

Castle Chronicle



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The Law Office of Rhode Island Attorney General Daniel Updike

Recreating an 18th Century Law Office at Smith's Castle

For its 2008 season, Smith's Castle is developing a permanent exhibition recreating the c. 1755 office of Daniel Updike, Rhode Island attorney general. The exhibition will commemorate the accomplishments of Updike as attorney general, incorporate or recreate elements of his office based on the inventory of his personal estate, and interpret the workings of a mid-18th century law practice.

Formative Years

Daniel Updike was born in 1693 or 1694, the son of Lodowick and Abigail (Newton) Updike. One year earlier, Daniel's father had inherited the vast estate of his uncle, Richard Smith Jr., consisting of thousands of acres centered on the family's seat at Cocumscussoc (Wickford), also known as Smith's Castle.

Much of what we know about Daniel Updike comes from a biography written by his grandson, Wilkins Updike, in his *Memoirs of the Rhode Island Bar* (1842).

"Daniel was educated in his father's house, by an able French instructor, in the Greek, Latin, and French languages, and his sisters, in the Latin and French. After Daniel's education was completed, he visited Barbadoes, in the company of a friend of his father's; and was admitted to the first circles of society on the Island. His intercourse with the English residents was highly beneficial, in improving his mind, and polishing his manners. Upon his return, he immediately applied himself to the study of the law. After his admission he opened an office in Newport..." [Updike 1842: 37]

While Wilkins Updike paints the Barbados trip as the coming-of-age, educational experience of an elite young man, the trip may actually have been a working one for Daniel. In colonial records, Daniel and his uncle, James Updike, appear in Newport court records as mariners from 1718 to 1721 (when he was about 25 to 28 years old).¹ Yet, in May 1722, when Henry Bull declined to fill the office of "General Attorney," Daniel Updike was elected to fill the vacancy.

Elected General Attorney

Wilkins Updike is silent on the dates of Daniel's legal training and with whom he studied and apprenticed in order to qualify for the bar. What explains Daniel Updike's fast-track elevation from mere mariner to chief legal officer of the colony in just one year?—especially given that, at the time, he had not even been admitted as a freeman of the colony? Daniel was accepted as a freeman of the town of Newport in 1723—almost a year after his election as attorney general.²

Is it possible an advantageous marriage accounts for his meteoric rise?

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Note from the President

Our 2008 year started out rather inauspiciously. Due to icy, inclement weather, the Smith's Castle annual meeting on February 23 failed to reach the quorum required under the new by-laws. Thus, we could not elect officers and new board members. With no firm guidance from the by-laws on what to do under such circumstances, Smith's Castle leapt boldly into the technology of the 1990s and requested that members for whom we have email addresses (about half the membership) vote by electronic survey on the Internet. To date, we have received 64 replies by this method, probably more member votes than at any annual meeting ever convened by the Castle. Those members without email were sent a postcard ballot, and to date we have received about six additional replies. We have thus reelected the same slate of officers as last year and elected five new trustees with terms to end in 2010—Diane Amaral, G. Timothy Cranston, Joe Harrison, Sue Moore, and Melissa Powers.

I have set out an ambitious but achievable list of goals for Smith's Castle in 2008:

1. Build our membership base and reach further into the North Kingstown, South County, and greater Rhode Island communities.
2. Expand and tap into new financial resources, both grants and fundraising.
3. Determine appropriate and affordable office staffing to support Castle's activities.
4. Decide appropriate use for the Annex and upgrade the building so it once again becomes a contributing resource to the Association.
5. Implement the \$45,000 State Preservation Grant project to remediate moisture problems that have plagued the Castle structure for decades.
6. Complete the Cultural Landscape Report for the RIDOT transportation enhancement project and begin the design phase of the project, another step toward restoring our historic landscape.
7. Refresh our collections installations and make them more hands-on and more accurate to our interpretive periods. This includes using proceeds from the collections auction to repair and refurbish collections items, as well as installing rooms that interpret authentic Cocumscussoc history.

8. Reinvigorate our educational committee and renew our educational programs to engage students in learning about colonial life and times.

9. Find volunteers to chair and staff a grounds committee that will manage our grounds and colonial-revival garden.

I know our enthusiastic corps of volunteers is on board and are already headed in the right direction. However, we need additional volunteers to accomplish these goals. Please consider setting aside a few hours a month to join your friends at Smith's Castle. Time spent here is always enjoyable and is also an incredible learning experience. Whatever your area of interest, Smith's Castle has a job for you! Urgent needs at the moment are for a chair and committee members for the June Strawberry Festival and a chair and committee members for the Grounds committee.

Also, please welcome Melissa Powers, who has graciously (and bravely) accepted the part-time office administration position. Melissa is probably best known to our members as the Castle's Gift Shop entrepreneur and the organizer of our opening day "Bridge to the Past." Melissa has made such an incredible contribution to the Castle over the years, and her ability to step seamlessly into this position is a great asset. Thank you, Melissa! Also many thanks to Jan Breault and Joyce Fuller for (yet again!) volunteering their time to staff the office until the position was filled. ■


—Neil Dunay, President

Welcome New Members

Kim Page
James Caswell



On behalf of the members of Smith's Castle the *Chronicle* extends sincere sympathy to the families and friends of Mary Packard Turkel and Robert L. Holland.

Smith's Castle Awarded State Preservation Grant

In December 2007, Smith's Castle was awarded a \$30,000 State Preservation Grant for a \$45,000 project to address moisture problems at the Castle. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) issued a total of \$1 million in 2007 State Preservation Grant awards that will fund capital preservation work at 20 museums, cultural art centers, and public historic sites from 13 towns and cities around the state. The 20 State Preservation Grant projects were selected from a pool of 36 applications.

The Smith's Castle project has been years in the making. In 2004 through the IMLS Conservation Assessment Program, architectural consultant Sara B. Chase and collections consultant Alexandra Alardt (Artcare Resource, Newport, R.I.) both identified serious moisture issues that threaten to deteriorate the structure of the c.1678 house as well as its contents. In 2006, the Cocumscussoc Association, under an NEH funded study, hired Richard Kerschner (Shelburne Museum) to recommend moisture remediation solutions.

The Castle Climate Control Project will address the dampness issue with both interior as well as exterior corrections. These include:

A new boiler and moisture control system will be installed within the Castle. In addition to the boiler, dehumidifying and humidification systems will work in unison to ensure that humidity levels do not go above or below ideal conditions for the preservation of the structure and the collection. (In fact, due to a near complete failure of our old boiler, we have already installed a new boiler. The boiler and other mechanical systems are being provided by Valley Heating and Cooling of Hope Valley, R.I.)



Association Secretary Barbara Vollmar (left) and President Neil Dunay receive the State Preservation grant "check" from Rhode Island Lt. Governor, Elizabeth Roberts.

Rain water and melting snow will be diverted away from the structure via the use of a vinyl barrier and underground piping covered with gravel and/or topsoil. Excavation work will be provided by Burnham Excavation.

Prior to any excavation, as a National Landmark Archaeological Site, archaeology must be performed in the affected areas. Charlotte Taylor of the RIHPHC has generously volunteered to coordinate volunteer work, with a first session scheduled for Saturday, April 26.

The State Preservation Grant requires matching funds in the amount of one-third of the project cost. Smith's Castle will contribute \$15,000 from prior fund raising efforts and grants, including:

- Nearly \$5,000 in 2006 and 2007 disbursements from the Smith's Castle Fund, administered by the Rhode Island Foundation.

- About \$1,600 from the Champlin Foundations (see sidebar).

- The remaining approximately \$8,400 will come from Smith's Castle member donations to our annual appeal, including the 2004/2005 annual appeal benefiting collections preservation and the 2005/2006

Smith's Castle annual appeal benefiting structural work and hearth preservation (moisture is the leading cause of deterioration to the bricks at the Castle).

Smith's Castle thanks, not only the State Preservation Office, the R.I. Foundation, and the Champlin Foundations, but also our dedicated members and donors. Without your contributions, this essential project to preserve Smith's Castle could not have gone forward. ■

Champlin Foundations Fire Alarm Grant Complete

In 2006, The Champlin Foundations generously awarded Smith's Castle \$6,700 for installing a new wireless fire alarm system to meet new fire safety regulations.

Hutchins Electric Corp. of East Greenwich installed the new system in January. The total invoice cost of the project was \$6,350, less a very generous \$1,000 in-kind donation from our vendor. Thus, the net project cost to Smith's Castle was \$5,350. At the same time, the grant fund balance from the Champlin grant had grown to \$6,937 (as of the last interest accrual).

