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# Progress of Americanization in Rhode Island

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESIS

PROGRESS OF AMERICANIZATION IN RHODE ISLAND

SUBMITTED BY

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(E.B., BROWN UNIVERSITY, 1924)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts

1927

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## PREFACE

This thesis is an attempt to trace the progress of Americanization in the state of Rhode Island beginning with a historical survey of the evening school work before the Act to Promote Americanization was passed in 1919, and ending with a resume of present conditions. The part that the state, the various factories, and private organizations, have played is traced.

The entire thesis was written under the supervision of Dr. Frederick A. Cleveland, Professor of Citizenship, College of Liberal Arts, Boston University.

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## CHAPTER I

### EVENING SCHOOL WORK IN THE STATE

Evening school work in the state of Rhode Island had its inception fifty-seven years ago during the administration of Commissioner Bicknell. Shortly after his appointment in 1869, he made a vigorous appeal to the people of his state, in regard to the increasing growth<sup>1</sup> of illiteracy. The facts upon which he bases his concern<sup>2</sup> are the following:

<u>YEAR</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
1850	Illiterate over 20 years	3607
1860	" " "	6112
1865	" " 21	10181
1870	" " 10	16786
1870	" 10 to 21	5115
1870	" over 10	21901

These facts may be further subdivided into the following table:

1. Carroll, C - Public Education in Rhode Island pp 158-159.
2. Ibid, p-159

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	<u>NATIVE BORN</u>	<u>FOREIGN BORN</u>	<u>WHITE</u>	<u>BLACK</u>
1 Illiterates over 20 years	1248	2359	3340	267
" " " "	1202	4910	5582	260
" " " "	1552	8629		
" " 10 "	4444	17477	21011	890

2

The entire population of the state during these periods was:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>
1850	147,545
1860	174,620
1865	184,965
1870	217,353

Most important of the facts to be deduced from this table is the fact that more than one tenth of the people of Rhode Island, who were over ten years of age, were illiterate. Rhode Island, however, was "in no way to blame for illiteracy among so much of the foreign-born population as came to the state after school age; nor for an increase in illiteracy, gross or in proportion to population, due to a large immigration of foreigners; nor probably for the large increase in illiteracy among the colored population recruited as it was after the Civil War by a migration of freedom from the south."

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1. Carroll, C. - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-159
2. Ibid - p-159
3. Ibid - p-159

It was not comfortable, nevertheless, to find so large a number of illiterate adults in a small democracy.<sup>1</sup>"

The fact that there were over five thousand illiterates between the ages of ten and twenty-one was a matter of grave concern to the Commissioner. He believed improvement could be brought about in this field. "There is still opportunity if there is little hope," he stated. "In a large degree they either belong to our truant and vagrant population ..... or to another class, which by the cupidity of parents or employers is obliged to pass the tender and formative period of childhood and youth in the factory where nimble fingers are made to enrich the capitalist or to aid in the support of the family at the expense of that necessary intelligence which fits boys and girls for the ranks of society and citizenship. Add to these a class of children whose only birthright is poverty, neglect, and misfortune, who must keep the wolf and the sheriff from the door by early toil, trial, and sorrow, and we have before us the unpromising minor illiterates of our state."<sup>2</sup>

Commissioner Bicknell, therefore, proposed seven remedies one of which was the establishment of evening schools for persons over sixteen years of age.<sup>3</sup>

- 1. Carroll - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-159
- 2. Ibid - p-159
- 3. Ibid - p-160

The General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island responded immediately with a law appropriating money for evening school support, to be apportioned by the State Board of Education. "This was the beginning of state support of evening schools, but not the beginning of evening schools in Rhode Island. Public evening schools had been in existence in Providence since 1850, free evening schools under philanthropic auspices since 1842, and private evening schools from 1800."

The state made its first appropriation for evening schools in 1873. "Five thousand dollars (\$5000.00) was appropriated to be apportioned and expended under the direction of the Board, with a smaller amount annually thereafter, according to the necessities of the evening schools. From 1880 dates an annual appropriation of three thousand dollars (\$3000.00) apportioned to the several towns to aid in purchasing dictionaries, encyclopedias, works of reference, maps and similar school apparatus."

"A marked gain in the efficiency of the evening schools followed the passage of the Teachers' Certificate Law (1898)."

1. Carroll, C. - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-160
2. Ibid - p-261
3. Ibid - p-314
4. Ibid - p-261



"This law was broad in its simplicity of statement, and sweeping in the authority conferred upon the Board of Education, which had power not only to issue certificates, but to determine the grades of certificates and the qualifications essential." In other words, "the Board was at liberty to examine all teachers in service, as well as applicants for certificates" to teach in the state. Four grades of certificates were provided by the Board, two of which had special reference to evening school teachers. These were the Third Grade Certificate and the Fourth Grade Certificate. One of these must be held by every teacher engaged in evening school work. In order to obtain the Third Grade Certificate one had to pass a successful examination in elementary school studies, school methods, school management and school law, or present evidence of successful pursuit of these studies. The Fourth Grade Certificate was a provisional certificate that was valid only for two years and could not be renewed. "The holder, at the end of that time, must qualify for a Third Grade Certificate." Since 1903 strict enforcement of this law has been simplified by the authority given the Commissioner of Public Schools to "withhold an amount equal to the wages

1. Carroll, C. - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-248
2. Ibid - p-248
3. Ibid - p-248
4. Ibid - p-248

paid by any town to a teacher without a state certificate."<sup>1</sup>

"The raising of the day-school age has taken from the evening schools a considerable proportion of juvenile pupils, thus emphasizing the mission of these schools among the older youth and the adult population."<sup>2</sup> "Special classes for foreigners have been provided," and as Dr. Carroll says "the personnel of the teaching force, the morale of the schools, and the dignity and efficiency<sup>3</sup> maintained are splendid."

Nearly every town in the state maintains an evening school or makes provision for the instruction of those who apply for it, in the neighboring towns or cities. In the cities the work of the evening schools includes high school classes. Emphasis is placed upon practical application, and as a rule the evening schools are more closely related to the outside interests of their pupils than are the day schools. "In 1917 the State Board of Education condemned a rising practise of charging a registration fee for evening schools, holding that evening schools, like<sup>4</sup> day schools, are under the law "free public schools."

- 1. Carroll, C. - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-264
- 2. Ibid - p-262
- 3. Ibid - p-262
- 4. Ibid - p-262

Many cities and towns had up to this time been charging a fee of fifty cents per year, returnable to the pupil if his attendance had been perfect, the whole term.

Just a year before, or "in 1916, the State Board of Education, adopted rules and regulations governing the apportionment of evening school money.<sup>1</sup>" Its apportionment to the different towns and cities may thus vary. "To participate in this money, towns must expend an amount equal to the state money, for the same purpose. Aid is limited to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per town and ten dollars (\$10.00) per school, annually. The restriction, of course, favored the smaller town. The amount of the appropriation has been increased to four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4500.00) yet in 1917, it reached the nine thousand dollar<sup>2</sup> (\$9000.00) mark."

By 1915, the number of foreign-born people in Rhode Island had reached the high total of 187,361 or thirty one percent<sup>3</sup> of the entire population. The following table clearly shows their distribution and emphasizes the fact that the cities or at least the larger industrial centers were claiming the new element.

1. Carroll, C. - Public Education in Rhode Island, p-316
2. Ibid - p-316
3. Pamphlet State Americanization Committee - Dec. 7, 1921.

(Table provided by the Rhode Island Bureau of Labor Statistics)<sup>1</sup>

Providence	80,263
Pawtucket	18,499
Woonsocket	16,186
Central Falls	10,296
Cranston	7,449
Newport	7,024
West Warwick	5,548
Lincoln	4,050
East Providence	3,969
Bristol	3,952
Warwick	3,420
Cumberland	3,300
Westerly	3,013
North Providence	2,911
Warren	2,555
Johnston	2,486
Burrillville	2,247
Coxentry	1,276
Smithfield	1,180
Tiverton	1,096

1. Pamphlet - State Americanization Committee - Dec. 7, 1921.

Barrington	912
East Greenwich	750
North Smithfield	741
South Kingstown	713
Portsmouth	674
Middletown	559
North Kingstown	335
Scituate	285
Jamestown	270
Hopkinton	257
Richmond	251
Narragansett	224
Little Compton	210
Gloucester	132
Charlestown	103
Exeter	61
Foster	59
New Shoreham	56
West Greenwich	49

IBID

"While these statistics are for the year 1915, it is probable that since immigration to the state did not increase during the next four years (the period of the World War)" these figures indicate with a fair degree of accuracy, the situation in 1919 when the great act to promote Americanization was approved by the General Assembly.

CHAPTER II

The ACT TO PROMOTE AMERICANIZATION - 1919

On April 24, 1919, the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island approved "An Act to Promote Americanization." This Act was divided into seven sections, that not only enlarged the scope of school education but placed upon the public school organization new responsibilities.

It was enacted as follows:

"Section I. One or more public evening schools in which attendance shall be free for persons resident in the town in which such school shall be located, and in which the speaking, reading and writing of the English language shall be taught for two hours on each of at least one hundred nights between the first of September and the first of June in each year, shall be established and maintained by the school committee of every town in which twenty or more persons more than sixteen and less than twenty-one years of age who cannot speak, read, and write the English language are resident. Provided, that the school committee of two adjoining towns may unite for the purpose of establishing and maintaining jointly, at some convenient place, and evening school for persons resident in both towns.

1. Circular issued by the Commissioner of Public Schools - An Act to Promote Americanization. Form 2401 - pp 3-4

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"Section II. The school committee of any town may establish and maintain one or more public day continuation schools for the teaching of the English language and American citizenship at which any person beyond compulsory school age resident in such town may attend free or expense, or may take provisions, at the expense of the town, for the attendance of such persons in continuation schools in other towns.

"Section III. Every person who has completed sixteen years of life and who has not completed twenty-one years of life, and who cannot speak, read and write the English language in accord with standards approved by the State Board of Education and who resides in a town in which the school committee has established a day continuation school for the teaching of the English language, or an evening school, shall attend either the day continuation school or the evening school at least two hundred hours between the first day of September and the first day of June in every year until he shall have acquired reasonable facility in speaking, reading, and writing the English language in accord with standards approved by the State Board of Education.<sup>1</sup>

1. Ibid - same as preceding page - pp 3-4



For the purpose of this act day continuation or evening schools may be established in shops or factories, provided that such schools are under control and supervision of the school committee. Attendance in private schools or private instructions in the English language, may be accepted as compliance with this act in lieu of attendance on public instruction only if the private instruction is approved by the school committee, as substantially equivalent in content, method and the hours of instruction to the instruction offered in public schools. Persons instructed in private schools or receiving private instruction in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be deemed as having acquired reasonable facility in speaking reading and writing the English language as provided in this section, only after the successful passage by such person of an examination provided for by the school committee.

"Section IV. Any person who has completed sixteen years of life and who has not completed twenty-one years of life, and who does not speak, read and write English in accord with standards approved by the State Board of Education, who resides in a town in which the school committee has made provision for the teaching of the English language in

1. Ibid - same as preceding page, pp 3-4

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compliance with this act, who habitually absents himself from public instruction, is sufficiently irregular to make it impossible for him to complete two hundred hours, of instruction annually within the time set by the school committee for conducting such schools, and who is not attending private instruction approved by the school committee as provided in section three of this act, may be fined for each wilful absence one dollar (\$1.00) and not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) in the aggregate during one year or for persistent refusal to attend such instruction may be committed to an institution during his minority.

"Section V. Public evening schools and day continuation schools established under the provisions of this act may, if approved by the State Board of Education, receive state support, from the annual appropriations for evening schools and industrial education.

"Section VI. The State Board of Education is hereby authorized and empowered to provide for the visitation, inspection and supervision of day and evening schools maintained under the provisions of this act. The sum of three thousand dollars (\$3000.00) is hereby annually appropriated to defray the expenses of such visitation, inspection, and <sup>1</sup>

1. Ibid - same as preceding page, pp 3-4

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supervision as provided in this section, and for the purpose of meeting such appropriations as may be provided by the Federal Government for like purposes as provided in this act; said sum to be paid upon properly authenticated vouchers approved by the State Board of Education.

"Section VII. For the purpose of carrying this act into effect during the fiscal year ending December 31, 1919, the sum of two thousand dollars (\$2000.00) is hereby appropriated out of any money in the treasury, not otherwise appropriated; and the state auditor is hereby directed to draw his orders upon the general treasurer to pay the same, or so much thereof as may from time to time be required, upon receipt by him of vouchers approved by the State Board of Education.

"Section VIII. This act shall take effect on and after July 1, 1919 and all laws and parts of laws inconsistent<sup>1</sup> herewith are hereby repealed."

