

AN

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE FORMATION OF THE

## BLACKSTONE MONUMENT ASSOCIATION,

TOGETHER WITH THE PRELIMINARIES.

AND

## PROCEEDINGS AT STUDY HILL, JULY 4. 1855.

PREPARED FOR THE PRESS BY THE SECRETARY,

AND

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SAID ASSOCIATION.

*Blackstone Monument Association*

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations.—DEUT. xxxii. 7  
Remove not the old landmark.—PROV. xxiii. 10.

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PAWTUCKET, R. I.,  
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## PRELIMINARY.

ON the 26th day of May, 1855, being the anniversary of Blackstone's death, the following communication appeared in the "Business Directory," a newspaper published at Pawtucket, R. I.

### WILLIAM BLACKSTONE.

Who was this almost mythical personage, whose name has been perpetuated in the waters that flow through our village, and what was his history? A brief reply may be interesting just at the *present time*. William Blackstone was an Episcopal clergyman of England, early in the 17th century. He was a bold, independent and intelligent man—far in advance of the age in which he lived. He was one of those self-poised spirits who would not submit to the theological dictation and civil usurpation of that weak-minded, fiery-headed, yet eminent scholar, Archbishop Laud. He left England and landed on this coast soon after the first band of pilgrims, and chose to stray away alone. He settled at *Shawmut*, the Indian name of the spot where the city of Boston now stands, and lived there several years as the first and only inhabitant of that peninsula. There in the solitude of his choice, he commenced his career of progress—planted his gardens and raised the first apples in Massachusetts. When in 1630 the English emigrants began to settle around him, he could not submit to the dictations they had imported with them; but to settle the difficulty, they taxed themselves and bought his improvements and rights, to his satisfaction; and in the Spring of 1635 he bid them adieu and started for what was then to them the unknown "Far West." He pitched his tent near the spot now occupied by our Lonsdale depot. The place was called *Wawepooseag*, a compound Indian term for catching wild geese and birds with nets and snares. Here he built his house (called "Study Hall") by the side of what he called

“Study Hill,” through which the rail cars and telegraph wires now pass. Here he planted himself as the first white inhabitant of what is now our State; and also raised the first apples known to Rhode Island. He lived here twenty-four years as a bachelor, and then married a Boston widow. He had a large library for those times, and cultivated his lands and his mind with industry and taste. He differed in sentiment, with Roger Williams at the village of Providence (a settlement subsequent to his own) but lived on good terms with Williams, and often preached for him and his people free, and gave them the first apples they ever saw. All that is known of this pilgrim father of Boston and Cumberland, discovers him to be a very benevolent, intelligent specimen of independent oddity. He lived at Study Hill forty years after he sold *Shawmut* (Boston,) and died at his Study Hall respected and lamented by all the inhabitants who had grown up around him during his long and patriarchal life, being over 80 years of age at his death. He died on the 26th of May, 1675, JUST ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY YEARS AGO THIS DAY, and was buried near his house on the 28th of May, as the records declare, and his grave remains to this day, designated by two small bowlders of semi-crystallized quartz rock.

The well he stoned is still to be seen; and the localities and boundaries of his lands are known from records and plats, although oaks of a hundred years growth have since flourished on the flowery gardens of Blackstone. Although this Pilgrim Father and patriarchal defender of rational liberty died a hundred years before the Revolution, and our “Declaration of Independence” was to him a century in the future, yet the 4th day of July was celebrated by him as his principal holiday because it was the anniversary of his marriage to an excellent and amiable lady who shared with him the last fourteen years of his long life—she having died but two years before him. He left one son, but his race is extinct—no blood of Blackstone flows in any living veins, and none but the above named unlettered stone marks his resting place. The sparkling waters of the Blackstone river will for ages to come reflect his *name*; but the thousands and tens of thousands of his successors, who have flourished and lived on the utility of this stream, have too long remained in ignorance of the illustrious character and amiable oddities of him whose name it bears.

And now, Mr. Editor, I would suggest an unceremonious and unostentatious gathering at Study Hill on the approaching 4th of July—

a sort of "Old Folks Celebration" with all the young who may choose to attend, on the spot thus once occupied;—where by free and familiar modes, the localities of his homestead can be pointed out, and a more detailed portraiture of his life and character can be given; and where can be commenced the formation of a Blackstone Monument Association, whose ultimate object shall be to rear a respectable stone which shall permanently record the name, character and resting place of the first white inhabitant of Boston and Rhode Island.

S. C. N.

Nothing further was heard on this subject until Monday, two days previous to the 4th of July; when two or three persons on the spur of the moment resolved to issue a notice inviting a meeting at the grave of Blackstone. With this very limited notice, a goodly number, far exceeding the expectations of its projectors, assembled there at 10 o'clock, A. M., on the 4th, and organized themselves under the branches of a venerable tree, called the "Catholic Oak."

The meeting was called to order by one of its number, and Rev. David Benedict, D. D., of Pawtucket, was chosen chairman, and James H. Chase, of Valley Falls, appointed secretary. The services were commenced with prayer by the venerable chairman. The Hon. Johnson Gardner, of Pawtucket, Mass., then read the Declaration of Independence, very much in the style of a practiced electionist, and gave very general satisfaction. Mr. S. C. Newman, of the Pawtucket Telegraph, a native of the ancient town of Rehoboth, which once embraced the residence of Blackstone within its limits, and a lineal descendant in the seventh generation from the founder and first minister of that early Puritan town, next delivered the following discourse.

## DISCOURSE.

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A NATION'S birth day! Truly this is, and long may it continue to be, a noble theme for contemplation. Yet time and circumstances, are fast changing the *mode* of its observance.

The exhilarating topics of its earlier anniversaries, have become familiar to the school boys. The story of the Revolution is enshrined in magic names from Lexington to Yorktown. Its language is stereotyped in granite on Bunker's consecrated summit; it is permanently engraved and daguerretyped in the manifold dialect of patriotism, and scattered broad-cast throughout our land. Those martial descriptions and patriotic phillipics of earlier days, have become historic matters of the glorious past; and we leave the bon-fires and illuminated outbursts of those more exciting forms of external expression, to the times that gave them birth. It is ours to consecrate this day to a no less noble purpose. We devote it to the remote, antiquarian contemplation of a liberal-minded worthy who lived long prior to our nationality—to the Pilgrim Father of Boston and Cumberland—to the first white inhabitant of our gallant little State; and whose history, deeds and sentiments are yet but too firmly "ANCHORED" behind the oblivious curtains of the past; and whose venerable ashes sleep in peace beneath yonder simple flag, and like the expressive motto of our State, repose in "HOPE."

Before entering upon a description of the venerable Blackstone, it will perhaps be proper to offer a glance at the origin of Cumberland. Some few of the early Pilgrims near Ply-

mouth, with the Rev. Samuel Newman as their pastor, purchased of Massassoit, the chief of the Wampanoags, a tract of land and settled themselves as the town of Rehoboth, in 1648. That town acquired additional territory by various purchases until 1694, when it was divided, and what they called the "North Purchase," became the town of Attleborough; and the twenty-seven square miles which now constitutes the town of Cumberland, was then claimed by Attleborough, and called Attleborough Gore, from its triangular form. This "Gore" remained thus till 1747, when it became a part of the colony of Rhode Island, and assumed the name of Cumberland, and has remained so for the last one hundred and eight years.

The magnates of England in the 17th century, were remarkable for their civil, political and religious usurpations. While the Vanes and the Sydneys of that infatuated age, fell victims to the political code of judicial murders, the fooleries of Archbishop Laud were no less conspicuous and abhorrent, in the branding, the nose-slitting, and ear-cropping dogmas of the dominant theology of that day. There were some, however, even among the corrupted upper ranks of the clergy, who were disgusted with the oppressive dictations of the times, and who chose to bid an eternal adieu to their native land. Such an one, was the Rev. William Blackstone, of England.

He was educated for the Episcopal ministry, and initiated into the classical learning of his day; and what was then called a dissenter, or non-conformist—not assenting to the dogmas and externalisms of the functionaries of the church, because he saw in them the elements of encroachment upon the true independence and natural rights of man—the very elementary foundation of our "Declaration of Independence" in its broadest sense.