The Champlin Foundations has agreed to allow Smith's Castle to apply the approximately \$1,600 balance from this project to the State Preservation Grant moisture remediation project. We are indeed grateful to Champlin Foundations and Hutchins Electric for their generosity.

Smith's Castle Honor Role

It's Not Too Late!

If you've already sent in your Annual Appeal donation, thank you! If not, we need your gift this year more than ever. If you agree that preserving the rich heritage of Cocumscussoc for today and for the future is a worthwhile mission, we encourage you to contribute generously to our Annual Appeal.

The 2007/2008 Annual Appeal letter went out in December, and as of April 14, 2008, we have received \$5,415 in contributions. This is a wonderful response, but we are just only slightly above halfway in our goal of raising \$10,000 this year. Like last year, your contribution will not be earmarked for any specific project or fund, but rather will support the Castle wherever and whenever needed most. Many thanks to Maggie Skenyon for once again spearheading the Annual Appeal drive this year.

Donors to the 2007-08 Annual Appeal as of April 14, 2008—

Paula D. Allen
Diane and John Amaral
Alex R. Andersen
Bonnie Baker and
James Andrew Daigle
Donna and Frank Boffi
Dick and Anne Bowen
Janet Breault
Sarah Updike Greene Bull and
Christopher Updike Bull
Mr. and Mrs. Paul C. Carlson
Kim and Stephen Clark
William and Karen Connelley
David A. Duffy and Heidi Kirk Duffy
Neil Dunay and Darrell McIntire
Betty and Alex Fenik
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Constance Hiller
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James and Christine Kassal
Donald Kern
Albert T. and Beverly M. Klyberg
Norma LaSalle and
Richard Tomlinson
Bonnie Leonard
Janice and H. Al Lewis
John and Lorrie MacGowan
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Quaker Lane Tool, Inc.
Roberts Reed
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Louis Sansone
Robert and Mary Shillaber
Maggie and Jack Skenyon
Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Skog
Taylor Rentals of North Kingstown
Nancy Thorpe
Lewis Towler
N. Beverley Tucker Jr. and
Constance Kane Tucker
H. Winfield Tucker and
Phyllis A. Tucker
Sheila and Robert Verdi
Barbara Vollmar
Marlene and Allen Lee Zucker Trust

Jan Breault Smith's Castle Volunteer of the Year

On April 10, 2008, the North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce hosted its Third Annual Community Volunteer Recognition Celebration. It is a community-wide event to honor key volunteers for North Kingstown non-profit organizations. With so many wonderful and dedicated volunteers, it is always a difficult task at Smith's Castle to single someone out for this honor. This year marked the long overdue recognition of an incredibly dedicated Castle advocate: Jan Breault. Jan was recognized for all of the things she has done, both large and small, over the years, including her crucial efforts to hold the Castle

together during the difficult period after our resident director left in 2006. She has always been a major force at the Castle, but over the last two years, she went "above and beyond"—serving on the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, helping to hold the youth education committee together, and staffing the office, all while doing her regular docent duties. The hours Jan logs annually on behalf of the Castle are the highest of any volunteer. Jan has held the position of past president on the executive committee since 2003, and her sound judgment (and frugal nature!) have been instrumental in guiding the



Castle during difficult times. These are just a few examples of her heroic contributions to the success of our organization. Thank you, Jan, for all you do for Smith's Castle! ■

Auction Proceeds Pay Off

Proceeds from last year's auction of redundant and non-period items in the Smith's Castle collections are being applied to several worthwhile projects.

Windsor Chairs: David Lockwood of Baggot Frank Lockwood, Narragansett, who restored two Castle furniture pieces a few years ago, has repaired damage to an exquisite pair of 18th century braceback Windsor chairs. The chairs are branded "RM" on the bottom, although we do not know whether that is the mark of the maker or the owner.



Coaching Table: David Lockwood also rehinged and repaired the coaching table. A mid-19th century reproduction of an 18th century style, this table has been in the Castle since its founding as a museum, and appears in photos from the 1950s with John Hutchins Cady, the architect who restored the Castle. It will be placed in the entry stairhall.

Elizabeth Simpson Portrait: The portrait of Elizabeth Simpson, known affectionately by volunteers as the "Lady on the Stairs," will be returning to Smith's Castle soon. For more than a year, conservators at the Lyman Allen Art Museum of New London have been giving our lady a facelift. The c. 1750 painting has been attributed to 18th century Boston artist Joseph Blackburn or an artist in his school. Come see Elizabeth's new face at the Castle this season and watch for an article about the portrait's restoration in an upcoming Chronicle.



Dye Wheel: Last year, the South County Garden Club dye wheel fell off the wall, shattering the glass and breaking the frame. Using archival materials and UV-protective glass, Wickford Cove Framing reglazed and reframed the dye wheel. Formally entitled *Exhibit of Skeins of Wool Dyed with Vegetable Dyes*, the wheel was created by Ethel Jane Schetky for the South County Garden Club in 1954.

New Accession: At a Skinner Discovery auction on March 20, 2008, the Castle acquired a carved Jacobean oak blanket chest with paneled top, front, and sides. The chest measures 23 inches high, 50½ inches wide and 20½ inches deep. The borders are decorated with shallow carved foliage (tree of life motif) and arches along the top border. The chest will be displayed in the 17th century Richard Smith Jr. bedchamber, replacing an 1840s vinegar-painted chest over drawer that will move to the North Chamber.



The Report Is In!

Highly Anticipated Landscape Study Submitted

This spring is an exciting time for Smith's Castle, especially the long range site committee. The eagerly anticipated cultural landscape report (CLR) for Smith's Castle, begun in 2006, has been completed. Lucinda Brockway of Past Designs, the historic landscape consultant retained by the Cocumscussoc Association to conduct the CLR, has submitted the Executive Summary of her study. The complete CLR will be concluded in May. The Executive Summary presents a comprehensive overview of the entire report and provides a concise introduction to the intent, method, scope, and result of this two-year endeavor.

The completion of the CLR and the archaeological investigations conducted as part of the study represent a quantum leap forward for the Cocumscussoc Association. For the first time we have a comprehensive, detailed, thoroughly documented examination of the landscape associated with Smith's Castle as it evolved over the more than three and a half centuries of its existence.

The Chronicle has divided the Executive Summary into four sections and will reprint them, one per issue, this coming year...

Spring— Foreword; Scope of Work; Project Boundaries; Before 1630: The Landscape of the Narragansett Indians; 1630–1692: Richard Smith Sr. and Richard Smith Jr.

Summer— 1692–1757: Lodowick and Daniel Updike; 1757–1812: Lodowick Updike and His Eleven Children.

Fall— 1812–1870: The Congdon Family; 1870–1879: The Rathbun, Gardiner, and Chapin Families; 1879–1936: The Babbitt and Fox Families.

Winter— 1936–1949: Subdivision and Change; 1949–Present: The Cocumscussoc Association; Feature Analysis; Names and Dates; Assessment: Significance and Historic Integrity; Conclusion; Bibliography.

The cultural landscape report and the archaeological investigations conducted in support of the study were funded by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation through a Transportation Enhancement Grant that was awarded to Smith's Castle in October 2002.

Support from the Johanna Favrot Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation assisted in broadening the research conducted and in developing a site maintenance plan during Phase 2 of the CLR.

The site committee gratefully acknowledges the generous financial support of these organizations and expresses its appreciation for the kind, attentive, and thoroughly professional assistance received from...

Michael Bennett, Stephen Devine, Thomas Queenan, Sharon Stone, and Michael Hébert, Environmental and Intermodal Planning, Rhode Island Department of Transportation.

Wendy Nicholas and Brent Leggs, Northeast Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Paul Robinson and Charlotte Taylor of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission.

Daniel Lynch, Soil Sight LLC, Archaeological Geophysics.

Joyce Clements, Ray Pasquariello, and Richard Petyk, Gray and Pape, Inc. Cultural Resource Consultants.

Patricia Rubertone, Department of Anthropology, Brown University.

The site committee is especially grateful to Cindy Brockway who has exceeded our very high expectations and produced a product that gives an insightful review of our site's past, and also insures a sound basis for organizing and directing the evolution of the Smith's Castle landscape well into the 21st century.

Finally, the work of all of these people, along with the financial resources that supported the work, and, in fact, the very existence of the Smith's Castle site committee would not have occurred without the dedication, foresight, hard work, and leadership of Mary Packard Turkel (1946–2008). The Cultural Landscape Report is dedicated to her memory.