This law requires that one or more free public evening schools be established in every town of the<sup>2</sup> state.

1. Ibid - same as preceding page, pp3-4
2. Ibid - p-5

The purpose of these schools is "to teach reading, writing, and speaking of the English language, where twenty or more persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty one years may be found who are unable to speak, read and write the English language with reasonable facility, in accord with standards established by the State Board of Education."<sup>1</sup>

Schools established under this law and approved by the state may receive state support. In fact for the supervision of schools and enforcement of this law the General Assembly has granted an appropriation of three thousand dollars (\$3000.00) to be paid annually. This law went into effect, July 1, 1919, and a Supervisor of Americanization has been appointed to promote the work throughout the state.<sup>2</sup> The supervision was at once placed in the hands of Mrs. Agnes M. Bacon, Supervisor of Americanization, Board of Education, at the State House in Providence, Rhode Island. At the present time, Mrs. Bacon occupies the same position.

1. Circular - "An Act to Promote Americanization - issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools - Form 2401 - p-5
2. Ibid - p-5

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The state law authorizes the school committee of every town to establish free day continuation schools or evening schools for the teaching of the English language and American citizenship to those who are not within compulsory attendance age or to provide for the education of such persons in the schools of other towns. It further requires that every person between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years who cannot meet the standards established by the State Board of Education shall attend a day or evening school, where provided, two hundred hours during every year until he is able to meet the state's standards. Wilful failure to do this may result in a fine of one dollar (\$1.00) for each absence up to a maximum of twenty dollars (\$20.00) in the aggregate. Persistent refusal to attend such instruction involves the penalty of being committed to an institution during <sup>1</sup> minority.

1. Circular - "An Act to Promote Americanization issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools - Form 2401 - p-4

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS ACT TO PROMOTE AMERICANIZATION

"In 1917, Section 321 of the General Laws was passed creating the Massachusetts Bureau of Immigration." Two years later "this Bureau was abolished in the general consolidation of departments and the law which created the present Division of Immigration and Americanization followed." The year, 1919, marked the passage, similarly of the Rhode Island Act. The provisions, however, were somewhat different. Chapter 69, Section 11 of the Massachusetts Law:

"The director of the Division of Immigration and Americanization with the approval of the advisory board thereof shall employ such methods, consistent with law, as in its judgment will tend to bring into sympathetic and mutually helpful relations the commonwealth and its residents of foreign origin, protect immigrants from exploitation and abuse, stimulate their acquisition and mastery of English, develop their understanding of American government, institutions and ideals, and generally promote their assimilation and naturalization."

1. Extract of personal letter received from Mrs. P.R. Thayer  
Director of Division of Immigration and Americanization,  
State of Massachusetts.

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"For the above purpose, the division may cooperate with other officers and departments of the commonwealth and with all public agencies, federal, state, or municipal. It may investigate the exploitation or abuse of immigrants and in making any investigation may require the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books and documents relating to the matter under investigation."

Section 12 of Chapter 15 also pertains to this Division and it is here that the greatest difference between the Massachusetts and the Rhode Island is noted.

"The Division of Immigration and Americanization shall consist of a Director, who may be a women, and an advisory board of six persons. Upon the expiration of the term of office of a director of the division, his successor, shall be appointed for five years by the governor, with the advice and consent of the council. Two members of the advisory board shall be appointed annually for three years each, by the governor with like advice and consent. Said board shall meet at least once a month, and at such other times as it may determine by rule and when requested by the director or by any three members.

Ibid - same as preceding page.

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The director and members of said board shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for their actual necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties."

"In addition, to this law concerning service work for the immigrants there was passed in 1919, Section 295 of the General Laws, which made provision for the teaching of English to adults unable to speak, read, or write."

This law now appears in Chapter 69, Section 9: -

"The

department with the cooperation of any town applying therefore, may provide for such instruction in the use of English for adults unable to speak, read, or write the same and in the fundamental principles of government and other subjects adapted to fit for American citizenship, as shall jointly be approved by the local school committee and the department. Schools and classes established therefore may be held in public school buildings, in industrial establishments, or in such other places as may be approved in like manner.

Ibid - same as preceding page.



Teachers and supervisors employed therein by a town shall be chosen and their compensation fixed by the school committee subject to the approval of the department.<sup>1</sup>"

The Massachusetts law does not require the establishment of evening or Americanization classes in all its towns and cities. Cities or towns may apply through the University Extension Department of the State Board of Education for the aid in the education of adult persons unable to use the English language, and in the providing of teachers and supervisors for Americanization work. In the schools and classes conducted under the provisions of the Act "such instruction shall be given in the English language in the fundamental principles of government, and in other subjects adapted to fit the scholars for American citizenship, as shall receive the joint approval of the local school committee and of the board."<sup>2</sup> There is, however, no compulsion or age-requirement for attendance as there is in Rhode Island.

Cities or towns in Massachusetts that carry out the provisions of the Act, will receive, upon the approval of

- 1. Ibid - same as preceding page.
- 2. Ibid - same as preceding page.

the board, one half of the sum expended. Here again is a striking difference with Rhode Island. In addition to the regular state appropriation for Evening Schools in Rhode Island school departments throughout the state are reimbursed for all Americanization classes on the basis of fifty cents (\$.50) per pupil enrollment and six cents per aggregate attendance. Likewise for the supervision of such schools and enforcement of the law in Rhode Island, there is an annual appropriation of three thousand dollars (\$3000.00). There is also one Supervisor of Americanization appointed to promote the work.

In Massachusetts, on the other hand there is a Director of Americanization and an advisory board of six persons, appointed at stated intervals. They receive no compensation for their work, and are reimbursed only for their actual necessary expenses.

The Massachusetts Act places all the responsibility for Americanization work on the particular town or city. If a town or city wished aid in the education of the adult person unable to use the English language, or if it wishes

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Circular - "An Act to Promote Americanization issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools - Form 2401 p-5
3. Ibid - p-5
4. Thayer, Mrs. Nathaniel - personal letter.

to provide teachers and supervisors for the work, the State stands ready to help. The University Extension Department is the medium for this aid. Rhode Island, however, authorizes the school committee in the various towns to establish day continuation schools and evening schools for the purpose of teaching the English language and American Citizenship.

CHAPTER IV

ENFORCEMENT OF THE RHODE ISLAND ACT

Although the 1919 Act to Promote Americanization is quite emphatic in its statement that there shall be two hundred hours of instruction yearly, for all persons who have completed sixteen years of life and who have not completed twenty-one years, and who cannot speak, read, and write the English language, such is not the case. The Act is not enforced, as it should be. Prior to 1925 there were only sixteen cities and towns maintaining Americanization classes and since then one more has been added to the list bringing the total up to seventeen.<sup>1</sup>

Of these seventeen cities, Barrington, Bristol, Central Falls, Cranston, Cumberland, East Providence, Lincoln, Newport, Pawtucket, Coventry, Providence, Warwick, Westerly West Warwick, Woonsocket, ~~and~~ Burrillville, and Warren, only four keep their schools open for one hundred two-hour sessions. The average length of term is sixty nights,<sup>2</sup> two hours per night. Even with such provision, the attendance is low. Usually the schools open with a large enrollment and close with a very small one. Oftimes the inclement weather or the individual's fatigue after a hard day's work at the factory is the cause of the poor attendance.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Ibid - personal interview.

In four centers throughout the state the provisions of the law are exactly kept. In Warren, West Warwick, East Providence and Woonsocket, the schools are open for one hundred nights with a two hour session<sup>1</sup>. In the case of Warren and East Providence, the former with less than three thousand foreign-born inhabitants and the latter with less than four thousand foreign-born inhabitants, this is a startling fact. In West Warwick with its foreign-born element totalling close to the six thousand mark and in Woonsocket a city that ranks third in having the largest number of foreign-born in the entire state<sup>2</sup>, strict adherence to the state law seems more of a necessity. Yet, although there is need for Americanization in these two centers, and although the evening schools are opened four nights a week during the entire term, the enrollment is not at all commensurate with the number needing the instruction. The state law with its requirement, that all between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one who cannot read, write, or speak the English language should attend these classes, is not enforced. There is scarcely, if ever any compulsion brought to bear on attendance throughout the State.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Statistics on file in Rhode Island Labor Bureau - State House, Providence, for year ending 1925.

Lack of enforcement of the Americanization Act, is perhaps the reason why attendance is low in all the Americanization classes throughout the state, and surely the reason why the larger cities, such as Pawtucket, Central Falls, Cranston, and Newport, with their large numbers of foreign-born people, find it adequate to have only fifty or sixty two-hour sessions for such instruction throughout the <sup>1</sup> year.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.

CHAPTER V

THE SUPERVISOR OF AMERICANIZATION

Rhode Island has one state supervisor of Americanization. Her office is in the State House at Providence.

Section VI of the Act to Promote Americanization clearly states that the appointment of such a supervisor rests with the State Board of Education. The supervisor may be either a man or a woman. When the law went into effect July 1, 1919, Mrs. Agnes M. Bacon was names as Supervisor of Americaniation for the State of Rhode Island, and she has since held the position. This position carries life tenure.

Her duties, also, as laid down by Section VI are "to visit, inspect, and supervise all day and evening schools, maintained under the provisions of the Act." At least once a year and sometimes oftener she visits every Americanization class in the various cities and towns of the state. Sometimes she is present at the opening night of the school term, when the teachers assemble for instruction in their new duties. Always on the closing night, when pupils receive their certificates or diplomas the State Supervisor is in attendance.

In an effort to secure better instruction for the foreign born, the Supervisor conducts courses that deal with actually teaching Americanization. These courses are free to teachers and the general public, and aid greatly in bringing about uniform results.

1 and 2 - Circular - An Act to Promote Americanization - issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public schools - form2401 p4

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In fact, if a given number in any community desire this instruction, the Supervisor will go weekly to that center for this purpose. This is not laid down as a duty in accordance with the Act, but it is an actual reality. In addition, the Supervisor also has to attend to the compilation of facts and statistics relative to the conditions and progress of Americanization work in the state. Reports from the various schools relative to enrollment, attendance, types of individuals instructed, etc. are filed in her office.

In regard to the salary of the supervisor, the Act specifies that "the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3000.) is hereby annually appropriated to defray the expenses of such visitation, inspection and supervision" - "and for the purpose of meeting such appropriations as may be provided by the Federal Government for like purposes; said sum to be paid upon properly authenticated vouchers approved by the State Board of Education." To say accurately what the salary of the supervisor of Americanization is, it would be necessary to subtract from the original three thousand dollars (\$3000.) all the expenses that would accrue in the course of a year from visiting and inspecting the Americanization classes in the state. The remainder, large or small, constitute the salary.

1. Circular - "An Act to Promote Americanization" issued by the Commissioner of Public Schools in Rhode Island.  
Form 2401 p-4



CHAPTER VI

METHODS OF DETERMINING INDIVIDUALS TO BE AMERICANIZED

In ascertaining a method that will determine whether or not an individual need to be Americanized, the foreigner who is unable to speak, read, and write the English language is the only one to be considered here. It is true that there are Americans already possessing the ability to speak, read and write the English language, who need to be Americanized more than the new arrival to our shores, but such are not to be discussed in this paper.

Rhode Island has established "standard to determine ability to read, write and speak the English language with such facility as is thought consistent with the welfare of the state." These standards or tests are to be used, principally, to ascertain those who are subject to the compulsory provisions of the act to promote Americanization. "The standards of these tests, it is believed, must be high enough to insure the ability of the individual to acquire first-hand knowledge of every-day occurrences, and an appreciation of the vital principles underlying the growth and development of the American people, as well as the responsibilities the individual owes to nation, state, and municipality."

1 and 2 Circular - An Act to Promote Americanization - Issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools - Form 2401 p-5

"In other words the strength of a democracy lies in the intelligence, loyalty and devotion of its citizens."<sup>1</sup>

1. WRITING TESTS.

The writing test that is given the candidate is a very simple one, provided he understands the English language. It does not seek to establish his type or form of writing, but rather to have him actually write out the answers to a number of important questions that establish his identity. The questions deal with his name, age, address, nationality and then there are a number of "yes" and "no" questions. It is a sort of registration card. It is given to the individual the first night of school, and it is to be filled out at once. Any person who can do this with a reasonable degree of success needs no further test. In case of failure on the part of the person filling out the card to give the information fully the examiner or teacher attempts to do it.<sup>2</sup>

2. THE READING AND COMPREHENSION TESTS seem more practical and definite. Their results are more worth-while. "AGreat Hero" or "Health" is submitted to the candidate. He is to read this through, taking as much time as he needs.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ibid - p-5

2. & 3. Ibid - p-5

It is in no sense of the word a speed test. When he has finished, there are two or three questions which he must answer.