He was of a bold, independent, intelligent and original cast of mind. He was far in advance of the age in which he lived; and had pictured in his mind something of that state of civilization and independence which we now behold; but as freedom of opinion was out of the question there, he preferred to

become a recluse on the rock-bound shores of a new world. Here he laid aside all fashion, and all conventionalisms of society, because there were none to require them, and sought nothing but morally-directed comfort and the enjoyment of true independence; and without any intention on his part, his enjoyments developed themselves in what we should now call independent and harmless oddities.

What was his precise age—when he first landed on our shores—and where he first pitched his tent, are problems in his history which the antiquarian energies of our times have hitherto failed to solve; but a long lost and recently discovered old manuscript history in a musty corner of an English library, and now being accurately copied by an agent of one of our historical societies—a document written by Gov. Bradford, and covering the space from 1602 to 1646, will no doubt solve these questions.

The year 1628 is the earliest date at which his name appears on the annals of the past. In that year the settlers of Plymouth made a tax on all the plantations to support a campaign against one Morton, at Merry Mount; and Mr. Blackstone, of Shawmut, was taxed 12 Shillings. This was a large tax for those times, and would imply that he had made considerable improvements at Shawmut.\* Shawmut was the Indian name of the peninsula where the city of Boston now stands; and when Governor Winthrop and his company arrived at Charlestown, in 1630, they found Blackstone in quiet possession of Shawmut, opposite the location they had chosen. Blackstone's cottage stood near a spring on the south side of the mouth of Charles river, and he was at that time the only person who inhabited Boston. Here he cultivated a garden and planted an orchard and raised the first apples in Massachusetts.

After Gov. Winthrop and his little community, had established themselves at Charlestown, they introduced a code of civil regulations, and Mr. Blackstone was the first man who took the Freeman's Oath, which was done May 18, 1631: but

\* This Indian word signified a spring of water.



they soon after broke the contract by adding a condition to the civil rights, to which he would not subscribe, viz: that all who would enjoy citizenship *must* belong to *their* church. He was benevolent, intelligent and independent. Soon after Gov. Winthrop's arrival, a severe sickness broke out among his company, which was attributed to bad water. Mr. Blackstone invited them to come over to Boston, where he had good water, and did all he could to alleviate their sufferings. But the men with whom he had to deal were strongly tinged with that civil and religious intolerance which he fled from England to avoid. His new neighbors undertook to *oust* him from his lands, under a pretence that they had a grant from the English King; but he would not have his rights taken from him, even by the hand that held the sceptre. In his manly and independent manner he answered—"The King asserteth sovereignty over this New England because John and Sebastian Cabot sailed along the coast, without even landing at any place; and if the quality of sovereignty can subsist upon the substratum of mere inspection, surely the quality of property can subsist upon that of actual occupancy, which is the foundation of my claim." This bold and ingenious logic puzzled his oppressors not a little; but how far they allowed his claim as original proprietor, it is difficult to determine. It is certain, however, that his claims were to some extent recognized, as appears from the Boston records, [vol. 1, page 97.] At a Court holden April 1, 1633, "It is agreed that William Blackstone shall have fifty acres set off for him near to his house in Boston, to enjoy forever." This was, at least one fourteenth of the whole peninsula,—a tract now worth millions of dollars. This did not settle the difficulty;—the breach between his independent spirit and the tyranny of his neighbors continued to widen, and the next year, 1634, they bought him out,—and here is the mode in which the fact has been preserved. Fifty years after that time a difficulty arose among the then inhabitants of Boston about the ownership of certain lands—the right of way, &c., and three aged citizens were called upon for testimony, and

have left on record an important document which we transcribe in its original orthography for the purpose of exhibiting the style of those times in connection with the facts.

D E P O S I T I O N .

' The deposition of John Odlin, aged about eighty-two yeares; Robert Walker, aged about seventy-eight yeares; Francis Hudson, aged about seventy-six yeares. These deponents being ancient dwellers and inhabitants of the town of Boston, in New England, from the first planting and settling thereof, and continuing so to this day, do jointly testify and depose that in or about the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred thirty-and-four, the then present inhabitants of said town of Boston (of whome the Honourable John Winthrop, Esq., Governour of the Colony was chiefe,) did treat and agree with Mr. William Blaxton for the purchase of his estate and right in any lands lying within the said neck of land called Boston, and for said purchase agreed that every house-holder should pay six shillings, which was accordingly collected, none paying less, some considerably more than six shillings, and the said sune collected was delivered and paid to Mr. Blaxton, to his full content and satisfaction, in consideration whereof hee sold unto the then inhabitants of said town and their heirs and assignes forever his whole right and interest in all and every of the lands lying within the said neck, reserving only unto himselfe about six acres of land on the point commonly called Blaxton's Point, on part whereof his then dwelling house stood;\* after which purchase the town laid out a place for a trayning field; which ever since and now is used for that purpose, and for the feeding of cattell; Robert Walker and William Lytherland farther testifie that Mr. Blaxton bought a stock of Cowes with the money he received as above, and removed and dwelt near where Providence now is, where hee lived till the day of his death.

Deposed this 10th day of June, 1684, by John Odlin, Robert Walker, Francis Hudson, and William Lytherland, according to their respective testimonye.

Before us,

S. BRADSTREET, *Governour.*  
SAM. SEWALL, *Assis't.*

Before tracing this pilgrim pioneer of liberty further, we will endeavor to learn something of the length of time he lived at Shawmut, before starting for what he might then call the "Far West;" and as the lights upon this point afford but a faint glimmer, we must pick our way with some degree of caution. All that the records inform us on this point is, that he sold his

\* His house stood near the spot where Cragie's Bridge now joins Boston. This "traying field" was the origin of Boston common.

lands in 1634 and started with his stock of "coves" \* in the spring of 1635. Lechford, an English traveler, who visited America in 1637, and published his writings at London in 1641, thus speaks of him: "One Master Blaxton, a minister, went from Boston, having lived there *nine* or *ten* yeares, he lives neere Master Williams." Placing the fact of his leaving Boston in the spring of 1635 by the side of Lechford's statement, an approximation to the time of his settling at Shawmut may be fairly made. Governor Hopkins, in his "History of Providence," published in the Providence Gazette, 1765, only ninety years after Blackstone's death, says that Blackstone had been at Boston "so long," (when the Massachusetts colony came in 1630,) "as to have raised apple trees and planted an orchard." Thus we have an amount of concurrent testimony sufficient to establish beyond a doubt, the fact, that Blackstone, whenever or wherever he might have first landed on our shores, pitched his tent at Shawmut, (Boston,) at an early period,—as early certainly as 1625 or 1626. Having thus disposed of his lands in Boston, and finding the bigotry and intolerance of his new neighbors averse to that freedom of spirit and liberty of conscience which he fled from England to enjoy, he thus addressed them in a speech which tradition has preserved and handed down to us: "I came from England because I did not like the Lord-Bishops, but I cannot join with you because I will not be under the Lord-Brethren." With this explanation of his motives, he again bade adieu to the abodes of civilization, and penetrated once more the gloomy forest, in search of an asylum; preferring the untutored rudeness of the savage to the civilized bigotry and intolerance of the *professed* Christian. The place he now selected, and which after forty years residence proved to be his last retreat, was in the present town of Cumberland, on the banks of the river

\* He sold the whole peninsula of Boston for £30—\$133,20. His "stock of coves" was two heifers and a bull, for which he paid £12—\$53,28, and had £18—\$70,92 left to start with for the "Far West." Imported cattle were costly at that time, but native stock soon became plentiful and cheaper.

