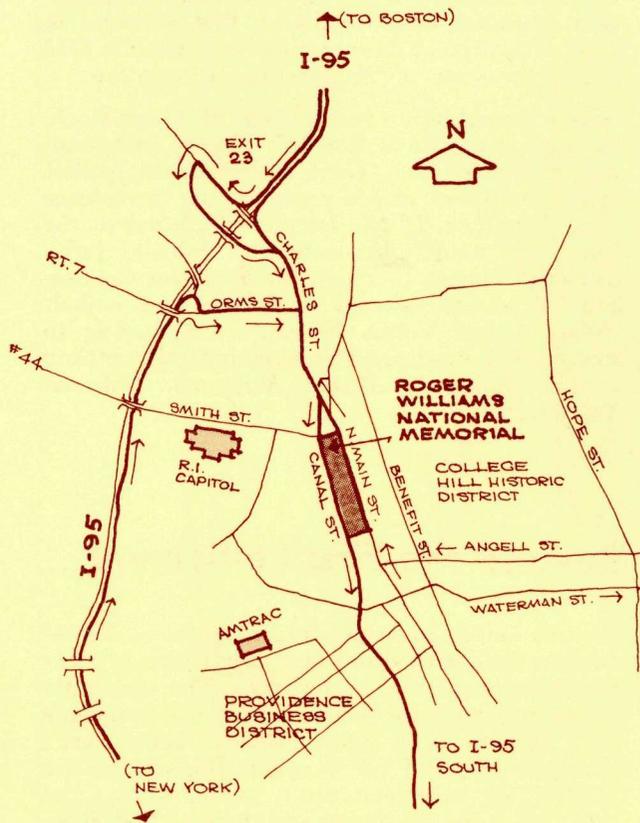


As you leave the city, you may want to stop at Roger Williams Park. Located about three miles from the center of town, the park features 450 acres of land which include a large expanse of gardens, the Charles H. Smith Memorial Greenhouses, the Museum of Natural History and the Bird and Mammal House. Visitors can enjoy concerts and other outdoor productions in the Benedict Memorial, a marble colonnade.



As the Nation's principal conservation agency the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, the providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U. S. administration.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR

ROGER WILLIAMS

upon the said lands and meadows
under their hands, two years after the said purchase of the
lands from the River and Harbour of Providence, the great Hill of Providence
and the Town of Massachusetts on the west; notwithstanding that
(my kind friends) that it should not be said that I should want about these
that I satisfied the Indians their inhabiting; I having made covenants of peace
with all the Sachins, and Nations round about us, and having in a sense of Gods merciful
into me in my distresses, and the place provided; I desired it might be for a shelter for persons distressed
ed for conscience; and then considering the condition of divers of my
called my said purchase unto my loving friends John Brockmorton, my
best cost, John Green senior, Thomas Olney senior, Richard Waterman, and
take shelter here with me. And in succession unto so many others as we should receive into the
fellowship, and society of enjoying, and disposing of the said purchase: And besides this first
that were admitted, our Towns Records declare, that afterwards we received Chad Brown, William
Hild, Thomas Harris senior, William Wykes, Robert Williams, George Dexter, and others as of
Town Books declare: And whereas by Gods merciful assistance I was the procurer of this
purchase (not by money nor payment, the Natives being so shy, and jealous that money could not
do it, but by that language, acquaintance, and favour with the Natives, and other advantages
which I pleased God to give me, and also bear the charges, and venture of all the creatures
which I gave to the great Sachins, and other Sachins and Natives round about us; and lay engaged for all
loving, and peaceable neighbourhood with them all, to my great charge and travail; it was therefore
thought fit by some loving friends, that I should receive some loving
= style; and it was agreed, betwixt us, that every person that should
ship of enjoying land and disposing of the purchase, should pay to the said
first about thirty pounds should be paid unto my self, by three
They were admitted: This sum I received, and in love to my friend
town, and place of success for the distressed as aforesaid, I do
and payment, as full satisfaction; and in haste, in the year
thirty six years (so called) I delivered the deeds subscribed
Sachins, (so much thereof as concerned the aforesaid land
to them, unto the whole number of the purchasers, with all
therein: reserving only unto my self, one single share Equall
now againe, in a more formal way under my hand and seal
that words of the Landes of aforesaid; and bind my self, my heirs
= us, and assigns, never to molest any of the said persons their
he received into the society of purchasers as aforesaid: But that
Administrators, and Assignes, shall at all times, quietly, and for
every part thereof; and I do further by these presents,
Executors, my Administrators, and Assignes never to lay
claims to be paid to any of the Landes aforesaid, or
thereof, (more than unto my own single share) by debt
former Bargains, sale, or mortgage, what so ever; (or joy
made by me the said Roger Williams, or of any other person
= sh, or under me In Witness, these of I have hereunto set my hand
this twentieth day of December, in this present year one thousand six hundred sixty one
Signed Sealed and Delivered. Memorandum the words of the purchase
in the presence of us
was intended before us
presents were sealed



