

PROVIDENCE, R. I. Jan. 30, 1838

SIR—At the meeting of the *Board of Trustees of the*
Rhode-Island Historical Society,

held *Jan. 24th* 1838 you were unanimously elected an *Honorary* member; and it affords me much pleasure to be made the Society's organ of communication in relation thereto.

The name is sufficiently indicative of the design of the Society. An account of its rise, progress, &c., will be found prefixed to the first volume of its Collections; a copy of which, together with your Diploma of membership, will be forwarded you in such manner as you may direct.

In the upper left hand corner of the Diploma, will be seen, the STATE'S COAT OF ARMS; in the corresponding right hand corner, two medallions; the one intended for ROGER WILLIAMS, and the other for WILLIAM CODDINGTON; who are considered as the settlers of the State. The main design is emblematical of the PAST, the PRESENT, and the FUTURE. To the right, the Past is represented by an Indian, in his light canoe, paddling down the Narragansett Bay; Mount Hope, once the favorite residence of Metacomet, Sachem of the Wampanoags, being seen in the distance. On the left, the Present is delineated, by a view of the Pawtucket River and Falls, having a Cotton Factory on either side. As this is emphatically a manufacturing State, as the village of Pawtucket consists chiefly of Cotton Establishments—which indeed adorn the banks of the river almost to its very source—and moreover as the first Factory ever erected in the Country stands immediately above these Falls, the scene selected is highly appropriate, although perhaps as destitute of beauty, as, without this explanation, it would be deemed deficient in classic taste. In the centre is a mirror, from before which Hope has withdrawn a curtain, and a representation of the future is exhibited therein.

The device contained on the SEAL, is the following; viz: Around the outer margin is a circular raised band, with the words and figures, "Rhode-Island Historical Society, 1822;" being the date of its foundation; within the band is a triangle, composed of three raised lines, with the words "Mooshasuck, 1636," on the line forming the base thereof, "Aquidneck, 1638," on the line forming the right side, and "Shawomet, 1642," on the line forming the left side of said triangle; (these are the Indian names of the first three settlements made within the State; viz: at Providence, on the Island of Rhode-Island, and at Warwick;) within the centre of the triangle, is a foul anchor—the Arms of the State.

Every thing relating to the early history of this Country, and more especially of our own State, is highly desirable. There are numerous manuscripts, books, pamphlets, and loose sheets of this description, which would be of much value to us, but are unattainable here; yet such are in the possession of many individuals to whom they can be comparatively of but little value, and may often be met with at the bookstalls, antiquarian sales, &c. in London and other parts of Great Britain, as well as upon the Continent, and more rarely in the United States, which are sold for a trifle, and not unfrequently used up as waste paper; no one noticing them who deems them of sufficient importance to merit preservation.

Should any such come under your observation, or to your knowledge, you would confer a favor on us by purchasing them for the Society; and the expenses attendant thereupon, shall be promptly paid.

I am, Sir, with sentiments of respect,
Yours, &c.

Thomas H. Webb SECRETARY.

M. Bertel Thorwaldsen
65

Sir

Some little explanation may be thought necessary, why we address you as an Honorary Member. Were our Institution a School of Fine Arts there would be a very evident reason for it, but to appear as one, and as will presently be seen, to appear as one only, it may seem strange that a local Historical Society, belonging to a little State, in a far distant land, should adopt this course towards one, to whom we are unknown, although his name and fame are not unknown to us. A satisfactory reason can be given in a very few words.

You are undoubtedly aware that the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of your native City have been for many years actively engaged in investigating the early history of this country. The results of their investigations have just been given to the world, in a forthright quarto, abounding with matter of great interest. Among other facts that seem satisfactorily proved, is the one that this country was visited in the year 1007 by an expedition under the command of Thorfinn Karlsefne, who wintered at Mt. Hope in this State, where, early in the following Spring, Thorfinn's wife, Gudrida, gave birth to a son to whom was given the name of Snorre. At the end of the Society's work alluded to is a Genealogical Table of this individual's family, by which it will be seen that the present lineal descendant and representative of Snorre Thorfinnson, the first native American of European descent, is Bertel Thorwaldsen, and this we deem ample reason why you should be elected an Honorary Member of a Society whose object is to investigate and treasure up everything relating to this your fatherland.

Respectfully Yours

M. Bertel Thorwaldsen.

Thomas H. Webb Secy. &c. &c.

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The device contained on the Seal, is the following viz: "Rhode-Island Historical Society, 1832," being the date of its foundation; within the band is a triangle, composed of three raised lines, with the words "Moosehauk, 1630," on the line forming the base thereof, "Aquidneck, 1632," on the line forming the right side, and "Shawomet, 1642," on the line forming the left side of said triangle; (these are the Indian names of the first three settlements made within the State: viz: at Providence, on the Island of Rhode-Island, and at Warwick;) within the centre of the triangle is a four anchor—the Arms of the State.
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Yours, &c.



1844



Bertel Thorvaldson
Drest Academy, St. Luke
Lane of at Rome
Hans Wille, Greenock
Hans