These questions are suggestive and point the way to determine his degree of comprehension. These questions may be asked orally by the examiner or "the test may be made a Writing Test<sup>1</sup> by asking the individual to write the answers to the questions."

3. A Speaking Test can very readily be given. Either a person can speak the language or he can not. There are many instances when a person can comprehend what has been said or what has been read without being able to verbally make a reply. Sometimes practice is the only thing necessary for a seemingly illiterate foreigner to prove himself.

4. Words Tests are another type. Rhode Island has used to ascertain the language ability of the new-comer. A series of words are submitted to him, and, according to the requirements of the test, he is to underline the words in the group that perhaps suggest color, number, clothing, or the like.<sup>2</sup>

These Tests, samples of which will follow, might legitimately be called Standardized Tests, yet they are only suggestive of what an average person with a limited knowledge of the English language could answer correctly.

1. Circular - An Act to Promote Americanization issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools - Form 2401 p-6

2. Ibid - p-7

They do not indicate ability or achievement; they simply register a working knowledge of our language. The same tests are not given all the time. "Similar tests, directed toward the same ends can be obtained by applying for them to the State Board of Education, Americanization Division, State House, Providence, Rhode Island."

2

SAMPLES OF TESTS

Test Number 1. - Writing.

1. Name                      Date
2. Home Address                      Nationality
3. Age                      Sex                      Married
4. Where do you work?
5. How many years have you lived in the United States?
6. Do you understand the English language?
7. Do you speak the English language?
8. Do you read the English language?
9. Do you write the English language?
10. Education in native land?
11. Education in the United States?
12. Have you applied for first citizenship papers?
13. Have you your final citizenship papers?
14. -----School.
15. -----Teacher.

1. Circular -aAn Act to Promote Americanization issued by the Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools, Form 2401 p-5
2. Ibid - p-6

Test No. II. Reading and Comprehension <sup>1</sup>

GEORGE WASHINGTON

George Washington was the first President of the United States. As a boy he had a keen love of truth and would not tell a lie. He was so fair and just when at school that the boys would call upon him to make peace when they were at strife. When he was a man he fought a great war with England and made American free from King George. Then the people made him their President.

- Questions: (1) What do you like about George Washington?
- (2) Why do you think he was made the first president of the United States?

Test No. III. Word Tests <sup>2</sup>

Directions: Below you will find a number of words, Look at each word. Think what it means.

1. Write C under each word that means a color.
  2. Write B under each word that means a bird.
  3. Write Cl under each word that means something out of which clothing is made.
  4. Write W under the word that means something to wear.
  5. Write H under the word that means something found in a house. Shirt, Shoes, Cotton, Red, Hat, Wool, Coat, Robin, Pink, Table, Chair.
1. Circular - An Act to Promote Americanization issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Education - Form 2401 p-6
  2. Ibid - p-7

These "tests were devised to aid superintendents of schools, teachers and others who might be called upon to examine the qualifications of persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years with reference to reading, writing, and speaking the English language with the reasonable facility established as standard by the State Board of Education"<sup>1</sup> Test No. 1. Writing is the most universally known and used. The Reading and Comprehension Tests and the Word Tests are not so popular because material of a like nature can be obtained very readily. Yet similar standard tests on cards convenient for use can be procured at the Americanization office.<sup>2</sup>

1. Circular - An Act to Promote Americanization issued by Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Schools Form 2401 p-7
2. Ibid - p-5

## CHAPTER VII

### TRAINING AMERICANIZATION INSTRUCTORS

After the Act to promote Americanization was passed in 1919, the impetus for the trained instructor began to grow. Every city and town wanted its teachers prepared for the new work. Experienced evening school instructors as well as the most recent normal school graduate began to study the new movement. The Americanization class seemed a different unit from the monotonous routine of the regular Three R drilling of the past. It was something that was going to show immediate results. There was a fascination about teaching an individual to read, write and speak a new language, that the purely formal instruction of the past could never possess.

Foremost in instruction for this new work was the recently appointed Supervisor of Americanization. Her teaching was state-wide.

At the Rhode Island College of Education courses in Americanization Methods and Teacher Training were at once instituted. They were given as part of the Extension Program<sup>1</sup> of the college.

At the Rhode Island State College at Kingston, they<sup>2</sup> have since been instituted.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Ibid - personal interview.

Only students in the Senior Home Economics Classes can elect these courses. Last year, 1926 "the course was broadened to include twelve model lessons and lectures. Its purpose is to prepare teachers to go into the homes and show foreign-born women how to adjust themselves to new-world ideas, customs and manners and thus accustom them to their daily life in and outside the home.<sup>1</sup> The course taken in Home Economics, Household Arts, Food Values, Family Budgeting, Marketing Family Health Problems and Family Welfare." The young women are urged to bring cookery into these foreign homes; to assist parents in the employment problems of their children, and also to be of aid to them in medical and legal situations.<sup>2</sup>

It has been perhaps in the Extension Courses given in the various cities and towns throughout the state that the most helpful and practical instruction has been given to the individual teacher. Local conditions with their predominant problems and pressing questions could be considered. For example, when the course was given in Woonsocket in 1924, the Supervisor of Americanization knew that she was dealing with a situation calling for the Americanization of large numbers of Canadian, Polish, French, Italian and Russian people.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes. - Personal interview.
2. Clipping - Providence Journal - 1926



The type of instruction was therefore adapted to their particular needs.

All of these courses whether pursued at the Rhode Island College of Education, or at the State College at Kingston, or at any center throughout the state carry credit when successfully concluded. Certificates are granted upon the satisfactory completion of the work assigned and are issued under the authority of the State Board of Education. These certificates carry credit toward a Teacher's Certificate; that is, they represent thirty hours of academic credit. A graduate of the Rhode Island College of Education or of any normal school who is working at this institution for a Bachelor of Education degree, may count these thirty hours of credit toward it.

The state does not demand that all teachers be certificated before teaching Americanization classes. This duty is left to the town or city itself. There are three cities, however, that employ only trained teachers; that is, teachers who have specialized in this field of work. Pawtucket, Central Falls, and West Warwick occupy this unique position. As a result of course, the salary in these three centers is high. \$3.00 per night.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Ibid - personal interview.
3. Ibid - personal interview.

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Although the state does not require certification for this type of teaching, there are six hundred persons<sup>1</sup> in the state or in neighboring states so certificated.

Many of these people are the regular day school teachers of the state; others are teachers in cities or towns just over the border, and still others are prospective teachers.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes. - personal interview.

## CHAPTER VIII

## TYPES OF CLASSES

Americanization work has been carried on not only in evening classes, but in the actual day-school classes, and in classes in industrial plants and even in the homes. There have also been classes under private organizations and at Social Service Stations in certain parts of the state. Each of these types has contributed greatly to the Americanizing of both child and adult.

The Day-School Class is pre-eminently the class for the child, although some adults who had the necessary time have been in attendance. Usually the day-school class is known as the "Special Class" or the foreign class. The number of pupils in such rooms is always small so that individual attention may be given, as needed. Another decided advantage of this type of class is that promotion to the various grades is made at whatever time the teacher thinks the pupil is prepared to make the change. In most cases, the language is the only barrier to successful completion of the required school work. Once this barrier is overcome, and it is soon overcome in the case of the young pupil, progress is at once noticeable.

It is in the evening class that Americanization work has reached its truer signification.

Since the passage of the Act in 1919 the aim of the evening-school teacher in Rhode Island has been three-fold:

1. To teach English
2. To teach state and national history
3. To teach American customs, ideals and opportunities

These three aims set up by the Supervisor and stressed in every course given on Methods of Teaching Americanization are the ideals to be realized by the successful teacher. First and foremost, of course, is the purpose of teaching English. The newcomer must be able to use the English language before any hope for his successful Americanization can be held out. Knowledge of state and national history, as well as knowledge of American customs and ideals will follow later. For some individuals, these three aims can be realized in a short time; for others it is a matter of years of study. It depends to a large extent on the age, ability, and aptitude of the person himself. It is necessary, therefore, to have the evening school class divided into three divisions; the Beginners, the Intermediate and the Advanced.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes. - Course in Americanization 1924
2. Ibid - Course in Americanization 1924

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An attempt is always made to have these divisions, small enough, so that the best possible advantages may result to the pupil.

(1) Beginner's Division.

In selecting candidates for these divisions, Rhode Island, through its Supervisor, has laid down certain requirements.<sup>1</sup>

Beginners, therefore, may be classified as (1) "Those who speak, read and write no English. They may be literate or illiterate in their own tongue. (2) Those who speak English but cannot read or write English. They, too, may be literate or illiterate in their own tongue. (3) Those who speak, read, and write only a very little English. They, also, may be literate or illiterate in their own tongue."

Any person entering an evening class whose qualifications come under any one of those three heads, would immediately be assigned to the Beginner's Division. Here, primarily, the aim would be to acquire a working knowledge of the English language.<sup>2</sup> Under competent teachers, who were tactful and sympathetic, and whose knowledge of racial characteristics and backgrounds was clear, the immigrant would accomplish a great deal.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket 1924.
2. Ibid - Woonsocket 1924

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In fact the following is a sample of an evening's program that has been advocated for use in Beginner's Classes throughout the state.<sup>1</sup>

Program

1. Greeting (by teacher to each person as he comes into the room.
2. Alphabet study - 10 minutes.
3. Personal Information - 10 minutes
4. Conversation and Reading Lesson. This usually involves some form of dramatization or socialization, in which every person actively participates - 40 minutes.
5. Speaking, reading and writing, drill, review and dictation - 20 minutes.
6. Phonics - 10 minutes.
7. Informal Language - 10 minutes.
8. Sight Reading - 10 minutes.
9. Facts Memorized.
10. Sight Reading Cards."

The methods for teaching this group that may be utilized are:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) Direct
- (2) Indirect
- (3) Pictorial
- (4) Laboratory.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket 1924.
2. Ibid given in Woonsocket 1924

In all methods, English is the medium of instruction. The Direct Method is commonly known as the Dramatic Method or the one that centers around the verb as the medium of action. A theme, which is a series of acts, is built upon a regular act. Sentences follow each other in logical sequence. For example,<sup>1</sup>

1. I stand.
2. I walk to the door.
3. I turn the knob.
4. I open the door.
5. I shut the door.
6. I walk to my chair.
7. I sit down.

The indirect method is more objective. The pictorial involves the use of pictures. The laboratory takes the pupil to the thing.

<sup>2</sup>  
(2) Intermediate Division.

In order to qualify as an intermediate student, one must have completed the work of the beginner's class, or at least have knowledge of it. Usually, intermediate pupils are defined as "those who can make themselves understood in English and can read simple sentences."

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket 1924.
2. Ibid given in Woonsocket 1924.

Usually such individuals are not the latest arrivals to our country. Some of them have been here a number of years and have "picked up" the language by contact and association with those who know how to speak it. Often their children attending the public schools have brought in the new language to them.

In this division, much attention is given to speaking and reading. It is better to acquire the ability to talk well rather than to write well. The teacher is reminded that the range of English should be within the individual's knowledge. In regard to the teaching of Reading, the State Supervisor of Americanization holds up four ideals:<sup>1</sup>

- "(1) There must be Sight Reading which demands the individual's thinking in English.
- (2) He must understand the meaning.
- (3) He should be able to express his thought.
- (4) He should read accurately."

The methods for teaching may be the same as those advocated for the Beginner's group.

(3) Advanced Division and Citizenship Classes.<sup>2</sup>

In order to be admitted to the Advanced Division of

- 1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket 1924
- 2. Ibid given in Woonsocket 1924



an Evening School Class, a person must have completed the work of the Intermediate Group, or its equivalent. He must be able to read, write and speak English to a fair degree. He must also be able to carry on a conversation in English. In addition, he must be able to read and understand a given newspaper article. This is, in reality, the most advanced division of the Americanization class. Here the various subjects of study are taken up with a new purpose. Spelling is taught with reference to the writing vocabulary of the class. Grammar is introduced by games and other devices. The dictionary and all that it entails is considered and taught. Reading, "in the order of (1) drill (2) silent reading (3) questions on silent reading and (4) oral reading, is always treated." Written English, in the form of simple letters, business letters, friendly letters, paragraph construction, reproduction of stories, and the like, is taken up.

