

KENT COUNTY DIVORCES FROM COURT RECORDS

Abstracted by Katherine Bruce
Contributed by Violet E. Kettelle

The following divorces were abstracted from Kent County Court Records, then at the Court House in East Greenwich, by Katherine [Mrs. Harold] Bruce, who intended to do further research on them. Mrs. Bruce died in 1986, and her papers are not presently available. The abstracts published here are from copies given to Miss Violet E. Kettelle.

When either partner petitioned for divorce, the date of marriage was usually given, but in many cases not accurately; dates found in vital records frequently differ from those given here. If the husband requested the divorce, the wife's name was usually included, but if the wife was the petitioner, she did not always state her maiden name.

The records themselves are now at Providence College Archives, and researchers interested in pursuing them further should seek them there.

1. ——— 1759: **Daniel Wall**, married a number of years before 1759, divorced wife **Mary** ———.
2. October 1759: **Abial Britton** and wife ——— divorced.
3. April 1766. **John Nicklass**, mariner, divorced wife **Eleanor** ———. He had gone away in 1756 for six years; while he was away, Eleanor had a child by another man and a second child by the same man after John's return.
4. April 1769: **Thomas Ninegrett**, Indian Sachem, divorced wife **Mary Whitefield**.
5. October 1770: **Stephen Bowen** and wife **Jemima Bowen** of Rehoboth divorced.
6. April 1771: **Thomas Remington** (son of Daniel) and wife **Freelove** [Nichols, dau. Joseph, deceased] divorced; m. 16 Aug. 1759, East Greenwich.
7. April 1774: **William Arnold** and wife **Prudence Corliss** divorced; m. 3 Nov. 1744.
8. April 1776. **Peleg Williams**, then of Providence, was divorced by wife **Jane** ———, of Smithfield; m. ca. 1764; three children.
9. April 1776. **John Pettingell** of Taunton, Mass., was divorced by wife **Anna** ——— of Coventry; m. "some years since"; three children. [VEK note: Was she Anna Dorrance?]
10. April 1779: **Amos Greene** divorced by wife **Alice** [Underwood]; m. in July 1773. He left her a year after marriage with no support for her or their child; he returned in Feb. 1777 and after a few days enlisted as a soldier in Continental Services in the regiment then commanded by Col. Crary but soon deserted at Bristol and was said to be gone to the enemy.

11. April 1781: **Yelverton Weight** divorced wife **Margaret Whitford**. He was accused of having fathered children by two Colvin sisters; Margaret went to live with her sister, and he accused her of being unfaithful.
12. October 1785: **John Bentley** of Exeter and wife **Lucy Vaughn** divorced.
13. October 1788: **John Wickes** and wife **Welthian Arnold** divorced.
14. October 1788: **Elisha Herendeen** of Glocester, R.I., m. 3 Sept. 1781 **Louise** — and moved to Danbury, Vermont. He attacked her with an ax, etc., and she returned to her father in Glocester and divorced him.
15. April 1789: **James Young** and wife **Mary Sweet** divorced; m. 11 Feb. 1773 at West Greenwich.
16. April 1789: **Jonathan Nichols** and wife **Unice Greene**, both of Coventry, divorced; she was unfaithful.
17. April 1789: **Thomas Field**, native of Ireland, divorced by wife **Mary** —, of Providence, who had a large family by a former husband; m. "nine years since."
18. April 1791: **William Briggs** of North Kingstown divorced wife **Lavincy Sweet** (dau. of Timothy), claiming that she was unfaithful to him for eight years and eloped from him 17 Sept. 1790.
19. April 1791: — **Pearce** was divorced by wife **Phebe** —, whose petition for divorce was referred to Kent County from Providence County.
20. April 1791: **Capt. Dutee Jerauld**, mariner, lately of West Greenwich, divorced by wife **Amey/Almy** —; m. March 1771. He deserted her in 1781, leaving her pregnant with her fourth child.
21. October 1791: **William Straight** and wife **Mary Carr** divorced; m. 23 Sept. 1762.
22. October 1791: **John Straight** and wife **Rebecca Bartholick** (dau. Elizabeth) divorced; m. 9 Aug. 1776 at West Greenwich.
23. April 1792: **Nathan Field**, mariner of Providence, divorced by wife **Elizabeth** — of Providence; m. 18 Nov. 1781.
24. April 1792: **Allen Tillinghast** of Granville, N.Y., divorced wife **Lois Phillips** of North Kingstown; m. in 1785.
25. October 1793: **Samuel Davis** of Warwick was divorced by wife **Barbary** —; m. about 50 years ago. He had left her with eight children "and intermarried another woman." Barbary was awarded money due to her husband from Thos. Warner, administrator of the estate of John Warner, late of Warwick, from Richard Rice, and from Archibald Crary, Esq.
26. October 1794: **Richard Rice** of Coventry divorced wife **Eleanor Worden** of New York; m. in 1788.

