly here of 70 Persons[.] Shall 70 Persons act on this Business to give it full Efficacy—argues that by adopting this Bill some Rights essential may be omitted—We have

adjourn'd to 3 oClock P. M

Met pursuant to Adjournment—

Elisha Brown makes a Motion in Writing for referr[ing] the Bills of Rights to the Town Meetings in the 3d. Wednesday of April next—

Judge Steere mov[es] that the Bill of Rights be rec[e]ivd

John Williams Joins in said Motion—

John Sayles confessd on all Hands that the Report of the Committee is R[c]ivd—

Mr Marchant moves to have it enterred on the Journals that the Report is Recd.—

Mr. Bourne objects to Recording that the Report is Recd. by itself—Because it ought also to extend to the Amendts.

Gov. Bradford We are now bringing up a Matter which ought to have been determined on or before any debate upon—calls for reading the Bill—Says he is in order—has no objection to an Entry being made that the Report of the Committee is Rec[eiv]e[d]—argues against the Motion on the Ground of Im[pro]priety—has no objection to it being enterrd on the Journals.

Marcht. If we look into the Act by which we met we shall find why & how we met here.—we have no Legislativ Power—Have no other Powers than as Trustees for the Busin[ess]—we have exam[in]e[d] the Constitution paragraph by para[g]raph—the Com[mittee] drew up a Bill of Rights—has no objection because we may declare that the People have such and such & Rights that when we adopt the Constitu[tion] it may appear that we claim such and such Rights similar to what was done by New York and may go on to give influence and the Wishes of the People—all this one connected Business—But it belongs to the Convention to finish the Business. objects to Referr[ing] the Bill to the People they cannot consult—and Act togeth[er] upon [it]. Wishes as we have gone thru the Bill of Rights and the Amendts. he has a Motion to Make. called to Order by Mr Comstock[.] determ[in]e[d] by the Pres[i]dent that he is in order—Reads a Moti[on] Resolved that this Convention having Recd.

Motion Seconded by B. Bourne—

Comstock They have rambled a great way round the former Mat[t]er ought to be first heard & Determ[in]d says Mr.

Job Comstock moves to adjourn to a future Day[.] Second by Elisha Brown who waves the first Motion he made this Afternoon.

Gen. Miller moves to have Mr. Comstocks Moti[on]

Col. Barton. has come to this Convention divestd of all Prejudices for or against the Consti[tution] from some Gentlemen being so anxious that they are influencd by Prejudices—President interrupts Col. Barton. and Requests him to Speak to the Point—

Col Barton says the Adjournmt. will affect his Constitu[en]tts Sensibly—The Congress have subjected the Citizens to foreign Duties and foreign Tonn[age.] calls for the Reasons why and Adjournmt is moved for.

Sayl[e]s will give the Reasons—If there is no Adjournmt the Question will be adopt or Reject[—]wishes to mix

Gov. Bradford Enquires of the Worthy Gentle[ma]n how long Time will it Require to take the Sentiment of his Constiu[ents].

Mr Sayles says that he does not know how long a Time

President—observes that both the Gentlemen are out of Order.

Mr. Marcht. Wishes for the Hon[or] of the Convention that the Business be done regularly and reads a Motion

Mr. Bourn Says it is not in the Power of this Convention to adjirn [i.e., adjourn]—The Act of Governt. points out the Business—If we have the Pow[er] of adjour[nmen]t they may adjourn to a Month or Two Months a Year or ten Years—The opinion ill founded that we may adjn we are app[oi]ntd to considr [– – –] & *Decide*—our Constitutents expected that it would be Decided on—If Mr Sayles knows the Sentiments of his Constituents he knows how to vote—says if we had Power to adjourn it is inexpedient—knows not what Time or plan is



intended. Congress are pressing us with their Laws—Tonnage & Duties on Us—no intercou[r]se by Land—all Com[m]erce thereby out[lawed]—Coasting Business destroyed—Fishermens employd—Espec[ia]lly Herring Fisherm[en]—Go to Virgin[ia] and Eastwd[—]they take salt in grat Quan[tities.—The United States now Raising a large Revenue[—]our Proportion 40,000 Dollars—are we in a way to collect our Proporti[on]—He has enqu[i]rd at the Collect[o]rs office in Providence [and] finds we shall not raise a Third Part of the Money—undoubtedly unless we Speedily accede to this Constitu[tion] & this Quota will be demanded of Us[.] But if we now accede it is probable the Defic[ie]ncy will not be called for.—The Governor has written a Letter by order of the Assembly assuring Congress that we should adopt the Constitu[tion] soon—you Have by a Bill passd in the up[per] House pledged yourself for the speedy adopt[i]on Rec[i]tes the Bill and that as you Have supported that Bill it is certain was the Sentiments of [constituents.]<sup>1</sup> our Fishing Business our Coasting Business our Ferryin[g] Business—has made a Statement of the Tonnage of the Vessels of this sort if Reckond at 4000 Tonn. Num[ber] 22. and will Amount to 80000 Dollars—only one Month will amount to 700 Dollars—They will suffer more in the Spring than in any other Season. Tonnage of Providence more than 10000 Dollars—Post office—150 Dollars a Month which we must account for—Estimate 700 Dollars a Month Ton. 1000 Dollars a Year for [Salt?]—other Losses the Requisi[tions] of Congress &c 40000 Dollars a Year all on Duties payable in Paper Money another Weighty considerat[i]on. The prob[ab]le Adjount of Congress in May—if we accede after the Adjount. there will be not Power to resort to for relief till the next Meeting of this Congress—shall add nothing further now as the Convention have no Power to adjourn

Jon. Hazz. says the Gentlem from Providen[ce] has objected to an adjourn because he says the Convention have not Power to adjourn—Sir if we have no authority to adjou[rn] we have done for we have adjourned—if we can adjourn one Day we can a Week or a Fortnight—May concurr that the Genl. Assembly tak[i]ng up the Matt[e]r without the Consent of the Peopl[e] was a Matter of Complaints—This was the Reason that produc'd the Bill of the upper House at the last session—Had this Bill been passd into a Law and the People had instructd their Deputies to adopt the Constitution it then cou[ld] have. We derive our Pow[e]r from the People[.] They have a Right to be consultd—They expect the Amends will be made and sent to them[.] is extremely sorry for the Sufferings of the Merchant[s]—But he hopes congress will continue the Exemption if we do not adjou[rn] too long a Time so as to appear as merely be[ing] adjo[urned.] The most Haste the Worse Speed is a Maxim[.] If the Gentlemen had not been In Such Haste it would have been much bett[er] for all—The Anxiousness Shewn has alarmd the Common People—He does not mention this as Matt[e]r of Justif[ication]—He says We have a Right to adjou[rn] and he has Instruction—

Saml. J. Potter The only Question before us wheth[e]r we adjourn or not—let us keep to the Point—

E Brown. Several States have adjourned—North Carolina & New Hampshire—If we apply to Congress they will continue the Indulgen[ce] as it will

otherwise operate agai[n]st the Federation[.] This will seem Hard—The People are more and more Reconcild.

Mr Davis calls on Mr. E Brown for his Reasons why he wishes for an Adjournment  
Saturday After noon on the Adjournment

Mr Comstock observ[e]s That Mr Bourne is of quite differ[ent] Sentim[e]nt [from?] the Last sentim[e]nt. Thus it wou[ld] be perfectly Safe—The convention could adjoin [i.e., adjourn]—Much is said ab[ou]t the Damage will arise—But the People must be satisfied—If it is the best Constitu[tion] yet if the Peopl[e] are agai[n]st it what will be the Confusion[?] Suppose We are at Some Expence for Tonnage we had better pay that than refuse the [- - -] possibly the Report

Marcht. Had heard that ma[n]y Things had been said against the Constitu[tion]—Expected that here was the Place to Dissent—But what has been said against it—Is there any thing to look the Constitution in the [Face?]—The Bill of Rights it is true has been agreed to—But there is not a Single Right but what was Safe by the Constitut[i]on—as Some might possibly doubt wheth[er] we argues on the Power of Adjourning and Questions the Power of Adjourning—In New Ham[p]shire there was an Adjournment. but the same Question arose and the Adjournment took place by Agreement—Says the Common People have been whisperd to—other Persons who had Points to carry have been whisperd to—There has been an Adjournment.—in the Untd Stat[e]s [i.e., Congress]—It was said that Two or Three Days only were necessary—But this Time was not enough—Some States have debatd Weeks—and the very state of North Carolina so often Referrd to have adopted the [Constitution.]

Two Years have elapsed—and 18 Months have elapsed since the Govnt. was organized—We ought to take Time—if we cannot finish it to day we oug[h]t to adjourn to Monday—We have had to see the 1000 things the *1000 things* said ag[ai]nst us not True—The People in the other Stat[e]s are in Peace & quiet Enjoyment of their Liberties & Privileges—The Gentleman has observd that the Act of the Genl. Assembly was only recomendatory—States the absurdity and inconsistency of Referring the Matter to the People again

Sir, It has been said that congress will continue their Indulgence—and that if they will be so hard so cruel as to refuse the Applicat[i]on it is best for us nev[er] to Join them—How unness[ar]y is this break[i]ng then with the Respe[c]t they Deserv[e]—observes on the Begin[n]ing of Congress and their Ready and immed[ia]t[e] Attention to the Reported Applicat[i]on of the Stat[e]s[.] The First Time they give suffic[ien]t Time to consider and adopt—It is true before this Time expird the Legislature did take it up—Rec[i]tes what was done and wrote to Congress assuring them that the Constitut[i]on wou[ld] be adopted—and will it not be treat[i]ng them with Indignity to postpone the Adopt[i]on—(States the Improbabi[li]ty of Congress further indulging us—) Will congress derange all their Measures the most necessary Affairs of the Nation to gratify us[?] we are trifling we sporting with the Privileges of the Means by which the People live—The People do see that the Property is depreciating—That they are depressed—What may be the Consequ[ence] he knows not—He would not contend agai[n]st a short adjournment—States Inconveni[ence] to the

Farmer in Case the Constitut[io]n is not adopted—in not having a Market—He cannot have Credit—He cannot do his Business—Congress have it in Expectation to rise in May—They have before them Business of the Highest Consequence to us—If our Delegati[on] do not arrive before the Adjout. Stat[e]s the Evils we shall be under—There is no other Means than a Land tax for discharging the Defic[ie]n[c]y we shall have to make up for The Revenue—

Gov. Bradford—Says he hoped to have [Land tax?]—puts him in Mind of a Story he had heard of Lord Coke who had a [Bank?] The Question is whether we have power to adjourn—There has been no Instanc[e] but New Hamps[hire] and there ten Members were clogged with th[ei]r Instruction—They themselves moved for Liberty—& adjour[ne]d—The Gent. from Smithf[ie]ld has Said that he wants to consult his Constituents when he has said there is a Majority agai[n]st this—has no Right to adjou[urnmen]t

Genl. Miller is against an Adjout. we have no Right—though we have their almighty Power—Suppose he [i.e., Bradford] should go home and his Constituent[s]. Nothing offerd as a suffic[ien]t Reason for an Adjt. [—] could he believ[e] the Adjout was for an Adoption he sho[u]ld not be agai[n]st—It is intended by some to keep this Link broken that some disturbance may happen—and it may then be said—cannot tell How it is possible that those who have been firm

Points out the Disadvantages to Warren—for a Numb[er] of Years past 6. or 5000 Barrels of Herr[i]ng taken up the Pawtux[et] all the Barrels and Salt for the use [— — —] if it will only Benefit Warren he [— — —] it may be [— — —] with the Privilege—Wishes he had the Eloqu[ence] of Demosthenes

Adjo[urn] 41

[Not] 28

Gov. Bradford mov[e]s that the Convention adjour[n] to the Last monday in March

Seconded by Mr. Marc[han]t

Elisha Brown moves that the Adjout. be till the Monday after the Proxing Day—

Gov. Bradford obliged for the Candor of the old Gentlem[an]—says it was a Prop[e]r season to take up the Busin[ess]—The First Day of April the Indulgen[ce expires]. I [k]now your Hon. Attention to wheth[er] if nothing is wanted but to consult their Constitu[en]ts—If they go beyond the Time we may be [always?]—we [must not?] view this Matter on the Broad Basis of Candour—Observes on the Advantages of a [— — —] between the Merc[han]t & Far[mer.] The Merch[ant] who grew Two Specie of Grass where but one grew bef[ore]

Elisha Brown is aga[i]nst the Time sooner than that he has movd because it will cause Meetings

President says that we had better finish the

Bradford calls on the Gentle. who has Spent almost a Century on the Earth, wheth[er] he is not convincd in his own Mind that the Damag[e]s and inconveni[ences] will be vastly greater—mentions Warren as Depicted by Genl. Mil[ler.]

Brown solemnly Declares solemnly that he acts with a Clear Conscien[ce]

[— — —]

Geo. Hazzard. Did not the Gentle[man] come from North Providence with but one Eye—will it injur[e] this man this Time—was he not movd by what Gen Mill[e]r [said]—Says the Man who cannot look with Two Eyes when he has them ought to have no more than one—Seconds the Motion of adj[o]urning to the Last monday of March—

Andrew Waterman moves for the 24th Day of May—Seconded by Mathewson

Gen. Stanton Joins the Motion. says the People are frightend by the Anxiety which is Shewn for the Adopt[i]o[n].

Marcht.

Elisha Brown gives up his Motion for the Monday in April and joins for the 4th Monday of May

Marcht. restates the Inconveni[ence] of meeting in Apr[i]l That the Gentle[man] is fascin[a]ted with the sound of Proxing Day—If the Interests of the Freemen is consulted

Bourne. says the only Quest[i]o[n] is to what Time we shall adjourn—Three Diff Times have been mentiond—He mentions them—He considers the Reasons which have been given—obviates the objection that it is Hurrying the Matt[e]r—The Constituents [i.e., Constitution] had been publishd and evry man has made up his Mind on the Subject—There will be Time in the Month of March to consult the Freemen—We shall be obliged to pay 2000 Dollars for the Delay of the Month of April—In Consequen[ce] of the Requisit[i]o[n] made in October Last the Indulgence was limited to the 15th. of Janry[.] Congress subjected us to foreig[n] Tonnage & Tonnage Duties to prevent foreigners fr[o]m availing themselv[e]s of the Rhode Island flag &c. The Revenue System befor Congress in which all of us are Interestd

Geo. Hazza[r]d Certain That 1/2 or 2/3 of this House consist[s] of Memb[e]rs of the Genl. Assembly—It was the Mean[in]g of this Assembly that the Convention should finish the Business—canno[t] therefor consent to the Adjourt.—It was movd for that Adj[ournme]nt and some of the Members were willing to acquiesc[e] for the sake of accommodation

Can any Men thing [i.e., think] it Right thus to length[e]n out the Determina[tion] of this Busin[ess] after having declar'd that Time to Consult the People was their only object—It will have the Appearan[ce] of Trifling—

Did we not Suggest to Congress that there was the Greatest Probability—and will it not be dishonorable for us to depart—This is the Constitution of the Country—as impossible for us to avoid being under it as wou[ld] be for Fish thrown upon the Land with out aid again to get to the Sea—We are held to pay our Part of the National Debt—as much as if the Lands were Mortgaged—Let me ask the Landhold[er]s respecting a Matter in Which he is inter[e]sted—The Farmers defeated the 5 per Cent—has any thing been done Since to lessen the Debt—This Inter[e]st has run on—is run[n]ing on—Eating Day & Night. it must be paid—will not propriation be called for—Congress have made Arrang[e]ment for destroying it by Revenue—if we adopt the Constitu[tion] we shall have the same Means—if we do not adopt the Constituti[on] we shall lose the opportun[i]ty—if we suffer another Jigg to be danc[e]d will not the wo[r]st Consequence follow—Have we not seen the Dir[e]ct Taxat[i]o[n] will not Do—

We have been pay[ing] six per Cent Inter[est] on Securities which we have sold for 2/6 on the Poun[d]—This Mischief has [been] unfair because we must—He asks no Office neither of Congr[ess] or the Stat[e]s. He shall Pity those who are now thus blinded—The Time will come when they will be convinced that this Measur[e] is necessary

G. Miller was against an Adjourn.—But when out sold he will Submit[.] But if it is the Intention to adjou[rn] so long he and his Constitu[en]ts will petition Congress to be Set to Massachusets—He thought it prop[er] to mention that this was his Intentio[n]—

J. Comstock. We have voted to Adjourn—we have a Right to take our own Time—no wonder that those who were then against the Adjo[u]rnt. now wish to make the Time as short as possible—We are the servants of the People. we act for them—The Constitution is the Prop[er] Work of the People—I cannot act against their Consent—When the People have had Time to think of it it will be prop[er] to meet again—if we adj[our]n to the 24th Day of May we shal[l] have time to consult. With respect to what Genl Mill[e]r has Said of Petition we are independt. State—if do any thing

G. Mill[e]r I cannot bear to be imposed Upon by the Gentleman—Instead of consulting the sentiments of his Constitu[en]ts—He persuad[e]s them to be against the Constit[utio]n

Mathewson. says That the Matt[e]r cannot be laid before the Peopl[e] till their Town Meetings because we cannot ord[e]r Town Meetings to be called—

Marcht: says this Shows us that we have reason to adjourn—Seven Men may call Town Meetings—If 7 Men cannot be found willing to call Meetings we may certainly then proce[e]d to adopt the Constitut[i]o[n]—

The Gen Assembly gave it one Month.

Champlin has not said any thing on the subject of the Adjourn. because ably spoken—Was it not for Proxing Time he supposd there wou[ld] be Time enough—befor April—Wishes Good men may be appoint[ed]—That the Members wou[ld] go home with the Disposit[i]ons of Members in New Ham[p]shir[e]—Mr Bourn has Stated the Ill Consequen[ces]—in same Respect Newport must have their Wood from abro[a]d[—]the Price will be doubld—calls on the Gentleman from Middleton to witness the Melancholy Situat[i]o[n] of Newport—These People have loo[k]ed up to this Convent[i]o[n] for Relief—they have been Patien[t]—Prevented from carrying away the Rum Chocolate &c manufact[u]rd in this state[.] Have no Stable [i.e., Staple]—could form[erly] with Spermac[e]ty Candle Rum Aples Potat[o]es Cyder Cheeses &c obtain—

Send lately to South Carolina to purchase this Produce could only send 7 Bundl[e]s of Hay—Congress will be disapp[oi]nted in not finding that.

uncertain what Measures congress will take[—]This were only prev[e]nted last fall from Prohibiting the Exportation of the Produce of this State—enlarges here

If the Adjourn. is to the Last of Marc[h] The Representat[i]o[n] to Congress may be chose

calls for the Vote the Last Monday of March or not—

Mathewson proposes the Vote the Last of March or the [First?]

Marcht. Relies on the Candour of the President to [- - -]—  
Andr. Waterman is for laying the Business

Desultory Debate on the Mode of putting the Vote—

J. Comstock contends for the Vote being put by the Hands—Last Monday of Marc[h] or 4th Monday in May.

B. Bourne We have not occasion to ask for favour[—]we have a Right to the Vote by Yea or Nay—Shall the Adjourn[ment] be on the Last Monday of March or not—

Marcht.

Marcht 31

Not 38

Not by sev[e]n Majority

Mr. Champlin moves that the Adjourn[ment] be on the monday following the Proxing Day

J. Comstock contends for the Last Monday of May—

Col. Barton begs Gentlemen to consider the Importance of the Matter—Congress will not extend further Indulgence. It is for the Poor and the Needy that he is Solicit[ous]—The Merch[an]t[s] can remain—if it is postponed—he is afraid they will repent of it. intreats and Besech[e]s the Gentle[m]n. to attend to this Matt[e]r.

Govr. Bowen says To postpone the Matt[e]r is a Wanton Exercise of Power—He has good Authority to suppose no further Indulgen[ce] will be giv[e]n

Secretary [reads] Letter of Gen. Washington

Gov. Bradford Moves That The Vote may be the Last Monday of April or May. Will always be Opposed to Threats—will go with his fellow Citizens[.] But thinks we do not Stand so secure as some thinks we have Enemies from North to South[—]will ever do all in his Power for the Good of the Stat[e]s—will never consent to an Applicat[i]on to Congress[.] hurtful to the Sovereignty of the State—Saw Mr Sayles Smile when it was observd that he would have Time enough to consult his Constituents. The Revenue not collecting[—]our Debt going on[—]Congress Raising.

our Trade Stoppd. Our Citizens Treated with Contempt—our State Disgrac[ed—]why should it be postpond.

Moved that the Vote be [taken.]

Gov Bradford. Points out the Certain Consequenc[e]s of postponing the Matt[e]r till the 4th. Monday of May.

Mr Williams I did not think of air[i]ng any thing on this Matt[e]r but we have been so repeatedly called on by Gentle[m]en who have been Candid as we and we are Candid as they. These Gent have called for our Reasons—But they are hardly to be persuaded that we have any Reasons[.] we are Sensible of the Weight of Reasons which have been engag[e]d.—is Sorry for the Differ[e]nc[e] of Sentim[en]t—wishes that cou[ld] be [- - -] who is [- - -]—will candidly give the Reas[on]n with as much surety as he Spoke—Those who are candid will allow this[.] we are on the Side of the Peopl[e]. We are to Act for them—He is on the Sid[e] of the People[.] They have be[en] repeatedly call[e]d on to give their Sentiments on this. Must—This Convention oringats [i.e., originates fr[o]m the choic[e] of the Body of the Peopl[e] and we know coming from them that it is

the Sentiments of the Great Body of the People that this Constituti[on] Should be rejected—It takes some time to bring the whole People to an Agreem[en]t to the Constit[ution]. We have had Time to Do the [Business?] but if we had done it we have Reason to Judge of the Consequence—But Time till the 4th Monday of May will be littl[e] enoug[h]—If the People will consent to the Adoption he will cheerfully acquiesce in the Government can it even if he was of a Dif[feren]t opini[on]—But it is his Duty to be on the Side of the People.

Mr. Bourn has wanted to hear the Reason which he expe[c]ted the Gentlem[a]n would [give?] but he has not heard a Single Reason—He has said that We know the Body of the People are against it that his Constituents are against it—Therefor instead of voting for an Adjourn[men]t. he ought to have votd for a Rejection of the Constitut[i]on—He had rather have the Constitut[i]on rejectd than be postponed to the last Monday of May[.]

