INFORMATION TO USERS

This dissertation was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again – beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

University Microfilms
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
A Xerox Education Company

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
MASTERS THESIS

COOPER, Wendy Ann
THE FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS OF JOHN BROWN, MERCHANT OF PROVIDENCE, 1736-1803.

University of Delaware, M.A., 1971
History, modern

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

© 1972
WENDY ANN COOPER
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THIS DISSERTATION HAS BEEN MICROFILMED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
The Furniture and Furnishings of John Brown, Merchant of Providence, 1736-1803.

by

Wendy Ann Cooper

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture.

June 1971
PLEASE NOTE:

Some pages may have
indistinct print.
Filmed as received.

University Microfilms, A Xerox Education Company
Approved: 

Professor in charge of thesis
on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: 

Coordinator, The Winterthur Program
in Early American Culture

Approved: 

Dean of the School of Graduate Studies
Acknowledgments

A thesis is not a singular effort. This study has been made possible only through the interest and assistance of many individuals and institutions to whom I owe much gratitude.

My deepest thanks go to the many Brown descendants who have carefully preserved the belongings of their ancestors, for without the objects that exist today this study would have been insignificant. I wish to especially thank Norman Herreshoff whose knowledge, resourceful suggestions and cooperation were immeasurable. Without his patience and photographic skill, the group of objects in this study would not have been visually recorded. The kind assistance of Mrs. John F. Brown was also invaluable, and greatly appreciated.

The Brown Manuscript Collections in two libraries supplied much of the documentation for this study. The Rhode Island Historical Society Library is rich in personal correspondence, and recent gifts from descendants have greatly enriched the material I read and utilized. The cooperation and assistance of the staff of The Society and especially Albert T. Klyberg, Director, were invaluable. The Brown Papers in The John Carter Brown Library, Brown University, compliment The Society's collection and are strong in early business records and accounts. Through the kindness of Thomas Adams, these papers were made available to me, and the assistance of the staff made my search for pertinent material more pleasurable and less tedious.

iii
I am further indebted to the librarians and other staff members of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum for their constant understanding and cooperation. Many thanks to Mrs. George Bullen for her patience and tireless understanding in typing my thesis.

A special note of gratitude I give to John T. Kirk for his enthusiasm and teaching that first introduced me to the study of American decorative arts, and the initial suggestion and encouragement of this study.

Finally, my deepest appreciation goes to Benno M. Forman, who with devotion and persistence, objectively read rough draft after rough draft of this paper, and offered valuable criticisms and suggestions.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. John Brown: His Family and Circle</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Accounts and Recorded Purchases of Furniture</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. The Furniture of John Brown</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Accounts and Recorded Purchases of Furnishings</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. The Furnishings of John Brown</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Assistance From James Brown and John Francis</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. The Social Peers of John Brown</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>VIII. Conclusion</th>
<th>157</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix I.</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix II.</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix III.</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### List of Illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frontispiece, Brass Doorknocker; England</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Side Chair, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Side Chair, Philadelphia</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Side Chair, Philadelphia</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Side Chair, Rhode Island</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Side Chair, Rhode Island</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Side Chair, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Arm Chair, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Arm Chair, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Corner Chair, Newport</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Corner Chair, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Lolling Chair, New England</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Chair, Braceback Windsor, New York</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Label of Thomas and William Ash</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Chair, Comb-back Windsor, Philadelphia</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Brand of &quot;I. Letchworth&quot;</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Commode Stool, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Stand or Stool, probably Chinese</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Sofa, Newport</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Daybed, probably Rhode Island</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Cane Couch, probably China</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Side Table, Rhode Island</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Side Table, Rhode Island</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Card Table, Newport</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Table, Rhode Island</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Pembroke Table, Philadelphia</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Pembroke Table, Rhode Island</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Pembroke Table, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Stand, probably Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Stand, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Stand, or Tea Table, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Table, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Stand, probably Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Fire Screen, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Detail of Fire Screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>High Chest of Drawers, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Chest of Drawers, probably Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Chest of Drawers, possibly Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Desk on Stand, probably China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Chest of Drawers, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Chest-on-chest, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Chest-on-chest, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Desk and Bookcase, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Sideboard, probably Providence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Knife Box, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>Pianoforte, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Bed, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Bed, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Sconce Glass, English or Continental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>Looking-Glass, England, sold by John Elliott, Sr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>John Elliott label on looking-glass in Figure 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>Looking-Glass, possibly French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Looking-Glass and Painting, possibly French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>Dressing Glass, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>Cruet, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>Plate Warmer, probably English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>Birmingham Trade Catalog, Doorknocker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>Curry Set, Chinese Export Porcelain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Plaque of Washington, possibly French .... 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Marble Bust, Apollo, probably French ...... 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Carved Bust of Milton, American .......... 116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Carved Squirrel, American ................. 116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Wallpaper, 1780-1788, French .............. 117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Wallpaper, 1780-1788, French .............. 117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of the area around John Brown's mansion 143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The mercantile society of eighteenth century America was unquestionably multifaceted. Various patterns of trade, merchandise and economics created an intricate and complex system. Economic historians have produced numerous valuable business histories. Only in more recent years have cultural historians traced the social ventures of these men in an attempt to examine their individual tastes and buying practices through personal possessions and purchases. This approach creates a more complete picture of the business associations, the social circles, and the tastes and styles outside of their home ports that influenced the personal needs and desires of these men and their families.

The following study will attempt to make just such a statement through the examination of the furniture and furnishings owned by a Providence, Rhode Island, merchant, John Brown. Hopefully, it will provide new and more detailed information about the regional and social interrelationships of merchants in the second half of the eighteenth century.

John Brown (1736-1803), was the third of four sons born to James Brown, merchant of Providence. John's great-great-grandfather, Chad Brown, had come to Rhode Island in 1638 and in 1642 he became the first settled Pastor of the Baptist Church. John Brown's father and his father's younger brother, Obadiah, began the family's long career in mercantilism. James Brown died in 1739, and Obadiah Brown was largely responsible for raising his brother's four sons
and introducing them to the family business. In the early years of John Brown's career the firm was known as Obadiah Brown and Company. In 1762 upon the death of Obadiah Brown, leadership of the firm passed to Nicholas, the eldest of the four brothers, and after 1763 the business was known as Nicholas Brown and Company.

The Brown brothers' trading ventures were varied. The routes their ships sailed went both coast-wise to the West Indies, and across the ocean to Europe and Africa. John remained in business with his brothers until 1771 when he broke from the partnership and pursued both old and new business ventures on his own. In 1786 he formed a partnership with John Francis of Philadelphia. Francis was the son of the Philadelphia merchant Tench Francis, who had traded with the Browns in earlier decades. By 1788 John Francis further strengthened this business relationship when he married Abigail, John Brown's eldest daughter. Unfortunately this partnership ended in 1796 with the death of John Francis at the early age of thirty-three.

The business and trade relationships of the Browns were extensive. A fine economic and business history has been set forth by Professor James Hedges in two volumes. In addition to commercial enterprises, the four Brown brothers were involved in several other enterprises in Rhode Island. Among these businesses were a gin distillery, a furnace that manufactured pig iron, and a spermaceti candle manufactory. John Brown also attempted to establish a glasshouse in Providence in 1795-1796, but this venture was not successful.

John Brown's shrewd business sense and aggressive speculative nature drew him into many fields. He was actively engaged in bridge-building, canal-planning, and turnpike and land speculation. His sense of both personal
gain and civic responsibility prompted his leadership in the fields of education, politics, and religion. Along with his brothers, he was responsible for the removal of the College of Rhode Island (now called Brown University) from Warren to Providence. For twenty years he served as Treasurer of this institution, and was its constant benefactor. He was elected to Congress in 1784 and again in 1785; but he failed to put in an appearance at either session. He did serve one term in Congress from 1799 to 1800. Financially he was quite able to support all of his enterprises but his support was not simply of a financial nature. He was a man actively and physically involved in all he pursued. Such activity was demonstrated in 1801 when he wrote:

I should have liked to have gone in the Boat to meet you could I have Left the Various workmen in the Various Branches Vis the Distillery, the Repairs of the Ship Hope[,] the Removing the Hill North East of India Bridge and also up the Hill in Front of my House ware we live[, ] Completing the Fence and Paving in Front of the Same West of my said House, all these attentions together with a new wharf at India Point has kep me in my sulkey from the Brake of Day till nite Excepting only an Hour at Breakfast and an Hour at Dinner for this 2 or 3 mos. 3

The following chapters will introduce John Brown's family and social circle. Their life in Providence, and the places they frequented and visited will be surveyed. The significance of business, social, and family ties with the leading aristocracy of late eighteenth century Philadelphia will be discussed. The travels and observations of John's only son, James, will be examined for their affect on John Brown's taste. The houses John Brown built, those he talked of building; the farms he owned and used as country seats and retreats for social entertaining; his speculative
land holdings -- all these will be cited. Altogether the above considerations shall show what influenced the taste and style preferences, and thus the purchases, of "the richest merchant in Providence." 4

This study is based primarily on the large body of household furnishings owned by John Brown that have descended through the offspring of his eldest daughter, Sarah Brown Herreshoff. These objects, including both furniture and furnishings -- silver, ceramics, paintings, prints, miniatures, textiles, sculpture, books, vehicles and accessories -- will be examined with regard to their style, regional origin, and quality of workmanship and materials. Contemporary information in regard to specific purchases, preferences, and requests have been gleaned from personal family correspondence, diaries, and memorandum books. Some ledgers, journals, daybooks and shipping invoices of Nicholas Brown and Company have also supplied valuable supporting evidence of purchases.

Unfortunately most of John Brown's business records and accounts were lost in a fire at his distillery in the latter years of his career. 5

Before a final summary is made with regard to the possessions of John Brown, the inventories of several of John Brown's Providence peers will be consulted in the hope of establishing a standard of comparison.

In conclusion, the question will be answered whether John Brown's purchases made him a style-setter and tastemaker among his peers, or whether by virtue of his great wealth he simply created a standard of values and attainment in his own elite circle.
Notes on Introduction


Chapter I

John Brown: His Family and Circle

...the brick House 40 by 36 feet with the Lot, wharf, Stores & adjoining northerly of Tho. Halsey's House in which he lives. This is my mansion House & Estate which I built in the year 1760 and moved into it with my wife and family the day after marriage and remained living in it till June 1788 when we moved on to the Hill.... $7000.1

In 1802 John Brown still owned this large brick house on Water Street, six lots south of the Market House and just south of the two lots occupied by his brothers Joseph and Nicholas.2 Forty-two years earlier John Brown and Sarah Smith had been married in Providence. The wedding was attended by approximately one hundred and forty-five guests. Distinguished gentlemen and their families who had attended included Stephen Hopkins, Nicholas Cook, Esek Hopkins, Nicholas Tillinghast, Jabez Bowen, and Abram Whipple -- all leading citizens of the town.

John Brown's bride was a Quaker, and little more is known of her than the following insight given by Thomas Willing Francis during a visit with the Browns in 1786:

My Reception here equalled my most distant Expectation & their Treatment since my Arrival has been very affectionate.... Mrs. Brown is really one of the good People of this World & tho' she has not had the advantage of a Liberal Education & unfortunately for her Children has it not in her power to offer them any assistance [,] yet she strives to make every one satisfied with their situation & seems desirous her
Children should acquire every branch of Literature necessary to adorn their Characters....She is a Quaker.... dresses plain, yet the false prejudices people of that sect have universally to the rest of mankind, she entirely discards as you must see by the Idea I have given you of her.3

The Browns spent the first twenty-eight years of their married life in the brick house on Water Street, where they reared four children.

James, born Sept. 22, 1761 died unmarried Dec. 12, 1834.

Abigail (Abby), born Nov. 20, 1766, married John Francis of Philadelphia Jan. 1, 1788, died Mar. 5, 1821.

Sarah (Salley), born Sept. 5, 1773, married Carl Frederick Herreshoff, July 2, 1801, died Aug. 2, 1846.

Alice, born Jan. 1, 1777, married James Brown Mason, died Oct. 23, 1823.4

The house became a lodging for French officers in 1782. John Brown wrote to his son James at that time that our House, wharf, stable and Lott is Jock full of French men, Horses, Waggins & &.... Every Gentleman in town takes the same officers as they did on their March westward last summer. They first told us it would be only 3 or 4 days....5

The formal education and moral upbringing of his children was a great concern to John Brown. He was a philosophical, religious, and reprimanding father. Letters he wrote to his son James at Harvard College in 1779 provide evidence of his paternal nature. James travelled to Philadelphia in 1782, two years after his graduation. John Brown advised James of several requests if he was to remain long at Philadelphia:
but if its more Agreeable to your inclinations to Remain at Philad [],
I hope you'll learn Two Things Viz
The French Language and to Dance.

In a postscript to this same letter John Brown added

Pray allways & at all times have it in your mind that you are my only Son & Consequently that everything you may do in Respect to your Good or bad Carrictor Effects me Very Deep therefore be sensible to Virtue Honour & Honesty and behave as well to the poorest man on Earth as You would to the Graitest Prince. I wish you to be beloved by the poore Honest Man, more than by the Rich & proud.

Fear not and Love Mercey.

James never actively engaged in business with his father. His occupation consisted mainly of travelling, observing, socializing, and managing the family's coach-house, stables, and carriages. In 1791 he wrote to his sister, Abby, and discussed the fact that they must enlarge their coachhouse if they were to add to the five four-wheeled, and three two-wheeled carriages they already possessed. James travelled to Charleston, South Carolina in 1794 where his friend Samuel Gaillard presented him with a card of admittance to the St. Cecilia Society on January 23, 1794. In February of the same year John wrote to James at Charleston and told him to return by land and make a considerable study at every town of any size and observe all; James was especially to note the new Federal City of Washington. Other social acquaintances with whom James visited and dined included the families of William Bingham and Samuel Powel of Philadelphia, Jerathmael Bowers of Somerset, Massachusetts, Elias Hasket Derby of Salem, and Harrison Gray Otis of Boston.

James Brown died on December 12, 1834. His death notice informs us that:
Mr. B. having no relish for active pursuits never engaged in any business. The style of character and manners, which marked the gentleman of the old school, he maintained to the last....It is known to many of [his] contemporaries, that few individuals have shared more largely in the familiar intercourse of that band of noble spirits who with Washington at their head were once the living ornaments of this land and in patriotic recollection are now its selectest glory.  

Little is known about the education of Brown's three daughters. In 1782, in her ninth year, Salley, the second eldest daughter attended Mrs. Wilkinson's school in Newport, and at that time was opposed to learning the French language. Her father was quite liberal in his theory of education, and he knew that in time she would realize the advantage of certain things. On April 1, 1782 he wrote to her:  

I am willing to Indulge you a wile longer not in the Least Doubting you will by & by Chuse to Learn that Polite Language, I am willing and Desireous of your having your choice what to Learn....

Further concern over Salley's education was observed in 1785 when John Francis wrote from Providence to his mother in Philadelphia and asked her to let Mrs. Brown know in her next letter to Abby what the course of education of ladies in Philadelphia was. Salley was then twelve, and was ready to be sent to a more advanced school in either Boston or Philadelphia. Later correspondence indicates that she went to Boston.  

John Brown was an active land speculator and he owned tracts of land in Herkshirmer County, New York, and several large farms throughout Rhode Island. The Brown family had owned property in Glocester, Rhode Island, since
the early part of the century. This farm must have been used by John Brown as a country retreat throughout the 1770's. In 1783 James recorded that

John Francis arriv'd in Providence on the 2nd of June / I was sent for from Glocester where I had been to bring the furniture from John Brown acquired other farms in Rhode Island in the early 1780's; three of these were estates confiscated from Tory sympathizers by the State. In 1780 John Brown purchased 94 acres on Prudence Island, and in 1782 he bought an additional 52½ acres there, all of which were leased thereafter. In 1782 he purchased 200 acres in North Kingstown and about 60 acres in South Kingstown, all part of the former Roome estate. These lands he sold in 1792 for £2000.

Two major purchases of land in 1781 and 1782 directly affected the Brown's recreational and social life. The first was Popposquash (later called Point Pleasant), which consisted of "221 3/4 acres and three poles, dwelling house, barn, out-houses and all other buildings." This farm was the country estate of the Boston Tory, William Vassall. In 1776 the farm had been taken over by the Governor of Rhode Island and in 1780 it was used to quarter French troops. This land lay on a peninsula that extended into Narragansett Bay opposite Bristol, Rhode Island. In 1781 John Brown purchased it from the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations for £3,293:06:03. In 1795 this farm was leased to Champlin and Wilber on the condition that there is a Reservation made by the said John Brown for his family use of the Garden South of the East Side of Dwelling House say about one Acre and of the Five Roomes on the East Side of said House say two belowe & three above stares & a small
locked cellar which are to be kept solely for the use of & at the order of said Brown & his Family.11

The second purchase in 1782 was the Passtuxet Farm, which consisted of 670 acres on the opposite side of the Bay for which John Brown paid "20 Dolars Cash per Acre."12 John Brown soon named this property "Spring Green" as he explained with rare humor:

Your Marr [,] Sister Nabbey [,] and Alice with Polley Stillman is at Poppersquash, I wish I could think of a Better name which might be applicable to the Place, I have thought of one for the Passtuxet Farm on which we enter possession tomorrow and call it Spring Green. Its applicable in every sense [,] first its been in the name of the Green Family 100 years [,] and secondly its very Springy [,] and Consequently early in the Spring is Green, and thirdly in the Spring we took over the Green Farm. Coll. Benj. Arnold of Pawtuxet is to live on it and oversee and manage it this year under me. I have got all the necessary provisions [,] ploughs [,] Chaises & & & now onbord the Packett to cary to said Farm in the morning.13

Parties of guests were often taken to Spring Green or Point Pleasant on daily excursions, and frequently the family would spend many weeks at one place or the other. In 1785 the family anticipated Christmas dinner at Spring Green, as John Brown wrote to John Francis

I suppose you omitted telling your Father that I beat you at shooting last time at Spring Green, I promise myself your agreeable company there at a Christmas Dinner but as I propose to have some of the Clergy you'll not tell the ludicrous Story....[an embarrassing story Francis had previously told in front of guests]14

February 25, 1788 James recorded in his diary that there was a dance at Spring Green; sixty invitations were given and
thirty-four persons attended. A young Philadelphia girl, Susan Lear, who visited Providence in 1788, noted in her diary two visits to Spring Green. On Thursday, May 29th, she wrote:

Twelve o'clock went to Spring Green (the country seat of Mr. John Brown) to dine and spend the day. Our party was very large, six and twenty in number....Spring Green is elegantly situated, about 7 miles from Providence. Commands a most charming prospect of the river and the country round. The house is very large and very neat and convenient....Our entertainment was elegant.15

John Brown had known the Tench Francis family of Philadelphia since the late 1750's when the four Brown brothers maintained a business relationship with the firm of Relfe and Francis. James had visited the Francis family in 1782, as well as their relatives the Byrds at Westover in Virginia. John Francis, the son of Tench, was an ambitious young man and must have shown great promise of becoming a successful entrepreneur. Francis was not only interested in advancing himself in business, but he was also interested in young Abigail Brown of Providence. The prospect of a marriage between these two powerful families was doubtless acceptable to John Brown. In October 1785 he wrote to John Francis and proposed a partnership between themselves to commence January 1, 1786 and last for a term of seven years, to be dissolved or continued at the end of that period. John Brown was anxious that Francis come to Providence to live and not take his dear Abby away to Philadelphia. Brown even offered "to build the house I proposed for you, at least equal in Value to any in this Town."16 On November 26, 1785 Brown wrote at greater length about the proposed house should Francis come to Providence:
Jamey is not yet come up from Spring Green [.] He went their in the Packett from point pleasant & has yet some of the company with him, my naturrel Inclination Leads me to build your House On the Lott by my Stores as you once told me that you should choose to live Very near ware your Buissiness was to be Done, but Jamey thinks their will not be Roome their for the House [,] Stores [,] Stables [,] for Horses [,] Hay [,] and Roome for Cariges etc....I told him perhaps your mind would not Run So Much on Horses & Cariges as his did, if it was to be a House for him to Live in, it might not be so material about its being handey to Buissiness, I do not know of so good a Lott in Town on the Main street as that ware My Stores is being 67 Feet Front & Gangway on the North of 30 and one on the South of 20 Feet but on the South Side of the Lott is Two Stores of 102 Feet Long Inclusive and 24 feet wide which must be moved off to build an Elegant Providence House, but it might do very well with out moving the Stores for a Philadelphia House, as the Lott Clear of the Store is now 43 Feet on the Main Street which would do very well for a House with only One Roome in the Front and the Entry to be on one Side the House [,] but I prefer the Entry to be in the Middle & Roomes on Each Side, I have bot a Very Good Lo.t over the Rear [River] 97 feet by 90 adjoining Two very Handsome Streets for 900 Doler its not Farr NW. from Abbey Mathewson's.17

On March 8, 1786 the appropriate papers were signed and John Brown agreed "to take the said Francis into partnership with me in Trade and to give him the use or proffits of one Third part of, the abovesaid Capital of £37,445:19:05 for the term of Seven Years."18 The partnership was successful and was renewed in 1793, but was terminated by John Francis' death in 1796.

On April 17, 1787 John Francis purchased from his new partner
For and in Consideration of the Sum of one hundred pounds Lawful Money...one certain Lott of Land adjoining West forty Feet on the Back Street and Adjoins Southerly about 120 feet on the Gardne of Nichs. Brown Esqe. Easterly 40 Feet on Land of the Late Archabald Young Deceased & Northerly on part of the Gardne of said John Brown.

Francis married Abby Brown the following January and either John Brown built them a new house or Francis had one built. On June 25, 1788 John Brown wrote to Francis at Philadelphia, "Lynley has not yet but I Expect he will Soone begin on your House." By Christmas of that same year the Francis' house must have been completed, for James noted in his diary on December 26th, "J. Francis gives the first dinner in his big room. Smoaky." When John Francis died in 1796, Abby and her two young children moved to her parent's home where she lived until her death in 1821.

In the spring of 1786, John Brown began to build the elegant mansion on "The Hill" into which he and his family would move in June 1788. For his new home John Brown ordered building materials and interior fittings such as imported window glass, mantles and jambs, tiles and hearth pieces, from Philadelphia. The house had several wooden outbuildings, including a woodhouse, bakehouse, stables, and coachhouse; in 1798 a "bathing house...calculated for hot or cold Bath" was added to the group. In May 1788 Susan Lear called this mansion "the most elegant building in America" and further commented that

the house is very large and furnished in the most extravagant manner. 'Tis built after the plan of some of the Noblemen's seats in England, and far surpasses any I have seen.
This was the last house John Brown built and resided in; yet in 1801 he wrote to his son-in-law, Carl Frederick Herreshoff, about some property "in the Massachusetts State ware I have it in Contemplation of building as Elegant Seat, Should the Ship [,] General Washington [,] Return safe."24

Although social activity in Providence in the 1780's and 90's could not compare with that of Philadelphia, the Browns enjoyed entertaining. Music played a significant role in their daily pursuit of leisure. In 1783 they owned a harpsichord,25 and one afternoon's entertainment consisted of the following scene, as John Brown described it

Miss Polley Stillman is here & now playing on the Harpsichord in the Roome I am Writing [.] Your Marr & I both thinks she plays full as well as Mr. Blodgit Doeth & her Accomplishments in Every other Respect I think is Excelled but by Very Fue, if aney within my Acquantence. I prevailed on her & Nabbey [Abby] to Dance Two Minuets this afternoone with the Musick of Wm Megees Flute, I am at a Loss to Determine which had the prefferece in Danceing.26

Susan Lear noted on August 21, 1788, that she and a party of friends spent the day at Spring Green, had a very excellent dinner, played on the harpsichord, strolled about the place for two hours and returned to tea.

Providence was not all good times and gaiety, and in April 1786 a friend wrote from Providence to Salley Brown at School in Boston

Abby and your mama are next door with your Aunt, yr Papa is in the Front Room with a numerous Junto of Politicians.... Providence is as dull as possible [,] especially for the Ladies, no amusements except such as neither you or I would incline to partake of.27
Nevertheless, sources of amusement were found, and some
entries in James Brown's journal in 1791 provide a glimpse
of this social activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| June 18, 1791 | We have a Turtle dinner, 22 Gentlemen in our Dining Room. The Turtle
                was relished the finest I ever tasted, some of the company sat till 12 Ock. |
| June 23, 1791 | I go in the Waggon to Somerset (Bowers) [Jerathmael Bowers]........    |
| July 15, 1791 | The new horses drove in the Chariot to S[pring] G[reen] and return..... |
| October 29, 1791 | I go to the Race at Notomy [,] we dine at H. Otis's."28               |

Some notable friends and guests who visited the Browns included Mrs. John Adams, her son and nieces, and George Washington.