Joseph Carpenter

Roger Williams

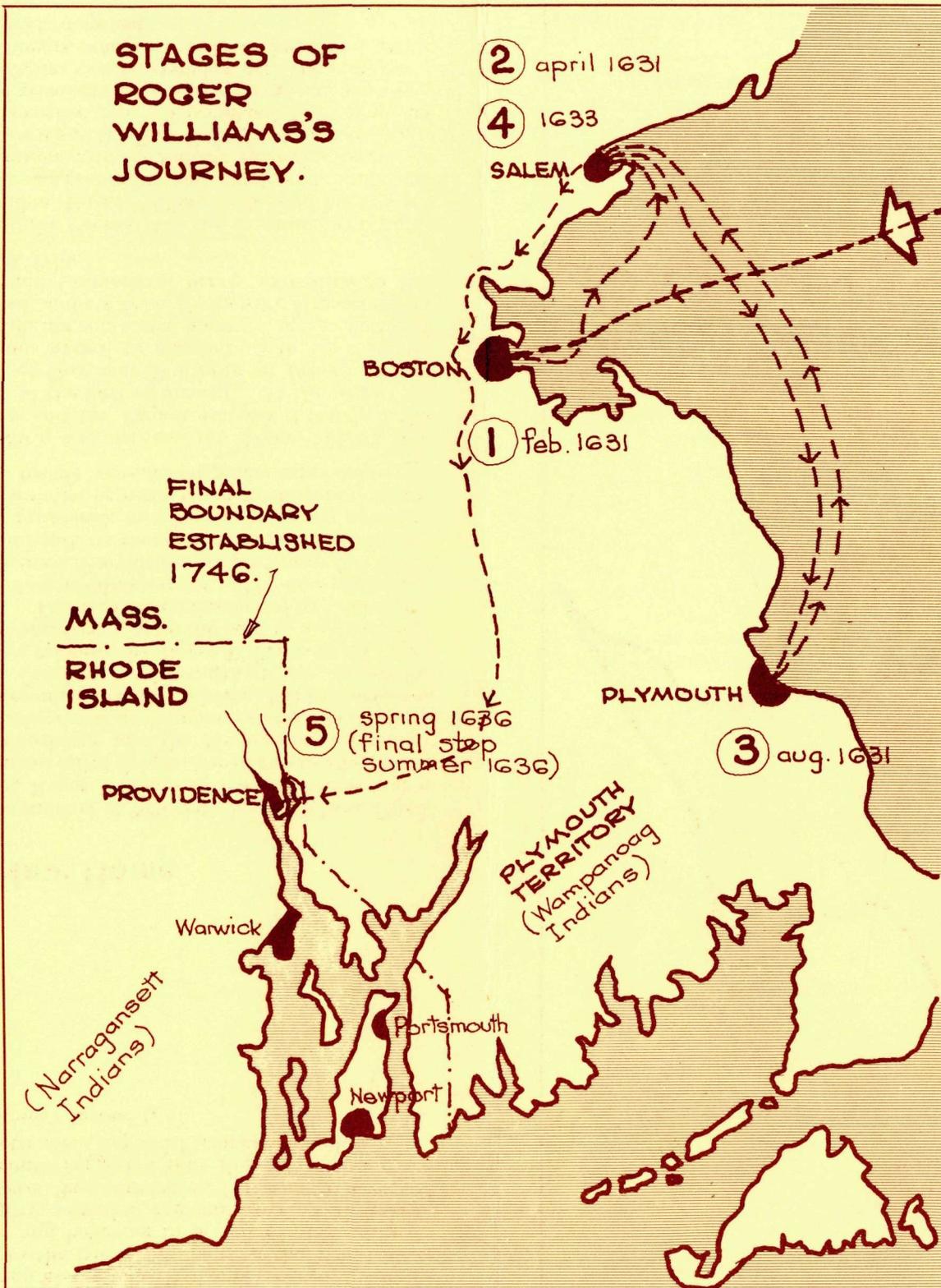
I Mary Williams, wife unto Roger Williams, do Assent unto
the promises, witness my hand this twentieth of December
in this present year one thousand six hundred sixty one

Acknowledged and subscribed the marriage of Mary
before me William Hild Justice
Assistent
Williams

Providence, Rhode Island

NATIONAL MEMORIAL

STAGES OF ROGER WILLIAMS'S JOURNEY.