Congress will probably subject our entry to the Commerce [duty] but [– – –] [– – –]. Hopes that The Reason given will convin[ce] the Inhabitants of Foster and all the oth[er] Town[s]

Gov. Bradford says That it is Time for the worthy Member Mr W [i.e., John Williams] to wrestle with the Peopl[e] of his Town to persuade them of the absolu[te] Necessity of the Constitut[i]on being[.] That he will have the same Candor for those who advoc[a]te the Constitut[i]on] as he asked for those who are against it—as those who adv[o]cate it are also on the side of the People

May [24th] 36

Not 32

Mr. Champlin

[Vote on the place of meeting]

East Greenwich 34

Newport 35

1. MS, RHi.

### 519. Rhode Island Convention Minutes Fragment, 1–6 March 1790<sup>1</sup>

And that the Judiciary Power of Congress shall not take Cognizance of any Contracts &c which shall have originat'd previous to the adoption of this Constitution.

That some Tribunal other than the Senate be provided for Trying impeachment of Senators—

We the Subscribers agreeable to our appoint't.—do report the above Amendments to the Proposed Federal Constitution of the united States of America.

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**520. James Manning to George Washington  
Providence, 1 March 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . As the adoption of the Federal Constitution by the Convention now sitting in this State is a most pleasing anticipation, I take the liberty to introduce & recommend to Your Excellency Benjamin Stelle Esquire. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**521. Newport Herald, 4 March 1790<sup>1</sup>**

THE CONVENTION OF THIS STATE *assembled at South-Kingston, on Monday last, pursuant to a recommendation of the General Assembly, to consider and decide upon the Constitution of the United States.*

The appointment of a Convention gave flattering hopes to the well-wishers of the State, that the opposers to the Constitution would manifest a conciliatory disposition; but these pleasing expectations we fear will be blasted.

1. Reprinted: *Boston Gazette*, 29 March.

**522. Providence United States Chronicle, 4 March 1790**

We learn, That the Convention of this State, for deciding on the new Federal Constitution, assembled at South-Kingstown on Monday last;—and have chosen the Hon. DANIEL OWEN, Esq. for their President, and DANIEL UPDIKE, Esq. Secretary.

From the best Information, it is probable, a short Adjournment will take Place, previous to the Question on the Adoption of the Constitution, being taken.

**523. Committee Report: Bill of Rights, c. 5 March 1790<sup>1</sup>**

We the Subscribers, being the Committee appointed to report the Amendments necessary to the proposed Constitution of the United States of America, do report that previous to the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, there be a Declaration or Bill of Rights asserting & securing from Encroachments the essential and unalienable Rights of the People of this State—

1st. To wit, That there are certain and natural Rights of which Men when they form a social Compact cannot deprive or divest their Posterity, among which are the Enjoyment of Life and Liberty with the Means of acquiring possessing and protecting Property and pursuing and obtaining Happiness and Safety—

2d. That all Power is naturally vested in and consequently derived from the People; that Magistrates therefore are their Trustees and Agents, and at all Times amenable to them—

3d. That the Powers of Government may be reassumed by the People whenever it shall become necessary to their Happiness, (that the Right of the States respectively to nominate & appoint All State officers &) that every (other) Power, Jurisdiction and Right which is not by the said Constitution clearly delegated to the Congress of the United States, or to the Departments or Government thereof



remain to the People of the several States or their respective State Governments to whom they may have granted the same; and that those Clauses in the said Constitution which declare that Congress shall not have or exercise certain Powers do not imply that Congress is intitled to any Powers not given by the said Constitution, but such Clauses are to be construed either as Exceptions to certain specified Powers, or as inserted merely for greater Caution—

4th. That Religion or the Duty which we owe to our Creator and the Manner of discharging it can be directed only by Reason and Conviction, not by Force or Violence, and therefore all Men have an equal, natural and unalienable Right to the free exercise of Religion according to the Dictates of Conscience, and that no particular religious Sect or Society ought to be favored or established by Law in Preference to others.—

5th. That the legislative, executive and Judiciary Powers of Government should be separate and distinct, and that the Members of the two first may be restrained from oppression by feeling and participating the public Burthens; they should at fixed Periods be reduced to a private Station, return into the Mass of the People, and the Vacancies be supplied by certain and regular Elections in which all or any Part of the former Members to be eligible or in eligible as the Rules of the Constitution of Government, and the Laws shall direct—

6th. That Elections of Representatives in the Legislature ought to be free & frequent, and all Men having sufficient Evidence of permanent common Interest with and Attachment to the Community ought to have the Right of Suffrage; and no Aid, Charge, Tax or Fee, can be set rated or levied upon the People without their own Consent or that of their Representatives so elected, nor can they be bound by any Law to which they have not in like Manner assented for the public good—

7th. That all Power of suspending Laws or the Execution of Laws by any authority without the Consent of the Representatives of the People in the Legislature is injurious to their Rights and ought not to be exercised.—

8th. That in all criminal and capital Prosecutions a Man hath a Right to demand the Cause and Nature of his Accusation, to be confronted with the Accusers and Witnesses, to call for Evidence and be allowed Counsel in his Favor, and to a fair and speedy Trial by an impartial Jury of his Vicinage, without whose unanimous Consent he cannot be found guilty (except in the Government of the Land and Naval Forces) nor can he be compelled to give Evidence against himself—

9th. That no Freeman ought to be taken, imprisoned or disseised of his Freehold, Liberties, Privileges, or Franchises, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any Manner destroyed or deprived of his Life, Liberty or Property but by the Trial by Jury or by the Law of the Land—

10th. That every Freeman restrained of his Liberty is entitled to a Remedy to enquire into the Lawfulness thereof and to remove the same if unlawful, and that such Remedy ought not to be denied or delayed—

11th. That in Controversies respecting Property, and in Suits between Man and Man, the antient Trial by Jury in the Extent that it obtains by the common

~~Law of England~~ as hath been exercised by us & ancestors from the time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary is one of the greatest Securities to the Rights of the People and ought to remain sacred and inviolate—

12th. That every Freeman ought to obtain Right and Justice freely and without ~~delay~~, Sale, compleatly and without Denial, promptly and without Delay, and that all Establishments or Regulations contravening these Rights are oppressive and unjust—

13th. That excessive Bail ought not to be required, nor excessive Fines imposed, nor cruel nor unusual Punishments inflicted—

14th. That every Person has a Right to be Secure from all unreasonable Searches and Seizures of his Person, his Papers or his Property; and therefore that all Warrants to search suspected Places, or seize any Person, his Papers or his Property without Information upon Oath or Affirmation of Sufficient Cause are grievous and oppressive, and that all general Warrants for such in which the Place or Person suspected is not particularly designated are dangerous and ought not to be granted—

15th. That the people have a Right peaceably to assemble together to consult for their common Good, or to instruct their Representatives, and that every person has a Right to petition or appeal to the Legislature for Redress of Grievances—

16th. That the People have a Right to Freedom of Speech, and of writing and publishing their Sentiments, that Freedom of the Press is one of the greatest Bulwarks of Liberty and ought not to be violated—

17th. That the People have a Right to keep and bear Arms; that a well regulated Militia, including the Body of the People, capable of bearing Arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defence of a free State.—That the Militia shall not be subject to martial Law except in Time of War, Rebellion or Insurrection: That Standing Armies in Time of Peace are dangerous to Liberty and ought not to be kept up, except in Cases of Necessity, and that at all Times The Militia should be under strict Subordination to the civil Power—That in Time of Peace no soldier ought to be quartered in any House without the Consent of the Owner, and in Time of War only by the civil Magistrate in such Manner as the Law directs—

18th. That any Person religiously scrupulous of bearing Arms ought to be exempted upon Payment of an Equivalent to employ another to bear Arms in his Stead—

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

#### **524. Committee Report: Amendments to be Proposed to the Federal Constitution, c. 5 March 1790**

Article first, The United States shall Guarantee to each State its Sovereignty, Freedom and Independence and every Power, Jurisdiction and right which is not by this Constitution expressly deligated to the United States.—

~~Second. There shall be one Representative for every Thirty thousand Free Inhabitants, including those bound to Service for a term of years, and excluding~~

all Slaves and Indians until the whole number of Representatives amount to two hundred, after which, that number shall be continued or increased as Congress shall direct, but shall not be diminished.

Second That Congress shall not alter Modify or interfere in the times Places and Manner of holding Elections, for Senators and representatives or either of them except when the Legislature of any State shall neglect refuse or be disabled by Invasion or rebellion, to Prescribe the same or in Case when the Provision made by the States is so imperfect as that no Consequent Election is had, and then only untill the Legislature of Such State shall make Provision in the Premises

Third, It is declared by the Conventioned that the Judicial Power of the United States in Cases in which a State may be a Party does not extend, to Criminal Prosecutions or to Authorise any suit by any Person against a State—but to remove all doubts or Controversies respecting the same, that it be especially expressed as a part of the Constitution of the United States, That Congress shall not directly or Indirectly either by themselves or through the Judiciary—interfere with any one of the States in the Redemption of Paper Money Already emitted and now in Circulation; or in Lequidating and discharging the Publick Securities of any one State, that each and every State shall have the exclusive right of making such Laws and regulations for the before mentioned Purpose as they shall think Proper.—

Fourth That no Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, hereafter to be made pursuant to the fifth article shall take effect or become a Part of the Constitution of the United States—after the year one thousand seven hundred and Ninety three without the Consent of Eleven of the States heretofore united under one Confederation.

Fifth That the Judicial Powers of the United States shall extend to no possible Case where the Cause of Action shall have Originated before the ratification of this Constitution except in disputes between States about their Territory; Disputes between Persons claiming Lands under Grants of different States—and Debts due to the United States—

Sixth—That no Person shall be Compelled to do Military duty otherwise than by Volantory Inlistments, except in Cases of General Invasion any thing in the second Paragraph of the Sixth Article of the Constitution or any Law made under the Constitution to the Contrary notwithstanding

Seventh, That no Capitation or Poll Tax shall ever be laid by the Congress

Eighth In Cases of Direct Taxes the Congress shall first make requisitions on the Several States to assess, Levy, and pay their respective Proportions to such requisitions in such way and manner as the Legislatures of the Several States shall Judge best; and in Case any State shall neglect or refuse to pay its Proportion pursuant to such requisition: Then Congress may assess and levy such States Proportion, together with Interest at the rate of six per centum pr. annum from the time Prescribed in such requisition

Ninth.—That Congress shall lay no Direct Taxes without the Consent of the Legislatures of three fourths of the States in the Union

Tenth—That the Journals of the Proceedings of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be Published as soon as Conveniently May be at least once

in every Year except such parts thereof relating to Treaties, Alliances, or Military Operations or in their Judgment require Secrecy.—

Eleventh. That regular Statements of the receipts and expenditures of all Public Monies, shall be published at least once a year—

Twelfth.—As Standing Armies in time of Peace are Dangerous to Liberty and ought not to be kept up, except in Cases of Necessity and as at all times the Military should be under strict Subordination to the Civil Power: That therefore no Standing Army or regular Troops shall be raised or kept up in time of Peace.—

Thirteenth That no Monies be Borrowed on the Credit of the united States without the Assent of Two Thirds of the Senators and Representatives present in each House.—

Fourteenth—That the Congress shall not declare War without the concurrence of Two thirds of the Senators and representatives Present in each House.—

Fifteenth—That the words “without the consent of Congress” in the seventh Clause in the ninth Section of the first Article of the Constitution be expunged—

Sixteenth That no Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States shall hold any Other Office under the united States or any of them, Nor shall any Officer Appointed by Congress be Permitted to hold any Office under the Appointment of any of the States.—

Seventeenth As a Traffick Tending to establish or continue the Slavery of any part of the human Species is disgraceful to the cause of Liberty and humanity, that Congress shall as soon as may be, promote and establish, such Laws [and?] regulations, as may effectually, Prevent the Importation [of?] every Person as Slaves into the united States.—

Eighteenth And that the Amendments Proposed by Congress in March AD 1789—be adopted by this Convention—except the Second article therein contained—

1. MS, Papers Relating to the Adoption of the Constitution, R-Ar.

**525. Murray, Mumford & Bowen to Brown & Benson  
New York, 6 March 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

... We hope soon to learn of your state's becoming a member of the Union, when business and your hopes will again revive—

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**526. Providence Gazette, 6 March 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Convention of this State, for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States, met at South-Kingstown on Monday last.

The Hon. Daniel Owen, Esq; was chosen President, and Daniel Updike, Esq; Secretary.

*The following have been sent us as Minutes of the Proceedings of Convention.*

After the Election of a President and Secretary, a Committee was appointed to draught Rules and Regulations for the Proceedings of Convention.

Tuesday Morning the Committee reported Rules, &c. Immediately after they had been adopted, and before the Constitution had been read, Mr. Sayles moved that a Committee should be appointed to prepare and report a Bill of Rights, and Amendments to the Constitution. This Motion, being in Writing, was laid on the Board, and the Convention adjourned till the Afternoon.

At the Meeting in the Afternoon, the Motion of Mr. Sayles was revived. The Constitution was also read, and agreed to be taken up and considered by Paragraphs.

The Remainder of Tuesday, the Whole of Wednesday, and Thursday Forenoon, were occupied in hearing and obviating Objections, &c.

Just at the Rising of the Convention on Thursday Forenoon, a Committee, consisting of two Members from each County, was appointed to draught Amendments, which Committee had not reported Yesterday Morning, when the Post came away.

The Committee are Messieurs Ray Sands, Joshua Barker, John Sayles, Stephen Steere, Jonathan J. Hazard, James Sheldon, Thomas Allen, Samuel Pearce, Par-don Mawney, and Gideon Arnold.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 15 March.

#### 527. Providence Gazette, 6 March 1790<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a Letter from South-Kingstown, dated March 4.*

“The Convention have not yet come to any Decision on the Subject of their Appointment: A Committee this Day were appointed to draught Amendments to the Constitution, and it is expected they will report in the Morning. It is highly probable the Convention will adjourn to the latter End of April, or Beginning of May, previously directing the Amendments which shall be reported by the Committee to be laid before the Towns, at their April Town-Meetings.”

1. Reprinted in eight out-of-state newspapers by 23 March: N.H. (1), Mass. (4), Conn. (1), Pa. (2).

#### 528. Newport Mercury, 8 March 1790

The Convention of this State, for deliberating on the Constitution of the United States, met at South-Kingstown on Monday last.

The Hon. Daniel Owen, Esq; was chosen President, and Daniel Updike, Esq; Secretary.

After spending the Week upon it, they adjourned on Saturday Evening, to the last Monday in May next, then to meet in this Town.

#### 529. New York Daily Advertiser, 15 March 1790 (excerpt)

... After the first day of April, the tonnage act will be enforced against us, the operation of which must be inevitably attended with misery and distress—Congress has certainly a right to compel us to pay our quota of the debt contracted by the war; and tho’ they should agree to consider us as foreign and independent,

yet upon the principles of an incorporate union, they must still view us as a part of the United States, subject to the general government and liable to pay our proportion of the expence accrued and accruing thereby. And is it just that the other states should sustain the whole expence of establishing and administering the federal government, securing the western territory, &c. &c. and that this state, without contributing towards it, should enter the Union and reap all the benefits of that government, whenever it shall please to adopt it? . . .

**530. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 20 March 1790<sup>1</sup>**

By this day's mail we learn, that the Convention of the State of Rhode-Island has adjourned, to meet again in June next.

1. Reprinted: Charleston *City Gazette*, 15 April.

**531. Providence United States Chronicle, 25 March 1790**

Mr. WHEELER, Inclosed I send you the Report of the Committee of both Houses of the Massachusetts Assembly, on the Subject of further AMENDMENTS in the CONSTITUTION of the United States, referred for Consideration to the next Session of the Assembly.—A Number of your Readers wish to see it published in your extensively circulating and valuable Paper.

A CONSTANT READER.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In SENATE, January 29, 1790.

ORDERED, That Josiah Thatcher, Benjamin Austin, jun. and Nathan Dane, Esqrs. with such as the Hon. House may join, be a Committee to consider what further Amendments are necessary to be added to the *Federal Constitution*—and report.

Sent down for Concurrence.

THOMAS DAWES, President, *pro tem*.

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In the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 2, 1790.

Read and concurred—and Mr. Hill, Mr. Goodman, Mr. Sewall, and Mr. Bacon, are joined.

DAVID COBB, Speaker.

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The Committee of both Houses appointed  
to consider what further Amendments are necessary  
to be added to the CONSTITUTION of the UNITED STATES—  
REPORT,

That having carefully examined and considered the subject referred to them; they are fully of opinion, that further Amendments in that Constitution are necessary to secure the Liberties of the People, and the blessings of a free and efficient system of Government; and that such Amendments ought now to be attended to, and made so particular, as will have a tendency to preserve the forms

of a Federal Republic, and to prevent a consolidation of the States.—As this important subject, is now brought before the Legislature; and the people have a favourable opportunity to deliberate upon it, the Committee think it is proper for the General Court, at the present time, to suggest to the Members from this State in Congress, several principles of Amendments to be attended to, as soon as the important business now before Congress, will admit.

It is with diffidence, the Committee express their opinion on this very interesting subject; but as it is made their duty, they have made it their endeavour to consider the objects referred to them, with the attention they deserve: And though they think the States have been highly favoured in laying the foundation of a good Government; yet they conceive much is to be done, to define and complete the System.

The committee in their enquiries, have been influenced by those truths and principles, which are held sacred in all free and enlightened Countries; and have inferred the proposed Amendments from what they conceive to be the fundamental principles of a free and energetic System of Government for an extensive Community.

They feel the fullest conviction, that the liberties and prosperity of the United States, must rest on a general Government, adequate to the common defence and general welfare; and on State or local governments, constitutionally secured in their proper stations; and therefore, that every good man will seasonably oppose a consolidation of the States—an event that must, probably, be attended with the loss of every thing dear to a free, virtuous and manly people.

Your Committee believe it is a truth, very generally admitted in this country, that the greatest portion of political happiness is enjoyed in that equality which prevails in well-regulated Republics;—That there is a constant effort in each order of men to destroy this equality, to exalt itself and depress the others: To prevent the ruinous effects of which, many checks must be engrafted into the Constitution; and every part of the people have its constitutional influence, and proper means of defence in the government: And to this end, not only a Senatorial Branch, but a full and substantial representation of the body of the people, must be effectually provided for.

That it is a fundamental principle, that such a representation, and power to lay and collect taxes—to form and controul the military forces of a community, ought to go together in all cases, where not evidently impracticable;—and that the Legislature of the Society, ought to be so formed, that the sense of the majority therein, may correspond with the sense of the major part of the people.

That the powers of those who govern, ought to be accurately limited and defined by the instruments and compacts of association; and that where the sovereignty is divided and qualified, and lodged in a Federal Head for certain purposes, and in local Governments, to certain other purposes, the line of distinction ought to be very carefully drawn, to prevent encroachments.

On attentively examining the Constitution of the United States, the Committee are of opinion, that the powers of the general Government, in several instances, are not well defined or limited; that there is not a just line of distinction

drawn between them and the powers of the local Governments; and that there is no such representation as before mentioned, in the Legislature of the Union.

It appears to the Committee, that it is agreeable to the very essence and design of a Federal System, that there be a general Legislature, composed of a few Members, and that a more numerous and substantial representation of the people be assembled in the State legislatures; and, therefore it follows, that the councils of the Union, must have a natural bias to vigour, order, and an aristocratical system of policy; and that the State Governments must have a like bias to popular liberty, and popular measures: To make the democratic temper of the latter, and the different temper of the former, mutual checks on each other, and thereby conducive to the happiness of the whole, is peculiar, perhaps, to a Republic like ours; and a part of political science, yet, in some measure, to be learned.

In a single Legislature, the senatorial and popular branches prevent the extremes of each other by mutual negatives in all or particular cases; and how far this fundamental principle can, with safety and propriety be extended to a general and State Government in a great Republic, must require much discernment, and reflection, time and experience to determine: The Committee conceive, however, that some important means to lessen the abuses of democracy on the one hand, and of aristocracy on the other, now present themselves.—By encreasing and improving the representation in the general Government, and making some of the State Governments (if necessary) less popular, they will become less destructive of each other; and by giving a negative in certain cases when practicable, each will be enabled to defend itself against the other, and a medium between the extreme views of both, be happily produced; and by limiting and defining powers, and by a proper distinguishing line, each may be kept in its proper place.—As the Constitution now stands, the Committee are of opinion it will cherish those natural inequalities among men, from which will in time, result constitutional distinctions, or an uneasiness in the body of the people, which, by sudden commotions may endanger or demolish the whole system.

The Committee by no means agree with those who contend, that the natural tendency of a system like ours, is towards an undue encrease of the powers of the State Governments, nor with those who contend that the democratic temper of the people, is a sufficient check upon the extensive powers of the general Government.—Certain it is, that this temper must tend to destroy all Government, if not constitutionally directed.—It must have its due weight in order to prevent their execution.

This subject of Amendments is too extensive to be treated at large, or in particular detail; the Committee therefore, have more particularly in this Report, made it an object to bring into view, such principles as appear to them, to be deserving of more immediate attention.—It appears to them to be a most important object, duly to examine the legislative powers of Congress, respecting internal Taxes, the militia peace establishments, regulations of elections, the Federal Judiciary and Federal Territories, and in various ways to check and limit



those powers in their exercise.—It is very obvious, that the legislative powers of the general Government, as to these objects, may be so exercised, as in a short period of time, materially to alter the condition of the community, and the first principles of the Government: and it is in the opinion of the Committee, equally obvious, that the body of the people, ought to have some further and more effectual controul on the formation of the Laws, and over those who make the Laws, relative to these subjects.

If it be necessary, that Congress should retain and exercise the powers vested in that Body; yet many useful checks may be provided—merely to elect the Senators and Representatives of a Federal Head, can be but imperfect security to the body of the people, against a system of politics, very repugnant to their general sentiments—for it is clear, that in a Federal Republic, the aristocratical part of the community, will very generally be elected to administer the general Government.

In altering the Constitution all agree, that the body of the people, in their State Legislatures, or in their State Conventions, ought to be consulted; because, otherwise, the public opinion could not be known, and all parts of the Federal System be secure; and perhaps, this principle, under different modifications, may well be applied to some few important cases in Federal Legislation.

The Committee are sensible, the weakness and embarrassments of the Confederation, and the many obstructions in the forms of Government in the United Netherlands, are to be avoided; but a Federal Head, possessing almost entire Sovereignty, and no ways checked by the local Governments, may be equally dangerous, and destructive of the system, of which it is intended as a part.—If a direct tax, a plan for forming the militia, or a large peace establishment, should be proposed by the general Government, and be disapproved by a large majority of the State Legislatures, ought such measures to be adopted.

