



Dear Members of the Roger Williams Family Association;

This will be my last message to you before our annual meeting in September, the fiftieth anniversary of the organization which means so much to us all.

While our membership of 300 is small in comparison with eligible descendants, the number has grown considerably since I became your president three years ago.

During the past three years quarterly meetings have been held at the Mathewson Street Church in Providence; others at the homes of members, where a feeling of comradeship has existed, which, with our kinship has brought us very close to each other.

Our charter reads in part "the preparation and preservation of an authentic genealogy of the descendants of Roger Williams", which has been the main aim during my term of office and many days have been spent with our Registrar working on the records, which had become sadly dilapidated. There has now been compiled between three and four hundred pages of genealogy, including every branch of the family. There are necessarily many omissions and no doubt some errors. However, now seems to be the time to think of putting these records into print.

The cost of this will run into a large amount of money. The price per copy will depend upon the number of subscribers. Before starting same we must find how many copies could be sold. If you are interested in a personal copy of this ROGER WILLIAMS GENEAL-

OGY send your name to the registrar, Mrs. C. W. Anthony, 23 Oakland Avenue, Cranston, R. I. voicing your desire.

Thank you all for your loyalty. Continued support to your incoming officers as whole-heartedly will make this family association continue to grow and be an honor to our illustrious ancestor.

HARRIETT WOOD WEEDEN,
President

NOTICE OF SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Fiftieth annual meeting of the Roger Williams Family Association will be held in the Museum at Roger Williams Park, Thursday, September 3, 1942.

Social hour will start at 1 P. M.

Business meeting called at 2 P. M.

The principal speaker will be Mr. William Greene Roelker, Librarian of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and a member of our association. He will speak on "Collecting the Letters of Roger Williams."

War conditions will make it hard for some to attend, but it is desired that every member make a special effort.

1943 dues are payable.

NEW HEADQUARTERS

At the June meeting it was voted to accept the invitation of the Rhode Island Historical Society to make our headquarters at their home, the John Brown House, 52 Power St., Providence, R. I. for one year following our annual meeting.

THE GUIDE POSTS OF HISTORY

by
William Greene Roelker

In times of stress men naturally turn to the past for help in solving the problems of today. In the generation before us men have survived great crises; we seek to find the stones upon which they built. They were men, not unlike ourselves, however different the conditions

of life may have been then. It is safe to assume that the principles which enabled them to survive are still valid for us.

If history teaches no other lesson, it demonstrates that our forefathers succeeded against great odds. Can there be any doubt that if we build on their foundations, we too, shall succeed?

Somewhat belatedly thinking people have become aware that the principles for which we now fight were expressed in America for the first time by Roger Williams.

"This is a war", recently said the Charleston News Courier, "for the right for every man to be a rebel, in the name of God, against earthly ambition, greed for land and loot, against creatures of common clay who call themselves 'the State'".

The authorization Axis powers are close kin to the "Divine-Right-of-Kings" rulers of England and in some respects similar to the theocracy of Massachusetts Bay, against both of which Roger Williams rebelled.

In their day, each of these governments held that man exists for the State which had the right to control even a man's opinions. Roger Williams established the American principle that the State exists for the individual who is free to express any opinion. The two positions are the opposite poles of thought.

Inevitably, the conflict began when the first man questioned the authority of anyone to do his thinking for him. But it remained for Roger Williams to establish a State based upon the principle that government should have authority "only in civil things."

We are so used to the principle that a man may think as he pleases and hold such religious opinions as he chooses, that we are not able to comprehend conditions under which a man dare not call his soul his own. Yet, every settler of Rhode Island was a refugee and an outcast from Massachusetts: refugee, because he was not allowed to express opinions contrary to the official views of the magistrates and elders of the church; outcast, because Massachusetts feared to let anyone remain within her borders who dared to speak out against the State.

Roger Williams dared to speak, and was banished, but his little settlement at Providence, the rallying point for believers in soul liberty, became a cornerstone of our liberties.

AN EXCERPT FROM AN OLD RECORD

"At a meeting of the Roger Williams Family Association held in Columbia Hall, Weybosset Street, Providence, R. I. on January 27th, 1906, it was voted to file papers for the incorporation of the society. President Sheldon Williams appointed Mr. Amasa M. Eaton to prepare the incorporation papers, which are contained in the following charter of the society.

"State of Rhode Island

"I, Charles P. Bennett, Secretary of State, hereby certify that Louis E. Remington, Charles Dean Kimball, Amasa M. Eaton, Hattie E. Hall, William J. Bowditch, Sarah M. Hicks, George W. Williams, John Spencer Williams, Sarah E. Dyer, Sarah C. L. Swett, Lucy A. H. Allen, Sheldon Williams, Hope A. K. Lassone, and O. C. Sherman, have filed in the office of Secretary of State according to law, their agreement to form a corporation under the name of the Roger Williams Family Association, for the purpose of honoring and preserving the memory of Roger Williams, the preparation and preservation of an authentic genealogy of his descendants, and the promotion of friendship and social intercourse among them, in accordance with law, and have also filed the certificate of the General Treasurer that they have paid into the general treasury of the State the fee required by law.

"Witness my hand and the seal of the State of Rhode Island, the 30th day of January in the year 1906.

(Signed) CHARLES P. BENNETT,
Secretary of State."

Miss Emily H. Paine, *Historian*