Few American statesmen of the 17th century have had a more profound effect upon this country than Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island. His colony was one of the first in the world to set forth in clear terms the principle that men should be allowed freedom of religious belief and that the state should govern "only in civil things". Roger Williams deserves national recognition for helping to achieve religious freedom in America, for successfully separating Church and State at a time when to do so was politically dangerous.

Early Dreams

Roger Williams was born in London, England, around 1604, the son of a merchant tailor. As a young man Williams became a protegee of the jurist Sir Edward Coke, the great common-law scholar and studied at Cambridge. He became increasingly dubious of the King's supremacy in spiritual matters and the control of the Anglican Church. His opposition to the established religion finally caused him to sail to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 where he was welcomed as "a godly minister".

False Hopes

However, he soon discovered the Bay Colony to be also intolerant of the nonconforming. His frank criticism of the Puritan system incurred great hostility. When Williams accepted a call as teacher at Salem, civil authorities interfered and caused him to become a pastor in nearby Plymouth, an older and more tolerant settlement. There he met Chief Massasoit, cultivated Indian friendships and studied Indian languages. He subsequently published "A Key into the Language of America", which served as a primer of the Indian languages and customs.

Two years later Roger Williams returned to Salem as assistant to the Reverend Samuel Shelton. After Shelton's death in 1634, Williams became minister despite the wishes of the General Court, the ruling authority in the colony.

His views on British imperialistic expropriation of American soil became an added reason for the authorities' hostility. Williams attacked English claims under the royal charter as a violation of Indian rights. The enraged General Court found him guilty on October 9, 1635 of disseminating "newe and dangerous opinions against the authorities of magistrates"* and ordered him banished. Bay authorities sent soldiers to deport him.

Hearing of the plot, Williams escaped, made his way to the friendly Indians of the Wampanoag Tribe and believing to be out of Massachusetts territory, settled at Seekonk Cove. Unwilling to displease Bay authorities, Governor Winslow of Plymouth suggested that Roger Williams move his settlement beyond Plymouth boundaries.