27. April 1795: **Peleg Sweet** (son of Thomas) divorced by wife **Ruth Straight**, both formerly of West Greenwich; m. 4 Sept. 1791. He deserted her.
28. April 1796: **John McLaughling** of South Carolina divorced by wife **Elizabeth** — of North Kingstown, who was guardian of son John, Jr. She had gone to South Carolina with him.
29. April 1796: **Rufus Cook**, formerly of Coventry, divorced wife **Phebe Morse** of Kent County; m. in the spring of 1791.
30. October 1797: **Frederick William Callahan**, mariner, was divorced by wife **Meribe** — of Newport; m. 16 Sept. 1794.
31. April 1798: **Caleb Medbury Mathews** of East Greenwich and wife **Sarah Jordan** divorced; m. 1796.
32. April 1799: **Aaron Davis** of Warwick, m. "upwards of three years ago," divorced wife **Barbara Straight**.
33. April 1799: **David Wightman** divorced by wife **Susannah** —, both of Warwick; m. 4 July 1773.
34. October 1799: **Spink Tarbox** and wife **Susanna Carr** divorced; m. 1770.
35. April 1800: **Henry Babcock** of West Greenwich and wife **Henrietta Haworth** divorced; m. 1798.
36. April 1800: **John Jordan** of Cogburn, N.H., divorced by wife **Sarah** — of Coventry; m. 11 March 1798.
37. April 1800: **Isaac Spencer** of East Greenwich divorced wife **Susannah Spink** of North Kingstown; m. 2 Oct. 1794.
38. April 1800: **Christopher Arnold** divorced by wife **Phebe** [Andrew, dau. of Edmond], both of Warwick; m. Sept. 1788.
39. October 1800: **Ebenezer Perkins** divorced by wife **Amey** — of Coventry; m. Dec. 1798. She had a daughter which he thought was not his.
40. April 1801: **Elisha Johnson** (son of Benjamin) and wife **Asa Albro** divorced; m. 1793.
41. April 1801: **Jerad Gorton** of West Greenwich divorced wife **Elizabeth Colvin**, later of Otsego, N.Y.; m. 21 June 1797.
42. October 1801: **John Stafford** divorced by wife **Susannah** — of Coventry; m. May 1800.
43. October 1801: **Benjamin Johnson** divorced by wife **Wait** — of Coventry; m. 25 December 1765 and had fifteen children. [Note by VEK: she is buried with him.]