Arithmetic, with emphasis on practicability is taught. The meaning, use, and reading of all signs and abbreviations, such as the dollar sign (\$) and doz. (dozen) as well as the important Arithmetical Tables, such as Linear Measure, Square Measure, Dry Measure and Weights are studied.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket - 1924
2. Ibid given in Woonsocket - 1924

It is even suggested that teachers instruct pupils in methods of computing daily and weekly wages, household budgets, bills and saving bank accounts. Geography and History especially in their local and state significance are stressed. Memory work, embodying worthwhile information, historical facts, proverbs, quotations from great Americans, short and inspirational gems, and the Salute to the Flag is taken up. Finally, Current Events gleaned from a study of the newspaper finds its proper sphere in the progressive work of this class. Students in this Advanced Division are usually those who are going to take out their final papers for citizenship. The work might justly be considered a preparation for this examination.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Course in Principles of Americanization given in Woonsocket - 1924

CHAPTER IX

CLASSES IN INDUSTRIAL PLANTS

After the passage of the Act to Promote Americanization in 1919, great impetus was given to the new movement by the institution of Americanization classes in various factories throughout the state. Classes were held during the working day, at noon hours, and even after working hours. The factories that carried on the most extensive work in this line were: The United States Rubber Co. at its Bristol, R.I. plant - the National India Rubber Co.; and at its Woonsocket, R.I. plant - the Alice Mill. 2. The Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Co. at Providence. 3. The Grinnell Mfg. Co. at Providence. 4. The General Electric Co. at Providence. 5. American Silk Spinning Co. at Providence. 6. Valley Mill of the American Woolen Co. at Providence. 7. The United States Finishing Co. at Providence. 8. Providence Plant of the Crompton & Knowles Loom Works. 9. Rhode Island Glass Division of the General Electric Co. at Central Falls. 10. The Lorraine Mfg. Co. at Pawtucket and 11. Pawtuxet Valley Classes.

In July 1919, after the passage of the Act to Promote Americanization, the United States Rubber Company, in thirteen of its factories opened Americanization classes. As two of these factories are located in Rhode Island, viz. the National India Rubber Company at Bristol and the Alice Mill at Woonsocket, these two only will receive consideration here. "The United State Rubber Company was spurred on to this action partly because in 1919 there was the "

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber, Co. July 1919-1920 p-5

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greatest shortage in immigrant labor that this country had ever seen. There was a shortage of four million laborers and yet five times as many immigrants had left the country since the war as had come into it. Not only did industry suffer from the departure of foreign born labor, but commerce, farming and all other activities found themselves the victims of labor shortage.<sup>1</sup>

Officials of the United States Rubber Company believed that the only conceivable way to overcome this deficit, was "by greater efficiency on the part of every working man and woman, also by more and better production per person." To bring this about, especially in the case of the Non-English speaking workman necessitated removing the language barrier. "Statistics had shown that only two percent of the aliens in any community were attending evening schools.<sup>2</sup> Right in the Footwear Division of thirteen of their factories where close to eight thousand aliens were employed only two thousand nine hundred and fifty nine (2,959) were naturalized citizens.<sup>3</sup>" The time to bring about a change was at hand.

They believed that "if there was one place where Americanization could be taught in a systematic way and on a scale commensurate with its magnitude, that place was in the plant classes and during the working hours."

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 pp2-3
2. Ibid - p-3
3. Ibid - p-4
4. Ibid - p-4

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"Here the immigrant could be reached in large numbers and under favorable conditions. At such time he would be receptive to teaching and not handicapped by the fatigue of a day's work. Groups of pupils so congregated would have a point of common interest. The cooperation of the foreman could easily be obtained, and the basic interests of employer, employee, and community would merge into one. The teaching in the classroom could be utilized in smoothing out the individual problems of the workmen and thus the results in production would be more evident to the worker, to the foreman, and to the employer. In establishing these plant classes, the United States Rubber Company was acting on a sound economic basis."

1. The Woonsocket Rubber Company opened its plant class in Americanization in 1919. One teacher, Miss Mary G. Hartnett, was placed in charge of the work. "Classrooms were located right in the factory. They were equipped with Moulthrop Movable Chair Desks, bulletin boards, book cases, teacher's desk, suitable pictures, sufficient blackboard space, maps and an American Flag."

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United State Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 - p-4
2. Ibid - p-79
3. Ibid - p-8

"Classes were organized with the help of Factory Councils, Foreman's Committees, racial leaders, and personal solicitation by the Industrial Relations Manager, teacher, and officials of the company. A card was provided to be used for registration, with space on one side for the necessary data, and a series of questions and reading tests to be used for classification, on the other side.<sup>1</sup>"

The "Director of Americanization for the United States Rubber Company supplied the teacher with a Syllabus and Course of Study, the Written Standard Practice on Americanization, Model Lessons worked out in minute detail, a Series of Fifteen Devices for stimulating and sustaining interest, a Course of Study in Thrift, a Classroom Program and Time Schedule, and three series of printed and mimeographed lessons to be used in the Beginner's Intermediate and Advanced classes.<sup>2</sup> All of this material had been especially prepared by Miss Rose M. O'Toole, Director of Americanization for the United States Rubber Company's Americanization Schools. So valuable, indeed, were these lessons that numerous requests for them were received from other industries, supervisors, city and state officials.<sup>3</sup>"

1. First Annual Report in the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 - p-8
2. Ibid - p-9
3. Ibid - p-9

An important phase of the teacher's work was to arrange the time when her pupils could come to school. This had to be at the foreman's convenience. Then "she had to find out on her own initiative, what the problems of her pupils were in the shop, and proceed to give instruction that would solve these problems. For this purpose she spent at least one hour a day in the factory getting acquainted with the various steps in production and watching for the difficulties met by her pupils through their inability to read, write or understand English."<sup>1</sup>

In the Alice Mill, the total enrollment for the year 1919-1920 was 206 pupils and the average percent-attendance was 88.13.<sup>2</sup>

2. In the Bristol Rubber Company, a similar procedure was carried out in the Americanization program. Here the work at the plant was so increased that it was necessary to employ an additional teacher, making a total of two. Miss Helen J. Wilder had been appointed in July 1919 and Miss Evelyn M. Carter had been appointed two months later, September 1919.<sup>3</sup> Here at the National India Rubber Company there was an eight hour day in the school as well as in the shop.<sup>4</sup>

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 p-6

2. Ibid - General Statistics  
 3. Ibid - p-5 and 79  
 4. Ibid - p-5

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There was a total enrollment of two hundred and forty one (241) pupils, the largest enrollment of the thirteen plants. There was an equally high average-percent-attendance <sup>1</sup> 91.97.

Administration and Supervision from 1919-1921.

Miss Rose M. O'Toole was appointed Director of Americanization (1919) for the United States Rubber Company's Americanization Schools. "She had direct supervision over the thirteen factory classes conducted at the factory plants, six of which were in Massachusetts, two in Rhode Island, three in Connecticut and one in New Jersey. She assumed some responsibility for the administration as well as the supervision of the classes." More direct relation existed between the class teacher and the supervisor. This was established by the frequent visits of the latter" which resulted in a more complete understanding and knowledge of the progress of the work, and also provided the opportunity for suggestion, observation, and criticism.<sup>3</sup>

"Model lessons were also given by the supervisor at the opening of each school, thus giving the teacher a chance for observation and question. These lessons were repeated as frequently as was deemed necessary with personal conferences after the lessons."<sup>4</sup>

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 to July 1920 - General Statistics.
2. Ibid - p-5
3. Ibid - pp-8-9
4. Ibid - p-9



Although much had been done in both the National India Rubber Company and the Woonsocket Rubber Company to interest the alien in becoming Americanized, yet the Attendance Statistics do not show that all took advantage of their opportunities. The following are the records for the Woonsocket Rubber Co. for the year 1919-1920.

<u>No. of Aliens in Factory</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>No. at School</u>
357	Oct.	94
337	Nov.	141
335	Dec.	145
352	Jan.	145
353	Mar.	121
333	Apr.	55
348	May	92
392	June	100
348	July	100

More striking are the results for the National India Rubber Company at Bristol, Rhode Island, for the same period 1919-1920. Here, where a large number of the employees are Portuguese, a very small percentage seemed to avail themselves of the opportunity to learn the new language.<sup>1</sup>

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 - Statistics of attendance.

<u>No. of Aliens in Factory</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>No. at School</u>
2460	Oct.	160
2535	Nov.	151
2554	Dec.	140
2693	Jan.	160
2773	Feb.	160
2828	Mar.	160
2886	Apr.	160
2887	May	160
2846	June	160
2908	July	160

These statistics on attendance for the year ending July 1920 show the trend without much commentation. Although the schools reopened again in the fall, it was only for a few months. Business depression which necessitated the actual closing of the plants for a few months, had its effect likewise on the closing of the schools. December 1920 really marked the end of the Americanization classes at the Woonsocket Rubber Company, although the classes have continued at Bristol under town and state control.

1. First Annual Report on the Americanization Schools of the Footwear Division, United States Rubber Co. July 1919 July 1920 - Statistics of attendance.

Since 1920 there has been no attempt to reopen the classes in Woonsocket. These Americanization classes during their actual period of operation - one and one half years - were successful but like other post-war ventures they have since passed into history<sup>1</sup>

In Bristol, however, "the town not so long ago, known as the town of big houses and tall pines and all that represented New England culture and community life - in fact Rhode Island's pride, fifty years ago" - quite a different state of affairs exists necessitating the continuance of Americanization classes. The 1920 Census shows it has become "the particular melting-pot, the leading crucible in Rhode Island." "42.2% of the foreign born population are unable to read, thus it leads the state in the percentage of its illiteracy. Central Falls comes next with a percentage of 39.1%; Woonsocket with 36.8%; Pawtucket with 32.7%; Cumberland with 32.6% West Warwick with 31.2% and Providence with 29%." Other important items gleaned from the 1920 Census were that of the total population of 11,375 only 2,276 were American born of American parents; and that of 2,485 families living in Bristol there were only 1,706 houses to shelter them.<sup>2</sup>

1. Hartnett, Miss Mary G. - interview.
2. Clipping from The Providence Journal Oct. 13, 1921.

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Thus the following statements were made against Bristol. They were later substantiated by Prof. Bucklin of Brown University who was asked to investigate to see if they were correct.<sup>1</sup>

Bristol has:

"The highest percentage of foreigners who have not become citizens.

The highest percentage of illiteracy.

The highest percentage of children not going to school.

The highest percentage of delinquent children.

The highest baby death rate.

The highest child death rate.

The highest tuberculosis death rate.

The lowest percentage of naturalized foreigners.

The lowest percentage of voters as compared with total population."

Thus the high standing of the Bristol of fifty years ago, has passed into history. "In less than the span of life, Bristol has turned from the sea and the farm and set its face toward the shining star of industrial success as symbolized by the mill and factory."<sup>2</sup>

1. Clipping - The Providence Journal Sept 29, 1922.
2. Clipping - The Providence Journal July 19, 1922.

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"In pursuit of industry, some of the other things in life have been passed by, until now Bristol lags far behind the State it once so proudly led.<sup>1</sup>"

"Today because of the present Immigration Laws foreigners now coming in are obliged to be able to read and write their own language." Yet at the National India Rubber Company there are Americanization classes - lasting all day. A total of one hundred and sixty five (165) men, women, boys and girls attend. There are even noon-hour classes and classes after the mill has closed. In the Women's Divisions, lessons are given on Food, the Care of the Home, as well as project work on the tasks of the factory. Special classes are held for those preparing for naturalization papers. Two teachers, Miss Stella M. McCann and Miss Miriam J. McCaffrey under the direction of Miss Evelyn Carter, Assistant Industrial Relations Manager, are employed. They even follow up their pupils to see that they attend classes. The work is now supported by the State and the school committee of the town.<sup>2</sup>

1. Clipping - The Providence Journal July 19, 1922.
2. Ibid - Feb. 3, 1924.

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Providence Factory Schools

In 1916, Americanization classes were held at the Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Company, in Providence, one of the largest machine-tool factories of the world, then employing about six thousand people. These classes, when first instituted, were conducted only during the noon-hours. Instruction was given in the English language. A little later, in view of the large number of foreigners employed, it was decided to have the instruction border on naturalization requirements. It was noticeable that large numbers of Canadians and English had not obtained their citizenship papers. <sup>1</sup> In fact, after a census two percent of one thousand three hundred twelve employees were not citizens. Some of this number were too young to be considered. <sup>2</sup>

In January 1917, the following letter, through the <sup>3</sup> clerks of the various departments was sent to each foreigner:

"Mr. -----

Reg. No. -----

We believe it is for our mutual interest that those in our employ who are not as yet American Citizens should become such. It is our purpose to aid those who are willing to take the steps necessary to become citizens and to that end we desire the following information:

1. Clipping - The Providence Journal 1916.
2. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine, July 1917 pp 385-392
3. Ibid

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Have you first papers?