In 1801, two years before the death of her father, Salley Brown married Carl Frederick Herreshoff, a Prussian emigre', who was living in New York City. Herreshoff had been in America since 1787, and had met John Brown in 1792 through a business transaction. Little is known about the specific business interests of Herreshoff. In 1801 he was involved in the manufacture of tobacco and snuff, and was considering the purchase of land on Shelter Island. After the marriage, John Brown tried to entice Herreshoff to come and live in Providence. He even discussed at length the possibility of a sugar refining business -- a project John Brown had previously tried himself -- although he had not prospered at it. Finally John Brown suggested that Herreshoff could proceed in business at India Point with the
importation of dry goods, and between that and the sugar and snuff manufactories, it would "...inable You to Live in as high a Stile as any in this Town." 29

To get Herreshoff to come to Providence, John Brown offered to sell Point Pleasant to him. On November 2, 1801 Brown wrote to Herreshoff:

...As Salley has mentioned in her letter to her Sister Alice that their is no place she should like to Live at.so well as at Point Pleasant provided the Farm was her own, I have thought proper to make a proposal to you & her on the subject.... Tho I have Ever Concluded it is Improper for a Man [to] Give much of his Property to his Children till his Debts are First paid. My Point Pleasant Farm & Prudence Lands are under Mortgauge for Twenty-five Thousand Dolars Inclusive, I will however if its Convenient to you to purchase one half the Farm I will give her the other half, the Lowest price I Value the Farm at is Twenty Thousand Dolars without the Stock, if you chuse to purchase one half at Ten Thousand Dolars I will Discharge the Mortgauge & Give a Warrentee Deed and Give all the Stock on the Farm to Salley besides the one half the farm. 30

The Herreshoffs soon moved to Rhode Island, but they did not purchase Point Pleasant, although they did live there and improve the house and gardens. In 1803 when John Brown died he willed to Salley Point Pleasant "on which she now dwells." After 1803 the Herreshoffs moved to New York State where Carl worked on the development of John Brown's lands in Herkshirmer County until his death in 1819. At that time Salley moved back to Providence and lived in the family mansion until 1846 when she died.

The furniture and furnishings of the mansion on the Hill in Providence and the contents of the Point Pleasant farm have descended directly through the family of Sarah
Brown Herreshoff. Two of Salley's grandsons, John Brown Herreshoff and Nathaniel Greene Herreshoff, founded the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1863. This firm designed and manufactured many superb sailing vessels in the later part of the nineteenth century including prize-winning America's Cup sloops.

John Brown died on September 29, 1803. Death occurred several months after "Symptoms of A Dropsy of the Breast" had been noticed by his physician. John Brown was sixty-seven, had led a full life, and had become noted as an ambitious and successful entrepreneur. Perhaps the most fitting comment about this man can be found in the Duke of La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt's expression of regret that he had not had the opportunity to meet John Brown in 1795.

The richest merchant in Providence is JOHN BROWN, brother to Moses Brown, the Quaker above-mentioned. In one part of the town he has accomplished things that, even in Europe, would appear considerable. At his own expenses he had opened a passage through a hill to the river, and has built wharfs, houses, an extensive distillery, and even a bridge, by which the road from Newport to Providence is shortened by at least a mile. He had sold many of his houses. At his wharfs are a number of vessels, which are constantly receiving or discharging cargoes. In his distillery he maintains a great number of oxen, the labour of which is extremely useful, and a great saving expense to him. I had no letter of introduction to him; and my stay in Providence was too short to admit of my becoming acquainted with him. I exceedingly regretted to find myself obliged to leave town, without conversing with a man, the extent of whose establishments, and the success of whose trade, evince him to be a person of extraordinary intelligence and enlargement of mind.
Notes on Chapter I

1 Brown Papers, A Schedule of John Brown's Estate, June 8, 1802.


4 Buckley, p. 37.

5 Brown Papers, John Brown to James Brown, Nov. 11, 1782.

6 Ibid., Dec. 24, 1782.


8 Brown Papers, John Brown to Salley Brown, April 1, 1782.


10 Brown Papers, Deed of Purchase of Popposquash, 1781.

11 Brown Papers, Lease of Point Pleasant Farm to Champlin & Wilber, Mar. 25, 1795.


13 Ibid., March 31, 1783.

14 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Oct. 29, 1785.

16 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Oct. 29, 1785.

17 Ibid., Nov. 25, 1785.

18 Brown-Francis Papers, Agreement to Enter Partners on the 8th March 1786.

19 Brown-Francis Papers, Deed, John Brown to John Francis, April 17, 1787.

20 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, June 25, 1788.


25 Brown Papers, James Brown to Salley Brown, Mar. 25, 1785, "There is a Mr. Dudley who promised to tune your Harpsichord, whenever I will send for him from Newport, which when convenient I shall do." This letter suggests that the harpsichord was Salley Brown's instrument.

26 Brown Papers, John Brown to James Brown, Feb. 18, 1788.


29 Brown Papers, John Brown to Carl F. Herreshoff, Nov. 29, 1801.

30 Ibid., Nov. 2, 1801.

31 Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language (London: 1785), I. defines a "Dropsy" as "a collection of water in the body, from too lax a tone of the solids, whereby digestion is weakened, and all parts stuffed."
A different account of the death of John Brown is cited in A.L. Donaldson, A History of the Adirondacks (Port Washington, N.Y.: I.J. Friedman, 1963) I, p. 93. "Ordinarily, however, he [John Brown] drove around in a low-built gig especially constructed to furnish both convenience and security for his great bulk. His death was the result of being upset in this gig as he was turning into the ground of his house on Power Street. He died in September, 1803, at the age of sixty-seven."

32 LaRochefoucauld, pp. 143-144.
Chapter II

Accounts and Recorded Purchases of Furniture

The earliest specific records and accounts of furniture bought by John Brown have been found in the Journals and Daybooks of Nicholas Brown and Company. The references in these books are limited to the first decade of Brown's married life, since he broke away from the family firm in 1771. Supplementary references to furniture purchases have been gleaned from scattered pieces of family correspondence. Frequently individual purchases by the brothers were shipped in care of the firm, and the invoices of goods would not name the recipient. In certain instances of this nature the cost of the invoice can be traced to one of the brother's accounts in the Journals, and the correct purchaser determined.

Company accounts during the 1760's indicate that the Brown brothers ordered a good number of chairs and looking-glasses from Philadelphia. All of the purchases from this center of style and fashion are known to have been ordered for one of the brothers, and not for one of their clients or customers.

In December 1759 the Philadelphia firm of Francis and Relfe shipped to Obadiah Brown & Company "1 Looking Glass £5:18:00."1 Exactly whom this looking-glass was purchased for is unknown. The following July, John Brown bought "3 Luking Glasses & 12 Chears from Philada....[ea.] £36:07:00." This purchase was recorded in the Ledger of

22
Nicholas Brown and Company from 1758 to 1764, and the total cost was £581:12:00.² (See Appendix I)

A year later the Newport merchant Aaron Lopez sent Nicholas Brown & Company, via Mr. Nicholas Tillinghast, "a pair of Neet Ornamented Looking Glasses Ammounting to £360:00:00...," and added, "I wish the same safe to your hands & to satisfaction [...] They are just arrived & recommended for the newest fashion."³ These looking glasses, whose place of origin is unknown, were billed to John Brown on December 31, 1761.⁴ The £360:00:00 was "Old Tenor [Tender]," as Lopez made clear in the beginning of his letter. On the same day John Brown also bought "1 Luckg. Glass of Wm. Hunt [of Boston],&" but the cost of this purchase was not recorded.

On March 5, 1763 Francis and Relfe shipped to Messrs. Nicholas Brown & Company "2 Mahogany Sconce Glasses with Gilt Edge and Shell [at] £9:06:00 [each]"⁵ The Browns also ordered looking glasses from Boston. On January 31, 1767, Nicholas Brown & Company wrote to the Boston merchant Henry Lloyd, and requested:

Please to send us...2½ doz. of Sadlers
Chimney Tile of the Greatest Variety
and One best Sconse Lookg Glass with
Gilt Edge & Shell at 20 Inches Wide
& 30 Long.⁶

A letter from Francis and Relfe to Obadiah Brown & Company on October 28, 1761 concerned an easy chair ordered from Philadelphia:

Gentlemen

We have your sundry Favrs of the 27th
Sept. & 5th Octr. and sincerely wish your
Mr. J Brown Joy of his son & hope to get
the easy Chair from Fleeson against Saturday,
when we shall send it by Capt. Thurman.⁷

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Plunket Fleeson was an "Upholsterer, lately from London and Dublin," and worked "at the sign of the Easy Chair." The easy chair that he made was shipped to Providence on February 1, 1762. It cost £9:18:03½, including a five percent commission, for Francis and Relfe. This chair may have been ordered by John Brown. Another easy chair and eight mahogany chairs were ordered in May 1763, and in July 1763 the "Easy Chair for Mr N[icholas] Brown" was shipped to Providence.

The following March, Nicholas Brown and Company again wrote to John Relfe and requested him:

please to procure made and send by the first opportunity to this place One Easy Chair Mahogany frame covered with Greene Furniture made in the best Manner the Last you Sent us was Very Slightly made & Six Mahogany frame Chairs with Leather Bottom & Co[vered]d with Greene Herreteen Bottoms made and polished in the best Manner of about 50/ or 55/ Value.

Plunket Fleeson made and upholstered the easy chair, and "bottomed" the other six chairs, but his bill does not include the cost of making the frames of the chairs. His total bill was as follows:

Mr. John Relfe
1764 To Plunket Fleeson D[ebto]r
April L s d
13th To a Mahogany Easy Chair Frame 2:05:00
To Bottoming 6 Chairs @5/ 1:10:00
To 11 Yds Harateen @4/ 2:04:00
To 13 Yds Ca[n]vas for the Chair @1/6 19:00
To 8 lbs Curled Hair @1/10 14:00
To girth & Tax 07:00
To 3½ of Feathers @3/ 10:06
To 1½ Yds Ticken @3/6 05:03
To 18 Yds Silk Lace @8d 12:00
To thread Silk & Cord 03:00
To a sett Castors 08:00
To making the Easy Chair 1:15:00
£11:13:11

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
This furniture was shipped to Providence in April 1764 and the invoice stated:

Invoice of Sundrys Shipt by Jno Relfe on Board the Sloop Dolphin Abraham Smith Mast[e]r for Providence on the proper Accot and risque of Messrs. Nichols. Brown & Co. Merch[ant]s there and to them Consigned

6 Mahogany chair wth Leather Bottoms 50/ 15:00:00
6 Do without Do 42/6 12:15:00
2 Cases for Do 10/ 1:00:00
To Sundrys as per enclosed Accot 11:13:11
[i.e. Fleeson's bill]13

The only other chairs ordered through the Brown firm and known definitely to have been purchased by John Brown were four chairs shipped by Relfe to Providence on July 7, 1767. The invoice listed "4 Chairs as pr Bill Enclosed. 14:00:00." A notation, penned in on the same line, reads "Chd JB Entd."14

In addition to buying furniture from Philadelphia, John Brown also bought furniture from John Goddard in Newport. In October, 1760, Brown purchased a tea table, tables, and some chairs from him. These items amounted to £520:00:00, which Brown paid in part in two cash installments and in part with "1 Firkin Butter" valued at £54:18:00."15 Perhaps the tables and chairs were made for John Brown's new home but the tea table Brown had ordered for Abigail Smith, his sister-in-law. Her father, Daniel Smith, paid Brown £45:00:00 for it.16

Brown bought other chairs in Newport in December 1760 in addition to those ordered from John Goddard. In the Nicholas Brown Daybook for December 11, 1760, "John Brown D[ebited] to Cash pd in Newport for 7 Frams, for worked Bottom Chears....£203:00:00."17 A notation indicated that this was paid in "Boston O[ld] Tenor."
Nicholas Brown and Company also acted as an agent for certain customers of Goddard. An order submitted to him in May 1766 requested:

Mr John Goddard
Sir

We have occasion for a Handsome Mahogany Arm Chair as a Close Stool for Sick Persons with a Pewter pan please to make one & send it to us as soon as you Conveniently can & send a Bill with it as its for a Gentleman in the West Indies & you'l oblig[e].

This chair was ultimately sent to a Captain Bogman in Surinam who paid £5:03:08 3/4 for it. After the chair was finished, Goddard wrote to Nicholas Brown about the terms of payment suggesting "but if thou will supply me with good Butter at the Cash price, it will Sute me, some I shall want soon & the rest Some time this Fall." Equally illuminating is the postscript that he added to the same letter: "P.S. I should be glad if thou or some of thy Brothers & I could agree abought a desk & Bookcase which I have to dispose of." Three block and shell desk and bookcases have descended in the families of Nicholas, Joseph, and John Brown. None of these superbly executed desks are documented, though they have often been attributed to John Goddard. Those that belonged to Nicholas and John have six carved shells; the one that belonged to Joseph Brown has nine. It has been thought that these were all specially ordered pieces of furniture, and that each owner dictated the form and ornament for his individual desk and bookcase. This postscript suggests that perhaps this was not the case, and maybe the purchaser did not have the opportunity to determine form and ornament.

No records have been found that refer to furniture purchased by John Brown between 1768 and 1784. Not only account books and journals are non-existent for this period,
but also personal correspondence. Scattered information begins to appear in the mid-1780's, but only in personal papers and family correspondence. John Brown's business accounts for the remainder of his career are not extant.

In a list of miscellaneous articles appended to an Invoice of James Brown's Books ordered from London in 1784, "a leather Backgammon Table" and also "music books contain[ing] rules for playing Forte Piano and the latest Pieces of Music and Songs to be put up in the Forte Piano" were ordered. John Brown had acquired a backgammon table by October 1785, which suggests that this order was filled. He wrote to John Francis at that time: "I have played but few games Backgammon since you left us [,] but hope for the pleasing satisfaction of many games with you before Spring."22

It might seem appropriate that when John Brown built his mansion in 1786 he would have ordered some new furniture. An indication that he contemplated this is found in a postscript to a letter addressed to John Francis, November 23, 1786. Brown wrote:

What think you of Going to Europe in the Ship, and geting the Furniture for the House & bring over with you in the Fall Reddy to go to keeping house, [?] perhaps Jamey [James Brown] will bear you compa[n]y in Case you Incline to go in her [,] you can come on by Land [.]
Injoy Your Self with your Friends at Philada, a Short time and the Ship may Touch here & take you onbord, in this Case you'l Leave Virginnia 2. 3. or 4. weeks before the Ship and order Sheldon to come up with the Ship as Farr as Spring Green.23

However, neither John Francis or James Brown made the trip to Europe at that time. Mrs. Anne Francis, John's mother,
makes this fact clear in a letter to James on March 3, 1787:

I am happy to inform you, that he [John Francis] has not the least inclination to Visit Europe, and positively will not go, unless Your Father particularly Wishes it, you well know Mr Francis's and my sentiments on that Subject, and I Assure you I was not a little pleased to find you still adverse to going.... I could propose a jaunt for you that might vary the Seeones when you are disposed to leave home, that wouldn't be attended with such inconveniences as this hateful European Voyage, hateful I say, you know I have dreaded it and couldn't say half I thought of it least it might take place. I feel now assured that it will not.24

John Brown's new partnership with John Francis in 1786 strengthened the Brown's Philadelphia connections and made it convenient for them to again purchase items from that city.

In July 1785 John Francis wrote to James:

My Mother has given directions to the Upholsterer to weave the Fringe, it is not yet finished, the Settee Capt. J Ambrose of the Sloop Delaware has taken charge of, and will deliver it with this.25

This settee was listed among the freight on board the sloop Delaware, September 1, 1785, and the freight charge of three shillings was paid by John Brown.

The following May, Thomas Willing Francis wrote to his brother, John, in Providence:

Capt Lawton has at length arrived [.] He almost tried our patience waiting [.] The Gardner & his Wife are ready to embark at a moments warning & everything almost is prepared to forward you [.] As for the Cabinet [.] don't think it safe to ship it by this vessel as she proceeds only
to N[ew]port & of course it must be put on board another vessel there to be sent to Providence[.]. It is a valuable piece of Furniture & you know it would be very provoking to have it injured by moving it[.]. However, if Ambrose does not appear when Lawton sails we shall put it under his Care[.].26

Whether this was a piece of furniture already owned by John Francis, or something that he had purchased for his business partner, is unknown. This "cabinet" is important for it indicates that some significantly expensive pieces of Philadelphia furniture were brought to Providence. These might have served as models of fashionable style for people who demanded the finest in furniture.

Another example of Philadelphia furniture in Providence is referred to in a letter John Brown wrote to John Francis in Philadelphia in June, 1788. Francis had been married to Abigail Brown for six months and his new father-in-law wrote from Providence:

If this reaches You in time I advise you Geting for Abey a Doz of Handsome Mahoggoney Chears with any other Furniture you & she may think best to git at the City.27

John Francis went to England and France at the request of John Brown in 1792 on a business venture. Whether or not he obtained any furniture for John Brown at that time is still undocumented, but the diary he kept during the summer of 1792 provides a personal account of his travels, observations, and a few purchases. Mention of the purchase of fabrics, a watch, some caricatures, and clothing is made. His detailed description of the Paris Plate Glass Manufactory, along with his comments and observations on various articles of sculpture, lead one to speculate about other possible purchases. Large gilt-framed rectangular looking glasses and six marble busts, all probably of French
origin, are known to have been owned by John Brown. Regardless of whether or not John Francis bought French furniture or furnishings, a statement by the Duke of LaRochefoucauld-Liancourt writing about a visit to Providence in 1795 recalled:

I was introduced to an inhabitant of the town, who had lately returned from France. This man spoke strongly against the revolution, and the crimes to which it had given birth. He, at the same time related, that at the Castle of Vincennes, he had obtained an excellent bargain of the property of an emigrant, and named others who had been as great gainers as he, by proscriptions and confiscations; I know not the gentleman's name; if I did, I should think it my duty to make it public.28

Could this "inhabitant" of Providence possibly have been John Francis?

Local Providence cabinetmakers are known to have worked for John Brown's brothers, and other leading citizens of the town. No record has been found of John Brown buying furniture from local men. The account books of the Providence cabinetmaker, William Barker, reveal that he made furniture for Joseph and Moses Brown, but John "bought only ordinary household articles" [i.e. mops, brooms....] from him.29

In 1802, the year before John Brown died he noted that "[my] whole Estate both real & personal after all my just Debts shall be discharged!" amounted to $589,581. The total valuation of "all my Plate & Household Furniture in my Homestead House and all my Books & Groceries in the same and all our Furniture at Point Pleasant & Spring Green" was $4,000."30 These were willed to his wife Sarah, who died in 1824. The will of Sarah Brown, dated November 3, 1824, stated:
First - I give & bequeath to my daughter, Sarah Herreshoff, all my linen, plate, apparel, books & household furniture, meaning thereby to include the furniture at Point Pleasant belonging to me, & all furniture of any kind or nature whatsoever ....But it is my desire that my daughter suffer such articles of furniture to remain in the mansion house where I now live as may be required by my son James Brown, as long as he may have use for the same.31

On May 22, 1844 Sarah Brown Herreshoff made her "last Will and Testament in manner following, that is to say,"

I give, devise and bequeath to my three daughters Ann, Sarah, and Agnes, their heirs and assigns all the property and Estate of every kind that may be remaining at the time of my decease, of that which was given to me by the Will of my mother.

I give, devise and bequeath to my son John Brown Herreshoff, his heirs and assigns all the Estate both Real and personal that may be remaining at the time of my decease of that which was given to me by the Will of my father John Brown, whether situate in the State, or in the States of New York or Ohio, or elsewhere. But this devise is upon condition that my said son shall at all times hereafter provide at his own expense, for the comfortable support of his three sisters, my daughters above named so long as they respectively remain unmarried.

My Will further is that all the rest and residue of all my Estate both real and personal shall remain undivided until my grandson, James B. Herreshoff, son of my son Charles F. Herreshoff shall attain to the age of twenty-one years. And that until such time and notwithstanding anything herein before written, my said son Charles may continue in the occupation of the farm in Bristol now occupied by him....32

The three daughters of Sarah Brown Herreshoff died unmarried, as did her son John Brown Herreshoff. Hence, the property

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
and estate Sarah had inherited from her mother in 1824, was divided among the other six children of her son Charles F. Herreshoff, all sisters and brothers of James Brown Herreshoff. Eventually these possessions were removed to Point Pleasant and Bristol where a large number of them have remained within the Herreshoff family for over a century and a quarter.
Notes on Chapter II


2 JCBL, Ledger, Nicholas Brown & Co., 1758 to 1764, p. 170.

3 JCBL, L60-61M, Aaron Lopez to Obadiah Brown & Co., Nov. 9, 1761.

4 JCBL, Nicholas Brown Daybook, Jan. 19, 1760-Mar. 11, 1767, p. 185.


6 JCBL, P-L5, Nicholas Brown & Co. to Henry Lloyd, Jan. 31, 1767.


8 Joseph Downs, American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods (New York: The Viking Press, 1952), No. 75.


11 JCBL, P-F7, v.2, Nicholas Brown & Co. to John Relfe, Mar. 12, 1764.


13 JCBL, P-F7, v.2, Invoice of the sloop Dolphin, April 1764.
Ibid., Invoice of the sloop Lovet, July 7, 1767.

15 JCBL, Ledger, Nicholas Brown & Co., 1758 to 1764, John Goddard account.

16 JCBL, Nicholas Brown Daybook, Jan. 19, 1760 to Mar. 11, 1767, p. 106.

17 Ibid., p. 97.

18 JCBL, Misc. 1765-1767, Nicholas Brown & Co. to John Goddard, May 31, 1766.

19 Ibid., John Goddard to Nicholas Brown, Oct. 3, 1766.


22 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Oct. 29, 1785.

23 Ibid., Nov. 23, 1786.

24 Brown-Francis Papers, Mrs. Anne Francis to James Brown, Mar. 3, 1787.

25 Brown-Francis Papers, John Francis to John Brown, July 12, 1785.

26 Brown-Francis Papers, Thomas Willing Francis to John Francis, May 11, 1786.

27 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, June 25, 1788.

28 LaRochefoucauld, p. 143.


30 Brown Papers, A Schedule of John Brown's Estate, June 8, 1802.

31 Brown Papers, Will of Sarah Brown, Nov. 3, 1824.
Providence County Probate Court Records, Will of Sarah Brown Herreshoff, May 22, 1844.
Chapter III
The Furniture of John Brown

Over one hundred pieces of furniture that can be traced to original ownership in the family of John Brown, have descended in the Herreshoff family. Several additional pieces of furniture have descended from Abby Brown Francis, some of which may have belonged to John Brown or with equal likelihood could have belonged to John and Abby Francis. The possibility also exists that some furniture was brought to Spring Green in 1832 when John Brown Francis, son of John and Abby, married Elizabeth Harrison of Philadelphia.¹

Space does not permit the discussion and illustration of all of the surviving furniture in this chapter. Those items that are either representative in style, or unique in form have been selected for inclusion. Specific data about them may be found in Appendix II, along with a checklist and corresponding data on all other known John Brown furniture. No attempt will be made in this chapter to discuss either the stylistic dates of these pieces of furniture, or the actual dates of manufacture, since for most of the pieces of furniture no specific documentation exists. In Appendix II a stylistic date range will be noted for each piece of furniture, and a table summarizing the provenance of each object will be included.

Since no itemized inventory of household furnishings for any one of John Brown's homes was ever made, this
furniture could have been used originally in any one of the
four homes John Brown inhabited from 1760 until 1803; the
1760 house on South Main Street, occupied until June 1788;
the large mansion on the hill, begun in 1786; the Spring
Green Farm, bought in 1782 and used extensively for
entertaining; and the Point Pleasant Farm on Poppersquash-
acquired in 1781 and also used as a family retreat. The
earliest surviving inventory of goods that once belonged to
John Brown is an 1887 inventory for Point Pleasant. Some
objects can be traced to this inventory, but the inventory
is by no means complete — in 1856 many of the Herreshoff's
belongings were removed from Point Pleasant to a new house
on Hope Street in Bristol across from the newly formed
Herreshoff Manufacturing Company.

The largest group of furniture is the seating
furniture. Fifty-eight chairs -- side chairs, arm chairs,
corner chairs, low chairs, easy chairs, a lolling chair,
and windsor chairs, both side and arm -- are extant. A
number of side chairs appear to have been part of larger
sets, judging from the numbers on their inside front seat
rails.

Three bannister-back chairs are stylistically among
the earliest chairs and were probably made in Rhode Island.
A pair (Fig. 1) have four half-bannisters, turned front
stretcher and plain side stretchers. The turned stiles end
in finials, and a double-lobed crest with a slight bow
complete the back. The back stiles and front legs are maple,
and all other members are ash.2 The third chair is similar,
but it has only three split bannisters and one front turned
stretcher. This chair is made entirely of maple. All three
chairs were originally painted black and have flag seats.
The Rhode Island origin of these chairs is strengthened by
their similarity to a bannister-back arm chair owned by the
Newport Historical Society. The armchair has a similar double-lobed crest, similar turnings, and a Rhode Island family history. It bears the mark "John W. 1731."

A Chippendale-style Philadelphia side chair (Fig. 2) with trifid feet and shell in the center of the crest rail is one of a pair surviving from a larger set. One of these has "IIII" chiselled on the seat frame and also a signature that appears to be "______ Robinson." Inside the back seat rail of the same chair is written "N B" in chalk, probably for "Nicholas Brown and Company." These side chairs are two of eight Philadelphia side chairs all of similar form and style, but with slight variations. All originally belonged to larger sets. Two other chairs in this group have pencil inscriptions on their seat frames that read "______ Robinson." These chairs might have been made by William Robinson (1734-1786), of Philadelphia, whose occupation — cabinetmaker and chairmaker — is recorded in both newspaper advertisements and tax lists. These chairs could be some of the twelve chairs John Brown ordered from Philadelphia in July 1760, or they could be the mahogany chairs ordered by Nicholas Brown and Company from Philadelphia in 1763 and 1764. (see pp ) The latter possibility would explain the "N B" written in chalk inside the back seat rail of one of the chairs.

