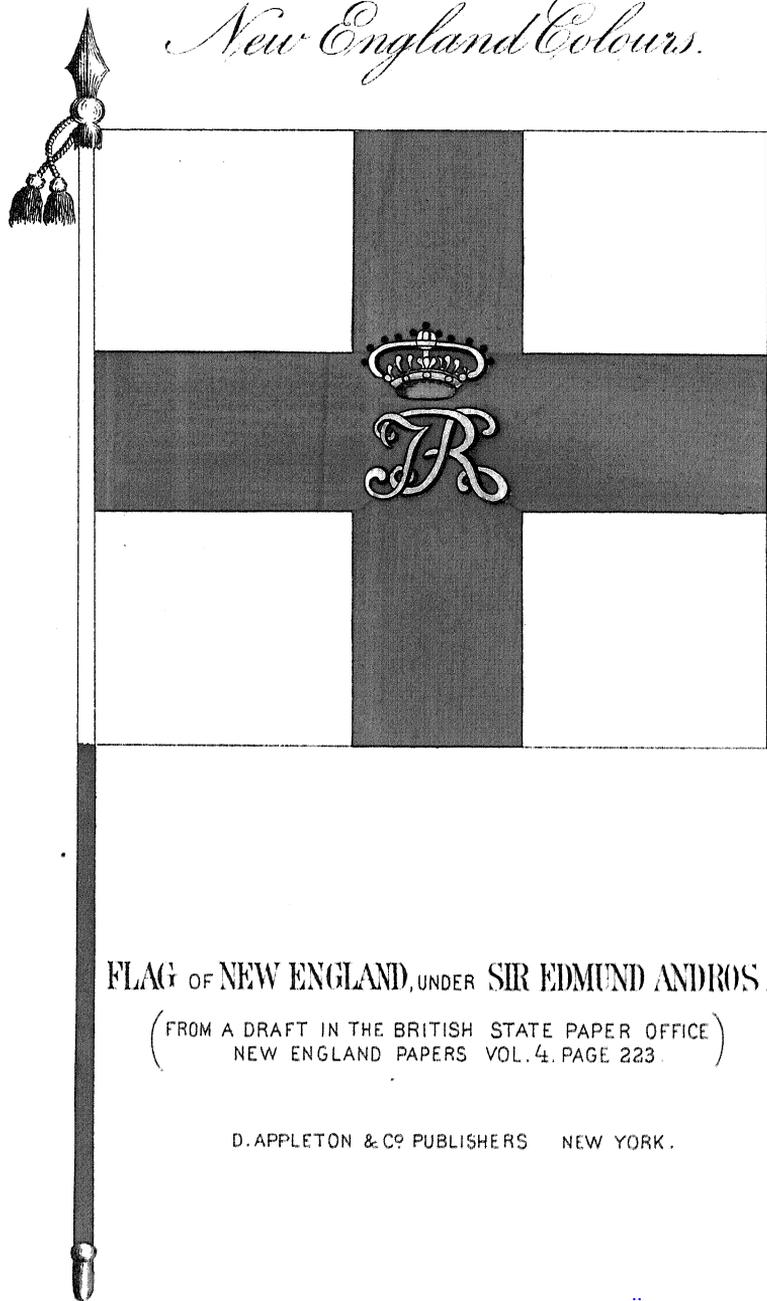


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HISTORY

OF THE

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

AND

PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

BY

SAMUEL GREENE ARNOLD.

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TO THE
PEOPLE OF RHODE-ISLAND

This History

OF THE TRIALS AND THE TRIUMPHS OF THEIR ANCESTORS

IS INSCRIBED

BY THEIR FELLOW-CITIZEN,

SAMUEL GREENE ARNOLD.

P R E F A C E.

THE work, of which the first volume is now presented, is the result of many years' labor. To trace the rise and progress of a State, the offspring of ideas that were novel and startling even amid the philosophical speculations of the seventeenth century; whose birth was a protest against, whose infancy was a struggle with, and whose maturity was a triumph over, the retrograde tendency of established Puritanism; a State that was the second-born of persecution, whose founders had been doubly tried in the purifying fire; a State which, more than any other, has exerted, by the weight of its example, an influence to shape the political ideas of the present day, whose moral power has been in the inverse ratio with its material importance, and of which an eminent historian of the United States has said that, had its territory "corresponded to the importance and singularity of the principles of its early existence, the world would have been filled with wonder at the phenomena of its history," is a task not to be lightly attempted or hastily performed.

The materials for Rhode Island history are more abundant than many have supposed. They are widely scattered and difficult to collect or arrange, and hence the opinion has seemed to prevail that too much was lost to render the preservation of the remainder an object of interest. But some persons have thought otherwise, and three attempts, prior to this, have been made to write the history of the State. The first was by Governor Stephen Hopkins, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who, in 1762, commenced to publish "An historical account of Providence," since reprinted in the second series of