44. April 1802: **William Boyd** and wife **Freelove Arnold** divorced; m. 1792.
45. April 1804: (Dr.) **Westcott Stone** and wife **Mary** — divorced. [He m. (2) **Abbie Smith** and went to Abington, Pa.]
46. October 1804: Dr. **Jeremiah Greene** and wife **Lydia Arnold** divorced; m. 1790.
47. April 1804: **Westcott Stone** divorced wife **Mary** —, both of Coventry; m. July 1780.
48. April 1804: **Samuel Stafford** of Warwick was divorced by wife; m. 11 July 1792. She lived in Exeter with the children. [In October 1800, they and children **Arnold**, **Samuel**, **Zebulon** and one other were given permission to move from Coventry to Exeter.]
49. April 1804: **Thomas Sweet** divorced by wife **Elizabeth (Tingley)**, both of West Greenwich; m. 2 Sept. 1802 at Exeter.
50. October 1804: **Darius Havens** of Warwick was divorced by wife **Abigail Boone** of North Kingstown; m. 1 Oct. 1788. He m. (2) in Warwick, 15 Oct. 1798, **Hannah Boyd**, dau. of **Andrew** of East Greenwich, who divorced him in April 1804 when she found that he had not been divorced from **Abigail Boone** when he had married her.
51. April 1805: **Michael Spencer** of East Greenwich was divorced by wife **Martha Fones** of North Kingstown; m. "about 37 years ago."
52. April 1805: **Caleb Whitman** divorced wife **Sarah Rice**, dau. of late **Ebenezer Rice** of Coventry; both of Coventry; m. 13 Dec. 1802.
53. April 1805: **George Tibbetts** was divorced by wife **Roba** —, both of Warwick; m. ca. 1802.
54. October 1805: **Samuel Remington** and wife **Amey Arnold** divorced; m. 1791. She was to keep the youngest child and he the others.
55. October 1806: **Olney Potter** of Coventry and wife **Susannah Arnold** divorced.
56. October 1806: **Nathan Gorton** and wife **Anna Warner**, m. 1792, apparently were divorced; she requested alimony for herself and children.
57. October 1806: **Thomas Letson** divorced by wife **Elizabeth Hunt**, who claimed non-support of herself and four children for the past year; m. 1797 in North Kingstown. She was allowed to keep the wearing apparel and furniture she took with her when she went to Kingstown.
58. October 1806: **David Colvin** of Coventry was divorced by wife **Anna** —; m. 1804.
59. October 1806: **Otis Colvin** of Coventry divorced his wife **Ruth Burlingame** of Scituate; m. 1803.

60. October 1806: **Jonathan Greene** was divorced by wife **Phebe** —; m. March 1800. He, formerly of Exeter, went to a place unknown to her and gave no support to their children.
61. April 1807: **James Burnet** was divorced by wife **Susannah** —, both of West Greenwich; m. 1803. He had left and gave no support to family.
- 62., April 1808: **John Warner**, mariner, of Warwick, divorced from wife **Deborah Gorton**, dau. of John; m. 6 Dec. 1792.
63. April 1808: **Joseph Jenkins** divorced by wife **Comfort Foster** of Warwick, who claimed he did not support her and their infant; m. Sept. 1805.
64. April 1809: **Gideon Parker** of Coventry and wife **Loruhanna Sullivan** of Voluntown divorced; m. 1801.
65. April 1809: **William Stafford** and wife **Mary** — divorced.
66. October 1809: **Daniel R. Rhodes** and wife **Polly Bailey** (dau. Capt. Jeremiah) divorced; m. 1802.
67. October 1809: **Edward Weeden** (son of Edward) divorced his wife **Mary (Bailey) Vaughn**; m. 10 May 1807 in West Greenwich. [She was widow of David Vaughn and dau. of Caleb Bailey of West Greenwich.] She deserted him, leaving him "to bemoan the loss of his first wife."
68. October 1809: **Dr. Henry Jearauld** and wife **Lucy Arnold** (dau. Gorton) divorced; m. 1798.
69. October 1809: **Henry Straight** of West Greenwich divorced wife **Sarah Spencer** of East Greenwich; m. 19 Oct. 1806. He claimed that she refused to live with him and was unfaithful.
70. October 1809: **Joseph Reynolds** of East Greenwich divorced by wife **Sibyll Spencer**, who claimed that he was not faithful to her; m. 8 Aug. 1791.
71. October 1810: **Stephen Knight** of Cranston divorced by wife **Esther** —, of East Greenwich, formerly of Cranston; m. 24 May 1801.
72. October 1810: **Edmond Andrew** of Coventry, laborer, divorced by wife **Sarah** — of Coventry, who claimed he was unfaithful to her; m. ca. 1792. She was to keep the furniture she had at marriage. [They had children b. in Providence 1793-1808.]
73. April 1811: **Isaac Fisk** and wife **Martha Shearman** (dau. Job deceased about 20 years) divorced.
74. October 1811: **Phineas Brand** of Coventry divorced by wife **Amey** —, who claimed that he gave no support for their five children, and "he had a Dultrous Intercourse with other women."

