

THE ROGER WILLIAMS FAMILY

ASSOCIATION

1995-1996 No. 82

Incorporated January 30, 1906 Providence, Rhode Island

> "Storms make oaks take deeper root." George Herbert (1593-1633) Iacula Prudentum



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Cousins and Friends:

First of all let me frankly make note that this current '95-'96 annual bulletin and report is extremely late. The delay has been caused entirely by your president. An unexpected crush of family events and health issues affected his performance and effected the lateness of this 82nd bulletin and its being mailed in two installments. This said, let us have a retrospective and a forward look in the Family Association.

When Dorothy Higson White completed her third and final year as our president, we realized with deep appreciation that her term was a triennium of triumph, organization, and devoted, hard work for us. She had a gift for enlisting the help and work of her fellow officers and members. Her punctuality and persistence were preeminent qualities along with her good humor and warm hospitality at board meetings, not to mention her festive feasts on those occasions at 15 Frederick Drive! A percipient observer of people, Dorothy further had the gift of being to the point, keeping agenda and officers moving, but always with kindness and caring. On behalf of her fellow officers and thousands of members, I here record the Family's profound appreciation, gratitude, and thanks. In her annual report Dot rightly mentioned "foremost the love, support and guidance of my husband. There are many things that would have been more difficult without him," wrote Dot. So we certainly thank Everett, too.

The March meeting at the Carpenter Museum in Rehoboth revealed a marvelous collection of colonial and Civil War artifacts, a Gilbert Stuart oil painting of his favorite subject, George Washington, and several delicate and defined water colors by our own Birdie Corbitt, who arranged for the visit, the speaker, Mrs. Deborah Didick, the museum director, and a superb catered dinner.

In June, 46 local members, and 4 from New Jersey, went to Roger Williams's own island, Prudence Island in Narragansett Bay. We left from Bristol on the small ferry that runs to Pru. The 18 ton, 50-seat motor coach almost dwarfed the ferry! A newspaper photographer took a picture of our arrival at Prudence and children along our island route ran into their houses shrieking, "Come see the bus!" to their families. On an island with mostly dirt roads and a midget ferry, they couldn't see how such a mammoth got there! We had picnic lunches and soft drinks in perfect weather on the lawn of our then vice-president. In the following leisurely tour we stopped at Division Rock, demarking the south and north halves of the island. Roger Williams sold the south half to the then Governor of the Bay Colony (Massachusetts), a wealthy friend, to get money for round trip passage back to England to petition the king for letters patent for Providence Plantations. We also stopped to see, climb, sit on, and take pictures of "pulpit rock", so-called from its use by Roger Williams as a "pulpit" from which to preach the gospel to native Rhode Islanders, namely, Narragansett and other tribal Indians. We all survived the sojourn and tour in good health and safety, regardless of the somewhat elevated average age! But not too elevated. We had some children along!

At our annual meeting on September 16, Elsie Williams, our reliable registrar, both edified and amused us with her talk "Epitaphs", an edited version of which I commend to your reading elsewhere in this bulletin.

Work on publishing the descendants and their lines to Roger Williams's children is proceeding with all deliberate speed consistent with proper research and scholarship.







HERE LYES

by Elsie Bushnell Williams

The New England states are noted for graveyards whose tombstone carvings range from primitive to exquisite artistry. Rhode Island had the unique distinction of possessing more family burial plots scattered over its landscape than any other state. This was because Roger Williams and his followers, determined upon the separation of church and state, did not consider it necessary to bury their dead in a churchyard. To their way of thinking, one plot of ground was as sacred as another, and so the family graveyards on homestead properties were established and multiplied. There are now well over 1700 burial grounds in Rhode Island that have been marked as Historical Cemeteries, and probably a hundred or so still hidden away in the woods awaiting discovery. However, the number of these small plots is diminishing as real estate and commercial developments increase and former farmlands become shopping malls, golf courses, home sites, and condominiums.

Newport was the first Rhode Island community to establish a public cemetery in 1640. This was the Common Burying Ground which has recently been restored after years of shameful neglect. It was 1700 before Providence got around to laying out the North Burial Ground, choosing land that was considered worthless for any other purposes, since it was very sandy and barren.