If not would you like to become an American Citizen?

Are you willing to take out your first papers now?

If not kindly give your reasons.

Have you had any difficulty in attempting to obtain citizenship papers?

Would you attend a class in order to prepare for citizenship?

If you do not understand English well would you join a class so that you may understand it better?

Please fill in and return to the clerk in your department not later than February first.

January 22, 1917

BROWN & SHARPE MFG. CO.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of this letter four hundred sixty employees signified their desire to become American citizens.

"A notice was sent out to seventy foremen and leaders thus stirring up interest. A series of popular lectures was held during noon-hours to instruct in methods of obtaining citizenship."<sup>2</sup>

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392
2. Ibid

"These lectures were conducted by Peter Roberts, Ph.D. of New York - International Secretary, Immigration Department Y.M.C.A. - E.E. Bohner, Industrial Secretary, Providence Y.M.C.A. - Charles Towne, Assistant Superintendant, Providence Schools and others."

"Then an Employee's Record Card, was sent to clerks in each department with the names of those who had expressed a desire to become citizens, asking information to be filled in. These were later sorted to see who was applying for first papers, second papers, and for those who must wait for an expiration of time before further steps could be taken. Those eligible to take out first papers were sent for, with the time specified when they should report in order to fill out their papers, as per the following form:"

"Mr. ----- Reg. No. ----

You are to report at the Apprentice Building at ----- about the matter of citizenship. Charge time to #43315-40.

BROWN & SHARPE MFG. Co."

"Representatives of the Industrial Department of the Y.M.C.A., who cooperated in carrying on the campaign, and representatives of the company were on hand so four or more employees could be assisted every fifteen minutes."

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392
2. Ibid
3. Ibid



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"If information was lacking as to the date or port of arrival or what steamship a man came on, these matters were taken up directly with the Immigration Bureau in Washington. Each man lost one half hour from work. Then the men were told to go to the Federal Building, pay \$1.00 fee and file paper. Receipt was given there and this was returned to the clerk of the Department as a check-up. This was handed over to the Industrial Department and a check made on the employment card. If it was not received in due time, the clerk of the department was instructed and she looked up the matter.

"The same was done for those who were eligible for second papers. It took longer time, even at the Federal Building - they needed two witnesses, so the department was open on Saturday afternoon for a number of weeks. Men were notified ahead so that they could bring in their first papers to aid in making out the second. If they were five years in this country and had spent one year in Rhode Island and it was two years since they took out their first papers, they could get second papers at once, if qualified. Those who were not qualified were to enter classed in English."

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392.
2. Ibid

They had to have two witnesses, and three months later when they appeared before the Court they had to have the same two. So the Clerk was consulted to see what two could serve as witnesses for the group.

"In the case of those who did not want to become citizens the clerk was sent a notice to revisit them. A number changed their minds.

"Then arrangements were made with the City of Providence for a number of employees to go to the evening Americanization classes, one for citizenship and one for English. Each was instructed by letter. Those in citizenship were held at the Public Library, Friday evening at 7:45 o'clock. For classes in English, the school nearest the employee's home was mentioned and a letter was enclosed for him to give to the principal, the first night he attended classes.

"Leaflets were also distributed to men applying for citizenship; as, "Naturalization of Aliens in United States" "The Constitution of the United States of America" and "Patriotism". The first two were published by the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution," the last by the Outlook Company of New York City."

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392
2. Ibid

"The results of all this work among 1,312 aliens were: 505 took out first papers. Of the 606 who already had their first papers, 262 were eligible for second papers and took steps to obtain them. 178 others, who were eligible declined citizenship giving such reasons as: "Intended to return to native land." Eighty one gave this answer. "Undecided until after the World War," that is, they did not want to renounce their own country while at war. Twenty three gave this answer."

The nationalities that responded less readily to the call to become citizens, were the Russians, Turks, Armenians and Austrians. In fact fifty-two out of one hundred twelve Russians employed failed to heed the call. In striking contrast was the Swedish contingent numbering one hundred sixty three employees - everyone applied for citizenship rights.

Summarizing, of the thirty three different nationalities employed with more than half natives of English speaking countries, and the large majority of these, subjects of the British empire, the following fact may be deduced:

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392
2. Ibid

"505 applied for first papers

344 had first papers - waiting for time expiration

124 had first papers - now eligible for second

138 applied for second papers

178 refused to apply for second papers

5 were waiting for father to receive his papers

23 were illiterate"

One hundred percent of the Poles and of the Bulgarians, fifty percent of the Belgians and of the Finns; forty seven percent of the Turks; forty six percent of the Russians; thirty nine percent of the Armenians and thirty one percent of the Austrians, refused to apply for citizenship. "In all fourteen percent of all nationalities refused to apply for citizenship papers."<sup>1</sup>

Yet the Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Company paid twenty five cents to each non-English speaking employee for every evening he attended classes in the city's evening schools. This money was paid in the form of Thrift of War Saving Stamps. The "aim was merely to stimulate the study of English among the alien employees as the first step toward Americanization."<sup>2</sup>

1. Burlingame, Luther D. - Americanizing One Thousand Workmen at the Brown & Sharpe Shops, in the Engineering Magazine June 1917 - pp 385-392
2. Newspaper clipping (no date)

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With the city's schools opened for twenty weeks of four sessions each, an employee would ultimately receive twenty dollars. Seventy-five employees, so benefitted.

Grinnell Mfg. Company

In September 1919, the Providence School Board, in response to a demand from manufacturers appointed Miss May D. Phillips, teacher at the Branch Ave. School, to go out into the factories of the city and teach Americanization. The manufacturers were willing to pay for such services and even to provide a school room for Americanization instruction. Noon classes, they believed, were not successful.<sup>1</sup>

Hence "the Grinnell Company was the first to establish a shop school, making temporary provisions in their new office building, then nearing completion on West Exchange Street. The classes were divided into units of ten - the first class coming at one o'clock and the second at half past one - all ending at two. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, were the days selected for class instruction."<sup>2</sup>

1. Clipping - The Providence Journal Dec. 5, 1920
2. Ibid - Dec. 5, 1920.

General Electric Company

Similar work was carried out at the Base Works of the General Electric Company's plant on Atwell's Ave. Here employees worked, in the glass foundry from six o'clock in the evening until six the next morning. In order to receive Americanization instruction they arranged to be in the shop school at 4:10 P.M. and remain an hour and a quarter. These classes, likewise, met three times a week. There was an average of twelve pupils in each class.

American Silk Spinning Company

Work of a like nature was carried on, also, at this plant. The interest of Edgar J. Lownes, President of the company, aided greatly toward its success. In fact the first Factory Women's Class was organized here in Sept. 1920 under the direction of the Providence Public Schools. At the beginning, the class met during the noon recess, but later President Lownes permitted it to function during working hours, each employee receiving his regular pay while attending. Most of the members of the class were Italians. A forty minute class was held twice a week, with an average attendance of forty-two women.

1. Clipping - The Providence Journal Dec. 5, 1920
2. Ibid - June 17, 1921

Valley Mill of the American Woolen Company

Under the direction again of Miss Mary Phillips, shop classes were organized at this plant. They were a sixty minute session, held twice a week. Albert B. Day, Agent of the mill, was intensely interested in the work. The main purpose of their institution was to have employees "carry out intelligently the directions of bosses." Eighteen employees enrolled at the outset. The majority were Italians, some were French, and a few were English. They were all adults except two.

United States Finishing Company

This manufacturing foundry in carrying on its policy of Americanization work furnished its own teachers from the ranks of its employees -a plan not attempted in any other city. In this respect it was a leader.

Providence Plant of the Crompton & Knowles Loom Works.

In some respects the work attempted at the United States Finishing Company was similar to the elaborate plan worked out in the "College of the Providence Plant of the Crompton & Knowles Loom Works."

1. Clipping - Providence Journal (no date)
2. Ibid - Dec. 5, 1920

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This "college" idea started a number of years ago, but in 1920 the Worcester plant added on Americanization work to its program. "In 1922, since the city of Providence no longer supported the work done by Miss Phillips Americanization classes at this plant were under the supervision of Mr. James Hogg, Chief Inspector of the company." The purpose of these classes was to "better aid the foreign-born in the language and customs of this country," so that he might eventually get his papers and become a citizen. The "work covered the teaching of English as it is used in the home, street, and shop; the teaching of Civics, and municipal, state and federal forms of government."

"These classes had their beginning in practical talks to groups in various departments of the shops. During the winter of 1920-1921 there were five classes. Instructors for each class were taken from the employees, except for those classes where English was not understood. Thus an employee, if foreign born and lacking the ability to speak English, could through class instruction become a valuable workman."

1. Clipping - Providence Journal March 19, 1922
2. Ibid - March 19, 1922



Factory Classes in Central Falls

At the close of the year 1918 when Mr. Robert K. Bennett, Supt. of Schools in Central Falls was submitting his report, he made a strong plea for more Americanization instruction. It had just been introduced then to the school system by the Council of National Defense. "Eighty percent of the people living in Central Falls were of foreign stock."<sup>1</sup>

"Although Americanization classes really began in 1912 when one thousand Poles came to the city in one year, it was not until 1922 that Central Falls was looked upon as the champion night school center of the state. The Americanization classes contained representations from thirteen nations. In this year, one out of every twenty of the entire city population was registered in some evening class. Twenty subjects were taught and fifty-six teachers were employed." Rightly was Central Falls called "the most polyglot spot in New England."

At the time that Supt. Bennett was making his plea for more Americanization in the city of Central Falls (1918) factory Americanization classes were being held in

1. Clipping - Providence Journal Nov. 29, 1918
2. Ibid - Dec. 17, 1922

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the plant of the Rhode Island Class Division of the General Electric Company. "The firm frankly stated that it was not a philanthropic venture but a means of increasing efficiency and production.

"The firms made electric light bulbs and operated in two shifts. Classes were held three times a week and as shifts changed in the middle of the afternoon this incoming shift came an hour early for the lessons and the out going shift remained an hour after work.

"There was no compulsion. There ere about 25 or 30 students. That was the year when influence was so common that the public schools were closed for a month but the factory classes continued to operate.

"Classes were held in the chemical laboratory and the firm bore the entire expense but the men gave their time. Equipment was complete. Naturally the English taught was that needed immediately by the students in their work.

"Interest and attendance were good. The pupils were mostly Portuguese and quite varied in their educational needs. After a few months the classes were divided making  
1  
four groups."

1. Letter from Miss A. Mabel Perkins, Supervisor of Evening Schools, Pawtucket, R.I. - Jan. 29, 1927

"At the end of the year former English speaking employees were returning from the war and the firm made places to receive them. Also many of the foreign born were anxious to go home so the character of the help changed and foreign-born classes were no longer needed.

"Officials of the firm stated that "Marvelous results were accomplished not only in the teaching of English but in instilling American ideas and a spirit of cooperation."<sup>1</sup>

Factory Classes in Pawtucket

Pawtucket likewise rose to meet the exigencies of the time. "The twin-city of Central Falls, sixty five percent of her people were either foreign born or children of foreign parents. Forty different nationalities were represented in her community life. Her great contribution to Americanization began five years before the passage of this Act, in 1914, in the Creation of the Civic Theatre, the great meeting place for all nationalities."<sup>2</sup> This lasted until 1924 and won the confidence of the foreign born."

1. Letter from Miss A. Mabel Perkins, Supervisor of Evening Schools, Pawtucket, R.I. - Jan 29, 1927
2. Pawtucket Magazine - Official Publication of Chamber of Commerce 41924 Vol. 1 No. 9

Miss A. Mabel Perkins was and is the Supervisor of Americanization in this city. There are seventeen nationalities in the Evening Schools varying in age from 16 to 60.

"At the Lorraine Mfg. Company, however, a little six weeks experiment was tried beginning the middle of April 1919. This experiment was limited to that time because the gardening season would be at hand. The firm bore all expense but the hour from 5 to 6 was not a good one. There were ten men and seven women registered and they did very good work but were all anxious to get home after work. They lived at a distance and a special car was operated for the benefit of the help. Students found it quite difficult to see other employees going home in the late spring afternoons and at supper time."

Yet the purpose of the experiment - "to make the non-English speaking operative of greater use to himself and to help him find his place in the ranks of the best producers in the country" - was a noble one. The Lorraine plant was the first in Pawtucket to establish a civic hall on mill property, for the purpose of encouraging Americanization.

1. Letter from Miss A. Mabel Perkins, Supervisor of Evening Schools, Pawtucket, R.I. - Jan. 29, 1927
2. Clipping - Providence Journal - April 27, 1919

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This was brought about through the efforts of James R. Mac Coll in response to a suggestion by Rve. James D. Dingwell. He foresaw the advantage of such a meeting place for 1500 employees, fifty percent of whom did not speak any English.

