

Paul Cuffe

His Purpose, Partners and Properties

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Dedication

We dedicate this book to the memory of Geraldine Millham who devoted much of her life to preserving the history of the Town of Westport, who was always willing to provide a helping hand and spectacular images to embellish any of our projects or publications, and who, most of all, was a dear and wonderful friend.

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Preface

IOWE A GREAT debt to Lee Blake, Executive Director of the New Bedford Historical Society, for first drawing my attention to Paul Cuffe and to Carl Cruz, Cuffe descendant and New Bedford resident, for further stimulating my interest by feeding fascinating facts and bits of information about Paul Cuffe and his family to me over the years.

It all started with a symposium called “Paul Cuffe, the Man and His Legacy,” which Lee, Betty Slade, and colleagues organized in 2009. I had already read Lamont Thomas’s excellent biography of Paul Cuffe and was attracted especially to his descriptions of Cuffe’s involvement in Sierra Leone. I wanted to understand what it was that he was trying to achieve in Africa and how it actually worked out. So, I volunteered to write a paper on that subject for the symposium.

My interest in this particular aspect of Paul Cuffe’s life was linked to the fact that I had undertaken a somewhat similar endeavor in Africa at almost the same age and stage of my life. My project was in a remote part of Sudan, in East Africa, rather than Sierra Leone, which is in West Africa, and it was some 170 years after Paul Cuffe last visited the continent, meaning I could fly easily from Massachusetts to Africa in a few hours rather than battling Atlantic storms on a small brig for a few months. And, with the help of solar panels and a shortwave radio, I could quickly communicate between Africa and America. Yet, I found some conditions in Sudan to be in many ways still untouched by the modern world.

When I read about the tribal structures and territorial conflicts of Sierra Leone during Paul Cuffe’s time, they struck me as quite similar to those I had seen on my African trips. The challenges of trying to figure out which would be the most practicable and promising ways to improve the lives of the local people also seemed similar. I wanted to learn more about how Paul Cuffe had handled those challenges and whether he had been any more successful than my colleagues and I had been.¹ That exploration led to the paper “The Struggle for Respect.”

That initial engagement, which focused mainly on Cuffe’s later life, led to my desire to learn more about his earlier days, and there I found some conflicting stories coming from his several biographers. Some said that he and his family had struggled to survive by working on a farm on the nearby island of Cuttyhunk. Others said the family had cleared a previously unfarmed property in Dartmouth. There were similar conflicting claims about where Paul Cuffe and his family lived at the end of his life. The National Historic Landmark Register of Individual Properties claimed that Paul Cuffe’s farm was at one location on the bank of the East Branch of the Westport River, whereas the local Westport Historical Commission said that property had belonged to the Tripp family at that time, not to Paul Cuffe. The local commission did not, however, say where the Paul Cuffe farm or homestead actually was.

These conflicting stories about specific locations and who owned what when, and what they were doing at those locations, led to the realization that I needed to

search through local property records and land-use information to determine the truth, or at least get as close to the truth as possible. Betty Slade and I began our search through the local property records at the New Bedford Registry of Deeds. By great good fortune, we discovered Richard Gifford, a local resident and descendant of many of the old families in this area, who also proved to be an incredible genealogist and repository of information about who lived where and when in much of old Dartmouth and more recent Westport and Dartmouth. We teamed up with Richard and together produced a second major paper, entitled “New Revelations from Old Deeds” for the next symposium about Paul Cuffe, organized by Lee Blake and others, with the theme “Paul Cuffe: Following in His Footsteps,” held in Westport on September 17, 2017, the 200th anniversary of Paul Cuffe’s death.

The “Deeds” paper focused on the property holdings of Paul Cuffe; his father, Cuff Slocum; and his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, along with the prior owners of some of their properties. It definitively demonstrates, we believe, where the farms of all three of these people were located, at which times they owned them, how they were acquired, and how they were used. This detailed paper appears at the end of the collection because it is somewhat heavy reading, but it provides the foundation for many of the stories told in the earlier chapters in this book.

We hope it also will provide the basis for correcting the designation of the so-called “Paul Cuffe Farm” on the National Registry.

As Betty and I worked our way through our Paul Cuffe projects, we concluded that there was an under-appreciation of key individuals who had played extremely important roles in his life and of the contributions they had made toward his success. These included his father, his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, and his most important business partners, William Rotch Sr. and William Rotch Jr. Several of the chapters seek to fill that gap by drawing strands together into three main themes: papers about Paul Cuffe and his purpose and his partners (Chapters 1-4); papers about his progenitor, Cuff Slocum (chapters 5-7), and a final chapter dealing with the property holdings of Paul Cuffe and his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer.

At some point along the way I became aware of the outstanding talents of another Westport resident, Ray Shaw, and managed to interest him in Paul Cuffe. We traveled to Cuttyhunk to envisage where Paul Cuffe and his family lived; and we employed a drone to create scenes of the Westport River, helping Ray visualize the background in his paintings of Cuffe sailing past the Point on his way to Sierra Leone. Ray also created the maps that illustrate the property holdings along the Acoaxet River. He has added great beauty to this book.