75. April 1812: **John Millerd** (son of Nathaniel) and wife **Eunice Pearce** (dau. Jonathan) divorced; m. 1785.
76. October 1812: **John Harrison** and wife **Polly Randall** (dau. Mary) divorced; m. 1805.
77. April 1813: **William Hall**, formerly of West Greenwich, divorced by wife **Lois** — of Coventry, who claimed that he had gone away over three years ago.
78. October 1813: **Joseph Buffinton** (of Jon.) divorced by wife **Mary Spencer** (dau. George) divorced; m. 2 Feb. 1800 at East Greenwich. She claimed that he stopped providing for her and their three children after a number of years; his residence was now unknown; she moved with the children seven years ago to live with her parents.
79. October 1813: **Daniel Studson** and wife **Ann Sukey Weeden** (dau. Caleb) divorced; m. 1806.
80. October 1813: **John Cranston** of Foster divorced by wife **Cynthia** — of Warwick; m. June 1810. She had had an earlier husband.
81. October 1813: **Anthony Weeden**, mariner, of East Greenwich, divorced by wife **Sarah** — of East Greenwich; m. 1 Nov. 1795.
82. October 1814: **Joseph Nightengale** of Providence divorced by wife **Mary** —, both of Warwick; m. 7 May 1810.
83. October 1814: **Benjamin Carpenter** of Warwick divorced wife **Elizabeth** —; m. July 1813.
84. October 1814: **Stephen Green** of Coventry divorced by wife **Sarah** — of Warwick, who claimed that he did not support his family.
85. October 1814: **Benjamin Burgess** of Scituate divorced by wife **Phebe** —, who claimed that he did not support their children; m. 27 Nov. 1808.
86. October 1814: **Gideon C. Spink** (son of Nicholas Spink) and wife **Mary Reynolds** divorced.
87. April 1815: **John Wilcox** and wife **Martha Foster** divorced; m. 1806. She claimed he had a child by a mistress. [Note: the wife's name in this and the following entry are as given, but one is probably a transcription error.]
88. April 1815: **Joseph Johnson** and wife **Martha Foster** (dau. Thomas) divorced; m. 1805; four children.
89. April 1815: **Michael Spencer**, mariner, divorced by wife **Hannah [Boyd]**, both of East Greenwich; m. "about nine years since." She stated that he beat her, left her 4 August 1814 taking the furniture, and was unfaithful.

90. April 1815: **Benjamin Rider** divorced by wife **Betsey** — of Coventry; m. 1796. He did not support her.
91. October 1815: **George Brown** and wife **Nancy** — divorced.
92. April 1816: **John Williams** of East Greenwich divorced by wife **Margaret** —, who claimed that he had since married a woman in New York City; m. 13 Nov. 1811.
93. April 1816: **Frederic Harvey**, of North Kingstown and later of Warwick, divorced by wife **Anna** —, who stated that he left her and their infant and went to another state; m. Sept. 1811.
94. April 1816: **Horace W. Stoddard**, formerly of Coventry, divorced by wife **Nancy** —, of Coventry; m. 12 Sept. 1813.
95. April 1817: **James Arnold** divorced by wife **Lydia** —, both of Warwick; m. Jan. 1805.
96. April 1817: **Gideon Greene Jr.**, schoolmaster, of Warwick, divorced by wife **Celia** — [VEK: Celia Baker?]; m. 1809.
97. April 1817: **Asa Phillips Jr.**, schoolmaster, lately of Scituate, divorced by wife **Dorcas** —, who returned to her father's house; m. 25 March 1812.
98. October 1817: **Anthony Sweetland** divorced by wife **Jerusha** — of Warwick; m. 2 May 1813. He was a "cormorant" [?] at Scituate. She claimed that he carried her and furniture to her father's and later came and took her furniture and some of her clothes.
99. October 1817: **Gideon C. Spink** and wife **Mary Reynolds** (dau. Joseph) divorced; m. 1808.
100. April 1818: **John M. G. Cory** divorced wife **Mary Ann/Polly Morse** of Foster; m. 30 Nov. 1809.
101. April 1818: **Oliver Gardiner** divorced by wife **Elizabeth** —, who claimed he left five years ago and gave no support for the family; m. ca. 1807.
102. October 1818: **Simon Peter Case** of West Greenwich divorced by wife **Elizabeth Briggs** (dau. Caleb) of East Greenwich, who claimed he left her; m. 18 Sept. 1808 at West Greenwich.
103. October 1818: **Thomas Whitford** (son of George) divorced by wife **Martha/Patty Stafford** (dau. John, deceased) of Warwick, who claimed he was unfaithful, left her seven years ago, and would not support his wife and family; m. 1808.