Another Chippendale-style Philadelphia side chair (Fig. 3) marked "III" on both the inside front seat rail and the seat frame was part of a larger set owned by John Brown. The primary wood is walnut and the original corner blocks are a variety of spruce. These corner blocks are made in two quarter round pieces of wood with vertical grain. The rear legs have open mortices. The slip-seat of this chair retains its original needle-point cover. The overall design and craftsmanship of this chair make it the finest
in the group of Philadelphia chairs John Brown owned. Since this chair is stylistically later than the group of eight Philadelphia chairs mentioned above, it might be one of the four chairs charged to John Brown and shipped to Providence by John Relfe on July 7, 1767. (see p.25)

Four Rhode Island Chippendale-style side chairs survive (Fig. 4). The primary wood is mahogany, and the present corner blocks are chestnut, and are probably original. The front corner blocks are made in two pieces each in quarter round sections with vertical grain; the rear corner blocks are triangular pieces of wood with horizontal grain. One chair is marked "V" inside the front seat rail, so these four chairs were originally part of a larger set. The splat design is the same basic Manwaring style as the Philadelphia side chair in Figure 3. These chairs are identical to a pair of unmistakable Newport chairs illustrated in The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Furniture. The related Newport chairs have stop-fluted legs and a cross-hatched and punched lobe, while the Brown chairs have molded legs and a carved shell in the crest rail. These four chairs might be some of the "7 Frms, for worked Bottoms Chears" that John Brown bought December 11, 1760 in Newport. (see p.25)

Two Rhode Island ladderback side chairs are marked "VII" and "VIII" inside their front seat rails, and this set might have numbered one dozen originally (Fig. 5). Inside one seat frame is written "Brown__." The frames of these chairs are mahogany, and the corner blocks are missing. The inverted, heart motif pierced in the slats of the chairs is unusual, but not peculiar to them: the brackets on two pair of Newport card tables associated with the Browns, and the brackets of a Newport mahogany kettle stand, illustrated in The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1820.
have an identical motif. On the basis of this association with several pieces of Newport furniture, these chairs can be ascribed to a Newport craftsman.

Four Rhode Island side chairs (Fig. 6) have shield-shaped backs with an urn and swag carved splat. These chairs are mahogany and the inside of the frame has 7/8" cedar cross braces at the corners. This style of chair is sometimes considered a Rhode Island type, but they were also made in Massachusetts. A similar chair signed "Mr. Benja[mijn] Frothingham, Charlestown" documents the Massachusetts origin of some of these chairs.7

The two arm chairs that have survived are simple in construction and unsophisticated in design. Both chair frames are made entirely of cherry and are probably of Rhode Island origin. They have crest rails which appear to have been cut from the same pattern as that of the Rhode Island chair in Figure 5. The arm chair in Figure 7 has a solid splat, slip seat, straight legs and plain rectangular stretchers. The corner blocks are two quarter round pieces of wood with vertical grain. The other arm chair (Fig. 8) is a ladderback type with a flag seat, straight legs and plain rectangular stretchers. Several similarities between this chair and a cherry "slipper" chair also owned by John Brown suggest that they might have been made in the same shop.

John Brown owned a pair of Newport corner chairs made entirely of dark mahogany (Fig. 9). Both chairs have ink inscriptions on their seat frames; one inscription reads "Brown" and the other, "John Brown." These two chairs might have been among the chairs that John Brown bought from John Goddard in October 1760. (see p.25) The mahogany arm chair to be used "as a Close Stool for Sick Persons with a Pewter pan" that the Browns ordered from John Goddard in May 1766...
for Captain Bogman of Surinam might have been similar to these chairs. After Bogman's chair had been ordered Goddard wrote back asking "but desire thou will be more particular respecting the form, whither one Claw foot & the other Plain." Two days later Nicholas Brown and Company wrote to Goddard specifying

the Chear should be Very Neet & Handsum therefor Desire You'l make it with 3 Claws & if Possable have it Dun in 10 Days otherwise as Soone as you can...

The third corner chair (Fig. 10) was probably made in Rhode Island. This flag-seated chair was doubtless originally made to be painted so that the fact that the stretchers are ash and the rest of the chair is maple was not obvious. The simple baluster and ring turned legs and stiles are similar to those of the single bannister-back chair related to Figure 1.

The only upholstered chairs in the group of seating furniture are two Philadelphia easy chairs and a New England lolling chair. Only one of the easy chairs was available for examination and it could not be photographed. Its claw and ball feet, cabriole legs with carved shells on the knees, a full curve to the front seat rail, and horizontal roll arms are characteristic of Philadelphia easy chairs. This chair might have been the one made by Plunket Fleeson, at a cost of £9:18:03½, and shipped to Providence on February 1, 1762. (see p. 24)

The New England lolling chair (Fig. 11) has an unusually wide (29") seat. The primary wood is mahogany. Possibly this chair was made in Massachusetts since its bold serpentine crest, and excessive width relate closely to a probable Massachusetts lolling chair (#57.1038) in the Winterthur collection.
The last group of nine chairs is made up of windsors. The group includes one unbranded, comb-back armchair with "J B" in chalk on the bottom; one Philadelphia comb-back windsor branded "I Letchworth" (Figs. 12, 13); a pair of brace-back, upholstered windsors with the label of "Thomas and William Ash" of "No. 17 John Street, New York" on their bottoms (Figs. 14, 15); three, nine-spindle Pennsylvania windsors with saddle-shaped seats, one of which has the incised letters "I.BROWN" on its left arm; and two Pennsylvania bow-back windsor armchairs with fourteen spindles and diagonal crossed stretchers. The Francis family descendants have additional branded Letchworth and labeled Ash chairs that might have originally been at Spring Green.

Several singular forms of seating furniture continue to exhibit the diversity in both style and quality discernable in the furniture illustrated. A small Rhode Island close stool, (Fig. 16) made entirely of maple, possibly painted in the eighteenth century, now has a nineteenth century imitation grained surface. The straight turned legs that end in pad feet above a club, or shoe, are similar to legs found on other pieces of Brown furniture. The double-lobed shaping on the skirt is also related to several other pieces of Brown furniture; the same form is echoed in the crests of the three bannister back chairs. The interior of this stool is missing, but it was probably once fitted with a deep pewter pan like a similar commode stool in the Winterthur collection (#56.94.1).

Another very different stool or stand is of Chinese origin (Fig. 17). Its six, straight, bamboo legs are painted with ovals to simulate the grain and knots of wood. The height of this object is 20 3/4". The hexagonal top is covered with a finely woven mat. Below the top is a
triple band of bamboo, and below that are six rectangular panels delicately set with split bamboo. The stool is held together with wooden pegs. A similar piece of Chinese furniture was illustrated by Sir William Chambers in Plate XIII of his 1757 edition of *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils*. This object might have been one of the "1 pr of stools" entered in the Account of the ship *George Washington* - Cargo - 1795, which sailed to the Orient.

Two Newport, camelback sofas with stop-fluted legs have descended in the Herreshoff family and are almost identical except in size. The smaller measures 72" in width, and the larger 98½" (Fig. 18). The larger one bears a marked similarity to Winterthur's Newport sofa (#51.33) made by Adam Coe in 1812. However, the molded legs and bowed front rail of the Coe sofa suggest that it was made at a later date than the Brown sofa with its stop-fluted legs, rectangular stretchers, and straight front. The Coe sofa is also about twenty inches shorter than the large Brown sofa. The primary wood of the Brown sofa is mahogany. The front and back seat rails are chestnut. Hard and soft maple, white oak and pine are used throughout the underframing. The Coe sofa has maple, cherry, and pine as secondary woods. Newport sofas with stop-fluted legs are not common, and the only other similar one is owned by Stanley Stone and has a bow front like the Coe sofa. The Stone sofa is eighty-four inches long, and has maple, cherry, and white pine as secondary woods.

A Federal-style daybed (Fig. 19) made entirely of cherry is probably the work of a Rhode Island craftsman. The cherry corner blocks are made of two pieces of vertical grain, quarter round wood and are similar to those found on several Rhode Island chairs in the Brown collection. The
overall length of the daybed is 76" at the seat rail, and the width is 26 7/8." The simplicity of this piece of furniture cannot hide the high quality of craftsmanship exercised in its execution. It relates to several other pieces of cherry furniture in the Brown collection. The shaping of the back stiles are particularly similar to those of the arm chair in Figure 7.

John Brown owned a caned couch (Fig. 20) made in the Orient. It might have been used on one of Brown's ships engaged in the China trade. Four other couches of similar form are known. All have histories of original ownership in Providence mercantile families. The John Brown couch, as illustrated in Wallace Nutting, *Furniture Treasury* (Figure 1731) did not have three drawers below the seat as the other four examples have. In the early part of the twentieth century drawers were added below the caned seat, but they were probably never part of the original form of this couch.

The Brown collection contains twenty-six tables and stands which exhibit a diversity of form, style, material, and regional origins. Two side tables in this group originally had marble tops, and the table of earlier stylistic form (Fig. 21) still retains its original top. The exposed surfaces are walnut, while the braces and underframing are chestnut. The other side table (Fig. 22) is stylistically of a later period. An examination of the frame indicates that the table never had a wooden top which suggests that the original top must have been a marble slab. The frame is mahogany, the interior braces and drawer are chestnut. The workmanship of this table is excellent.13

Only one pair of card tables (Fig. 23) are definitely known to have been owned by John Brown. Mahogany is the primary wood. The gate on the underside is soft
maple and the blocks are chestnut. These tables are exceptional examples of Newport form and craftsmanship. A similar table in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, made by John Townsend in 1766, has stop-fluted legs and circular brackets instead of heart-shaped brackets. The six heart-shaped brackets on each Brown table are unusual. They also appear on a similarly styled Newport stand with fluted legs in the collection of the Rhode Island School of Design. The only other example of the use of heart-shaped brackets is found on a pair of later style card tables that have descended in the Francis family. These tables have always been at Spring Green, so they could have been purchased by John Brown, or by John and Abby Francis in the 1790's. They have serpentine sides, molded tapered legs, and gouge carving around the edge of the top.

A simple Newport breakfast table (Fig. 24) is made of mahogany, and no secondary wood remains since the blocks under the top are all missing. The tapered legs and pad feet on this table are characteristic of Rhode Island furniture. Similar legs and feet appear on the commode stool illustrated in Figure 16. This table is similar to a communion table, attributed to John Goddard, in the Moravian Church in Newport, Rhode Island. A significantly similar walnut breakfast table in the Winterthur collection (#64.1070) has an almost identical treatment at the juncture of the legs and skirt.

Three "pembroke" tables owned by John Brown exhibit a wide diversity in style and regional origin. The primary wood of the table in Figure 25 is mahogany. The gates that support the drop-leaves are white oak; the drawer interior and underframing of the table are pine and tulipwood. The front of the drawer is veneered. The feet have been replaced. The fact that this table is almost identical to the signed
Adam Hains pembroke table at Winterthur (#57.669) formerly in the Reifsnyder collection, suggests an attribution to a Philadelphia maker. The proportions of the two tables are similar and the only difference is that the signed Hains table has gadrooning below the drawer and the Brown table has stop-fluting at the top of the legs. The secondary woods of the Hains table are oak, cedar, and tulipwood. An inscription on the bottom of the Brown table reads: "Repaired & Refinished in Spring 1925 by Mr. Oberg - Had dark stain same drawer pull."

The second pembroke table (Fig. 26) is of Rhode Island origin and could have been made in either Newport or Providence. Solid mahogany and mahogany veneer are the primary woods. Maple and cedar are used in the underframing of the table. The drawer interior is pine. The brass pull on the drawer is original, and the opposite end of the table has a false drawer front and a brass pull also. The concave molded edge around the top of the table is often found on Rhode Island tables.

The third pembroke table (Fig. 27) is the simplest of the three tables. This table could have been made and purchased around the same time that the other two tables were. Cherry is the primary wood, and chestnut is used as a secondary wood in the drawer. This table is almost the same size as the table discussed in Figure 24. The absence of veneer or inlay, the simple molded, tapered legs, and the rectangular crossed stretchers of this table place it in direct contrast to the two preceding tables.

Five candle stands, four bason or wash stands, and one fire screen are found in the Brown collection. All the candle stands have ogee legs with pad feet, and simple, turned balusters; three have round tops and two have rectangular tops. The fine mahogany candle stand with an
unusual heartwood baluster illustrated in Figure 28 could have been made in Newport. The turning on this stand is handsomely executed, and the baluster is architecturally proportioned.

A second Rhode Island candle stand (Fig. 29) is made entirely of walnut and might be stylistically of earlier date than Figure 28. This stand is slightly smaller than the previous one, but appears to be quite similar to it. The architectural proportions of this stand present a very different statement from that of the former stand. The shaping of the feet on these two stands is another subtle difference, and one might conclude that the same craftsman did not make both of them.

The third stand (Fig. 30) has a round, dished top larger than those of the first two stands, and is made of mahogany. The greater size of its top suggests that it might have served as a tea table. The turning of its baluster is once again quite different from the first two. This stand has a prominent, cup-turned base, and lacks the fine tapered column of the stand in Figure 28. The shaping of the legs differs from that of both the stands in Figures 28 and 29. These three stands provide a superb, visual example of the variations in quality of craftsmanship and understanding of proportional relationships.

One of the stands with a rectangular top (Fig. 31) is made of mahogany and cherry and is probably of Rhode Island origin. Two candle slides pull out from either end of the top of this stand. The turned baluster and ogee legs of this stand are almost identical to those of the stand in Figure 30, which suggests these were made in the same shop.

The most sophisticated of the four bason stands (Fig. 32) is made of mahogany, with pine used in the drawer and chestnut used as the blocks to secure the structural
frame. The molding applied around the lower edge of the mid-shelf is similar to that found on the stop-fluted Brown card tables Figure 23 and the related stand in the Rhode Island School of Design collection previously cited. The fine craftsmanship and this additional relation to three known Newport pieces of furniture, suggest that this bason stand might also have been made by a Newport craftsman. The design of this stand is very similar to Plate 84 of the 1789 edition of Hepplewhite's The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide. The major difference in the Brown bason stand from Hepplewhite's Plate 84 is that the upper portion does not have shaped sides, and the top is not pierced to accommodate a bason and soap dishes.

The Newport mahogany fire screen (Fig. 33) is a fitting climax to this group of tables and stands. Characteristic elements of Newport design are its paw feet, knee carving, pedestal base, and spiral turned bulb at the base of the shaft (Fig. 34). The finial and part of the screen have been restored. The Brown fire screen is similar to two other identified Newport screens; one is in a private collection, and the other is owned by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The fire screen in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art is almost identical to the Brown screen, except for additional carving on the sides of the legs.

There are fifteen pieces of case furniture in this collection, including chests and desks. A New England high chest of drawers with flat-top (Fig. 35) is made of maple and all secondary wood is chestnut. The molding around the mid-section is applied to the lower case, and the brasses appear to be the original ones. The two pendant drops on the front of the skirt replace the originals.

A chest of drawers of unusually large dimensions (Fig. 36) may be of Rhode Island origin. It is 39 inches
high and 52 3/4" wide. The case and drawer fronts are mahogany, and all secondary wood is chestnut. The top edges of the drawer sides have a double, half-round molding.

Another chest of drawers (Fig. 37) is stylistically of a later period. The sides are solid mahogany and the drawer fronts and top are mahogany veneer. The drawer interiors are pine, and tulipwood is used in the interior case supports. This chest closely resembles a four drawer chest in The Metropolitan Museum of Art that bears the earliest label (1801-1803) of Michael Allison. The shaped skirt with an extra peak on either side relates to other pieces of furniture attributed to Allison. However, chests of drawers similar to this one were also made in Rhode Island. Two related chests of drawers bear labels of Joseph Rawson & Son of Providence, and suggest a possible Providence origin for this piece of furniture. However, if this is a New York chest of drawers, it may have been purchased by Salley Brown Herreshoff in New York shortly after her marriage in 1801 and brought to Rhode Island.

That the unusual slant-top, lacquered desk in Figure 38 was made in the Orient is suggested by the Chinese characters marking each drawer in the interior section. The desk sits on a low stand with bracket feet and a writing slide. If the desk is lifted off the stand, the writing slide can be removed and placed on top of the stand. Set into the writing slide is a removable panel with a checkerboard on one side, so that the stand may be used as a game table. On technical as well as stylistic grounds the conclusion can be drawn that the tapered, fluted legs of the base of the desk are a later addition since they are made of sassafras wood, a strictly North American wood. The presence of two square slots, similar to those found on lacquered dressing glasses, at the rear of the desk's top surface
suggests that this desk once had a looking-glass atop it. A related lacquered desk of slightly earlier stylistic form has its original looking-glass attached to the top, and also has a writing slide. This desk however is lacquered in yellow and green and has cabriole legs.20

A three drawer bureau, two chest-on-chests, a kneehole desk, and a six-shell desk and bookcase, in the famous Newport block and shell style, are among the surviving John Brown furniture. A second block and shell kneehole chest of drawers is owned by descendants at Spring Green, but the original ownership of this piece of furniture is uncertain.

The three-drawer bureau illustrated in Figure 39 belongs to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and was purchased from a Herreshoff descendant in 1939. Dark mahogany is the primary wood, and chestnut is the secondary wood. Each of the two carved and applied convex shells on the top drawer have twelve lobes that flow in an unbroken, undulating curve. The centers of these two shells are reeded and cross-hatched. The concave shell is cut from a piece of wood applied to the drawer front, and this shell is just reeded in the center. A beaded edge planed from the solid of the case surrounds each drawer. The bracket foot has an unusual inward curving scroll that is not common on Newport block and shell furniture. Other examples of this same unusual bracket are found on a desk with shells similar to those on this bureau, except they lack the cross-hatching, and a desk and bookcase in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.21

The two block and shell chest-on-chests are very different in form, proportion, and execution. The larger of the two (Fig. 40) stands 95" in height, and is made of dark mahogany with chestnut being the only secondary wood
used. The lower case is of unusual height. A beaded edge on the case surrounds each drawer, while the drawer fronts of the upper case lap over the drawer openings on three sides. The shells on this chest differ from those on the bureau. Although these shells are cross-hatched, they are not of the same form and they have nine lobes, instead of twelve. The center, concave shell has incised scrolls on each side, a characteristic often seen on Newport block and shell furniture. The shells on this piece of furniture are identical though to those on a chest of drawers labeled "Made by John Townsend." Incised in the top of the bottom case of the Brown chest-on-chest is "I B H E".

The second chest-on-chest (Fig. 41) has very different proportions from the chest-on-chest in Figure 40. The mahogany is much lighter in color, and the secondary wood is pine, in contrast to the chestnut used exclusively in the former. In addition, it is seven and one-half inches shorter. The only other Newport block and shell piece of furniture that resembles it in any way is the nine shell chest-on-chest in the Winterthur collection. The Winterthur chest was originally owned by Joseph Brown, and descended through the Gladding family of Rhode Island.

First of all, the shells on both of these chests are cut from the solid, mahogany drawer fronts, and not applied as on the former chest. The convex shells have the distinctive feature of being contained within a distinctly carved out half-circle. Both chests have enclosed boxes on either side of the pediment, and the feet on each chest are identical in that they both have an unusual additional volute on the bracket.

The knee-hole chest of drawers is made of mahogany, and chestnut is the only secondary wood. (not illustrated) This piece of furniture has only three shells; the door in
the center of the recessed lower portion simply has an
arched panel on it. The two convex shells are applied and
each has ten lobes. They are unusual in that the core or
center section of each shell has been left plain, as opposed
to the more common fluting or cross-hatching usually found.
A similar treatment of the shells is found on the desk and
bookcase, already noted, in the Museum of Fine Arts. A
unique feature of this kneehole chest of drawers is its
fitted top drawer. The center of the drawer has a green
baize covered writing slide that lifts up; on either side
of this surface are pigeonholes and secret drawers.

The six-shell desk and bookcase (Fig. 42) once
owned by John Brown now belongs to Yale University. In
1918 Francis P. Garvan purchased it from a dealer who had
obtained it from a Herreshoff descendant. The primary
woods are light and dark mahogany. The quarter columns of
the upper case, the molding on the pediment, the rosettes,
and the circular molding within the pediment are all made
of the darker wood. The applied panels below the arch,
and the fourteen lobed shells on the bookcase doors and the
fifteen lobed shells on the slant-top are two of the added
refinements of this piece of furniture that must have made
it a costly item at the time of its purchase. When, and
from whom, John Brown bought this desk, are unknown, but the
postscript that John Goddard added to his letter to Nicholas
Brown on October 3, 1766 suggests that one of the Browns
might have purchased a desk and bookcase from John Goddard
in the 1760's.

P.S. I should be glad if thou or some of
thy Brothers & I could agree abought
a desk & Bookcase which I have to
dispose of.24

A footnote about an unusual use this desk and bookcase might
have served occurs in a letter John Brown wrote to Salley,
December 19, 1782:

Your Mar told me the pieces like Your Brocade frock is in the Lore Draw of the Book Case[;] if they can be found [they] shall be Sent you with this....25

Only one sideboard is known to have definitely belonged to John Brown, and today The Rhode Island Historical Society owns it (Fig. 43). The sideboard stands in the dining room of the John Brown mansion on Power Street, now the headquarters of the Society. This piece of federal style furniture was -either made in Providence or Newport. The primary wood is light mahogany, the case is veneered on yellow pine and the legs are solid. The drawer linings are also yellow pine. The inlay on the legs is not typical of any particular area in Rhode Island, so the specific region of origin is difficult to assess. An inscription on the inside of the right hand center door indicates that the sideboard descended in the Herreshoff family. It reads:

John weighed 149 when he was 17 years old
& Master Lewis 110.
[in a later hand]
Lewis Herreshoff feb. 3, 1859
Weighed 120 lbs. age 15.
feb. 1859 120
1860 145.26

Two pair of English knife boxes were owned by John Brown. The larger pair (not illustrated) are urn-shaped, 25 3/4" high, and veneered with satinwood. They have square bases with small feet and a dagger inlay surrounding the base. The top is surmounted by an egg-shaped finial. When it is raised, it reveals an interior with four raised levels with slits in which are placed knives and forks.

The second pair of knife boxes (Fig. 44) are also veneered with satinwood but have mahogany bottoms. These
boxes are basically rectangular in shape with slanted tops and shaped fronts. The design for this particular pair of knife boxes is similar to Plate 39, the design on the left, of Thomas Sheraton's 1793 edition of The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book. Perhaps these cases are the "square Knife cases" that James Brown noted that he purchased at "Bringhursts 3rd Street" in Philadelphia in 1791.

The pianoforte that played a central role in the social activity of the Brown family is illustrated in Figure 45. The case is deal veneered with mahogany and rosewood. The pedals of this instrument are missing. The name "Longman and Broderip Musical Instrument Makers, No. 26 Cheapside & no. 13 Haymarket London" appears above the keyboard. Two books of music that once belonged to Salley are kept on the shelf below the keyboard. One, inscribed "Miss Sally Brown's Book/Newport August 26th, 1783" teaches "Select Harmony - containing in a plain and concise manner, the Rules of Singing." The other book, printed by the makers of the pianoforte, is inscribed "Sarah Brown" and is entitled The Farmer - A Comic Opera. John Brown referred to this instrument in 1786 when he noted:

On going hoome from the Store last Nite [I] found Abbey playing on the Forta-peany with the Famely & Sister Ruth all well, I mention this as a Rerity being the First of my Knowlede that the Peiany was removed into the Keeping Roome. 27

Five beds that once belonged to the Browns are extant. An exceptionally fine mahogany bed (Fig. 46) is probably of Newport origin. The headboard with shaped sides is plain. The headposts are square in section, plain, and tapered. The side and foot rails have a molded top edge and bottom outside edge that is planed from the solid. The rails retain the original mahogany pegs that hold the roped
bottom. The foot posts are massive, square in section, fluted, and taper toward the top. All four posts have molded Marlborough feet stop-fluted on two sides below the rails. A narrow molding is applied to each foot post above and below the rails on all four sides. The upper portion of the posts is stop-fluted for about seventeen inches above the rails.

A second mahogany bed (not illustrated) is similar to Figure 47. This bed has almost identical Marlborough feet, and the foot posts have five flutes on four sides below the rails. The headposts are only fluted on two sides and their upper portion is square in section and tapered. This bed has the same narrow, applied molding on the foot posts above and below the rails as the first. The foot posts are octagonal, tapered, and stop-fluted above the rails. A "lamb's tongue" serves as a transition between the square and octagonal forms.

The bed illustrated in Figure 47 has a shaped cherry headboard similar to that of the first bed, while the rest of the bed is mahogany. The headposts are octagonal, plain, and tapered. The foot posts terminate in much simpler, molded Marlborough feet than those on the first two beds discussed. These posts are square below the rails and have five flutes on two sides. Above the rails they are octagonal and stop-fluted approximately eleven inches up from the "lamb's tongue" transition between square and octagonal sections.