Executive Summary

Cultural Landscape Report for Cocumscussoc, Wickford, R.I.

*Prepared by Lucinda Brockway
Past Designs, Inc. Kennebunk, Maine*

Foreword

In early August 2005, the Cocumscussoc Association sent a *Request for Qualifications for a Cultural Landscape Report for Cocumscussoc/Smith's Castle*. The Cocumscussoc Association had been awarded a Transportation Enhancement grant from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to fund the design and construction of a revised entrance, additional parking, and bus turnaround. Prior to developing these plans, the Association commissioned a Cultural Landscape Report to analyze the existing site conditions and to document the historic landscape development at Smith's Castle. The report is the first step in the planning and design process, and will serve as the basis for the organization's future master planning, including the protection of its historic resources both above and below ground.

Since receiving the commission for the Cultural Landscape Report, innumerable visits to the site and hours of research and mapping have resulted in a clearer picture of the landscape here. It is a landscape that extends from the headwaters of Pojac Point south to the very tip of Boston Neck, from the shores of Narragansett Bay to the swampy shores, ponds, and tributaries of the Pettasquamscutt and Cocumscussoc waterways. In reality, it is a landscape history of North Kingstown from its Native American planters to the flurry of land speculation surrounding Quonset Point's World War II military base installation.

This Cultural Landscape Report will serve two related but distinct functions: 1. it will provide the background and recommendations for preparing a Landscape Preservation and Development Plan (to be conducted under separate contract) and 2. it will provide a comprehensive resource for the historic interpretation of the Castle and its associated landscape surroundings. Funding for the project was initially divided into two parts: Part 1 consisted of organizing and researching documents for landscape information, preparing a series of period landscape plans, and writing an executive summary of the research findings. Part 2 included additional research and preparation of the full text of the Cultural Landscape Report and its recommendations. The initial proposal included an additional option: conducting

a geophysical study of the below-ground cultural resources using remote sensing equipment, followed by archaeological field testing to investigate identified anomalies. We were fortunate to have been funded for this work as well and the archaeological investigations (and two subsequent reports) were completed in the fall of 2007.

This report, therefore, represents the completion of Part 1 of the CLR process. This document provides the highlights of our research findings and the graphics illustrate the dramatic changes in the Cocumscussoc landscape from 1650 to the present. When Part 2 is complete, the Cultural Landscape Report will offer a comprehensive look at the landscape history of Cocumscussoc, though with such a massive quantity of land and such a long historic evolution, it is a story that will continue to unfold.

None of the work for this report would have been possible without the dedication of time and talents of the Cocumscussoc Site Committee, including Marilyn Cohen who coordinated all of the grant documents, contracts, contractors, and volunteers for the project; Neil Dunay and Darrell McIntire, who offered their in-depth knowledge of the history of the site and were generous in their time and talents in compiling copies of archival materials into well organized research notebooks; and Norma LaSalle, Martha Dwyer, and Clifford (Jack) Renshaw for their advice and expertise throughout the project. The archaeological component of this study, key in understanding the potential for below-ground resources needing protection, was conducted by Dan Lynch of Soil Sight LLC and Joyce Clements, Ray Pasquariello, Richard Petyk, and their team from Gray and Pape.

The willingness and efforts of the staff at RIDOT, RIHPHC, and CRMC are greatly appreciated as are the kind and generous efforts of Patricia Rubertone of Brown University who offered expertise and guidance throughout the project.

Preparation

Work was begun on Phase 1 in April 2006. Spring and summer of 2006 were spent conducting research and gathering site information. With the help of the committee and a huge amount of existing documen-

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A virtual monoculture of the invasive common reed, *Phragmites australis*, has developed along the banks of Cocumscussoc Brook. Photo: Cindy Brockway.



tation compiled by Darrell McIntire and Neil Dunay, additional sources for research were identified and prioritized. On-site archives were reviewed, and photographs of existing plans and historic images were taken for research purposes. Off-site archives, including the resources of the Town of North Kingstown, the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Massachusetts State Archives, Records of the United Colonies, the Rhode Island State Archives, and others were searched for additional cultural landscape information. Additional research tasks, to be completed in Phase 2, have already been identified and prioritized. Monthly reports to the Site Committee for the Phase 1 work and for the archaeology component were compiled and submitted throughout the project, and form a detailed accounting of our work to date.

Mapping and Photography

Aerial photographs of the site were commissioned from Don Bosquet and Son Aerial Photography in late fall 2006 and site mowing was completed to record bird's eye views of the landscape. Orthophotography for mapping purposes was obtained from the University of Rhode Island and the Town of North Kingstown. Northeast Engineers scanned historic maps and prepared a survey of the site. To minimize costs, topographic information was collected from existing maps rather than commissioning a com-

plete new topographic plan. There has been a great deal of focus on the land surrounding the Castle and the Annex buildings, and topographic information is available at one foot intervals in those areas. Less topographic information has been gathered for the wetland area north of Richard Smith Drive. The northern property boundary was surveyed, staked, and mapped by Northeast Engineers prior to completing the mowing operations to verify exact property boundaries in the field.

Field Investigations

Throughout the spring and summer of 2006 bimonthly visits to the site were made to record plant identifications, landscape management issues, and evidence of landscape history, and to photograph the site and its landscape contents throughout the seasons. Windshield surveys of other parts of North Kingstown owned at one time by the Smith and Updike families revealed evidence of a broader landscape history.

Archaeology

The contracts for the archaeology project were signed by Soil Sight and Gray and Pape in November 2006 after an October gathering of archaeological experts advised the team on the scope and direction of the project. With the funding of the archaeological component, work was postponed on Phase 1 of the CLR until the findings from this work could be integrated into the overall research plan. A CRMC permit was filed and approved for mowing a significant amount of underbrush that had grown up on site after an unusually wet spring. The mild winter allowed remote sensing to continue under good field conditions. Once site anomalies were identified, the archaeology advisory committee met again to prioritize the work for field investigation. Field investigations were conducted in spring 2007, and a draft report was completed by August.

Preparation of Period Landscape Plans

One of the products of the Phase 1 work was to complete a series of three landscape plans, illustrating the history of the property during three distinct periods. Historic data, historic and contemporary maps, archaeological information, and field investigations were analyzed, overlaid, and compiled to produce nine graphics. Historic property lines were overlaid on both 1997 aerial photographs and 1873 maps to illustrate the properties boundaries c. 1680, c. 1800, and 1870–1947. The 1873 plan was a coastal survey that was found to be extremely accurate for roads, lanes, house locations, fence lines, and coastal features



Rabbit (Queens) Island, owned by the Cocumscussoc Association, serves as a welcome buffer to encroaching 20th and 21st century development. *Photo: Cindy Brockway.*

and helped to determine historic property boundaries and land use in the mid 19th century. In addition, information from historic maps was overlaid on the current property to determine site-specific landscape information. Historic maps were scanned and overlaid on the existing site maps prepared by Northeast Engineering, and offered insight into the historic configuration of the land immediately surrounding the Castle buildings.

Executive Summary

Completion of the Executive Summary marks the end of Phase 1. Combined with the research notebooks, graphics, and archaeology reports, the summary provides a general overview of the cultural landscape history of the site. Upon the completion of Phase 2, which includes the comprehensive Cultural Landscape Report and recommendations for managing the grounds and interpreting the site to the visitors, a detailed picture of the rich landscape legacy that has survived on the Castle grounds and within the Town of North Kingstown will emerge.

Project Boundaries

Today, the building known as Smith's Castle sits on a 1.8 acre lot on the edge of Mill Cove, a small protected cove off the larger Wickford Harbor. The names of the

coves and the names of the rivers and streams have changed, often many times over. Sorting through these names and piecing them together is necessary to make sense of the landscape history of the site. The Cocumscussoc Association now owns six lots of land whose boundaries were established in the mid 20th century when Richard Smith's original land purchase was subdivided (after three centuries) to supply the housing needs of nearby Quonset Point, a United States Naval Reservation (established 1940). In total, the Association owns 23.29 acres, including the 10.2 acre Rabbit Island (Queens Island). This acreage represents only a small portion of the vast land holdings once owned by Richard Smith Sr. in the 17th century. Though the primary purpose of the Cultural Landscape Report is to tell the landscape history and identify the cultural landscape evidence that remains on this 23.39 acres, we cannot tell the entire story without investigating the other pieces of this landscape history—a history that incorporates most of the Town of North Kingstown and portions of the towns of South Kingstown and Narragansett.