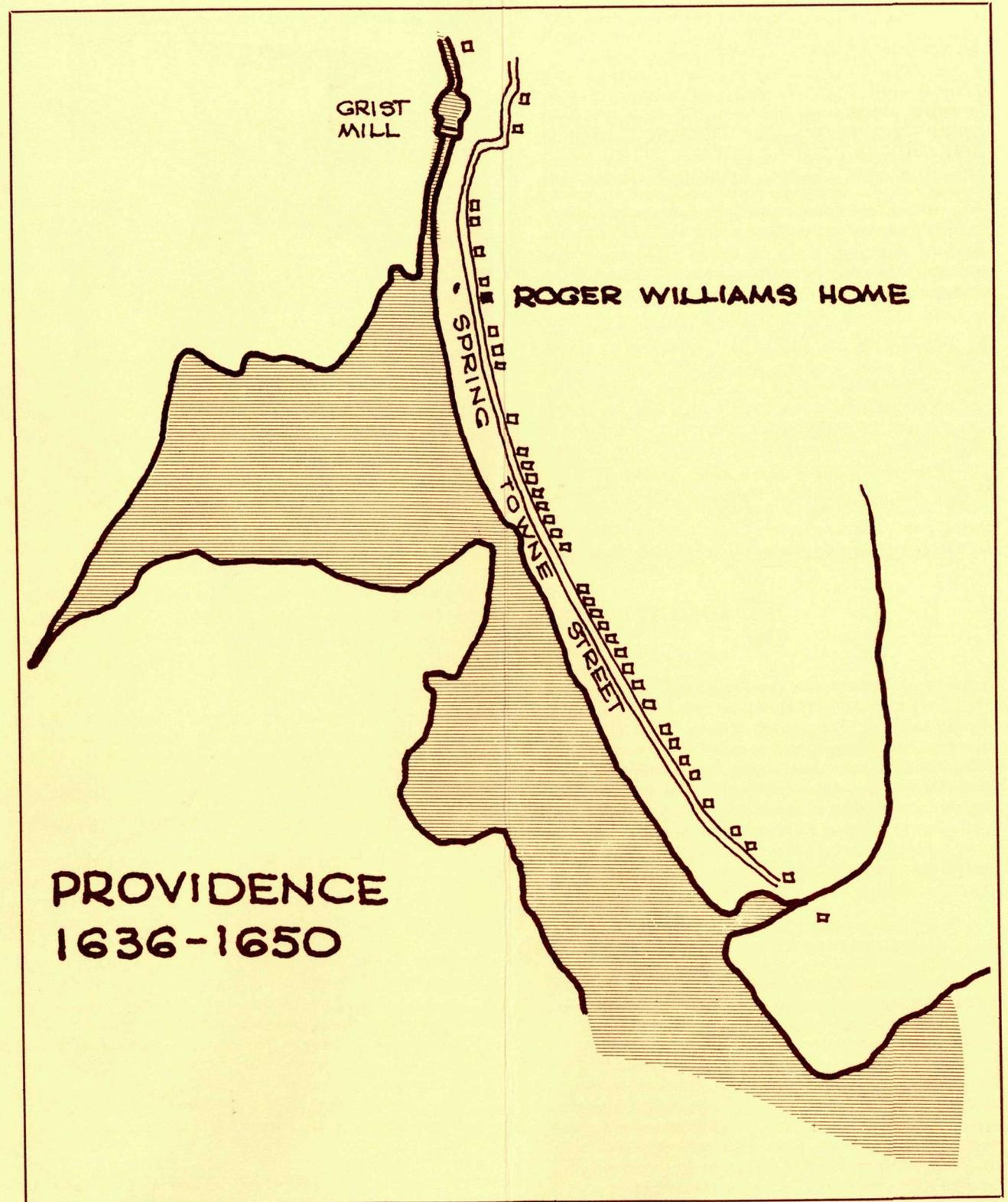
*Winthrop's Journal I, 57

A New Home

In the summer of 1636 with his small band of followers, Roger Williams arrived by canoe near a prominent hill at the junction of two small streams, the Mooshasuc and the Woonasquatucket, and went ashore near an abundant spring. On this land he determined to build his home. The Indian Canonicus, Chief of the Narragansetts, in return for services rendered by Roger Williams as an interpreter and friend, gave the land as a gift to Williams. The deed of sale was signed by Canonicus, and sub-chief Miantonomo. The new plantation was named Providence in gratitude for God's merciful gift to the new settlers. The Colony grew, prospered, and became a haven over the years for Ana-baptists, Quakers, Jews and others whose beliefs were denied public expression.

In 1636 a war between the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Pequot Indians threatened the safety of the new settlement. At the urgent request of Governor Winthrop in Boston, Roger Williams agreed to negotiate with the Pequots. The fighting continued, however, and a combined force of soldiers from Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Connecticut nearly exterminated the Pequot Tribe.

During the Pequot War and in subsequent times of trouble, Roger Williams exhibited his characteristic magnanimity and conducted important negotiations with the Indians, rendering assistance to Massachusetts Bay Colony which had originally expelled him. Throughout later years he was of great service to Rhode Island and neighboring colonies as a peacemaker with the Narragansett Indians, whose language he knew and whose trust he had earned.