Having made the foregoing observations, the Committee submit the following principles of Amendments for consideration, and that constitutional provision be made.

First.

*That Congress shall not interfere in the regulations of the elections of its Members, except in cases, where the State Legislatures shall neglect, or refuse to make regulations; and that the qualifications of Senators and Representatives, be expressly defined in the Constitution.*

Second.

*That Congress erect no company with exclusive advantages of commerce.*

Third.

*That Congress have power to establish a uniform rule of inhabitancy or settlement of the poor of the different States throughout the United States.*

Fourth.

*That republican forms of Government be established in the districts which are, or shall be ceded to the United States.*

Fifth.

*That Congress shall by law provide for calling forth the posse comitatus for executing the laws of the United States.*

## Sixth.

*That the general Government exercise no power, but what is expressly delegated.*

## Seventh.

*That a part of the internal resources of taxation be appropriated to the United States, and that a part thereof be exclusively reserved to the respective States, with such exceptions, however, and under such limitations as war and other extraordinary exigencies may require.*

## Eight.

*That no system for forming the militia be established, and that no establishment of troops in a time of peace, beyond a limited number, be made, if disapproved by a specified number of the State Legislatures, within a limited time after the bills for those purposes shall be laid before them.*

## Ninth.

*That the Judiciary powers of the United States be more explicitly defined, and more accurately distinguished from those of the respective States.*

## Tenth.

*That the Senate shall not possess all the Executive and Judicial Powers now vested in that body.*

## Eleventh.

*That it be left to the several States, to make compensations to their Senators and Representatives respectively, for their services in Congress.*

## Twelfth.

*That the State Legislatures have power to recall when they may think it expedient their Federal Senators, and to send others in their stead—and that the Senators be chosen, all at the same time, and for the term of four years.*

In the foregoing investigations, it has been the main object of the Committee to bring into view, amendments which shall secure the blessings of freedom without injuring the nerves of Government.

As to internal taxes, the Committee further observe, that so long as there shall remain in all cases, concurrent power in Congress, and the respective State Legislatures to tax the same objects, it will be impracticable for the Union or separate States to estimate their revenues; and, consequently to estimate, with any degree of certainty, on performing their respective engagements.

Permanently to secure the liberties and happiness of America, the Committee believe a due modification of the Legislative Powers before-mentioned, and further checks in the Constitution are essential; as well as a fair and honest administration of the general and local Governments.

The Committee are convinced that the people of this State, when they adopted the Constitution of the United States, wished for, and expected further amendments, than those which have been recommended; and that they are now anxious to have their liberties more explicitly secured to them.

After dilating on general principles, the Committee have brought into view more particular propositions, resting assured that from the premises laid down, will result such amendments as will answer the just expectations of all our citizens.

**532. North Carolina Chronicle, 29 March 1790**

By a vessel arrived at Wilmington, from Providence, Rhode-Island, we learn, that the convention lately held at Little-Rest, have rejected the constitution, by a majority of six.

**533. Thomas Jefferson to the Marquis de Lafayette  
New York, 2 April 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . the opposition to our new constitution has almost totally disappeared. some few indeed had gone such lengths in their declarations of hostility that they feel it awkward perhaps to come over; but the amendments proposed by Congress, have brought over almost all their followers. if the President can be preserved a few years till habits of authority & obedience can be established, generally, we have nothing to fear. the little vaut-rien, Rhode-island will come over with a little more time. . . .

1. FC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XVI, 292–93.

**534. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 5 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The population of the State of Rhode-Island amounted, at the last census, to 51,000 men, women and children. This is about one sixtieth part of the people of the United States.

1. Reprinted: Edenton *State Gazette of North Carolina*, 24 April.

**535. Otho H. Williams to Alexander Hamilton  
Baltimore, 6 April 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

The Brigantine Providence, Arnold Briggs, from Rhode Island, arrived at this port the 22d. February last with a large variegated Cargo, Among the rest thirty-two Casks of New England rum—an article subject to duty, from Rhode Island, if Manufactured there; and the contrary is not pretended. . . . A deduction of ten Per Cent was allowed from the duties on the Cargo. . . . But these privileges were granted with a proviso that a Register be produced conformable to the laws of the State in which it shall have been obtained. I request to know whether the Register so produced is to be considered in lieu of all documents required of Vessels from other States: and whether the Brigantine be liable to tonage or Not? . . . I have . . . been obliged to request that there may be issued a process against William Atkinson for a trespass in unlading half a dozen Cases and boxes without a permit. . . . If I, instantly, prosecute this matter further the possible goods & the Vessel will be forfeited & in that case innocent Men must suffer and very worthy characters be exposed as Smugglers. . . . Pray advise me what I am to do to in the present case.

1. Printed: Syrett, VI, 357.

**536. A Freeman****Providence United States Chronicle, 8 April 1790**

Mr. WHEELER, Sometime since I published, in your Paper, my Sentiments on the Necessity and Justice of *paying* our Representatives in the General Assembly a reasonable Compensation for their Services—and on the Importance of electing them, and other principal Officers of the Town, in a free and uninfluenced Manner, by a *Paper Vote*, without any *previous Nomination*.—And I am now happy in being able to say, I think with Confidence, that on no Questions would the Town be more unanimous, were they fairly taken, except those great Ones on the *Adoption* of the Federal Constitution, and the *Abolition* of the Slave-Trade.

*Providence, April 7, 1790.*

**537. New York Daily Advertiser, 9 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

*Extract of a letter from Rhode-Island.*

“From a tolerable exact calculation, the number of men, women and children in and belonging to this state, may now amount to about 60,000 people. Out of these could be mustered (upon urgent occasion) about ten thousand fighting men, including boys from 15 years old, and upwards. Besides these, should the state be attacked *ab externo*, a very large proportion of the females would turn out (like the heroines of France) in support of the honor and independence of their country. There is hardly any such thing as forming a proper idea of what might be effected by such a host of people, when thoroughly exasperated, especially if headed by such able men as Dr. T. and some others I could mention. As to unanimity, no doubt a prospect of certain danger would soon put an end to our intestine divisions, and unite us in one common cause.”

1. Reprinted: Hartford *American Mercury*, 19 April; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 22 April.

**538. George Benson to Theodore Foster****Providence, 11 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

My Dear Sir,

I duly recd. your Acceptable favour of the 22d. ulto.—I have thought with regret on the interruption in our Correspondence the delay or omission on my part has been principally Occasion'd by the Death of a brother who languish'd some time in my house previous to his Death and whose situation Necessarily arrested my attention, he quitted this transitory scene with the most Comfortable Persuasion of entering as he express'd it the fulness of Joy so that I am not [left?] to [sorrow?] as those who have no hope—I was pleas'd with your letter to Govr. Fenner it Contain'd much Correct & interesting information, we shall be glad to receive the Proceedings of the general Convention by the Middle of May at which time we expect our society will have an Annual Meeting if our friends in Philada. have the particulars of Mr. Wilberforces speech in February last in the British Parliamt. I will thank you to Procure & send it to me and also impart any private advices they may have respecting the Probability of the abolition's bill Passing the House of Lords &c—our Citizens appear Universally

Pleas'd with the dignified refusal of the President to Comply with the vote of the House—*appropo*—the speeches of our Friends Mr. Sedgwick & Mr. Bourn on the Occasion have done them Much honour my friendly salutations Court their Acceptance—I heard that Dr. Priestly was delivering a Course of Lectures in Defence of the Authenticity of Divine Revelation, but if it is only in support of his *own system it is quite a different thing*—he may be I Conceive as Usefully employ'd in asserting Seneca's Morals as his own Plan divests Christianity of those Grand Peculiarities which render it so incomparably Precious to the Believer—but to do this he must in my humble Opinion Crucify Scripture as well As Christ.—Do write soon to your Obliged & faithful friend

1. RC, Foster Papers, RHi.

**539. Alexander Hamilton to Otho Holland Williams  
New York, 12 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I have considered the circumstances you state in your Letter of the 6th inst. respecting vessels owned by Citizens of Rhode Island.

I am of opinion that those vessels in the case you mention, are Subject to the Same Tonnage to which registered vessels owned by Citizens of the united States without License are liable: because if they were to enjoy all the privileges of coasting vessels, they would be placed on a more favorable footing than registered or licensed vessels, which could never have been the intention of the Legislature.

With regard to the case of Wm Atkinson, if you are fully Satisfied, that there was no intention of fraud, it will be best not to hasten the prosecution of that cause, as there is now a Bill before the house to provide for the remission or mitigation of fines forfeitures and penalties in certain cases.

1. Printed: Syrett, VI, 365.

**540. "Z."  
Providence United States Chronicle, 15 April 1790**

*TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRONICLE.*

*Please to give the following Remarks a place in your next Chronicle and oblige,*

A FRIEND TO GOOD GOVERNMENT.

Paying the Representatives of this Town in General Assembly, moderately for their services, has been often mentioned; but has hitherto been put by, without much discussion. I now offer my reasons why I think it not only reasonable but eligible, that they should be paid.—I know interest will rise up and ask, why should we now pay for that which has hitherto been done without pay, and which good men are still willing to do without pay?—this is plausible; but in this case I apprehend not sound. Whilst we on all hands agree that civil government is and ought to be supported by monies, to be contributed by the public at large, what reason can there be for distinction in the office of Legislator only? Besides, I am really of the opinion, that moderate pay, such as shall bear strong marks of economy and frugality, to the office of Legislator, will rather tend, by way of

example, to keep the expences of government in general moderate, than to raise them.

But there is a further reason; men of moderate circumstances cannot afford to attend that service at their own expence; and men of fortune, tho' willing to take that burthen upon themselves, and tho' the best men we have; yet from their situation, cannot possibly see and feel every pivot upon which the affairs of the different parts of the community turn, and every pinch, to which the Legislature might apply some relief by proper attention; and which renders it absolutely necessary to select men from the various situations in life, within the qualifications of law, in order to form the best representation; this is measureably prevented in the present case, by withholding a very trifling sum of money, which in my judgment, we hand out with a sufficient degree of liberality (the nature of our government considered) on most other occasions. But when we add to this, that we do not always find men of fortune the best men; that admitting they are naturally men of the best parts, and as humane and benevolent in their dispositions, yet it is very natural for such to reason on this wise;—the different conditions of mankind in this life is the work of Providence; it is the natural order in which the Almighty is pleased to place the human race, if we may judge from the actual state of men in all ages; from the highest state of affluence and power to the second, third and middle rank,—to the lower class, to the poor man, to the slave, who has neither property, liberty, nor life secured to him by the institutions of his fellow men; and if these things are according to the divine order and economy, why to be sure, I, as a Legislator, shall be found in the line of my duty, to do what is in my power to preserve and keep up these various classes as *seperate* and *distinct* as possible.—But this is in reality perverting the nature and design of civil government—the disinterested and philosophic politician (some of whom happily for the human race, I acknowledge are found among men of fortune) reasons otherwise. He considers those as evils necessarily incident to mankind more or less in this world: that, like the storms and tempests in the natural world, and their corresponding disorders in the moral, they are to be carefully guarded against, and mankind to be sheltered from them by the wise and prudent; that to this end the Patriot Statesman devotes his watchful hours, and withstands, as much as possible the torrent of corrupt propensity:—and in short endeavours to fulfil the duty pointed out in the new Testament, to be “a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well.”

**541. Brown & Benson to Hewes & Anthony  
Providence, 16 April 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We must not omit to return our grateful thanks for your kind attention in advancing the Money for the flour two months, we hope we shall not have occasion to intrude on your kindness When we become united to the federal Government an Event we most ardently wish to realize & to effect which no exertions are Wanting on the part of the federalists—

With every Sentiment of attachment & Esteem We are Dr sirs Your Obligd. & assured friends—

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**542. Brown & Benson to Severin Erickson  
Providence, 16 April 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We omitted to mention that in order to obtain the advantage of the Drawback on all the goods we export our Revenue Law exacts a Certificate sign'd by two reputable Merchts. residing at the place where they are landed, specifying the quantity of each Article with the Marks & Numbers of the Casks or Packages also the Name of the Vessel & Captain & place from which they Came & the time when deliverd—you will please to send us a Certificate of the ten Hhds of Rum & three Tons of Iron which we shipt to you by Capt. Allen when we are so happy as to be in the Union this form will be unnecessary but as our trade has at present so many difficulties to encounter it becomes us to save all we Can with Respect to the dutys &c—

The Convention of this State adjourn'd to the latter end of May We hope they will then adopt the Constitution. . . .

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**543. John Sullivan to John Langdon  
Durham, N.H., 17 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

My Dear Sir

permit me to embrace this opportunity to enquire after your health and ask how matters seem to go on? whether we are likely to have an Indian war? added to a European one—will Rhode Island Join us or perish alone? I have lately received some letters from Mr. John Carter Printer at Providence he is as high a federalist as he was a whig when you knew him & is persuaded they will Join! he solicits to be concerned in the post office way he was in for years under Doctor Franklin & conducted to approbation The Doctor is his great Friend but is too far advanced to do him much service now I will Esteem it as a very great favor if you will favor him with your friendship at Head Quarters when you see the proper time. & as you know the merits of the man I flatter myself that your recommendation will procure the Interest and Influence of the members of this State who are with you; I should not give you this Trouble but I am bound in Justice to his merit to use every effort to serve a man whom I have known in the worst of times & has ever been a True friend to the Interest of his Country and now is an avowed Enemy to antifederalism paper money and Tender Laws even though countenanced by the Rhode Island assembly.

1. RC, Langdon Papers, Portsmouth Athenæum, Portsmouth, N.H.

**544. Thayer, Bartlett & Co. to Brown & Benson  
Charleston, S.C., 17 April 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We lament with you that your Government still retard your Intercourse with the United States & hope the time is not far distant when they will recede from those pernicious measures which have so long distressed the commercial Interest of your State. . . .

1. RC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**545. An Honest Plough Jogger  
Lansingburgh, N.Y., Federal Herald, 19 April 1790 (excerpt)**

. . . We are told, that the present distracted situation of Rhodeisland, has proceeded chiefly from some trifling difficulties which first originated between their commercial towns and country: be this as it may; their troubles have uniformly increased with their parties; they have at length arrived to such a height, that, in their councils the general good of the state is no longer consulted: the destruction of their domestic adversaries is now amongst their first and chiefest objects; and, unless the continental government should interfere, it is not improbable but their difficulties will terminate in the *cutting of throats*, or the introduction of a *Cromwell*. . . .

**546. New York Daily Advertiser, 22 April 1790<sup>1</sup>**

*Extract of a Letter from Rhode-Island.*

“If Congress would lay a duty on the produce and manufactures of this state, to take place before the 22d of May, there would be little doubt of the adoption of the Constitution. If this is not done, we shall remain in our present disagreeable situation all the year. The duties on tonnage, affects only the friends and well wishers to the federal constitution, while the opposers of it, exult at our misfortune.”

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 26 April; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 27 April; *Connecticut Gazette*, 30 April; New Jersey *Burlington Advertiser* and New Jersey *Brunswick Gazette*, 4 May; York *Pennsylvania Herald*, 5 May; Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 11 May; and Edenton *State Gazette of North Carolina*, 15 May.

**547. Newport Mercury, 24 April 1790**

*Friend BARBER, Please to insert this in your Paper, and it may oblige some of your Customers.*

It seems the prophet Samuel was sent by the immediate command of God, to anoint David to be King over all Israel. David past through a large share of trouble in the time of Saul; and after, when his son Absalom set up to dethrone him, it is said, the conspiracy was strong; when Absalom set off for a Federal Government, and had a large number of the inhabitants confederated with him;



for when it came to a battle, it is related, that the wood devoured more people than the sword, and there was a slaughter that day of twenty thousand men. Notwithstanding this, when King David grew old, Adonijah conspired against his father, and he conferred with Joab, and Abiathar, the priest, and they were confederated with Adonijah, and were zealous for a Federal Government. But Zadok, the priest, and Benaiah and Iehoiada, and Nathan, the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah; and Adonijah slew sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle, which might likely draw many of the chimney-corner men, and short jacket and skim-milk men, to their party; but notwithstanding, it cost Adonijah his life, as it had Absalom his before.—

*Isaiah the 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13th verses*—“Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word and it shall not stand; for God is with us: For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me, that I should not go in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not a confederacy to all them, to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; sanctify the Lord of Host himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.”

*Portsmouth, April 13, 1790.*

#### 548. Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 28 April 1790<sup>1</sup>

In the year last past eleven thousand bushels of Barley were imported into Philadelphia from the State of Rhode-Island. As, in the event of their rejecting the Federal Constitution, it is probable the foreign duties and tonnage, and some other restrictions, may render it impossible for Rhode-Island to send us their Barley of the ensuing crop, (or any other article) it seems advisable for our farmers to put in *Summer Barley*, to supply the want of the Rhode-Island grain. Fourteen Breweries, that can work to good profit, in this city will require a great quantity of Barley.

1. Reprinted in the *Newport Herald* and Providence *United States Chronicle*, 13 May, and in the *Providence Gazette*, 15 May, and in nine other newspapers by 19 May: N.H. (1), Mass. (2), N.Y. (1), N.J. (1), Pa. (3), S.C. (1).

#### 549. Providence United States Chronicle, 29 April 1790<sup>1</sup>

The following ANECDOTE is recommended to the Attention of those Members of Congress who are in Favour of *Funding the whole Debt of the U.S. and assuming the State Debts*.—A Clergyman in the State of Connecticut, whose People had not been very punctual in paying him his Salary, in one of his public Discourses, after discanting upon the pernicious Consequences to Society of People not fulfilling their Contracts, concluded as follows:—“All the Inference I shall draw from what has been said is—that it is a *Trick of the Devil*, and a *devilish Trick*, for any Man, or Body of Men, to *promise more* than they know they *can perform*.”

1. Reprinted: Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 18 May.

**550. Jack Tarpaulin**  
**Newport Mercury, 1 May 1790**

THE FEDERAL SHIP.

Halloa! *the federal Ship!* Halloa!—Upon deck there, Lads! Are you all asleep below in the cabin?—Turn out! or we shall soon get among the breakers!—Avast Pilot, w[h]ere do you mean to bear your course? By Heavens, if you run us ashore, heark'ye, you shall soon fare the fate of old brother JONAH; who slung his hammock in the steerage of a whale, for three nights.—The officers on board, seem more for calculating their *own wages*, than for keeping the *Ship's reckoning*: Instead of being on deck to take an *Observation*, each man is lolling in his own *State Room*—and is more anxious for the *Steward's Bill of Fare*, than for the *Captain's Log-Book*—Hear me messmates, we have a rich cargo, and high-spirited owners; if we make a bad voyage by our negligence, we must expect to be *keel haul'd*—as we have set our *own wages*, and given ourselves *double pay*, we must make an East-India voyage, or we shall bring our *owners* in debt. It won't do for us to be any longer *lounging* in the cabin, and living on *ship's provision*, without making *more sail*—as we shall soon “consume” our *two years* stock, without even getting clear of the port we sailed from. Our owners are good fellows, but don't let us *impose* on them, for they already begin to find that all our bustle to *man the ship*, was merely to put *ourselves*, and a shoal of *ship's cousins* into business. We have taken good care to provide for *ourselves*, and have *appropriated the freight for our own services*, and left the owners to sherk for *themselves*, with an oar upon their backs.

It is true, my lads, we told them a fine story, what we would do, and how we would make them all Nabobs: We gave them a grand specimen of our sailing, by parading a ship on *dry land*, and huzzaing at every corner of the streets; but now we are *at sea*, and the ship is under *our own* sailing orders, we sing them another tune; and tack and veer, luff and bear away, as will serve our own private purposes. However let us be cautious lest they should begin to *complain* that they cannot afford to furnish us for *another two years voyage*; if so, we must be obliged to turn ashore droves of *needy dependants* from between decks—and they would make but a lousy hand to heave the hand spike, after being so long tampered with the tit bits of the Federal Cabin. Many a good fellow is obliged to work hard to feed them.—No more at present.

P. S. The mariners on board will *fatten well* if we once get the militia plan under way; this chart is laid before the officers—but can hardly think they will venture to carry the ship into such dangerous latitudes.

**551. “Z.”**  
**Providence Gazette, 1 May 1790**

Mr. CARTER, A *Peter Paragraph*, in the last Rhode-Island “*United States Chronicle*,” whom I strongly suspect to be an advocate for our late paper money system, hints to the members of Congress who are for assuming the State debts, that that measure would be out of the power of Congress to carry into effect; and

so, although they might *promise*, they never could *perform*; which, he says, is “*a trick of the devil, and a devilish trick.*”—I ask *Mr. Peter*, then, if it would not resemble *his* tricks in getting rid of our State debt? Answer, YES.

**552. Brown & Benson to Thayer, Bartlett & Co.  
Providence, 12 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . in order to obtain the Drawback on the imported goods which we again export our Revenue Laws exacts a Certificate sign'd by two reputable Merchts. at the Place where the goods are landed specifying the Marks & Numbers of the Casks or Packages with the Name of the Vessel & Captain who delivers the goods & from what Place they are brought. We will thank you to send us a Certificate of the two Tons base Iron we shipt you by the Schooner Lydia Saml. Lee [- - -] if two of your house subscribes it with your respective signatures it will no doubt answer. . . . The Convention of this State will meet by adjournment in about ten Days but what will be the Issue of their deliberations baffles all Conjecture—We ardently wish for the adoption of the Constitution which will greatly facilitate our intercourse with you, will thank you for a state of your Markets from time to time and are sirs Your Obedt. friends—

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.

**553. Greenwichiensis  
Newport Herald, 13 May 1790**

When I am asked a question, decency obliges me to answer it. “When will the time come, you ask me, when the public will be freed from this war of words?”—Without inquiring who commenced it, I answer directly when you lay aside your pen.

If before you entered into the war, you had prudently calculated the idle words which might be expended, the ink which might be shed, the paper which might be stained, and the time and money which might be misapplied by the community in the course of it, modesty would possibly have suggested to you, to avoid the conflict;—but when a man enters a volunteer into a contest is it not rather cowardly to ask,—when will the war be over?

