

# NEWPORT REDUCED FROM FIVE TO FOUR DIS

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PRICE TWO CENTS

## TRICTS IN COMMISSION REPORT

### PRESENT FOURTH TO BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THE THIRD AND FIFTH

### STEPS ALREADY UNDER WAY TO CHANGE WARD LINES TO CONFORM TO NEW PLAN

Newport is reduced from five to four districts in the report of the State Re-Districting Commission, made today to the General Assembly. This means that the city's representation in the house of the General Assembly will be reduced by one, a loss attributed to a falling off of population, based on the 1920 census, provided the recommendations are made a law. Of greater importance to the city is the changing of the district lines, which have stood for years, making four instead of five.

The most important change, so far as Newport is concerned, is the dividing of the present Fourth district into two, part being added to the Third and the remainder to the present Fifth, which will henceforth be known as the Fourth. There are changes in the upper districts of the city, and while these are important in themselves, they are minor compared to the others.

Steps are already under way to change the ward lines in Newport to conform with the new district lines. This, of course, will mean but four wards in the city, with a loss of an alderman and several Councilmen.

Chairman William A. Peckham of the Representative Council stated today that he is considering the matter of calling a special meeting of that body, to take the necessary steps for the preparation of an act, for introduction in the General Assembly, to have the ward lines conform with the district lines, so that there will be no confusion at the election in November. Much has to be done in the way of detail before this can be brought about, including the preparation of the act, passage by the Council, and transmittal to the Assembly in time for entrance under new business.

It is considered fairly certain that the re-districting, having the support of the Republican majority, will pass the Assembly. Amendments to the city charter will be necessary to reduce the wards from five to four, and rapid action on the latter is necessary at this time, to avoid confusion at the fall election. Probably the most important recom-

mendation in the commission's report, so far as the state is concerned, are the rather sweeping changes in the political map of Providence. That city has four state senators instead of one. The number of wards has been increased from 10 to 12, and the number of voting districts from 22 to 17. There are seven school districts, with 11 voting districts constituting each.

Cranston, East Providence and Warwick are each given an increase of a seat in the house of representatives, due to increased population based on the 1920 state census. The gain for them is lost to Newport, Central Falls and Narragansett, each a seat.

Created by the General Assembly last year for the purpose of re-districting the state, the commission has been at its duties for some time, but has repeatedly declined to make known its findings until it reported to the legislature. The Board of Aldermen made a formal request for incorporation several weeks ago, but was refused.

#### One Democratic District

Under the new district Newport will have three Republican and one Democratic district, instead of three Republican and two Democratic, as at present.

The political complexion of the first three districts does not change, while the Fourth, which has been Democratic, is so divided that the heavy Democratic section is thrown into the Fifth, while the portion east of Bellevue avenue and north of Commercial wharf, Franklin and John streets goes into the Third.

There are 100 seats in the house of representatives, and the Re-Districting Commission is acting under the law which provides that the districts shall be as nearly equal in population and as compact in territory as possible.

#### Fourth District Disappears

What is known now as the Fourth district will be no more when the commission's report becomes a law. This highly important political change is made by dividing the district. The

section west of Bellevue avenue and north of Perry and Pope streets, as far as John and Franklin streets and Commercial wharf, is made part of the present Fifth district, which will henceforth be known as the Fourth.

To the present Third district will be added that part of the Fourth which is east of Bellevue avenue, as far as Bailey's beach, and north of John and Franklin streets and Commercial wharf, to the present Third District's southern boundary, which is Market square, Mill street and Old Beach road.

#### New Fourth District

More specifically, all the present Fifth district is included in the new Fourth, and to it is added the northerly side of Perry street, the easterly side of Spring street from Perry north to Franklin, and the northerly side of Pope street as far as Franklin. In the part east of Spring street to Bellevue avenue, in the new Fourth district, are East street, West street,

Pope street, Anthony street, Fountain street, Bowery street, King street, Jones avenue, Golden Hill, William, Levin and Thomas streets, and the easterly side of John street.

Other additions to the new Fourth district west of Spring street include Malbury court, Howard, Young, Depue, Newton court, Brewer, Ann, Okey, Fair and Cannon streets, and the south side of Franklin street, in addition to the south side of Commercial wharf and all the wharf property as far south as Pope street.

#### New Third District

The Third district is given a substantial addition from the present Fourth, and also surrenders small sections of its present lines to the First and Second. To the district is added all the wharf property between the south side of Market square and the north side of Commercial wharf, and all that territory embraced between the south side of Mill street and Old Beach road to the north side of Franklin and John streets, and the easterly side of Bellevue avenue as far as Bailey's beach.