that perpetuates his name, a few rods east of the *bridge* that joins the village of Lonsdale. Here he reared a cottage and called it "Study Hall." It stood six rods east of a knoll or hillock which appears to be of alluvial earth, and which rose abruptly from the meadow like a pyramid, on the very brink of the river, to the height of about seventy feet. On the top of this hill was an area of several rods of level surface, and from its being his favorite place of retirement and study, he called it "Study Hill." The Indian name of the place was *Wawepooseag*. This compound Indian term, is supposed to mean the place where birds are ensnared or taken, from *wawe*, the name of a species of goose, and *poonseag*, a term for nets and snares. The land about the hill is divided into three tables, elevated one above the other, which are evidently water formations. His cottage stood on the first, and his well was on the second table. His garden was on the north and north-east of his house, and his orchard was on the south. Here he planted the first trees, and raised the first apples in Rhode Island:—here he cultivated his garden and lived many years in entire seclusion from the world, with none to disturb his lonely retreat. He commenced living here one year before Roger Williams went to Providence; therefore, Cumberland may lay claim to having the first white settler in Rhode Island. Mr. Blackstone used frequently to go to Providence to preach the gospel, and to gratify his young hearers, gave them the first apples they ever saw. When he was old and unable to travel on foot, and not having any horse, he used to ride on a bull, which he had tamed and tutored to that use. Tradition says it was a *white* bull, though Blackstone himself probably bore no resemblance to the "*fair Europa*" in ancient Mythology, who was said to have been kidnapped by a similar animal. In the year 1830, three trees were standing on the site of his ancient orchard, and two of them bore apples, but they have now entirely disappeared—they were evidently very aged trees. There are now two trees standing near his ancient dwelling, one is rather an obso-

lete species of the *pyrus communis*, which measures thirteen feet in circumference, and bears pears this year ; and the other has been honored with the appellation of "Catholic Oak,"\* which, from their appearance, if there is any thing in the science of "*Tree-ology*," must have been cotemporary with Blackstone.

He differed in many of his opinions with his neighbor Roger Williams at the village of Providence, yet always lived on the most friendly terms with him as he did with all others. As he occasionally visited Providence by invitation to preach for his friend Williams, his approach was hailed with about as much *eclat* as a modern village church would welcome the arrival of an archbishop. True, he could not have dreamed of the magic road and necromantic spirit-wires that now run through his favorite hill ; but we can easily imagine the starting of his trains for Providence to preach improvement to his younger neighbors. He had no cars ; but with a home-made grass bag, filled with apples, for his valise—himself performing the part of engineer, brakeman, conductor and passenger, he would fearlessly step on board of his own *Bull-gine* whose bellowing whistle effectually "cleared the track ;" and his entire preponderance in the whole stock of the corporation, must have rendered all his tickets "free passes." Although wild beasts and Indians were his switch-tenders, yet he had no smash-ups or collisions with other men's principles, but was independent in the enjoyment of his own, and free to speak them too whenever an *unoffending* opportunity occurred ;—and his apples were not the "apples of discord," nor such as Eve had tampered with when she got *snaked* out of Eden, but were such as grew on the trees of amendment and reconciliation.

\* A few years since, Rev. J. C. Richmond held a religious meeting under this venerable tree and christened it in its old age by its present name ; and he has stood sponser for it ever since and has held many interesting and profitable religious meetings there, so that so far as utility is concerned, the aged Oak has actually been "born again" and deserved to be christened. We would not if we could, and could not if we would, diminish one iota of Mr. Richmond's paternity of this venerable "Catholic Oak"—it is fairly his thunder.

He and his locomotive presented the appearance of what a modern naturalist might call a Setiferous Sextopode !\*

But these appearances and practices were not intentional oddities—they grew out of his condition in the secluded life he had chosen to lead. He was of too lofty a mold of mind and too well stocked with mental culture to descend to anything for the mere sake of appearance ; and although he had surrounded his orchards and gardens with a sort of park and was “monarch of all he surveyed,” yet this was not to ape the nobility of England whose pride he despised, but was for his meditative walks in his hours of relaxation, in which he planned and studied the highest good of his race. While he was a religionist in the best sense of that term, the two prominent planks in his platform were religious and political TOLERATION, and that true generosity that constitutes NATURE’S NOBLEMEN. He did not, like too many of the puritan pilgrims, import with him that intolerance which he fled from England to avoid. And it is not a little remarkable that the very first place in which his name occurs in any known annals of this country, is in a tax-record by which he was taxed 12 shillings in 1628 for a military campaign to expel Thomas Morton† and a few associates because they chose to differ from their neighbors on a matter which lay solely between the individual and his God. Mr. Blackstone paid the tax as a quiet citizen, but paid it under a protest, keeping his own hands clean from the intolerance that demanded it. His words have not descended to us, but his whole life and conduct shows what they would be,

\* A bristly six-legged animal.

† Thomas Morton came over in 1622. He settled near Weymouth. After great trouble and losses from those of a different religion, he was banished out of the country, and had his property sequestered, but soon after returned. He died in York, Me., 1646. If it be pretended that *Morton had no religion*, we say, “judge not.” He professed to have.—*Drake’s Book of the Indians*.

Morton’s volume called “NEW CANAAN” has been very servicable to succeeding generations. It was published at Amsterdam in 1637. S. C. N.

could we now read them,—they would be like this: “Gentlemen, if your consciences say that you want twelve shillings of my money to bind or fetter another man’s conscience in religious or civil matters, take it, but do not involve my conscience in your foolish, unmanly and unchristian disputes.”

How Blackstone performed the labor of building his cottage at Boston or at Cumberland; how he took care of his “stock of coves,” (for he appears to have devoted much of his time to study,) whether he kept servants, or whether he performed all his labor with his own hands, the annals of the times have not revealed to us. Tradition, however, affords us some light upon this point. We may perhaps *run* upon the solution of this question through the word “*run*.” To this short word Dr. Webster has given us no less than ninety-eight definitions; and in the early settlements of America, it was very generally used to denote a small stream or brook. A little south of Blackstone’s homestead, and near the village of Valley Falls, there is a brook which empties into the Blackstone river, called “Abbott’s Run.” It has borne this name ever since the days of Blackstone; and the undisputed tradition in the families who have occupied this territory through the long intervening period is, that Blackstone had a faithful servant by the name of “Abbott,” who lived with him many years, and to whom, as a reward, he gave lands bounded upon this brook, which, like the beautiful river to which it is tributary, has transmitted his name, with the name of his friend and benefactor, to succeeding generations, and forms the staple to the unbroken chain of circumstantial evidence which proves beyond a reasonable doubt that Blackstone, though eccentric and independent in his nature, was not so misanthropic as to have lived entirely alone. Twenty-four years after he settled at Cumberland, he was married, as appears by the following extract from the Boston records: “Mr. William Blackstone, was married to Sarah Stephenson, widow, the 4th of July, 1659, by John Endicott, Governor.” This widow had a son John Stephenson, then fourteen years old, and he came with

his mother to Study Hall, and lived with Mr. Blackstone till both of his parents were dead. He was kind and dutiful to his mother and father-in-law during their declining years,—and on their death, the court of Plymouth, for his kindness and filial conduct, ordered a portion of Blackstone's land to be given to him as a reward; and on this portion he lived in solitude till his death, September 16, 1695. By this marriage, Mr. Blackstone had one child—John Blackstone—but the time of his birth is unknown, as the date on the Rehoboth records is illegible.

At the date of Blackstone's death, the limits of the present towns of Attleborough and Cumberland, united, contained but 160 inhabitants.

He was remarkable for his love of children; and although amply competent to teach the most intelligent among those bands of pilgrim brethren like "one having authority," yet he always manifested the docility of a little child; and was kind and benevolent in bread to the needy, and in rich counsel and instruction to all with whom he came in *unsought contact*. He did not shun man because he hated him, but chose seclusion because he loved solitude better than to mingle in the foolish dogmas and contentions of men, although abundantly able to cope with the wisest of them in learning or argument.

He took up these lands on the principle of squatter-ship, or because there were none to want them; and a few years before his death, when others began to settle around him, the court of Plymouth out of respect to his character and to his example in improvements and cultivation, sent him an invitation to stake out all the land he desired to call his own without regard to limit—he did so, and pointed off two hundred acres being all he desired, and the court confirmed it to him by an act of law. He was over 80 years old at the time of his death, but his precise age cannot now be ascertained, unless the forthcoming manuscript history of Gov. Bradford shall disclose it.

Blackstone had some annual trade with his Indian neighbors. He let them have fruit and other rarities from his gar-



dens and received what furs he needed for his own use, but beyond this there were no markets; and he sought no fortune beyond the annual supplies of his frugal wants. With his Indian neighbors he ever lived on the most friendly terms, and they held him and his books in mysterious veneration; and he was singularly happy in his death, as it occurred before the direful results of King Philip's treachery were known, so that the sun of his long and peculiar life went down in peace into this humble grave.