Personally, we have had the good fortune to experience living for several decades in a house built during Paul Cuffe’s time (1776) at Westport Point in his hometown. Not only have we sailed around the Westport River and Buzzards Bay, as Cuffe did, but we’ve also visited Cuttyhunk Island, where he was born, even sailing there from Westport Point in a small catboat. We’ve also read books about the history and lifestyles of people living in this area during the time that Paul Cuffe and his family lived here. From these experiences, we have, in a sense, imbibed the essence and mental images of these places such as: “this is the harbor of Cuttyhunk where Paul and his siblings grew up”; or “Paul Cuffe’s windmill was

just up the road, and he undoubtedly rode by our house many times on his way to the boat docks at the end of the road”; or, “this is the river bank where he had his boatyard and his home”; or, “this is the Friends Meeting House that he played a major role in building”; or “this is where Cuff Slocum’s farm was, and it now has a solar farm named in his honor.” We have “lived” these stories vicariously through researching and writing about them. And often, when we thought we finally had the story right, some new bit of information would pop up, causing us to revisit the story and modify it to accommodate the new insight, which usually came from Carl Cruz, or Lee Blake, or Richard Gifford, who have all been part of living and reliving the Paul Cuffe story.

In connection with the Paul Cuffe symposium of 2017, a committee was formed led by Lee Blake and including Carl Cruz, Richard Gifford, Robert Harding, Jane Loos, Judith Lund, Geraldine Millham, Jenny O’Neill, Betty, and me. In addition to organizing the symposium, the committee established a website, paulcuffe.org, which is maintained by the Westport Historical Society and

Paul Cuffe sailing across Buzzards Bay in a shallop.



contains many documents and much new information about Paul Cuffe. Many of the papers included in this volume appeared initially on the Paul Cuffe website and are here consolidated and updated. The committee also mapped out and dedicated a new Captain Paul Cuffe Heritage Trail, which identifies and describes some eleven sites in Westport, Dartmouth, and New Bedford that were important in the life of Paul Cuffe and his family.

Betty and I are deeply grateful to all members of the Paul Cuffe Symposium Committee for their continuing inspiration, stimulation, and assistance in helping us celebrate the lives of these distinguished citizens of color of our hometown.

– David C. Cole
Westport, Massachusetts

Note: Regarding the spelling of names—such as Cuff Slocum, Paul Cuffe, other Cuffes, Sowles, etc., and the names of various places—we use the most common contemporary spellings except when quoting from or referring to an original text or document. In such cases, we use the spelling that appears in the specific text or document.



– Watercolor by Raymond C. Shaw

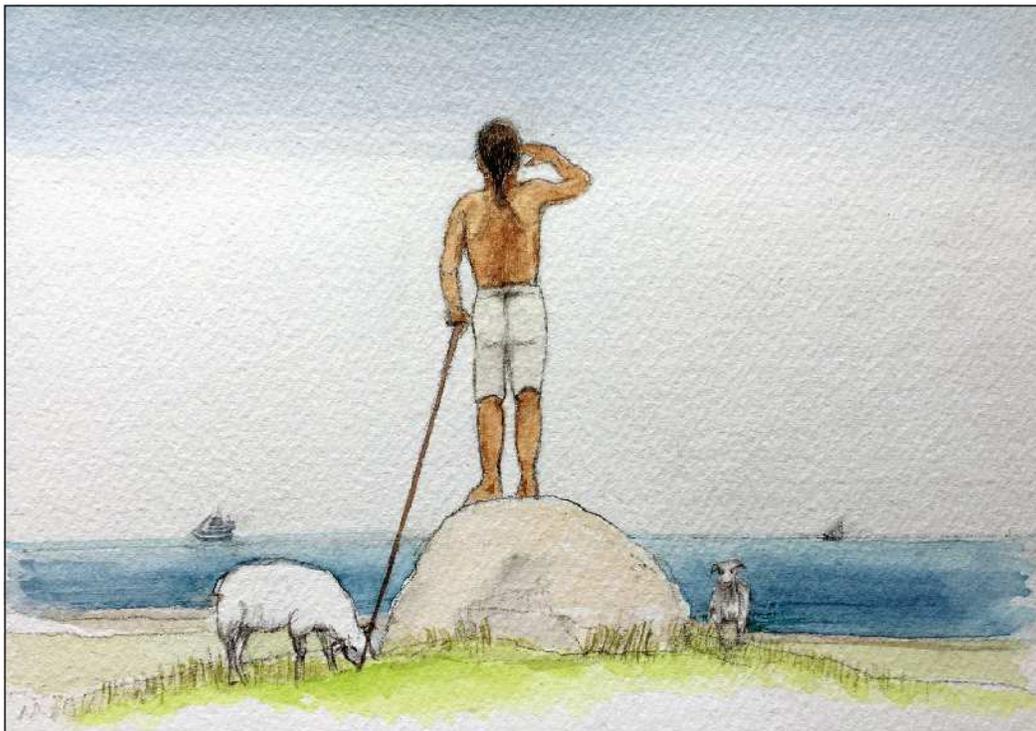
A Brief Biography

PAUL CUFFE WAS born on Cuttyhunk Island, at the west end of the Elizabeth Islands chain in Massachusetts, on January 17, 1759. He was the seventh child and fourth son of Cuff Slocum, an emancipated slave from West Africa, and Ruth Moses, a Native American woman from Cape Cod. Cuff and Ruth had ten children, who all lived well into their adult years, a remarkable record for that time.