I have heard of a nation, which as soon as it begins a war, sighs for peace.— Cheer up Agricola,—if the last word is not your ambition, drop your weapon, and expect good quarters;—but if you chuse still to continue the fight, do it like a man, and a soldier.—To drop metaphor, lay aside such little dishonest artifices as you have practised in the introduction to your last piece, to prejudice the public in your favor, and against me;—away with reflections upon your antagonist, misrepresentations, and scraps of latin.—Come boldly, and openly to the combat,—and know, if you have it yet to learn, that candor, and decency are an ornament to a well written piece, and lessen the reproach which attends a bad one,—and further, that a latin motto cannot give either force to sentiment, or accuracy and elegance to composition.

That he who advances a principle which he cannot support, by acknowledging his mistake, shews his candor, is a trite, just observation; and as you have thought proper to adopt it, I now call upon you to *prove* "that the naval power of the *United Netherlands* is capable of the most rapid augmentation, and that the *Dutch* would soon be able to resent and vindicate any insult or injury that the power of *Spain* dare to offer them." or to retract your error.—It is necessary that you should do one or the other; because in a former piece, you built much upon that false ground, and have again assumed and asserted it.

You talk largely about the carrying business, and, notwithstanding you have been told that *Greenwichiensis* never had it in contemplation to confine the trade of the United States to this State, you still insist upon it that this was his view. Is this fair? Doth this shew the man of sense and candor?

You next introduce your opponent, as asserting, that the advantages accruing to the United States from *foreign* insurances would compensate the loss of their revenues. *Greenwichiensis* never said a word about *foreign* insurance. He advanced, that if the United States should lose a portion of their revenue, it would be compensated by the saving in insurance and the facility of procuring a number of foreign articles.—He did not imagine that the merchants trading to this State would have their property insured in foreign States, nor did he write any thing which led to such a whimsical sentiment.—He doth not want to be told that the merchant adds the premium of insurance to the price of his goods, and that the consumer pays it.—This is too obvious to escape his observation;—and it is equally clear, that a diminution of premium is a saving to any commercial country;—If you chuse, you may deny it;—but if you should, remember it is expected that you will advance some arguments in support of your negation.

The danger you suggest, that this State may be destroyed by its protectors, is as unfounded, as your notion about the merchants of the United States sending abroad to procure insurance upon their trade to it.

The reason why *St. Eustatius* was attacked and conquered by the British, in the last war, was because the United Netherlands took a part in that war.—This State is a separate, distinct Sovereignty, and I presume, in any future wars, will aim at and observe as strict a neutrality as possible between the belligerent powers.—It will be its interest to do it, and in that case the powers which may be disposed to favor, most certainly will not attempt to destroy it.

As you have not advanced a single argument in opposition to the propositions laid down by *Greenwichiensis* in his last piece, he had only to point out your misrepresentations, which he conceives he has fully exposed, and might finish here; but, as this may be the last time he may have the honor to answer you, he hopes it will not be taken unkindly if before he leaves you, he should impart to you a little, wholesome advice.

Never, never misrepresent, or misquote your opponent and always attend so much to your style, as to write correct, grammatical english; and if you should think that a latin motto will show your learning and set off your performances, take care to render it into english;—for the people at large do not understand latin;—and remember, that a latin head to a piece badly written, is like a splended

sign to a house illy furnished, and which affords little or no entertainment.—As the best way to enable you to avoid faults in future may be to note present errors, permit me to point out several improprieties in your last performance.

In the second paragraph,—“with a determination of,” is improper.—In the third, “*shews* the man of candor and sense *to acknowledge*,” should have been, *shows* &c. by *acknowledging*—At the close of the fifth paragraph there is a manifest inconsistency. So far is it, say you “*for the advantage* of a State, &c.[.]” “that it would be *highly detrimental to her interests*.” And your concluding sentence is so illy framed, that in fair grammatical construction, it is *Mary* who violated her plighted faith and the rights of hospitality instead of *Elizabeth*,—and it required a *who Elizabeth*, as well as a *she Elizabeth* to clear the sentence of the embarrassment occasioned by the position of the pronoun personal *who*.

I am still of opinion that this State would find its account in rejecting the Constitution, and adopting my plan of repealing the Impost Act, and making its ports free.—No disadvantage would accrue from the experiment. It may be safely made; for if it should not answer the purpose, and it should be deemed eligible to accede to the New Constitution the State will at any time be graciously received.—We are now running with celerity to our ruin. Our commerce is expiring and the numerous dependants on trade are suffering through want of employment. Agitated by distress and suspense the people pant for a change.—The New Constitution must be adopted at the ensuing session of the convention, or the plan I have ventured to propose be embraced, I know of no other alternative.—If *Agricola* should propose a better it will without doubt be attended to.

#### 554. Providence United States Chronicle, 13 May 1790<sup>1</sup>

Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Albany to his Friend in this Town, dated April, 1790.

“Next for Politics.—Our Elections are to take Place this Month; the Warmth which attended them last Year has almost entirely died away, and the Parties become consolidated, a little Compliance on both Sides united all in one Opinion, that is, not to praise nor dispraise our new Government, but unanimously, *nem. con.* to be sick of it. I speak generally; we have our Speculators, who wish to fund their ill-gotten Securities, or have them paid at Par; likewise some few flaming Politicians, who knew so much that it would now be confessing Ignorance were they to yield. We all agree to be not Antifederalists, but what Antifederalists were. You may depend on it there are but few who discover real Beauties in our new Government, nor in some of its Officers; which last are incomprehensible in Numbers and Kinds, and their *very moderate* Compensations are as incomprehensible, except to those who are well skilled in Numeration. The Conduct of your State is approved, and were you to do two Things your Credit would be established as manly, viz. Repeal your Paper-Money Acts, and boldly *reject* a Constitution framed to make you Slaves—take Warning by others Follies.”

1. Reprinted: Boston *Herald of Freedom*, 18 May; Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 26 May; Pennsylvania *Packet*, 27 May.

**555. Detector****Providence Gazette, 15 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Please to inform the Public, through the medium of your paper, that a *well-seasoned* antifederal letter, from a "GENTLEMAN" at Albany to his correspondent in this town (S.S. Esq; one of the Majority Justices) which *graced* the last *United States Chronicle*, is said to be the production of a Mr. T—f—a—y, the keeper of a small school, alias a *haberdasher of pronouns*, in that city; and who, some time since, effected his *retreat* from Pawtuxet, in this State, *per favour of the night*—taking with him *bag and baggage*—and leaving his bail in the lurch.

1. Reprinted: Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 27 May.

**556. Providence Gazette, 15 May 1790**

Extract of a Letter from a Member of Congress, to a Gentleman in Boston, dated New-York, May 6.

"A Committee of Senate, to whom was referred a Consideration of the Provision proper to be made in the present Sesson respecting Rhode-Island, have reported, that all commercial Intercourse between Rhode-Island and the United States should be prohibited after the First of July next—and that a Requisition be made on Rhode-Island for 27,000 Dollars, to be paid into the public Treasury before the First of August next.—Monday is assigned for a Consideration of this Report.—It is universally agreed, that the public Good requires a decisive Line of Conduct towards these People."

**557. Augusta Chronicle, 15 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

Saturday, the 1st of May, being Saint Tammany's day, the same was celebrated by the sons and daughters of the Saint as resolved upon at the last Anniversary. . . .

At three o'clock the ceremonials being over, a dinner was served up in the adjacent grove to about 150 ladies and gentlemen; after which the following toasts were drank. . . .

12. May the Seminoleans of Rhode-Island see their error, and be no longer styled wanderers.

1. Reprinted: Charleston *City Gazette*, 28 June; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 12 July.

**558. A Federalist****New York Daily Advertiser, 18 May 1790**

In a free government, it is the peculiar privilege of freemen, to give their sentiments on public measures: I shall not, therefore, apologize for the observations I am about to make on an act said to be pending before the Senate of the United States, respecting the state of Rhode-Island. 'Tis well known that the sea port towns in that state are all federal, and that the country part of the state are the only opposers to the present government of the United States. 'Tis

equally well known, that in the late election of officers, there were only 17 anti-federal characters in the town of Newport. If the act in question passes into a law as it now stands, the inhabitants of the sea port towns, and particularly those of Newport, will be the principal sufferers. Their supply of wood has annually been from Long-Island, and the southern parts of Massachusetts, from which they are now to be cut off, and if the constitution is not adopted in that state before the ensuing winter, the inhabitants of Newport, who are among the firmest friends to the federal government, must inevitably perish. It is therefore to be wished, that the act may be so amended, as to strike at the country interest of that state. A total prohibition of its produce, is the only effectual way to bring them to a sense of the impolicy of their present measures. But the act, as it now stands, is pointed directly at the very existence of the seaport towns, and consequently, if the country are determined to oppose the constitution, as they can live more independent, the former, of course, will be in danger of starving. To admit the vessels of that state to have intercourse with the United States, will not impair the public revenue, because the mercantile part of the state are federal, and consequently it will be defeating their own wishes, to attempt smuggling. However necessary it may be to pass some coercive law respecting Rhode-Island, a due regard ought to be observed not to crush the only men who are friends to the new government, and who have it not at present in their power to alter the impolitic measures of that state.

New-York, May 17, 1790.

**559. John Adams to William Smith  
New York, 20 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Your agreeable favor of the 24th of April was brought to me in Season, and I thank you for it, though my thanks are not in good Season. Your Sentiments concerning the assumption of the State debts, the encouragement of American navigation, and the establishment of a national bank, are conformable to those of about one half the Continent and Contrary to those of the other half. How shall we contrive to make the Clocks all Strike together. Virginia begins to be convinced of the necessity of uniting with the States on this side of her, in measures to encourage our shipping, and give it an advantage over foreigners. But your cousin of Carolina, who is one of the most judicious men in the house, is you see quite an Enemy to such measures. The Carolinas and Georgia I suppose will be longer in their [accession?] than Virginia has been. It may require a more united people and a Stronger government to take those steady measures necessary to support our navigation. But my Sentiments on this point are no Secret to Congress. I wrote them Continually from England and I still think for us to build, man and maintain twelve hundred Ships for a foreign nation out of the labor of our husbandmen is very ill contrivance for the interest of Agriculture whatever our friend Smith may say.

Division of Sentiments about everything, some inclining to the French Some to the English; one party to the South, and another to the north; one set, advocated for the interest of Agriculture; another for those of Commerce, a third

for those of manufactures. Every party pushing their own principles too far and opposing others too much. How few minds look through the mighty all, with a Steady eye and consider all its relations and dependences. How few aim at the good of the whole, without aiming too much at the prosperity of parts. These questions have occurred ever since I was born and will as long as I live, or you either: The turbulent manoeuvres of a faction in the Massachusetts weaken and embarrass us as much or more than Rhode Island, I despair of New England. They upon principle tie the hands and destroy the influence of every man who has any chance or any desire to Serve them. So says and so feels, by much experience.

1. FC, Adams Papers, MHi.

**560. John Brown to John Francis  
Providence, 20 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . as I am Still in hopes & indeed in full Expectations that our Convention Next Week will Adopt the Constitution, and Not knowing for a Certinty but that aney Goods that come in the Ships belonging to us may be Considdard as Imported in a Foureign bottom (of which You'l please to make Inquiery at New York[]) as in case they will not be Subject to a higher Duty their or at Philada. then the Five ₤ Ct. which we have Gave Bonds for hear to be Returnd on proper Certificates of the Goods being Shipt to the Other States & the Dutys Secured or pd. their. . . .

PS. if our Convention Dont adopt the New Constitution Next Week we shall then have time before the 1st. of July to Git all or Such parts of the Cargo out of the State that we may then think best, theirfore if this finds You at Philada. You'l please to Call on the Collector their as allso in New York, and know weither the Goods may go their paying only 5 ₤ Ct. Duty or Not . . .

1. RC, Henry A. L. Brown Deposit (Mss 1031), RHi.

**561. Brown & Benson to May & Payson  
Providence, 20 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . We hope this State will soon be Connected with the federal Government, When we flatter ourselves with the pleasure of an increasing intercourse with your house interim We are Sirs with due Esteem Your assurd friends

1. FC, Brown Papers, RPJCB.



562. *Agricola*

Newport Herald, 20 May 1790

Mr. Greenwichensis, I find you have not only turned critic, but that you have altered your principles and have different ideas of decency, than what you have heretofore practised. I recollect your mode of solving questions once was by asking others; but now you nobly and directly answer, or what is tantamount to it, that you will have the last word.

Sir, I did not enlist myself a volunteer in this dispute, that I might have the last word, or to display my knowledge of politics or grammar; but for the sake of truth and with a determination of yielding to her energy in whatever shape she might come. I hope I may never be so opinionated as not to concede to the force of reason, though it should come from my opponent; yet I find it is my misfortune to be engaged with one, who is full proof against her power, and who is determined to persist in his opinion, whether right or wrong.

Remember that *Agricola* asks no quarters, he has a sufficiency of ammunition to carry on the war (if he is disposed) another campaign, he requires no auxiliaries, he will make use of no subterfuges, nor fly from post as he has known some do; nor will he, as he has heard of some soldiers doing, when their ammunition failed, throw mud and dirt at their opponents.

Be assured, he wishes not to prejudice the public against you, the unfairness of your arguments must do that sufficiently—He has not told them of your errors in grammar; and he has treated with as much delicacy as possible, errors much more important and much more dangerous—errors that either betray your ignorance or a design to deceive. This, and the like is the argument you made use of to support a proposition that was tottering and just ready to fall from its rotten foundation—that sovereign powers had never been tame spectators of invaded sovereignty; and when you could not answer the facts I produced to disprove your assertion, you advanced others, which had you not clothed them in a false garb, would have completely overturned and confuted your darling position.—Do you suppose the world is ignorant of the facts that attended the decapitation of Charles the First, or that of Mary Queen of Scots? or are you really ignorant? If you be, take not your pen to write of things without your reach,—and if you are acquainted with them, relate them as they were: for know, that the public are not so ignorant as you may imagine,—they are capable of distinguishing between truth and error, right and wrong, sophistry and reasoning, grammar and solecism.—And as for the latin motto, it was intended solely for your benefit, and I would not have exposed you or mortified your pedantic vanity and the desire you have of being thought learned, so much as to translate it for you,—but, Sir, if you wish the people should know the sentiments the latin poet would convey to you, they are these, that there is a medium in all things, and a point to which all things tend: that it is inconsistent with right, incompatible with the character of a man of ingenuity, sense or candor, or the fair reasoner, not to acknowledge when he is vanquished; and that if you multiply words *ad infinitum*, it will not change falshood into truth, nor make that right which is essentially erroneous,—that if you write volumes to prove a point and even have the last word; yet if the impartial public find you wrong, your

works shall be condemned, and buried in eternal oblivion. This is what Horace would tell you; but you plainly declare, you will pay no regard to his admonitions.

If ever I take up my pen, it shall be in the cause of truth, and as truth needs not the aid of tropes or figures, or a studied stile, but appears to the greatest advantage in her native dress; so, if I should not gain the fame of an elegant writer, it will be no kind of mortification to me: but when I am engaged with such an inimitable critic and connoisseur, and incomparable judge of elegance, of stile, and of composition, as you suppose yourself to be, I must be dull indeed not to gain some advantage. I will say nothing of your concluding the last sentence of your *grammatical piece*, with the particle *to*, for in that you have followed the rules of composition to a punctilio, as it is certainly as important a word as any in the sentence, if not in the whole performance; but gratitude obliges me to acknowledge your condescension in pointing out and amending the improprieties, your aquiline eyes discovered in my last piece, and that the public may lose the benefit of such admirable strictures, I will here quote some of the errors you have discovered and your amendment of them, as in my piece.—“He who finds he has advanced a principle that cannot be supported *shews* the man of candor and sense to *acknowledge* his mistake,”—As amended by the *word cobbler—shows*, &c. *by acknowledging*. Be pleased, good Sir, when you publish your grammar for refining the American language, and convincing the world that Lowth, Webster, &c. were mere novices, to inform us why *e* will not do as well in the word that I have used it as an *o*, and why a verb in the infinitive mood will not answer as well as the participle you have used.—Away, away with such quibbles, they only expose your weakness and show you have nothing left for your defence, but cobwebs of your own spinning.

You call on me to prove that the naval power of the *United Netherlands* is capable of the most rapid augmentation, &c. I must tell you that proofs are lost on those who are resolved not to be convinced; yet you may be informed of what I suppose you are ignorant of, that those States are a nursery for seamen—that there is no want of materials for the building of ships—that they have workmen of every kind—that they abound in naval and military stores—and that their coffers are filled with the sinews of war. And moreover that there was once a time when their abilities and resources were less than at present, and yet they raised a powerful navy almost instantaneously into existence.

Does this convince you that the *United Netherlands* could soon put themselves in a situation to resent and vindicate any affront or injury that Spain dare offer them? No—for you have declared war against reason, and bid defiance to conviction.

You charge me of misquoting and misrepresenting you, tho’ I aver, as far as I could discover any sense or meaning in your assertions I have endeavored carefully to preserve it; yet I think it might be much to your credit were some of them misquoted; for then they might put on the appearance of veracity.

You say, you never said a word about foreign insurance; but, that you advanced, that if the United States should lose a portion of their revenue, it would be compensated by the saving in insurance, &c.—In the name of all the *logic-twisters*,

what can that mean but foreign insurance? Is not that insurance foreign, which is had in a foreign port, by foreign merchants, from foreign insurers, and in a foreign State. If you mean any thing you must mean foreign insurance, for there will scarcely be need of an insurance office within the United States (according to your plan) as the risk will be small for their coasting vessels, in running back and forth on these coasts; thus it follows, if they are to be such gainers by insurance it must arise from out of the jurisdiction of the United States and consequently be foreign to them.

I shall, as I desire not to be the judge of my own cause, submit my performances to the tribunal of an impartial public, with this caution, that you never meddle with tools you do not understand, nor attempt to criticize on the works of others, till you have amended your own—and likewise remember, if your thirst for the last word, should lead you to scribbling again, that

Reproach is infinite and knows no end,  
Arm'd or with truth or falshood, right or wrong—  
So voluble a weapon is your tongue,  
Wounded you wound, nor never can you fail,  
For every man has equal strength to rail.

### 563. Providence United States Chronicle, 20 May 1790

Mr. WHEELER, Looking over some English Magazines, I was struck with the following EXTRACT from a Pamphlet published in the year 1781, by the Dean of Gloucester, entitled “*An Enquiry, what Benefits can arise to the English, the Americans, &c. from the greatest Victories or Successes in the present War.*” The Predictions of the Dean concerning our Country are so far from being fulfilled, that the very Reverse has taken Place—America is now UNITED under a firm, efficient Government, administered by her choicest Sons—her Inhabitants are happy,—Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures are encouraged and encreasing—and in no Country in the known World are there less Enemies to the *established Government*, or more warm Supporters and Friends to it.

*A Citizen of the United States.*

*Rehoboth, May 13, 1790.*

“As to the future grandeur of America, and its being a rising empire, under one head, whether republican or monarchical, it is one of the idlest and most visionary notions, that ever was conceived even by writers of romance. For there is nothing in the genius of the People, the situation of their country, or the nature of their different climates, which tends to countenance such a supposition. On the contrary, every prognostic that can be formed from a contemplation of their mutual antipathies, and clashing interests, their difference of governments, habitudes, and manners, plainly indicates, that the Americans will have no centre of Union among them, and no common interest to pursue when the power and government of England are finally removed. Moreover, when the intersections and divisions of their country by great bays of the sea, and by vast rivers, lakes and ridges of mountains; and, above all, when those immense inland

regions beyond the back Settlements, which are still unexplored, are taken into the account, they form the highest probability, that the Americans never can be united into one compact empire, under any species of government whatever. Their fate seems to be, *a disunited People*, till the end of time. In short, the only probable supposition that can be formed of them at present is this: that being so very jealous in their tempers, so suspicious and distrustful of each other, they will be divided and subdivided into little common-wealths, or principalities, according to the above-mentioned natural divisions, or boundaries of their country; and that all of them in general will be more intent on prosecuting their own internal disputes and quarrels, than desirous to engage in external wars and distant conquests. They will have neither leisure, nor inclination, nor abilities, for such undertakings.”—

**564. Massachusetts Spy, 20 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

It is said that the new assembly of Rhodeisland will be as much opposed to the new Constitution as those who have gone before them.

1. Reprinted: Portland, Maine, *Cumberland Gazette*, 24 May; Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 25 May; Danbury, Conn., *Farmer's Journal*, 27 May; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 27 May; *New Hampshire Gazette*, 28 May.

**565. Ebenezer Thompson to George Washington  
Providence, 21 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Tho I am not insensiable that your Excellency must be troubled with many applications of this nature, Yet as it is probable that this state will in a few days adopt the Constitution and Laws of the Union, I take the liberty to request that you will be pleased to appoint me to the office of Collector of the Revenue for the port and District of Providence, an office which I now Sustain Under the Authority of this State, the duties of which I have performed to the best of my Abilities and I trust so as to bare the test of any Examination. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington, Presidential Series*, V, 414–15.

**566. Warren Town Meeting, 22 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting May 22nd:1790

Was Chosen Mr. Benjamin Bosworth a Delegate for the State Convention in the Room of Nathan Miller Esqr. Deceased

1. MS, Warren Town Meetings, Vol. 1, 1746–1811, Town Hall, Warren, R.I.

**567. New York Gazette of the United States, 22 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

## RHODE-ISLAND.

Certificates granted, &amp;c.

3d. 1¼

The amount unknown, say, 100,000 dollars.

☞ The State out of the union and devoid of every principle of honesty, compelling the creditors to receive payment of the principal by installments in paper money, depreciated to 15 for 1. The creditors praying for redress from the government of the union upon the plea of justice, because the debts were contracted on the credit of the *Firm*; and altho they have not the company's signature as in the case of continental securities, they can bring full proof of the copartnership. . . .

1. Reprinted: *Salem Gazette*, 1 June; *New Hampshire Gazette*, 11 June.

**568. New York Daily Advertiser, 22 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

## ☞ RHODE ISLAND.

On Wednesday the bill respecting Rhode Island was received from the Senate. It was read a first time and ordered a second reading. On Thursday the bill was read a second time and committed, to be taken up on Monday week. A motion was made to have the bill printed, but this was thought unnecessary. So great a majority of the house appear to be in favor of the bill that no doubt can exist of its passing. By this act all trade and intercourse with Rhode-Island is interdicted; and the President of the United States is authorised to demand of that state 25,000 dollars specie, for which they are to be credited in account with the United States.

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 25 May.

**569. Providence Gazette, 22 May 1790**

Monday next the CONVENTION of this State, elected for the Purpose of "investigating and DECIDING" on the Constitution of the United States, will meet at Newport, pursuant to Adjournment.