Twenty-four looking glasses and two lacquered dressing glasses have survived among the John Brown furniture. A pair of "sconce glasses" of English or Continental origin (Fig. 48) were probably among the first looking glasses that the Browns acquired after their marriage in 1760. The brass candle arms are replacements. The glass of these sconces is in three
parts, and according to microscopic wood analysis, the backs are a Tilia, perhaps American basswood. This could mean that they are either replacements, or they were assembled in this country and only the glass was imported.

Nine looking-glasses with mahogany veneered frames with carved or pierced crests exist. Two of these are almost identical, except in size, and both are labeled by John Elliott, Sr. The larger looking-glass (Fig. 49) is 52 3/4 inches high and the smaller 37 1/4 inches. The label on the larger glass (Fig. 50) is the type used by Elliott between 1758 and 1762. This specific type of imported English looking-glass is representative of approximately one-third of the known glasses with the label of John Elliott, Sr.28 Wood samples taken from the frames of these looking-glasses indicate that they are spruce, which is the wood of which the majority of Elliott's frames were made.

An additional clue to the specific date at which John Brown might have purchased this looking-glass may be deduced from the sum £9:06:00 written in ink on the label. On March 5, 1763 "2 Mahogany Sconce Glasses with Gilt Edge and Shell [at] £9:06:00 [each]" were shipped to Nicholas Brown & Company from Francis and Relfe in Philadelphia.29

John Brown also owned some larger, more elegant looking-glasses in a later style that were probably purchased in the early 1790's for his new mansion. A closely related group of six large looking-glasses have descended in both the Herreshoff and Francis families. All of these looking-glasses have square bases and are surmounted by elaborate carved crests either of baskets of flowers, cornucopias, bow-knots, flags and war trophies, or nautical instruments; all are approximately five feet high and three feet wide.
One of them is illustrated in Figure 51. A seventh glass of similar design, but smaller size (31 1/2" by 24") has descended

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
in the Francis family. A peculiar feature of these looking-glasses is the great depth of their backs. The origin of these glasses is unknown, but it is certain that they were imported, possibly from France.

A unique pair of frames that have descended in the Herreshoff family combine a looking-glass below with a painting above (Fig. 52); both are enclosed by a simple gilt frame with a beaded, inner edge. The overall size of each glass and canvas is 56½ inches by 28½ inches, while the height of the glass alone is approximately 22 inches. The frames resemble a pair George Washington bought at New York in 1790 from the estate of the Count de Moustiers. However, Washington's looking-glasses are of much greater size (81¼" by 43"), and they do not have paintings above the lower section of glass. The subject of one canvas is a landscape with a family in the foreground; the other (Fig. 52) is based on a classical theme, perhaps depicting a sacrifice of love.

Two lacquered dressing-glasses owned by John Brown are of similar design and dimensions. Both of these looking-glasses were imported as a result of the trade with China between 1787 and 1800. One owned by Brown (Fig. 53) is almost identical to a dressing glass purchased by George Washington between 1795 and 1800.
Fig. 53
Notes on Chapter III

1 Buckley, p. 33. Mrs. Harrison was the widow of Henry Harrison and daughter of Thomas Willing and Dorothy Francis. She was descended from several old and prominent Philadelphia families and descendants today feel that she might have brought some eighteenth century furniture to Rhode Island.

2 The use of ash in turned bannisters is unusual, and some of these bannisters are replacements; ash used for stretchers is not as unusual, and it should be noted that the corner chair in Figure 10 also has ash stretchers that appear to be original.

3 Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, No. 65.1261--hereafter cited as DAPC.

4 The front corner blocks on these Rhode Island chairs are identical in fabrication to those found on Philadelphia chairs, like the chair in Figure 3.


8 JCBL, Misc. 1765-1767, Nicholas Brown & Co. to John Goddard, May 31, 1766.

9 Ibid., June 6, 1766.

10 Montgomery, p. 158.
Brown Papers, Leather Bound Account Book of the Ship George Washington's Cargo, 1795. It appears to be in John Francis' handwriting.


Perhaps this table is similar to the "Mahogany frame with Marble Slab" for which Benjamin Hicks paid Job Townsend, Jr., £75:00:00 on March 7, 1763." See Carpenter, p. 15.

Carpenter, p. 80.

DAPC, No. 70.3907.

Downs, No. 314.

Carpenter, p. 76, and Ott, Loan Exhibition, p. 140-141.

DAPC, No. 65.1283.


Serge Roche, Mirrors in Famous Galleries and Collections (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1957), Plate 185.


Carpenter, p. 65. Also written on the label is "Sarah Slocum's November 20th, 1792."

"Little Known Masterpieces," 18.

JCBL, Misc. 1765-1767, John Goddard to Nicholas Brown, Oct. 3, 1766.

John Brown Herreshoff, born in 1841, and his brother Lewis, born in 1844, were the sons of Carl Frederick and Julia Ann Lewis Herreshoff, who married in 1833. Carl Frederick Herreshoff was the son of Salley Brown Herreshoff, and the grandson of John Brown. John Brown's great-grandsons, John and Lewis were seventeen and fourteen respectively in 1858 when their names and weights were first inscribed on the sideboard.

Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Nov. 24, 1786.

The author is indebted to Mary Ellen Hayward, Winterthur '71, for this information which is contained in her Winterthur Thesis entitled "The Elliotts of Philadelphia: Emphasis on the Looking-Glass, 1755-1810."

JCBL, L57-67FR, v.2, Invoice from Francis and Relfe, Mar. 5, 1763. Also written on the back of this looking-glass is "Point Pleasant S B H saved from Fire Old Herreshoff House Jan 10 1925."


Ibid., p. 45.
Chapter IV

Accounts and Recorded Purchases of Furnishings

Some information about the furnishings and household accessories that John Brown bought between his marriage in 1760 and his death in 1803 can be gleaned from letters and accounts. These scattered facts do not give a complete picture of what this man desired and was able to obtain, but they do give some indication of the places from which he bought, the sums he spent, the men he dealt with, and the people who actually purchased things for him and his family.

Two of his earliest purchases included "1 Bell Mettle Skillet" and "1 Tea Bord" bought at Nantuckett in April 1760. The skillet cost £23:00:00 and the board £4:00:00. Later that same month he ordered marble hearth pieces, a lock, and eighteen dozen tiles from Philadelphia.

Brown devoted much attention to the fireplaces in the new house he built on South Main Street for his bride. In the fall of 1760 John Brown was billed £125:00:00 by Joseph Belcher of Newport for five brass chimney frames. These frames were probably installed around a fireplace opening to hold ceramic tiles used around the opening in place. At this time Brown also paid £65:00:00 for two pair of brass fire dogs, and £24:00:00 for a "square glass light." On December 29, 1760, John Brown added to his fireplace equipment when he paid Joseph Russell £90:00:00 for "And Irons Shovel and Tongs." Another pair of "Hand Irons and 1 Spitt" were purchased in February 1761 from
Amos Atwells of Providence for £77:12:00. That same month Samuel Goldthwait of Newport charged John Brown £20:00:00 for "1 sett Shovel & Tongs & poker." John Brown also purchased "1 Sett pickters" from Goldthwait for £120:00:00.

On January 24, 1762, Brown sent an order to Messrs. Francis and Relfe in Philadelphia for "22 dozen harth tyle." He continued:

Please to procure & send us by Capt. Potter
22 Doz. Liverpool Chimney Tile Made by J Sadler Sorted of as grait Variety of Images as maybe. If they should not be had at your Place please to procure them sent for from Liverpool Soon as possible if likely to be had In 5 or 6 month.

Three days later he added to the above memo:

Procure made 2 pieces of marble[,] 4 ft. 9 in. length 6 Inch wide each & 4 pieces Do 11½ Inch Length[.] Pray let these be made & polished in the Mettest Manner & done within a few [months] being to be used with the Tile for Harths.

Perhaps John Brown intended to have five fireplaces whose openings would be surrounded by double rows of Sadler tiles held in place by the brass chimney frames he had purchased in 1760. Twenty-two dozen tiles would have allowed him to use fifty-two tiles around each opening. The house built by William Vassall in Cambridge, Massachusetts, had three fireplaces with tiles around them in 1759. One of these fireplaces had a double row of tiles and contained forty-eight tiles. The Isaac Royall house in Medford, Massachusetts, had similar tile fireplaces in 1756, and Colonel Jeremiah Lee of Marblehead used tiles around several of the fireplaces in his new house in 1768.

John and Sarah Brown bought silver in the early years of their marriage. On March 22, 1762 Brown bought "½ Doz Teaspoonies of Callinder" for £14:00:00, and also

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
"1 punch Ladle & Strainer" for £67:10:00; the total purchase from Callinder was £107:01:08.11

Occasionally one of the four Brown brothers would make a trip to Boston, and on such a trip small personal purchases might be made for all the brothers and their wives. Shoes, handkerchiefs, hats, trimmings, clothesbrushes, and even a "Teethe pricker Ivory" might be obtained on one of these visits.12 While at Nantuckett on October 13, 1762, John Brown bought for himself "a walking Cain" for £19:05:00.13

The Browns had some painted floor carpets in their house on South Water Street, for October 11, 1763 John Brown paid Nathaniel Clney £6:03:01 "for Painting floor Carpets, etc...."14 Nicholas Brown also had painted carpets in his home. The agreement he made with William Logan dated October 21, 1771, stated that Logan was to paint the carpets "in a Good Workman-like Manner as said Brown shall direct, etc..... Priming and painting them twice over.... for which he's to have for doing the whole Two Shillings per yard."15

Few references to purchases of furnishings or accessories by the Browns during the period from 1768 through 1784 have survived. After 1780, however, valuable accounts and notes are to be found in correspondence. This information tells much about the sources of Brown's purchases and also the importance of James Brown and John Francis as purchasing agents.

In the early 1780's John Brown was much aware that the French taste was in fashion, and in December 1781 he wrote to Captain Simeon Smith on board the brig Hope before its departure from Europe:

You will please to bring...from France... silks suteable for Ladys Gounds...also
of the best and genteelast of silk you can git in France which I purpose for my Daughters Gounds.16

By the end of the same month John Brown wrote again to Captain Smith:

I am told that the French excells almost all Nations in Manufactory of Plate[dware], You'll please to bring me one neat Silver Plated Tea Urn 1 [or 4?] Doz do plates and one Doz Dishes Viz 4 Large 4 Midling & 4 Small one Caster....one Complete Sett of Chaney of the neetest Sort for Dineing as well as Tea [...] also one Doz Porringer[s] Plated, Three Plated waiters to hand Round Tea with. One Large, one midling, and one small, 3 Doz. of the Neetest Knifes and Forks Silver Plated Handles all to be in one Neet Case With 2 Doz Plated spoones if to be got....

You'll Bring from France one Doz. pr Neet Stone Buckells for my Daughters and other.17

Almost exactly one year later he noted in a letter to James "The plated Service is arrived at Salem."18 Why did Brown tell James this? Was James expected to go to Salem to pick it up? Had James actually had something to do with the ordering of the plate, or was Brown just anxious to have his son's approval?

A fragment appended to a letter James wrote from Philadelphia to his sister Abby on May 30, 1783 demonstrates that James may have been acting as an agent for his father. It reads:

A Suite of most fashionable color Silk Curtains for a Bed with the Fringe Tassells & everything completely made, with four Window Curtains of the Same

James19

The note suggests that James was describing something he had either sent back to Providence or was bringing with him.
On March 26, 1784, John Brown wrote to Simeon Smith, Captain of the General Washington, then preparing to sail for London:

Have also sent [Champion and Dickason] my Memo of fall goods to come by you & Copy of which I now Inclose them by you with an additional number of Articles that did not go before Including a Library of Books & an apparatus for the College.20

A "Catalogue of Books belonging to James Brown - 12 Jany 1785" was found among family papers. A note added to the bottom stated "Imported in Ship Genl. Washington Octr. 1784." This shipment contained a total of two hundred and seventeen volumes.21

In 1788 John Brown purchased eight pieces of silver from Maria Byrd of Westover through Thomas Willing Francis, brother of John Francis. The Byrds were cousins of the Francis children, and a letter from Mrs. Byrd to John Francis in Providence, November 29, 1788, suggests that the Byrds were in financial difficulty. She writes:

[Abby Willing]...told me you had seen my Epergn & that you had [taken] it off to shew it to Mr Brown, & thought it possible he might purchase it....Well to the Epergn, My Sister advises that I shall accept your Brothers kind offer & send not only the Epergn but any other plate or article of finery I have.... now my sweet cousin will not I am sure laugh at the conduct of his aunt, as he well knows, poverty, not inclination tempts me, to some steps I would not otherwise be persuaded to....I have given Jenny a dress of blue & silver, which I have twice worn, it cost I think between 30 & 40 guineas. If your brother can change it for her -- for Chintz [,] Muslin or dimity, I think there will be no impropriety in it -- if it can't be parted with as a dress it can be burnt & the silver will then be pure virgin silver,
& will readily sell I suppose....I likewise send a bread basket, a Bowl, two Can's, two salvers, & a set of Castors[.]. They are very heavy, not compleat [,] wanting two glass Cruets [',] which I hope you will be able to buy for me, the silver tops are with it -- the weight of each article are below.22

Thomas Willing Francis did sell his aunt's silver to John Brown; a receipt dated December 20, 1788 lists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Silver Bowl</td>
<td>46:01:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 do Cans</td>
<td>26:16:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 do Salvers</td>
<td>53:02:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 do Castor</td>
<td>63:03:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 do Bread Basket</td>
<td>54:04:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 do Epergne</td>
<td>153:00:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>396:07:08 d23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While these pieces of silver did not become the property of John Brown himself, they must have found their way into the mansion on the Hill after the death of John Francis in 1796 when Abby moved back to her parent's home.

When James Brown travelled to Philadelphia and visited other places, he sometimes purchased things for his mother or sisters, and notations of his purchases are often found in the form of a brief, scribbling on a page of his almanacs or journals. In 1788 he paid six shillings "for a Roasting Machine at Philada."24 In a journal kept by James in 1789 he listed the "Number of the Pieces of China with the Cypher J.B. that came in Ship Washington July 1789."25 James also noted how many of the pieces arrived broken and stated that in all there were 228 pieces of china. He noted in this list that "a Tea Service marked J.B." came
in the same shipment. The original invoice for these goods stated that both the "Table Sett" and the "Tea Table Sett" were of the "best Nankeen blue & white China."26

An additional instance in which James Brown and John Francis were directly involved with purchases occurred in 1791 when John Francis went to London. On January of that year, James wrote him:

My Mother's affectionate Love to you [,] wishes you to procure her in London Two Cases to contain each one doz large white Knives and Forks tipped with Silver and one doz Desert each of the same quality[.] Also one doz large knives to come of the same sort not in the Cases and four small silver Card Table Candlesticks and a Sett of Glass large & small, Wine glasses & Tumblers & Salts & Water Bottles and some ornamental pieces Glass for sweetmeats ...used without a Pyramid.27

John Francis was actually the agent, but what is more significant is that James, and not his father, was responsible for Francis' being instructed what to get in London.

A few days later on January 3, 1791, Salley Brown wrote to her brother James in Philadelphia:

I hope you will get a handsome set of Glass like that we had from England, or indeed any that you fancy, and I will ask the favor of you to get a very handsome seal for me, I do not own one.28

James responded quickly to these requests, and in a letter on January 22nd to his sister Abby Francis he wrote:

There is a small keg in the schooner which I did not mention to my Mother containing 18 wine glasses & 6 Tumbler.29

Occasionally a personal purchase would be made on a trip to Europe or the Orient for a specific member of the
family. In 1791-1792 the President Washington sailed to the East. An entry in the account book for that voyage indicates the extravagance of John Brown.

By Brown & Francis - Owners of the Ship
P.W. pa [paid] for a Shawl sent by
Capt Tingley per Mrs Brown's order
£100:00:0030

Since Mrs. Brown was a Quaker, a shawl was a necessary article of clothing, and the cost of this particular shawl suggests that it might have been a woven cashmere shawl from India.31

John Brown may not have personally selected his own purchases, but this did not mean that he was unaware of the demands and needs of the citizens of Providence outside of his own circle of friends. He recognized that there was only a small circle of elite in Providence who desired and could afford elegant and fashionable furnishings. A letter Brown wrote to John Francis in 1791 exhibits the insight Brown possessed in regard to the needs and demands of the citizens of Providence.

No hardware excepting the 24 Dozen valuable Cases Knives & forks, ferril'd and tipped with silver, and the case containing them is now in the Custom House at New York as Mumford had no Invoice, but have sent it to him this day, if you get to New York before he ships them, advise at least half of them to be sold there, as but few here uses so high priced ones.32

Just what the price of these cases of knives and forks were, and whether or not John Brown himself purchased any is uncertain. However, three years later when James Brown journeyed southward to Philadelphia and Charleston, he noted that he paid "60 Dolls for one Pyramid & two square knife Cases [,] empty at Bringhursts. 3rd Street."33
On February 12, 1795 Brown paid $333.33 1/3 for "one rich Cutt Glass and paste richly ornamented Lustre hung in Mr. Brown's house." Two other purchases that year included "1 rich Cutt Glass Vase & top richly engraved" and "1 rich Cutt Glass Sugar bason" at $15.00 each. These three items were listed in a detailed three page account submitted to John Brown by John Hurley (See Appendix III). This account tells the story of John Brown's attempt to establish a glasshouse in Providence beginning in 1795. It indicates that Hurley had once been established in London, and may have worked in Philadelphia before coming to Providence. His journey to Providence "at the direct request of Messrs. Brown and Francis" cost $19.30. Expenses for removing his family and household goods to Providence were also listed in the account. This glasshouse was perhaps the most ambitious undertaking that John Brown ever initiated, but it was also one of the few ventures in which he did not achieve success. The written account ends on November 1, 1795 with Hurley charging Brown for

212 days attendance at the glasshouse, or in planning the building [], procuring!
Workmen! Working! Tools! Clay! & Sand!
etc....for said Glasshouse til this date,
when Mr. Brown wished & proposed to dissolve the partnership & to separate and ordered me to leave their house allowing 31 lost days.34

Another note regarding items imported from the Far East is contained in a leather-bound book in the handwriting of Francis that lists the cargo of the George Washington in 1795. Besides a large number of boxes of china, the shipment also included two backgammon tables, two tea caddies, one pair of stools, two satin fans and two "moving mandarins."35

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Notes on Chapter IV

1. JCBL, Nicholas Brown Daybook, Jan. 19, 1760 to Mar. 11, 1767, p. 33.

2. JCBL, L57-67FR, v. 1, John Reife to John Brown, April 26, 1760.

3. According to Ledlie I. Laughlin, Pewter in America (Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishers, 1969), pp. 89-90, Joseph Belcher was a brazier and pewterer in Newport, R.I. He was born in Boston in 1729 and moved to Newport in 1751 when he married Hannah Gladding. When he advertised in the Newport Mercury in 1763, there was no mention of pewter-making in his shop on Thames Street. A notice of 1769 indicates that pewter-making might have been a new departure for him at that time.


7. Ibid., p. 105.

8. Ibid., p. 105.


10. John Seider began printing tiles in 1756, and by 1761 he was producing at least 100 different designs. In 1761 he entered into partnership with Josiah Wedgwood. See Price, pp. 53-55.


12. Ibid., p. 242.
13 Ibid., p. 247.
14 JCEB, L63-74M, Account of John Brown, Oct. 11, 1768.
15 JCEB, Misc. 1771, Agreement with William Logan, Oct. 21, 1771.
17 Ibid., Dec. 29, 1781.
18 Brown Papers, John Brown to James Brown, Jan. 6, 1783.
20 Brown Papers, John Brown to Simeon Smith, Mar. 25, 1784.
22 Brown-Francis Papers, Maria Byrd to John Francis, Nov. 29, 1785.
23 Brown-Francis Papers, Receipt for Byrd Silver, Dec. 20, 1785.
26 JCEB, V-G35, Invoice from Canton, July 1789.
29 Brown-Francis Papers, James Brown to Abby Francis, Jan. 22, 1791.

32 Brown-Francis Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Oct. 13, 1792.

33 Brown Papers, noted on p. 2 of James Brown's *United States Register for the Year 1794*.


Chapter V

The Furnishings of John Brown

A large number of furnishings owned by John Brown have descended through the Herreshoff and Francis families. These objects illuminate the information that has been found in accounts and letters. Many pieces of Sheffield plate and silver survive today, including some of the French plated-wares ordered by John Brown in 1781 and some of the Byrd silver purchased in 1788. Ten pieces of silver are marked and seven makers can be identified, six of them American and one English. The Boston silversmith Samuel Minott (1732-1803) made four pieces of silver that were used by the Browns. These include a porringer initialed "J. B. S.," a plain, round, open salt on three trifid feet inscribed on the bottom "S.S." and "L 8=15," and two tankards with domed lids inscribed with the Smith family coat of arms and "B.S. to S.S." The initials "S.S." are those of Sarah Smith (Mrs. John Brown), suggesting that the items were in her possession prior to her marriage in 1760. The initials "B.S." refer to her brother, Benjamin Smith.

A slightly smaller porringer bears the mark of the Providence silversmith Saunders Pitman (1732-1803). Inscribed on the top of its scroll and leaf handle is "S.Brown." A second Providence maker whom John Brown patronized was John Gibbs. A fifteen-inch dressing-spoon initialed "J-S\*B" on the back of the spoon's bowl bears two Gibbs marks: "JG" and "J.GIBBS." A small brite-cut teaspoon marked "J.C." and inscribed "S\^B-H" either belonged to Mrs. John Brown or Salley Brown Herreshoff. John C.
Jenckes, who took over John Gibbs' shop in 1798, made a silver beaker in 1801, which was given to Salley Brown upon her marriage to Carl F. Herreshoff. The inscription on the side of the beaker reads "S.H. July 2, 1801," and the beaker is twice stamped "JENCKES" on the bottom.

A boat-shaped cruet containing seven cut-glass vessels with silver tops bears the mark of the London silversmith Robert Hennell, and the date letter for the years 1785-1786 (Fig. 54). The set is neo-classical in style, with fine beading around its edges.

Among the unmarked silver is a fine urn-shaped teapot with an urn finial, fine beading about the top and shoulder, on the spout, and around the pedestal base. The scroll handle is made of wood. Brite-cut floral swags frame the initials "J.S.B." This teapot has many of the stylistic attributes associated with neo-classical work done in Philadelphia during the last decades of the eighteenth century, and might have been made there. A second, unmarked teapot has a round, barrel-shaped body with straight spout and wooden handle. It has beading, an etched guilloche, and a pineapple finial, though the workmanship is not as fine as that of the former teapot.

A large hot water kettle and stand, with Dutch marks and probably made in Amsterdam between 1760 and 1780, stands about fifteen inches in height. Its lid has a pineapple finial and the ovoid body and stand have an etched design similar to that on the straight-spouted teapot. The kettle is inscribed "S.B." on the base.

An unmarked, urn-shaped cream jug on a round pedestal with beaded and gadrooned edge is initialed on the bottom of the rim, "J-S*B," initials identical to those on the Gibbs dressing-spoon. An uncovered sugar bowl with
pierced border and brite-cut swag decoration also belonged to the Browns, and is unmarked.

Other silver of English origin owned by the Browns includes a ladle with a wooden handle and a silver bowl that has a coin set in the base, a plain punch ladle with the date mark for the year 1801 on it, an unmarked punch strainer with reeded handles, and an unmarked silver fish server with an ivory handle.

Five of the seven pieces of Byrd silver bought by John Brown in 1788 have been located: the two cans, the two salvers, and the bread basket. All of them have the Byrd coat of arms on them, and three bear the motto "Nulla Pallescere Culpa" (Never to be embarrassed by guilt).

Several pieces of Sheffield silver were owned by John Brown, the largest of which is an oval gallery tray 32¼" by 22¾". The gallery is pierced with a beaded edge, reeded border, and cut out handle. The base is backed with green baize. A much smaller Sheffield tray, 7 5/8" in length, has a pierced gallery and is inscribed "Salley Brown" in script on its bottom.

An oval Sheffield bread basket with a pierced border and reeded edge rests on a short, raised rim. A pair of neo-classical Sheffield candlesticks ornamented with beading and swags, and also a pair of candelabra standing 18 3/8" high, once lighted the Brown's home. The candelabra have two fluted arms that encircle the shaft, and the central portion is topped by a gadrooned finial with flame top. None of these pieces of plated silver are marked.

Fifteen pieces of French plated-ware survive from the 1781 order. Nine plates in three different sizes with curvilinear edge and fluted border bear the mark "A 1 6 G." Six plated ecuelles, or two handled porringer, with
triangular, curvilinear handles are also part of the 1781 order of plated-ware from France.

Sheffield knives and forks from two different sets also survive. Some of these have green bone handles with a roughly worked surface, while the others have ivory colored bone handles with a striated surface and a silver tipped end engraved with John Brown's bear's paw crest. An unmarked pewter plate 9 3/4" in diameter with a flat rim also has this bear's paw crest.

