

**LIFE OF ROGER WILLIAMS,  
THE FOUNDER OF THE  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

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Life of Roger Williams, the Founder of the State of Rhode Island by William Gammell

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**WILLIAM GAMMELL**

**LIFE OF ROGER WILLIAMS,  
THE FOUNDER OF THE  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**



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R O G E R W I L L I A M S,  
T H E  
F O U N D E R O F T H E S T A T E O F R H O D E I S L A N D.

  
B Y  
W I L L I A M G A M M E L L, A. M.  
P R O F E S S O R I N B R O W N U N I V E R S I T Y.

"Roger Williams justly claims the honor of having been the first legislator in the world, in its latter ages, that fully and effectually provided for, and established a full, free, and absolute liberty of conscience." Gov. HOPKINS.

B O S T O N :  
G O U L D A N D L I N C O L N ,  
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## PREFACE.

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IN preparing the following sketch of Roger Williams, the writer has consulted nearly all the works of New England history, from which materials might be derived for the illustration of his life and character. He is, however, by far the most indebted to the elaborate "Memoir," prepared by the late Mr. Knowles, a work of great fulness and accuracy of information respecting not only the immediate subject to which it relates, but also the general affairs of New England in that early age. This work, which probably contains all that can now be known concerning the life of the calumniated founder of Rhode Island, renders the task of a subsequent biographer comparatively easy. The narrative of Mr. Knowles has been generally compared with the original authorities on which he relies, and in all cases his statements have been found to be correct.

In selecting and arranging the materials, which are thus supplied, the aim of the present writer has been, to confine himself to

those which are best fitted to illustrate the personal character of this eminent man, and to furnish the means of estimating aright the services he rendered to his own and to subsequent times. He has sought to give a plain and faithful narrative of a series of events, which seem the more remarkable, as, by the lapse of time, we are further separated from the period in which they occurred. These events, indeed, furnish a sad and perplexing commentary upon the principles of the Puritans, while they serve to impart the aspect of heroism to the life of him, whom the Puritans persecuted and banished. They are now well understood, and are regarded as, in some sense, among the anomalies of history; yet they can never lose their interest and importance. So long as men shall continue to differ on religious subjects, and require the exercise of Christian charity and liberality, so long may they learn lessons of the highest practical value from the life of him, who has been justly styled "the apostle of religious liberty."



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