In Rhode Island, laws regarding the recording of vital statistics were not always enforced, and often gravestones and Bible records are the last resort of the genealogist. Too much reliance can not be placed on either of these sources, for often the event was recorded from memory years after it occurred. Dates on tombstones can be misleading, too, for even Death can not put an end to the vanity of women where their ages are concerned.

The early settlers of New England had no money to spend on fancy gravestones, and so they made do with what they had. Field stones were free and plentiful, and so they used those to mark the family graves. Sometimes they chiseled initials and dates on them, but more often just left them in their natural state. They knew who was buried under them, and they didn't think it mattered to posterity.

The old gray slate stones have withstood time and weather much better than the marble and granite stones that succeeded them. For many years it was thought that the slate stones were brought from England as ballast for sailing vessels. However, it has been determined that these stones came from local quarries in New England. The men who carved the designs and lettering did this as a sideline to their ordinary occupations. They often worked in family groups, or shared a common quarry. This was particularly true in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, where carvers developed their own highly individual symbolic designs that are not found in any other area.

Gravestone carvings can be divided into five periods. According to Odell Shepard, in his book <u>Connecticut Past and Present</u>, the spiritual history of the settlers may be traced from their tombstone art. During the first period, the settlers were rigid Calvinists. They were obsessed with the thought of death and this was shown in the horrendous skull and crossbones carvings of the period. Suggesting only the decay and dissolution of the body, these gruesome emblems also served as awful warnings to children and people unable to read as to what they were to expect. A common epitaph, which appears with variations in all New England graveyards, expresses this period very well:

Stranger, pause as you pass by.
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so you must be.
Prepare for Death, and follow me.

The rarest type of skull and crossbones carvings was the profile skull, and a few may be found on Cape Cod. One of these is located in the old Congregational section of Swan Point Cemetery. Three-quarter skulls, also rare, are sometimes found. On the stone of Joseph Hall in a Dennis, Massachusetts cemetery, the lower jaw is missing.

With the arrival of new settlers and the bettering of living conditions, religion began to take a softer attitude toward death. This was shown in the carvings of the second period where the lower jaw had been restored to the skull, although the teeth were still hideously prominent. The redeeming touch was the replacement of the crossbones with lovely feathered wings, the symbols of resurrection.

The third period was a blending of the old and the new, as the skull took on the aspect of the cherub. However, for some strange reason, the cherub was sometimes pictured with two mouths, one with lips and, below this, one with teeth forming a fringe about the chin.

The fourth period was that of the cherub proper and of the portrait stone. Many stone cutters carved the features of these cherubs in what they hoped were likenesses of the deceased. Sometimes the results were commendable and other times ludicrous, depending upon their skill. The portraits were supposed to represent the soul and were usually shown with wings. But Mrs. Mary Cross of Truro, who died in 1791, expressed a more worldly attitude. She asked to be presented to posterity in her best bonnet and with every frill in place.

The fifth and last period of tombstone art showed the decadence of religion in New England, as the cherubs were supplanted by the weeping willow or cypress and the urn. This design was imported from England and reflected the Federal style of architecture, where urns were important in decoration. This new style in tombstone art spread like wildfire from one New England cemetery to another. The stern, old Puritan pastors, if their voices could have been heard, would never have allowed this heathenish intrusion. They were scholarly men, well-versed in classical lore, and knew that the cypress had been forbidden in early Christian funerals because of its association with pagan rites. The urn represented cremation, which was never practiced in early New England. By 1800, when this design took hold, the influence of the clergy was so weakened that their protests, if any, had no effect on this "new look" in tombstone fashions.

The earliest epitaphs were usually composed by the village pastor, who was often the only one in the community with enough education to qualify for the task. Even at that, there was great variation in the spelling. And punctuation, or lack of it, was always a problem. The following example from a Maine cemetery shows what the lack of punctuation can do:

My Husband God Knows Why.