Included in this addition are Pelham, Green, Prospect Hill and Corn streets; Green place, Tuoro streets, Downing, Liberty and Delhous streets, Tow's court, Chapel street, Red Cross avenue, portions of Rhode Island and Gibbs avenues, Sunnyside

place, Edgar court, Grandall court, Bath road and all that section south of Bath road and east of Bellevue avenue, to Bailey's beach.

#### Added to First District

At the same time the Third district surrenders to the First that portion of its present line, bounded northerly by Long wharf, easterly by Thames street, northerly by Marlborough street, along Farewell street to Bridge street, and then westerly along Bridge street to the harbor. The Torpedo Station is included in the First district, as are the north side of Long wharf, Northern lane, West Marlborough street, the northerly side of Marlborough street, Coddington street, Charles, north of Marlborough, Wanton, North Baptist and Sanford streets, Cozens' Court, Marsh street, and those sections of Washington, Second and Third streets south of Bridge.

A further addition to the First district in territory from the Second includes land on the easterly side of Hall avenue and the northerly side of Warner street, from Hall avenue to Tilley avenue, in addition to the westerly side of Hall avenue, the First district will include Congdon avenue and Homer street, the easterly side of Tilley avenue and Bailey streets, and parts of Everett,

Southfield and Garfield streets.

Instead of starting at Training Station road and proceeding along Third street to Dyre street, thence to Farewell, Rutgers and Bailey streets, to Tilley avenue and Warner, the new line for the First district starts at Coddington's cove and Harbert avenue and proceeds due south until it intersects Hall avenue.

#### Second District Lines

The Second district, which is already the largest in the city, is not changed materially under the recommendations of the commission. It surrenders that section west of a line extending from Hall avenue north to Coddington's cove to the First district, but, on the other hand, adds to its present strength from portions of the Third district.

The new line separating the Second from the Third district is Watte Works road, Prairie avenue, Key street, Boardway and Marlborough street as far as Farewell. This gives to the Second that portion between Broadway and West Broadway south of Oak street, and includes the southerly side of Edward street. It also adds to the Second district the northerly side of Everett street, Calvary street, Bartlett court, Ashburton place and the southerly side of Cranston street.



## NEWPORT COUNTY.

### History of the One City and Six Towns Which Compose It.

Newport county includes the city of Newport and six towns—Portsmouth, New Shoreham, Jamestown, Middletown, Tiverton and Little Compton. It embraces an area of about one hundred and seventeen square miles, and comprises the islands of Rhode Island, Conanicut, Block Island, Prudence, Patience and Hope, Tiverton and Little Compton alone being on the mainland. The population of the county by the state census of 1895 is 30,972, distributed as follows: Newport, 21,537; Jamestown, 813; Little Compton, 1,112; Middletown, 1,413; New Shoreham, 1,300; Portsmouth, 1,833, and Tiverton, 2,964. The valuation, as established by the General Assembly in 1893, is: Newport, \$34,347,300; Middletown, \$2,441,200; Portsmouth, \$2,215,000; Tiverton, \$2,359,897; Little Compton, \$1,404,490; Jamestown, \$2,023,125, and New Shoreham, \$178,300—a total of \$43,509,322.

The first town to be settled was Portsmouth, in 1638, two years after the settlement of Providence by Roger Williams and other exiles from the Massachusetts bay colony, the land being purchased March 24, 1638, from "Cannonicus and Miantinnomu, two chiefs sachims of the Nanhigansitts." The settlers were William Coddington, John Clarke, William Dyre, William Hutchinson, Samuel Hutchinson, Nicholas Esson, or Easton, Edward Hutchinson, senior; Edward Hutchinson, junior; John Sanford, John Coggeshall, Randall Holden, Richard Burden and William Balston. According to the records, "At a quarter meeting of the first of ye 5th month 1639 it is agreed upon to call this town Portsmouth," and at the "general court" at "Newport" 12th of first month 1640, the name of Portsmouth was confirmed. The Indian name of the town was Pocasset.

As indicative of the spirit of the settlers, on the 13th day of the third month "It is ordered that the Meeting House shall be set on the neck of Land that goes over to the Malne of the island wher Mr. John Coggeshall and Mr. John Sanford shall lay it out," and later in the same month William Balston was authorized to "erect and sett up a howese of entertainment for Strangers, and also to brew Beare and to sell wines of strong waters and such necessary provisions as may be usefull in any kind." William Hutchinson and John Coggeshall were chosen treasurers of the town for the first year. The first government was a board of elders including Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall and William Brenton, Henry Bull being sergeant and Samuel Wilbore constable.