As a specimen of the language of a race of men with whom Blackstone had to deal, and with whom he spent a long life on the most amicable terms, we present a copy of the Lord's Prayer in the dialect of the Wampanoags—over whom the great Massasoit alias the "benign Osamequin" reigned for a half century of Blackstone's life, and never broke a treaty or forfeited his word; and happy would it have been for our colonial fore-fathers if the same could be said of Philip his son and treacherous successor. We select this specimen from the labors of Elliot, the great Indian Apostle.

Noo-shun kes-uk-qut, qut-tian-at-am-unch koo-we-su-onk, kuk-ket-as-soo-tam-oonk pey-au-moo-utch, kut-te-nan-tam-oo-onk ne nai, ne-ya-ne kesuk-qut kah oh-ke-it. As-sa-ma-i-in-ne-an ko-ko-ke-suk-o-da-e nut-as-esuk-ok-ke pe-tuk-qun-neg. Kah ah-quo-an-tam-a-i-in-ne-an num-match e-se ong-an-on-ash, ne-wutch-e ne-na-wun wonk nut-ah-quo-an-tam-au-o-un-non-og nish-noh pasuk noo-na-mon-tuk-quo-h-who-nan, kah ahque sag-kom-pagin-ne-an en qutch-e-het-tu-ong-a-nit, qut poh-qua-wus-sin-ne-an wutch match-i-tut.—*Elliot's Indian Bible, Luke XI, 2, 4.*

Blackstone's mind was one of eccentricity and boldness, and desirous of enjoying independence. His speech on leaving Boston, before quoted, gives us his character in bold relief. It does not show him to have been morose and misanthropic, but singular and independent. With Byron, he loved not man the less, but nature and nature's God, and the free enjoyment of his gifts, the more. He resided in New England about fifty years, during which he saw the colonists spreading the emblems of civilization in every part of what, when he first beheld it, was one unbroken wilderness. From an inventory

taken two days after his death, it appears that he had in his "Study Hall" one hundred and eighty-five volumes, from folios to "paper books"—a very respectable library for those times, and for a private gentleman in the wilds of America. He devoted much of his time to study and contemplation. It is hardly to be presumed that a man so devoted to study and retirement as Blackstone, and possessing a mind of that independent, original, and contemplative cast, could have suffered its energies to run to waste through the period of a long life, without having directed them to any specific object; and the "ten paper books" spoken of in the inventory, were most probably manuscript journals of his wanderings, and "golden opinions," purchased by "patient thought" on "Study Hill;" and had not the torch of the treacherous Pometacon's emissaries consigned his lucubrations to the flames, we might have known more of the life of this singular and worthy man, of whom there now remains but little more than sufficient to awaken and excite our curiosity. His character, so far as developed to us, is one of peculiar interest, and worthy of imitation. He was one of the few whose spirits are centuries in advance of the age in which they are sent, as though by mistake, to take up their abode on earth. Born at a period when religion formed the whole business, instead of the mere pastime of life, and finding the freedom of conscience so necessary to the enjoyment of that religion whose native air is liberty, trammelled by the shackles of ignorance and bigotry, he left the home of his fathers, the friends of his youth, and the scenes of his boyish sports, and sought an asylum on the stern and rock-bound shores of New England. Here he found, with the untutored savage, under the influence of the benign Osamequin, that right which the polished Christian had denied him—"freedom to worship God." And when this far off retreat was invaded by men stern and intolerant, and inheriting much of the bigotry of the mother country, "he uttered no complaint, he provoked no quarrels;" but quietly sold his lands, and again retired from the face of civilization, and again took up

his abode in the wilderness; and luckily for the peace of this pilgrim father of Boston and Cumberland, the tide of civilization, which excited the ire of the hitherto peaceable red man of the forest, had not quite reached him at the period of his death, which happened but a few weeks before his cottage was given to the flames, and his fair and cultivated domain rendered a scene of desolation. Were his spirit now permitted to revisit the scenes of his former exile, how great the change he would witness! Almost in vain would he search for the spot where he once inhabited. "Where stood his lonely cottage on the wild peninsula of Shawmut, (exclaims the eloquent Bliss) he would now behold, rising from out the wave,

'As from the stroke of the enchanted wand,'

and teeming with an active and intelligent population, the beautiful city of Boston. Where then he beheld the wigwam of the savage, he would now see the hall of legislation and the temple of learning. Where grew his young and thrifty orchard, where bloomed the rose in his garden, now arise mansions of elegance and grandeur,

'On swelling columns heaved,—the pride of art.'

And perhaps the very spot where he sheltered his cattle may be the site of the Tremont or of Faneuil Hall. The Bay, whose bosom felt nought but the light canoe of the Indian, he would now behold studded with the sail of every nation, and whitened with the canvas of a prosperous commerce. The shores where the young Indian gathered his shells, he would now see lined with wharves, laden with the product and luxuries of every clime."

Nor is *Wawepooseag* hardly less changed. Study Hill has been almost demolished by the railroad passing through it, and but little except the beautiful river that rolls at its base, remains of its original features. It is true that he might point out the site of his once beautiful orchard, and *nineteen* years ago might have pointed out, on the south side of the hill, the

stump of his favorite tree. He might *now* find, among the brakes and shrubs, the well he stoned, and from which he drank the element originally intended as the drink of man, filled up to within a foot of its top to prevent accidents to cattle:—he might point to the site of his lonely dwelling, and when he glanced at the spot where he ordered his ashes to be laid, might sigh over the ingratitude which had denied him a stone to record his name; but he would find little to gratify his taste for solitude and little that reminded him of his former solitary and peaceful abode. The forests have been leveled away, and even his favorite stream has within the last fifty years, changed its channel some rods nearer the hill. Smiling villages have sprung up at its side, and the howlings of the wild beast and the yell of the savage have given place to the hum of the Valley Falls and Lonsdale spindles.

\* His wife died in June, 1673, and he survived her about two years, he having died on the 26th of May, 1675, and was buried on the 28th—one hundred and eighty years ago the present year, 1855. Many of the ancient records mention the day of the burial, but not the day of the death of the persons. Snow, in his history of Boston, says Mr. Blackstone died on the 26th, which, if he was buried on the 28th, cannot be far from correct. He lies buried in classic ground, *two rods west* of the site of his cottage—where two rude stones mark his grave.

It is often the destiny of ministers and other good men to have foolish and profligate sons, and the son of Blackstone was an instance corroborating the truth of this remark; for it was a saying of Blackstone that Solomon was mistaken when he said we did not know whether our inheritance would descend upon a wise man or a fool, for he thought he did know. But little is known concerning his child—nor does that little interest us, other than as a son of Blackstone. He was

\* “Mrs. Sarah *Blakstone* the wife of Mr. William *Blarston* buried about the middle of June, 1673.”

“Mr. William *Blakston* buried the 28th of May, 1675.”—*Rehoboth Records*.

Here is certainly some variety in the orthography of names as they stand on the ancient town records, except the italicizing. S. C. N.

a minor when his father died, and had a guardian appointed, as appears by the Plymouth Colony records. At the termination of his minority, he assumed the management of his estate, and lived on his paternal inheritance till 1692, seventeen years after the death of his father, when having squandered his estate by his idle and profligate habits, he sold his lands to David Whipple, and soon after removed to Providence. Here he labored in the occupation of a shoemaker; and it is probable that here he married his wife Catharine, as no record of his marriage appears either on the Rehoboth or Attleborough records, as was the custom of those times. He continued to reside in Providence till 1713, when he returned to Attleborough, and, with his wife, was legally warned out of town. For what cause is not stated, but may be conjectured.\*

The *only deed* of Study Hill and Blackstone's "fair domain" ever given, is that given by his son to David Whipple and bears date in 1692. This deed is in the antiquarian collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society at Providence. From the above named grantee, the estate has descended by heirship to the present time, and has passed through the following hands: David Whipple was advanced in years when he bought the estate, but his age is not definitely known. From him it descended to his son Jeremiah Whipple, born 1655; married a person by the name of Shippy, and died in 1720, aged 65:—from him to his son Jeremiah Whipple, born 1684; married Deborah Bucklin, died 1760, aged 76:—from him to his son Jeremiah Whipple, born 1718, (wife Hannah Bowen,) and died January 18, 1800, aged 82. From the above named Jeremiah, it descended to his son Jeremiah Whipple, born April 7, 1749, (wife Nancy Dexter,) and died February 14, 1819, aged 70:—from him to his son Jeremiah Whipple, born 1802, (wife Sarah Smith,) and died 1852, aged 50; from him this "fair domain," as Blackstone called it, descended unim-

\* How transitory are all earthly things! Blackstone had left property and wise instruction to his son, yet in a few years the very town that contained the ashes of the venerated father, rejected the son as a pauper. Ye "fast youths" of the present day, learn wisdom from this ancient example. s. c. s.

paired to his only son Jeremiah Whipple, the present owner, now in his minority, and under the directions of a guardian.