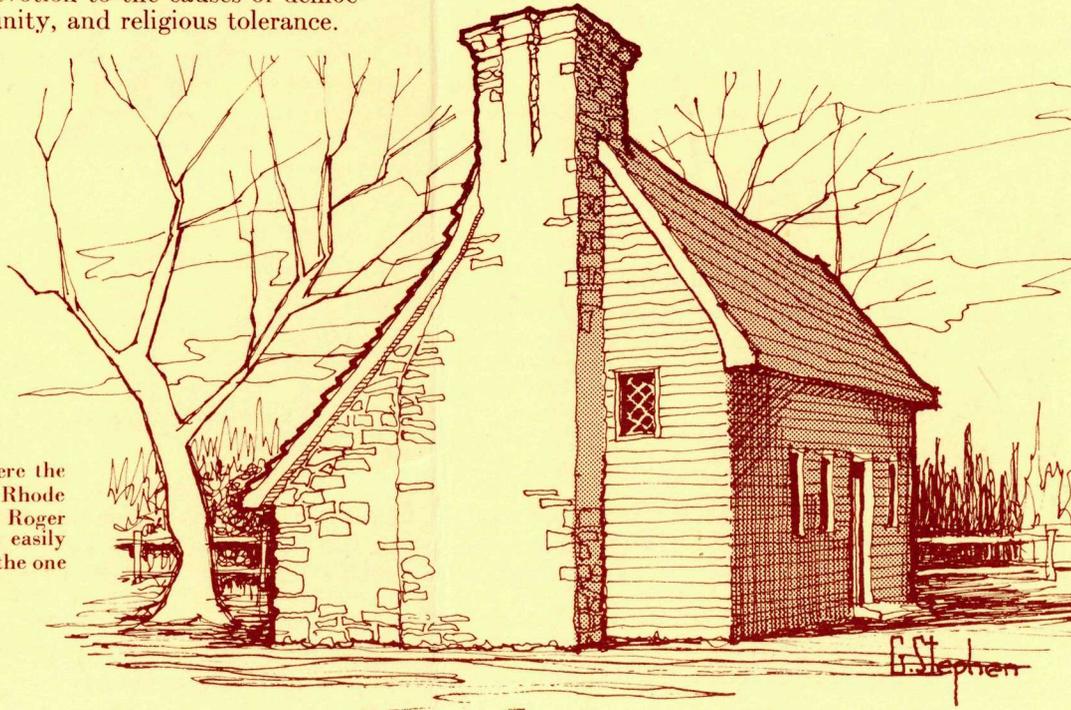
Final Settlement

By 1643 four settlements had sprung up in the Narragansett area (Providence, Newport, Portsmouth and Warwick). Internal problems with individual settlers and external threats from the encroachments of other colonies, particularly Massachusetts Bay, compelled Williams to sail for England where with the help of influential and powerful allies, he managed to secure a patent for the whole area.

The Charter for the Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay was issued March 14, 1644. When attempts were made to rescind the Charter, Williams returned to England and in 1663, King Charles II granted Providence Plantation a favorable new Charter. The colony was now secure. During his return visits to England, Williams wrote his two most celebrated works, "The Bloody Tenent of Persecution" and in response to the Puritan clergyman, John Cotton, wrote "The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody." Under its charter, Roger Williams became the first president of Rhode Island and until his death held public office.

In 1683 Williams died. At the simple burial ceremony beside his house, guns were fired in a military salute to mark the end of a brilliant career. Colonial thinker, religious liberal and father of democracy, Roger Williams shall be remembered for his untiring devotion to the causes of democracy, free opportunity, and religious tolerance.

Stone End Houses were the dwellings the early Rhode Island settlers built. Roger Williams could have easily lived in a house like the one shown here.



Along Towne Street

While in Providence, you may want to visit the many historic areas in the city near Roger Williams National Memorial. The National Park Service site is located on North Main Street, which together with South Main Street, was originally called Towne Street. Along this street, Roger Williams and his followers settled. Their farms extended far back over the adjacent hill, now college hill, the location of Penbroke College and Brown University. Penbroke is named after the college in Cambridge, England, that Roger Williams attended. Near Penbroke overlooking the city is Prospect Terrace where a portion of Roger Williams' remains now lie entombed.

Just up North Main Street from Roger Williams National Memorial stands the Old Court and State House, where on May 4, 1776, two months before the Declaration of Independence, the House of Deputies passed an act which affirmed Williams' strife for freedom by declaring Rhode Island the first free and independent republic in America. The new State Capitol, envied as the most beautiful building of its kind in the country because of its large Georgia white marble dome, remembers the founder of Providence with the following quote carved over the pillared portico:

"To hold forth a lively experiment that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained with full liberty in religious concernments."

Royal Charter of 1663

Near the Memorial on North Main Street stands the First Baptist Meeting House, whose congregation, including Roger Williams, first gathered in 1638. The present structure was dedicated in 1775 during the heart of the American Revolution.

Another point of interest is Roger Williams Rock, the legendary site of Rogers Williams' first landing. Before Williams reached Providence, he first settled in an area known today as East Providence (near Rumford, Rhode Island) which was at the time, still under Massachusetts colonial jurisdiction. Forced to move further down the Seekonk River, he spotted an Indian who hailed, "What Cheer Netop (Friend)." According to legend, Williams landed here before finally settling at the spring in Roger Williams National Memorial.

Beyond the First Settlement

As well as remembering Roger Williams, Providence is filled with sites which pay tribute to other significant times in its history. The newly restored houses along Benefit Street which include The Sullivan Dorr House (1810), Shakespeare's Head (1772), and the Stephen Hopkins House (1708-1743) commemorate a period during the 1800s when Benefit Street was the social, intellectual, governmental, and artistic center of Providence. Areas such as Moshassuck Square, Market House and the Moshassuck Arcade pay tribute to Providence's early industrial history. Representing the early days of the republic and housing artifacts from all periods of Rhode Island's history is the John Brown House, headquarters of the Rhode Island Historical Society. The Adelia Rowe Metcalf Building and the museum in the Rhode Island School of Design, University Hall in Brown University, the Providence Art Club, the Brick School House, the Providence Athenaeum, the John Hay Library, the John Carter Brown Library and the Talma Theater are just a few of the living memorials to artistic and educational endeavor in Providence.