

The First Prophet of Freedom



LANDING OF ROGER WILLIAMS. From the painting by Chappel

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

THE various tercentenary celebrations which have been held in Massachusetts this year have revived public interest in the historical events of long ago, and have brought again to the attention of Americans the names of many men who are all but forgotten. Some one has suggested that the Bay State might well round out its tercentenary program with one more celebration of an important event which took place 300 years ago. Such a celebration would be held next February, for it was in February, 1631, that a man named Roger Williams arrived in Boston from England.

The only trouble with that suggestion is that Roger Williams is a man whom Massachusetts is little likely to honor with any special ceremonies, even though it would seem that after three centuries had passed all ancient prejudices should be dispelled and the harsh judgments of those far-off days considerably softened. At least, one might logically draw such a conclusion from these facts:

In 1635 the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony wrote upon its records the following: "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates; and also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction; it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next evening, which if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the court."

In 1628 the Massachusetts house of representatives accepted without debate a report by the judiciary committee recommending "leave to withdraw" on a bill by Representative John W. Hawkins to revoke the sentence of banishment of Roger Williams. Thus the Bay State passed up its chance to make a graceful gesture which would show that the spirit of intolerance which once characterized Massachusetts, the colony, had been succeeded by a more generous spirit in Massachusetts, the state, and it missed an opportunity to utter even this smallest thanks for Williams' service when at the greatest risk to himself, he dissuaded the Narragansett Indians from joining in the Pequot war against the colony which had expelled him from its borders.

But, quite aside from this question of whether or not the Massachusetts of today is likely to pay belated honor to the man whom the Massachusetts of 300 years ago considered dangerous, feared and sent into exile, is the question which one might logically ask as the result of recalling the name of a man who has been gone from the American scene these 247 years— "Why is the arrival of Roger Williams on the shores of New England important enough to justify a celebration 300 years later?"

The answer to that question may be found in these words "Roger Williams was the first prophet of freedom in America, the 'land of the free,' a man whose liberalism was not confined to religion alone but who stood staunchly for civil liberty as well." Surely in these days when Americans are becoming concerned about the liberties guaranteed them in the foundation stone of our Republic, the Constitution, to know something of such a man is worth while. Recently there has appeared a biography of him which brings out strongly the importance of this man in American history. It is "Roger Williams, Prophet and Pio-

neer," written by Emily Easton and published by the Houghton Mifflin company.

If Roger Williams had been no more than the pioneer, he would still be interesting and worthy of study. But it is in Roger Williams, the prophet of freedom, that our main interest lies, and with him in this role his new biographer is chiefly concerned. The year of his birth is uncertain. It was probably 1602 or 1603. The scene was in London on the edge of Smithfield where were held both the fairs and the executions of the day. His father was a merchant tailor, but young Roger does not seem to have had any desire to follow in his father's footsteps. He began the study of stenography and became an adept at writing shorthand, taking down sermons at Saint Sepulchre's church and speeches in the star chamber, the awesome and terrible court at Westminster hall, where offenders against the crown were summarily and secretly tried.

Williams' talent attracted the attention of Sir Edward Coke, the great judge and leader of the Puritans, who saw to it that the boy was admitted to the Charter house school. In 1623 he received his degree from Pembroke college, Cambridge, and became chaplain in the country house of Sir William Masham. Naturally a free thinker, he allied himself with the most extreme of the Puritans. Belief in the separation of church and state prevented his taking a parish in England and he resolved to come to America. He arrived in Boston on February 5, 1631, but soon found that he was no better off in New England than in Old England. So he went to Plymouth, the pioneer settlement.

The Plymouth people could not agree with his "strange opinions," so he went to Salem, where he was repeatedly summoned and finally banished.

It was in January, 1636, that Roger Williams was compelled to leave his wife and babies and tramp through the snow-covered forests. He was saved through the aid of Indians toward whom he had ever assumed a kindly and generous attitude.

Chief Massasoit of the Pokanoket Indians gave him a tract of land on Seekonk river, where he was joined by old friends from Salem, and a settlement started. But upon receiving friendly hints that complications were liable to arise with the Plymouth colony, he moved to the present site of Providence, R. I., and in June, 1639, started the settlement that was destined to become Rhode Island. The land there was given by his old friends, Canoncus and Miantonomo, sachems of the Narragansetts.