They cultivate the grounds about the hill, and guard them with pious veneration for the original proprietor, around whose silent and peaceful resting-place there is a small area over which the plough-share has never been permitted to pass.

No personal description of Mr. Blackstone, to my knowledge, is in existence. I have been repeatedly asked questions relative to that matter, and there appears to be a prevailing inclination to suppose that he was a large robust man; but I know of nothing on which such an opinion can be well founded. There is sometimes to be met with, an idea that a man of large mental capacities and true nobleness of soul, must also be of large physical dimensions, such as Webster, Dr. Johnson, &c., but this is no safe stand-point to judge from. Many of the mental stars who have adorned the last three centuries, like Lord Bacon, were physically, small and feeble men; and even Lord John Russell, one of the luminaries of the present age, is so small, and having married a widow, that the language of Scripture is facetiously applied to him by calling him the "Widow's mite." What his personal appearance was, is to us of but little consequence. But enough of his **MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL STATURE** has descended to us, which together with the fact of his being the first settler of our colony and though then unperceived in his influence in giving a right tone and direction to the then incipient future, we say enough *has* reached us to entitle him to the gratitude of the present generation, and to justify this prosperous and rapidly advancing age in erecting a monument to perpetuate his memory. It has been said of the Greeks and Romans, that half of our learning is but their epitaph; and certainly the character and principles that are worthy of admiration are most easily transmitted from age to age through monumental and eulogistic channels.

Mr. Blackstone's family here has long been extinct; but his name will not be easily forgotten. It is identified with the river which flows past the site of his lonely dwelling, and is

destined to be engraved on the most durable records of his adopted country. Thousands and tens of thousands of the sons of liberty are now passing by railroad over this spot once dedicated to freedom and solitude; and already the winged travelers are beginning to enquire, "Where is Study Hill?" "Where is Blackstone's grave?" and may we not fondly hope it will not be long ere these questions will be eloquently answered from a granite column on the spot that now enshrines the ashes of William Blackstone.

"It is sweet  
 To linger here, among the flitting birds  
 And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks and winds  
 That shake the leaves, and scatter as they pass  
 A fragrance from the cedars thickly set  
 With pale blue berries. In these peaceful shades—  
 Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old—  
 My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,  
 Back to the earliest days of Liberty."

Such was the character and principles of the Rev. William Blackstone, and such were the times in which he lived. Let us change the picture, and glance at our own times, especially as this is our Nation's natal day. Let us take to ourselves for a moment, the swift wings of imagination, and make a flying excursion over this vast, powerful and expanding republic—now containing twenty-five millions of inhabitants and eight billions of dollars in wealth.\* Let us go over the seventeen thousand miles of her railroads, and waft our thoughts over her forty-eight thousand miles of telegraphic wires. Let us pass through the great lakes, which, within my brief memory, were but silent wastes of waters, but which are now ploughed by a thousand keels, bearing from shore to shore the products of agriculture, and the wealth of mechanical labor. Let us float down the mighty river, whose waters are gathered from a dozen States, each large enough for an empire, and bears to the coast the inland commerce of a territory, that reaches

\*Census of 1850—population, 23,263,488. Valuation, \$7,135,760,228.

through half the temperate zone. Let us survey, in our imaginative flight, the industrial wealth of the interior, and the commercial greatness of the Atlantic shores; the vessels which have no equals in speed and beauty of construction; the great ocean steamships, that bear to every sea the flag of a confederated union of States, known over all the world, and everywhere respected for the power in arts, arms and intelligence, of which that starry flag floats as the proud representative. Let us waft ourselves to the Western confines of the republic, and there behold the empire which has sprung up in glittering power and magical rapidity on the shores of the Pacific, standing there like a monument of enterprise on a pedestal of industry, facing the ancient seats of history and tradition, and ready to return that civilization which, springing from the oriental regions of old, has spanned the earth, and is preparing to revisit the place of its origin. A progress which, in the nations of antiquity and of the middle ages, was measured by centuries and years, is now computed by weeks and days. And there is a mission to be fulfilled, there is a high destiny to be accomplished, little dreamed of by those, who though only attracted by the temptations of gold, are unconsciously performing their part.

What is our country, that we have thus transiently glanced at? It may not be what we would desire it to be, as tried by the standard of our abstract ethical philosophy;—but the question returns, what is our country, and by what shall we compute it? There is sometimes a mode of showing what a thing is, by showing what it is not, and perhaps this mode will apply to our country. It is not the sunny *South*, with the uncouth music of her rustling cane, the mimic snow of her cotton, and the glowing robes of her resplendent rice fields. It is not the expanding *West*, whose millions of the sons of Freedom are alive with activity, joyous with prosperity, and reposing with high confidence upon her bosom. It is not the busy *East*, whose massive hammers, humming spindles, and flying shuttles are gloriously weaving the web of her destiny; and



whose flowing canvas is whitening the ocean, and wasting to the remote corners of the earth the emblems of her skill, genius and enterprise. Nor yet is it the frozen *North*, whose hardy sons, warmed by the stimulus of liberty, prosper and grow rich on timber, rocks and ice. It is not these. These, even in all their multiplied and aggregated capacities, are but the members, the brothers and sisters of a greater, higher, holier family—our country, our republic. All this is ours; of all this greatness and glory, of all this magnificent present and boundless future, a part is the possession and heritage of every **AMERICAN CITIZEN.**

Thus we have a summary of the two eras. A befitting motto for Blackstone's day might have been, *Stat nominis umbra*; while our own stands out in bold relief, **E PLURIBUS UNUM.** And such are some of the results of that freedom and independence, to which this venerable patriarch looked as with a prophet's eye, but unlike Simcon of old, saw only through mental vision; and while it was the destiny of his youthful associates, Sir Henry Vane, Algernon Sydney, and others of those regicidal days, to become martyrs to their dreams of liberty in the old world; it was his happier lot to bid adieu to the detested usurpations of his race, and spend a long and honorable life in this secluded, sylvan retreat. It was here that he devoted his hours of relaxation from agriculture, to classical study, pious contemplations, and to the sowing of those incipient seeds of political **FREEDOM** and religious **TOLERATION** which have germinated and are now flourishing throughout our land;—yes, here in these scholastic gardens of fruit and roses, now almost returned to a state of nature, were conceived the true germs of that **DEATHLESS TREE**, beneath whose shade so many millions now sit in security with none to dictate their free opinions, and under whose genial branches, we as a nation, have thus prospered.

To his memory we owe an accumulated debt of gratitude; and let us this day commence its discharge, by the formation of a Monument Association. Let us, like Samuel of old, set

up a Stone, a sort of politico-religious *Ebenezer*\* of our exalted religious and civil condition,—a stone which shall remind us and coming generations of men, that the Philistines of tyranny belong not with us,—a stone which shall transmit to future ages. the principles and resting-place of one of the noblest and earliest of our patriarchal fathers, in the very front of our obscure, colonial history,—the first white inhabitant of our NOW PROSPEROUS, FREE AND GALLANTLY “ANCHORED” STATE, pursuing her glorious and honorable destiny in confidence and “HOPE.”

\* See I Samuel VII—12. This word, in Hebrew, signifies a stone.

## SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS.

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After the foregoing Discourse, the next in the order of proceedings was singing. An excellent choir from the adjoining village of Lonsdale, made the air literary vibrate with the melodious inspiration of sacred and patriotic song.