#### Pawtuxet Valley Classes

The Pawtuxet Valley, "comprising twenty one villages, each with no existence politically though representing twelve different nationalities in a total population of 30,000," is nine miles from the city of Providence.<sup>2</sup>

Miss Marie Slack was the Americanization Director for this district. "Five-eighths of the population is foreign, non-English speaking. The other three-eighths speak only broken English. With French Canadians in every village of the valley; with Italians predominating in Natick; Poles in Crompton and Quidneck; Swedes in Pontiac and Crompton; and a scattering of English and Chinese through out, " the rate of illiteracy is high.<sup>3</sup>

"Under the direction of Mrs. Althea Jenckes, Supervisor of Barrington Night Schools, courses of twelve lessons each were given in the Pawtuxet valley twice a week for two hour periods. 18 pupils graduated from these classes in 1924, 19 entered the first course in Providence and 15 re-enrolled for a second course."<sup>4</sup>

1. Clipping - Providence Journal - April 27, 1919
2. The Survey (Magazine) Jan. 1, 1922 - p-441
3. Clipping - Providence Journal - Feb. 1, 1924
4. The Christian Monitor Magazine - April 15, 1924

CHAPTER X

AMERICANIZATION WORK UNDER PRIVATE AUSPICES

Despite all, that the state of Rhode Island has done as a whole for the Americanization of the foreign born by its Americanization classes, and all that factories had done by factory classes, numerous private organizations attempted to go beyond the limit that any state or factory could possibly hope to attain. Foremost in this movement have been the following:

1. The Providence Shapter of the Red Cross
2. Social Service Workers in Barrington
3. Social Service Workers in Central Falls and Pawtucket
4. Y.M.C.A. workers in Woonsocket
5. Rhode Island State Americanization Committee
6. Immigrant Educational Bureau
7. Providence Legal Aid Society
8. The Federal Hill House Association
9. St. Ann's Roman Catholic Parish Work
10. St. Vincent de Paul Society Work
11. The International Institute of Providence

In an attempt to evaluate the work done by these groups the work of the Red Cross stands out predominantly. The state pier at Providence is at Fox Point. As early as 1912 the Y.M.C.A. representatives used to meet the incoming boats and send the people to their proper destinations. The Red Cross and the Traveller's Aid Societies later did similar service. The Red Cross began its work in May 1920, with the appointment of Mrs. William W: Weeden as Head Worker among the immigrants at the port of Providence.

1. Clipping - Providence Journal - March 1922
2. The Netopian (Magazine) Nov. 1923 Vol. 4 No. 8 99 5-11

Miss Alice Bradley, Chairman of the Committee, was another Red Cross worker, who aided greatly in this important work.

"Since 1920 there had also been at the pier, a representative of the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company so that foreigners upon landing may immediately get their money changed into our coin.<sup>1</sup>"

Another project entirely due to the Red Cross is that of accompanying all incoming brides to the City Hall for marriage licenses. In all of these cases the five-day clause is waived. A nurse is also maintained at the pier for medical assistance. Since 1922 a cafeteria, information desk, nursing and motor service have been available to the new arrivals. "The Red Cross ambulance even transports women and children to the railroad station. Sometimes, when it is deemed necessary, they are left at the International Institute, on Weybosset Street, until a relative can be communicated with. Both "the International Institute and the Traveller's Aid (two departments of the Y.M.C.A.) have been of the greatest help to the Red Cross in carrying out its friendly work."<sup>2</sup>

1. The Netopian (Magazine) Nov. 1923 Vol. 4 No. 8 pp 5-11
2. Ibid - p-5-11

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In fact, "the Providence Chapter of the Red Cross is the only one in the United States that carries on this type of welfare work."<sup>1</sup> "Its representatives are among the first to arrive at the pier and always the last to leave, last at the last moment some service should be needed. "Since May 1921 every ship has been met regardless of the weather conditions." This welfare work, they believe, is the first step in the Americanization of the foreigners."<sup>2</sup>

(2) "In 1919 Mrs. William H. Horrman conceived the idea of a kindergarten for Barrington. She called together the Superintendent of Schools, the head of the Town Council, clergymen, and other influential citizens. Soon after, the old Norton homestead on Maply Avenue was rented as the town's first kindergarten. Later it became a community house and recreation center with Miss Louise Brooks of Providence, the teacher;" Foreign children were immediately benefited. "With the assistance of Mrs. Charles Jencks of Barrington, an expert on Americanization," the mothers soon began to come monthly and finally weekly. Then the older girls began to attend. From nine o'clock in the morning until ten at night, there is someone in attendance."<sup>3</sup>

1. The Netopian (Magazine) Nov. 1923 Vol. 4 No. 8 pp 5-11
2. Foreign Born (Magazine) Aug.-Sept. 1921 - article by Sara P. Weeden.
3. Clipping - Providence Journal Oct. 16, 1921.



3. "At an Executive Meeting of the Pawtucket Chamber of Commerce in June 1926, it was agreed to have a community program of Americanization including group teaching for men, home teaching for women, and factory classes. Howard A. Kelley was named President of the Reorganized American Bureau of the Pawtucket Chamber of Commerce, Robert Chase, Mr. Kelly, and Prof. Harold S. Bucklin of Brown University, a committee to plan the details. Another project was the establishing of a Naturalization Information Desk, in the Chamber of Commerce where immigrants may obtain advice on naturalization and immigration matters. A fund of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) was available - fifty different contacts to be established with individuals in homes, small groups in clubs and neighborhood houses and larger groups in factories."

Groups were to be taught by local club women, trained for the work by an expert from Brown. Seniors majoring in Social Science were to be assigned as teachers through Prof. Bucklin.

1. Clipping - Providence Journal June 11, 1926
2. Ibid - June 11, 1926

"Those who are preparing for life work as social workers were to be selected. They would study the theory at the college. They were to try to get pupils into the public schools as soon as they had learned enough English. Fifty men and women chosen from patriotic societies were to be selected for Advisory Bureau."<sup>1</sup>

"By November, five men and thirty two women of foreign birth were enrolled in Americanization classes in Pawtucket and Central Falls. One group of fifteen students was ready for instruction in the Evening Public Schools. The Report from Mrs. Althea M. Jencks who was giving part of her time to the work in the twin-cities showed that thirty seven were attending class twice daily.<sup>2</sup> The committee aimed to get two hundred.

"Nine women and four male teachers, students at Brown working for credit, were handling classes, formed-classes, which meet regularly in the homes of members. There are now three Syrian groups, two in Central Falls and one in Pawtucket, one Polish group and seven Armenian groups, mostly in Pleasant View Section, Pawtucket. Soon French-Canadian and Italian and Portuguese groups will be organized."<sup>3</sup>

1. Clipping - Providence Journal - June 11, 1926
2. Ibid - Nov. 1926
3. Ibid - Nov. 1926

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"Mrs Jenckes is at the Chamber of Commerce Building every Wednesday afternoon from 4:30 to 5 o'clock to interview prospective students; those interested in assisting the groups, and those who wish to suggest names of students. Fifteen students now ready for public school training are to be turned over to Miss A. Mabel Perkins.

"The Women's progress is especially noteworthy. At the end of twenty weeks they are ready to shop in stores and make requests in English. There are forty student teachers now training for class room work. The "fine spirit" is due to Rev. James D. Dingwell who was<sup>1</sup> instrumental in organizing the movement."

In Pawtucket also, classes are held by the Samuel Slater Parent-Teacher Association from 2:30 to 3:45 o'clock for mothers, three times a week.

(4) Y.M.C.A. work in Woonsocket.<sup>2</sup>

In Woonsocket the citizenship work at the Y.M.C.A. was under the direction of Mr. James MacIlwain, the Industrial Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. The purpose of the instruction was to train aliens for citizenship.

1. Clipping - Providence Journal Nov. 1926
2. Ibid - Pawtucket Times 1921

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"In 1917 two thousand (2,000) men took out their first papers and by 1921, six hundred (600) had taken out their second papers. Throughout Rhode Island there were thirty five such citizenship training classes and two thousand three hundred sixty seven (2,367) persons enrolled. In Providence the enrollment was one thousand and thirteen, (1,013), in Woonsocket six hundred ninety five, (695), and in Cranston five hundred and fifteen (515).

From 1918-1922 there was a total enrollment of one thousand one hundred fourteen (1,114) men in Woonsocket.<sup>1</sup>

(5) Rhode Island State Americanization Committee.<sup>2</sup>

"The Rhode Island State Americanization committee was appointed by Governor Beeckman to assist in the Americanization work of the state. It was appointed in August 1919. The following served on the committee: Prof. Harold S. Bucklin Chairman; Mrs. Caesar Misch, Mrs. Francis W. Wetmore, Mrs. Henry A. Whitmarsh and Mrs. Ernest Williams. They were to supplement the existing Americanization efforts being made in the state - not to duplicate them.

"They issued News Bulletins, to show the work of this and other committees; Americanization work in other states;

1. Clipping - Pawtucket Times - 1921
2. Rhode Island State Americanization Committee Bulletin - Aug. 25, 1919.

information or questions on citizenship, naturalization, etc; and reference to worthwhile articles in newspapers, periodicals and books.

They offered an Information Service. The following six items show the scope of this work:

1. They offered a center for aid and advise both for foreign-born and others interested in Americanization.
2. They prepared and published articles for the foreign language press.
3. They collected statistics regarding Rhode Island Americanization - how and where the foreigner lived and worked and how he could be approached.
4. They had a directory of social work agencies; leaders of foreign born groups; and citizens interested in Americanization
5. They had a circulating and reference library of reports, programs and literature published by American agencies in different parts of the United States.
6. They collected information regarding Americanization work done by the public schools, manufacturing plants and social-work agencies of the state during the past year.

1. Rhode Island State Americanization Committee Bulletin - August 25, 1919.

"This committee, as a whole, sought the cooperation of municipal authorities, manufacturers, labor unions, women's clubs, fraternal orders, social-work agencies, churches, libraries, leaders of foreign-born groups and others. Their office was open daily from 9 o'clock to 12:30 and from 2 o'clock to 5 o'clock, except Sunday. It was also opened Tuesday and Friday evenings from 7 o'clock to 9 o'clock."

At the end of Governor Beeckman's administration, this committee went out of existence.

(6) Immigration Education Bureau.<sup>2</sup>

The Immigrant Education Bureau is conducted by the Union for Christian Work, Office Room 501 A, 55 Eddy Street, Providence, Rhode Island. "Its purpose is to prepare the immigrant for citizenship and right living." The principal work is done in English and Civics. "It seeks to bring before the immigrant the opportunities necessary for the development of good citizenship." It organizes the immigrant work in the community. Its worker meets the immigrant on arrival, gives them the needed assistance and information, distributes literature calling their attention to the city's educational opportunities and to the school laws regarding children.

1. Rhode Island State Americanization Committee Bulletin - August 25, 1919.
2. First Report of the Union for Christian Work (Magazine) January 1912.

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It has established a deposit station at the Providence Public Library at Livingstone Street. Here it arranges for lectures in foreign languages and in English on topics appealing to immigrants. Special lectures are for mothers and immigrant teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The Union for Christian Work has been in existence over sixty years. In 1911 it established this Immigrant Education Bureau with Morris J. Wessel as the Executive Secretary. Miss Bessie Bloom, later Mrs. Morris J. Wessel was the Headworker for the bureau.<sup>2</sup>

A unique service performed is the meeting of incoming steamers by workers who have with them Italian and Portuguese assistants. Circulars printed in foreign languages are then distributed telling about the bureau's desire to help, the laws for children, and the common evening schools. The names of all children arrivals are recorded so that they later may be traced for school entrance. Often the wrong addresses are given and it is impossible for the truant officer to locate them. Of one hundred and twenty cases in 1913, forty nine were located and sent to school. In 1912, sixty five lectures were given, thirty five to immigrant audiences and the other thirty to American.<sup>3</sup>

A summary of the work done by this organization in 1913 indicates that they dealt with nine different nationalities, one hundred immigrants in class work, four thousand in lectures, and thousands at the wharf.<sup>1</sup>

The report for the year 1914 shows that they maintained an Information Desk and Lunch Counter at the wharf. They carried on Extension Classes after the regular city evening classes were closed. Three classes were held in public school buildings three nights weekly for a ten week period. The Doyal Avenue, Point Street, and Old Branch Avenue Schools were the buildings used. Even libraries were maintained at each. Classes in cooking, embroidery, babies' care were held once a week. A Glee Club and Athletic Club were also in existence.<sup>2</sup>

(7) Providence Legal Aid Society.<sup>3</sup>

The Providence Legal Aid Society was incorporated Jan. 31, 1921, although it had started legal aid work in May 1920. Its purpose was to insure rights before the law to every person in the state of Rhode Island who had not the ability to pay for legal assistance. It was incorporated by leading lawyers of the state and supported by contributions.

