Editor's Note

Nancy Ellen Giorgi
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Ronald M. Potvin is a 1990 graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, History program and received his Master of History from the University of Connecticut in 1993. Ron was an intern at the Society's Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House in 1989 and contributed an article to Newport History, Number 214 on the house's architectural history. Ron is currently on the staff of the Newport Historical Society as Associate Researcher for the Brick Market Museum of Newport History. For this issue of Newport History he is the author of "The Rearing of the Quaker Faithful: Family, Meeting and Transition from City to Farm" and has transcribed and edited a letter by Henry Williams. Another item from the Williams collection is the camera obscura image also described by Ron in this issue.

These articles would not have been possible without the generous contribution of the Williams family papers by Mrs. Marion Hoffmire, whose husband was a descendant of Obadiah Williams and Catharine Williams Carman. When told of plans for the articles contained in this bulletin, Mrs. Hoffmire promptly sent another collection of manuscripts, almost as large as the first, to the Newport Historical Society.

Simultaneous with the donation of the Williams papers, Anna Wood Murray and Henry Wood, descendants of the Robinson family of Newport, donated the largest single collection of family manuscripts. The collection documents the history of "Quaker Tom" Robinson's family from the eighteenth century to the present. It includes ledgers, rare account books, and a wide range of personal correspondence with many references to the Society of Friends.

Both families have shown a tremendous appreciation for history by recognizing the value of the family papers in their possession, and by entrusting the Newport Historical Society with the care and interpretation of these documents. With these two generous gifts the Newport Historical Society now has a larger and important collection of early American Quaker family documents in the country. We hope that the generosity of Mrs. Hoffmire, Anna Murray, Henry Wood and other patrons of the Newport Historical Society is amply rewarded by the use of genealogists and other researchers and by publications such as these.