104. October 1818: **Asa Bennett** divorced by wife **Sally** — of Warwick, who claimed that he was intimate with Abby Nason and others; m. Nov. 1802. She received the house in Warwick which was stated to be hers. She was to care for the youngest child, Asa Alber Bennett, and he was to have the oldest, Thomas Bennett.
105. April 1819: **Thomas Merritt Tennant** divorced by wife **Sarah** —; m. 3 July 1791. She stated that they lived in East Greenwich where for years he leased real estate held in her name which she had at time of marriage.
106. October 1819: **Gideon B. Capron** of East Greenwich divorced by wife **Lucy Abbot**, who claimed he had at least one child by another woman; m. ca. 1814.
107. October 1819: **Elisha Arnold** divorced by wife **Phebe** —; m. Dec. 1796. He did not support his family in Coventry.
108. October 1819: **Davis Hopkins** divorced by wife **Sarah [Clark]**, (dau. Peleg); m. 14 April 1805 at West Greenwich.
109. April 1820: **Nathan B. Hoxsie** divorced by wife **Deliverance Greene**, both of West Greenwich; m. April 1801. [VEK: Yet, both their names are on one gravestone.]
110. April 1820: **Ray Watson** and wife **Abigail Case** divorced; m. 5 Feb. 1817 at West Greenwich.
111. April 1820: **Peleg G. Thurston** divorced by wife **Robey** — of East Greenwich, who claimed he did not support the children and her father had to; Peleg was living with another woman in Charlestown; m. June 1810. [Ed. Note: Is Peleg G. Thurston perhaps the same as Peleg Grinold in next entry?]
112. April 1820: **Peleg Grinold** divorced by wife **Robey Andrews**, who claimed he had been away three years with another woman. [KB Note: Peleg m. 18 Sept. 1817 (sic) Ann York, dau. of William, of Westerly. He d. in Johnston 12 July 1862 and Ann d. in N. Providence in 1873.]
113. October 1820: **John Pendleton** divorced by wife **Elizabeth** — of Warwick, who stated he left Exeter 15 years ago; m. April 1805.
114. April 1821: **Isaac Ladd** of Warwick divorced by wife **Phebe** — of Coventry, who stated she fled from her drunk husband to her widowed mother; m. 1819.
115. April 1821: **Levi Hall** of Swansea, Mass., divorced by wife **Eunice** — of Warwick, who claimed he deserted her; m. Sept. 1802.
116. April 1822: **Isaac Johnson** divorced by wife **Mary** — of Coventry, who stated that he left her after five years. [VEK Note: She was **Mary Rice**, dau. Nathan.]
117. April 1822: **Thomas Letson** of Coventry divorced by wife **Anna** — of

West Greenwich, who stated he left her and one child four years ago when she was far advanced in pregnancy with their second child, since born; he has been in Rhode Island several times without seeing her.