1. First Report of The Union for Christian Work (Magazine) Jan. 1913.
2. Report of The Union for Christian Work for the year ending 1914 (Magazine)
3. Clipping - Providence Journal Feb. 8, 1922.



from legal and business communities. It was the forty fourth of its kind in the United States. The Society's foundation was due to Mr. Richard B. Comstock, President of the Rhode Island Bar Association who believed in giving assistance where it was needed. Thus its purpose was to cooperate, not to compete, with lawyers by relieving them of charity cases. A nominal fee was to be charged to preserve the self-respect of the client.

In one year's time, the thirty members of the society had handled two hundred and sixty six cases, most of them without pay. It was reckoned that it cost \$3000.00 a year to function properly. By 1922, the staff had been increased to forty members - some of them women." There was <sup>1</sup> three types of contributors viz:

- (1) those who paid \$100.00 or more a year.
- (2) those who paid \$25.00 to \$100.00 a year.
- (3) those who paid \$5.00 to \$25.00 a year.

Likewise there were three types of clients: (1) the <sup>2</sup> inefficient, (2) the beggar, and (3) the worthy person.

In 1926, after five years of existnece, the society <sup>3</sup> believed it had proved its worth."

- 1. Clipping - Providence Journal Feb. 13, 1922
- 2. Clipping - Providence Journal Feb. 1924
- 3. Clipping - Providence Journal Feb. 21, 1926

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"Sixteen hundred and fifty-eight cases had been successfully concluded, thousands of dollars had been saved, the future for hundreds of children had been assured, families had been united, the oppressed protected and the wrong championed.<sup>1</sup>

Today the society is the legal advisor to the Family Welfare Society, the Social Service Department of Rhode Island Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital, and to the State Hospital for Mental Diseases. Clients coming from welfare organizations can pay ten cents others twenty-five cents. The Society also does advisory service and case work."

(8) Classes at Federal Hill House.<sup>2</sup>

"Ward Nine of the city of Providence - the Federal Hill Section - is the most congested of the entire city. There, there are three generations of Americans, one by naturalization and two by birth." In 1922, Dr. John Elliott, of Hudson Guild, New York speaking under the auspices of the Sprague House Association at Brown University voiced the need of looking ahead to the future and making adequate provisions for these large groups of Italians.<sup>3</sup>

"By 1915 plans were under way to raise \$25,000.00 for a new building to take the place of the old Sprague Settlement House.<sup>4</sup>"

1. Clipping - Providence Journal Feb. 21, 1926
2. Ibid - January 1925
3. Ibid - Nov. 9, 1912
4. Ibid - Dec. 5, 1915

"The Federal Hill House Association was incorporated in February 1914. From a nucleus of sixty families, the work grew until fifteen hundred babies were registered in the clinic in the course of two years. It had the cooperation of many individuals and organizations - as District Nurses, Housewives Leagues, the voluntary services of physicians, the Baby Welfare Committee, the head of the Providence Boys' Club and Music Settlement Workers.

"In 1918, during the sugar shortage, three tons of sugar were given away - twenty one hundred babies weighed, and when the schools were closed because of the coal shortage, grades five, six and seven and even the kindergarten met there.<sup>1</sup>"

By 1920,<sup>2</sup> an English department for Italian women had been established with Mrs. William E. Brigham, Director. With the slogan - to keep up with son and husband - classes were held weekly. The total attendance for the year including all departments was forty seven thousand and sixty three (47,063).

1. Clipping - Providence Journal January 1925
2. Ibid - May 23, 1920

1

In 1922 there were three divisions of work at the house-health, recreation, and education. The purpose of the house then became "to preserve the best that Italy send to our shores and to give this distinctive coloring and life to the city of Providence."<sup>2</sup>

In 1924 Henry F. Burt, General Secretary of the Providence Society for Organizing Charities said the Federal Hill house was "the most American of all our privately controlled organizations." By self expression and self development, it interpreted America.

By 1925, seven thousand children between the toddling and working ages were attendants. Children of pre-kindergarten age are taken and taught social relations and English through the medium of nursery games and simple arts. Medium-sized children are taught toy-making and handicrafts. Young men hold formal club meetings, athletic conferences, debates, drama league sessions and they also study city problems here. Clinics are held; two interpreters are in attendance; and the District Nursing Association cooperates in follow-up cases.<sup>3</sup>

1. Clipping by Rachel Whitcomb - Providence Journal May 24, 1922
2. Ibid - Providence Journal June 25, 1922
3. Ibid - Providence Journal May 17, 1925

(9) St. Ann Parish Work.

At St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church in 1915, afternoon and evening classes were held. The association was non-sectarian. Classes were open to all, the younger girls being expected to attend the afternoon sessions and the adults the evening sessions. These classes included instruction in embroidery, sewing and cooking, as well as instruction in both English and Italian.

(10) St. Vincent de Paul Society Work.

Before the war when trans Atlantic steamers were arriving regularly from European ports, the St. Vincent de Paul Society maintained interpreters at the docks in Providence. They were there to assist newcomers in getting to their final destinations.

(11) The International Institute of Providence.

This Institute, a branch of the Y.W.C.A. was formed about six or seven years ago. Its purpose is "To protect, befriend, and teach foreign-born women and girls." It maintains a service bureau on 141 Weybosset Street, Providence. The outstanding advantage of the Institute is that it has a staff of workers who speak the various foreign languages, in most instances having been at one time residents of those foreign countries.

1. Shippee, L.B. - Some Aspects of Population of Providence p-235
2. Ibid - p-235
3. Saunders, Miss Gertrude, Exec. Sec. International Institute, Y.W.C.A. Providence - personal interview.

"Today the staff consists of workers speaking Armenian, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish, languages. Reliable volunteers are used for the other  
1  
languages.

The following is a list of the activities the  
2  
International Institute does:

Cooperate with all Social Agencies.

Provide Interpreters wherever called for.

Maintain an Information Bureau.

Visit in Foreign Homes.

Organize Home Clubs and Classes.

Teach English.

Co-operate with American Foreign Clubs.

Co-operate with the American Red Cross in their Immigration Service by caring for arriving immigrant women and girls who have to stay in the City over night.

Secure service for relatives in other countries through the co-operation of the International Migration Service.

No charge is made for any service."

1. Saunders, Miss Gertrude, Exec. Sec. International Institute Y.W.C.A., Providence - personal interview.
2. Booklet of International Institute of Providence.

"During the year 1925 five hundred ninety one contacts were made. The figure of persons met during the year is not available. This figure (591) shows only persons met who were not known prior to 1925. A list of the agencies with which the Institute cooperates follows:

PROVIDENCE

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| District Nurses                               | 6th District Court           |
| Superior Court                                | Y.M.C.A.                     |
| Well Babies Clinic                            | Confidential Exchange        |
| American Red Cross                            | City Health Dept.            |
| Dexter Street School                          | Truant Office                |
| Candace " "                                   | Lying-in-Hospital            |
| Quaid " "                                     | Overseer of the Poor         |
| State " "                                     | Legal Aid Society            |
| Doyle Avenue "                                | Tuberculosis League          |
| Central Police Station                        | North End Dispensary         |
| Juvenial Court                                | Family Welfare Society       |
| Municipal "                                   | Tax Dept. City Hall          |
| Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children |                              |
| Committee for Better Moving Pictures          | Rescue Home and Mission      |
| Homeopathic Hospital                          | Public Library               |
| Board of Education                            | Free Employment Bureau       |
| Mayors Office                                 | Near East Relief             |
| Council of Jewish Women                       | St. Mary's Orphanage         |
| St. Vincent de Paul Asylum                    | Grace Church, Social Service |
| Toby Street Home                              | Floating Hospital            |
| St. John's Church                             | City Hospital                |
| R.I. Hospital                                 | League of Women Voters       |
| Traveler's Aid Society                        | Olneyville Boys Club         |
| Brown Union                                   |                              |
| Daughters of American Revolution              |                              |

RHODE ISLAND

I. Report for year 1925 of The International Institute, Providence.

1

"RHODE ISLAND

School for Deaf & Dumb	R.I. Federation of Womens Clubs
State Public Welfare Dept.	Exeter School
Sockannosset School	Butler Hospital
State Hospital, Howard	Lakeside Home
Oaklawn School	Mother's Pension Office
Newport Naval Hospital	Wallum Lake
Red Cross, Woonsocket	District Nurses, Esmond
Red Cross, Pawtucket	

1

FEDERAL

Commissioner Gen. of Immigration, Washington  
 Bureau of Passport Control, Washington  
 War Veterans Bureau  
 State Pier  
 Dept. of State  
 Clerk of U.S. Federal Court  
 U.S. Customs Office  
 Naturalization Office  
 Inspector of Immigration  
 Congressman from Rhode Island

1

FOREIGN

Armenian Benevolent Union	Russian Mutual Aid Society
Armenian Apostolic Church	Russian National Book Store, N.Y.
Armenian Protestant Church	Near East Relief, Beirut, Syria
Armenian Womens Charitable Society	Near East Relief, Aleppo, Syria
Daughters of Armenia	Roberts College, Constantinople
Armenian newspapers (2)	Portuguese Consul
Portuguese newspapers (2)	Italian Consul
Russian newspapers (2)	Roumanian Consul
Russian Church, Manville	Civic Registry, Cape Verde Island
Russian Baptist Church	Union of Soviet Socialistis Republic, Canada

1. Ibid - 1925 Report of the International Institute



"Y.W.C.A.'s <sup>1</sup>

Providence  
Providence Lunch Box  
National Board, N.Y.  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Woonsocket  
Washington  
Pawtucket

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTES

Los Angeles, California  
New York City  
Boston, Mass.  
Detroit, Michigan

Bridgeport, Conn.  
Flint, Michigan  
Lowell, Mass.  
Pittsburg, Pa.

OTHERS

International Migration Service  
City Clerk, Hartford  
Sisters of Mercy, Boston  
District Court, Boston  
Council of Jewish Women, New York  
Department of Health, New York  
Department of Americanization, Massachusetts  
Dispensary for Women and Children, New York  
City Health Department, New York.

This society also does the following:

1. Follow-up work in foreign homes for the Tuberculosis League securing permission for pyhsical examinations and treatment in mal-nutrition classes.
2. Cooperation with the Americanization Committee of the Federation of Womens Clubs, in securing home teachers for foreign women.
3. Cooperation with the Red Cross and Traveler's Aid for work at the pier.

1. Ibid - 1925 Report of the International Institute.

- "4. Assistance in securing international music for the International Music Night of Music week, arranged by the Federation of Womens Musical Clubs.
- 5. Securing tutors for foreign people, using Brown University students.
- 6. Growth of work among Armenians, to such an extent that an assistant has had to be secured for translating and teaching Armenian women.
- 7. Enlargement of work at the North End, using rooms for English classes, sewing classes for women, and sewing classes for girls.
- 8. Furnishing of a room at 141 Weybosset Street for many foreign gatherings such as: - Armenian Benevolent Society - foreign church trustees meetings - lecture for Russian people - Committee groups on Americanization work." 1

1. Ibid - 1925 Report of the International Institute.

CHAPTER XI  
STATE REIMBURSEMENTS

Rhode Island annually appropriates about twenty thousand dollars(\$20,000.00) for evening schools. This is a regular state appropriation. In addition to this appropriation the school departments of the various cities and towns are reimbursed for all Americanization classes on the basis of fifty cents on the enrollment. This means that for every individual enrolled in a public Americanization class, that city or town through its school department will receive fifty cents annually for this individual's education.<sup>1</sup>

Then, at the end of the year when the aggregate attendance of the Americanization classes is compiled and forwarded to the Department of Education at the State House, the particular city or town will receive an additional six cents per aggregate-pupil-attendance. By means of these remunerations, cities and towns are able to carry on their work under better financial conditions.<sup>2</sup>

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Ibid - personal interview.

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CHAPTER XII

ENROLLMENT IN AMERICANIZATION CLASSES

The state of Rhode Island is divided into five counties - Bristol, Newport, Providence, Washington, and Kent. According to the 1926 census returns, the population of the state is 679,260. Of this number 335,959 are males and 343,301 are females. The total white population is 667,786; the negro population is 10,883 and 591 are listed as belonging to other races. Of this entire number, there are only 181,072 native born, 90,860 being male and 90,212 female. Then there are 96,966 naturalized citizens, 51,777 male and 45,189 female. Nine thousand eight hundred and nine have applied for citizenship papers. This still leaves a remainder of 71,509 people that are classified as aliens. In this group 30,619 are male and 40,890 are females. Then there is a final group composed of 304<sup>1</sup> males and 724 females that are listed as unknown.

