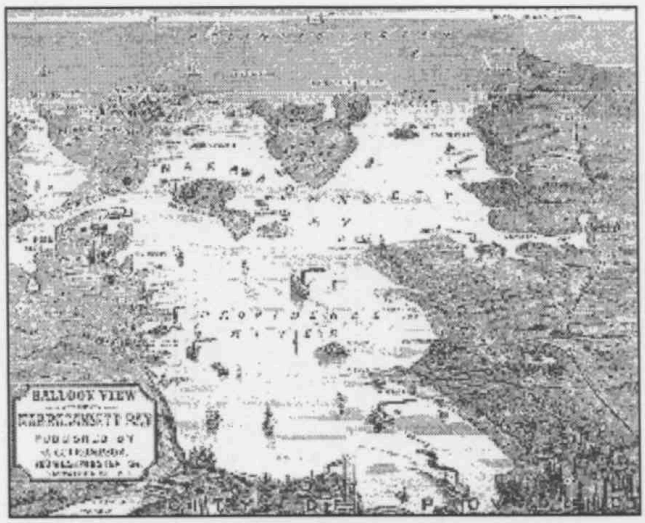
The Islands



There are over 30 islands in the Bay. In this listing, they range from Aquidneck, a fertile area of 27,629 acres, to Whale Rock, which is a flat rock ledge about a half acre in size. Illustration from Balloon and Panoramic Views of Narragansett Bay, published by J.G Thompson, Providence R.I., 1882. *Courtesy of the Providence Public Library.*

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Aquidneck Island. The Indian word means "Isle of Peace." It was the royal seat of the Narragansett sachem Miantonomi. Roger Williams helped negotiate the sale of the island in 1638 to a group of settlers which included William Coddington, Anne and William Hutchinson, William Dyer, John Coggeshall, Nicholas Easton, William Brenton, and John Clarke (these are an familiar to Rhode Islanders as place names on the island). It was sold for "forty fathoms of white peage [wampum], ten coats and 20 hoes for the resident Indians, and five fathoms of wampum to the local sachem." These first settlers founded Pocasset, but the following spring, in 1639, Coddington chose Newport with its excellent harbor for a new settlement, and some of the settlers followed him there. The island. with its rocky cliffs, its dramatic views of the ocean, and its ideal conditions for sailing, has had a celebrated history as a summer resort. The commercial fishing fleet working out of the port of Newport lands the second most important catch in the state (after Galilee). The most strategic fortifications in the state were at Fort Adams; work was begun during the Revolutionary War under the supervision of Rocharnbeau's men, but construction of the present fort was started in 1896. It has now become Fort Adams Park. and will be part of the Bay Islands Park system.

Block Island. Indian name was Manisses, which means "Island of Little God." Indians were apparently living there by 1524, for Verrazano noted small campfires burning all along the coast. The Indians were Manisseans, a tribe under the authority of the Narragansetts. The first recorded landing by a European was in 1614, when Adriaen Block. a Dutch trader, visited the island (it was named after him in 1876). In 1636, a Captain John Oldham of Boston came to Block Island with a small party to trade with the Indians and was killed. possibly during an argument over terms. The Massachusetts Bay Colony took advantage of the incident to claim the island by right of conquest (after killing the warriors involved and burning an crops as punishment). In 1658, the island was entrusted to four people, who sold it afterward to 16 men for £40, and the families of these men became the first settlers. The island came under Rhode Island jurisdiction in 1672 and was named New Shoreham. There are many fascinating legends of pirates and shipwrecks that are part of the island's tradition. Block Island is a popular summer resort,

Fox Island. Indian name was Azoiquaneset, and it lies between Conanicut and North Kingstown. It was purchased from the Indians in 1659 by the founder of the Warwick settlement.

Goat Island. Indian name was Nomsussmuc, and it was purchased from the Indians in 1658. The island was used as a goat pasture by the early settlers of Newport. The 26 pirates who had been hanged at Gravelly Point in Newport in 1723 were buried here between high and low water mark. Fort Anne was built in 1700 (name changed several times afterward), and was the only fort in the colony at outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Fort Wolcott was built in 1794: it became the Naval Torpedo Station when the Navy took over the island in 1869. The city of Newport purchased the island in the 1960s.

Gould Island. Named Aquopimokuk by the Indians, it was purchased from them by Thomas Gould in 1657. The Navy acquired the island in 1919 to expand its Goat Island torpedo experiment facilities. The state has now acquired 17 acres in the middle of the island, which win become a wildlife management area (several species of birds are beginning to return here). The north end of the island is still being used by the Navy, but the south end may be declared Navy surplus land.

Greene Island. It is located off Warwick and named for a Captain John Greene. It is essentially a series of shallow. tidal flats and marsh grasses.

Hog Island. Its Indian name was Chiseweanock, and it was purchased from the Wampanoags in 1546. The early settlers of Portsmouth and Newport kept their Shrine here. The islands were convenient for herding: the animals could not wander off. therefore no fences were necessary. and wolves and foxes couldn't wander in.