118. April 1822: **Perry Green James** divorced by wife **Jane Andrew** (dau. Timothy), who stated that he deserted her; m. ca. 1809/10. [KB Note: He d. in New Haven, Conn., at home of son Erastus, one of 9 children by 2nd wife Betsy Darby, m. at Wales, Mass., 2 years before he divorced Jane, not knowing Jane had divorced him. Betsey d. at Sturbridge, Mass.] [VEK Note: Katherine Bruce and Gladys Palmer went to Sturbridge and New Haven to collect records of the children of his second marriage, and had considerable material correcting published accounts of the James family which they intended to publish but never did.]
119. October 1822: **James A. Roberts** divorced wife **Avis C. Briggs**, who left him in 1822; m. 13 May 1820.
120. October 1822: **Earl Cook** divorced by wife **Sarah**, who claimed that when he visited her and the children, he broke the furniture. [Note: Sarah was **Sarah Borden**, and Earl was a descendant of Thomas Cook of Portsmouth; see the genealogy of that family by J. Fiske, 1987.]
121. October 1822: **Jeremiah Smith** of Warwick divorced his wife **Phebe Hayes**; m. ca. 1815.
122. April 1823: **George Currier Jr.**, formerly of Warwick, now of parts unknown, divorced by wife **Marietta** —, who claimed that he did not support the children and absconded in Feb. 1816; m. 1 Dec. 1808.
123. April 1823: **Samuel R. Smith** divorced by wife **Susan** —; m. 10 Nov. 1805. [KB Note: She was **Susanna Wilcox**, dau. widow Alice Marble; marriage record in East Greenwich.]
124. April 1824: **John G. Bates** divorced by wife **Abigail** — of West Greenwich; m. Dec. 1816.
125. April 1824: **Thomas Wood**, formerly of Coventry, divorced by wife **Mercy** —, who claimed he deserted her in April 1819; m. 25 Nov. 1813.
126. April 1824: **Samuel Wood**, clothier, of Providence at time of marriage, of Voluntown, Conn., when divorced by wife **Huldah** — of Coventry, who stated he deserted her in Jan. 1819 and lives with another woman; m. 19 Jan. 1817.
127. April 1824: **Samuel Cranston, Jr.** of Johnston divorced by wife **Cynthia** — of Coventry; m. May 1813. She stated that he deserted her and their three children and she was dependent upon her father.
128. April 1824: **John Price** and wife **Amy Foster** divorced; m. 11 Dec. 1808; had 3 children.

129. October 1824: **Benjamin Bennett** of East Greenwich divorced wife **Betsey** —, claiming she left home in Jan. 1823; m. 21 March 1819.
130. October 1824: **Isaac Clark** divorced by wife — of Coventry; m. ca. 1794. She petitioned in October 1823. He did not support his family and was in parts unknown. [VEK Note: This is not the Isaac Clark who m. Annie Herrington in Foster in 1783.]
131. October 1824: **Benedict Arnold** and wife **Mary Greene** divorced; m. 6 Oct. 1810 at Warwick.
132. April 1825: **Gideon B. Capron**, mariner, formerly of North Kingstown and now of parts unknown, divorced by wife **Esther C. [Helme]** of Warwick, formerly of North Kingstown, who claimed he left her May 23rd; m. 26 Dec. 1819.
133. April 1825: **Job Manchester**, chair maker, formerly of Coventry, now of Warwick, divorced by wife **Penelope** — of Coventry, who claimed he gave no support to the children for 18 months; m. March 1817.
134. April 1825: **George Peirce** and wife **Catherine Weeden** (dau. John, deceased) divorced; m. about 9 years ago.
135. April 1825: **Russell Greene Arnold** of Warwick divorced by wife **Esther** —, who claimed he turned her out in 1821; m. about 1819.
136. April 1825: **Clarke Spink**, formerly of West Greenwich and now of Connecticut, divorced by wife **Milly** —, who claimed he neglected her and their child for nearly 3 years; m. about 1821.

— TWO UNRECORDED SOUTH KINGSTOWN MARRIAGES —

The following marriages are recorded in a small notebook of "Justices' Records, December 14 AD 1793 and Continued," by Levi Totten, J.P., kept in the South Kingstown Town Clerk's Office, Wakefield, R.I.:

Isaiah Greene of Charlestown, son of Joshua, and Eliza Tefft, daughter of George of South Kingstown, married 23 January 1794 (p. 10).

Charles Barker of South Kingstown, innholder, and Mary P. Holloway of South Kingstown, spinster, daughter of John Holloway, married 19 November 1794 (p. 43).