Most striking of all these facts, is the fact that there are no many known aliens in the state,

71,509

1. Statistics from Bureau of Labor - State House, Providence for year ending 1925.

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The following statistics show how this number is distributed among the countries of the state:

	<u>Foreign Born</u>	<u>Naturalized</u>	<u>Papers</u>	<u>Aliens</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
<u>Providence County</u>	149,889	79,648	9,809	59,988	441
<u>WASHINGTON County</u>	4,552	2,674	297	1,564	17
<u>Kent County</u>	10,956	6,352	696	3,670	238
<u>Newport County</u>	7,894	5,190	265	2,293	146
<u>Bristol County</u>	7,781	3,102	502	3,994	183
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>181,072</u>	<u>98,966</u>	<u>11,569</u>	<u>71,509</u>	<u>1,025</u>

Rearranging this table to interpret the number of foreign-born, naturalized, first paper, alien, and unknown residents of the various towns and cities, we have the following statistics in their logical order:

	<u>Foreign Born</u>	<u>Naturalized</u>	<u>Papers</u>	<u>Aliens</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
Providence .	70,694	39,251	4,908	26,464	71
Pawtucket	21,724	12,312	1,466	7,818	128
Woonsocket	17,872	7,144	1,021	9,675	32
Central Falls	9,295	4,133	615	4,530	7
Cranston	7,927	4,670	521	2,601	135
East Providence	5,445	2,451	332	2,629	33
Newport	5,136	3,931	188	884	133

1. Statistics from Bureau of Labor - State House, Providence for year ending 1925.

	<u>Foreign Born</u>	<u>Naturalized</u>	<u>Papers</u>	<u>Aliens</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
West Warwick	5,266	2,656	373	2,129	108
Bristol	4,431	1,544	228	2,626	33
Warwick	3,741	2,512	204	967	58
Lincoln	3,625	2,003	152	1,470	
North Providence	3,089	2,073	165	850	1
Cumberland	3,020	1,520	128	1,371	1
Westerly	2,750	1,653	206	891	
Johnston	2,501	1,475	209	816	1
Warren	2,210	931	177	1,021	81
Burrillville	2,161	1,400	122	628	1
Coventry	1,182	663	96	375	48
Barrington	1,140	627	97	347	69
Smithfield	1,077	504	71	502	
Tiverton	974	484	17	473	
North Smithfield	832	408	62	355	7
East Greenwich	712	494	19	175	24
Portsmouth	659	250	20	389	
South Kingstown	594	387	36	155	16
Middletown	560	232	29	290	9
Scituate	355	147	17	186	5
North Kingstown	312	243	5	63	1

Ibid - Statistics from Bureau of Labor, State House, Providence  
for year ending 1925.

	<u>Foreign Born</u>	<u>Naturalized</u>	<u>Papers</u>	<u>Aliens</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
Richmond	303	140	11	152	
Jamestown	273	164	1	108	
Hopkington	249	133	13	103	
Little Compton	231	91	10	126	4
Narragansett	171	63	11	97	
Gloucester	155	97	16	30	12
Foster	117	60	4	53	
Charlestown	97	36	8	53	
Exeter	76	19	7	50	
New Shoreham	61	38		23	
West Greenwich	55	27	4	24	

Although these are the census returns for the past year, the number of residents amenable to the act is not exactly known.<sup>1</sup> In the 1925 report of the Director of Americanization, it is stated that two thousand six hundred eighty five (2,685) attended evening classes during the past year 1924-1925. Of that number "one thousand nine hundred and thirteen (1,913) were not subject to the compulsory provision of the act."<sup>2</sup>

1. Statistics from Bureau of Labor, State House, Providence, for year ending 1925.
2. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Report of Rhode Island Director of Americanization 1924-1925.

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This indicates that only seven hundred seventy three (773) who attended the classes were subject to the provisions of the Americanization Act.

Since the Act was passed in 1919 an average yearly enrollment of two thousand seven hundred fifty (2,750) persons have been maintained in the public Americanization classes throughout the state. Of that number approximately eight hundred fifty (850) have been amenable to the provisions of the act; that is, they are sixteen years of age and less than twenty-one and unable to satisfy the State's standards for reading, writing and speaking the English language.<sup>1</sup>

During the year 1924-1925 six cities and ten<sup>2</sup> towns maintained Americanization classes, in the state. Last year one more was added to the list making a total of seventeen, viz, Barrington, Bristol, Central Falls, Cranston, Cumberland, East Providence, Lincoln, Newport, Pawtucket, Coventry, Providence, Warwick, Westerly, West Warwick, Woonsocket, Burrillville, and Warren.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Ibid - personal interview



"There were one hundred three (103) schoolrooms, one hundred twenty three (123) teachers, ninety-nine of whom were trained Americanization teachers. The aggregate attendance for the year was 163,142 hours. The total enrollment for the state included one thousand two hundred eighty one (1,281) beginners, nine hundred nineteen (919) of whom were literate and three hundred sixty two (362) of whom were illiterate; the remaining one thousand four hundred four (1,404) included seven hundred thirty (730) intermediates and six hundred seventy four (674) advanced students. Altogether there were thirty six nationalities represented, comprising one thousand eight hundred twelve (1,812) males and eight hundred seventh three <sup>1</sup> (873) females."

"The total enrollment for the state, subdivided <sup>2</sup> according to nationality is as follows:

French	742
Italian	497
Portuguese	354
Polish	177
American	122

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - Report of Rhode Island, Director of Americanization 1924-1925.
2. Ibid 1924-1925

"German	113
Hebrew	109
Armenian	106
Swedish	99
Cape Verde Islanders	72
Russian	46
French	33
Syrian	33
Ukrania	25
Greek	22
Irish	17
Roumanian	16
English	13
Dane	9
Lithuanian	9
Spanish	9
Belgian	8
Chinese	7
Swiss	7
Austrian	6
Slovak	6
Albanian	5

"Norwegian	5
Assyrian	4
Canadian	3
Bulgarian	3
Dutch	2
Negro	2
Brazilian	1
Finn	1
Hungarian	1
Turk	1 "

Ibid

CHAPTER XIII  
RECENT LEGISLATION

A recent amendment to the 1919 Act to Promote Americanization has to do with cases of absenteeism on the part of those who legally should attend an Americanization class. It provides that truant officers in the various towns and cities proceed as in cases of day-school absenteeism, and ascertain the cause of the individual's absence. Under no consideration is the truant officer to be liable for costs of court. As a result of this addenda prosecutions have been made in West Warwick, Bristol and Newport.

"The latter part of last year 1926 the Americanization Committee of the State Federation of Women's Clubs met to discuss plans for active work. A bill for Home Teachers for foreign women, which had been presented two or three times came up for discussion and the question was raised whether we should again present the bill or ask the various womens' organizations of the State to finance a practical demonstration of the need for teaching English to the foreign women in their homes. It was voted to do the later and letters were sent to most of the women's organizations, to send representatiges to a meeting for a discussion of the project.

1. Bacon, Mrs. Agnes - personal interview.
2. Palmer, Mrs. A. deForest, - Director of the Americanization Committee of the State Federation of Women's Clubs - letter February 1927.

"The representatives reported back to their organizations the object and scope of the proposed plan. As a result fourteen organizations promised to support this work.

- Chapters, D.A.R.
- Daughters of 1812.
- R.I. State Federation of Women's Clubs.
- Colonial Daughters of the 17th Century.
- R.I. Council of Women.
- R.I. Federation of Women's Church Societies.
- International Institute.
- Society of Colonial Dames.
- R.I. Congress of Parents and Teachers.
- W.C.T.U.
- Providence Section, Council of Jewish Women.
- American Legion Auxiliary.
- Women's Republican Club.
- Women's Relief Corps.

"Every club contributing was entitled to a representative on the governing board, called "The Joint Citizenship Training Committee."

"A bridge was given to add to the sum collected from the clubs, and there were a few contributions from individuals. The State Commissioner of Education approved the plan and expressed the belief that such a practical demonstration, if successful, would do much toward obtaining state aid for the work in the future.

Ibid - Palmer, Mrs. A. deForest - letter February 1927

"Mrs. Althea M. Jencks of West Barrington and Mrs. Chester M. Boynton of Pawtucket were appointed teachers. The teaching was done between one and four o'clock in the afternoon. While the teachers were paid for three hours work, they often worked five hours, because of their devotion to the cause.

"Little time was spent in recruiting classes. The Family Welfare, the District Nursing Association, the International Institute of the Y.W.C.A., Church Societies, Red Cross, and others sent names of foreign women who desired to learn English. Most of the classes, were formed in foreign neighborhoods, held in kitchens, four classes were taught in Community Centers.

"Seventy two women, representing about two hundred children, and eleven different nationalities were taught twice a week. The character of the teaching was governed by the present need of the pupil.

"Many of the clubs asked for speakers to tell them about the work, the teachers were sent and a substitute put in charge of their work, for that hour. This part of the work was highly educational and it was most important that the American women realized the need of these foreigners and they were brought into closer understanding.

"A bill seeking state aid was presented, but failed to pass the House, although the State Board of Education expressed the opinion that an excellent piece of work had been accomplished. This year the same work is carried on in the same way, except Miss Doris Brown took the place of Mrs. Boynton who was not able to go on with the work on account of illness.

"Ten students were trained last year by Mrs. Jenckes at the Women's College of Brown University, every one giving at least an hour a week to teaching some foreign women, English in her home. This course had the approval of Professor Harold S. Bucklin of the Social Service Department and of other professors.

SUMMARY

Nearly sixty years ago, the state of Rhode Island opened its first evening school. The increasing growth of illiteracy among both native and foreign-born, necessitated this movement. A marked gain in the efficiency of these evening classes followed the passage of the Teachers' Certificate Law in 1898. The law required teachers to be properly trained and certificated before attempting to instruct pupils. Since 1903 strict enforcement of the law has been simplified by the authority given the Commissioner of Public Schools "to withhold an amount equal to the wages paid by any town, to a teacher without a state certificate."

By 1915, the number of foreign-born in Rhode Island had reached the high total of 187,376 or almost one third of the entire population. Something had to be done to Americanize the large number of foreigners who were unable to read, write, and speak the English language. The World War, was in progress and so it was not until 1919 that the General Assembly of the State responded and passed the "Act to Promote Americanization."

The most exacting requirement of this law was that persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one who could not meet the standards established by the State Board of



Education should attend a day or evening school, two hundred hours during every year. Thus the great impetus for English instruction in school, factory and under private auspices, was given.

Evening schools throughout the state immediately introduced Americanization instruction, or added more advanced courses to their curriculum. Industrial plants, conducting classes during the working day, and at noon hours, and even after working hours, did a very creditable piece of work.

The most extensive work was done at the following factories:

1. The National India Rubber Co. at Bristol
2. The Alice Mill at Woonsocket
3. The Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Co. at Providence
4. The Grinnel Mfg. Co. at Providence
5. The General Electric Co. at Providence
6. The American Silk Spinning Co. at Providence
7. Valley Mill of the American Woolen Co. at Providence
8. The United States Finishing Co. at Providence
9. The Providence Plant of The Crompton & Knowles Loom Works
10. R.I. Glass Division of the General Electric Co. at Central Falls
11. The Lorraine Mfg. Co. at Pawtucket
12. Pawtucket Valley Classes

Private organizations, likewise carried on an elaborate system of Americanization work that the state may justly feel proud of. Foremost in this movement were the following:

1. The Providence Chapter of the Red Cross
2. Social Service Workers in Barrington
3. Social Service Workers in Central Falls & Pawtucket
4. Y.M.C.A. workers in Woonsocket
5. R.I. State Americanization Committee
6. The Immigrant Educational Bureau
7. The Providence Legal Aid Society
8. The Federal Hill House Association
9. St. Ann's Roman Catholic Parish Work
10. St. Vincent de Paul Society Work
11. The International Institute of Providence

Today, however, although factory classes have practically disappeared, and private organizations have somewhat curtailed their work, the average yearly enrollment in the evening Americanization classes of the state is two thousand seven hundred and fifty.

Whether or not this number is commensurate with the number actually needing the instruction, the fact remains that Rhode Island has done, and is continuing to do her part toward the Americanization of the alien who comes to her shore.

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- (7) December 5, 1920
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- (9) October 13, 1921
- (10) October 16, 1921
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- (13) March 19, 1922
- (14) March - 1922
- (15) May 24, 1922
- (16) June 25, 1922
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- (18) Sept. 29, 1922
- (19) December 17, 1922
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