Two bellmetal skillets survive, either of which could be the skillet purchased by John Brown in Nantucket for £23:00:00 in April 1760. The two quart skillet is marked on the upper side of its long handle "2 O WARNER," and the three pint skillet is crudely inscribed on the underside of the handle "I B 1764." Another metal kitchen item owned by John Brown is a brass trivet with a turned wooden handle. It is 10" high and stands on iron cabriole legs with flat circular feet.

An assortment of fireplace equipment exists, but the only marked items are a set of andirons stamped "John/ Holineux/Boston." These andirons have a square base, surmounted by a stepped plinth and topped with a series of ball and ring turnings. The fender, shovel, and tongs are unmarked. The fender has five paw feet and a pierced border of interlaced circles.

The tin plate-warmer in Figure 55 might have been used in the Brown's dining room. Originally the surface had a painted, or lacquered, decoration. This object was probably imported from England. An identical plate-warmer owned by George Washington is now displayed at Mount Vernon.

Possibly the most elegant and fashionable piece of brass that John Brown ever bought was the door knocker.
that hung on the front door of his mansion on the hill. (see frontispiece) Its dimensions are 10 3/4" by 5 5/8" and its style is neo-classical. The central oval, inscribed "John Brown Esqr.," is encircled with acanthus leaves and has a beaded edge, all of which is surmounted by a swag draped urn and scrolled leafage. The knocker itself is a garland in the form of a swag with a central rosette. This door knocker is identical to one illustrated in a Birmingham trade catalogue dated 1803 (Fig. 56). The wholesale prices of these knockers ranged from 4/ to 9/6. John Brown's knocker is listed for 8/.3

John Brown ordered dinner services of Chinese porcelain on at least two different occasions. Several patterns and a large variety of forms of blue and white Nanking china used by the Browns have been located. Two large dinner sets each had a different pattern. One set had John Brown's initials in a blue and gold mantle with tassels on either side of a shield that is hung from a ribbon tied in a bow. A second set, of which 114 pieces remain, also had a blue and white pattern with touches of gold and sepia decoration. This service did not have identifying initials. Instead, the central decoration was a unique urn-shaped basket with flowers piled high within it. This set is believed to be the one that originally contained 172 pieces and was ordered from Canton in 1795.4 The most unusual item in this group was a "curry set" (Fig. 57).

A Chinese export porcelain tea set with a total of 28 pieces remaining is of a rarely-seen pattern. The ground is white, with gold and sepia decoration, scalloped borders, and green, gold, and sepia butterflies in the center of each piece.

A large punch bowl thirteen inches in diameter was once used by the Browns. The outside surface of the bowl
is decorated with views of the various hongs at Canton, each of which flies the flag of the nation whose trading headquarters it is. This bowl is exceptional among other known hong bowls because the American hong and flag are pictured. The only surviving piece from a garniture set of Chinese porcelain known to have been used in the Brown's mansion is a flat, covered jar about nine inches tall. The cover has a restored foo dog finial.

Many kinds of ornamental ceramics were used in the eighteenth century of which garniture sets represented only one form. Small porcelain figures were also used. John Brown owned several pieces of ornamental biscuit or unglazed porcelain, and seven of these figures remain today. Three single figures have the rectangular, applied stamp of the Niderville manufactory in France, and three have the incised mark of the Derby factory in England. The Derby marks are of the type used on pieces of porcelain made between 1782 and 1811. The unmarked, large, biscuit figure group is similar to a marked Duesbury-Derby figure group of 1795. Both biscuit and glazed figures were fashionable in the 1790's. George Washington requested Gouverneur Morris to send him a complete set of handsome, biscuit figures from Paris in 1790. At the same time Washington also bought a set of china figures in New York from Thomas Burling. The manner in which John Brown displayed his biscuit figures is unknown.

The number or kinds of paintings and prints that Brown might have owned cannot be ascertained from an inventory, but an assortment of paintings, prints, and miniatures that belong to his descendants are believed to have hung in the houses he owned. Only two large oil portraits are known to have hung in any of the Brown's houses (Figs. 58 and 59). These paintings, three-quarter
length portraits of George Washington and his wife, Martha, appear to be copies of paintings by Charles Willson Peale, though the artist who painted them is unknown. The circumstances under which Brown acquired these portraits is uncertain. Family tradition relates that they were presented to him as a gift from General Washington, but the possibility also exists that he could have had them done by an unidentified Rhode Island artist. John Brown was an ardent admirer of Washington. He had met the General on several occasions, and in 1790 Washington drank punch with him in his mansion on the hill. When Washington died in 1799, John Brown wrote a letter to James Brown and enclosed the eulogy that was delivered in both branches of the Legislature by Governor Henry Lee of Virginia upon the request of Congress. In this letter John Brown expressed the hope that Abby would have her son learn this address by memory for as Brown said:

Too much extreme cannot be bestowed on the memory of that Hero whom you have often heard me say was the Best Man in the World.  

Another oil painting we can be certain John Brown owned depicts the familiar scene at Whampoa Reach, just below Canton at the mouth of the Pearl River. In this painting by an unknown Chinese artist, ships of various countries lie at anchor, and at least five have American flags flying from their masts. On June 7, 1791 the cargo on board the General Washington contained a group of goods consigned to Brown and Francis. The cargo manifest included a "Pantg. sundry Slo[0]ps of the United States and Foreign manifactory. the Latter Costing...fifty six Dollars."

Two paintings on glass were also brought back from a China voyage. One pictures a woman with an elaborate gold headdress, the other a man in a fancy embroidered costume.
Another portrait that probably hung in the house on the hill for many years is an oil on canvas of Mrs. Brown painted about 1821. The portrait is unsigned, but possibly Francis Alexander, an itinerant artist who worked in Providence in the early nineteenth century, might have painted it, for it resembles much of his work. In this painting Mrs. Brown wears a delicate cream-colored shawl with a narrow, floral border in red and blue. This same shawl is preserved today, and perhaps one might speculate whether it is the same shawl John Brown appears to have paid 100 for in 1791. A painted mezzotint affixed to glass also survives. The subject is "Louis XVI, King of France & Navarre," and at the bottom of the print is the legend "London: Printed for R.Sayer, & L.Barrett, No. 53 Fleet Street, as the Act directs, 2nd Feby. 1778."

John Brown owned at least two sets of prints, parts of which are owned by descendents today. None of these are dated, so either set might be the set Brown purchased in 1761 from Samuel Goldthwaite for 120. A set of mezzotint engravings depicting the months has six remaining, and each is inscribed "T.Burford ad Vivum delin et fecit." Three other prints of another mezzotint group of the seasons remain, and they were "Printed for John Bowles & Son at the Black Horse in Cornhill." All of these are in their original black frames with gilt molding.

Four additional mezzotints are mounted on linen. Of these, a pair, "A Brisk Gale" and "A Moderate Gale," were engraved by John Boydell and are dated May 1765 and February 1766 respectively. Another Boydell mezzotint owned by Brown, "The Misers," bears the date April 18, 1770. The fourth print, a pastoral landscape the title of which is obliterated, was engraved by Jean Pillement, and printed in London by Act of Parliament, December 26, 1759.
A group of copperplate engravings in oval gilt frames of varying sizes contains assorted colored prints of landscapes, figures, and noted buildings of England. Almost all of these are sealed in the back with a French newspaper entitled "Assemblée Nationale." Two of these prints are after paintings by Angelica Kauffman and two are after paintings by I.F. Rigaud. Ten of them are the same size and seem to form a separate group. All of these are English scenes and on the back of each is written in French a description of the particular scene. One country landscape has "12/" on the back at the bottom. The inscriptions on the front of each one are almost obscured by the frames, but on one print the information "London 1791" can be discerned. Perhaps these are some of the prints that John Francis purchased in Europe in 1792.

Five miniatures by Edward Greene Malbone picture John Brown, Salley Brown Herreshoff, Carl F. Herreshoff, and John Francis. The miniature of John Brown, recorded in Malbone's account book, belongs to the New York Historical Society. One of the two miniatures of John Francis was taken from life, is dated 1795 and is signed "Malbone." The second is a copy executed after Francis' death, and is signed on the back, "Edward G. Malbone, Newport Jany 1798." Malbone also painted miniatures of Salley Brown and Carl F. Herreshoff before their marriage. The miniature of Salley is signed, but the date is partially missing. This miniature was done in either 1795, 1797, or 1798. The miniature of Carl F. Herreshoff is unsigned and undated, but the following excerpt from a letter in October 1798 from Carl to Salley makes it almost certain that Malbone was the artist.

Do you know that she [Alice] gave me one [of] your likeness when we parted? Though it is an imperfect one, I cannot help
looking at it ten times a day, I think the mouth is the best part of it, and therefore I use to kiss it in preference. Tell not Alice how thankful I am, for I intend to do it my self one of these days. Whenever I can take hold of Malbone you shall certainly have my likeness, perhaps I shall soon be obliged to go to Philadelphia.... 19

An unsigned and undated miniature of James Brown, probably painted in the 1820's, is owned by The Anne-Mary Brown Memorial at Brown University, but this miniature is definitely not by Malbone.

John Brown owned an unusual plaque of a profile view of General George Washington (Fig. 60). This plaque is cast plaster and shows in relief Washington's face and shoulder. The background color is chocolate and the figure is white. While the origin of this plaque is unknown, probably a French manufactory is the most likely source.

Four large marble busts graced the interior of John Brown's mansion on the hill. They rested upon grey marble plinths that surmounted carved wooden columns set into the surface of the walls. Two columns surmounted by busts flanked the entrance hall, and two more flanked a wide doorway in the large southeast drawing room (Fig. 61). Tradition states that these were ordered from France by John Brown, and two more busts that once surmounted two exterior gateposts were supposed to have come from Versailles. The origin of these busts will probably never be known, but possibly John Francis purchased them in France in 1792. The journal that he kept for Abby described in great detail much of the sculpture he saw, and he remarked "Every beauty that a gate or arch of stone can admit is here expressed." 21

Three smaller pieces of wooden sculpture are probably of American origin. Carved, polychrome portrait busts of
the English poet Milton (Fig. 62) and Pallas Athena were probably used in chimney pediments or doorway pediments. A carved mahogany bust of Milton, attributed to Simeon Skillin, is part of the pediment decoration on a secretary desk and bookcase in the Beverly Historical Society. But John Brown's bust of Milton, and the Athena bust, are both notably different in treatment from the attributed Skillin bust. A carved wooden keystone resembles the face of the Milton bust and is probably the work of the craftsman who carved the portrait bust of the poet's likeness. The third piece of wood sculpture is a carved squirrel with its original grey paint (Fig. 63). This squirrel is related to the motif in a French wallpaper that hung in the Brown mansion (Fig. 64), and was probably displayed in the same room with it.

John Brown either ordered wallpapers from France or John Francis selected them in 1792 on his visit to Paris. Eleven samples of different patterns of wallpaper have been saved by descendants, and were probably used in the mansion on the hill. All of these papers are owned by the Herreshoff descendants, but a fragment of the squirrel wallpaper was also found among Francis family papers and inscribed on the back of it was "Paper from drawing room of my great-grandfather's house on Power St. [mansion on the hill] Sally Francis 1931." All of these wallpapers are neo-classical in style and printed in deep, vibrant pastel colors. The paper with the squirrel motif is stamped on the back "Manufacture des Sr. Barabe et Cie Place et peint d'or - 21 fevrier -." The other papers are not marked, but three of them closely resemble dated Réveillon wallpapers made in Paris between 1780 and 1783. (Fig. 65)

A large assortment of textiles made in the second half of the eighteenth century is now owned by a number of
Brown family descendants. Some of these are small pieces of material, some are recognizable parts of bed hangings, others are large miscellaneous pieces, and several are totally unused ends of bolts. Some fragments of red and blue moreen are the earliest type of cloth owned by the Browns that survives. Two pieces of blue and white English copperplate printed cotton of two different patterns were once bed "furniture." One set of hangings had a fringe that bound the edges, while the other had a scalloped, solid fabric border. A large cotton bed quilt has a light brown background with light brown fringe; the printed design consists of crimson and blue floral swags with bowknots and tassels.

Pieces of delicate white gauze with brilliant hand-painted flowers and vines covering them might be Chinese in origin. The particular shaping of these pieces of cloth suggests that they might have been used to drape a dressing table. A large piece of green silk damask is of French manufacture and might have been used as either a dress fabric or an upholstery fabric. Finally, several floral silk brocades, probably of French manufacture also, might have been among the silks that John Brown asked Simeon Smith to bring back from France in 1781 for his daughter's gowns.
Notes on Chapter V

1 In 1805 The Boston Directory (Boston: Sampson & Murdock Co.) contained the following listing: "Molineux & Cook/Hardware/23 Union Street." The directories of 1806, 1807, and 1809 listed: "John Molineux/Hardware/23 Union Street."

2 Fede, p. 41.


4 Eleanore B. Monahon, "John Brown's Dinner Set," Rhode Island History, 12, No.3 (1953), 70.


7 In June, 1776, John Hancock commissioned Charles Willson Peale of Philadelphia to paint two large oil portraits of George and Martha Washington. This commission was noted in Peale's diary. The portraits were begun in June and finished the following fall. See John Hill Morgan and Mantle Fielding, The Life Portraits of Washington and Their Replicas (Phila.: Printed for the Subscribers, 1931), p. 25. These paintings were taken to Boston and today the portrait of General Washington commissioned by Hancock is owned by The Brooklyn Museum. The companion portrait of Mrs. Washington has never been located.

Between November 9 and November 27, 1776, Peale made a replica on canvas of the Hancock portrait of Washington. This replica was commissioned by "a French Gentleman" and is recorded in Peale's diary. Until 1965, this replica was thought to be lost, but a painting purchased by Lansdell K. Christie in London, July, 1965, was believed at that time to be the replica for the French Gentleman. See Charles Coleman Sellers, "The 'French Gentleman' and the Washington portraits of 1776," Antiques, 89, No.2 (1966), pp. 249-255.

119

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Once Hancock's paintings were taken to Boston, they were copied several times. Samuel King, the Newport portraitist is thought to have worked on some copies. General Nathaniel Greene of Rhode Island wrote to Washington on Sept. 1, 1778: "I intend to have your picture. And Mr. Hancock has promised me a copy of that he has in Boston. He gave one to Count d'Estaing, and I never saw a man so glad at possessing his sweetheart's picture, as the Admiral was to receive yours." Fielding and Morgan, p. 44. The Pennsylvania Packet of November 10, 1778, cited an "Extract of a letter from a gentleman on [sic] Rhode Island dated October 11, 1778":

Monday se'ennight, a large company of gentlemen and ladies dined on board the Languedoc, at the invitation of the Count D'Estaing. The entertainment was highly elegant. A picture of General Washington at full length, lately presented to the County by General Hancock, was placed on the center of the upper side of the room, the frame of which was covered with laurel.

Charles Coleman Sellers has suggested in the article cited above, that possibly this "gentleman on Rhode Island" was John Brown, and that Samuel King had copied the Washington portraits now owned by a Herreshoff descendant. These portraits do not appear to be by the hand of Peale, but that does not preclude their having been a gift to Brown from Washington, as family tradition states. To date it has been impossible to say who the artist was; although the one of Mrs. Washington is more accomplished and more closely resembles the work of Peale than does the companion portrait of the General.

8 Brown Papers, John Brown to James Brown, Jan. 12, 1800.

9 Brown Papers, "Manifest of the cargo on bord the Ship General Washington of Providence american built burthen... tons by Register, Jonathan Donnison, master, from Canton in China, having touched, at St.Eustacia being the port from Whence she last sailed/Providence, June 7, 1791."

10 See cover illustration of Rhode Island History, 5, No.4 (1946).

11 Francis Alexander was born in Killingly, Connecticut, in 1800. He studied in New York City, and began his career in Killingly, working in Providence in the early 1820's. In the 1830's and 1840's he lived in Boston and was a successful artist there. In 1853 he went to Florence where


13 Burford was an English mezzotint engraver born in 1710. He executed a few plates of landscapes and hunt scenes, but was best known as an engraver of portraits. He died in 1770. See George C. Williamson, Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers (London: George Bell & Sons, 1903), I, p. 215.

14 John Bowles was a printseller in London, Black Horse, Cornhill; and in the Strand over against Devereux Court, without Temple Bar, 1709. See Henry R. Plomer, A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 65.


16 Jean Pillement was born in 1728 at Lyons, France and came to live in London in 1763. He painted oil landscapes and fancy subjects. In 1780 he moved back to France and became the painter to Marie Antoinette and the last king of Poland. His paintings were engraved by eminent engravers like Canot, Revenet, and Woollet. Williamson, IV, p. 119.

17 Jean Rigaud was born in Paris in 1700. He painted landscapes and appears "to have spent some time in England, as he etched some views in the environs of London." Williamson, IV, p. 235. Maria Anna Angelica Catharina Kaufmann was born in England in 1747. She was a painter and etcher, and in 1754-1765 lived in Italy where she copied many of the works of the great masters. In 1765 she moved back to England and in 1781 married Antonio Zucchi, the Venetian painter. She died in Rome in 1807. Williamson, III, p. 124.


20 The marble bust pictured in Figure 61 is Apollo. For the Greeks, he was the god of goodness, beauty, and harmonious peace, the preserver of law and order, and the bringer of catharsis. As an archer he punished the arrogant. This marble depiction represents him as an archer, with quiver and arrows over his left shoulder. The other bust in this room is the figure of Diana, the Roman moon goddess, depicted with a crescent atop her head.

21 Brown-Francis Papers, Diary of John Francis


23 Rhode Island History, 23, No.3 (1964), cover illustration. This keystone was originally part of the frame of a large Palladian window in the rear of John Brown's mansion built in 1786.

Chapter VI

Assistance From James Brown and John Francis

In earlier chapters the travels of James Brown and John Francis have been mentioned. The suggestion was made that the observations both these men made for John Brown had considerable influence on his choice of possessions and personal taste. A closer look at what both of these young men did, where they travelled, what they observed and related, will bring us to more specific conclusions about their roles.

James made his first trip to Philadelphia in 1782 when he was nineteen. The responsibility and faith that his father placed in him at that youthful age can be seen in a series of letters written in the fall of 1782. One of the initial requests that John Brown made of his son was that he purchase a chariot. James ordered the vehicle to be made and in a letter to his father he compared it to a similar one that was being built in Philadelphia for "Mr Nathaniel Tracey of Newburyport." Mr. Tracey's chariot was to cost £400. Without his father's approval, James was hesitant to dictate the degree of elegance and "Stile" for the new vehicle; but he did not question the fact that it must be in the current "Fashion." He wrote to his father in October 1782:

I believe I shall not have yours finished till I know if you will not have it in as elegant a Stile as his. I find the Body as neat & gentell as I expected. painted a Sky blue, which is T[n] at Present, tis larger than common[.] they tell me I must
have four horses to get it to N. England.
...the only difference between Mr T's chariot & ours I will describe as well as I can....The c. is turn'd in a much shorter space. 'tis the Fashion, 'tis extravagant - but I would have it.

In regard to the horses that would be needed for the new chariot, John Brown wrote to his son:

Alltho I mentioned to you that I would not exceed 400 or 500 Dolrs for a span of Horses[,] yet nevertheless if you should see a span that are Eligant as well as Possessed with Every other Good Quality and you think are worth more, you are at your Liberty to use your own prudence in the purchase.

In early November 1782, John Brown wrote again.

Dr Son
My last was by the Last Post since which I have not received any of yours....I then mentioned that I was sorry you should wait a moment for any advice or Directions from me Respecting the finishing the Charriot but that you had Given such Directions as you thought best both in point of its being durable[,] Convenient or Eligant, or to this Effect, I also Left it intirely to your Judgment Respecting the purchase of a pr. Horse Even if the Price Exceeded what I mentioned when you left me.

James Brown willingly assumed the responsibility that his father continued to place upon him and he finally purchased a pair of horses for $800. In this instance James certainly used the "Liberty" his father had given him.

James was not only expected to make purchases for his father, but he was asked to make observations in addition. Both personal and business interests must have been on John Brown's mind when he wrote to James:
P.S. I have not time to Read what I have wrote, your Descriptions are pleasing, Continue them, Even more lengthy, if convenient, what number of Houses & Soules is the present Estimate of Philade[,] how many Vessils are built there, how large, what price per ton Does a Good Ship Cost. I mean the Hulls including Iron Work or not, but exclusive of rigging & sails.

John Brown was most interested in trading centers, and Baltimore was one town that he did not want James to miss. The information Brown had already collected in regard to this place provides an excellent example of what concerned him most. On November 26, 1732 he wrote to James:

If you chose to make so Early Mornings you could soon see that most Flourishing Markantile Town[,] I mean Baltimore, it will soon be the Gratest Trading Town in America. I am Jest now told that a French officer has said that between the time of the French army going Through that place for Virginnia & their Return back their was 150 Dweling Houses Built, if this is True, its the Most Rappid Groath that History gives any acct. of under simmuler surcumstances, only consider a young Country Jest Immerging from Obscurity and in the [wake] of a warr with the most Powerfull Nation on Earth and at the moment when the Currency of the Country was but Jest beginning to be Fixed, yet not withstanding all these Obstacles a small Town of not more than 500 Houses should Increase 150 Houses, Is it Possible, ad to this a See Captain not Long Since told more[.] He returned here from Virginnia and Came through Baltimore & Philadelphia and [said] that their was more shiping at the Former Then the Latter[.] you must not Expect to hear much in Favour of this new Rivel Town from the Philadelphians they[,] as its naturel to Human Frayelty[,] can't Bare to hear any Preference Given against their own City.
James Brown must have sent his father many accounts of places, people, and personal impressions. Just such an account was written in the fall of 1782 when James stopped at Verplank's Point on his way to Philadelphia. In his travel journal he made the following note:

The American Army were...stationed at Verplank's Point on the Hudson During the Summer of 1782. James Brown was there several days....The French Army under the Orders of Genl. Rocambeau were then returning from the Seige of York & were at Cranberry Pond -- I dined at the Table of Washington with the principle Generals of both [American and French] armies.7

During this visit James received a letter of introduction from General George Washington to Mrs. Washington at Mount Vernon. Whether he ever went there and had occasion to use it is unknown.

In 1782 and 1783 James was entertained by the elite of Philadelphia. Certainly he viewed the interiors of many elegant homes. On November 18, 1782 he wrote to his sister Abby:

I am more than ever convinced how...Manners ...are necessary to those who appear in high Life -- & I am afraid tis too late for me to acquire them[.] I never felt the Want of them more than when I was at the M[inister][s of France, the French do exceed all the people in the World for Ease & Dignity of Manner -- you'll receiv[e] an Acct. of that Day Entertainment by A Genl. Varnum, if it does not miscarry....I have a Letter from Mr. Morris to Dine four Days hence. I am told that he lives in the most elegant stile. that his Table exceeds the Ministers of France in Variety of Dishes & Neatness of Plaite.8

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Another glimpse of the company James mingled with on his trip can be seen in a letter he wrote to his sister Salley from Baltimore on February 12, 1783.

I have dined with Mr. Buchanan[.] There was a large Party Europeans & Americans -- The Ambassador Mr. Jefferson was of the number -- he gives it as his opinion that Baltimore will never be a very large Town -- that this State being intersected with so many Places fortunately situated for Commerce, no one Market can ever engross [a] much larger Share of the Trade than the others.9

In 1786 James took another trip southward. This time he visited the Byrd family at Westover on the James River and was impressed by "this Blessed abode of Elegance & Taste."10 The room in which he slept was "furnished elegantly with crimson Damask, some fine Pictures -- one, a naked Venus, reclines on the grass under the Trees by a wandering brook."11

James was also familiar with other homes in Virginia and his observations of these mansions might have had some influence on John Brown when he decided to build a three-story, Georgian mansion in 1786.

We know that James travelled for his own pleasure and observed things for his father's information. James made it clear to his father though that he was not interested in joining the family business. What then did James Brown do with the time he spent in Providence? A partial answer to this query might be found in the part James may have played in the design and building of the family mansion in 1786. Joseph Brown has been believed to have been the architect of the new house.12 He was an architect and was responsible for several buildings in Providence, including the First Baptist Meeting House and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
University Hall at Brown University. Furthermore, Joseph owned James Gibbs' Book of Architecture (1728) and Abraham Swan's Designs (1745), both of which provided ideas for the interior work of the house. In 1768 the Providence Library Company Catalogue listed Batty Langley's Builder's Compleat Assistant (1738) and William Salmon's Palladio Londonensis (1734). However, Joseph died in December 1785, several months before ground was broken for the new house. The possibility that James worked on the design and plans for the house along with his uncle before December 1785 is suggested by the fact that he ordered two architectural books from London in 1784. The "Original Invoice of Jas Brown's Books 1784" listed two hundred and seventeen volumes requested among which were "Ware's-Palladio," "Palladio's Architecture," and "A complete Body of Architecture with cutts by Inigo Jones." A note on the outside of the invoice stated "There is no Body of Architecture by Inigo Jones only Designs in Architecture." James was mistaken about a specific title he ordered, and while he hoped to obtain three new architectural books not yet available in Providence, he only received two.