The original 17th century Smith family land grants included land from Potowomut Point south to the tip of Boston Neck. Rivers, streams, hills, and the shores of Narragansett Bay formed the natural boundaries of these land grants. The bounds of Smith's land traced from the Potowomut River down the Hunt River to

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Sandhill Brook to the Black Swamp, and then along the course of Cocumscussoc Brook to the headwaters of the Mattatuxet River and along the course of the Pettasquamscutt River out into the West Passage of Narragansett Bay. Smith, whose primary interest in the area was trading furs with the Narragansett, found the protected harbors and coves of the region to be ideal spots for locating a trading post. A foot trail ran along the spine of the shoreline parallel to the Bay, roughly midway between the rivers and the shore. This path—the Pequot Path, the English Path, the Post Road, and finally Routes 1 and 1A—eventually came to define the property boundaries for most of Smith’s land interests.

Smith purchased land not only for his own immediate use but as speculative investments as well. He and his son were partners with a group of Boston-based entrepreneurs in the purchase of two large tracts of land later known as the Quidnessett Purchase and the Namcook Purchase, located on land north of Smith’s Castle and on land along Boston Neck south of the Castle, respectively. Smith’s land fell in the center—the literal heart of the proposed new settlements.

For most of this study, we will focus on the land directly owned by the Smiths and their heirs lying between the Annaquatucket River, today’s Post Road and Camp Avenue, just south of the Quonset Naval Air Station, including all of Wickford village with its many coves, island, and necks of land thrusting into the Bay.

At the end of the 18th century this land was subdivided into three farms, the “North Farm” (360 acres), the “South Farm” (750 acres), and the “Homestead Farm” (300 acres) and a hoped-for village known as “Updike’s Newtown.” A large family (eleven children) caused Lodowick Updike to subdivide his farms in 1798 into smaller parcels: five, 250–360 acre farms and lots in the village that ranged from a quarter acre to 50 acres. The 300 acre Homestead Farm, which remained with Smith’s Castle until 1936, consisted of land that occupied the intricate shorelines of Wickford Harbor and Mill Cove (earlier Sawmill Cove) from today’s West Main Street to Oakdale Avenue—the heart of Smith’s original land interests.

Like matrioska nesting dolls, Cocumscussoc’s 23 acres is at the center of an ever-enlarging picture—the center of a cultural landscape history that expands along the western shores of the Bay. This study does not include land associated with Richard Smith and his heirs in Portsmouth, Bristol, Newport, or Jamestown and other islands of Narragansett Bay, nor does it include the trade and early settlement stories of Gloucestershire, Amsterdam, New Amsterdam (New York City and Long Island), nor does it trace the routes traveled by Smith’s sloops as he built the financial base of his land empire. The land history of this property has many tentacles

that extend well beyond this house and its 23 acres—a wealth of information that can extend our research efforts well into this century.

Summary of Landscape History

Before 1630

Landscape of the Narragansett

First came the land—long before military bases, villages, political boundaries, Europeans, or even Narragansetts. Myriad streams, brooks, and rivers shaped protected coves. Soft glacial till, rich alluvial river soils, boggy freshwater swamps, and softly undulating hillsides provided a rich habitat for wildlife. Grassy riverbanks and natural meadows offered plentiful food and ideal shelter for migrating wild fowl and industrious beavers. Deciduous forests protected deer, wildcat, squirrel, and fox. Sharp bends in rivers and streams slowed freshwater fish ripe for the catch. Narragansett Bay teamed with fish—shell and fin alike. It is no wonder this land of plenty induced visitors to remain; to put down roots; to populate the land with their offspring.

When the first European settlers arrived here, they found a land carefully shaped by its inhabitants. Instead of a “wilderness” they encountered a highly sophisticated manipulation of the natural environment in order to optimize its potential for habitation, for hunting, and for improving efficiency of labor, movement, and living. Slow spring burns eliminated woodland undergrowth and facilitated hunting and increased the borders and grassy edges where bird and animal populations could breed and graze. Boggy land offered retreat in time of war; the difficult soils slowed movement and created a more defensible position for stopping an enemy. Cultivated fields were planted with corn, beans, and squashes together; the beans and squashes growing under the corn stalks, shading out weeds and minimizing water evaporation from the soil. Here was a native culture that had adapted well to its environment and offers us a rich glimpse into the native cultural landscape.

The seemingly complicated words of the Narragansett language used in early deed transactions between Richard Smith and the Narragansett sachems describe their landscape in clear, uncomplicated terms: Potowomut—low meadow land; Sawgoge—loose shell beads; Namcook—at the fishing place; Shewatucket—at the place between tidal streams; Mascakonage—place of long rushes; Wyapumseat—place of rushes at the end of the rocks, rocky hill at the end of a cove; Mattatuxot—poorly wooded river; Pascachute (Pansacaco)—pond with crooked outlet or crooked current. Other, less complicated terms complete the picture—“little island for goates; tradeing house; planting ground; meadows; small maple tree; greate high rocky hill; creek; great neck; little river; common road or English path; broad waters.”

The early land transactions are delineated by natural boundaries now almost completely obscured by later development. The headwaters of the present day Pettaquamscutt River flow from an intricately linked network of ponds, swamps, brooks and streams that flow behind the low hills of the Narragansett shoreline. These waterways offered identifiable boundaries that were easily understood in the indigenous habitats of North Kingstown and almost completely ignored by today's inhabitants. The area is rich with natural springs and freshwater supply—one reason among many that the land was so desirable for settlement.

The footpaths that linked these hunting, fishing and camping grounds became important, easily traveled byways for European settlers, although the water was by far an easier travel option even in the easily-overturned chestnut canoes used by Roger Williams and the Narragansett. The common road or English path eventually became our present day thoroughfares of Route 1 and Route 1A. As these roads became the preferred means of transportation, their twists and turns were softened and straightened, leaving us with a number of small turn-outs where the sharper turns were bypassed with straighter roads. Even today it is easy to trace the route of the earliest road system from Namcook (Boston Neck) to Quidnessett following the original road system, and to identify the navigable waterways, bog lands, coves and streams understood so well by the Narragansett.

1630–1692

Richard Smith Sr. and Richard Smith Jr.

For Europeans, this was a land of economic opportunity ripe for the shaping. Land was purchased first for trading posts, which required a location where protected coves and gentle shores met overland byways, easily accessible by land or by sea. For both the Narragansett and the Dutch businessmen this was a mutually beneficial opportunity for trading the byproducts of natural resources (mostly pelts) for European manufactured goods or local currency. From his home in New Amsterdam, Richard Smith ran a prosperous and coveted trading port on the shores of Wickford Cove for almost 15 years before establishing his full time residence there. One of three traders in Narragansett Country, Smith eventually acquired his competition by outright purchase (Roger Williams) and by court settlement (Jan Wilcox) forming his own small monopoly on fur trade in the vicinity.

Land investment became the next best opportunity for wealth by the late 1650s, and Richard Smith lost no time in positioning himself as a large landholder. As one of the Atherton partners, Smith and his son owned, in whole or in part, the rights to land that extended from the tip of Boston Neck north to Potowomut Point. This



Richard Smith's land holdings, c. 1661 to c. 1680, included large tracts along the western shore of Narragansett Bay from Quidnessett south to the tip of Boston Neck. During this period Smith also owned large tracts of land in Bristol, Portsmouth, Newport, Jamestown, and New Amsterdam. *Graphic: Cindy Brockway.*

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The colonial revival garden designed by Irmgard Graham is one of most enduring landscape features at Smith's Castle. At more than a half century old—it is a rarity among ornamental perennial gardens.
Photo: Cindy Brockway.

land offered four great economic opportunities: 1. It was adjacent to the rich fishing resources of Narragansett Bay, a resource that offered its own economic rewards. 2. Its deep harbors and coves and its shallow inlets offered diverse opportunities for shipping, wharfage, and trade. 3. Though the area was limited in water power, its deep river outlets provided the opportunity for tidal water power—at least enough for grinding grain or sawing timber, and its brooks could be dammed for ponds that could provide enough power for other grain and saw mills. 4. Its rich soils were ideal for cultivation and pasturage and a 250 acre farm could produce sufficient excess for successful commercial farming.