*Extract of a Letter from a very respectable House in London  
to a Gentleman in this Town, dated Jan. 26.*

"We observe, by the last Letters from Charleston, that North-Carolina had joined the general Union; and therefore hope the Junction of that State will immediately be followed by that of Rhode-Island, and make one general Harmony."

A Correspondent observes, that those who prize Harmony at home, and Union with the other States, above selfish Party Broils and Vanity for Office, must unite their Hopes with those of our Friends abroad, that the Convention will the next Week, without Hesitation, adopt the new Government, as the only Alternative

for restoring that general Harmony, as well between the Citizens of this State, as between this and the United States, which it is the true Interest of all Parties to join in promoting.

**570. Providence: Warrant Calling Town Meeting, 24 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island &c  
Providence

To the Town-Serjeant or either of the Constables of the town of Providence in the County of Providence in said State GREETING

Whereas more than seven of the Freemen of the said Town have made a Request in the Words following, To Wit, "Whereas the Situation of this State will become extremely critical & alarming in case the Convention should not adopt the Constitution at their present Meeting & it is necessary that the Sentiments of the Freemen of this Town should be known relative to the measures which in that Event it will be proper to take in Order to secure a Continuance of our commercial Intercourse with the United States.—You are therefore requested to cause the Freemen of the Town of Providence to be convened at four o'Clock this Afternoon for the purpose of Adopting such Measures relative to the Subject aforesaid as they may think Proper, & for transacting any other necessary Business"—

You are therefore in the Name of the Gove[r]nor & Company of said State hereby required to warn the Freemen of the said Town to meet in Town Meeting at the State House in said Town at four o'Clock in the Afternoon of this present Day for the Purposes in the Request aforesaid mentioned & contained—

Hereof fail not Given under my Hand and Seal this 24th. Day of May A.D. 1790—

Daniel Cooke Town-Clerk

Providence 24th. May 1790.

Warn'd the Freemen of Said Town to meet at Time & place as above Directed Henry Bowen T. Serjt.

1. MS, Providence Town Papers, Vol. 13, no. 5626, RHi.

**571. Boston Gazette, 24 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Convention of the State of Rhode Island is to meet this day at Newport to take into consideration the adoption of the new Constitution.

1. Reprinted: *Salem Gazette*, 25 May; *Massachusetts Spy*, 27 May; *Pennsylvania Gazette* and *Pennsylvania Packet*, 2 June.

**572. Massachusetts Centinel, 26 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Convention of *Rhode-Island*—met on *Monday* last at *Newport*—Whether or not, they have adopted the Constitution of the United States, we have not heard.

1. Reprinted: *New Hampshire Gazette*, 27 May.

**573. Providence United States Chronicle, 27 May 1790**

*Extract of a Letter from one of the Representatives in Congress for Massachusetts, to a Gentleman in this Town, dated New-York, April 26, 1790.*

“There is nothing which could give me more sincere Pleasure than again to embrace, in the Arms of the Confederacy, our wandering Sister, who I am very confident will soon return to the Family, from which she has been led astray.— I have the utmost Confidence in her returning good Sense, and that she will voluntarily relieve us from all *those disagreeable Consequences* which might result from her longer Continuance in her Elopement.—There is no one so weak as not to perceive that an ultimate Separation between your State and the Rest of the Nation *cannot take Place.*”

**574. William Few to George Washington  
Newport, 29 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Our State has at last thought proper to adopt the Constitution, and God Grant that the peace and Prosperity of America May never Be Desturb'd By Vicious and Designing Men again. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**575. Moravian Newport Diary, 29 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

In the Afternoon there was great rejoysing on account of this State adopting the new Constitution.

1. MS, Archives of the Moravian Church, Bethlehem, Pa.

**576. Providence Gazette, 29 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The Convention of this State convened at the State-House at Newport on Monday last, pursuant to Adjournment; but no Business was done till Wednesday, when the Instructions of several Towns were read. A Motion for an Adoption of the federal Constitution was then made, and the Bill of Rights and Amendments, as reported by the Convention at the former Session—the Amendments to be recommendatory.—A Motion was previously made for an Adjournment—this was objected to, as not in Order; the President being appealed to, gave his Opinion, that “by the Rule of the Convention a Motion for Adjournment superseded all others, and was therefore in Order.”—The Question for an Adjournment, after some Debate, being taken, *was lost by a Majority of 9*; the Motion for an Adoption was then taken up, and the Constitution of the United States read—after which the Convention removed to the Rev. Mr. Thurston’s Meeting-House. The grand Question, “ADOPT or REJECT,” it is expected will be this Day determined favourably for the Honour and Interest of the State.

1. Reprinted: *Newport Mercury*, 31 May; *Connecticut Courant*, 31 May; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 3 June.

**577. Samuel Phillips Savage Diary**  
**Weston, Mass., 29 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

☞ SW. fair, pleast. *R Isld. adopted Natil. Constin*: 34 of 66

1. MS, Savage Diaries, Box 1795, MHi.

**578. Catherine Greene to Alexander Hamilton**  
**30 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

My Dear friend

. . . I am, from a combination of circumstances—determin'd to leave this on wednesday next for Bethlehem [Pa.]—tho I am daily expecting my beloved and only Brother—if the constitution should be adopted by the State of Rhode Island who will be in dispair when he finds me gone and who will be one among the many candidates for the collection office in Newport. . . .

1. RC, Hamilton-McLane Papers, DLC.

**579. Tench Coxe to Tench Francis**  
**New York, 31 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Tis probable that before this reaches you you may have heard that the house of Reps. have determined that the next session of Congress shall be in Philada. by a Majority of 38 to 22, exclusive of the Speaker who would have made 39.—New York was tried before & stood at 35 against & 25 for—& Baltimore upon a proposition in its favor in another form had a Majority of 14 against it—The Senate is now the place—A very judicious N. Carolinian assures me both their Senators will be with us—and the Opinions seem much in our favor. Several things will operate for Us. So large a Majority of the Representatives—the fear of a proposition for the *permanent* Seat in Penna.—and some other considerations will affect the votes of the Southern people. I wish Mr. Morris was here. A Number of modes of informing him by the different stage routes have been vigilently attended to, and I trust he will be here by ten or eleven tomorrow—

Rhode Island is in the Union. Their Convention adopted the Constitution on Saturday at 5 O'Clock by 34 to 32. Touch & go you will say, but they are in—we have time to fix this Matter in the Senate before their Senrs. can be here—

I have troubled you with this line convinced that both points interest you much—with my affecte. compls to my Aunt & Sophia—

1. RC, Coxe Papers, Series II, Correspondence and General Papers, PHI.



**580. Daniel Lyman to George Washington  
Newport, 31 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

This State has at length acceded to the Union of the United States; an event which has long been anxiously desired by the Friends of peace, good order, and a Government which will be administered upon the equal principles of civil & religious liberty of which we flatter ourselves, will ensure all the blessings to be derived from our late successful struggle for happiness, freedom & Independence. On this occasion I doubt not your Excellency's indulgence if I again offer myself a Candidate for an appointment under the United States. . . . My Family, my Friends, my property are in Newport, and I believe I can say with truth that the Friends to the late decision of our Convention in this Town & the State in general would feel themselves gratified in seeing my wishes realized. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**581. Jeremiah Olney to Henry Knox  
Providence, 31 May 1790<sup>1</sup>**

I have the Singular pleasure to inform you that the Convention of this State Convened at Newport. Did on the 29th Inst. Ratify the Constitution of the United States, a Copy of which is enclosed, permitt me Sir to Congratulate you on this happy & important event as it again Compleats the Bond of Union & must therefore Relieve Congress from many Serious Embarasments—I should have Sett out immediately from Newport where I attended the Convention, for New York had I not been necessarily detained to pay the Invalid Pensions—however I hope to accomplish this business and be at New York before the Revenue officers are appointed—but should the President think expedient to make the appointments immediately, permitt me Sir to Request your Friendly Influence in favour of my being appointed to the office of Collector for the District of Providence &c. Colo. Barton has gone on to New York & I am inform'd he intends to make interest for the office I am Soliciting—I Regret that it is not at present in my power to be on the Ground myself, however I have the fullest Confidence in Your Friendly assurances to promote my Interests & the good wishes & Influence of my other Friends in New York to Serve me as far as may be don[e] with Propriety & the public Good—

P.S. Since writing the above I am informed the President of the Convention who has been uniform against the adoption, has it in Contemplation to keep back the Ratification of the Constitution untill the Senators go on, which cannot possibly be Sooner than the 21st of June next. This is don[e] with a view if possible to have the present *Ante* Revenue officers of the state reappointed—

1. RC, Knox Papers, GLC 02437.04620, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, courtesy of The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, at the New-York Historical Society.

**582. Jeremiah Olney to George Washington  
Providence, 31 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

Permitt me great Sir to congratulate you on the happy adoption of the constitution of the United States by the Convention of this State on the 29th Inst. a Copy of which I do myself the Honor to enclose. . . .

1. RC, Washington Papers, DLC.

**583. Henry Sherburne to Henry Knox  
Newport, 31 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

I do myself the pleasure to Inclose you the Ratification of the Constitution of the United States, by the Convention of this State on the 29th. Inst. by a Majority of Two Votes; this Important Business being now happily accomplished (tho not without the greatest difficulty) I hope this State will do every thing in her power to answer the most sanguine wishes of the Friends to the Government.

Pardon me Sir, for renewing my request, for your Interposition in my Behalf; for the office of Collector for the Newport District, with the President or such other Gentlemen as to you may appear best,—particularly Gen. Schuyler, Col. Langdon Mr Green & Col Humphrey, with whom I have had a personal Acquaintance.

Such is the Anti. Majority in our State Legislature, that I am very doubtful whether we shall be able to send a true federal character to the Senate of the United States,—therefore I cant expect much assistance from them Gentlemen, as my Conduct has been Inflexably opposed to their Cause. The Assembly will without doubt be Called in the Course of a Week, when I shall be able to Inform you who the Senators are, Mr. Jonathan Hazard who was formerly at Congress is named & I think it probable he may be elected. . . .

1. RC, Knox Papers, GLC 02437.04621, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, courtesy of The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, at the New-York Historical Society.

**584. Henry Wynkoop to Reading Beatty  
New York, 31 May 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I beleive I told You in my last that the Convention of Rode Island were sitting, they met last monday, Debated until Saturday, when at 5 oClock in the afternoon the Question on the Adoption of the general Government was put, 34 were for & 32 against it, perhaps by Saturday next we may expect their Senators. . . .

1. RC, Wynkoop Letters, Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa.

**585. The Christian's, Scholar's, and Farmer's Magazine, April–May 1790**

The Convention of Rhode Island did, on the 29th of May, adopt the Constitution of the United States by a majority of Two. The yeas were 34—the nays 32.

**586. New York Daily Advertiser, 4 June 1790**

The last advices from Rhode Island say, that the reason why the country towns were opposed to the adoption of the federal constitution, was because the inhabitants were informed that Congress were providing ways and means to pay the *full amount of the continental debt to the present holders of the securities*—most of whom they were informed, purchased them under par. It was suggested to these mis-led people, that by keeping out of the union they might avoid paying their proportion of the continental debt. One moment's reflection might have convinced them, that the state of Rhode Island would be obliged to pay her proportion of whatever Congress should declare to be the continental debt; neither was it probable that the other states would have agreed to receive of Rhode Island less in proportion than they pay of the domestic debt, because some of the inhabitants of Rhode-Island might think that Congress had not done right in funding the whole nominal amount. Congress would never have consented that the proportion of the debt should have been determined by Rhode Island. Even the antifederalists of the twelve states (considered as a distinct body) would have united in the most decisive measures to oblige them to pay their equal proportion of what they should have consented to pay themselves.

**587. Albany Gazette, 7 June 1790**

On Friday last, on the arrival of the news of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States by the state of Rhode-Island, a detachment of the Independent Artillery Company announced the same by a discharge of cannon.

**588. Governor Arthur Fenner's Proclamation Concerning Oaths for State Office Holders, 14 June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

By his EXCELLENCY  
ARTHUR FENNER, ESQ;

Governor, Captain-General, and Commander in Chief, of and over the State  
of

*Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations.*

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the Sixth Article of the Constitution of the United States of *America* requires, that "the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all Executive and Judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation to support this Constitution:" AND WHEREAS the Congress of the said United States, at their Session in *March*, A. D. 1789, passed an Act, enacting, "That the Oath or Affirmation required by the Sixth Article of the Constitution of the United States shall be administered in the Form following, *to wit: I A. B. do solemnly swear (or affirm, as the Case may be) that I will support the Constitution of the United States;*" And further enacting, that "the Members of the several States Legislatures, and all Executive and Judicial Officers of the several States, who shall be chosen or appointed after the said First

Day of *August*" next, "shall, before they proceed to execute the Duties of their respective Offices, take the foregoing Oath or Affirmation; which shall be administered by the Person or Persons who by the Law of the State shall be authorized to administer the Oath of Office. And the Person or Persons so administering the Oath, hereby required to be taken, shall cause a Record or Certificate thereof to be made, in the same Manner as by the Law of the State he or they shall be directed to record or certify the Oath of Office." AND WHEREAS the General Assembly, at the Session held at *Newport*, on *Monday* the Seventh Day of *June* inst. passed the following Act, *to wit*: "WHEREAS the Constitution of the United States hath been adopted by this State, and the Members of this General Assembly have qualified themselves, agreeably to the said Constitution and the Laws of Congress, by taking the Oath or Affirmation to support the said Constitution thereby prescribed; and the like Duty is incumbent upon all Executive and Judicial Officers of this State: IT IS THEREFORE VOTED AND RESOLVED, That his Excellency the Governor be and he is hereby requested to issue his Proclamation, notifying all Executive and Judicial Officers of this State of the same; and that they are to qualify themselves in like Manner, within One Month after the Rising of this Assembly."

I HAVE THEREFORE thought fit to issue this PROCLAMATION, to make known the same to all Executive and Judicial Officers of this State, that they may qualify themselves for the Execution of their respective Offices, agreeably to the said Constitution, the said Act of Congress, and the said recited Act of the General Assembly.

*Given under my Hand, at Providence, this Fourteenth Day of June, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety, and in the Fourteenth Year of Independence.*

ARTHUR FENNER

*By his Excellency's Command,* HENRY WARD, *Sec'y.*

GOD save the United States of *America.*

1. Broadside printed by John Carter in Providence (Evans 22844). For the legislature's manuscript call for the governor's proclamation, see Acts & Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly, 117, no. 174, R-Ar.

### 589. George Washington to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives New York, 16 June 1790<sup>1</sup>

The Ratification of the Constitution of the United States of America by the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations was receiv'd by me last night, together with a letter to the President of the United States from the President of the Convention—I have directed my Secretary to lay before you a copy of each—

1. FC, Washington Papers, DLC. Printed: Abbot, *Washington Papers, Presidential Series*, V, 529–30n.

**590. Providence United States Chronicle, 17 June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

At this Session an Act was past for ratifying the Amendments proposed by Congress to the Federal Constitution, except the *Second*.

1. Reprinted: *Providence Gazette*, 19 June; *Newport Mercury*, 21 June; *Massachusetts Spy*, 24 June; Stockbridge, Mass., *The Western Star*, 29 June.

**591. Pennsylvania Carlisle Gazette, 7 July 1790<sup>1</sup>**

On Monday last, the important Æra of American Independence was commemorated in this town, with those marks of regard which have always been manifested in this place.

At 10 o'Clock the Light Horse, Infantry and Artillery companies paraded at the public square and proceeded to the Presbyterian Church, where an elegant Oration was delivered by Mr. ROBERT DUNCAN, to a very numerous auditory—after which the troops marched to the Farm of Mr. Andrew Holmes, accompanied by a greater number most respectable citizens from town and country than had ever before assembled on the same auspicious occasion—After the company had partaken of a cold collation, the following Toasts were given:

1. The President of the United States.
2. The Congress of the United States.
3. The President of the State of Pennsylvania.
4. Our Illustrious Ally Louis the XVIth.
5. May Private Morality and Public Virtue combine to promote the National Prosperity.
6. The Virtuous Citizens of North-Carolina and Rhode-Island.
7. Agriculture—the great source of Commerce and of American Grandeur.
8. May the Dome of National Government be *Liberty*—and may it be always supported by the Pillars of *Public Integrity*.
9. The Commerce and Manufactures of the United States.
10. The Marquis de la Fayette—the Friend of America, and the great Patriotic Leader of Liberty in France.
11. The Friends of Freedom all over the Globe.
12. The Memory of Doctor Franklin.
13. May the American Government by its justice and energy produce internal union, and universal peace with the nations of the world.

Each Toast was accompanied by a discharge from the Fœderal Field Piece.

In the evening the Troops returned to the Commons East of the Town, and performed a variety of manœuvres, were dismissed at their usual place of Parade.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 16 July.

**592. Massachusetts Spy, 8 July 1790<sup>1</sup>**

On Monday last, the anniversary of the glorious birth day of American Independency was celebrated in this town by the Worcester Artillery company—At eleven o'clock they paraded before Mr. Mower's tavern—and at one o'clock they marched on to the hill by the court house and fired a federal salute; after which they returned to the place of parade—and the officers of the company, together with several other gentlemen, partook of a handsome entertainment which was provided for the occasion; at the close of which the following toasts were drank, each accompanied with a discharge from the artillery, viz.

1. The memorable Fourth of July.
2. The President of the United States.
3. The king of France, and his Royal Family.
4. The Vicepresident, Senate, and House of Representatives of the United States.
5. The Governour and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
6. The National Assembly of France.
7. The Marquis de la Fayette.
8. Agriculture and Manufactures of America.
9. Navigation and Fishery.
10. The Militia of this Commonwealth.
11. The adoption of the Federal Constitution by the State of Rhodeisland, which completes the Union.
12. May the union of these States be long continued as a blessing to themselves and to mankind at large.
13. All Mankind.—May virtue, liberty, peace and happiness universally prevail.

The company was in complete uniform and made a very handsome appearance.

1. Reprinted: *Pennsylvania Packet*, 17 July.

**593. Stockbridge, Mass., The Western Star, 13 July 1790<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. ANDREWS, The surprizing event which lately happened at Pawtuxet, as mentioned in your last, which wrought so effectually to the conversion of an Anti, has been matter of doubtful contemplation to some of your readers who are not skilled in prodigies. This new convert is requested to inform the publick, whether the "Salmon weighing exactly thirteen pounds," which "leaped into the boat, the moment the President announced to the Convention at Newport, that by their votes they had ratified the Constitution," is to be considered as an emblem of the Thirteen United States?—Whether the boat into which this fish leaped, is to be considered as emblematick of the Government of the said States? And whether the Fishermen who had the management or administration of the boat, are to be considered as emblematick of those who are, or may be, in the administration of the General Government? These doubtful contemplators wish

further to be informed, whether this emblemick fish was devoured by those who were in the administration of the boat, or whether he was distributed amongst, and became a prey to, their respective families and friends? In short—whether this miraculous leap was found eventually to be for the mutual benefit and happiness of these emblemick Fishermen, and their emblemick Fish? Or, whether it served rather for the emolument of the one, to the perdition of the other?

1. Reprinted: *New York Journal*, 20 July; Newburyport, Mass., *Essex Journal*, 21 July; *New Hampshire Spy*, 24 July.

#### 594. Newport Herald, 29 July 1790

A Correspondent wonders what is become of the writers who, before the adoption of the Constitution, crowded the Herald with their pieces.—Although by that event the field is narrowed, yet there are other than political or party subjects on which they might display their talents. Arts, manufactures, manners, morals, religion, are inexhaustible subjects; and a news-paper affords an opportunity to all who wish to exercise and improve their talents for composition, to do it without being known.—He wishes to see some original pieces, and not to be indebted for his amusement and instruction altogether to pieces from foreign countries, or from other States.—(The Printer heartily joins with him, and hopes that gentlemen of the quill will be pleased to favor him with their sentiments on the subjects mentioned, or any other which may be agreeable to them.)

#### 595. Henry Marchant: Address to the Grand and Petit Juries Newport, 2 August 1790<sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen of the Grand and Petit Juries

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The Union of the Thirteen United States of America being completed, by the accession of this State to the Constitution; and the Supreme, Circuit, and District Courts being fully organized, some general observations upon the Constitutions of those Courts, and especially upon the Powers and Duties of the District Court may be expected from me;—and that the important Duties which are assigned to You should be pointed out.—This done, I am confident the regard which You entertain for the honor and dignity of Your Country; the peace, safety and happiness of Your fellow-citizens, the just support of good Government,—and the general prosperity,—will stimulate You to the performance of your Duty:—to an honest zeal in promoting Virtue, by a faithful presentment of such Crimes as may come to your knowledge.—

To enquire into the origin of Juries, whether they originated from an [— —] from the ancient Britons, the Saxons, or the Greeks, might perhaps be useful and entertaining;—but it would carry me beyond the limits, which propriety and custom have prescribed to this species of Address.—A long course of time and experience, has evinced the utility of that Institution.—It has proved the bulwark of English Liberty for many Ages.