### O D E .

ALTERED FROM ONE BY WM. J. PARODIE, FOR ANOTHER PURPOSE.

From dwellings by the stormy deep,  
From city's mart and forest side,  
From shadowy vales that softly sleep,  
By Narragansett's storied tide,—

Up to this 'TOMB, great God! we come,  
Blest with Thy rich and bounteous store,  
Beneath yon broad, majestic dome,  
Thy praise to sing, Thy grace adore!

For lo! where once the savage trod,  
And fiercely wild the war-whoop rung,  
Where darkly o'er the unfurrowed sod  
A wilderness its shadows flung,—

'Ten thousand peaceful homesteads rise  
O'er all this broad and fruitful land,  
And, pointing to the eternal skies,  
Thy pillared fanes serenely stand.

And yet a nobler boon is ours ;  
 Our father's sought in sore distress,  
 From lands where stern oppression lowers,  
 A refuge in a wilderness.

They came, they suffered and they died ;  
 Yet planted here a DEATHLESS TREE,  
 Beneath whose branches far and wide,  
 Resound the anthems of the free !

THEIRS was the stern but glorious task,  
 To raise its branches high in air ;  
 Yet Europe's millions vainly ask  
 Its fruit to taste, its shade to share :—

Be ours the mission, God of Love !  
 To cause its fragrant boughs to spread,  
 Till towering every land above,  
 On every heart its dew be shed.

And *here*, the FATHER of that band  
 Now rests—forgot to present fame !  
 His noble life, of *firmness bland*,  
 Deserves a STONE to speak his name.

Great God ! to Thee we humbly look,  
 For aid Divine from yonder skies,  
 While here beneath this aged Oak\*  
 We pledge, A MONUMENT SHALL RISE.

\* The old "Catholic Oak," dedicated to *universal Toleration* by Rev. James C. Richmond, of the Episcopal Church. See note to page 13.

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After the singing there was a general call for Rev. J. C. Richmond, of the Episcopal Church, who took the stand and made one of *his* speeches. We think it out of the power of phonography and the limner's art combined, to describe his speech, or its electric effect upon the audience, and shall not

attempt even an analysis of it. He commented with nicety of perception on the facts which had been developed, and turned everything to the best possible account. He was patriotic—grave—humorous—solemn—facetious, and in all, eminently eloquent; and his speech was *audibly* and *visibly* appreciated by the entire audience—he added greatly to the interest of the occasion.



The next business was the formation of an Association. This was resolved upon, and a code of very simple regulations, after some discussion, were adopted as follows:

### BLACKSTONE MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.

#### CONSTITUTION.

THIS ASSOCIATION WAS ORIGINATED AND FORMED AT THE GRAVE OF REV. WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, ON JULY 4, A. D. 1855.

The OBJECT of this Association is to enclose and beautify the spot which contains the ashes of Blackstone; and to erect a respectable Stone which shall serve to coming generations as a memento of the life, character and final resting place of the illustrious first white inhabitant of Boston and Rhode Island.

The regulations of this Association, are designed to be extremely plain and simple; and are as follows:

All persons, without distinction of age, sex, sect or color, who leave their names and TEN CENTS with the Treasurer, are members of the Association.

#### OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES.

A PRESIDENT, whose duty it shall be to call, by public notice, any and all general meetings of the Association when needed, and to preside at the same; and to call special meetings at the request of any ten members.

A TREASURER, whose duty it shall be to receive all funds intended for the foregoing object, and also the names of all contributors with the amounts of each, and keep due record of the same; and pay such drafts only as are drawn by order of the Directors.

A SECRETARY, whose duty it shall be to make and keep records of all general meetings; and also such records as the Board of Directors may need.

The President, Treasurer and Secretary, together with two other members of the Association shall constitute a Board of Directors; whose duty it shall be to adopt such means as shall appear to them best calculated to secure, in honorable ways, the ultimate object of the Association; but any *definite instructions* adopted by the members at any regular general meeting, must be regarded as paramount law by the Directors.

The officers shall hold their offices six months unless circumstances absolutely requires successors; and *may hold them indefinitely* until the Association manifests a desire for a change; and a majority shall decide all questions properly before the Association or before the Board of Directors—the President, whether in general meeting or Board of Directors, having a casting vote but no other vote; and the Board may make provision to fill vacancies.

When the object of this Association shall have been completed, it shall be the duty of the Directors to cause a brief history of its existence to be compiled, with the names of all its officers and members appended; and deposit the same in the archives of the Rhode Island Historical Society; and to do such other acts relative to the same as they may think best.

A D D E N D A .

This Association may be thrown into existence by a vote of the audience *en masse*, without regard to actual membership, and its first officers also, may thus be chosen as matter of convenience; and after that, to be guided by the foregoing code of regulations. [The foregoing regulations were adopted in accordance with this "addenda."]

Officers of Blackstone Monument Association, chosen at a mass meeting holden at the grave of the venerable Blackstone, on July 4th, A. D. 1855;—Rev. David Benedict having acted as Chairman of said meeting, and James H. Chase as Secretary.

PRESIDENT, REV. DAVID BENEDICT, D. D., of Pawtucket, R. I.  
TREASURER, HON. BENJ. FESSENDEN, of Valley Falls, R. I.  
SECRETARY, S. C. NEWMAN, ESQ., of Pawtucket, R. I.

A S S O C I A T E   D I R E C T O R S ,

HON. JOHNSON GARDNER, OF PAWTUCKET, MASS.  
REV. JAMES C. RICHMOND, OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

DAVID BENEDICT, *Chairman.*

A true copy—Attest,

JAMES H. CHASE, *Secretary.*

When the association had been thus born, there was manifested an eagerness to become actual members by subscribing their names and paying the ten cents. At this point an old octogenarian manifested a wish to be heard—it was granted. He wished that Mr. Newman, of Pawtucket, be permitted and invited to record his name first on the list of actual membership. It was so done—when Rev. Mr. Richmond seized the bright dime in his fingers, and holding it high in air, exclaimed: “In this little coin behold in glistening embryo, the future monument—a granite volume with marble illustrations, which shall be read by distant coming generations of men with respect and admiration of their fore-fathers who met here this day to perpetuate the character and memory of Blackstone.”

The signatures and dimes of nearly the whole company followed; after which, agreeably to request, the Secretary accompanied a portion of the audience over the grounds once owned by Blackstone, and pointed out his grave—his well—the site of his ancient dwelling—his orchards and gardens, and various other matters relative to the location, which just at that time had excited a very deep interest; and some verbal explanations on the spot, showing the judgment and taste exercised by Blackstone in his selections of location in that wilderness age, seemed to place the whole in a new light to such as had transiently seen it but never studied it.

The seed of the monument has been sown, and began rapidly to germinate. Already its roots are feeling their way into the soils of PATRIOTISM—TOLERATION AND GENEROSITY; and too well developed and too confident of success to be pulled up by the vandal spirit of selfishness, or withered by the blighting rays of the sun of sectarianism.

Many hundreds of names are enrolled as its members; and it is intended that an agent of the association shall call on the inhabitants of our State for members and dimes, that it may be emphatically the WORK OF THE PEOPLE.

The accompanying engraving, while it represents something of the locality—the Lonsdale bridge—the river—Whipple’s

house in the distance, &c., is not intended as a fac-simile of the future monument. It is estimated that one thousand dollars will rear a respectable granite column with suitable inscriptions; and that five hundred dollars will prepare the ground and enclose it in an iron fence with a walk or path from the road, thus costing fifteen hundred dollars and requiring fifteen thousand members at a dime each. The constitution, while it confines membership to ten cents, does not reject *donations of more*, nor prohibit the adoption of any other means provided they be "honorable ways" for its completion; and in regard to the precise style or cost of the monument, the directors, exercising a sound discretion, will be guided by future circumstances. But it is now regarded as highly probable that circumstances will warrant a contract in due season to lay its corner stone on the 4th of July, 1856. And if so, one of the greatest gatherings known to the New England States, will probably then occur.

And now a word for the secretary, *per se*. This little production has a singular paternity. He does not claim it to be strictly, either an original, a selection or a compilation, but perhaps its *compound* is an original!