Richard Smith, his son, and their Atherton partners sold tracts of land divided not by natural boundaries, but by European measurements of chains, rods, and poles. Fences, walls, and roads required by the first settlers designated later property ownership. Today this late 17th century land settlement is easily traced in the field, and on contemporary maps, as all later land subdivisions have been derived from these early parcels. A network of stone walls, lanes, highways, ditches, and fence lines weave themselves across the landscape like the warp and woof of Rhode Island's textile mills—a landscape fabric that traces more than three hundred years of farming and land trade.

Changing political allegiances among European colonies and with the Native Americans brought the Narragansett Country into the heart of political upheaval. The value of this land was easily recognizable and everyone wanted a piece of the action. Between 1660 and 1726 repeated land disputes and changing colonial territorial jurisdictions resulted in fluctuating legal and political alliances for the Narragansett

Country. Known first as Nanhigansett, then as the Narragansett Country, Wickforde, King's Town, King's Province, Rochester, and finally Kingstown, court and legal records for Cocumscussoc can be found in the archives of Massachusetts, Connecticut, the United Colonies, Great Britain, and finally in the Rhode Island archives. Despite these political maneuverings, economic opportunities remained strong and the Smith/Updike empire grew, though the area was not settled as quickly as communities in Connecticut, Plymouth, or Massachusetts Bay.

The Smith family's financial and social role in the Narragansett Country was recognized by each political allegiance and though the Smiths continually appealed to remain part of the Connecticut colony, the Smith family men were named as agents, commissioners, selectmen, constables, justices of the peace, and court presidents under each colony claiming jurisdiction; and charged with disloyal or illegal acts by the colony with opposing claims. Under both father and son, the Smith house was recognized as the physical, political, and economic center of the Narragansett Country. With that role came the responsibility of using the property in both a private and semi-public way, and some of the landscape information for this report was gleaned from court pleadings, soldiers' letters, tax records, and other accounts describing the dealings here—sources that normally fall outside the realm of ordinary landscape history research.

Most importantly, Smith's "garrison" was the central gathering place for the troops of the United Colonies before the Great Swamp Fight of King Philip's War. Not surprisingly, the easy accessibility that made the property an ideal trading post offered the same ease of access for military forces from the Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Connecticut colonies. Smith's extensive agricultural operation, his collection of sloops and small boats, and the link between overland routes and easy waterfront access drew the colonial forces bent on quelling troubles with the Narragansett. After years of business dealings with the Narragansett, the family's attitudes about the disagreements are unclear, though it was clearly in their best economic interest to bring peace to the Narragansett Country and allow trade and settlement to continue.

After King Philip's War, Smith pleaded with the United Colony Courts to reimburse him for his losses while housing the troops during the Great Swamp Fight. These pleadings offer us a glimpse into his agricultural operations for the year 1675. In 1684, the General Assembly of the United Colonies voted to pay Richard Smith forty pounds "for the great charge he was at in maintaining of our soldiers when at his house, several times, and for that he was so greatly serviceable himself." In his letter, Smith petitioned for reimbursement for horse shoes and nails, 26 head

of cattle, 100 goats, and 80 hogs fed to the soldiers, copper, brass and wooden vessels "spoiled" by the army's use, most of his post and rail fence used for firewood by the army, an oxen, cart and utensils "all lost after the garrison went away," and the loss of his house "burnt, being of great valewe." [*Records of the United Colonies*, Sept 1, 1684]. Housing, feeding, and warming 600 troops for eight to ten days, in addition to the more than 350 prisoners taken during the battle and its preceding skirmishes, required a substantial farm operation, even if they were "housed" in outdoor camps. After the battle, Wilkins Updike recounted that the dead were buried in a grave located "in the south-east part of the garden," where "a tree, known as the Grave Apple Tree, grew up." [Updike 1842: 35]

Other landscape information from the late 17th century offers only a taste of the content or arrangement of Smith's farm. A 1659 deed (recorded date) describes "a small maple tree near on the Northwest side of the trading house, by a spring" [Fones 1659: 97] Roger Williams granted Richard Smith "my trading house at Narragansett, together with two iron Guns or murderers, there Lyeing as alsoe my fields and fencing aboute the s'd house, is alsoe the use of the little island for goates which the old Sachem, deceased, Lent me for that use." [Fones 1651: 93] The 1659 (recorded date) deed from Coginaquond to Richard Smith Sr. and Richard Smith Jr. references "a necke of land beareing Eastward from the house on the other side of the Cove, part of which neck is already inclosed" [Fones 1659: 97] In 1666, Richard Smith left his children his dwelling house and land bounded by the Annaquatucket River, Cocumscussoc Brook, and the creeks and coves of the harbor. In addition, his land included property on Conanicut Island, Dutch Island, tracts on Boston Neck, and lands at "Sagag." His list of livestock included cattle, horses, mares, sheep, goats, and swine, with no reference to numbers of animals nor any specific field crops. Throughout his lifetime, personal letters reference cheese, corn, cattle, and other livestock traded or sold from the property.

Richard Smith Jr. continued his father's interests in agriculture, land speculation, shipping and trade. After the house burned in 1676, Richard Smith Jr. either rebuilt the dwelling or built himself a new home nearby and continued his farming and trade operations. Cheeses, turkeys, white sugar, corn, livestock, and other goods are all traded, sold, or sent as gifts from Cocumscussoc. His sloop, the *Primrose*, ferried goods for trade up and down the Bay, to Newport, and connected to larger colonial and European ports.

The *Primrose* and the *Welcome* are the two documented trading vessels owned by Richard Smith Jr. or his father. They probably also owned smaller boats and canoes which offered access to shallow waters and sandy beaches, but could hold far smaller amounts of

corn or fur for trade. By the 18th century a wharf can be documented off the shores of the cove a little north of the house. We cannot document the earliest date for this wharf, nor do we know the historic depth of water off the shores of the house. Other locations for wharves, on land owned by the Smiths in the 17th century, include wharves off Calf Neck, Saugo Point, and several in nearby Wickford.

Clearly interested in the economic opportunities that his land offered, Richard Smith granted two separate parcels of land along the Annaquatucket River "for the greate desire I have to promote the good Settle'mt of this Towne." [Fones 1686: 85 and 135] The first parcel was 27 acres located near Jacob Pinder's dwelling (one of the Smith's tenant farmers at South Farm) along the north shore of the Annaquatucket River. The land was granted with the agreement that Richard Wharton would build a dam for mills and create a mill pond to power the mills. One year later, Smith granted William Palmer, a gunsmith from Barbados, a 40 acre lot along the same river—clearly another hopeful investment in industrial opportunities along the river. Today the Mill Pond, with its dam located under Boston Neck Road, is the physical remains of Wharton's industrial investment.

Richard Smith Jr.'s 1692 inventory portrays a larger and more complex agribusiness, though dealing in much the same livestock as his father. His inventory includes several buildings: a Great House, warehouse, shop, stone house, and kitchen (in addition to the kitchen in the Great House). We do not, however, know the specific arrangement of these buildings though it is believed that the Great House is the building now known as Smith's Castle. No evidence has been found, above or below ground, for the other buildings on the 23 acres which remains with the house. However, buildings have developed north of the existing house, on land now owned by the MacKendall family, including the family cemetery. Today, with later buildings in between, it is hard to envision the larger 17th century complex that probably including buildings on the MacKendall property.

In 1692, Smith's inventory includes 3 horses (2 Geldings and a Stone horse), 30 sheep (kept at Thomas Havens), 20 swine, 135 cattle, along with ploughs and other husbandry tools. [*Inventory of Richard Smith Jr.* Boston: October 13, 1692] Pork, butter, cheese, and wool, though not inventoried, were important documented byproducts of Smith's farm, and his staple field crops probably included corn, hay, wood, peas, and beans, and some combination of rye, oats, and barley. Smith's inventory includes a listing of "English money, New England money and Spanish"—evidence of the international trade and unstable monetary situation experienced by Smith and his contemporaries in the late 17th century.

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The view of Mill Cove from the front lawn is one of the most valuable landscape features at Smith's Castle. Photo: Cindy Brockway.

Richard Smith Jr.'s 1692 will describes a highly evolved combination of farms and residences, some with tenant families, stretched across his land holdings that totaled almost 4,000 acres in outright ownership and hundreds of acres more in investment lands at Boston Neck and Quidnesset. After almost 50 years, many of the Narragansett place names continued to reference individual farms. The land at Saugo and Calf's Neck, though described as distinct parcels from the Homestead Farm, were bequeathed to Lodowick Updike as part of the Homestead parcel. The Homestead Farm is described as "the housing and land I now dwell on,"—a continuation of his father's legacy.