Some gravestones carried admonitions or advice to those left behind. The only Mayflower passenger buried in Rhode Island is Elizabeth (Tilley) Howland, who was a girl in her early teens when the ship cast anchor in Plymouth Harbor. She was orphaned in the first terrible winter of 1620-21 and later married a fellow Pilgrim, John Howland. She was the mother of ten children, all of whom lived to maturity. She died in 1687 at the home of her daughter in what was then Swansea, Massachusetts, but is now Riverside, Rhode Island. A monument in Little Neck Cemetery was erected by her descendants and bears a quotation from her will:

It is my will and charge to all my children that they walke in ye Feare of ye Lord, and in Love and Peace towards each other.

Gravestones were often used to express grievances or political opinions, and were even used to advertise:

Here lies Jane Smith, wife of Thomas Smith, marble cutter.

This monument was erected by her husband as a tribute to her memory and a sample of his work. Monuments of this same style are \$250.

One of the most poignant epitaphs is found, not in New England, but on the banks of the James River in Virginia. This inscription, which commemorates one of the ninety maidens who came in 1619 in the first shipload of women to marry the lonely settlers of Jamestown, truly illustrates the spirit and determination of the early settlers of America. When this young wife died, her grieving husband inscribed on her tomb:

She touched the soil of Virginia with her little foot And the Wilderness became a home. We are also in the process of seeking a secure yet accessible place to store our records and artifacts here in Rhode Island. The locus of such a collection would likely be best in the capital city, Providence.

My sincere wishes to all the cousins and friends of the Association for a blessed and holy Christmas season and a New Year of happiness and health.

Jenge Wightman Williams
George Wightman Williams
President

December 1995

NOTICES

The 1996 Program will be sent out at a later date to members in the Rhode Island and nearby New England area. Anyone else wishing to receive a schedule of events should notify the Association at the following address:

The Roger Williams Family Association Janis M. Stevenson, Corresponding Secretary 142 George Allen Road Glocester, RI 02814-1775

If you have a current address for any of the following members, please let us know so we may send them a 1995-1996 Bulletin:

Name	Last Known Address
Barlow, Wayne E	Los Angeles, CA
Parphaedt Luther F III	East Rochester, NY
Beamer Helen (Saunders) (Mrs. H. Lee Beamer)	Tucson, AZ
Blackinton, Richard R.	North Attleboro, MA
Droum Marchal D Ir	Cypress. CA
Crook, Ruth (Topliff) (Mrs. Kenneth Crook)	Warwick, RI
Fenner Alice (Cranston) (Mrs. Glenn B. Fenner)	Wilmington, NC
Heinsohn, Mildred (Edwards) (Mrs. Henry J. Heinsohn)	Temple Terrace, FL
Helm, Cazenova (Miller) (Mrs. Leslie R. Helm)	Augusta, GA
Hill Emery C. Sr	rreeiand, w A
Hoyle Glenn	South Burnington, vi
Hoyle Sylvia (Knowlton) (Mrs. Wayne F. Hoyle)	Wrentham, MA
Hoyle Wayne F. Ir.	South Burlington, VI
Huytable Fric S	APO New York, NY
Lindley Virginia R	West Union, IL
McGee, Charles F	Albuquerque, NM
Milroy Paul M	Gorham, ME
Moore Alice (Hugli) (Mrs. Bruce Moore)	Washington, DC
Newcomb Ann (Bookhout) (Mrs. I. Turner Newcomb)	Los Altos, CA
Dandall Judga William I	Framingnam, MA
Romer, Rev. William M.	Ballston Spa, NY
Shinnee Steven W.	Ossining, NY
Stroud Andrew C	l'ampa, FL
Stroud, Bradley A	Tampa, FL
Stroud Lisa A	Tampa, FL
Taylor Marlys (Williams) (Mrs. Ronald L. Taylor)	Greenville, SC
Wannhara Donald F	Providence, Ki
Whitten Evelyn (Conley) (Mrs. George W. Whitten)	Renton, WA
Wightman Daniel D	Honolulu, Hl
Winter, Millicent (Hicklin)	Wapello, IA
Zolman Paul R	Smithfield, RI

NEW MEMBERS 1994-1995

Welcome to all those who have joined the Roger Williams Family Association throughout the past year:

* Allen, Emily M.	Antioch, TN	Daniel
* Arnold, Marilyn L.	Washington, DC	Mercy Waterman, Joseph (2)
Barney, Carol (Reimer)	Providence, RI	Mary
* Barney, Maurice C. III	Manhattan Beach,	CA Mercy Winsor
Budlong, Merrill P.	Cranston, RI	Mercy Waterman (3)
* Cruthers, Gerald M.	Norwich, CT	Mary
* deGroff, Charles E.	Washington, ME	Freeborn
* Garlick, Norman L.	Charleston, SC	Freeborn, Daniel
* Joy, Constance (Boerner)	APO Germany	Mercy Winsor
* Kasanovich, Heather I.	Truro, MA	Mary
* Kasanovich, Stephen E.	Truro, MA	Mary
* Lauterbach, Anna E.	Sarasota, FL	Mary
* Lauterbach, Margaret C.	Sarasota, FL	Mary
* Long, Chaplain Maj. Lewis C. III	Lake Helen, FL	Joseph
* McNally, Stephen B.	Van Nuys, CA	Mary, Joseph
* Moran, Charlene (Dumouchelle)	Gaysville, VT	Mary
Palmer, Emily S.	Boulder, CO	Mary
* Palmer, Stanley H.	Arlington, TX	Mary
Parker, Gary R.	Sandpoint, ID	Joseph
* Patenaude, Charles R. Jr.	New London, CT	Mercy Waterman
Patenaude, Florence (Sharples)	Warwick, RI	Mercy Waterman
* Pickup, Mrs. Mary E.	Barrington, RI	Mercy Waterman
* Salsbury, Peter A.	LaPlata, MD	Mercy Winsor
Sharples, Mrs. Helen R.	Warwick, RI	Associate
* Smith, Thomas M.	Willington, CT	Mary
* Smith, Mark R.	Hampton, NH	Joseph
* Steinour, Edna (Salisbury)	Gettysburg, PA	Mercy Winsor
* Stewart, Mrs. Doris A.	Mercedes, TX	Mary
* Stout, Arthur P.	Youngtown, AZ	Daniel
* Stout, Roger P.	Chandler, AZ	Daniel
Sweet, Lillian M.	North Providence,	
Tate, Norman C.	Golden, CO	Mary
* Wade, Dennis A.	New London, CT	Mercy Waterman
White, Gordon P.	West Boylston, M.	
* Williams, Allan	Martinez, CA	Daniel
* Williams, Paul R.	Rumford, RI	Mary, Daniel, Joseph
* Winsor, David C.	Mobile, AL	Mercy Winsor

* Life Member

Roger Williams was banished from the Colony of Massachusetts by the General Court in 1635, and founded Providence the following year. He was finally pardoned in 1936 when the Massachusetts legislature voted to revoke the long-standing order of banishment in honor of Rhode Island's tercentenary.

IN MEMORY OF MARION LOUISE FRY 1912-1995

The passing of one of our former Presidents and Directors of the Roger Williams Family Association last January 20 saddened all of our members who knew her, in addition to her family and an untold number of other folk in the community. Marion was well known for her unending campaign for what was truthful, helpful and correct. Marion's calm demeanor and genuinely forthright personality was admired by all.

Miss Marion Fry, an 11th generation descendant of Roger Williams, led the Association through three successive years. From October 1986-October 1989 she ably carried out her duties of leadership. She energized and encouraged all of those around her. Following her Presidency, these traits were evident in the pursuit to restore the badly damaged stone of Roger Williams' daughter, Mary Sayles Green, at Easton Cemetery, Middletown, R.I.

Marion graduated from R.I. State College (now URI) with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. She went on to get her Masters and Ph.D. at Columbia University, which led to her Professorship in "Textile and Related Art." At URI she was a home demonstration agent for

Cooperative Extension Services of Southern R.I. and was a 4H Club Leader.

Miss Fry was well known in her hometown of East Greenwich, R.I. for being a historian and preservationist, as well as a teacher. If asked to serve or perform some task Marion would always say "I'll try." Her home is graced by a framed plaque citing her for "her keen interest in historic research and preservation." For an unprecedented period of 22 years she was the President of the Preservation Society of East Greenwich. Marion and Col. Robert Allen Greene (another one of our past Presidents) initiated the Society's bulletin called the "Packet" whose purpose was to preserve architectural heritage, history and customs.