It has been produced on the spur of the moment, from such material as happened to be at hand, while much of its matter has been hastily drawn from general recollection in earlier investigations. To Bliss, of Rehoboth, Daggett, of Attleborough, Gov. Hopkins, of Rhode Island, and that inveterate antiquarian S. G. Drake, of Boston, he has appealed for dates and items, without stopping to credit them in detail, in throwing all the facts attainable, into this new form; and if this mode should attract the attention of antiquarian scholars, they will, he trusts, see at once the propriety of the course he was, under the circumstances, obliged to adopt. He thinks he hears all the people say—"LET THE MONUMENT BE MADE."



## MISCELLANEOUS ADDENDA.

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### AN ACROSTIC.\*

“ I came from England because I did not like the Lord-Bishops, but I cannot join with you because *I will not* be under the Lord-Brethren.”

*Blackstone on leaving Sharnut for Wawepooseag.*

When England's BISHOPS raised Oppression's rod,  
I could not bow, and disobey my God ;  
Little would life, in bondage, be to me,—  
Let me alone, said I, or let me flee :—  
I left them all, to worship as I pleased—  
And here a lodge in solitude I seized.

More sore surprised am I, so soon to find  
BRETHREN too, whom I had left behind,  
Leave for that same “ Freedom to worship God”  
Arrive, and bring *their* dictatorial nod !  
Xerxes himself, with all his *pagan* power  
To crush his race, would flee in such an hour.

O let me flee this dire, *intolerant* gall—  
Not only leave, but rear a FREEMAN'S HALL.

\* In this acrostical version of Blackstone's sentiments, I have used the true orthography of his name as found on the earliest records. I have seen the original deed of the estate which his son gave to David Whipple on September 10, 1692, and the signature is John *Blanton*. There can be no doubt about the original way he spelled his name, although it has long since been modernized into Blackstone ; and I hope that whoever may have the designing or epitaphing of the monument, will not over-look this fact.    s. c. n.

## BLACKSTONE'S ESTATE.

“Inventory of the lands, goods and chattels of Mr. William Blackstone, taken May 28, 1675, the day of his funeral, by Stephen Paine, Commissioner of Rehoboth.

### REAL ESTATE NOT PRIZED.

\* Sixty acres of land and two shares in meadows in Providence.

The west plain, the south neck, and land about the house and orchard, amounting to two hundred acres, and the meadow called Blackstone's meadow.

### LIBRARY.

	£	s.	d.
3 Bibles, and 6 English books, in folio, . . . . .	2	10	0
3 Latin books in folio, and 3 do. large quarto, . . . . .	2	15	0
30 Small quartos, . . . . .	2	11	6
55 Large and small octavos, . . . . .	5	5	0
22 Duodecimos, . . . . .	1	13	0
53 Small do. of little value, [probably much worn,]	0	13	0
10 Paper books, † . . . . .	0	5	0
	15	12	6
Remainder Personal, . . . . .	40	11	0
	56	3	6
Total personal, . . . . .			

\* This sixty acres and two shares was within the then limits of Providence, and was bought of Robert Williams, and bounded near “the second wading-place above Patucket.” It was within the Rhode Island Colony and is recorded in the “Miscellaneous records” in the city clerk's office at Providence. It had nothing to do with what the Plymouth Court confirmed to Blackstone, so that he left in all about two hundred and sixty acres.

† These “paper books,” could they have been saved from the flames of King Phillip's war, would have been worth more to us than the whole library besides. See page 18.

## EXTRACTS FROM EARLY RECORDS.

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“ June 1st, 1675. Lieut. Hunt, Ensign Smith and Mr. Daniel Smith are appointed and authorized by the Court to take some present care of the estate of Mr. William Blackstone, deceased, and of his son now left by him ; and to see that at the next Court he do propose a man to the Court to be his guardian ; which in case he do neglect, the Court will then see cause to make choice of one for him.”—*Old Col. Records.*

October 27th, 1675. Mr. Nathaniel Paine and Mr. Daniel Smith are appointed and approved by the Court, to be guardians unto John Blackstone, the son of Mr. William Blackstone, deceased.”—*Ibid.*

June 10th, 1675. “ Whereas the Court is informed that one whose name is John Stephenson, son-in-law to Mr. William Blackstone, late deceased, was very helpful to his father and mother in their life-time, without whom they could not have subsisted as to a good help and instrument thereof, and he is now left in a low and mean condition, and never was in any measure recompensed for his good service aforesaid, and if, (as it is said at least) his father-in-law engaged to his mother at his marriage with her, that he should be considered with a competency of land out of the said Blackstone's land then lived on, which hath never yet been performed ; and forasmuch as the personal estate of the said William Blackstone is so small and inconsiderable, that he the said Stephenson cannot be relieved out of it ; this Court, therefore, in consideration of the premises, do order and dispose fifty acres of land unto the said John Stephenson, out of the lands of the said William Blackstone, and five acres of meadow, to be laid out unto him by Ensign Henry Smith, and Mr. Daniel Smith and Mr. Nathaniel Paine, according as they shall think meet, so as it may be

most commodious to him or as little prejudicial to the seat\* of Mr. William Blackstone as may be. By order of the Court for the Jurisdiction of New Plymouth.”—*Old Col. Records.*

The bounds of the foregoing grant to Stephenson are recorded in the records of the Rehoboth North Purchase, Book 1st. p. 47. Extracts are made for the gratification of those who may wish to know the situation of his lands.

“*Imp.* Fifty acres of upland lying upon Patucket river, most of it upon the South Neck, being part of that land that was left for Mr. William Blackstone and granted by the Court to John Stephenson: bounded to the eastward the land of John Fitch and the Common; westerly, Patucket river, and southerly; to the northward, the land of John Blackstone; it being 106 rods long.”

The five acre lot of meadow mentioned in the grant is also recorded as laid out by the Commissioners.

1st. Two acres of meadow adjoining to the lands lying in two pieces; one piece within the former tract of land, and the other by the river side upon the southernmost end of it.

2d. “Three acres of fresh meadow lying at the northeast corner of the meadow commonly known by the name of Blackstone’s Great Meadow, † from a white oak tree marked, and so through the breadth of the meadow to the Run, the Run bounding it to the northards; westward, the meadow of John Blackstone: eastward, the swamp; southward, the upland.”

There is another tract which he probably purchased. “Fifty acres of upland, more or less, bounded east the land of Ensign Nich. Peck and Rob. Miller; north, the land of Sam. Carpenter; west, a highway four rods wide (between John Blackstone’s land and this lot) and a little piece of common land; south, coming near John Fitch’s ‡ grave, to the Common.

\* Most of the dwellings of the early settlers were necessarily simple log thatched houses, and probably Blackstone’s dwelling in his earlier sojourn was of this kind; but the term “seat” in the official record would seem to indicate that he had made improvement in building as well as cultivation.

† Often called in the Records the “Parson’s Meadow.”

‡ John Fitch was a volunteer at “Pierce’s fight” in the spring of 1676, captured by the Indians and tortured at “Nine mens’ misery” at “Camp Swamp” near Blackstone’s homestead.

There is to be taken out of this lot a highway 2 rods wide next to Sam. Carpenter's land to meet with the highway at the east end of said Carpenter's lot.

Likewise 10 acres of land, allowed to John Stephenson by the king's jury, for land for highways, taken out of his land, lying on the southerly side of Abbott's Run, &c.

Another record of land commences thus: "Likewise two acres of land that I took up adjoining to my own land, at the southerly end of it, which I had in exchange with my brother John Blackstone," &c.

To gratify the curious, the boundaries of John Blackstone's lands are added, by which the precise location of his father's estate may be ascertained by the following, as taken from the Rehoboth North Purchase Records, book 1, page 153.

*Imp.* A hundred and fifty acres of upland, swamp, and meadow ground, more or less, containing the West Plain (commonly so called) and land adjacent; bounded, to the northward, the land of Isaac Allen; to the southward, the land of John Stephenson; to the westward, Patucket; to the eastward, the land of John Stephenson, the highway, and the undivided land; there running through it a country highway to Patucket\* river, four rods wide.

*Likewise* a parcel of fresh meadow commonly known by the name of Blackstone's Meadow, being eight acres, bounded to the eastward, the meadow of John Stephenson, &c.