*America*, under all her various forms of Government, hath anxiously preserved, and wisely determined to hand down to posterity, the inestimable privilege of Tryal by Jury;—under which we include that of Presentments by Grand Juries, previously to any Tryal.—By this means the Citizen is secured against the intolerable tyranny which might result from prosecutions upon *Informations*.—I could with pleasure indulge myself in a zeal of Expression on this invaluable part of the American Constitution; but I do not mean to declaim; I should be happy to be useful.—

By the First Section of the third Article of the Constitution,—the Judicial power of the United States is vested in one Supreme Court, and in such Inferior Courts as Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish,—and the Judges are to hold their Offices during good behaviour.—

Agreeably to the Constitution, Congress have enacted, that the Supreme Court, consisting of a Chief Justice and five Associate Justices, shall hold two Sessions, annually, at the Seat of Government.—That it shall have exclusive Jurisdiction of all controversies of a civil nature, where a State is a Party, except between a State and its Citizens, and except, also, between a State, and Citizens of other States, or Aliens, in which latter Case it shall have original, but not exclusive Jurisdiction—and shall have, exclusively, all such Jurisdiction of Suits or Proceedings against Ambassadors, or other public Ministers or their Domestic, or Domestic Servants, as a Court of Law can have or exercise, consistently with the Law of Nations;—and original, but not exclusive Jurisdiction of all Suits brought by Ambassadors, or other public Ministers, or in which a Consul, or Vice Consul, shall be a party;—and the Tryal of Issues in fact, in the Supreme Court, in all Actions at Law against Citizens of the United States, shall be by Jury.—The Supreme Court hath, also, appellate Jurisdiction from the Circuit Courts, and Courts of the several States in certain Cases specially provided for.—All causes, heretofore tryable by the Courts of the Individual States, chosen and appointed agreeably to their own Constitutions, in which their own Subjects only are interested, and which are of Common Law Nature, are with few, if any exceptions, left to be prosecuted before, and finally determined by the State Courts.—

It is observable that the Constitution has not provided Courts for the Tryal of any Causes where the safety of the Union, impartial Justice to Subjects of different States, and Foreigners,—the security of Trade, and the due collection of the Revennue:—In short where the Peace, honor, and safety of the Union, does not absolutely require National interference.—

The Circuit Courts are composed of any two of the Justices of the Supreme Court, and the Judge of the District Court, where such Court shall sit.—They have two annual Sessions in each District. The Circuit Court has original cognizance, concurrent with the Courts of the several States, of all suits of a civil nature, at Common Law, or in Equity, where the matter in dispute exceeds, exclusive of Costs, the Sum or value of Five Hundred Dollars, and the United States are Plaintiffs, or Petitioners; or an Alien is a party, or the Suit is between a Citizen of the State where the Action is brought, and a Citizen of another State.—And it hath exclusive cognizance of all Crimes and Offences cognizable



under the Authority of the United States,—except in some special Cases appertaining to the Supreme Court, or otherwise by the Laws of Congress provided for—It hath also concurrent Jurisdiction with the District Court, of the Crimes and Offences cognizable therein.—

It hath, also, appellate Jurisdiction from the District Court, in Causes of Admiralty and Maritime Jurisdiction, where the matter in dispute exceeds the sum, or Value, of three hundred Dollars, exclusive of Costs—The final Decrees and Judgments of the District Courts in Civil Actions, where the matter in dispute shall exceed the sum or value of Fifty Dollars, exclusive of Costs, may be re-examined, and reversed, or affirmed in a Circuit Court, holden in the same District, upon a Writ of Error—

The District Court now sitting, consists of but one Judge.—The Jurisdiction of this Court extends through this State, and will have, annually, four Sessions.—The first commences this first Monday of August One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety. The other three Sessions progressively on the like Monday of every third Calendar Month hereafter. The stated District Court, will be held alternately at Newport and Providence beginning at Newport.—

In this District there will be held, annually, two Circuit Courts.—The first Sessions will be the fourth day of December next, at Providence, and the second Sessions on the fourth day of June next, at Newport, and the subsequent Sessions on the fourth day of every December, and June afterward, except when any of the Days shall happen on a Sunday, in that case, on the day following, alternately at Newport and Providence.

The District Court, appears to be instituted chiefly with the view of supporting the Revenue Laws.—It is to the Revenue we are to look for the support of Public Credit, without which, no Government can long subsist.—Honor and Interest will concur to induce a ready and punctual compliance with the Acts of Trade; as without it, Trade itself must become embarrassed and will soon decay.

Exclusively of the Courts of the State, this Court hath power and cognizance of all Crimes and Offences that are cognizable under the Authority of the United States, committed within this District, or upon the High Seas, where no other Punishment than whipping, not exceeding thirty stripes, a Fine not exceeding One hundred Dollars, or a Term of Imprisonment, not exceeding six months is to be inflicted.—

It hath exclusive original Cognizance of all Civil Causes of Admiralty and Maritime Jurisdiction, including all Seizures under Laws of Impost; Navigation or Trade of the United States, when the Seizures are made on Waters which are navigable from the Sea by Vessels of Ten, or more Tons burthens, within its District, as well as upon the High Seas. It hath also exclusive Original Cognizance of all Seizures on Land, or other Waters than before mentioned, made, and of all Suits for Penalties and Forfeitures incurred under the Laws of the United States.—It hath also cognizance, concurrent with the Courts of the State, or the Circuit Courts, as the Case may be, of all Causes, where an Alien sues for a Tort only in violation of the Law of Nations, or a Treaty of the United States.—And it hath cognizance concurrent, as last mentioned, of all Suits at Common Law,

where the United States sue, and the matter in dispute amounts, exclusive of Costs, to the Sum, or Value of One hundred Dollars;—And it hath also Jurisdiction, exclusively of the Courts of the State, of all Suits against Consuls, or Vice Consuls, except for Offences above the Description aforesaid.—

The CONSTITUTION of the United States, hath long been the Subject of discussion before the General Assembly of this State, and the State Convention;—and it is presumed, and I hope justly, that the People in general have made themselves well acquainted with it.—Although the Acts of Congress are in print, in almost every newspaper, yet I thought it would not be amiss, to extract such parts of the Constitution, and the Act of Congress establishing the judicial Courts of the United States, as respect the general Powers of the Courts, more particularly of this, to which as Judge, I have the honor of being appointed;—by which You may be better acquainted with the Duties incumbent upon You.—You Gentlemen of the Grand Jury may promise yourselves every Aid and Assistance in my power; and in Addition, You will have the aid, of the very able Gentleman, honored with the Appointment of Attorney for the United States of this District.—

You are the Constitutional Watchmen over the Lives and Conduct of your fellow citizens;—You are the honorable Conservators of the Peace.—Never suffer this important Duty to be considered as a task.—A Rotation in Offices in almost every Department, pervades the Constitution of the United States:—You will soon be relieved, and others take your Place at the stated Terms.—Your enquiries into breaches of the Peace in the Instances pointed out by the Laws of Congress, and of all Crimes and Offences against their Laws, will be with coolness and impartiality, under the solemnity of the Oath of God upon You, and a sacred regard for the peace and happiness of your fellow-citizens and the support, honor and Dignity of Government.—A Government, not imposed upon You, or effected by time and accident, but formed by Freemen, in the full exercise of their Liberty, their best reason and Judgment.—A Government, in the formation and establishment of which, the assistance and influence of Heaven have been conspicuous. That God who gave us complete Victory and Independence, who reared up Heroes for the Conflict, marshalled our Camp, and gave a Washington for our Leader; hath upon the conclusion of a glorious peace, given us a Government, under which, by the continuation of His divine favour, we may lead peaceable lives, and sit under our own Vines and figtrees, and none to make us afraid.—The same overruling Providence hath united the hearts of Americans in placing the same illustrious Leader, at the Head of the National Government.—He needs not studied declamation to convince Him of our attachment;—He has ever possessed our hearts;—and we cannot make Him a more suitable return than by promoting our own happiness, in giving every Support to Him, and the Government over which He presides. You will not,—We will not be wanting them, in our greatest exertions, in our [— —] Stations to discharge our Duty;—and by our example, more prevalent than precept, to excite an equal Zeal among all our Fellow-Citizens—

You Gentlemen of the Petit Jury, educated as You have been, and so well enlightened and instructed, will be easily led to contemplate the important Duty

which falls to Your Lot.—In Criminal Tryals, You will remember that the Life, the Character, or Fortune of a fellow-citizen are in Your hands; and You will be bound by honor, and the solemnity of an Oath true Deliverance to make.—The Claim which the peace and happiness of Government have upon You, will solemnize Your minds.—You will examine as for your own Lives; but with that Firmness of Feelings which must be sometimes exercised in distressing Scenes.—Avoid credulity,—rely upon Evidence—at all events keep Your own Consciences clear.—In matters of common right, often of great moment to individuals, attend to the real Circumstances of the Cause;—see that you try the Cause, and not the man.—To You it belongs to try all facts, and to determine upon the Law which may arise thereon.—If however You doubt of the Law, and choose to refer it to the Court, the Court will cheerfully take their part, and feel themselves happy in affording You all the Assistance in their Power.—Thus may we all harmonize in supporting and preserving the Rights, and Property of our fellow-citizens, their peace and happiness;—the end of all Government—

My Brethren of the Bar, for such let me still consider You;—permit me to hope from Your attachment to our common Country—to the Laws, and the Stability of Government;—and from Your love of decency and order,—that I shall receive from You that support, and that candid construction of my Conduct, which will greatly conduce to my discharging the duties of my office with propriety and afford me the greatest felicity highest pleasure.—From me You may in return, expect that Countenance and Protection, which shall be consistent with the Laws, the honor of the Court, the Rights of Your Clients, and which shall accord with Your own feelings as Brethren and Gentlemen.—

From Your example of Industry and Application, of honor and Liberality;—may the young Gentlemen, Students at Law, who have my warmest and best wishes, be led closely to pursue their Studies.—May They be sensible that the Profession is not instituted merely for their private emolument.—The Profession is honorable, and if exercised agreeably to the Intention of it becomes of public Utility. The helpless,—the ignorant,—the Widow, and the Orphan, are peculiarly interested in the Abilities, Improvements, and, above all, in the Honor, Virtue and Integrity of the Bar—As an encouragement, History will inform them, that by no class of men has the Cause of Liberty throughout Ages, been more ably and more nobly supported.—The Liberty and Constitution of Great Britain have, at many important periods of their History, been indebted to the exertions and firmness of the Professors of Law.—Their Courts have been their main bulwark against every tyrannical Attempt, and their Courts have ever been filled by the first Law Characters. Let those therefore who are coming forward, study to deserve the confidence of the Public;—Let the *Amor Patria* burn in their Breasts, beat in every vein; and excite the Profession to qualify themselves for the Service of their Country; and to step forth for the preservation of its Rights and Liberties, and the just support of Government.—May every blessing attend our Country, may Arts and Science flourish,—may useful Literature be encouraged, may Trade and Commerce revive, our Manufactures rival our Neighbours; and may our Agriculture, by the blessing of Heaven establish America the grain-ary of the World. May this be Immanuel's Land, and may We be a chosen people,

whose God is the Lord!—Here might I close;—but the affection and gratitude I feel towards You my fellow-citizens, whose best interest will ever occupy the first chief place in my heart, constrain me to express, my acknowledgements to You, for the favours, and the honors, You have been pleased on various Occasions to confer upon me, and my warmest wishes for Your felicity.—Your friendship, Your countenance, Your confidence, I have long experienced in private Life, and in the line of my Profession.—To Your voices, and the voices of my fellow-citizens throughout the State, I have been heretofore indebted for promotion to respectable Offices.—Would to Heaven! that my Abilities had been commensurate to Your Benevolence, and my disposition to serve You!—That defect I have endeavoured to supply by incessant assiduity.—And a consciousness of my Integrity and Your patronage, have been my support.—For the unmerited kindnesses You have bestowed upon me, accept the only offering I can make.—A grateful heart.—

May You long share in the Blessings of that Constitution, to the Adoption of which, You have contributed by every possible exertion:—And may Your Posterity, through all succeeding Ages, derive the highest national advantage,—temporal happiness and religious Liberty, from the Prowess,—Virtue,—Wisdom and Magnanimity of their illustrious Ancestors.

1. MS, Marchant Papers, RHi.

## 596. Detector

Providence Gazette, 28 August 1790

*To the FREEMEN of the State of Rhode-Island.*

GENTLEMEN, It is much easier to *assert* than to *prove*. This is one reason why a writer, under the signature of *Thousands*,<sup>(a)</sup> has attempted to injure the character of Mr. BOURN, a respectable candidate for representing this State in Congress, by intimating that he is opposed to the interest of the landholders.—Mr. B. is a landholder, perhaps a larger one than Mr. C. and is therefore a sure friend to the interest of landholders.—This writer affects to think unfavourably of Mr. B. because he opposed the 17th amendment to the Constitution.—Mr. B. doubtless thought, with dispassionate and wise men, that the provision made by the Constitution for the abolition of slavery was the best the nature of the case would admit, and voted accordingly, without being influenced by any views of popularity. Mr. B. is *charged* by another writer with being a member of the Society of Cincinnati.—No candid person would think this an objection to his possessing the public confidence. Mr. B. had the honour to serve in the late war, at a most distressing period, without receiving any emolument, but never was a member of that Society.

Mr. B. is a Lawyer. Mr. C. has always *wished* to be one.—'Tis to the honour of the former, that he stands high every where in reputation in his profession; whilst the latter has been for many years in practice, without its being known much beyond the limits of the neighbourhood in which he lives.—Mr. C. certainly did well to refuse a bribe; but the integrity that is thought capable of being bribed, is not void of suspicion.—Mr. B. has supported such uprightness of character,

that no person has dared to *offer* him a bribe; he cannot therefore make a merit of having refused one.

Mr. C. is said to be opposed to high salaries. This is not peculiar to Mr. C.—We are generally opposed to them, and to all useless expenditures of the public revenue.—Mr. C's disapprobation is just; but who will best answer the views and wishes of the State, in lowering high salaries, and preventing misconduct and extravagance?—That man certainly who possesses the greatest share of our confidence in the management of our private concerns. To speak moderately, Mr. C. has never had the greatest share of private confidence—or stood highest in the public opinion.—Mr. C. *may be* of the society of Friends. I never heard him acknowledged as such, or that any member of that Society gave any marked approbation of his conduct.—He is a member of the Abolition Society; if he has joined it from mere political motives, however high that Society may stand in the public esteem, no share of it can be reflected upon him.

It is time to lay aside our prejudices, and to labour ardently for the public good, in the promotion of which all orders of citizens will find their individual interest.—If we are governed by these motives, we shall, in the choice of a Representative, give our suffrages for the man who unites the highest worth to the greatest abilities.

(a) As this day's Gazette will be the last published previous to the election of a Representative, the piece signed *Thousands* was, by consent of the writer, communicated to a friend of Mr. *Bourn's*, in consequence of a request made for that purpose.

## 597. Thousands

### Providence Gazette, 28 August 1790

*To the FREEMEN of the State of RHODE-ISLAND.*

FRIENDS, I am a plain man, and follow my plough; but have read news-papers, and learnt something of human nature. I speak little, and frequently wish to think less than I do; for my thoughts are troublesome when suppressed, and, if spoken, are apt to trouble others. I recommend to you, friends, to choose JOB COMSTOCK for your Representative in Congress, because he is a man of more honesty than any slave-holder, or Guinea trader, or any of their dupes or upholders; for Know Ye, that those who deprive and rob the blacks of their earnings and their liberties, are sinners above all that dwell in the tents of paper money; and that nothing but law restrains them from making merchandize of their innocent neighbours, and their children. One would think that the people would not bear that any man should have voted, in the State Convention, against the 17th amendment to the new Constitution, prohibiting the slave-trade, against the well-known sense of a majority of his constituents; and yet it is said that was Borne. After the merchants had made such a *ketouse* to get the Constitution adopted, we might have expected that they would have readily paid the duties required of them; yet they kick and flounce desperately, and are determined to find a man to lighten them, by throwing the duties into the shape of a LAND-TAX; and however disagreeable that may be to the farmers, they declare it shall be BORNE.

You all know, friends, that your stocks were taken from you in the war; that your husbandry languished, for want of your farms being well stocked, till you were relieved by the late paper money; the loan of which, being open to you all, enabled the prudent to buy oxen and cows, and to stock their farms.—If you wish, friends, to prevent their being taken from you again by a land-tax, you will all say, at your town-meetings, as the prayer of your hearts was in the time of your aforementioned distress,—COME STOCK! COME STOCK! COME STOCK!!!

**598. Abigail Adams to Thomas Brand-Hollis**  
**New York, 6 September 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I know it will give you pleasure to learn that our union is complete by the accession of Rhode island; that our government acquires strength, confidence and stability daily. That peace is in our borders, and plenty in our dwellings; and we earnestly pray that the kindling flames of war, which appear to be bursting out in Europe, may by no means be extended to this rising nation. We enjoy freedom in as great a latitude as is consistent with our security, and happiness. God grant that we may rightly estimate our blessings.

1. Printed: John Disney, ed., *Memoirs of Thomas Brand-Hollis, Esq.* (London, 1808), 39–40.

**599. Thomas Brand-Hollis to John Adams**  
**The Hyde, England, 19 October 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

. . . I can say with great truth no american wishes prosperity to that country more than I do & therefore rejoice to hear that you are getting into order & that Rhode Island is united with you. . . .

1. RC, Adams Papers, MHi.

**600. General Assembly Resolution Requesting Governor to Issue Thanksgiving Proclamation, November 1790<sup>1</sup>**

WHEREAS it becomes States and Governments, as well as all People individually, at all Times, to acknowledge their Dependence upon the Creator of the Universe, and gratefully to acknowledge the Blessings of his Providence: *It is therefore Voted and Resolved*, That his Excellency the Governor be and he is hereby requested to issue a Proclamation, appointing *Thursday*, the Twenty-fifth Day of *November* next, a Day of public Thanksgivings and Praises to Almighty G O D, and calling upon the People of this State to assemble themselves together on that Day, at their usual Places of public Worship, to offer up their united Thanksgiving and Praises, for the manifold and undeserved Blessings bestowed upon the People of this Land by the great Author of all Good; for the Preservation of our civil and religious Rights and Privileges; for disposing the Hearts of this People peaceably to unite in the Establishment of the General Government; for the Prosperity of our Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce; for the general State of Health enjoyed by the People; for the happy Improvement of Arts and

Sciences; and for all other Mercies and Favours of the Year past: And at the same Time humbly to implore the Forgiveness of all their manifold Sins and Transgressions, and a Continuation of the divine Blessings: And also recommending to them to abstain from all servile Labour and Recreations on that Day.

1. Printed: General Assembly Schedule, October 1790 Session (Providence, 1790) (Evans 22839), 16–17.

**601. Providence Gazette, 6 November 1790<sup>1</sup>**

By his Excellency  
ARTHUR FENNER, Esq;

Governor, Captain-General, and Commander in Chief, of and over the State of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the General Assembly of this State, at their Session held on the last Monday in October last, passed an Act appointing THURSDAY, the Twenty-fifth Day of November inst. a Day of public Thanksgivings and Praises to Almighty God, and requested me to issue a Proclamation accordingly: AND WHEREAS it becomes States and Governments, as well as all People individually, to acknowledge their Dependence upon the Creator of the Universe, and gratefully to acknowledge the Blessings of his Providence:

I DO THEREFORE, in Conformity to the said Act, issue this Proclamation, hereby calling upon the Inhabitants of this State to assemble themselves together on that Day, at their usual Places of public Worship, to offer up their united Thanksgivings and Praises, for the manifest and undeserved Blessings bestowed upon the People of this Land, by the great Author of all Good; for the Preservation of our civil and religious Rights; for the Prosperity of our Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce; for the general State of Health enjoyed by the People; for the happy Improvement of Arts and Sciences, and for all the other Mercies and Favours of the Year past: And at the same Time humbly to implore the Forgiveness of all their manifold Sins and Transgressions, and a Continuation of the divine Blessings. And I hereby recommend to them, to abstain from all servile Labour and Recreations on that Day.

*GIVEN under my Hand, at Providence, this first Day of November, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety, and of Independence the Fifteenth.*

ARTHUR FENNER.

*By his Excellency's Command,*  
HENRY WARD, Sec'ry.

1. Reprinted: Providence *United States Chronicle*, 11 November; Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 17 November; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 19 November.

## 602–619. PAYMENT OF CONVENTION EXPENSES

**602. William Eng: Payment for Transcribing Rhode Island's Form of Ratification and Proposed Amendments, 10 June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

The State of Rhode Island To William Engs Dr.  
 1790 June 10th To Transcribing the Constitution of the United States of  
 America, and the Ratification thereof, by the State of Rhode Island; with the  
 Amendments proposed by said State, on 13 large Sheets of Paper £48 paper

Resolved that forty eight pounds in paper money be paid to Wm. Engs out of  
 the Genl. Treasury in full of the above acct.

In the Upper House Read the same Day & Concurred

By ord. H[enr]y Sherburne D[eput]y Sec[retar]y

Voted & passed per order—D[anie]l Updike Clk

1. MS, Accounts Allowed, 1790, R-Ar.

**603. John Grelea: Account for Drafting and Engrossing a Copy of the Constitution and its Ratification by Rhode Island, June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode-Island Dr.  
 To the fair drafting and engrossing a Copy of the Constitution and its Ratifica-  
 tion, £60—

[Greela?]

The above mentioned Transcript was made by Greely & sent to the President  
 of the United States D. Updike  
 Sec[retar]y Covent.

In the lower house June 11th. 1790.

Voted that the above acct. be allowed and that the sum of Sixty Pounds Lawful  
 Paper Money be paid out of the Gen'l Treasury to John Greely Esqr. in full of  
 sd. acct—

[By ord?] D. Updike Clk

In the Upper House Read the same Day & Concurred with this Alteration that  
 the sum of Forty eight pounds paper Money be allowed in full for this Acct.

By ord Hy Sherbourne Dy Secy

In the lower house read the same day & this house adheres to the sum Voted—

By ord D. Updike Clk

June 12th. In the Upper House This house adheres to their former Vote.

By ord Hy Sherbourne Dy Secy

In the lower house [ - - - ] [ - - - ] [ - - - ] [ - - - ] [ - - - ] [ concurred? ]

D. Updike Clk.

1. MS, Accounts Allowed, 1790, R-Ar.



**604. Daniel Owen Account for State Convention Expenses  
Newport, 16 June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

State of Rhode Island

To Daniel Owen Dr.

To My time Expences and Horse hire in going to Newport to attend the making Ratification of the Constitution of the united States & Comparring the same, also Procuring a Duplicate to lodge with the Sec'y of the State.

Errors Excepted Pr.—Daniel Owen

£60—s—

Voted that the sum of Sixty pounds paper currency be allowed and paid out Genl. Treasury in full of sd. acct.

P. order D. Updike Clk

In the Upper House Read the same Day & Concurred

By ord. Hy. Sherburne Dy Secry.

1. MS, Accounts Allowed, 1790, R-Ar.

**605. Rhode Island General Assembly Payment to Daniel Updike, June 1790<sup>1</sup>**

*IT is Voted and Resolved*, That *Eighty-two Pounds Ten Shillings*, in the Bills of Credit emitted by this State, be allowed and paid out of the General-Treasury to *Daniel Updike*, Esq; it being the Amount of his Account for Parchment and Paper by him provided as Secretary of the Convention lately held in *Newport*, and for his Services as Clerk of the Lower House at the present Session.

1. Printed: General Assembly Schedule, June 1790 Session ([Providence, 1790]) (Evans 22837), 16.

**606. Rhode Island General Assembly Payment to Peter Edes, September 1790<sup>1</sup>**

*IT is Voted and Resolved*, That *Two Hundred and Seven Pounds*, in Bills of Credit emitted by this State, be allowed and paid out of the General-Treasury to Mr. *Peter Edes*, in full for *Thirteen Pounds Sixteen Shillings*, Specie, reported to be due to him by the Committee, on his Account to *September* 8th inst. for printing 300 Copies of the Ratification of the Constitution of the United States, Acts of Assembly, &c.