East Greenwich was the home town of Marion and sister Dorothy who lived in the same 1794 historical home built by their great-great-great grandfather, Joseph Fry. Home was important to the sisters and a succession of beautiful collies. The most recent was a puppy named Nelson. This farm was comprised of 150 acres until 46 were given to the East

Greenwich Land Trust in 1989 for the purpose of "remaining as it is."

Marion's Rose Garden "was always a happy place to visit annually by many invited guests

on one day in June when 150 varieties were blooming at their best.

As Roger Williams descendants we are thankful to have had such a fine "cousin." Her example will live on and we will look forward to the privilege of viewing her portrait in the Fast Greenwich Town Hall.

October 1995

Birdella Wightman Corbitt Historian

In Memoriam

Bretsch, Glenn E.	20 March 1994	Daniel
Chamberlain, Don S.	14 October 1994	Daniel
Davignon, Ethelyn (Pray) (Mrs. Wilfred G.)	25 January 1995	Daniel
Fry, Dorothy E.	12 October 1995	Mary
Fry, Marion L. (Past President & Director)	20 January 1995	Mary
Jordan, A. Linda	6 November 1995	Daniel
Noves, Shelton C.	15 May 1995	Mary, Daniel
Roffee, Arthur P. Jr.	May 1995	Joseph
Thompson, Elmer I.	June 1993	Associate
Thompson, Elvira P. (Mrs. Elmer I.)	October 1990	Mary
Whitaker, Marion (Saunders) (Mrs. Joel H.)	25 October 1994	Daniel

BEGINNING OUR 104TH YEAR 1995-1996

OFFICERS

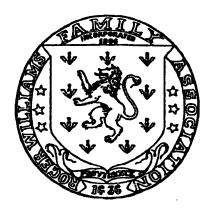
President	Mr. George Wightman Williams
8 Moses Brown Street, Providence, RI 02906	
1st Vice President	Col. Robert Allen Greene
P. O. Box 137, East Greenwich, RI 02818	401-884-5929
2nd Vice President	Mrs. Ann (Rowley) Prokopowicz
168 Forest Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910	401-785-2512
Secretary	
Wilbur Hollow Road, North Scituate, RI 02857	401-647-7204
Corresponding Secretary	Mrs. Janis (Frigault) Stevenson
142 George Allen Road, Glocester, RI 02814	401-568-4016
Treasurer	
168 Forest Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910	401-785-2512
Registrar	
35 Hodsell Street, Cranston, RI 02910	
Historian N	
15 Ivy Lane, Seekonk, MA 02771	

DIRECTORS

Director	Miss Gladys I. Bailey 401-884-9009
Director, Past President	
P. O. Box 137, East Greenwich, RI 02818	401-884-5929
Director	Mrs. Judith (Miller) Hurst
16 Salt Creek Road, South Dartmouth, MA 02748	
Director, Past President	
1017 Great Road, Lincoln, RI 02865	401-334-2674
Director, Past President	
15 Frederick Drive, Barrington, RI 02806	401-246-0246

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Lineage Book
P. O. Box 137, East Greenwich, RI 02818
Membership Mrs. Janis (Frigault) Stevenson
142 George Allen Road, Glocester, RI 02814
Sunshine Miss Dorothy W. Budlong
8 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, RI 02906
Chaplain Mrs. Birdella (Wightman) Corbitt
Program
Publicity Mr. Everett O. White
15 Frederick Drive, Barrington, RI 02806
Auditors Mr. Raymond L. Hilton Jr., Mr. Everett O. White
Trust Committee Miss Gladys I Bailey Mr Elmer H Palmer



THE ROGER WILLIAMS FAMILY

ASSOCIATION

1995-1996 No. 82

Addendum February 1996

Incorporated January 30, 1906 Providence, Rhode Island

CALENDAR March 1996 - October 1996

MARCH 16, 1996 - Saturday 11:30 a.m.

Guided tour of the Johnson & Wales Culinary Archives and Museum, 315 Harborside Boulevard, Providence, RI. A self-ordered luncheon will follow at Ocean Express, a short distance north on Allens Avenue. There is a small fee for the Museum tour.

