Governor Wanton Proclamation, 1772

On June 12, 1772, three days after the Gaspee attack, Governor Wanton issued a proclamation offering rewards for information leading to the attackers. This proclamation is how most Rhode Islanders would have learned about the event.

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A Proclamation

Whereas on Tuesday, the ninth Instant in the Night, a Number of People, unknown, boarded His Majesty's armed Schooner the Gaspee, as she lay aground on a Point of Land, called Nanquit, a little to the southward of Pawtuxet, in the Colony aforesaid, who dangerously wounded Lieutenant William Dudingston the Commander, and by Force took him with all his
People, put them into Boats, and landed them near Pawtuxet; and afterwards set Fire to the said Schooner, whereby she was entirely destroyed:

I HAVE, therefore, thought fit, by and with the Advice of such of His Majesty's Council, as could be seasonably convened, to issue this Proclamation, strictly charging and commanding all His Majesty's Officers within the said Colony, both Civil and Military, to exert themselves with the utmost Vigilance, to discover and apprehend the Persons guilty of the aforesaid atrocious Crime, that they may be brought to condign Punishment. And I do hereby offer a Reward
of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, Sterling Money of Great Britain, to any Person or Persons who shall discover the Perpetrators of the said Villainy, to be paid immediately upon the Conviction of any one or more of them.

AND the several Sheriffs in the said Colony are hereby required, forthwith, to cause this Proclamation to be posted up in the most public Places, in each of the Towns in their respective Counties.

Given under my Hand and Seal at Arms, at Newport, this Twelfth Day of June, in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of His Most Sacred Majesty, GEORGE THE THIRD, by the Grace of God, King of Great-Britain, and so forth, Anno; Dom. One Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy-two.

J. WANTON.

By his Honor's Command,
Henry Ward, Sec'ry.

GOD SAVE THE KING

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This primary source comes from the Rhode Island State Archives, C#0554 - Gaspee Papers 1772 – 1773.

This transcript is intended to capture the substance of the document.
For details of grammar, punctuation, spacing, and spelling, we recommend consulting the original document.

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