A second provocative fact that suggests the involvement of James in this building adventure is contained in his "Memo Book" kept in 1786:

Memo. was absent from Providence ye 14th to ye 31st of May.
Mr [George] Cabots house 52 by 44
largest Room 23 by 22 Feet Ceiling
10½ feet, Glass 17 by 11
Mr [Jeremiah] Lees house 64 by 48
Glass in the ________house 12 inch
by 18 inch
Mr [William] Bingham's house
60 by
ceilings 14 - 15 11 Feet
Glass - 30 by 18
largest Room 34 Feet long
an octagon shape....
These notes strengthen the possibility that James was directly involved in the initial plans and final building of his father's new house. The houses he noted and measured were in Beverly, Marblehead, and Philadelphia respectively. However, none of these houses specifically served as a model for the new mansion.

On several occasions James Brown dined at the home of William Bingham, to which he probably had entree through John Francis, who was Mrs. Bingham's cousin. In 1791 when he visited the Bingham's he took special note of the interior:

Yesterday we dined at Mr. Bingham's a large Party, I had not seen the Drawing Room since the Furniture was put up[.] It altogether is most superb, I can scarce form an Idea of superior Taste, neatness, Propriety & Splendor. Mrs. B. often enquires after you....16

Besides the family and social connections with the Binghams, there is a possibility that a business relationship existed between Bingham and John Brown.17

The fact that James bothered to make note of the Bingham's furnishings is important because he seldom made specific comments in his letters and journals. During the years 1783 through 1786 the Binghams had lived and travelled abroad. In 1787 they returned from Europe and brought back with them all new furniture and furnishings for their house. Before returning home, Bingham had written to Thomas Willing, his father-in-law, and asked Willing to sell all his silverplate, his set of "Nankin" tea china, and his looking glasses "for the most they will bring."18 The Binghams had spent much time in England, Italy, and France selecting their new furnishings. In comparison, we know that John Brown did not dispose of all his old, out of fashion
belongings in 1788 when he was ready to furnish his new mansion. However, he had contemplated sending James and John Francis to Europe to get furniture as has been cited in Chapter Two; but they did not go.

The plan for the Bingham's new house had been drawn in England. Bingham had sent it to Thomas Willing in Philadelphia and asked him to show it to as few people as possible because "it would only expose it to criticism." The house was three stories high, with the principle rooms -- a drawing room, a dining room, a card room and bed chambers -- on the second floor. James Brown recorded the "largest room [is] an octagon," so undoubtedly the house was of a design unique in America at that time. The Brown mansion was not built in this new style, but we do know that in January 1788, before the family moved in, John Brown had the second floor rooms partially furnished for entertaining. A bridesmaid at the wedding of Abby Brown and John Francis recorded:

Last Tuesday evening [I] witnessed the union of my two friends, Francis and Abby. I was present and officiated as bridesmaid in unison with Miss Francis and Stillman....On Friday, Mr.Brown gave a smart ball at his home on the hill. Indeed, it will be a most elegant place. We had four rooms lighted up on the second story -- one for supper, another for cards, and two for dancing. We danced in the large chambers of the hall and continued it through the door into the next room, which made the whole length of the house.

This ball occurred in January 1788, and the Browns did not move into their new home until the following June. With this insight, speculation could be made about the probability of some Philadelphia influence on John Brown's use of his second story rooms. His awareness of the
differences between Philadelphia houses and elegant Providence houses has already been cited in Chapter One, so it is possible that he adopted some Philadelphia customs.

The same young girl who attended the ball further commented:

The rooms are already genteel but will be elegant when finished and furnished. Two of the largest and most elegant mirrors I ever saw ornamented the rooms. Standing in the door which is in the middle of the partition you are just in line with them, so that at the head of the dance you can look down through a variegated crowd of sprightly dancers, and if you are a little elevated above the common race of mortals or chance to be made so by high heels or long feathers you can then have the pleasure of contemplating your image and seeing it reflected 52 feet....

These mirrors do not exist today. Perhaps the "mirrors" referred to were not rectangular looking glasses, but rather round, convex glasses. The "Catalogue of the principal articles of furniture and plate" sold at auction after the death of William Bingham listed a total of nineteen "Looking Glasses" of unusually large rectangular sizes, plus "2 Girandoles with mirrors" that were in the "front room upstairs southwest corner."22

Henry Wansey, an English traveller, visited the Bingham's house and wrote:

I dined this day with Mr. Bingham, to whom I had a letter of introduction. I found a magnificent house and gardens in the best English style, with elegant and even superb furniture. The chairs of the drawing room were from Seddon's in London, of the newest taste; the back in the form of a lyre, with festoons of crimson and yellow silk. The curtains of the room a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
festoon of the same. The carpet one of Moore's most expensive patterns.

The room was papered in the French taste after the style of the Vatican at Rome. 23

What Wansey meant by "after the style of the Vatican at Rome" is a puzzle, but the fact that Bingham had wallpaper "in the French taste" suggests another Philadelphia parallel to those French wallpapers put up in the Brown mansion.

Bingham had a wide assortment of marble busts and other types of figures on pedestals, including "2 Mandarin Figures." John Brown owned four large marble busts on pedestals, and the ship George Washington brought "2 moving mandarins" back to Providence in 1795, for either John Brown or John Francis. 24 The Binghams' entrance hall had not only six busts, but also two marble medallions in gilt frames. John Brown owned a much less costly and elaborate plaster cast medallion of George Washington. Binghams' "Drawing Room" had four gilt figures, plus two small busts on pedestals; John Brown's carved wooden busts of Milton and Athena might parallel Bingham's busts in function, but perhaps not in quality and cost.

The Binghams brought back from Europe in 1787 a harpsichord and a pianoforte. But John Brown owned a harpsichord by 1783, and a pianoforte by 1784. If the pianoforte the Browns owned in 1784 was the same one that survives today, it was new and of the latest fashion in 1784. (See Fig. 45) The Binghams had four mahogany knife cases in their "front room south" and a large mahogany sideboard with two large mahogany urn knife cases on it in their "Dining Room." These correspond to the two slant-top knife cases, and two large urn-shaped knife boxes that the Browns owned. Two of John Brown's square knife cases were acquired in Philadelphia in 1791. A pair of glass
chandeliers hung in the Bingham's dining room, and a third hung in the drawing room. John Brown's elegant paste and cut-glass lustre that was hung in his house in 1795 might have been equally as handsome as any of William Bingham's, but then John Brown only owned one that is known of.

One final example illustrates once again a specific parallel between the kinds of things owned by the very wealthiest of Philadelphia society, and those owned by John Brown, the wealthiest of Providence society. The Bingham's bought over 2000 ounces of plate in Europe. The following list is a sampling of some of these pieces of silver. In comparison with John Brown's silver, the evidence is that Brown had a similar assortment of forms of silver, though probably not the quantity of silver that Bingham owned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>oz.</th>
<th>dwt.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Dutch kettle with lamp</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fish Knife</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tea Urn</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Coffee Urn</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cake Basket</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Strainer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bread Basket old fashion</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 large tray</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Strainer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The function of John Francis as observer must not be overshadowed by the reflections and scattered notes of James Brown. John Brown relied on each man for different things. Francis had certain contacts in Philadelphia that allowed him to obtain specific building materials, or finishing materials, for Brown's new house. In the spring of 1786 Francis obtained advice from his brother, Thomas Willing Francis, at Philadelphia:

I wrote to my Brother sometime since, with a list of the Size & prices of Window Glass -- this I hope has got safe to hand in this -- Glass of 12 by
12 something lower -- the Size & Quantity you want can be readily had.

I waited on Messrs. Willing[,] Morris & Swanwick this afternoon -- the Dimensions of the mantles & Jams are various -- the former from 3.6 to 3.11 in the Clear[,] I mean the Width of the Chimney's Arch. The latter from 2 ft. 8 in. to 3 ft. 2 in. in height -- White, lead, blue & mustard are the different Colours -- there are about ten or twelve remaining unsold -- the handsomest were pick't out soon after they arrived -- Swanwick still asks the enormous price of £9:00:00 -- altho there is no Hearth pieces with them, simply the mantles & Jams -- Several pérsers were looking at them this afternoon & a Competition of purchasers might have made him hard in his terms -- I will take someother opportunity of talking with him on the subject --

With the Respect to the Stone Cutter I believe it would be impracticable to get a person who really understood the Business to leave this [city as] a good Tradesman is always in demand & more encouragement is given here than in any other part of the Continent[]. If you have the Dimensions of all the Stone Work particularly taken, which may with ease be done[,] the precise expense of cutting it may be immec[iatel]y ascertained. plain work on our stone is done at 5/[, pr foot -- moulding 6/pr ft.]

Within little more than a week Thomas Willing Francis made a purchase for John Brown and on June 9, 1786 he wrote:

I have Shipt by Capt Ambrose the Remainder of the Tea, being four Chests with sundry other Articles as pr Bill of Lading -- I have sent you one sett of Chimney Pieces with Tiles for the hearth they are not well polish'd but the marble is good 'tis only as a Tryal -- Swanwick expects some handsome Setts soone, when they arrive I will advise you.

Almost two years later the Brown's house was almost finished, but some fireplaces were still not complete. On March 20, 1788 John Brown wrote to Francis:
Mr Francis Sr

I omitted Desiring you to Git a marvil Chimney ps. [piece] or arcetrive for the SW Chamber of the New House[,] with a Slab for the Harth, both [of] which you have Deliniated by Martin Simmons as Inclosed, Mr Allin[,,] the Stone Cutter hear[,] hav[ing] no marvel buy him, and I think its 10 to 1 if you can git one Reddy made at Philada[.]. I advise if it can be made soone, you'll Sett the workmen Immediately at work upon it that it may come & be put up if possible before we move in to the House, you'll also Send about 100 Toyle [Tile], the Brick are come & put onbord[,] Capt. Cook who is loading the sloop & I expect will Sail....

John Brown must have neglected to enclose the "deliniations" made by Martin Simmons in that letter, for the following day he wrote again to Francis:

I wrote you this day & Inclosed Martin Simmons Dementions -- of a Marvil arcetrive or Chimney ps. with Slabs for a Harth & a Letter fro Otis.29

However, Francis did not understand what John Brown precisely desired, for on March 22, 1788 Francis wrote from Newport before he sailed to Philadelphia

dear Sir

I had scarcely delivered my letter to Mr Ward before your[s] by Capt Cahoone was handed me with Martin Seaman's [Simmons] Draft of a Hearth & Frontispiece -- The first I perfectly comprehend, but the last rather gives me doubt -- He says a Marble architrave, 6 inches wide. The whole width 4 feet 5/4 Inches -- The whole height to the Top of the Harth 3 feet 5½ inches and the Plynth 5 Inches above the Harth. I wish you would describe it agreable to your Ideas -- Had he said the mantle piece or Jambs in lieu of those hard Words, then I might have comprehended him -- However, I shall endeavor to get it explained by the Stonecutters or Carpenters in Phila.30
Occasionally John Francis would make small, personal purchases for the Browns. In April 1788 he was in New York and he wrote to John Brown:

I have also sent 6 yards of the best black Sattin & 17½ yards of black Silk lace for Mrs Brown, the best in Quality I could meet with.

Finally, John Francis was not only a buyer, like James, but he was also an observer and reporter. In 1789 John Francis was in New York on business and Brown must have anticipated building an ice house on one of his properties at that time and desired some first-hand advice. October 5, 1789 Francis wrote to Brown that:

M. Pintards Ice house is in his Cellar dug out of a Rock -- 8 feet Deep and 6 feet Diameter, it is round and barely covred with Plank -- It cannot keep and Mr P. is determined on trying another Method....I send you some Peach Stones off his Place. They were fine cling Stones.

When John Francis went abroad in 1792 on business for the firm, he wrote to Brown from England that:

My stay in this Country has been longer than I intended, but the disturbances in France led me to conclude the Superior Time allotted to this Island would be so much gain'd -- Indeed I have not been Idle, and every information within my reach I have arduously pursued[.]. The Canal Business, I have minutely Studied, and the only objection I can see to their introduction in America is the Facility with which they can be executed & consequently the Doubts that will occasion -- For you have often experienced that those who have but little Enterprise cannot be persuaded that New project is not loaded with difficulties -- More of this subject when we meet.
James Brown and John Francis definitely travelled much more than John Brown is known to have travelled between 1780 and 1803. Brown knew when he asked them to make a purchase that he wanted the best or the finest, but it was James and John Francis who knew what was the finest by the standards of style centers like Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.
Notes on Chapter VI

1 Brown-Francis Papers, James Brown to John Brown, Oct. 9, 1732.


3 Ibid., p. 53.

4 Brown Papers, John Brown to James Brown, Jan. 21, 1783.

5 Ibid., Nov. 11, 1732.

6 Ibid., Nov. 26, 1782.


8 Brown-Francis Papers, James Brown to Abby Brown, Nov. 18, 1732.

9 Brown Papers, James Brown to Salley Brown, Feb. 12, 1783.


11 Brown Papers, Travel Notes or Diary of James Brown, Dec. 13, 1736.


13 Ibid., p. 558.
In 1734 when James Brown ordered "Ware's Palladio," "A complete Body of Architecture with cutts, by Inigo Jones," and "Palladios Architecture," he was probably referring to the following editions that would have been available then:

1 - Isaac Ware, trans., The four books of A.Palladio's... Architecture, (London, 1738).
2 - Isaac Ware, A complete Body of Architecture in which are interspersed some designs of I[nigo] J[ones] never before published, (London, 1756).

The "Palladio's Architecture" ordered by James could have been any one of a large number of various editions and translations. See The British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books - to 1955, Compact Edition (New York: Readex Microprint Corporation, 1967) 13, 721. The possibility of designs for John Brown's mansion having come from either of these books has not yet been explored, though other sources have been; see Downing, p. 557.

Brown-Francis Papers, Memo Book of James Brown, 1786.

Brown-Francis Papers, James Brown to Abby Francis, Jan. 22, 1791.

In 1788 Bingham wrote to John Francis and ordered spermaceti candles from Brown and Francis. He noted that he liked their candles because they did not give off black smoke which damaged the furniture. This letter is owned privately and was not available to be quoted.


Ibid., p. 157.


Ibid.

Alberts, p. 469.

Montgomery, p. 105.

Brown Papers, Account Book of the ship George Washington's Cargo - 1795. This account is in John Francis' handwriting.

26 Brown-Francis Papers, Thomas Willing Francis to Messrs. Brown and Francis, June 1, 1786.

27 Brown-Francis Papers, Thomas William Francis to John Francis, June 9, 1786.

28 Brown Papers, John Brown to John Francis, Mar. 20, 1788.

29 Ibid., Mar. 21, 1788.


31 Brown-Francis Papers, John Francis to John Brown, April 1, 1788.

32 Ibid., Oct. 5, 1789.

33 Ibid., June 1, 1792.
Chapter VII

The Social Peers of John Brown

No evidence has been found during the course of research to show that John Brown completely refurnished any house. He did not dispose of all his "old" belongings at any time to make way for new and more fashionable things, as his contemporary, William Bingham, the richest merchant of Philadelphia, is known to have done in 1786. If the majority of the objects that have descended in the Herreshoff family came from the mansion on the hill built in 1786 and occupied by June 1788, then we can believe that they form a reliable picture of accumulated possessions with which John Brown lived over a period of about forty years. The fact that John Brown was the richest merchant in Providence suggests that a comparison of his possessions with those of his social and economic peers may prove enlightening.

Although an inventory for John Brown's mansion does not survive, inventories for the houses of three of his contemporaries -- Welcome Arnold, John Innes Clark, and Joseph Nightingale -- do survive. A letter John Brown wrote from Philadelphia on February 3, 1800, recognizes these three men as his neighbors:

I have Recd. Yours of the...and am exceeding Sorry to hear of Mr.J Clark's Fitt and pray it may never be Repeated, Alarming indeed it would be if three of my nearest & most Respectable Neighbours should go off in that way [,] I mean Mr N[ightingale]. A[rnold]. & C[lark].

141
Welcome Arnold had died just the year before, John Innes Clark died in 1808, and Joseph Nightingale in 1809.

John Brown was unquestionably the leader of a certain elite segment of Providence society. He was the first person to build a large house on the hill, east of Water Street, then the principal street of Providence. John Innes Clark, also a Providence merchant and entrepreneur, approached Brown in wealth. In 1788 Clark followed John Brown's example when he built a large three-story mansion on the southeast corner of what today is Benefit and John Streets, just two blocks south of the Brown mansion. (See map p. 143) Susan Lear, on a visit to Providence, noted in June, 1788:

Friday morning, the 13th. We went to see a large house that Mr. Clark is building, and next to Mr. J. Brown's is the most elegant in this state. It is built three stories high and has five large rooms on a floor, with an elegant hall all through it. From this we went to Mr. J. Brown's. I will not do so much injustice to this house as to attempt to describe it.2

The Clark house, unlike Brown's brick mansion, was frame, and burned in 1849.3 George Washington drank wine and punch at both Mr. Clark's and Mr. Brown's during his 1790 visit to Providence.4

Joseph Nightingale also built a three-story, frame house on the hill in 1801. This house was across Power Street from John Brown's, but unlike the Brown house, it fronted on "Back Street," today called Benefit Street. Presently this house is owned and occupied by Mr. John Nicholas Brown, a descendant of John Brown's brother Nicholas.

Welcome Arnold was the only one of these three contemporaries who did not built a new house on the hill.
Map of the area around John Brown's mansion.

Compiled from Plates I and III of Henry R. Chace's, Owners and Occupants of the Lots, Houses, and Shops in the Town of Providence, R.I. in 1798, (Livermore & Knight Co.: Providence, R.I., 1914).
In 1795 he bought the old Sabin Tavern on Water Street, just one block north of Power Street. He restored this three-story frame structure after he purchased it. However, he spent most of his time on a very commodious farm that he owned in North Providence.

In 1796 the Duke of La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt wrote that

In Providence there are some rich merchants, who expend their wealth by living in a comfortably sumptuous style. Such are Messrs. Clark and Nightingale. I had a letter of introduction to them. The former received me very hospitably, and seemed to be a man of sound intelligence, and considerable information.5

The amount of plate owned by each of these men at the time of death and recorded in their inventories provides an idea of the relative wealth of each man. These inventory listings also exhibit the fluctuation in the monetary valuation given to one ounce of silver. Over a period of ten years the value of the dollar fell and then rose again, but for purposes of this comparison the fluctuation is not significant. In 1799 Welcome Arnold's 173 ounces of plate were valued at one dollar per ounce;6 in 1808 John Innes Clark's 151 ounces of silver, valued at $1.30 per ounce,otalled $196.30;7 in 1809 Joseph Nightingale's 200 ounces of plate, valued at $1.10 per ounce, totalled $220.00.8

In the 1802 Schedule of John Brown's estate no separate account of his plate was given, but on December 27, 1788 James Brown made a notation in his diary that the weather had been

a little moderated for two days, has been an appearance of snow. This day I weighed my Father's plate [,] make about 400 ounces -- snow on the ground, not good Sleighing in the country but about town.9
The libraries owned by these men are another notable point of comparison. Welcome Arnold's inventory listed "212 Volumes of Books, different kinds $75.00." John Innes Clark's "Library at the House" totalled 339 books valued at $148.20, plus 9 books in the "Compting Room" valued at $9.00. Joseph Nightingale had 250 books valued at .75 each, to total $187.50. Exactly how many books John Brown and James Brown owned is unrecorded, but it is likely that their libraries were combined into one collection, since James always lived at home with his parents. To date, The Rhode Island Historical Society has been given a total of 259 books by Herreshoff descendants. These books had belonged to both James and John Brown. All of them have original bookplates or signatures in them. Some of these books probably arrived in the 1784 shipment of 217 books that James received from England. Other books owned by John Brown belong to the Francis family descendants. When all of these books are considered, the library in the mansion on Power Street may have rivaled in size that of John Innes Clark.

The number of vehicles a man owned was another important indication of his wealth and status. In 1802 John Brown's estate included

1 Chariot 1 Coachee 1 Chaise 1 Sulkey & 2 Sleighs together with all the horses besides the 4 entered before which I suppose may be 4 in number besides my Sons horses & Carriages and my Daughter Francis's Carriages which are not included nor their Libraries by my Watch and apparel may be estimated with the above to make up a round sum

James Brown was frequently involved with the management of the family's carriages and coaches, and in the 1790's the Browns owned more vehicles than the number listed in 1802.
June 5, 1791 James Brown wrote to Abby Brown Francis that

Our Father is gone to consult with a number of Gentlemen on the subject of establishing a Mark in this Town - I have communicated to him the Proposal respecting the light Wagggon I have not got his answer, The horses I think the Family really want, but we must enlarge our Coach house & so must you to add another to our number of Carriages, which now consists of five four wheel'd, & three two Wheel'd Carriages -- however, I shall say everything in favor of the Plan and (or "as I") propose disposing of the old ones. Three if not four of which we might well spare - I have your Chaise body upon the english phaeton Carriage, I have been twice to Boston with it where it has been much admired....

Certainly these were years of prosperity for the Browns. The chariot listed in the 1802 schedule might have been one that John Brown purchased from Harrison Gray Otis in 1800 in Philadelphia. Brown was dissatisfied with the carriage he already had, and on January 10, 1800 he wrote to James that he

found it so Inferior in appearance to Every other Carrage that I bot. Mr Otis's Charriot at 125 Dollers...but it is so handsome a Carrage that I believe I shall do with it as Mr Otis was going to do, if I had not bot. it. I mean send it home as he was going to send it by water to Boston,...it is, I think Quite as handsome a Charriot as ours at home.

In 1799 Welcome Arnold had a number of vehicles and several horses, but his collection was not so impressive as the one that John Brown owned at the same time. Arnold's inventory listed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Horses</td>
<td>220.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Coachee with Harness</td>
<td>250.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Phaeton without Harness</td>
<td>250.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chair with Harness</td>
<td>50.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Saddles & Briddles 8.
1 Old Sleigh 12.
1 Chair Carriage & broken chair 30.14

At some date prior to 1782 John Brown bought a chaise from Noah Smith, a coachmaker of Providence. Welcome Arnold must have admired this handsome vehicle, for on July 24, 1782 he made the following agreement with Smith:

I have this day agreed to build Mr. Welcome Arnold a good new Chaise with Carriage [,] wheels [,] Harness & every other thing belonging to it Compleat, built in the best manner I possibly can build one and of the best stuff [,] every way equal if not better than the one I made for Mr. John Brown with Brass Rods round the Tops & front insted of nails, wooden Springs behind & Steele spring before Brass boxes and Iron Exetras and Brass Caps on the Hubbs to be finished Compleat [,] Lined with Such Cloth as Mr Arnold has Shewn me the body of the Sides with Superfine & overhead with coarser Cloth for Eighty pounds Lawful money, as Follows...

The chaise that Welcome Arnold owned in 1799 may have been the one he bought in 1782 from Smith for £80. It would seem reasonable that by 1799 this vehicle would only be worth $30.

John Innes Clark had a slightly different assortment of vehicles when he died in 1808, for his inventory listed:

1 Coachee and harness 300.00
1 Phaeton without harness 100.00
1 Chaise & harness 50.00
1 Old Chariot without harness 40.00
2 Large horses 180.00
1 Old Saddle & Bridle 2.50

In 1809 Joseph Nightingale's inventory contained one more vehicle and one more horse than Clark's:
1 Coachee & Harness 130.00
1 Phaeton without harness 140.00
1 Chaise & Harness 30.00
1 Chaise & Harness 25.00
1 Pair Bay Horses 300.00
1 Gray Horse 80.00
1 Old Saddle & Bridle 5.50
1 Sleigh 20.00
730.50

From the similarity of the three inventory listings cited above, and the closeness in valuations, these three men all appear to be of comparable means. However, the 1802 valuation of John Brown's vehicles still exceeds all, even when the value of his watch and apparel are taken into account. In 1808 John Innes Clark had a gold watch worth $37.50, but the inventories of Arnold and Nightingale do not mention watches.

The 1799 inventory of Welcome Arnold's possessions proves to be the least extensive, but he did own the greatest amount of plate. In a comparison with the possessions of Clark and Nightingale, Arnold's belongings are slightly less expensive on the whole, but he did have some expensive items that do compare favorably with those of his peers. His inventory listed eight looking glasses. The two most expensive were valued at $37.50 each, one at $24.00, and the least valuable at $3.00. His parlor must have been elegantly furnished as it contained "12 Mahogany Chairs ea. 7.50" totalling $90.00; yet the eight mahogany chairs in his dining room were only worth $1.75 each. The dining room did have two rather expensive pieces of furniture in it -- a sideboard valued at $30.00, and "1 Clock & Mahogany Case" valued at $50.00. John Brown must have owned a similar clock and case, for Arnold once made a reference to his own clock as being almost as fine as John Brown's. \(^{18}\) Joseph Nightingale owned a clock valued at $40.00, and Clark had an eight-day clock valued at $45.00.
In the southeast room on his first floor Arnold had "1 Desk and Bookcase...$25.00." The "Beaureau" in the parlor chamber was also valued at $25.00, an indication that perhaps both of these pieces of furniture were old, and possibly out of fashion. Arnold's first floor southeast room also contained "1 Sophy Bed & Bedding" valued at $30.00.19 The most expensive bed, bedding, curtains, and bedstead totalled $60.00, the exact amount of Clark's most expensive bed and furniture, and five dollars more than Nightingale's most expensive bed and furniture.