Directions to Museum: Interstate Route 95; Exit to Route 1A south (Allens Avenue); left at Shell Station onto Northup Street; left into first parking lot; the museum is in a warehouse with an art deco arch at its entrance.

APRIL 13, 1996 - Saturday 11:00 a.m.

Tour of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, 118 Johnny Cake Hill, New Bedford, MA. A self-ordered luncheon will follow at Freestones, 41 William Street, New Bedford. There is a fee of \$3.50 for the museum tour. Please call Robert Allen Greene at 401-884-5929 or Meredith Smith at 401-647-7204 before April 6 for reservations.

Directions to Museum and Freestones: Interstate Route 195 East; Exit 15, keeping right toward downtown; bear right onto Elm Street to parking garage; the museum is a short walk from the garage and Freestones is close to the museum.

MAY 19, 1996 - Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Founders' Sunday at the First Baptist Church in America, 75 North Main Street (corner of Waterman Street), Providence, RI. A guided tour of the church will be available after the service. A self-ordered huncheon will follow at 1:00 pm. at the new Eileen Darling's Restaurant at the Ramada Inn, 940 Fall River Avenue, Seekonk, MA.

Directions to Eileen Darling's: Interstate Route 195 East; Exit 1; right and immediate left into Ramada Inn parking lot.

JUNE 22, 1996 - Saturday 1:30 p.m.

Picnic and short business meeting at the home of Ann and Elmer Palmer, Route 1, North Kingstown, RI. Part of the Palmer home is the old Roger Williams Trading Post. Please bring a picnic lunch and a lawn chair. Beverages will be served, and the Palmers will provide a grill for cooking meat, etc.

Directions to Palmer home: Interstate Route 95 South; Route 4 South; Route 403 South; right onto Route 1 South; the house is just south of and on the same side of Route 1 as the RI State

Police Barracks.

SEPTEMBER 14, 1996 - Saturday 1:30 p.m.

Annual Meeting at the Boat House, Roger Williams Park, Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI. Officers and committee chairmen will present annual reports, and officers and directors will be elected for the following year. Dues are payable at this time. Nancy Derig, Superintendent of Parks for the City of Providence, will be our guest speaker and bring us up to date on the exciting Roger Williams Park Zoo. Refreshments will be served.

OCTOBER 19, 1996 - Saturday 11:00 a.m.

Roger Williams Day will be observed at the Roger Williams National Memorial Park, 282 North Main Street, Providence, RI. Following the business meeting, Sue Andrews, the Site Manager of the Memorial, will tell us of the progress the Memorial is making on their project to put into their computer several generations in each line of the descendants of Roger Williams. A self-ordered luncheon will follow at 3 Steeple Street, within walking distance of the Memorial.

Kindly note that George W. Williams has resigned as President of the Roger Williams Family Association. At a special meeting of the Executive Board held on 29 January 1996, Col. Robert Allen Greene was appointed President and Dorothy H. White was appointed Vice President to fill the vacancies until the Annual Meeting of the Association in September 1996. The revised listing of officers follows:

OFFICERS

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President
P. O. Box 137, East Greenwich, RI 02818
1st Vice President Dorothy (Higson) White
15 Frederick Drive, Barrington, RI 02806
2nd Vice President
168 Forest Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910
Secretary Mrs. Meredith (Rowley) Smith
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Treasurer Mr. A. John Prokopowicz
168 Forest Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910
Registrar Mrs. Elsie (Bushnell) Williams
35 Hodsell Street, Cranston, RI 02910
Historian Mrs. Birdella (Wightman) Corbit
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DIRECTORS

Director	Miss Gladys I. Bailey
2068 South County Trail, East Greenwich, RI 0281	8 401-884-9009
Director, Past President	Col. Robert Allen Greene
P. O. Box 137, East Greenwich, RI 02818	401-884-5929
Director	Mrs. Judith (Miller) Hurst
16 Salt Creek Road, South Dartmouth, MA 02748	508-993-3276
Director, Past President	Mrs. Gussie (Randall) Lawton
1017 Great Road, Lincoln, RI 02865	401-334-2674
Director, Past President	Mrs. Dorothy (Higson) White
15 Frederick Drive, Barrington, RI 02806	401-246-0246

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