Williams soon had a chance to return good for evil for such was his influence over the Narragansetts that he easily prevailed upon this powerful tribe not to join the Pequots under Sassacus in their plan to destroy all the English settlements in that part of the country.

Williams, in 1638, assisted John Clarke and William Coddington in purchasing Aquidneck, or Rhode Island, from the Indians. He saw to it that the Indians were not swindled but liberally paid for their holdings.

In 1648 he went to England and obtained the charter for the Providence and Rhode Island settlements. While there he blossomed forth as an author of some of the "best sellers," producing "Key Into Language of America," "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience," and "Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered." Williams made such a hit in England that several members of parliament gave him a letter which was virtually a passport through Massachusetts upon his return in 1644.

In 1651 he was obliged to again visit England in order to obtain the revocation of the commission of William Coddington as governor of Rhode Island and Connecticut. He not only got what he went after, but found



ROGER WILLIAMS

some time to do some more writing. He returned home in 1654 and participated in the reorganization of the colonial government, and accepted the presidency of the colony which he held until 1658. In his administration he obtained toleration for the Quakers who were then coming to New England.

It seems a somewhat strange paradox that the settlers of Massachusetts, who fled from England to secure religious liberty, should become so intolerant toward others whose religious ideas did not agree with theirs. But it must also be admitted that the Quakers gave them plenty of provocation, for, unlike the gentle, peaceful persons whom we are accustomed to associate with the idea of the Society of Friends today, the Quakers of the Seventeenth century were firebrands and disturbers of the peace wherever they went.

Williams himself had little more use for them than did the Puritans. "Amongst Jews and Turks, Protestants and Pagans (with all of which I have conversed)," he wrote, "I never met with such a judging, censuring, reviling spirit as is the spirit of the Quakers." But, though he disliked them, he would not deny them the right to worship as they pleased any more than he would deny that right to any others who were driven out of Massachusetts because of their beliefs. Rhode Island had very little trouble with the Quakers, for the simple reason that they were allowed to talk all they wanted to, hence they had little desire to cause a disturbance. Just the opposite was the case in Massachusetts. The more they were persecuted there and their right of free speech suppressed, the more determined they were to exploit their views. There is food for thought in those facts in considering some present-day problems in America!

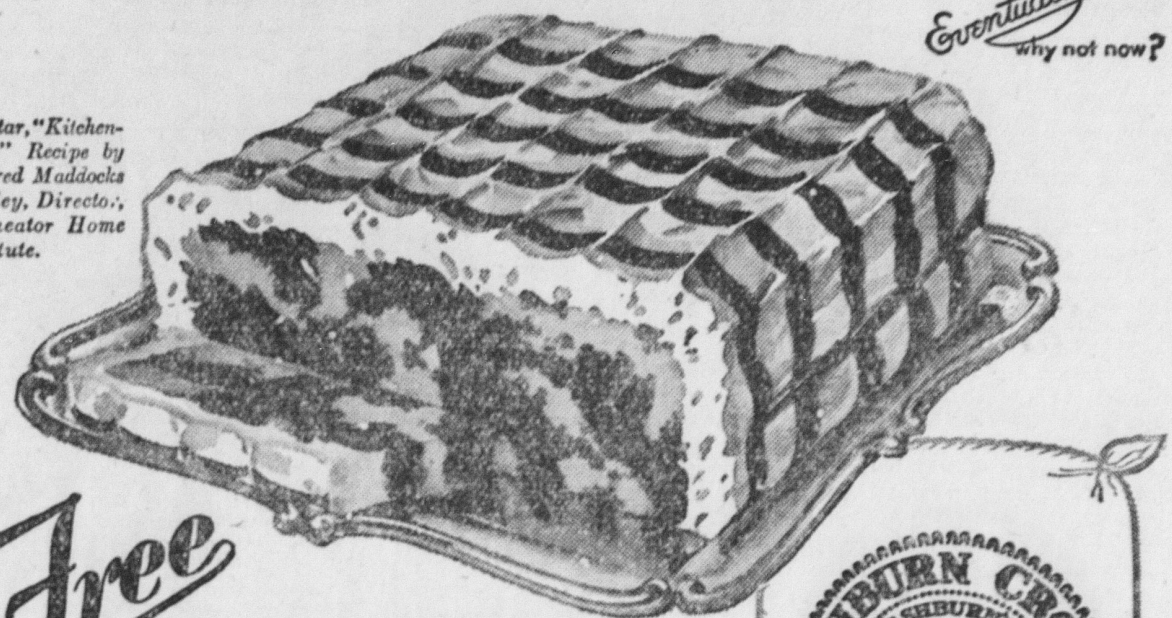
Not only did Williams stand firm for religious liberty in his colony but for civil liberty as well. He had revolted against the theocracy which ruled New England, and in revolting he rebelled against the magistrates as well as against the clergy. Eighteen years after he had founded his islet of defiant freedom he could boast, in a letter to Sir Henry Vane: "We have not felt the new chains of the Presbyterian tyrants, nor in this colony have we been consumed with the over-zealous fire of the (so-called) godly Christian magistrates. Sir, we have not known what an excise means; we have almost forgotten what tithes are, yea, or taxes either, to church or commonwealth."