Daniel and James Updike received the next farm to the south, (in the late 19th century this farm was called the "South Farm") including the land from the Annaquatucket River north to Wickford Cove. This land was farmed by tenant farmers Jacob Pinder and John Thomas. Israel Newton and James Newton inherited the farm at Masguage, in the north part of the Quidnesset purchase. Thomas Newton of London received Smith's house and land in Bristol and Hogg Island, and his sister, Elizabeth Viall (Newman) received his farm on Boston Neck where Alexander King was living. Aquila Ketch received a house and 100 acres of land "within fences" where Thomas Whithers and his mother lived (location unknown). His Negro servant Caesar and his wife received 100 acres of land "in a convenient place" to be laid out by Lodowick Updike. Similarly, Caesar's children were to receive their

freedom at the age of 30, and other disbursements of money and land on Boston Neck. For a couple with no children, the Smiths had a large extended family, all of whom were included in Smith's final bequest. Land was subdivided along parcels that reflected, to a great extent, the boundaries or place names of their original purchase, though more settled and more developed than when left behind by Richard Smith Sr.

The map on page 11 illustrates the land holdings of the first two generations of the Smith family along with the land directly owned and settled by the Smiths and their tenant farmers. As for other cultural evidence, which can be documented to this era, we can include the land, Queens (Rabbit) Island, the heart of the existing building (built 1678), the remains of the English Path, some of which is found under the Post Road, and some of which is found underground near the current highway. (The English Path had bends and twists that were later straightened as the road became a busy automobile highway in the 20th century. The geophysical sensing done in 2007 revealed the remains of a "turn off" that was found in later mapping exercises to be the remains of the earlier road.) In addition, the remains of the entrance and lane to the Castle are also buried beneath the road changes that occurred here in the 1950s. Cocumscussoc Brook and the tiny streams that drain the land north of the house are indigenous to the property, and the freshwater spring near the English path is described in deeds recorded as early as 1656. ■

Upcoming Events

Travel Back to the 1600s

Smith's Castle, in collaboration with the Roger Williams National Memorial, will host Bridge to the Past from noon to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 3, and Sunday, May 4, 2008. One of the few 17th century encampments in New England, re-enactors portraying soldiers, sailors, privateers, pirates, sutlers, and traders will take over the Smith's Castle grounds. Visitors will be treated to the sights, smells, and sounds of the 17th century with maypole dancing, fireside cooking, weapons demonstrations, games, and much more.

Entertainment will feature Barnacle, a folk group with an extensive repertoire of colonial era music. Attired in colonial-era costume, they will stroll the grounds serenading visitors. Admission: \$5 (members, free); children 6–12, \$1; children under 6, free. For more information, call 401-294-3521, e-mail smithscastle@earthlink.net. ■



Reenactors encamped on the front lawn of the Castle relax during a break in last year's Bridge to the Past events. *Photo: Bruce Major.*

Strawberry Festival

Haven't yet savored Smith's Castle's famous homemade strawberry shortcake smothered in whipped cream? Then don't miss the annual Strawberry Festival celebration on Saturday, June 21, 2008, from noon to 4 p.m. Beat the June heat with thirst-quenching lemonade and strawberry drinks. Family entertainment, sponsored by the North Kingstown Arts Council, will fill the afternoon.



Photo: Wayne McCarthy.

The children's craft area will feature two perennial Castle favorites: Make a tussie mussie, a tiny Victorian flower bouquet, or, if you prefer more physical crafts, hammer flowers to make a lovely keepsake flower print or note card.

The first floor of the house will be open for a walk-through with docents in period costumes stationed in each room to answer questions about the house and its history. Stroll through the lovely Colonial Revival Garden and enjoy the beautiful grounds overlooking scenic Mill Cove.

Watch your e-mail for the *eChronicle* for details and updates as this perennial event comes together. ■



Attorney General Daniel Updike

Anstis Jenkins Updike was the second wife of Daniel Updike. Painting by Nehemiah Partridge (the Aetatis Sue limner), 1722. Courtesy of the Rhode Island Historical Society. Photograph by David Shultz. (Rhi x5 307)



About 1716 Daniel married Sarah Arnold, likely the daughter of Benedict Arnold, a speaker of the House of Deputies (1706–1707) and granddaughter of Governor Benedict Arnold. Sarah died in 1718, but this family connection no doubt helped Daniel in his professional aspirations.³

Shortly after his election as attorney general in 1722, Daniel Updike married his second wife, Anstis Jenkins. According to Wilkins Updike, Anstis was the granddaughter of an aristocratic Polish woman, “a lady...who by her intermarriage with Mr. Wilkins, below her degree, lost the favor of her family and emigrated with him to America. By the connexion [sic], Mr. Updike became possessed of a considerable property, in addition to his patrimonial estate.” [Updike 1842: 37–38]

In honor of the wedding, two portraits were painted of the couple by the Aetatis Sue limner (also known as the Schuyler limner), who recently has been identified as Nehemiah Partridge, an artist known to briefly have visited Newport in 1722. The portrait of Anstis survives and today is the oldest painting in the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society. Unfortunately, the companion portrait of Daniel is missing. [Goodyear 1974: 3] Daniel and Anstis had four children: Lodowick in 1725, Mary in 1727, and twins Gilbert and Wilkins in 1729, both of whom died in infancy.

Setting R.I. Boundaries

In 1724, the legislature voted that “Mr. Daniel Updike be sent to Connecticut to exchange copies of the Assembly’s acts, and of the commission for the settling of boundaries between the two colonies.” [Bartlett 1859 IV: 349] This boundary had been disputed since the mid 1600s, with Updike’s own ancestors, Richard Smith Sr. and Jr., staunch advocates for Connecticut’s claim to southern Rhode Island. The negotiations proved fruitless and the matter was ultimately decided by the King in Council in 1726, although the border was not firmly established until the 19th century. [Updike 1842: 39]

Also that year, Massachusetts requested Rhode Island (and Connecticut) military assistance against alleged Native American hostilities. Wilkins credits Daniel Updike with drafting the reply (signed by Richard Ward, recorder) that rebuffed the request diplomatically, thus keeping Rhode Island out of the immediate conflict. [Updike 1842: 39–41; Bartlett 1859 IV: 351–353] In 1727, Updike was also on a committee to draft an address to the newly coronated King George II that contained, in addition to the expected pleasantries, requests for cannons for new fortifications at Newport. [Bartlett 1859 IV: 392–294]

In 1729, Daniel Updike became embroiled in a cause that marked the high point in his legal career. He was appointed, along with William Jencks and Daniel Abbott, to fix the border between the colonies of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. [Updike 1842: 44] This effort would not be decided until the 1740s.

“In June, 1741, the King’s commissioners met at Providence, to hear and determine the cause... To Rhode-Island the issue was eventful. Her existence, as a colony, depended on the decision. If Massachusetts could establish her claim to the Narragansett Bay, on the south-west, the exclusive political jurisdiction of Rhode-Island over the Narragansett waters would be lost forever; but if Rhode-Island could establish her jurisdiction over the territory described in her Charter, she would hold, within her control, the great naval and commercial key of New-England. Both parties were confident; and both were arrayed with their best talents, for the conflict... Each party thought they understood their case; they were ready for the trial; neither asked for postponement or delay. Mr. Shirley, or Bollan, and Auchmuty, distinguished advocates in Boston, argued the cause in behalf of Massachusetts, and Messrs. Honyman and Updike in behalf of Rhode-Island. Judge Lightfoot, who heard the trial, spoke of it as one of the most anxious exhibitions

that he ever witnessed, and that the argument of Mr. Updike, in the close, was a masterly effort. [Updike 1842: 48–49]

The commissioners sided mostly with Rhode Island, and the decision was confirmed by the crown, over Massachusetts appeal, in 1746. The decision gave to Rhode Island the modern towns of Little Compton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, Barrington, and Cumberland.

Despite Updike's later success in settling and expanding Rhode Island's borders, his ancestors' own unpopular land claims were a political liability. In 1732, Daniel Updike declined to run as attorney general to pursue a run for governor. Supporters of his opponent, William Wanton, however, spread a rumor that if Updike was elected, he would reopen and reverse land claims to Narragansett country. Wanton prevailed.