*Likewise* twenty acres (laid out to John Blackstone, granted to him by the king's jury for a way taken through his farm to *Pattucket* River,) running 76 rods N. W. and by W. and 42 rods S. W. and by S. bounded round by the undivided land; this tract lying near the new road to Dedham.

*Likewise* two acres which he had upon exchange with his brother John Stephenson, adjoining to his own farm, on the westerly side of the country highway, next the house; bounded easterly by the highway, westerly his own farm, and southerly by a small run of water; and in consideration of it John Stephenson had two acres of what John Blackstone was to have allowed by the king's jury, for the highway through his land to Providence.

\* This word *Patucket* was applied by the Indians to several places where there were falls of water. *Patuxet* was the Indian name of Plymouth.

## FINAL NOTE—IDENTITY OF GRAVE, &c.

Where is his wife's grave? the records say she was "buried *about* the middle of June." Why this uncertainty about the day? differing from all the others in the Rehoboth "burial book?" I think there are other reasons beside this, to suppose she was carried to Boston and buried with *her* friends—the custom of the times would warrant it.

There was one Alexander, who was drowned in the river near the date of Blackstone's death, who was buried near Mr. Blackstone, but the grave has not been preserved. With regard to the *identity* of Blackstone's grave, we here offer a remark. "*He who does not abide by the records is no antiquary.*" This is a very good general rule; but has, or ought to have, its exceptions. In a very brief account of Blackstone, in the *Mass. Hist. Collections*, it is stated that "He lies buried *on* Study Hill, where *it is said* a flat stone marks his grave." A part of this is *known to be error*, and the whole *may* be. No grave was ever known to be *on* the hill; and any one who has studied the earlier condition of the hill would pronounce it a piece of *difficult foolishness* to have put one there. The hill was originally steep and difficult of ascent, except by artificial steps made of the soil. The whole was covered with trees, except a small area on the top, which he had prepared as an *arboreal study* for summer convenience; and it would have been a much greater piece of *oddity* than ever Blackstone was chargeable with, to have buried him on that hill. From the words, "*it is said* a flat stone marks his grave," it is evident that the writer [Davis] in the *Hist. Coll.* never saw the spot, and writing at a distance, if he had said "buried *at* Study Hill" instead of *on* it, he would have been sufficiently correct, which he no doubt intended to be. See *Mass. Hist. Coll. X. 170-3, 2d series.* The late Judge Dexter, of Cumberland, who lived near the spot, once stated that within his recollection, the stoning of the cellar to Blackstone's house was clearly visible; and that the generations of the Whipple family who have owned it ever since their progenitor David Whipple, (who had a high regard for the Patriarch) bought it in 1692, had ever scrupulously guarded the grave by never letting a ploughshare pass over it, although they always cultivated all around it; and such is its condition at the present time:—it has been regarded by its owners in each successive generation as the *known* and *cherished* spot of Blackstone's repose.

If there ever was any truth in the statement about a "flat stone" to his grave, it was probably a parallelogram of slate, horizontally laid, as was the custom at the old Seekonk burial ground in the 17th century, still to be seen in dilapidated conditions. The action of the atmosphere destroys the compound of this shaley stone so that it falls to pieces, while the quartz stones at the head and foot of the grave still remain entire, with the exception of small pieces knocked off for mementos by occasional visitors. When the spot is officially excavated for the foundation of the monument, the remains of this "flat stone," if any was ever there, can be easily detected. There is no more rational doubt about the *identity* of Blackstone's grave, than there is of Washington's at Mount Vernon.

It could never have occurred to him, who, to avoid the notice of men, sought the shades of solitude, that future ages would take so deep an interest in him that he should be an object of minute research to the antiquarian; and that every circumstance connected with his life, which could be rescued from the shades of oblivion, should be sought out with so much avidity! Why is it so? it is because those principles of CIVIL and RELIGIOUS TOLERATION—those eternal gems of innate freedom, which, amid all the bigotry and oppression of two centuries ago, he PROFESSED and PRACTICED, are now standing out in bold relief, and are but the common sense of the present age.

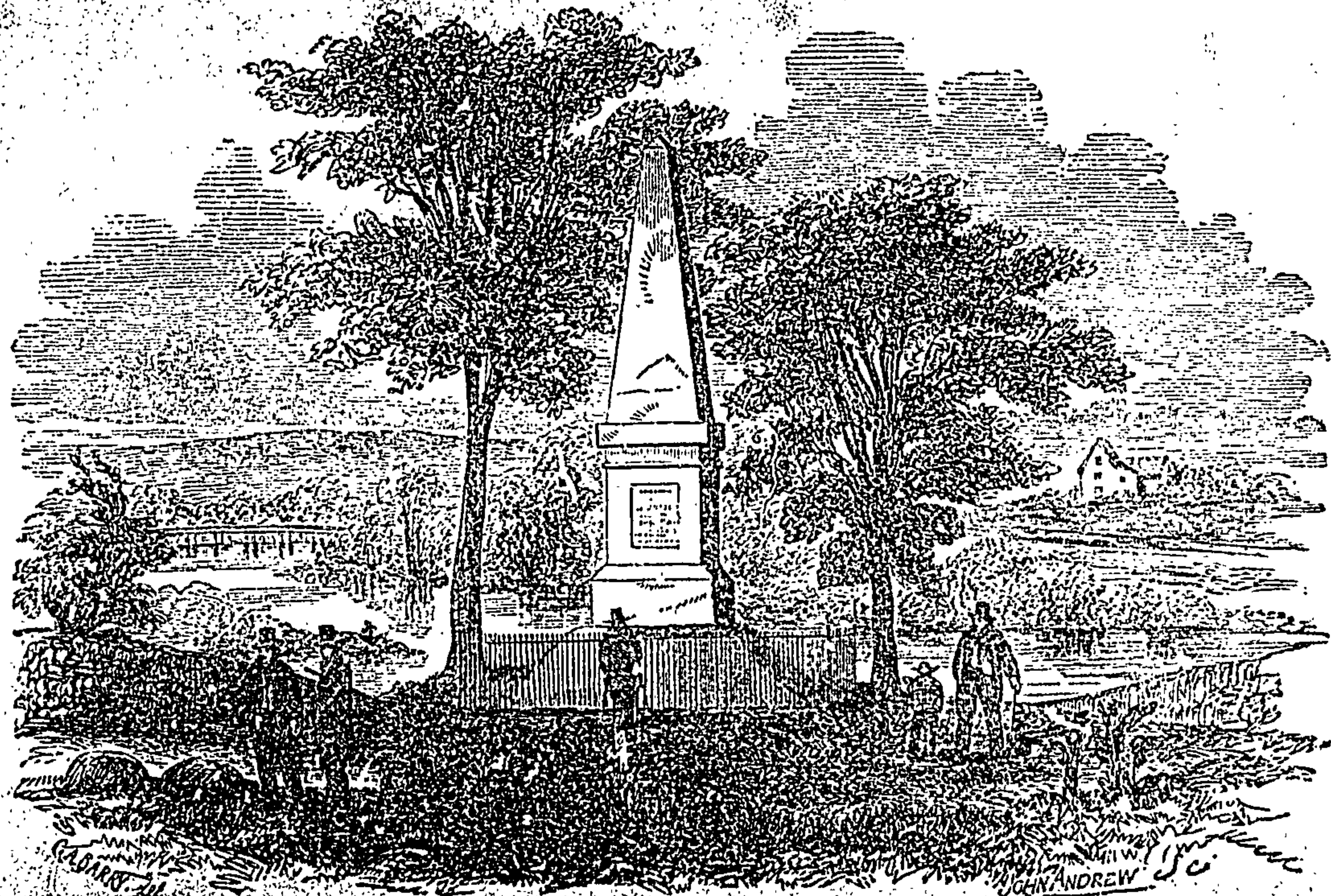
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ERRATUM.—In note to page 23, read, Census of 1850.

[In connection with the allusion to Solomon, on page 20, see *Ecclesiastes* II—18, 19. Blackstone's son practiced but very little of the industry, prudence and other virtues of his father, and Blackstone foresaw it.]

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"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE HAD IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE."



BLACKSTONE MONUMENT AT STUDY HILL.