Joseph Nightingale's 1809 inventory is more extensive than Welcome Arnold's. While Nightingale had some very expensive possessions, his inventory reveals a wide range in the value of items. At least one looking-glass was hung in every furnished room, except the entries, and the kitchen. The ten looking-glasses he owned ranged in value from $30.00 to $1.50.

The parlor, like Arnold's, must have been quite elegant: Nightingale's twelve mahogany chairs were valued at six dollars each, and his two "sophetts" at $14.00 each. The carpet must have been of extreme size, and was the most expensive in the house, valued at sixty dollars.

The dining room contained a "sopha" worth $18. Nightingale owned a mahogany sideboard valued at $30.00 -- the same sum that Arnold's sideboard was valued at. These sideboards might possibly have been like the handsome veneered and inlaid one that John Brown owned in the 1790's (Fig. 43). The carpet in the dining room was only valued at $10.00.

In Nightingale's first floor back dining room he had "1 India Couch...$10." This couch was probably similar to the cane-bottomed, oriental couch that John Brown owned (Fig. 20). Perhaps the couch given to the Rhode Island
Historical Society by descendants of the Nightingale family, is the "India Couch" mentioned in Nightingale's inventory.  

Joseph Nightingale's first floor bedroom contained a mahogany desk and bookcase worth $25 and an unvalued mahogany dressing table. These might compare with the two similar pieces of furniture in Arnold's first floor south east room, both valued at $25.00. The carpet in this bedroom was worth only $1.00, and "the bedstead, etc...$25."

By 1783 John Brown owned a piano, but the original purchase price is unknown. In 1809 Joseph Nightingale had his "Old Piano Forte" in the lower entry, and it was valued at $50.00.

A note in the Nightingale inventory, after the contents of the third chamber on the second floor are listed, reads "Drawing Room not furnished." The Nightingale house, built in 1801, was modeled after John Brown's house, and had a similar floor plan. This note indicates that Nightingale had a second floor drawing room, and since he modeled his house after John Brown's, possibly Brown had a second floor drawing room and Nightingale copied this idea also.

John Innes Clark's inventory of 1808 is the most extensive of these three inventories but the contents are not listed room by room. Eight pages list "Furniture etc. etc. in the Dwelling House" followed by the items "At the Pinkey Farm (so-called)" and the "Kettle Point Farm (so-called)," an indication that Clark owned homes in the country just as John Brown and Welcome Arnold did. If Joseph Nightingale also had a country home, the fact is unrecorded at present.

Clark's inventory exhibits a wide variety of expensive and inexpensive things. There are "old" mahogany chairs, some worth only one or two dollars. Lolling and
easy chairs range from three to five dollars, and some cherry stands and washstands are valued at only two dollars. There are bedsteads made of mahogany, birch, and ash, and even a "Pine Toilet table" only worth $.33. Clark had "green chairs" that ranged from $.40 to $.50, and "1 stuffed settee" worth $8.00. An inexpensive set of chairs was listed as "1 doz gilt frame bamboo chairs $18.00."

Clark had ten looking-glasses that ranged in value from $40.00 to $1.50. Five of these looking-glasses must have been very large since their value ranged between thirty and forty dollars. Next to John Brown, Clark had the largest number of expensive "Large gilt frame looking glasses." In addition to his fashionable looking-glasses, Clark had a dozen "carved back mahogy damask'd bottom Chairs" worth $6.00 each. In one room he had "1 Sopha -- with Silk Covering...$30.00," "2 Sophitts - do...$35.00," and "4 damask silk window Curtains & Cornices...$40.00."

Clark had four pieces of mahogany furniture that, judging from the values given them, might have been older items. These pieces of furniture included:

1 swell'd front small mahg Beureau $10.
1 mahogy chest on chest drawers 20.
1 do small Bureau 10.
1 old mahogany desk & bookcase 15.
1 sett mahogy Dining Tables 24.

The one piece of furniture that might have been a blocked-front piece of furniture is the "swell'd front" bureau. In 1763 this form was probably what John Goddard referred to when he used the same term in a letter to Moses Brown:

I would know whither he means to have them different from what is common, as there is a sort which is called a Chest on Chest of Drawers & Sweld. front [,] which are Costly as well as ornamental. thou'l Plesse to let me know friend Bowens minde that I may Conduct accordingly.21

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Like John Brown, Clark owned a number of cases of both green-handled knives and forks, and the more expensive silver-handled knives and forks. However, while Arnold had "1 Lantern...4.50" and Clark had "1 Entry Glass Lamp...5.00," these are the only hanging lighting fixtures mentioned in the inventories. Apparently none of these men owned a "lustre" anything like the one John Brown purchased from John Hurley for $333.33 1/3 in 1795.

John Innes Clark had a number of large, expensive, "Brussels carpets."22 One was about forty square yards and was valued at $80.00, while another was worth $36.00 and measured eighteen yards. In contrast to these elegant floor coverings, Clark also owned "painted canvas carpets" valued at six and ten dollars each.

Little is known about the use of wallpapers in Providence in the last decade of the eighteenth century, but we know John Brown did have some elaborate French papers in his mansion (Figs. 64 and 65). Clark may also have hung similar types of wallpaper in his new house in 1788, for in his inventory there is listed "1 old trunk containing Remnants of paperhangg...1.50."

Clark's is the only inventory that contains any mention of paintings and prints. Scattered throughout Clark's inventory are:

- 8 Chinese Paintings 48.00
- 3 Prints & 2 Paintings 25.00
- 7 Prints 35.00
- 3 Pictures 3.00

He did not own nearly the number of prints that Brown is known to have had, but the above list does suggest a correspondence to some similar items that Brown owned.
Table I (below) reviews the correspondences and comparisons between these inventories and known John Brown items. This table is primarily a summary of the selected data presented in this chapter, and does not represent a comparison of the inventories in their entirety. All three of these men seem to have been living within the same economic sphere, and they all had similar possessions of comparable value. While the specific values for most of John Brown's possessions are unknown, an "x" in the last column of Table I indicates that John Brown had a similar item. We know that John Brown was of the same social level as these men, and Chapters Three and Five have demonstrated that he owned items encompassing a wide range of style and quality. We can conclude that although he was the richest merchant in Providence, his possessions did not materially differ in diversity of style and quality from those of his neighbors on the hill: he merely had more of them.

Finally, Table I indicates that John Innes Clark had more items of higher value than did Arnold and Nightingale, although Clark owned the least amount of plate. The conclusion could be drawn that Clark was probably John Brown's closest peer in Providence, if in fact these men, in all their wealth, do represent the zenith of taste and fashion in Providence.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1799 Arnold</th>
<th>1808 Clark</th>
<th>1809 Nightingale</th>
<th>Brown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plate</td>
<td>173 oz.</td>
<td>151 oz.</td>
<td>200 oz.</td>
<td>400 oz. (1788)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library (# of vol.)</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>259 (min.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6 (1802)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$37.50</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking-Glasses (#)</td>
<td>$37.50-3.00 (8)</td>
<td>$40.00-1.50 (10)</td>
<td>$30.00-1.50 (10)</td>
<td>x (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs * (#)</td>
<td>$7.50@ (12)</td>
<td>$6.00@ (12)</td>
<td>$6.00@ (12)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock &amp; Case (#)</td>
<td>$50.00 (1)</td>
<td>$45.00 (1)</td>
<td>$40.00 (1)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sideboard</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk &amp; Bookcase</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$15.00 &quot;old&quot;</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureau</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$10.00@ (2)</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed, Bedding, etc.*</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofa</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$30.00 (1)</td>
<td>$18.00 (1)</td>
<td>x (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofifts</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$17.50@ (2)</td>
<td>$14.00@ (2)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pianoforte</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$50.00 &quot;old&quot;</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lantern (entry)</td>
<td>$4.50</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>$333.33 (Lustre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpets *</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paintings &amp; Prints (#)</td>
<td>---- (21)</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(* indicates most expensive item listed)
Notes on Chapter VII


2 Lear Journal, p. 20.

3 Howard W. Preston, "Washington's Visits to Providence," The Rhode Island Historical Society, Collections, 19, No.2 (1941), 110.

4 Ibid., p. 113.

5 LaRochefoucauld, p. 143.

6 Providence County Probate Court Records, Inventory of Welcome Arnold A.1656, Will Book 8, pp. 413-415, 1799—hereafter cited as Arnold Inventory.

7 Providence County Probate Court Records, Inventory of John Innes Clark, A.3913, Will Book 10, pp. 333-336, 1803—hereafter cited as Clark Inventory.

8 Providence County Probate Court Records, Inventory of Joseph Nightingale, A.1617, Will Book 10, pp. 469-471, 1809—hereafter cited as Nightingale Inventory.


10 These nine additional books were probably Ledgers.

11 Brown Papers, John Brown's Schedule of Estate, June 8, 1802.

12 Brown Papers, John Brown to Abby Francis, June 5, 1791.

14 Arnold Inventory, p. 415.

15 JCBGL, Arnold-Greene Papers, Agreement between Noah Smith and Welcome Arnold, July 24, 1782.

16 Clark Inventory, p. 334.

17 Nightingale Inventory, p. 470.

18 This information has been supplied by Professor Franklin Coyle, Brown University History Department, who is currently writing a doctoral dissertation on Welcome Arnold.


20 "Brussels carpets" were of English manufacture and were first woven at Wilton about 1740. Kidderminster was another place in England where they were produced. The surface of a Brussels carpet was similar to that of an Oriental carpet, except it was woven and not hand-knotted as an Oriental. See Rodris Roth, Floor Coverings in 18th Century America (Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Press, 1967), pp. 35-37.
Chapter VIII

Conclusion

The question can now be asked if John Brown was recognized as a connoisseur by his peers and for that reason alone a leader in style and taste in Providence. Or did he set precedents mainly because of his social and financial position?

From the time of his marriage in 1760, John Brown bought furniture at Philadelphia and New York. The purchases he made outside New England were limited mostly to looking-glasses and chairs. Brown probably bought from Philadelphia and New York because it was convenient: he had established trade connections in those places. Boston would have been much closer, but the Brown's business with this center of trade was limited. Only miscellaneous items and looking-glasses were purchased there.

The evidence presented in the preceding chapters indicates that John Brown bought furniture and furnishings at two distinct times in his life. The first occurred during the first decade of his marriage, when he furnished his new house on South Water Street. Information in business records shows that many purchases were made through the family firm. The specific selection of objects was to some extent placed in the hands of one of the brothers, or a merchant in another port. In only a few instances has John Brown been noted as dictating specifically what he wanted. These examples are in his request for J. Sadler tiles, and in the easy chairs made by Plunket Fleeson of Philadelphia. Both of these requests...
represent a concern with fashion and quality. However, the Philadelphia furniture from this period that survives in the Herreshoff family does not represent the highest style or finest workmanship offered by the craftsmen of that city during the 1760's.

The decade of the 1760's was a prosperous period for Brown. By 1767 he owned 140 ounces of "wrought plate," and in that year his "Rateables" consisted of:

The Dwelling House wherein he lives 40 feet Front & 36 Feet back with the Lott whereon it stands 40 feet front wharf & a small warehouse back of the House. One old horse & one dry cow[,] one negro feller, Also one Negro more which am uncertain weither is 14 years old or not, 140 oz. wrought plate, a small piece of ground which is improved by him 50 feet front & 40 feet deep between Mr. Thos Greens Dwelling House & the Back Street but is owned by some person in England.1

In comparison, his brother Joseph's "Rateable Estate" contained only 72½ ounces of plate at about the same time.

The 1770's must have been financially more difficult years for John Brown. In 1771 he had broken away from the family firm and taken on added responsibility in his own business, and the war years were particularly difficult years for the people of Rhode Island. One should, therefore, not be surprised at the absence of recorded purchases during these years, or references to purchases in letters. Many merchants suffered great losses, both financial and physical, and John Brown was not exempted from such casualties. By 1778 "An Account of all the Rateable Estate belong[ing] to John Brown this 10th of Jan[uary] 1778. Exclusive of lands not in this town" listed "131 oz wrought plate mostly in the country,"2 suggesting that the plate had been taken to his farm in Glocester, Rhode Island for
safe-keeping. This account also stated the losses Brown had suffered since the previous May, at which time he owned twelve vessels and part interest in thirteen others. Since May, 1777, he had lost six vessels "most" of which he had owned.3

By 1780 John Brown had recovered from his losses of the previous decade and was involved once again in flourishing enterprises. That his situation allowed him to form a partnership with John Francis in 1786, indicates his increased success. His "Estate both Real and Personal" totalled £95,840:18:09 on September 6, 1785. This sum represented

the net Amount of My whole Estate excluding...My 5 Rites [Rights] in the Brick School House & 4 Rites [Rights] in the School House over the River is not Ch[arge]d with [the] above accoun[t]. Nor my Household Furniture[,] Cariges nor Horses.4

Less than a year later, his "Estate both Real and Personal" totalled £97,527:14:01½. At that time he also owned

5 Negroes now in Boston, 1 Negro wench, Household Furniture, Plate, Horses, Carriage[,] 5 Rights in the Brick School House over the River is not included in the above Estimate.5

In the six months between these two accounts, John Brown's estate had increased almost £2,000, and he had become more involved in trade and independent business pursuits. An indication of this involvement is found in a letter he wrote in November 1786 to his Quaker brother, Moses, in defense of the "guiney" trade. John stated:

I owe an Enormous Sum of Money in Europe & am Strive[in]g in Every Trade which Appears Lawfull & Right to me, to pay as Much of the Debt as possable Dureing My
Brown might have been in debt in 1786, but only because he was wealthy enough to become more active in Atlantic trade, thus placing himself further in debt.

The last twenty years of John Brown’s life were his most affluent. He bought new properties, built a large mansion, and bought much new furniture. In the midst of all this wealth, the question again arises whether or not he was a connoisseur. By this time James Brown and John Francis were assisting him, and he frequently trusted their judgment without placing specific requirements on purchases. The majority of the furniture he bought during this period came from New England, and mostly from the immediate area of Newport and Providence. Little evidence survives to indicate that he tried to obtain extraordinary pieces of furniture from Philadelphia or Europe. He did, however, own at least seven large looking-glasses, probably made in France, marble busts of classical gods and goddesses, and French wallpapers, but these items may have been purchased mainly because John Francis conveniently went to England and France on business.

John Brown projects in all of his correspondence the image of a man with strong principles and a determined will; yet in only one or two instances has he ever demonstrated an eager concern with the purchase of items for his home. The large number of objects he owned exhibit a wide range in both materials and quality of workmanship, thus negating any theory that he only bought objects of the highest style, of the finest materials and best craftsmanship.

If John Brown cannot be considered a true connoisseur who sought only the finest personal possessions, was he at
least by virtue of his wealth in the fashionable taste within his small elite circle in Providence? John Brown, John Innes Clark, Welcome Arnold, and Joseph Nightingale all owned items of similar form and value, but Brown owned more of each than his three close neighbors did. Like Brown, his contemporaries also had an assortment of old and new-fashioned furniture and furnishings. That they all built large mansions on the hill above Water Street is an indication that these men were looking to John Brown as an exemplar of fashion.

Perhaps John Brown's personal possessions during his later years were not only determined by the economic fact of his increased wealth, but also by the assistance he received from James and John Francis.

John Brown was much too busy to go himself and purchase items. It would seem only natural that James should have occupied his time with some pursuits, since he preferred not to join his father in business. John Francis travelled on business and also was in a position to make specific personal purchases. Certainly business, social, and family connections with Philadelphia determined some of Brown's purchases. Yet it does not seem that either in the 1760's or 1780's he preferred Philadelphia furniture to that made in New England since the majority of his possessions were of New England origin. Philadelphia parallels to his furniture and furnishings have been cited, and John Brown was aware of the tastes and styles there. His mention of the differences between Philadelphia houses and Providence houses (see p. 13) is direct evidence of this awareness. While James and John Francis might have influenced John Brown's purchases because they knew what was fashionable in Philadelphia, John Brown never consciously aped the high style of Philadelphia. He might have borrowed
an idea occasionally, but he was definitely an independent man with a mind of his own.

The lack of correspondence between Sarah Brown and members of her family is unusual. She has given her descendants no insight into her personality or her preferences. Eighteenth century practice placed the husband in control of the household, and usually the wife had little to say with regard to management of finances or purchases. The absolute silence of Sarah Brown supports this theory; but perhaps her Quaker background had some influence on her husband's taste and style preferences. Little of the furniture and furnishings owned by the Browns were overtly ornate, except the French wallpapers. In many cases, the finer furniture is notable for its simplicity, good proportions, quality of execution, and refinement of design and ornament. The wide variety of materials employed, craftsmanship exhibited, and stylistic range covered, suggests that to some extent functionalism and the selection of certain conservative craftsmen might have played some role in the choices of this wealthy merchant.

Whatever might have been John Brown's personal taste, style preferences, and likes and dislikes, he must have set precedents not only because of his financial position, but also because of the public respect held for his exemplary character and rare civic beneficence. He died on September 20, 1803, and great regret was expressed over the death of one who

by his zeal and public spirit, enabled the industrious man to provide for the support and comfort of his family. Property with him retained its best and truest use. It was not hoarded up with the avarice of a miser for exclusive enjoyment, but flung into circulation by his enterprising genius.
Characters of this kind are rare, and therefore their loss is to be more deeply regretted. Let the aged widow and surviving children and relatives of the deceased, derive consolation from the sorrow of a sympathizing public, the surest tests of intrinsic excellence and worth....He had lived long enough to reap the harvest of public gratitude and affection, for the many important services rendered to his native town...and his relatives may now experience genuine token of regret, at a time when sincerity and truth are powerful and predominant. More it is not in the power of feeble mortality to bestow.
Notes on Chapter VIII


6 The Rhode Island Historical Society, Peck Manuscript Collection, Box VIII, #10, John Brown to Moses Brown, Nov. 27, 1786.

7 The Providence Gazette, Sept. 24, 1803, p. 3.
Bibliography


Brown Papers, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

Brown-Francis Papers, Privately owned, Warwick, Rhode Island.


Chace, Henry R. A Descriptive List of All The Houses in the Compact Part of the Town of Providence, Rhode Island in 1779. MSS. typed and bound, The Rhode Island Historical Society: Providence, 1912.


Flather, M. Ralph. "Four Hundred Dollars for a Hat - When Inflation Raged in Rhode Island." Rhode Island History, 1, No. 4 (1942), 134-141.


167


"Little Known Masterpieces - A Block Front Chest-on-chest." Antiques, 1, No.1 (1922), 17-18.


"Providence Cabinetmakers of the 18th and Early 19th Centuries." Antiques, 87, No.5 (1965), 573-579.

"Thomas Howard, Jr.--Providence Cabinetmaker." Antiques, 87, No.6 (1965), 702-704.


The Providence Gazette, Saturday, September 24, 1803.


Rhode Island History. 5, No.4 (1946).


Appendix I

An Explanation of Colonial Currency in Rhode Island

Many of the sums of recorded purchases cited in Chapters Three and Five might seem inflated. This is a result of the devaluation of paper currency in the colonies throughout the eighteenth century. The amount of paper currency issued in Massachusetts since 1702, and Rhode Island since 1710, had continued to increase and hence drop in value since the amount of hard money, or silver, had not increased.

In 1749 the value of one shilling in silver had risen to sixty shillings in Massachusetts paper money. Hard money had virtually disappeared. In that year the English Government sent £185,000 sterling to the Province with orders to redeem the paper money at the rate of one unit of sterling for $\frac{7}{2}$ of the paper. After that little paper money was left outstanding, yet many merchants continued to reckon in terms of "old tenor [tender]" until the Revolution, generally at a rate of $\frac{7}{2}$ "old tenor" for one of "lawful money."

An illustration of this currency conversion during the 1770's is found in an undated table of coins "Engrav'd, Printed & Sold by Nат[hanie]l Hurd" probably about 1774. The print is only 6\(\frac{1}{2}\)" by 4 3/4", has an ornamental heading and bears no title. The body of the sheet is divided into two main columns, that on the left is subdivided into columns headed 'COINS, Weights, Value and Lawfull Money,' and the right-hand columns are headed, 'Silver Coins,
Weights, Value.' Below the latter columns is a table of the value in ounces of gold and silver. The first listing on the left side gives a Guinea at £10:10:00 Old Tenor, and 28/ Lawfull Money. This is the above stated ratio of 7 1/2 to 1.

If the Province of Massachusetts was indiscreet in issuing paper currency, Rhode Island might be considered downright reckless. In 1710 Rhode Island issued its first paper currency in the amount of £5,000 "bills of credit" to be outstanding for five years. In 1715 it issued its first "bank" in the amount of £30,000. The difference between these two forms of money was that bills of credit were secured by tax or levy, and banks were secured by mortgages on land. Previously one ounce of silver had been worth eight shillings in Rhode Island paper money. By 1731 it had risen to twenty shillings.

Between 1715 and 1786 there were ten banks issued in Rhode Island. These bills circulated throughout New England and were an important factor in the depreciation of the currency of that region. In September 1740 Rhode Island issued a bank with "new tenor" bills. This and following issues continued to circulate as "new tenor" until about 1756-1758. The borrowers of this bank were to make payment in the bills themselves, in silver at 6/9 per ounce, or in gold a £ 5 per ounce. These "new tenor" bills circulated at four times the face value of the "old tenor."

In 1751 the English Parliament had passed an act to curtail the use of paper currency in New England, but Rhode Island continued to issue bills of credit through the 1760's. Large emissions of old tenor bills occurred in 1755; and in 1756 the first bills known as "lawful money" were issued. In February 1769 Rhode Island still had a lot of paper currency outstanding, and the Assembly ordered that
for the payment of taxes six shillings of lawful money be reckoned equal to £ 8 "old tenor." While in Massachusetts the ratio of "old tenor" to lawful money was 7½ to one, the ratio in Rhode Island after 1756 was 26 2/3 to one.

In 1760 when John Brown paid £36:07:00 per chair for twelve chairs purchased at Philadelphia, this sum was apparently reckoned in Rhode Island "old tenor." If this sum is refigured into "lawful money" at the ratio of 26 2/3 shillings "old tenor" to one shilling of lawful money, these chairs cost about £1:07:00 each. Furthermore, the notes of the colony of Pennsylvania suffered comparatively little depreciation.
Appendix II

Data on Illustrated and Non-Illustrated Brown Furniture

(N.B. The number in parentheses that follows the object designation—i.e. Chair—indicates the number of items existing from a set or pair.)

Fig. 1 - Side Chair (2), Bannister-back
Probably Rhode Island
1750-1800
Maple (legs and back stiles); ash (bannisters—some replaced); painted black.
OH. 44½"; to seat 18½" W. 18 7/8" D. 14"

Fig. 2 - Side Chair (2)
Philadelphia
1755-1770
Mahogany, all secondary wood missing
OH. 40½" W. 19½" D. 15 3/4"
Front seat rail marked "III;" seat frame signed "Robinson." Inside back seat rail in chalk, "N B."

Fig. 3 - Side Chair
Philadelphia
1760-1775
Walnut; spruce (corner blocks).
OH. 40½" W. 20½" D. 15½"
Front seat rail marked "III;" Retains original needlepoint, slipseat cover, seat frame marked "III;"

Fig. 4 - Side Chair (4)
Rhode Island
1765-1785
Mahogany; chestnut (corner blocks).
OH. 37½" W. 21" D. 17 1/8"
One marked "V," one "III," and one "I."
Fig. 5 -  Side Chair (2), Ladderback  
Rhode Island  
1770-1790  
Mahogany, all secondary wood missing.  
OH. 37 3/4"  W. 21"  D. 17 1/8"  
Front seat rails and seat frames marked "VII" and "VIII." Seat frame "VII" is inscribed in ink "Brown_______."

Fig. 6 -  Side Chair (4)  
Probably Rhode Island  
1790-1805  
Mahogany; chestnut (front & back seat rails); cedar (corner braces).  
OH. 39 1/2"  W. 20 7/8"  D. 18 1/2"

Fig. 7 -  Arm Chair  
Probably Rhode Island  
1760-1790  
Cherry; pine (quarter-round, vertical grain corner blocks).  
OH. 43"  W. 24 3/4"  D. 18"

Fig. 8 -  Arm Chair  
Probably Rhode Island  
1770-1790  
Cherry; walnut (arms).  
OH. 40 1/2"  W. 22 1/2"  D. 17 3/4"  
Legs have been pieced on the bottoms.  
Flag seat is replacement.

Fig. 9 -  Corner Chair (2)  
Newport, Rhode Island  
1765-1795  
Dark Mahogany  
OH. 30 1/2"; to seat 16 1/2"  W. 30"  
One chair has "Brown" inscribed in ink on the slip seat frame, the other has "John Brown" written on the frame.

Fig. 10 -  Corner Chair  
Probably Rhode Island  
1750-1800  
Maple (legs, stiles, back rail); ash (stretcher).  
OH. 29 3/4"  W. & D. of seat 17 1/2"  
Painted dark brown; new flag seat.

Fig. 11 -  Lolling Chair  
New England  
1785-1800
Mahogany, secondary wood not exposed.
OH. 43½" W. 29" D. 21½"

Fig. 12 - Chair (2), Braceback Windsor
New York, Thomas and William Ash
1785-1800
Ash, pine, maple
OH. 36 5/8" W. 18 7/8" D. 21½"
Seats originally upholstered, but present upholstery not original.