Newport Culture

Reverend George Berkeley, Irish philosopher and dean of Derry, arrived in Newport in 1729 and quickly became friends with Daniel Updike. Berkeley was on his way to Bermuda to establish a college, but Updike and other locals tried to persuade him to establish the school in Rhode Island. Berkeley bought an old house in Newport (now Middletown), and Daniel Updike's name appears as a witness to the deed. Berkeley renovated the old farmhouse in the Georgian style, the latest in English fashion at the time. He called his house Whitehall in reference to the home of the English kings. It remains today as a museum.

Updike, already a learned man, was no doubt encouraged by Berkeley, as were other locals, in literary and philosophical pursuits. In 1730 a group of Newporters, including Updike, formed a literary society out of which was formed the Redwood Library in 1747, and Updike is one of the Redwood's original proprietors. Updike had a vast personal library, including books on law, religion, and the classics. Funding for Berkeley's college was not forthcoming, and Berkeley returned home in 1731. On his departure, he presented Updike with a silver flagon (coffee pot), now in the collection of Newport's Trinity Church.

Daniel's father Lodowick died in 1737, leaving his vast estate to Daniel. At this time, Daniel, who had called Newport home for nearly two decades, moved back to the family home at Cocumscussoc. Inspired by Berkeley's renovation of Whitehall, Updike transformed his great uncle's c.1678 Elizabethan-style "Castle" into a grand and elegant Georgian mansion

house, with symmetrical façade painted bright white and paneled interiors of bright pink. The renovation may have taken about two years, as in September 1739 the records of Old St. Paul's mention the admission of Mrs. Anstis Updike, "the wife of Col. Daniel Updike, having been heretofore, before her removal to the main land, a Communicant at y^e Church of Newport." [Updike 1907 I: 183]

Final Years in Office

In 1740, the office of Attorney General was changed from one, colony-wide, position to individual attorney generals for each county. Daniel Updike, who had given up the position in 1732, was appointed to represent King's County in 1741 and 1742. This method was repealed and in 1743, Daniel Updike was once again elected as the colony-wide Attorney General.

Anstis died about 1744. In 1745, Daniel married a third time. His new wife, Mary, was the widow of his rival in the governor race, William Wanton. Mary also preceded Daniel in death.

In May 1757, soon after he was elected yet again as the colony's attorney general, Daniel Updike died. Ironically, Rhode Island's longest serving attorney general and one of its greatest legal minds failed to settle his own legal matters. Daniel Updike died intestate.

Updike served the longest of any of Rhode Island's attorneys general. He helped mould and enforce the laws of the colony, but he will be remembered most for helping to secure the boundaries of the Rhode Island colony as we know them today.

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The shaded areas on the map show the modern towns transferred from Massachusetts to Rhode Island in 1746. "Map of Rhode Island, 1806–1854" John Hutchins Cady, 1936.



Attorney General Daniel Updike

Daniel Updike's Law Office at Smith's Castle

For its 2008 season, Smith's Castle is developing a permanent exhibition recreating the c. 1755 office of Daniel Updike, Rhode Island attorney general. The exhibition will commemorate the accomplishments of Updike as attorney general, recreate known elements of his office from the inventory of his personal estate, and interpret the workings of a mid-18th century law practice.

Born about 1694, Daniel Updike was Rhode Island attorney general from 1722 to 1732 and again from 1741 until his death in 1757, 24 years of service. Updike is best remembered for his role in settling boundary disputes. Updike helped define Rhode Island's boundary with Connecticut in the 1720s, and his "masterly effort" in arguing Rhode Island's case led to the annexation of Little Compton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, and Cumberland from Massachusetts in the 1740s, securing the Rhode Island boundaries we know today.

Beriah Brown Desk,
Daniel Updike Waist-
coat and Walking
Stick. *Smith's Castle
Collections.*



From the probate inventory of Daniel Updike's personal estate in 1757, we know which room in the house was his office and the types of major pieces of furniture found in the room. According to the inventory, Updike's office at Smith's Castle contained a bookcase and books, two desks, a table, a chest, and a pair of pistols. The mention of books is not surprising. Updike was a founder of the Redwood Library in Newport and had an extensive personal library of volumes on law, religion, and the classics.



The presence of two desks indicates that a second person staffed the office, mostly likely an apprentice. One of Updike's apprentices, John Cole (1715–1777), married Updike's daughter, Mary, in 1759 and later became a Rhode Island supreme court chief justice and a conspirator in the burning of the *Gaspee*. Apprentices not only helped with the running of the office, but they (along with scribes) were the 18th-century equivalent of the copying machine in modern law offices, as it was they who hand-copied legal documents.

Unfortunately, Updike's desk and other original furniture have not survived, but we will display instead a comparable desk owned by Beriah Brown, the high-sheriff of Washington County from 1746 to 1792. In addition to furniture pieces and office equipment, the exhibit will include Updike's walking stick and his waistcoat, a reproduction of a painting of his second wife (Anstis Jenkins), and a wall map showing the Rhode Island boundaries he helped secure.

Updike worked without benefit of the modern office equipment and supplies we take for granted. Legal documents were managed by folding them into thirds or quarters, noting the subject on the outside, and filing them in the pigeon holes of the desk. Older documents were bundled and stored in chests (such as the one mentioned in the probate inventory). Important documents that were frequently referenced were bound into books.

When Updike needed a new pen, he sent a boy to pluck one of the largest feathers from a (live!) goose's wing. The feather would be cured in hot sand, then



trimmed with a penknife to just the right point. The point would last about five pages before the nib needed to be honed again. Ink came in powdered form and had to be mixed with water—a tedious, messy process.

The colonial lawyer was his own accountant. Strict ledgers and account books were as necessary then as now. However, stable currency was not generally available, so attorneys rarely received cash for their services. In South County, cheese was a favored form of currency. How much is an hour of your time worth in cheese? (And for clients who were reluctant to pay, let's hope he didn't have to resort to the pistols.) ■



Colonel Theo Atkinson (detail), Joseph Blackburn, 1760.
Courtesy Worcester Art Museum.

Smith's Castle is seeking financial support for the Updike Law Office so that we might secure needed furnishings and educational objects. If you would like to be a part of this exciting project, please send your contributions to the Castle, noting "Updike Law Office" on your check.

Thank-you to Richard B. Carpenter, Esq. and Domenic A. Mosca Jr., Esq., Mosca and Volpe, for their generous contributions!

Notes

1. See Newport County Supreme Court, General Court of Trials, Vol. A 1671–1724, Archives at the Judicial Records Center (JRC), Judiciary of Rhode Island.

2. Updike was elected "General Attorney" in May 1722 and as a freeman of the colony in April 1723. [Bartlett 1859, IV:311,325]

3. Wilkins Updike continues, "After his admission he opened an office in Newport; married Sarah, the daughter of Governor Benedict Arnold, and she dying without issue, he married for his second wife, Anstis Jenkins" However, Benedict Arnold, the governor, had no children named Sarah and any of his daughters would have been a generation older than Daniel Updike. Benedict's son of the same name had a daughter Sarah, b. 1698, who is a more likely candidate. [Austin 1887: 243] The submission of one family historian on ancestry.com indicates this Sarah Arnold married Daniel Updike on December 20, 1716, and died January 26, 1718, a plausible but as yet unsubstantiated assertion.

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Hearthside Cooking

Butter and the Colonial Dairy

Contributed by Barbara Crudale

Consider the lowly stick of rectangular butter in your refrigerator for a moment and realize that you are one person in a long line of generations that have enjoyed its smooth texture in baking, cooking and smeared on hot bread.

One of the earliest records in history of butter being churned is of the tribes of horsemen who lived in Central Asia called the Scythians. The Scythians were riding the plains centuries before Christ and were known to have their slaves churn cream into butter. However, because butter was so important to the Scythians, the slaves would be blindfolded during churning, so that they would not be distracted. [http://www.naturalandtasty.co.uk/history_butter_2.html]

Additionally, Sarah and Abraham of the Old Testament also had butter available and served it with cakes when the angels visited with the announcement that Sarah would bear a son named Isaac. [Genesis, 18:8] To make butter thousands of years ago, the Arabs and Syrians would use a goatskin for the churn. The goat was skinned, and the skin sewn up tight, leaving a foreleg as an opening. The cream from the goat milk was poured in, and this early churn was hung and swung from the tent poles until the butter formed. [<http://webexhibits.org/butter/history-intro.html>]



Ancient Romans revered butter as an ointment for wounds inflicted on the battlefield, but also smeared it over their skin and deeply massaged into their hair before attending important ceremonies.