1. Printed: General Assembly Schedule, June 1790 Session ([Providence, 1790]) (Evans 22837), 13.

**607. Foster Town Meeting, 31 May 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held at Foster in the County of Providence on the 31st. Day of May AD 1790 being the day Established by said Town for the Election of Town officers . . .

Voted that five Shillings L:M per day be allowed to William Howard and John Williams out of the Town Treasury for the Number of days Charged in their

accounts presented to this Meeting for their Expences in attending the State Convention in March Last—

Voted that this Meeting be Dissolved

per order John Westcot Town CLK

1. MS, Town Meeting Records, 1781–1865, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Foster Centre, R.I.

**608. Hopkinton Town Meeting, 9 November 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town meeting held (by Adjournment) at Col. George Thurston's in Hopkinton the 9th. Day of November AD 1790.—

Capt. Samuel Babcock Moderator. . . .

Voted that Col. Jesse Maxson have an Order to the Town Treasury for £4:4 L.M. it being in full for his attending the State Convention at Newport 14 Days in March last— Order given. . . .

1. MS, Town Records, 1786–1824, Vol. 2, Town Hall, Hopkinton, R.I.

**609. Middletown Town Meeting, 20 April 1791 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Middletown April the 20th 1791

Oliver Durfee Esqr Morderator . . .

William Peckham Jur presented an Act. amounting to thirty Six pounds paper money for his attendence on the State convention Twelve days, in March seven & May five 1790 at three pounds paper money per day which was Voted and allowed and ordered the Same to be paid out of the Town Treasury

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1743–1808, Vol. 1, Town Hall, Middletown, R.I.

**610. Middletown Town Meeting, 25 May 1791 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in Midletown May 25th 1791

Joseph Peabody Esqr. Morderator . . .

Joshua Barker presented an Act. of thirty nine pounds paper money for his attending the State Convention 1790 which was Voted and allowed and ordered the Same to be paid out of the Town Treasury . . .

Voted that William Peckham Jur. Act. for his attendence on the Convention be Transferred into Silver money at the rate of Eighteen paper Dollars for one Silver Dollar . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1743–1808, Vol. 1, Town Hall, Middletown, R.I.

**611. North Providence Town Meeting, 7 June 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting held in North Providence in the County of Providence in the State of Rhode Island &c. on the Seventh Day of June AD 1790. It being the Annual Election for Choosing Town Officers To serve the Year Ensuing—

Caleb Jenks Esqr. is Chosen Moderator for said Meeting. . . .

AD 1790 Mr. Esek Easton Exhibited an Account to this Meeting Charged Against this Town as serving as a Deligate in the state convention in March Nine Days at 3/6 pr. day—

and also Seven Days Servis in june at the State Convention at Newport at 3/6 pr day—

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1785–1808, Vol. 1, City Hall, North Providence (Pawtucket), R.I.

**612. Portsmouth Town Meeting, 21 April 1790 (excerpt)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting of the Freemen of Portsmouth in the County of Newport & State of Rhode-Island &c. Held the 21st day of the month called April AD 1790. at Burrington Anthony's

The Warrant being read

Voted & Jonathan Freeborn Esqr is Chosen Moderator. . .

Voted that the Accompts presented by Burrington Anthony, Job Durfee Giles Slocum & Peter Barker for their Servises in attending the State Convention at South: Kingstown, Eight Days each, at six shillings pr day each, be allowed, the amount thereof being two pound eight shillings, for which sum they each Received order on the Town Treasurer for. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1786–1835, Town Hall, Portsmouth, R.I.

**613. Portsmouth Town Meeting, 31 August 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting of the Freemen of Portsmouth in the County of Newport and State of Rhode: Island &c. Held the 31st of the month called August AD 1790 at Robert Fisks

The Warrant being Read

Voted that Giles Lawton junr. Esqr. is Chosen Moderator . . .

Voted that The Accounts Exhibited by Giles Slocum for his Servis in attending the State Convention at Newport as a Deligate for this Town six Days at six shilling

pr day be allowed, amounting to one pound sixteen shillings and he received an order on the Town Treasurer [ - - - ] . . .

Voted that this Meeting be Dissolved

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1786–1835, Portsmouth, R.I.

**614. Portsmouth Town Meetings, 18 October, 13 November 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting of the Free:men of Portsmouth in the County of Newport and State of Rhode:Island &c. Held on the 18th Day of the month called October AD 1790—at Robt. Fisk’s—

The Warrant being Read.—

Voted & William Anthony jr. Esqr. is Chosen Moderator . . .

Voted that the accompt presented by Burrington Anthony for his attending the State Convention at Newport as a Delegate for this Town five days at six shillings pr Day be allowed the amount thereof being one pound ten Shillings for which sum he received an order for on the Town Treasurer. . . .

At a Town Meeting of the Freemen of Portsmouth in the County of Newport and State of Rhode:Island &c. Held the thirteenth of the month called November AD 1790.

The Warrant being read—

Voted that William Anthony jur. Esqr. is Chosen Moderator . . .

Voted that the Accompt presented by Peter Barker for five days attending the State Convention at Newport as a Deligate of this Town be allowed the amount thereof being One pound ten Shillings for which sum he had an order for on the Town Treasur[er].

Voted that this Meeting be Dissolved

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1786–1835, Portsmouth, R.I.

**615. Portsmouth Town Meeting, 20 April 1791 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting of the Freemen of Portsmouth in the County of Newport and State of Rhode:Island &c. Held the 20th of the month called April 1791

The Warrant being Read

Voted & William Anthony jur Esqr. is Chosen Moderator. . . .

Voted that the accompt presented by Job Durfee for 5 Days attending the State Convention as a Delegate of this Town be allowed to the amount thereof being one pound ten shillings for which sum he received an order for. . . .

1. MS, Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1786–1835, Portsmouth, R.I.

**616. Scituate Town Meeting, 31 August 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At the Annual meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Scituate in the County of Providence held on 31st. Day of August 1790. it being the Day affixed by Law for Choosing Deputies to Represent said Town at October Sessions, and also for

bringing in their Votes for a Representative to Represent this State in the Congress of the United States—

Peleg Fisk Esqr. Chosen Moderator . . .

Voted that the Acct of Nathan Bates for [his?] Expences at the State Convention at N. Port the amt. being £1.1 hard money be allow[ed]

This Meeting is adjd. . . .

1. MS, Town Meeting, Vol. 2, 1787–1824, Town Hall, Scituate, R.I.

**617. Tiverton Town Meeting, 21 February 1791 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

att a Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Tiverton Convened at the Dwelling House of Philip Manchester on the 21st Day of February AD 1791

Voted Pardon Gray Esqr. be Chosen Moderator of this Meeting . . .

Voted to Isaac Manchester the Sum of Six pounds fourteen Shillings Lawfull Silver money for attending the Conventions &c. as pr. act.

This Meeting is Dissolved

Pr. Pardon Gray Esqr. Moderator

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1754–1798, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Tiverton, R.I.

**618. Tiverton Town Meeting, 20 April 1791 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

Att a Meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Tiverton Legally Warned and Met at the Dwelling House Philip Manchester in Said Tiverton on the Twentieth Day of April AD 1791—

Voted Pardon Gray Esqr. is Chosen Moderator of this Meeting. . . .

Voted to Abraham Barker Esqr. the Sum of Eight pounds and ten pence Silver Money the Same being Voted him for attend Conventions at Washington and Newport and Sundry other Servises to the present time as pr. acct.

This Meeting Dissolved Pr.

Pardon Gray Esqr. Moderator

1. MS, Town Meetings, 1754–1798, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Tiverton, R.I.

**619. West Greenwich Town Meeting, 18 October 1790 (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

At a Town Meeting Called and held at West-Greenwich in the County of Kent at the dwelling House of William Nichols' Esqr. Innholder on the 18th. day of October AD 1790 it being Especially Called in Consequence of an act of the Genel. Assembly for the purpose of proxing for a Representative to Congress &c.

Voted that Samuel Hopkins Esqr. Chosen Moderator . . .

Whereas William Nichols Esqr. presented an account to this Meetin by him Charged against the Town the amount whereof being £1:10s for Attending on the General Assembly as a Deputy the Six months passed: and one othe[r] account amounting to £1:16s for his Attending on the Convention Six days at South Kingstown in March Last and Six days at Newport in June Last.

Voted that Said accounts be Allowed and that the Clerk grant orders on the Treasury for the Same—both orders granted and Whereas William Matteson presented Two accounts of the Same amount by him Charged against the Town for the like Service by him performed as a Representative at the times above Specified. which accounts were Likewise Allowed—orders granted &c. . . .

And this Meeting is dissolved

Witness Benja. Johnson Tn. Clerk

1. MS, Town Meeting Book, Vol. 2, 1773–1811, Town Hall, West Greenwich, R.I.

## 620. William Barton: Biography<sup>1</sup>

William Barton (1748–1831) was born in Warren, R.I., where he received a common-school education. After becoming a hat maker, he moved to Providence.

In 1775, Barton joined the R.I. militia and rose rapidly to the rank of major. Two years later, he developed and carried out a daring scheme on 9 July 1777 to capture British General Richard Prescott, who commanded the British forces then occupying Newport. For his exploit, Barton was promoted to colonel by the Continental Congress. In May 1778, he was seriously wounded near Bristol Ferry while chasing a British and Hessian force. When recovered in 1779, Barton took command of a light corps consisting of four companies and served actively for the remainder of the war.

From 1787 through 1790, Barton campaigned vigorously for the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. Elected to the state ratifying Convention, he was elected as one of two “monitors” and actively participated in the abortive March 1790 session in South Kingstown. After voting for ratification in May 1790, Barton was dispatched to New York to notify President Washington of R.I.’s belated entrance to the Union.

Later in life, Barton became involved in a land dispute in Barton, Vermont, a town he helped to found. In a legal contest over ownership, a judgment was assessed against him, which, in principle, he refused to pay. As a result, Barton spent nearly fourteen years confined to the Green Mountain State as a debtor. When the Marquis de Lafayette visited America in 1824–25, he learned of his old ally’s financial plight and paid Barton’s obligation, thereby securing the aged hero’s release. Barton returned in honor to Providence, where he died in 1831.

1. Derived from Patrick T. Conley, *Rhode Island’s Founders: From Settlement to Statehood* (Charleston, S.C., 2010).

## Addendum

### **Samuel Nightingale: Memo Concerning Expenses Incurred for Fourth of July 1788 Celebration in Providence**

- ◆ *To view this document, visit the University of Wisconsin Digital Collection at <https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Constitution>*

## Appendix

Items Reprinted in Rhode Island Contained in  
*Commentaries on the Constitution: Public and Private, 1787–1788*

### Rhode Island Newspapers, 1787–1788

*Newport Herald*  
*Newport Mercury*  
*Providence Gazette*  
*United States Chronicle*, Providence

CC:No.	Item/Rhode Island Reprints
CC:1	Resolution of Congress, 21 February 1787 New York <i>Daily Advertiser</i> , 24 February <i>Newport Herald</i> , 8 March Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 8 March <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 12 March
CC:3-B	The Idea of Separate Confederacies Reason New York <i>Daily Advertiser</i> , 24 March 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 28 April
CC:3-C	Lycurgus New York <i>Daily Advertiser</i> , 2 April 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 26 April
CC:4	George Washington's Circular Letter Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 15 March 1787
CC:5-B	Halifax Letter <i>New York Journal</i> , 15 March 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 29 March
CC:7	Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 29 March 1787 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 9 April
CC:10	George Washington's Election to the Convention Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 9 April 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 5 May
CC:11	<i>Virginia Independent Chronicle</i> , 11 April 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 5 May
CC:12	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 11 April 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 3 May



- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:13                   *Newport Herald*, 12 April 1787  
No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:14                   Benjamin Franklin's Election to the Convention  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 14 April 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 5 May
- CC:16-A               John Adams: *A Defence of the Constitutions*  
Preface, *Massachusetts Gazette*, 20 April 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 26 April  
*Providence Gazette*, 28 April
- CC:16-B               Letter LIII  
*New York Daily Advertiser*, 9 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 7 June
- CC:16-C               Sidney  
*Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 6 June 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 23 June
- CC:18-D               Agrarian Unrest and the Constitution  
Litchfield, Conn., *Weekly Monitor*, 21 May 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 2 June
- CC:18-E               *Worcester Magazine*, 24 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 31 May
- CC:19                   *Pennsylvania Herald*, 9 May 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 31 May
- CC:20-A               Speculation about a New Constitution  
*Worcester Magazine*, 17 May 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 24 May
- CC:20-C               *Pennsylvania Herald*, 25 July 1787  
*Newport Mercury*, 13 August
- CC:22                   Richard Price: On the American Government  
*Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 16 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 31 May  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 31 May  
*Providence Gazette*, 2 June
- CC:24                   *Pennsylvania Herald*, 19 May 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 31 May  
*Providence Gazette*, 2 June  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 June  
*Newport Herald*, 7 June
- CC:26                   Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 22 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 7 June  
*Providence Gazette*, 9 June

- CC:No.           Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:29           Harrington  
*Pennsylvania Gazette*, 30 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 14 June  
*Providence Gazette*, 16 June
- CC:30-A       Reports of Constitutional Convention Proceedings  
*Pennsylvania Herald*, 30 May 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 14 June  
*Providence Gazette*, 16 June
- CC:30-B       *Pennsylvania Herald*, 2 June 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 14 June  
*Providence Gazette*, 16 June  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 21 June
- CC:30-C       *Pennsylvania Herald*, 13 June 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 23 June  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 28 June
- CC:30-D       Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, 15 June 1787  
*Baltimore Maryland Gazette*, 19 June  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 12 July
- CC:30-E       *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 16 June 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 30 June  
*Newport Mercury*, 2 July  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 5 July
- CC:30-F       *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 18 July 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 28 July  
*Newport Herald*, 2 August  
*Newport Mercury*, 6 August
- CC:30-I       *Pennsylvania Herald*, 28 July 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 9 August  
*Newport Mercury*, 13 August  
*Newport Herald*, 16 August
- CC:30-J       *Pennsylvania Herald*, 8 August 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 23 August  
*Providence Gazette*, 25 August  
*Newport Mercury*, 27 August
- CC:30-K       *Pennsylvania Herald*, 15 August 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 25 August  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 30 August
- CC:30-L       *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 5 September 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 15 September
- CC:31        *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 5 June 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 16 June  
*Newport Herald*, 21 June

<b>CC:No.</b>	<b>Item/Rhode Island Reprints</b>
CC:35-A	Rhode Island and the Constitutional Convention <i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 9 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 June Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 21 June <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 23 June
CC:35-B	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 22 June 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 7 July Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 12 July
CC:38	Richard Price to William Bingham Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 20 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 5 July <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 7 July
CC:39	<i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 20 June 1787 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 5 July
CC:40-A	The Opposition to the New Constitution <i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 20 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 5 July <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 28 July
CC:40-B	Alexander Hamilton Attacks Governor George Clinton <i>New York Daily Advertiser</i> , 21 July 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 25 August
CC:40-C	<i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 1 August 1787 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 16 August <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 18 August
CC:40-D	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 8 August 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 30 August
CC:41	<i>Albany Gazette</i> , 21 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 12 July
CC:43	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 26 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 12 July Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 12 July <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 14 July
CC:44	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 27 June 1787 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 19 July
CC:45	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 30 June 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 5 July
CC:46-A	The United States, Spain, and the Navigation of the Mississippi River <i>Maryland Journal</i> , 3 July 1787 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 23 July



<b>CC:No.</b>	<b>Item/Rhode Island Reprints</b>
CC:63	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 15 August 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 25 August <i>Newport Herald</i> , 30 August
CC:66	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 22 August 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 13 September Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 13 September
CC:68	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 22 August 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 8 September Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 6 September <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 17 September
CC:72	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 5 September 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 September
CC:73	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 12 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 4 October
CC:74	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 12 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 4 October
CC:77-A	Benjamin Franklin: Speech in Convention, 17 September 1787 Northern Version: <i>Boston Gazette</i> , 3 December 1787 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 6 December <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 8 December <i>Newport Herald</i> , 20 December
CC:79	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 19 September 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 29 September <i>Newport Herald</i> , 4 October Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 4 October
CC:87	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 21 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 11 October
CC:88	<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 22 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 8 November
CC:96-A	Destiny and George Washington <i>Delaware Gazette</i> , 26 September 1787 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 22 October Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 18 October <i>Newport Herald</i> , 18 October
CC:96-B	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 10 October 1787 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 8 November
CC:98	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 26 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 11 October

- CC:No.**            **Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:101            *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 26 September 1787  
                       *Providence Gazette*, 6, 13 October  
                       *Newport Herald*, 11 October  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 11 October  
                       (paragraphs 1–2, 5, 7)  
                       *Newport Mercury*, 15 October (6th paragraph)
- CC:104-A        *Newport Herald*, 27 September 1787  
                       No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:104-B        *Providence United States Chronicle*, 27 September 1787  
                       No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:108            *Maryland Journal*, 28 September 1787  
                       *Newport Mercury*, 22 October
- CC:110-A        *Massachusetts Centinel*, 29 September 1787  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 4 October  
                       *Newport Herald*, 4 October
- CC:111            Curtius I  
                       *New York Daily Advertiser*, 29 September 1787  
                       *Newport Herald*, 1 November (3 paragraphs)
- CC:120            *Boston American Herald*, 1 October 1787  
                       *Newport Herald*, 4 October  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 4 October
- CC:123            *New Hampshire Spy*, 2 October 1787  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 18 October and  
                       22 November 1787  
                       *Providence Gazette*, 20 October
- CC:124            Foreign Spectator  
                       *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 2 October 1787  
                       *Newport Herald*, 18 October  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 18 October
- CC:125-A        The Address of the Seceding Assemblymen  
                       Broadside, Philadelphia, 2 October 1787  
                       *Providence Gazette*, 20 October  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 25 October
- CC:131-M        The Press and the Constitution  
                       Argus  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 8 November 1787  
                       No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:131-N        *Providence United States Chronicle*, 15 November 1787  
                       No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:133            Centinel I  
                       *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 5 October 1787  
                       *Providence United States Chronicle*, 6 December

- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:134                   James Wilson's State House Yard Speech, 6 October 1787  
*Pennsylvania Herald*, 9 October 1787 (Extra)  
*Newport Herald*, 18 October  
 Providence *United States Chronicle*, 25 October  
*Providence Gazette*, 27 October
- CC:135                   The Grand Constitution  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 6 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 18 October
- CC:143                   A Federal Centinel  
*South Carolina Weekly Chronicle*, 9 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 15 November
- CC:148                   “A”  
 Newburyport, Mass., *Essex Journal*, 10 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 1 November
- CC:150                   Foederal Constitution  
*Pennsylvania Gazette*, 10 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 25 October, 1 and 8 November  
 (excerpts)
- CC:156-A               Philadelphia Baptist Meeting  
*New York Packet*, 12 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 25 October  
*Providence Gazette*, 27 October  
 Providence *United States Chronicle*, 1 November
- CC:161                   *Boston Gazette*, 15 October 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 20 October  
 Providence *United States Chronicle*, 3 January 1788
- CC:171-A               The Attack on the Non-signers of the Constitution  
*Pennsylvania Journal*, 17 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 1 November (2nd paragraph)
- CC:171-B               *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 17 October 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 27 October
- CC:173                   A Citizen of America  
 Pamphlet, Philadelphia, 17 October 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 22 and 29 December (excerpts)
- CC:177                   Governor John Hancock's Speech to the Massachusetts  
 General Court, 18 October 1787  
 Providence *United States Chronicle*, 25 October  
*Newport Herald*, 25 October  
*Providence Gazette*, 27 October
- CC:190                   Centinel II  
 Philadelphia *Freeman's Journal*, 24 October 1787  
 Providence *United States Chronicle*, 13 December

- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:192                   Report of Connecticut's Delegates to the Constitutional Convention  
*New Haven Gazette*, 25 October 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 15 November  
*Newport Herald*, 22 November
- CC:196                   A Republican I  
*New York Journal*, 25 October 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 15 November
- CC:198                   *Newport Herald*, 25 October 1787  
No Rhode Island reprints
- CC:201                   The Federalist 1  
New York *Independent Journal*, 27 October 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 22 November
- CC:203                   "M.C."  
*Pennsylvania Herald*, 27 October 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 17 November
- CC:211                   *Boston Gazette*, 29 October 1787  
*Newport Herald*, 8 November
- CC:217                   The Federalist 2  
New York *Independent Journal*, 31 October 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 22 November
- CC:222                   Cincinnatus I  
*New York Journal*, 1 November 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 8 December
- CC:225                   Foreigner I  
Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 2 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 29 November
- CC:227-A                Elbridge Gerry to the Massachusetts General Court  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 3 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 8 November  
*Providence Gazette*, 10 November
- CC:228                   The Federalist 3  
New York *Independent Journal*, 3 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 27 December
- CC:231                   An Officer of the Late Continental Army  
Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 6 November 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 24 November
- CC:233-A                George Washington and the Constitutional Convention  
*New Jersey Journal*, 7 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 29 November  
*Newport Herald*, 6 December



<b>CC:No.</b>	<b>Item/Rhode Island Reprints</b>
CC:233-B	Anecdote <i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 7 November 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 24 November
CC:235	Mathew Carey's Prayer of an American Citizen <i>Philadelphia American Museum</i> , 7 November 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 31 January 1788
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 25 September 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 6 October <i>Newport Herald</i> , 11 October <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 11 October
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 25 September 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 11 October <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 15 October
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Philadelphia Freeman's Journal</i> , 10 October 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 27 October <i>Newport Herald</i> , 15 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 10 October 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 25 October (paragraphs 5–6) <i>Newport Herald</i> , 1 November (paragraphs 1, 4–6) <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 8 November (paragraphs 1, 5–6)
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 17 October 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 1 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	Lansingburgh, N.Y., <i>Northern Centinel</i> , 29 October 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 29 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 1 November 1787 No Rhode Island reprints
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>New York Journal</i> , 1 November 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 17 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer</i> , 1 November 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 22 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Herald</i> , 3 November 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 17 November <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 22 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 3 November 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 17 November
Volume 1 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 7 November 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 22 November <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 24 November
CC:241	Cincinnatus II <i>New York Journal</i> , 8 November 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 8 December

- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:243                   Centinel III  
Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 8 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 3 January 1788
- CC:247                   Uncus  
Maryland *Journal*, 9 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 10 January 1788
- CC:258                   *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 14 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 6 December
- CC:263                   The News-Mongers' Song for the Winter of 1788  
Albany *Gazette*, 15 November 1787  
Providence *Gazette*, 8 December
- CC:268                   An American: The Crisis  
Massachusetts *Centinel*, 17 November 1787  
Newport *Herald*, 3 January 1788
- CC:270-A               *Pittsburgh Gazette*, 17 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 3 January 1788  
Newport *Herald*, 10 January
- CC:276-A               George Mason's Objections  
Massachusetts *Centinel*, 21 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 29 November
- CC:276-D               Extract of a Letter from New York, dated 7 December 1787  
Massachusetts *Centinel*, 19 December  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 27 December
- CC:280                   *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 21 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 13 December
- CC:283-C               *New Haven Gazette*, 13 December 1787  
Newport *Herald*, 10 January 1788
- CC:289                   James Wilson's Speech in the Pennsylvania Convention  
Pamphlet, Philadelphia, 24 November 1787  
Providence *Gazette*, 15 December
- CC:290-A               John Jay and the Constitution  
Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 24 November 1787  
Providence *Gazette*, 15 December
- CC:290-B               John Jay to John Vaughan, 1 December 1787  
Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 7 December 1787  
Providence *Gazette*, 22 December  
Newport *Herald*, 27 December
- CC:295                   A Landholder IV  
Connecticut *Courant*, 26 November 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 6 December

<b>CC:No.</b>	<b>Item/Rhode Island Reprints</b>
CC:316	A Landholder V <i>Connecticut Courant</i> , 3 December 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 20 December
CC:320	Philadelphiensis III <i>Philadelphia Freeman's Journal</i> , 5 December 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 22 December
CC:325	Richard Henry Lee to Va. Governor Edmund Randolph Petersburg <i>Virginia Gazette</i> , 6 December 1787 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 16 February 1788
CC:335	A Landholder VI <i>Connecticut Courant</i> , 10 December 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 27 December <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 5 January 1788
CC:339-A	President John Sullivan on the Constitution <i>New Hampshire Spy</i> , 11 December 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 27 December <i>Newport Herald</i> , 3 January 1788
CC:339-B	N.H. President John Sullivan's Speech to the Legislature <i>New Hampshire Mercury</i> , 30 January 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 14 February
Volume 2 Appendix 1	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 15 November 1787 No Rhode Island reprints
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Volume 2 Appendix 1	<i>Connecticut Courant</i> , 10 December 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 20 December <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 22 December
CC:353	The Dissent of the Minority of the Pennsylvania Convention <i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 18 December 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 10, 17, and 31 January; 14 and 28 February; and 13 March 1788 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 12, 19, and 26 January

- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:356                   Philadelphia V  
*Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 19 December 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 5 January 1788
- CC:365                   *Pennsylvania Mercury*, 21 December 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 31 January 1788
- CC:371                   The Landholder VIII  
*Connecticut Courant*, 24 December 1787  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 17 January 1788
- CC:382                   Philadelphia VI  
*Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, 26 December 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 1 March 1788
- CC:385                   Edmund Randolph's 10 October 1787 Letter  
Pamphlet, Richmond, c. 27 December 1787  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 February 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 28 February
- CC:386-A               George Washington to Charles Carter  
*Maryland Journal*, 1 January 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 17 January  
*Providence Gazette*, 19 January  
*Newport Herald*, 24 January  
*Newport Mercury*, 28 January
- CC:394                   Centinel VII  
*Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 29 December 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 2 February 1788
- CC:402                   *New Hampshire Spy*, 1 January 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 26 May
- CC:407                   An Old Man  
*Pennsylvania Carlisle Gazette*, 2 January 1788  
*Newport Herald*, 31 January  
*Providence Gazette*, 2 February
- CC:408                   An Address to the Minority of the Pennsylvania Convention  
*Pennsylvania Carlisle Gazette*, 2 January 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 February  
*Providence Gazette*, 1 March
- CC:409                   Philadelphia *Freeman's Journal*, 2 January 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 February
- CC:413                   Speeches in the Connecticut Convention, 4 January 1788  
*Connecticut Courant*, 7 January  
Oliver Ellsworth's Speech  
*Newport Herald*, 17 January  
*Providence Gazette*, 19 January  
William Samuel Johnson's Speech  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 24 January  
*Providence Gazette*, 26 January

- CC:No.                   Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:419                   Elbridge Gerry Defends His Conduct in the Constitutional Convention  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 5 January 1788  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 17 January
- CC:424-D                Reports of the Boston Tradesmen Meeting  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 9 January 1788  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 17 January
- CC:424-E                *Boston Gazette*, 14 January 1788  
*Newport Herald*, 17 January
- CC:428                   Speeches in the Connecticut Convention, 9 January 1788  
*Connecticut Courant*, 14 January  
Samuel Huntington's Speech  
*Newport Mercury*, 28 January (excerpt)  
Richard Law's Speech  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 February
- CC:430                   Tamony  
*Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 9 January 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 18 February
- CC:439                   Gov. George Clinton's Speech to the N.Y. Legislature, 11 January 1788  
*New York Daily Advertiser*, 14 January  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 31 January  
*Newport Mercury*, 4 February
- CC:448                   *Pennsylvania Packet*, 14 January 1788  
*Newport Herald*, 3 April  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 17 April
- CC:460                   Luther Martin to the Printer  
*Maryland Journal*, 18 January 1788  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 28 February
- CC:473                   Philadelphiensis VIII  
*Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, 23 January 1788  
*Providence Gazette*, 23 February  
*Newport Mercury*, 3 March
- Volume 3                *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 19 December 1787  
Appendix 1             *Providence Gazette*, 5 January 1788
- Volume 3                Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and the  
Appendix 1             Constitution  
*Pennsylvania Herald*, 19 December 1787  
*Providence Gazette*, 5 January 1788
- Volume 3                Newspapers Reports of the Calling of State Conventions  
Appendix 1             *Worcester Magazine*, 20 December 1787  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 27 December  
*Pennsylvania Packet*, 20 December  
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 10 January 1788

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	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 22 December 1787 <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 27 December <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 29 December
Volume 3 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 21 December 1787 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 27 December <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 3 January 1788
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Volume 3 Appendix 1	Richmond, Va., Political Society <i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 2 January 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 31 January
Volume 3 Appendix 1	John Hancock and the Constitution <i>Connecticut Courant</i> , 4 February 1788 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 16 February
Volume 3 Appendix 1	The Pillars of the American Republic <i>Massachusetts Gazette</i> , 15 January 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 24 January (2nd paragraph) <i>Providence United States Chronicle</i> , 24 January (2nd paragraph) <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 26 January (2nd paragraph)
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Volume 3 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 19 January 1788 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 18 February
Volume 3 Appendix 1	The Minority of the Connecticut Convention <i>New Haven Gazette</i> , 24 January 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 14 February
Volume 3 Appendix 1	Litchfield, Conn., <i>Weekly Monitor</i> , 28 January 1788 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 18 February <i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 February



- CC:No.           Item/Rhode Island Reprints**
- CC:560           Hugh Williamson's Speech in Edenton, N.C.,  
8 November 1787  
*New York Daily Advertiser*, 25–27 February 1788  
*Newport Herald*, 25 September (excerpt)
- CC:566-A       Governor John Hancock's Speech to the Legislature  
*Boston Independent Chronicle*, 28 February 1788  
*Newport Herald*, 13 March  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 13 March
- CC:580           The Landholder No. X  
*Maryland Journal*, 29 February 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 8 May
- CC:593           Philadelphia *Freeman's Journal*, 5 March 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 17 March  
*Providence Gazette*, 22 March
- CC:603           Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 7 March 1788  
*Providence Gazette*, 5 April
- CC:622           A Landholder XII  
*Connecticut Courant*, 17 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 27 March  
*Newport Herald*, 27 March  
*Providence Gazette*, 29 March
- CC:627           *Massachusetts Centinel*, 19 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 27 March  
*Newport Herald*, 27 March
- CC:629           *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 19 March 1788  
*Newport Mercury*, 14 April (paragraphs 1–3)  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 17 April  
(paragraphs 1–3)  
*Newport Herald*, 17 April (paragraphs 1–3)
- CC:632           Brutus XV  
*New York Journal*, 20 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 24 April
- CC:638-A       George Washington to Caleb Gibbs  
*Massachusetts Centinel*, 22 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 27 March  
*Newport Herald*, 27 March  
*Providence Gazette*, 29 March
- CC:641           A Landholder XIII  
*Connecticut Courant*, 24 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 10 April
- CC:643           *Salem Mercury*, 25 March 1788  
*Providence United States Chronicle*, 3 April  
*Newport Herald*, 10 April



<b>CC:No.</b>	<b>Item/Rhode Island Reprints</b>
CC:649	James Iredell's Address to Freemen of Edenton, N.C. c. 28–29 March 1788 Philadelphia <i>Federal Gazette</i> , 19 April 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 29 May
Volume 4 Appendix 1	False Reports on North Carolina's Ratification of the Constitution <i>Massachusetts Gazette</i> , 5 February 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 14 February <i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 6 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 9 February <i>Newport Herald</i> , 14 February Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 21 February <i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 5 March <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 22 March
Volume 4 Appendix 1	New York <i>Daily Advertiser</i> , 5 February 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 21 February <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 3 March
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Volume 4 Appendix 1	Newburyport, Mass., <i>Essex Journal</i> , 6 February 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 February
Volume 4 Appendix 1	Boston <i>Independent Chronicle</i> , 7 February 1788 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 9 February Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 14 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 16 February
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 7 February 1788 No Rhode Island reprints
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Connecticut Courant</i> , 11 February 1788 <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 23 February <i>Newport Herald</i> , 28 February
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 13 February 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 21 February 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 February
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 14 February 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 21 February (1st paragraph)
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>New York Packet</i> , 15 February 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 28 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 1 March
Volume 4 Appendix 1	Accounts from England, 18 February–22 March 1788 <i>Pennsylvania Packet</i> , 18 February <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 3 March <i>Newport Herald</i> , 13 March

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	Philadelphia <i>Freeman's Journal</i> , 20 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 March <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 31 March
	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 21 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 March <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 31 March
	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 27 February <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 March
Volume 4	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 20 February 1788
Appendix 1	<i>Providence Gazette</i> , 23 February (paragraphs 1–2) <i>Newport Herald</i> , 28 February
Volume 4	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 20 February 1788
Appendix 1	<i>Providence Gazette</i> , 1 March (1st paragraph) <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 3 March (paragraphs 1, 4, 6)
Volume 4	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 February 1788
Appendix 1	No Rhode Island reprints
Volume 4	South Carolina Calls a Convention
Appendix 1	<i>Newport Herald</i> , 21 February 1788 No Rhode Island reprints
Volume 4	<i>Boston Gazette</i> , 25 February 1788
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Volume 4	<i>Pennsylvania Mercury</i> , 21 February 1788
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Volume 4	Middletown, Conn., <i>Middlesex Gazette</i> , 25 February 1788
Appendix 1	<i>Newport Mercury</i> , 3 March <i>Newport Herald</i> , 6 March <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 March
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Appendix 1	Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 17 April
Volume 4	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 27 February 1788
Appendix 1	<i>Providence Gazette</i> , 15 March
Volume 4	Letter from Wilmington
Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 27 February 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 20 March (extract)
Volume 4	<i>Pennsylvania Mercury</i> , 28 February 1788
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Appendix 1	<i>Newport Mercury</i> , 3 March

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Volume 4 Appendix 1	Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 6 March 1788 No Rhode Island reprints
Volume 4 Appendix 1	Philadelphia <i>Federal Gazette</i> , 8 March 1788 <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 24 March
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> , 12 March 1788 <i>Newport Herald</i> , 27 March (1st paragraph) <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 5 April (paragraphs 1, 4)
Volume 4 Appendix 1	Philadelphia <i>Independent Gazetteer</i> , 14 March 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 17 April
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 15 March 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 20 March <i>Providence Gazette</i> , 22 March <i>Newport Mercury</i> , 24 March
Volume 4 Appendix 1	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> , 19 March 1788 Providence <i>United States Chronicle</i> , 27 March
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## 498. Jeremiah Olney to Alexander Hamilton, Providence, 12 February 1790.

Providence 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1790

Sir

I have just been Honored with your  
 Fav. of 4<sup>th</sup> Inst. on the Subject of my being Designated  
 by the President to pay the Invalid Pension of this  
 State - you may be assured Sir that it affords me  
 the most singular Pleasure to <sup>find</sup> be ~~informed~~ by you that  
 I am so much in the Remembrance of the President as to  
 be Designated by him for to execute that Trust, and my  
 Feelings Sir are no less gratified in the Reflection that  
 I can in any Degree be serviceable to that unfortunate  
 Class of our fellow Citizens -

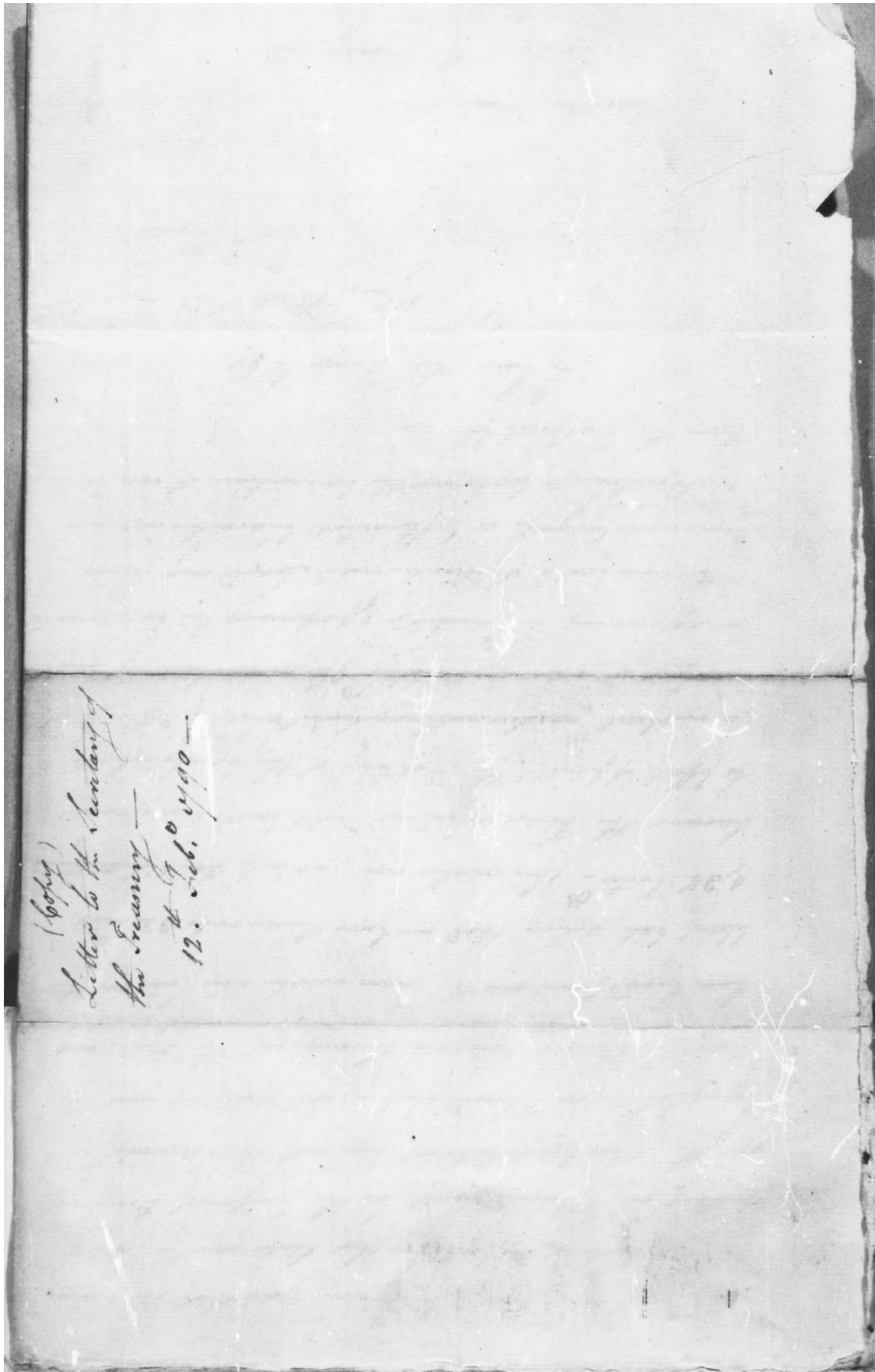
I presume Sir, when the Secretary at  
 War made you the Estimate of Nine Hundred Dollars for  
 the payment of the first half year Pension - that he had  
 not Received the last Return of Invalids paid by this State  
 which I as one of a Committee, had the Honor to transmit  
 him on the 1<sup>st</sup> Inst. - as that Return very considerably  
 exceeds the above Estimate -

I have been Honored with Instructions from  
 the Secretary at War, Respecting the Order to be observed  
 in making the payments -

9







**Samuel Nightingale: Memo Concerning Expenses Incurred for Fourth of July 1788 Celebration in Providence.**

For a transcription of this facsimile, see RCS:R.I., 1085-87.

Mem<sup>o</sup> of Sundries for the Federal Celebration of A<sup>ny</sup> July 1788

of W <sup>m</sup> Hubbard 3/6 doz Plates, lost 2 A/ if Cash	£ 0 <sup>o</sup> 12 <sup>o</sup> 0 <sup>o</sup>
of W <sup>m</sup> Hewes 3/4 doz Plates, D <sup>o</sup> A/6 D <sup>o</sup>	3 <sup>o</sup> 4 <sup>o</sup> 1/2
of W <sup>m</sup> John Brown 1 1/2 doz Plates 2/16	£ 0 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup>
of D <sup>o</sup> 1 Cream Col <sup>d</sup> Dish	9 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup> 9 <sup>o</sup>
of W <sup>m</sup> Parker 40 wooden Bowls	£ 1 <sup>o</sup>
of D <sup>o</sup> ditto 1 Loaf Sugar 11 <sup>o</sup> 2/1	11 <sup>o</sup> 9 <sup>o</sup>
of Mess <sup>rs</sup> Stoppers & Snow Knives & forks	1 <sup>o</sup> 19 <sup>o</sup> 2 <sup>o</sup> 3/4
Balance due to them as for their ac <sup>t</sup>	
of Aaron Peck 25 Milk Pans	15 <sup>o</sup>
of M <sup>o</sup> C. Stearns 5 1/2 Cream Col <sup>d</sup> Cups lost 2/1 doz	4 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup>
Laborers paid in Cash by S. Nightingale	
To Cleaning Knives & forks, Plates, Dishes, Cups	
Bowls &c. Before Dinner	£ 0 <sup>o</sup> 5 <sup>o</sup>
Cleaning ditto after Dinner	6 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup>
To paid 3 Men to Tend Tables 40 besides the 2	10 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup>
Three Men P <sup>ay</sup> subscribed to there (2/6)	1 <sup>o</sup> 2 <sup>o</sup>
	<hr/>
	£ 5 <sup>o</sup> 12 <sup>o</sup> 6 <sup>o</sup> 1/4



*Sundry Articles for the Entertainment at Providence July*

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr Hubbard 57 Doves white Stone Plates  
 Returned to ditto 52 1/4 Doves of ditto  
 Returned to ditto 3 3/4 Doves lost ... (A) ... 20 ... 15 ...  
 5 1/2 Doves

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr Storer 20 Doves Cream Col Plates  
 Returned to ditto 19 Doves of 9<sup>th</sup>  
 Ditto to ditto 2 9 Plates wanting ... (A) ... On An 1/2 ...  
 11 Plates wanting

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr John Brown 14 1/2 Doves Cream Col Plates  
 Returned to ditto 13 1/2 Doves of 9<sup>th</sup> ... } ... 6 ...  
 1 1/2 Doves lost ... (A) ...

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr John Brown 3 Cream Col Dishes  
 Returned to ditto 2 ... of 9<sup>th</sup> ... } ... On On 9 ...  
 1 lost ... 9

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr Storer 18 Cream Col Dishes  
 Returned to ditto 18 Ditto ... } ... On On On

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr J<sup>r</sup> Comstock 6 Small Earthen Milk Pans  
 Returned to ditto 6 Ditto ... } ... On On On

Rec<sup>d</sup> of W<sup>m</sup> Barber 10 Wooden Bowls  
 Returned to the Vendor 33 Ditto ... } ... On On On  
 7 lost ... (A) ...

Rec<sup>d</sup> of M<sup>rs</sup> Stephen Snow 108 Doves Knives & Forks  
 Returned to ditto 96 Doves Ditto Knives ... } ... On On An  
 31 Doves lost ... (A) ...

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr J. G. Jenkins 27 Round Earthen Bristol Dishes  
 Returned to be vendued 24 of ditto ... } ... On On  
 3 lost ... (A) ...

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr J. G. Jenkins 29 Earthen Milk Pans  
 Returned to be vendued 24 10 lost ... (A) ... } ... 7 ...

Rec<sup>d</sup> of Mr B. Perry 72 Cream Col Cups  
 Returned to ditto 10 ... } ... On On  
 62 lost ... (A) ...

Written Permission

4<sup>th</sup> 1788. Vinegar

Left at Vendue Room for Sale  
Plates & 1 Cream Col Dish Damaged  
Salt more than Half Bushel  
Vinegar . . .

Sum Bro<sup>d</sup> Forward . . . . . \$ 7. 7. 6 1/2

Sum Bro<sup>d</sup> Forward . . . . . \$ 7. 7. 6 1/2

Bo<sup>d</sup> of M<sup>r</sup> J. Jenkins . . . 24 Dble Handle Porringers }  
Returned to Vendue Room 4 . . . Ditto }  
20 lost . . . (at 1/2) } . . . 7. 6.

Borrowed of M<sup>r</sup> Hubbard 1 Stone Pott . . . }  
Returned to ditto . . . 1 Ditto . . . } . . . 0. 0. 0.

Bot of Aaron Peck 25 Milk Pans . . . . .

Hired the Plates Dishes Plates Carthans Pans and the dining  
Bowls washed } . . . 0. 11. 6.  
Wenises & Forks before Dinner }  
Washing Dishes after Dinner . . . . . 6. 6.  
Cash paid to be men standing on Table 4<sup>th</sup> July } . . . 10. 6.  
Deduct . . . 3 Stirred on my own Airt }  
3 - @ 3/6 . . . . . } \$ 0. 16. 11 1/2