Hope Island. It was a gift from Miantonomi to Roger Williams. The island, which is unique among the Bay islands by having a rocky shoreline, was used by the Navy as an ammunition storage depot during World War 11. It was acquired by the state in the early 1970s and will be one of the islands in the Bav Islands Park system. It has become important as a wading-bird management area.

Lime Rock. This island in Newport Harbor was

with ferries arriving daily in the summer from Galilee, Newport. Providence, and from New London, Conn. It also has an airport for small planes. The northern section of the island is a great undeveloped natural area. and is often visited by birds making a stop along the Atlantic flyway. The historic lighthouse at Sandy Point, the northernmost point of the island, was built in 1867.

Coaster's Harbor Island. The Indian name was Woonachaset. It was purchased from the Indians in 1654. The Newport Asylum for the Poor (built in 1822) was located on the island, and was converted into the Naval War College in 1884. The Navy still uses the island as a training center.

Conanicut Island. It was named after Conanicus, Narragansett sachem and friend of Roger Williams who had his royal residence on the island, and it was purchased from the Indians in 1657. The township of Jamestown (named for King James) was incorporated in 1678. It is nearly divided by Mackerel Cove: because the southern section resembles a beaver. the lower part was called Beavertail, the upper part Beaverhead. There was a watch tower and beacon fire on Beavertail Point as early as 1667; the present lighthouse was built in 1856. The island has two important forts: construction of Fort Wetherill was begun in 1896. on the site of old Fort Dumplings (batteries erected during the Revolutionary War): Fort Gett! at Beaverhead was developed by the federal government from 1900 to 1909. Fort W'etherill is a state park and win become part Or the Bay Islands Park system, with ferry service to the islands.

Cornelius Island. A. small uninhabited island in Wickford Harbor. it was used for the deposition of dredge spoil in the mid-sixties.

Despair Island. These outcroppings of rocks are used extensively by nesting birds. particularly gulls and terns.

Dutch Island. Its Indian name was Quotenis, but it is called Dutch Island because the West India Company established a trading post on the island in 1625, trading Dutch goods, cloths, implements. and liquors for the Indians' furs, fish, and venison. The island was bought from the Indians in 1654. During the Civil War, it was a rendezvous for battalions of the 14th Regiment of the R.I. Heavy Artillery. The federal government took over the island in 1863 and constructed earthen batteries: the honeycomb tunnels and gun emplacements of Fort Greble were built after the Spanish-American War and enlarged until 1902. The island is part of the Bay Islands Park system.

Dyer Island. Located between Prudence and Aquidneck. it was formerly called Dyer's Island. It belonged either to William Dyer, early settler of Pocasset. or to William Dyer. husband of Mary Dyer, who had returned to the Massachusetts Bay Colony to challenge their laws against Quakers and was hanged on Boston Commons. It is said the settlers presented the island to Dyer as a gift.

made famous by Ida Lewis.

Patience. Purchased by Roger Williams in 1637, the island became part of the town of Portsmouth in 1664. Never heavily populated but extensively used for agriculture. it is rapidly returning to a natural state, and efforts win be made to retain this quality when it becomes part of the Bay islands Park. The Nature Conservancy bought the island from private owners in 1979 as part of a negotiated agreement with the State of Rhode Island.

Prudence. Its Indian name was Chibacuwese, and it was purchased by Roger Williams in 1637. The early settlers used the island for grazing. During the Revolutionary War, the British burned all the homes on the island, and the residents left for the mainland. It was a popular summer resort in the nineteenth century. During World War II, the southern portion was used as a storage depot: the state acquired this land from the Navy, and it win be a central site for the Bay Islands Park system. The northern portion of Prudence was bought by the state from private owners in 1978, and its natural qualities will be preserved when it and Patience become one of the East Coast's few federally designated estuarine sanctuaries. It will also be part of the Bay Islands Park system.

Rabbit Island. The smaller island of the two in Wickford Harbor, it was purchased from the Indians by Richard Smith. The island is picturesque. with salt marsh borders.

Rock Island. This small rocky island near Pawtuxet Village is now connected to the mainland by a riprapped causeway. It is part of the Salter Grove public picnic ground. and is the site for a proposed man-made salt marsh using dredged materials. The island has several unusual fossils.

Rose Island. Its Indian name was Conockonoquit. Fortifications were built on this island during the Revolutionary War and developed until 1801 (Fort Hamilton). It was popular for picnic parties in the nineteenth century.

Starvegoat Island.-Formerly an island, it is now fined in from Fields Point. The island was once the site of choice oyster grounds.

Whale Rock. Located west of Beavertail. the rock probably got its name from the fact that it is shaped like a whale's back. It was the cause of many shipwrecks in the past.

Roger Williams gave names to four of the islands, and children of the period liked to recite a rhyme that played on the names: "Prudence, Patience, Hope, and Despair, And little Hog Island right over there."

Material is mostly from Narragansett Sea and Shore, by *Frederic Denlson, J.A. & R.A. Reid, Providence, RI., 1879; and* Rhode Island's Coastal Natural Areas, by *George L. Seavey..*