

thus occasioning a great and clear saving to the national government. Were this topic of less importance to Providence, the author would not have given it so much space. He is informed that for generations in some families of antiquity in the town, the sole legacies bequeathed from father to son have been the family Bible, wearing apparel, and the French claims. Personally I have some doubts as to the entire correctness of this last observation.

The first impetus in trading lines, after the Narragansett war, was consequent upon the establishment of clam fields by prominent and well-reputed parties, among whom may be mentioned the Browns (both branches), and the Smiths. Doubtless the fame of Providence and Rhode Island had been more scattered through this country and Europe because of the clams than from any or all other reasons combined.

These materials have been compiled carefully from a mass of private traditions, documents and the like, hitherto unknown to the historic student, and are modestly offered as a contribution for the future historian of Providence, the writer well knowing the scarcity of reliable and accurate data of that early and interesting period.

Should these "studies" be favorably received by the public, the author further purposes in succeeding chapters to disclose much of equally important matter.