The settlement at Portsmouth prospered, and soon there arose a spirit of growth in territory, and on the 28th of the second month, 1639, it was agreed: "By us whose

hands are underwritten to propogate a plantation in the midst of the island or elsewhere; and doe engage ourselves to bear equal charges answerable to our strength and estates in common; and that our determinations shall be by major voice of judge and elders; the Judge to have a double voice. Present—William Coddington, Judge; Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall, William Brenton, Elders; John Clarke, Jeremy Clarke, Thomas Hazard, Henry Bull, William Dyre; Clerk."

This was the beginning of Newport. On the 16th of the third month it was agreed and ordered that "the Plantation now begun at this southwest end of the island shall be called Newport; and that all the lands lying northward and eastward from the said towne called Pocasset for the space of five miles, and so cross from sea to sea with all the lands southward and westward bounded by the malne sea together with the small islands and the grass of Cunnuqueott is appointed for the accommodation of ye said towne. It is also ordered that the Towne be built up on both sides of the spring and by the sea-side southward." The name Newport is supposed to have been taken from Newport, capital of the isle of Wight, which the island of Aquidneck or Rhode Island resembles.

The records of the 1st of the eighth month, 1639, give the names of fifty-nine persons admitted by the general consent of the company "to be Inhabitants of the island now called Aquidneck, having submitted themselves to the Government that is or shall be established according to the word of God therein."

The two colonies were united under one government, the chief magistrate being called Governour; the next, Deputy Governour, and the rest of the magistrates, Assistants. The first "governour" was William Coddington; the deputy governour, William Brenton; the assistants, Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall, William Hutchinson and John Porter. Robert Jeffreys and William Balston were treasurers; William Dyre, secretary; Jeremy Clarke, constable of Newport; Mr. Sanford, constable of Portsmouth, and Henry Bull, sergeant attendant.

Newport was incorporated as a city June 1, 1784, and had but one mayor, George Hazard, who served two years and a portion of a third, the charter being repealed at the March session of the General Assembly in 1787. The aldermen under this charter were Francis Malbone, Christopher Champlin, Samuel Rowler, Oliver R. Warner, George Champlin, Peleg Clarke, George Gibbs and Henry Bliss.

The city was again incorporated May 6, 1853. Robert B. Cranston was elected the first mayor, qualified June 9, 1853, and resigned the same day, the duties of mayor falling upon Thomas R. Hunter, alderman from the first ward, until October, when George H. Calvert was elected, and served until the following June. The other mayors of the city have been as follows: William C. Cozzens, 1854-5; William J. Swinburne, 1855-7; William H. Cranston, 1857-66; Samuel A. Parker, 1866-8; James Atkinson, 1868-73; Stephen P. Slocum, 1873-6; and 1880-2; Henry Bedlow, 1876-8; J. Truman Burdick, 1878-80; Robert S. Franklin, 1882-6; John Hare Fowel, 1886-8;

Thomas Coggeshall, 1888-91; Samuel R. Honey, 1892; Jeremiah W. Horton, 1893; Daniel B. Pearing, 1894; John Waters, January, 1895, to April 13, 1895, died in office; Patrick J. Boyle, from May, 1895, to the present time.

Middletown was formerly a part of Newport and was known as "Ye Woods." It was incorporated by the General Assembly June 16, 1743, and its name was derived from its location, the middle of the three towns. The dividing line as adopted by the General Assembly is as follows: "Beginning at the head of the creek that separates the two farms of the Hon. Joseph Whipple, Esq., and Godfrey Malbone of said Newport, merchant; and on a south course, nineteen degrees and one half east, run a direct line, extending to the northeast corner of a lot of land belonging to Job Almy, of said Newport, merchant; the said corner being between the houses of Ellisha Card and that in the possession of Samuel Pemberton; and from said corner a straight line south, twenty-seven degrees east, crossing the bridge that lieth over the creek at Easton's beach; and so into the sea on that course, it being the place where the said creek usually runs into the sea." This division was effected August 24, 1743.

The freemen included the names of Allen, Barker, Bailey, Brown, Clarke, Cornwall, Coggeshall, Card, Dering, Easton, Gould, Green, Holme, Lawton, Luther, Manchester, Mitchell, Nichols, Peabody, Peckham, Rogers, Rogers, Ryder, Smith, Slocum, Turner, Tew, Taylor, Weaver, Weeden, Weaver and Wood.