It is interesting to note that butter was rarely used in cooking in Italy until the 15th century as olive

oil was the preferred fat for cooking. By the 16th century, approximately one-third of the recipes in the *Livre Fort Excellent* that call for butter. [Toussant-Samat: 121] Countries of northern Europe and other parts of the world, with a strong tradition of dairy farming, continue to today to consume more butter

than oil. English speaking countries tend not to consume as much oil as butter; Hispanic countries prefer oil; French speaking countries, are a balance of oil and butter.

To preserve butter for future use, the Irish in the 17th to early 18th centuries would flavor the butter with garlic, pack it tightly in wooden firkins and bury it in the bogs. This would protect the butter from enemies during war or thieves who would be interested in stealing this precious food. When reopened years later, the butter was partially hardened and free of mold, because of the cool, antiseptic and acidic properties of peat bogs. [<http://webexhibits.org/butter/history-firkins.html>]

As the Europeans came to America, they brought their preferred taste for butter with them and often brought their cows along to continue their love of dairy products. As in Europe, the work of the dairy was done by women. (In fact, the word “dairy” is from the Middle English word “dey”, meaning female servant.) Butter production was often an added income for the family. Butter made in the area of Old Sturbridge Village, in Massachusetts, was salted heavily and then brought to market in Boston. In Chicago, farmers would bring their shipments of butter in wagons, with the butter covered with freshly cut grass, still wet with dew. [webexhibits.org] Butter sold in the Philadelphia area had a high reputation and often sold at more than a dollar a pound, when the market price was usually closer to twenty cents per pound. Philadelphia butter was described as “firm, of rich

**Eat butter first
and eat it last,
and live till
a hundred years
be past.”**

—Dutch proverb

golden color, with a sweet, nutty, aromatic smell, put up in pound or half pounds lumps and when opened from its moist, white line wrapper, invites both the senses of smell and taste." [http://webexhibits.org] The butter was usually stamped with a press with the mark of the farm it originated.

Butter made in America continued as it had been made in Europe. Preferring cow's milk over goat's or sheep's milk, the farmer's wife would skim the cream from the surface of the milk which had been allowed to "set" in a shallow bowl for several hours. The milk would be kept as cold as possible, allowing more cream to form. Depending on the number of cows on the farm, it may have taken several days for enough cream to be collected to churn butter. Cream that was a few days old was preferred, since butter would separate more readily from cream that had been allowed to sour a little, than from fresh cream. The butter also separated best at room temperature. Once the churn was half full of cream, the churning would have begun. [http://waltonfeed.com]

In general, after about 15–20 minutes, whipped cream would form, and the butter would slowly emerge after 10–15 minutes more. Steady, even churning delivered the butter in the least amount of time and approximately one quart of cream yielded about one pound of butter. [Chalmers: 20]

Once butter had formed, the buttermilk was poured off (to be drunk or used in other recipes). The butter then was washed repeatedly in cool water; as the water became cloudy, it was discarded and more cool water was used to wash the butter. All the buttermilk was washed from the butter to keep the butter from becoming rancid. Once the water was clear, approximately one teaspoon of salt per pound was mixed into the butter. More salt would be added if the butter was not to be consumed immediately.

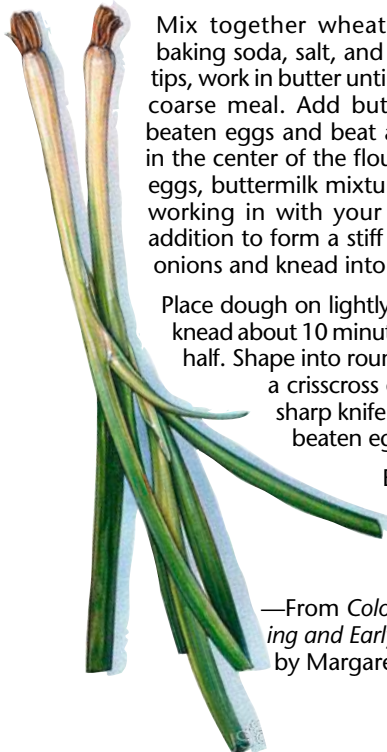
Smith's Castle has a fine history of dairy farming, although usually selling the dairy products in the form of cheese and milk. The Updike family, who resided at Smith's Castle in the 18th century, created one of the great Narragansett plantations. Their 3,000 acre plantation was subdivided into five farms, and the plantation was well known for its cheese, for both domestic and imported sales. In the early 1900s, the Fox family turned the former plantation into a modern dairy farm. Their purebred milk producing cows produced milk for ice cream and a retail milk route in Wickford.

This spring, during the Opening Weekend Celebration at Smith's Castle, we will continue to celebrate the long dairy tradition at Cocuscussoc. However, instead of creating cheese, we will be hosting a Butter Churning Contest, both Saturday and Sunday afternoon, with prizes awarded to those who churn cream into butter the quickest. We hope you will join us for an afternoon and maybe take your turn in churning cream into rich, golden butter. ■

A recipe that uses
buttermilk and butter!

Green Onion Bread

4-1/2 cups whole wheat flour
3 cups white flour
3 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 lb. plus 2 tsp. butter
2 eggs slightly beaten
2-1/4 cups buttermilk
Bunch of green onions, chopped fine



Mix together wheat and white flour, baking soda, salt, and sugar. With fingertips, work in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add buttermilk to slightly beaten eggs and beat again. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and add eggs, buttermilk mixture a little at a time, working in with your fingers after each addition to form a stiff dough. Add green onions and knead into dough.

Place dough on lightly floured board and knead about 10 minutes. Divide dough in half. Shape into round loaves and make a crisscross on each loaf with a sharp knife. Brush with slightly beaten egg yolk or milk.

Bake in a dutch oven until done when tested with a straw. Serves 8.

—From *Colonial Fireplace Cooking and Early American Recipes*
by Margaret Taylor Chalmers.

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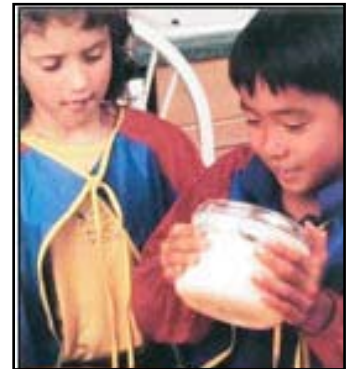
Kids' Corner

Make Butter at Home—No Churn Required

1. Pour heavy cream into a clean glass jar with a tight fitting lid, until the jar is half full.



2. Shake the jar as hard as you can. You'll get tired of this, and probably think something's wrong, but keep at it.



3. Eventually the cream will form into whipped cream. Keep shaking. Soon the whipped cream will start to solidify.



4. Finally the cream will separate into butter and buttermilk.



5. Pour off the buttermilk.

6. Rinse butter until liquid poured off is clear. If buttermilk is left in butter the butter will spoil quickly.



7. Dump butter onto a cool surface. Squeeze liquid from the butter using wooden spoons (one in each hand). Pour off liquid.



8. Add 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. salt as you work butter with spoons.

9. Store butter in refrigerator.

Images courtesy of www.nickleplated.com/butter.html.

This Spring at Smith's Castle

April

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 5	9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.	Docent training #1
Saturday, 12	8:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.	Landscape Clean-up Day at the Castle Coffee, donuts, and lunch provided
	9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.	Docent training #2
Sunday, 15	1:00 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.	Volunteer orientation
Saturday, 19	8:00 a.m.– 12:00 noon	Windows Day at the Castle
Monday, 21	7:00 p.m.– 9:00 p.m.	Board of Trustees meeting
Thursday, 24	9:00 a.m.– 12:00 noon	Interior Clean-up Day at the Castle
Saturday, 26	9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.	Docent training #3

May

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 3 & Sunday, 4	Noon– 4:00 p.m.	Bridge to the Past & opening days
Saturday, 10	Noon– 3:00 p.m.	Historic Sites Coalition free day Statewide
	2:00 p.m.	Slavery in South County Lecture by Tim Cranston NK Free Library
Saturday, 24	9:00 a.m.	Docent meeting
Saturday, 31	10:00 a.m.	Herbal container gardens and indoor winter containers Lecture by Cheryl Cadwell

June

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 21	Noon– 4:00 p.m.	Strawberry Festival (rain date Sunday, June 22)
Saturday, 28	9:00 a.m.	Docent meeting



Springtime at Smith's Castle. Photo: Lucinda Brockway.

The Cocumscussoc Association



Birds-eye view of Smith's Castle. *Photo: Don Bousquet and Son Aerial Photography.*

The Cocumscussoc Association
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