A new charter was granted Rhode Island in 1663. This charter established such liberal republican government that the Revolution in 1776 made no change in it, and it was not superseded until 1842. For the next 14 years he was actively engaged in public life.

The death of this remarkable American pioneer was announced in this quaint fashion in a letter written May 10, 1683, by John Thorndyke of Providence to Rev. Samuel Hubbard: "The Lord hath arrested by death our ancient and approved friend, Mr. Roger Williams, with divers others here." (By Western Newspaper Union.)

Mildred Maddocks Bentley's "All-Star" Recipe for Marble Cake

All-Star, "Kitchen-tested" Recipe by Mildred Maddocks Bentley, Director, Dietitians Home Institute.



Free

This and 14 other ALL-STAR Betty Crocker "Kitchen-tested" Recipes inside every sack of

GOLD MEDAL "Kitchen-tested" FLOUR



TODAY THE BEST BAKERS ARE MAKING A VARIETY OF DELICIOUS CAKES—HAVE YOU TRIED THEM?

Carelessness
A New York woman who claimed a bus climbed the curb and struck her lost in the resulting lawsuit. This would indicate that being alive is now regarded as contributory negligence.—Life.

When Ignorance Is Bliss
In the summer a certain family of farm girls always helps with work in the fields, there being no boys to perform the necessary tasks. This summer, however, one of them was missing at hay time. She had been compelled to go to summer school in order to remain with her class in the march through high school. A neighbor became rather eager for an explanation of the absence of the missing girl. There was no hesitancy on the part of the other girls in reporting the situation. "Oh," they chirped in chorus, "she flunked last year in Latin so she would have to go to summer school!"

The Venturesome Spirit
"I am so glad school holidays are over."
"Glad?"
"Yes. Now we can have some lovely times playing truant again."—Lustige Kolner Zeitung, Cologne.
It was once said you could tell a man's age by his clothes—but not nowadays.

Perfect dyeing so easily done!

DIAMOND DYES contain the highest quality anilines money can buy! That's why they give such true, bright, new colors to dresses, drapes, lingerie. The anilines in Diamond Dyes make them so easy to use. No spotting or streaking. Just clear, even colors, that hold through wear and washing. Diamond Dyes never give things that re-dye look. They are just 15c at all drug stores. When perfect dyeing costs no more—is so easy—why experiment with makeshifts?

Diamond Dyes Highest Quality for 50 Years

ASTHMA
DR. J. D. KELLOGG'S ASTHMA REMEDY for the prompt relief of Asthma and Hay Fever. Ask your druggist for it. 25 cents and one dollar. Write for FREE SAMPLE. Northrup & Lyman Co., Inc., Buffalo, N.Y.

Dr. J. D. KELLOGG'S REMEDY

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM
Removes Dandruff, Stops Hair Falling, Imparts Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair, and is sold at 50c at Druggists.

FLORESTON SHAMPOO—Ideal for use in connection with Parker's Hair Balsam. Makes hair soft and fluffy. 50 cents by mail or at druggists. Hixco Chemical Works, Patchogue, N.Y.