Fig. 13 - Engraved label pasted on bottom of Fig. 12 reads:
"Thomas and William Ash, Windsor Chairmakers,
No. 17 John Street, New York."
It is known that "Thomas Ash, the Windsor chairmaker, listed above had a son Thomas who was a chairmaker, and it may well be that both this Thomas and William were his sons; it seems more probable, however, that they were the sons of Gilbert Ash, whose will of 1785, filed at the New York Historical Society, mentions three sons, Thomas, William & John."
In the New York Packet, March 3, 1785 is the following advertisement: "Thomas and William Ash, Windsor Chair Makers, No. 17 John Street, Beg leave to return their sincere thanks to the Gentlemen of this city and state and particularly to the Captains of Vessels, for the many favours they have received and would by the continuance of their commands. They have now ready at the Ware-House, a great number of very neat Chairs and Settees, some of which are very elegant, being stuffed in the seat and brass nailed, a mode peculiar to themselves and never before executed in America." See Ethel Hall Bjerkoe, The Cabinet-makers of America, New York: Bonanza Books, 1957, pp. 31-32.

Fig. 14 - Chair, Comb-back Windsor
Philadelphia, John Letchworth
1780-1805
Ash, poplar, maple
OH. 37½" W. 18½" D. 16½"

Fig. 15 - "J Letchworth" brand on the seat bottom of the chair in Figure 14. John Letchworth was born in 1759, and it has been noted he made no less than eight distinct types of Windsor chairs in addition to benches. See Bjerkoe, pp. 144-145.
Fig. 16 - Commode Stool  
Probably Rhode Island  
1750-1800  
Maple; stained with a simulated grain that is not original.  
OH. 18\(\frac{1}{4}\)"  Width to Top: 16\(\frac{1}{2}\)" by 15 7/8"  
Hinges on the top are missing.

Fig. 17 - Stand or Stool  
Probably Chinese  
1750-1800  
Bamboo, painted to simulate grain and knots in wood.  
OH. 20 3/4"  W. 15\(\frac{1}{2}\)" by 13\(\frac{1}{2}\)"

Fig. 18 - Sofa  
Newport  
1770-1800  
Mahogany (legs and stretchers); chestnut (front and back seat rails); soft maple (side seat rails); pine (top back rail).  
OH. 39\(\frac{1}{2}\)"  L. 98\(\frac{1}{2}\)"  D. 30\(\frac{1}{2}\)"

Fig. 19 - Daybed  
Probably Rhode Island  
1790-1810  
Cherry, primary and secondary wood.  
OH. 38"; to seat, 14\(\frac{1}{2}\)"  L. 76"  W. 26 7/8"  
Corner blocks of cherry are made in two pieces of quarter-round section with vertical grain wood.

Fig. 20 - Cane-bottomed Couch  
Probably China  
1795-1815  
Mahogany; unavailable for study of secondary woods.  
OH. 27"  L. 6' 6"  D. 31"

Fig. 21 - Side Table with marble top.  
Rhode Island  
1750-1770  
Walnut (frame), chestnut (blocks and interior supports).  
OH. 28 1/8"  W. 46"  D. 23 3/4"

Fig. 22 - Side Table, marble top missing.  
Rhode Island  
1770-1795  
Mahogany, chestnut (drawer interior).  
OH. 32 5/8"  W. 34"  D. 20 1/16"
Fig. 23 - Card Table (2)
Newport
1765-1795
Mahogany, soft maple (gate), chestnut (blocks).
OH. 28 1/2" W. 29 1/2" D. (closed) 14 5/8"

Fig. 24 - Table
Rhode Island
1750-1790
Mahogany, no secondary wood.
OH. 26 5/8" W. 23 1/2" L. 27 7/8"

Fig. 25 - Pembroke Table
Philadelphia, possibly Adam Hains.
1785-1805
Mahogany, oak (gate), tulip (drawer), pine (interior framing).
OH. 28 1/2" W. (closed) 21 1/8" (open) 42 5/8" D. 32"
On bottom of drawer is written "Repaird and Refinished in Spring 1925 by Mr. Oberg - Had dark stain same drawer pull."
Marlborough feet replaced.

Fig. 26 - Pembroke Table
Rhode Island
1790-1805
Mahogany and mahogany veneer, cedar (drawer), maple and pine (interior of frame).
OH. 27 3/4" W. 18 1/2" W. (open) 39 1/8"

Fig. 27 - Pembroke Table
Probably Rhode Island
1790-1810
Cherry, chestnut (drawer).
OH. 27 7/8" W. (closed) 18 1/2" (open) 42 1/2" D. 36 3/4"

Fig. 28 - Stand
Probably Newport
1775-1795
Mahogany; iron brace under base of column secures legs.
OH. 28" Dia. of Top 15 1/2"

Fig. 29 - Stand
Probably Rhode Island
1765-1795
Walnut, maple (block under top).
OH. 24 1/4" Dia. of Top 12 1/2"
Fig. 30 - Stand or Tea Table  
Probably Rhode Island  
1775-1795  
Maple  
OH. 26 7/8"  Dia. of Top 20 1/8"

Fig. 31 - Table with candle slides  
Probably Rhode Island  
Mahogany, cherry (block under top).  
OH. 27 3/4"  L. (of top excluding slides) 22 3/4"  
D. 17"

Fig. 32 - Stand  
Probably Newport  
1790-1805  
Mahogany, pine (drawer), chestnut and cedar (blocks).  
OH. 31½" (to lower shelf) 20" Top 15½" sq.

Fig. 33 - Fire Screen  
& 34.  
Newport  
1795-1815  
Mahogany  
OH. 61 3/4"  W. (of screen) 20 3/8"  
H. (of screen) 22 5/8"  
Finial and frame of screen replaced.

Fig. 35 - High Chest of Drawers  
Probably Rhode Island  
1750-1775  
Maple, chestnut (drawers).  
OH. 71 3/4"  W. (lower case) 37 5/8"  
D. (lower case) 19"

Fig. 36 - Chest of Drawers  
Probably Rhode Island  
1770-1795  
Mahogany, chestnut (drawers).  
OH. 39"  W. (at top) 51"  D. (of top) 25 1/8"

Fig. 37 - Chest of Drawers  
Possibly Rhode Island  
1790-1815  
Mahogany and mahogany veneer, tulip (drawers), pine (interior).  
OH. 40 1/8"  W. (of top) 44½"  D. (of top) 22½"

Fig. 38 - Desk on Stand  
Probably China; legs American.  
1750-1810  
OH. 46"  W. 30 1/8"  D. 21 3/8"
The legs appear to be a later addition and are possibly sassafras wood, a North American wood.

Fig. 39 - Chest of Drawers
Newport
1760-1790
Mahogany, chestnut (drawers).
OH. 34\(\frac{1}{2}\)" W. 34" D. 17.3/4"

Fig. 40 - Chest-on-chest
Newport
1770-1795
Mahogany, chestnut (drawers).
OH. 95" W. 44\(\frac{1}{2}\)" D. 23"

Fig. 41 - Chest-on-chest
Newport
1770-1795
Mahogany, pine (drawers).
OH. 87\(\frac{1}{2}\)" W. 41 3/4" D. 21"

Fig. 42 - Desk and Bookcase
Newport
1760-1790
Mahogany (light and dark), chestnut, pine, poplar.
OH. 106" W. 44" D. 25"

Fig. 43 - Sideboard
Probably Providence
1790-1805
Mahogany and mahogany veneer; yellow pine (frame and drawer linings).
OH. 41" L. 64" D. 28\(\frac{1}{2}\)"
Legs were restored after acquisition by The Rhode Island Historical Society.
See footnote, p. 88 for inscription inside center door.

Fig. 44 - Knife Box (2)
England
1790-1805
Satinwood veneer (on deal); mahogany bottom; silver on copper escutcheon.
OH. 16\(\frac{1}{2}\)" W. 9 5/8" D. 12 5/8"

Fig. 45 - Pianoforte
England
"Longman and Broderip Musical Instrument-Makers
No. 26 Cheapside & No. 13 Haymarket, London."
1780-1790
Mahogany veneer (on deal), rosewood and satinwood inlay.
OH. 31 3/8"  L. 61 1/8"  D. 21 3/8"

Fig. 46 -  Bed
Newport
1770-1800
Mahogany
OH. 85"  W. 60 1/2"  L. 81 3/8"

Fig. 47 -  Bed
Newport
1770-1800
Mahogany, cherry (headboard).
OH. 88"  W. 56 5/8"  D. 75 1/2"

Fig. 48 -  Sconce Glass (2)
English or Continental
1760-1775
Glass on wood (a tilia); brass candle arms replacements.
OH. 22 3/8"  W. 8 1/2"  D. 5 1/8"

Fig. 49 -  Looking-Glass
England
Sold by John Elliott, Sr., Philadelphia
1758-1762
Mahogany veneer (on spruce); glass; gilt and gesso.
OH. 52 3/4"  W. 24 1/2"
Glass appears to be original; has beveled edge.

Fig. 50 -  Label on Looking-glass in Figure 49.
This was the label used by Elliott between 1758 and 1762, when his shop was located in Chestnut Street. His labels were in both English and German, and on this early label he spelled his first name "Dschan" (John), instead of "Johannes", as he did on later labels.

Fig. 51 -  Looking-Glass
Possibly French
1790-1800
Wood (a tilia), gesso and gilt, glass.
H. (approx.) 50"  W. (approx.) 35"
These measurements do not include the crest and side ornament.
Fig. 52 - Looking-Glass and Painting (2)
Possibly French
1790-1800
Wood, gesso and gilt, oil on canvas, glass.
OH. 56⅜" W. 28½" H. (of glass) 21⅜"
W. (of glass) 22"

Fig. 53 - Dressing Glass
China
1790-1800
Wood, lacquer, gilt, glass.
OH. 33½" W. 16½" D. 11 5/8"
Appendix II

John Brown Furniture Not Illustrated In Chapter III

1 - Chair (2), Caneback
Probably England
1680-1700
Beech (sample used in microscopic analysis too small to determine if English or American beech.)
OH. 50 1/8"; to seat 18 1/2" D. 14 7/8"

2 - Chair, Bannister-back
Probably Rhode Island
1750-1800
Maple, painted brown.
OH. 41 5/8"; to seat 17" W. 19 1/4" D. 13 1/2"
Flag seat is modern, feet have been restored.

3 - Side Chairs (2)
Philadelphia
1745-1765
Mahogany, pine (corner blocks).
OH. 40" W. 19 1/2" D. 15 3/4"
One chair is marked "II" and one is marked "III."

4 - Side Chairs (4)
Philadelphia
1750-1770
Mahogany, pine (corner blocks)
OH. 40 3/8" W. 19 1/2" D. 16 1/8"
Three seat frames are marked "IV", "II", and "I".
One slip seat frame is marked "III" and inscribed "Brown, J". The slip seat frame from chair "IV" is inscribed in pencil "Robinson," and in a different hand is written "This chair was reupholstered & repaired in 1883."

5 - Side Chairs (7)
Probably Rhode Island
1770-1795
Mahogany, pine (only front corner blocks survive).
OH. 37 7/8" W. 21 1/2" D. 16 3/4"
Seat frames are marked "I", "II", "IIIIV", "VI", "VII", "VIII", and "XI".

182
6 - Side Chairs (3)
   Possibly Rhode Island
   1770-1790
   Walnut, soft maple (front seat rail).
   OH. 37" W. 21 1/2" D. 17"

7 - Side Chair, "Slipper"
   Rhode Island, probably Newport
   1740-1765
   Walnut, pine (corner blocks).
   OH. 35" W. 20 1/2" D. 16 3/8"

8 - Side Chair, "Slipper"
   Probably Rhode Island
   1760-1795
   Cherry; flag seat.
   OH. 33 3/4" W. 19 1/2" D. 15"
   Feet have been restored.

9 - Easy Chair
   Philadelphia
   1755-1770
   Walnut, (secondary wood not exposed).
   OH. 46" W. 31" D. 24" (approx.)

10 - Armchair, Windsor, (comb-back)
     New England
     1750-1800
     OH. 41 1/2" W. 22 1/2" D. 16 1/2"
     On the underside of the seat is written "J B" in chalk. Painted green originally.

11 - Armchair, Windsor
     Probably Pennsylvania
     1760-1800
     Maple (legs and spindles); ash (back). Painted green originally.
     OH. 35 3/4" W. 26" D. 17"
     "I. BROWN" carved in the top surface of the left arm.

12 - Armchairs (2), Windsor
     Probably Pennsylvania
     1750-1800
     Maple (legs), ash (arms); originally painted green.
     OH. 27 1/2" W. 22 3/4" D. 15 1/8"
     These two chairs are identical in form to Number 11.

13 - Armchairs, Windsor (2)
     Probably Pennsylvania
     1750-1800
Maple; originally painted green.
OH. 28 3/8" W. 22 1/4" D. 14 1/2"

14 - Sofa
Newport
1780-1805
Mahogany, white oak (back rails); hard maple (bottom braces).
OH. 37" L. 72" D. 27 1/2"

15 - Table, Dropleaf
Probably Rhode Island
1745-1775
Mahogany, chestnut (gates), pine (underframe).
OH. 26 1/8" Dia. of Top 42 1/8"

16 - Table, Dropleaf
Probably Rhode Island
1745-1775
Maple, chestnut (gates).
OH. 26 7/8" Dia. of Top 36 1/2"

17 - Table, Dropleaf
Probably Rhode Island
1760-1790
Mahogany, maple (gates), pine (underframe).
OH. 26 3/8" W. (open) 38 1/2" D. 40"

18 - Dining Table, Dropleaf
Rhode Island
1765-1790
Mahogany, chestnut (gates).
OH. 27 3/8" W. (closed) 19 1/2" D. 57 1/4"

19 - Dining Table, Dropleaf
Rhode Island
1770-1800
Mahogany, chestnut (gates), soft maple (innerframe).
OH. 27 1/4" W. (closed) 18" W. (open) 52 1/2"
The four straight legs on this table are stop-fluted on the exterior surfaces, and chamfered on the inner edge.

20 - Dining Table, Dropleaf
Rhode Island
1770-1800
Mahogany, oak, maple
OH. 28 3/4" W. (closed) 17 1/2" (open 52"
This table is identical in form to Number 19; it is believed to be the center section of a three-part
dining table, but possibly the ends were not made at the same date as the center section was made.

21 - Toilet Table
Probably Rhode Island
1750-1810
Pine; iron brace.
OH. 27  W. 42½  D. 23½
Painted greyish white.

22 - Stand
Probably Rhode Island
1755-1780
Cherry.
OH. 27 3/8  W. 24 1/8  D. 16 3/4

23 - Bason Stand
 Probably Rhode Island
1790-1810
Mahogany, pine.
OH. 35½  W. 18½  D. 17½

24 - Bason Stand
 Probably Rhode Island
1790-1810
Pine; originally painted.
OH. 40  W. 18 7/8  D. 16

25 - Stand
 Probably Rhode Island
1790-1810
Mahogany, chestnut (drawer interiors).
OH. 31½  W. 17½  D. 14

26 - Chest of Drawers
 Probably Rhode Island
1770-1800
Pine; painted originally
OH. 47  W. 51½  D. 26 3/8

27 - Desk
 Probably Rhode Island
1760-1800
Mahogany (drawer fronts and fall front), walnut (case); chestnut, pine, and cherry.
OH. 40 7/8  W. 36½  D. 18 5/8

28 - Desk
 Probably Rhode Island
1760-1800
Mahogany, chestnut, pine.
OH. 43 3/4" W. 36 3/16" D. 18 7/8"

29 - Desk
Probably Rhode Island
1760-1800
Maple (slightly tiger).
OH. 41 5/8" W. 38 1/2" D. 21 1/4"

30 - Desk
Probably Rhode Island
1760-1800
Cherry, chestnut (drawer interiors).
OH. 44 1/2" W. 35 3/4" D. 18 1/16"

31 - Kneehole Desk or Chest of Drawers
Newport
1765-1790
Mahogany, chestnut (drawer interiors).
OH. 31 1/2" W. 35 7/8" D. 20 1/8"
Mahogany, chestnut (drawer interiors) and the top
OH. 31 1/2" W. 35 7/8" D. 20 1/8" he front. The
top drawer is also fitted with compartments and
a writing slide.

32 - Desk Box
Newport
1760-1800
Mahogany, primary and secondary wood.
OH. 6 1/2" W. 23 1/2" D. 12"
An oval brass plate bearing the initials "J.B."
beneath a bear's paw crest is fixed to the top
of this box.

33 - Sideboard
Rhode Island
1790-1810
Mahogany, mahogany veneer, pine.
OH. 38 3/4" L. 55 7/8" D. 20 1/8"

34 - Sideboard or Huntboard
Providence
May 2, 1805
Cherry, pine (interior).
OH. 41 1/4" L. 47 1/2" D. 23 3/8"
Inscribed on the bottom of the lower right-hand
drawer (in pencil) is the following:
May 2nd 1805 Sideboard $19
Two Tables $17
One Stand $ 3
$33
April 1st 1805  
10th  
May 2 - 3rd
[another line added later in 1815 is illegible]
This small sideboard is related to several others
made by Thomas Howard, Jr. of Pawtuxet and Providence, ca. 1790-1828.

35 - Sideboard
New York, bears label of George Shipley (unexamined).  
1800-1815
Mahogany veneer.  
OH. 37 3/4"  L. 72"  D. 29 3/4"
This sideboard might have been originally purchased
by Salley Brown Herreshoff and Carl F. Herreshoff in
New York before coming to live in Rhode Island.

36 - Knife Boxes (2), Urn-shaped
England
Satinwood veneer on deal.  
Dia. (of body) 11"

37 - Bed
Newport  
1760-1800
Mahogany, primary and secondary wood.  
OH. 88 1/2"  W. 55 3/4"  L. 75 1/2"

38 - Looking Glass
 Probably England  
1720-1745
Walnut (frame), oak (backboard); glass.  
OH. 25 3/4"  W. 18 1/8"
Originally had crest, but now missing.

39 - Looking Glass
 Probably England  
1755-1785
Mahogany veneer on pine (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. 33 3/4"  W. 14 3/4"
Inscribed on the back in pencil is "College Glass Bo't of Mrs Timms 1787."

40 - Looking Glass
 Probably England  
1755-1785
Mahogany veneer on pine or deal (frame); glass.  
OH 28 7/8"  W. 17 3/16"
Inscribed on the back is "Point Pleasant Julia A. Herreshoff 2.50."

41 - Looking Glass, labelled John Elliott, Sr.  
Probably England  
1758-1762  
Mahogany veneer on spruce (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. 37½" W. 15½"  
This looking glass is identical to the one illustrated in Figures 49 and 50, except in size.

42 - Looking Glass  
Probably England  
1760-1770  
Mahogany veneer on pine (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. 47 5/8" W. 23 3/4"  
This looking glass was possibly originally sold by John Elliott, Sr. since the backboard that is thought to have originally belonged to it bears Elliott's label.

43 - Looking Glass  
Probably England  
1760-1780  
Mahogany veneer on pine (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. 44" W. 17"

44 - Looking Glass (2)  
Probably England  
1760-1780  
Mahogany veneer on pine (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. (frame) 34½" W (frame) 22½"

45 - Looking Glass  
Probably England  
1775-1795  
Mahogany veneer on pine (frame); gesso and gilt; glass.  
OH. 54" W. 25"

46 - Looking Glass  
Probably France  
1785-1800  
Gesso and gilt on a conifer (frame); glass.  
OH. 50" (approx. excluding top crest) W. 36"  
Carved crest includes bow-knot, cornucopia, flowers.
47 - Looking Glass
Probably France
1785-1800
Gesso and gilt on a conifer (frame); glass.
OH. 50" (approx.)  W. 37 3/4"
Carved crest consists of a basket of flowers.

48 - Looking Glass
Probably France
1785-1800
Gesso and gilt on a conifer (frame); glass.
OH. 52½"  W. 39"
Crest includes spy-glass and other nautical instruments.

49 - Looking Glass
Probably France
1785-1800
Gesso and gilt on a conifer (frame); glass.
OH. 59½"  W. 37"
A fifth looking glass similar in form and size to Figure 51 and Numbers 46-49 exists, but was not examined or measured.

50 - Looking Glass
England or France
1790-1800
Gesso and gilt (frame); glass.
OH. 36"  W. 17½"

51 - Dressing Glass
China
1790-1800
Lacquer and gilt on unknown wood; glass.
OH. 32"  W. 16"  D. 12"
Table indicating the Regional Distribution of John Brown's Furniture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Total #</th>
<th>R.I.</th>
<th>N.Eng.</th>
<th>N.Y.</th>
<th>Phila.</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Seating</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables &amp; Stands</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chests</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beds</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desks</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking-Glasses</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Furniture</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III

Messrs. Brown and Francis Account with John Hurley
India Point, November 3, 1795
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>For postage of two letters from Mr. Brown &amp; Francis</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in my journey to Philadelphia at the request of Mr. Brown &amp; Francis as per letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Of one red currant glass and paste box unopened</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laid in Mr. Brown's house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>To ship four packs of the said inguard</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said among my family proceeded at the request of Mr. Brown &amp; Francis as per letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said among my hand had given at 1989 August</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said in going to Boston for Mr. Gagean on account</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A pair Band for horse for said Mr. Francis on account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Gave in going to journeying A last of food upon A 1989 school</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vessels for procuring vegetables &amp; fruit &amp; for glass &amp;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paid admission to the glass house at last of food and</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expenses in going and sending on four men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paid the Connecticut P. New York and getting the boat and</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mov'd to the Philadelphia for Clay &amp; went</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Paid P. Bruffin &amp; Co. in New Jersey on the way</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Delaware Clay Bank for the Clay &amp; went</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Paid P. Bruffin &amp; Co. in New Jersey on the way</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said in going to Allegheny &amp; the Clay bank at Clay Springs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said leaving the Allegheny &amp; the Clay bank at Clay Springs and bargaining with the owner</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Paid in Philadelphia P. for coffee &amp; H.  &amp; to send</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Said waiting in Philadelphia till this date (by now)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In my journey to Pennsylvania, I stopped at the hotel in Middlebury, Conn. The hotel was in the town of Middlebury, where I met with the gentleman whose name I have not yet mentioned. He conveyed my family to the hotel at the request of Mr. Brown & Frane, as per letter Yes, I paid the hotel bill at Mr. Fane's request. During my stay in Middlebury, I saw several interesting sites and enjoyed the local cuisine.

On my way to Hartford, I stopped at the Bank of Middlebury. The bank was located in the town of Middlebury, and I met with Mr. Brown, who was a banker. He showed me around the bank and explained the workings of a bank.

On my journey back to New York, I passed through the town of Middlebury and saw the beautiful parks and gardens. The weather was pleasant, and I enjoyed the walk.

I found myself in New York, where I met with Mr. Brown again. He showed me around the city and introduced me to several important people.

On my return to Middlebury, I found myself in a hotel that I had stayed at before. I was greeted by the same friendly staff, and we had a pleasant conversation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event/Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1824</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
59.5
June 25
said to 2 hours for the mare
27 paid Mrs. Phillips for her two Davis the Glass
for
29 July 13 paid Mr. Phillips for the Glass
as Mr. Bower
29 paid 1000 for a guaranteed deal for a boat

From this date till my leaving Philadelphia being
engaged in unpacking the Glass, where it

The Glass came from London on the

From the note is lost my account of the

information of the mode adopted in England for

that men immigrating. It was considered by Mr. Evans

myself Tuesday to try every means to procure

a competent member of hands possible, which was

a great cause of the many journeys above stated

of the birth of the

20 said returning on your accounts to Princtown
20 Mr. D. Elizabeth Brown
said 2 hours for the mare
21 paid to New York
21 paid waiting at New York 5 days for the freight

Rich salt Glass, sugar beeswax Mr. Brown
paid Mr. Aldridge for Money due upon her
return, which was caused by her having a dis-
order and was jealously from her having caught

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 13</td>
<td>paid Mr. Allen for horse and shoes for the Geyphouse as per Bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>said for horse with a guaranty to take for an out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 16</td>
<td>from this date till my leaving Philadelphia being engaged in unpacking the rum, in order to examine the same; however, Mr. Francis wrote in London some 8 days after leaving &amp; (as it is but justice) I add after having received information of the mode adopted in England &amp; several booksmen in immigration, it was concluded by Mr. Francis and myself, therefore to try every means to procure a competent number of hands of possible, which was a great cause of the many journeys above stated of the tenth of this day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20</td>
<td>said returning on your accounts to Princtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>said 2 shoes for the mare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>said to New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24</td>
<td>paid working at New York 3 days for the fastest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>paid for Glass sugar basin Mr. Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 26</td>
<td>said Mr. Aldridge for horses help upon her return which was caused by her having a disorder and was fearful of her having caught the small pox at the farm &amp; was anxious she might be taken care of as I judged her in need as per Bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>paid a person half his expenses to Boston to try to induce Adam Gilmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28</td>
<td>212 days allowance at the Geyphouse for horse which was used for both Geyphouse, to the date when Mr. Brown went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 29</td>
<td>212 days allowance at the Geyphouse to the date when Mr. Brown went</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.