New Shoreham was incorporated as a town November 6, 1672, but long previous to that time had been known. The first mention of the island is by Verrazano, a French navigator, who examined the shores in 1524 and gave a report to Francis I. King of France. He called it Claudia. Its discovery was made in 1614 by Adrian Block, who was the first European known to have explored the island. It was then inhabited by Indians, who had given it the name of Manisses. Block called it "Adrian's Eyland," and it so appears on old Dutch maps, but became better known as Block Island.

In 1636 John Oldham visited the island for the purpose of trading with the Indians, but was murdered by them. The Massachusetts colony avenged his murder by driving the Indians to the woods and burning their plantations. A later expedition was made by Israel Stoughton, who succeeded in getting the Indians to promise tribute to the colony.

In 1653 the Massachusetts colony granted the island to four men, who two years later sold it to a company of sixteen individuals, who had it surveyed and apportioned among themselves, and became the first settlers. Among the names of these first citizens of Block Island that of Rose is the only one appearing today. Others soon joined them, who were the ancestors of the Dodges, Balls, Motts, Palmes and Littlefields, who are now prominent in

the town. Block Island was admitted as a part of the colony of Rhode Island May 4, 1664, and when incorporated the name was changed to New Shoreham. The first representatives of the town in the General Assembly in 1665 were James Sands and Thomas Terry.

The town of Jamestown was organized November 4, 1678, and was named in honor of James II, King of England; the Indian name was Quononoquitt (Conanicut). The island was the summer home of Canonicut, chief of the Narragansett Indians. The first purchase of land was made in 1657 by Benedict Arnold and William Coddington, the deed being given by "Cashesaquoont, a chiefe Sachem and commander of Narragansett and Quononoquitt Island in Narragansett Bay," the transfer being "for and in consideration of Several gifts beforehand received, And also for and in consideration of ye fullle and justt summe of 100 lbs. sterling in hand, also received in name and nature of a fine or purchase money," and the land conveyed being "all and every parcell of the foranamed Island Quononoquitt appurtanances, Benefits, profits, commodities, and privileges therefrom, and thereto properly belonging, or appertaining." The deed is signed by Cashesaquoont and witnessed by "Brimley and Awawhowes." In consideration of this purchase, another sachem, Qualequann, quitclaimed his interests to William Coddington, Benedict Arnold, William Brenton, Caleb Carr and Richard Smith.

The lands were held in common until 1665 or 6, when they were divided and other owners admitted, Coddington and Arnold being the largest purchasers. Arnold at his death bequeathed to his children 1,000 acres on Beaver neck, Dutch Island, and an interest in the 260-acre tract known as the "Township." The Carr and Weeden family became prominent in the development of the town, and are today among its leading citizens.

The action of the General Assembly incorporating the town is as follows: "Voted: that the petition of Mr. Caleb Carr and Mr. Francis Brinley on behalf of themselves and the proprietors for Quononoquitt Island to be made a township shall first be adjetated and debated," and "Voted: that the petition is granted and that the said Quononoquitt Island shall be a township with the like privileges and liberties granted to New Shoreham."

The first officers of which there is any known record, in 1685, include Ebenezer Slocum, moderator; Caleb Carr, deputy moderator; Nicholas Carr, Joseph Mowry, Oliver Arnold, and Caleb Carr, councilmen, and Nicholas Carr, treasurer. The early name of the town was "James Towne."

Tiverton and Little Compton were two of the five towns received from Massachusetts by royal decree in January, 1747, and were annexed to Newport county February 17, 1747. Fall River was originally a part of Tiverton, and was ceded to Massachusetts in the settlement of the boundary question October 6, 1856. The two towns were a part of that unexplored country which the English charter of April 10, 1606, conferred upon the Plymouth colony. In May, 1746, King George II of England appointed a commission, whose report he confirmed, taking Tiverton and Little Compton and two other towns from Massachusetts and adding them to Rhode Island. In the latter part of that year the two states appointed surveyors to define the state line, and the land within three miles of the Sacoconnet river was set off to Rhode Island, including the city of Fall River. In 1746-7 the Rhode Island legislature approved this line, and Massachusetts accepted it for the time, but did not examine it until 1791, when it began to be questioned, and the agitation was kept up until 1866, when the present boundary was established, Rhode Island losing a large territory.

1 TOWN  
2 CITY  
3 TOWN  
4 CITY

3/1/1897