The Ideal Vacation Land
Sunshine All Winter Long
Splendid roads—towering mountain ranges—Highest type hotels—dry invigorating air—clear starlit nights—California's Foremost Desert Playground
Write Geo. A. Chaffey
Palm Springs CALIFORNIA

THE FIRST ANNUAL RABBIT SHOW of the Northwestern Ohio Rabbit Breeders Assn. will be held Nov. 27-28, 1926. RUSSELL PALMER, Secy., Edgerton, Ohio.

Bargain—One Dollar Buy One Thousand dollar policy paying eighty monthly, sickness, accidents. Policy mailed free. Peoria Casualty Insurance Co., Peoria, Ill.

HEALTH, HAPPINESS, SUCCESS! Many severe, hopeless patients recovered by following instructions. 12 lessons postpaid \$1. worth thousands. Tiresy, 718 E. 12th St., N.Y.

BROKER WANTED
to distribute good gold stock issue. Offering supported by substantial background. Write Jno. A. Comer, Shelton Hotel, N. Y.

WIGS and Patent Toupees
World's finest, illustrated catalogue sent free with price list. Remains superior for 50c per box postpaid. Write or call.
LOMBARD BAMBINA COMPANY
113 Marston Street - Lynn, Mass.
W. N. U., BALTIMORE, NO. 40-1930.



Special 49¢ Introductory Offer
New Medicine Cabinet Bottle
FEEN-A-MINT Value 50¢
DILLARD'S ASPERGIN Value 25¢
The Right and Easy Way to take Aspirin
Total Value 75¢
Feen-a-mint is America's most Popular Laxative. Pleasant, safe, dependable, non-habit forming. Keep it handy in this attractive economical bottle.
Aspergin is the new and better way to take aspirin. No bitter tablet to swallow. Effective in smaller doses for every aspirin use. At your druggist's or HEALTH PRODUCTS CORPORATION 113 North 15th Street Newark, N. J.

WHITE SKIN
KREMOLE makes old skin young. It positively accomplishes four things for it is a skin tonic; a tissue builder; banishes pimples; and a skin whitener and rejuvenator—or money refunded. Thousands of women depend on Kremole to keep their skin youthful. Ask your Druggist, or direct by mail postpaid. Price \$1.25. Write for FREE "Beauty Secret" to Jane Kay, care Dr. C. R. Berry Co., 2975 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

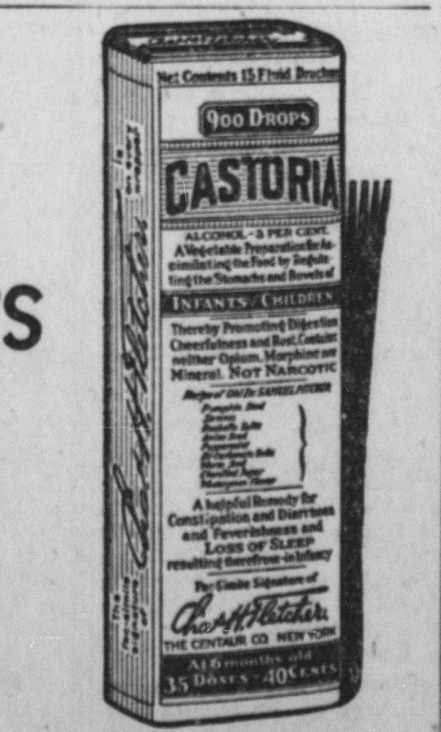
Well?
Harry—I think you are the nicest girl on earth!
Ruthie—What about the other planets?
Sin is committed for its own sake. It rarely pursues one.
An evil life is one of death.—Ovid.

Castoria corrects CHILDREN'S ailments

WHAT a relief and satisfaction it is for mothers to know that there is always Castoria to depend on when babies get fretful and uncomfortable! Whether it's teething, colic or other little upsets, Castoria always brings quick comfort; and, with relief from pain, restful sleep.

And when older, fast-growing children get out of sorts and out of condition, you have only to give a more liberal dose of this pure vegetable preparation to right the disturbed condition quickly.

Because Castoria is made expressly for children, it has just the needed mildness of action. Yet you can always depend on it to be



effective. It is almost certain to clear up any minor ailment and cannot possibly do the youngest child the slightest harm. So it's the first thing to think of when a child has a coated tongue, is fretful and out of sorts. Be sure to get the genuine, with Chas. H. Fletcher's signature on the package.