For about fifteen years, the family lived on Cuttyhunk, where they interacted with Wampanoag neighbors on the Elizabeth Islands and Martha's Vineyard. They were responsible for managing the properties of Holder Slocum at the west end of the Elizabeth Islands that were used mainly for grazing sheep in the warmer months. The Slocums were a well-to-do family who had settled in the mainland town of Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

Paul's parents eventually saved enough of their earnings to purchase an existing 116-acre farm in Dartmouth. The family moved there in the spring of 1767 and lived there together until 1772, when Paul's father died. Cuff Slocum bequeathed this farm to his two younger sons, John and Paul, and it remained in their possession for the next half-century. But in 1773, Paul initiated his seafaring life as a 14-year-old crew member on a voyage to the West Indies, leaving management of the farm to his older brother, John.

Paul Cuffe as a boy living and tending sheep on Cuttyhunk Island..



– Watercolor by Raymond C. Shaw

Paul again crewed on whaling ships in 1775 and 1776. After being taken prisoner by the British Navy on the latter voyage and held in a jail in New York harbor for three months, Paul took up the challenge of penetrating the British blockade to deliver needed supplies to the residents of Nantucket throughout the rest of the war years. He lost his small boat and supplies to pirates on at least one occasion but succeeded on many crossings in the dark of moonless nights and, in the process, built up relationships with leading families of Nantucket Quakers, such as William Rotch, Sr. and Jr., who became important friends and business partners throughout the rest of his life.

In 1780, Paul, aged 21, and his brother John, 23, joined four free African American friends in petitioning the Massachusetts Legislature to grant them the right to vote. The petition was denied by the House of Representatives but was subsequently incorporated into the State's new constitution, which only required property ownership to qualify men to vote. That same year, Paul and John were jailed for a few days for not paying town taxes on their property as part of their protest to gain the right to vote. But they were rescued by a prominent local citizen, Walter Spooner, who helped negotiate a reasonable settlement.

On February 25, 1783, Paul Cuffe married Alice Abel Pequit, widow of James Pequit and daughter of a prominent Wampanoag family on Martha's Vineyard. They had seven children together, five daughters and two sons, all of whom were born in the Dartmouth/Westport area and lived to maturity. That same year, Paul joined forces with his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, a Wampanoag who had married his older sister, Mary, in 1772. Paul and Michael established a shipping business that operated across the south coasts of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. In 1789, Paul acquired a small waterfront property on the west bank of the East Branch of the Acoaxet (Westport) River, where he and Michael began building a series of increasingly larger sailing ships that they used to expand their ocean trading business along the East Coast and up into the Canadian Maritime Provinces, for fishing voyages to the Grand Banks, and for whaling voyages throughout the Atlantic Ocean. As Michael and Mary's sons matured, they served as mates, captains, and masters of those ships.

In the latter half of the 1790s, realizing the benefits of their successful trading business, both Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer established permanent residences for their families on nearby properties along the East Branch. Paul built a substantial house next to his shipyard; Michael Wainer acquired a 100-acre property a quarter-mile to the south, which had been the homestead of the Eddy family and included a sizeable house.

Paul Cuffe became one of the wealthiest persons of color in the United States, and he used his wealth to support local activities and endeavors, such as a smallpox hospital and an integrated school. He also provided aid to many people in need, no matter what their ethnic or racial background. To help with his extensive landholdings and shipbuilding, he partnered with the white community as well as with persons of color in Westport and elsewhere.

As Cuffe expanded his commercial dealings around the Atlantic Ocean, he became increasingly engaged with Quaker businessmen and abolitionist leaders

in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and London. The British abolitionists, in particular, saw Paul Cuffe, a prominent black entrepreneur and humanitarian, as a potential ally in their efforts to improve conditions in the colony of Sierra Leone.

This colony had been established in 1791 by England to provide a home for slaves who had sought freedom by taking refuge with British forces during the Revolutionary War. They had been transplanted to Nova Scotia when the British were defeated, and subsequently transported to Sierra Leone in the hope of creating a viable permanent settlement there. This effort had experienced numerous problems. Many settlers had died from tropical illnesses, and there had been continuing conflict between the English commercial and military leaders and the ostensibly free citizens. These problems were compounded when a group of former slaves from Jamaica, referred to as “Maroons,” was brought to Sierra Leone in 1800 and injected into this already unstable setting. The situation was further exacerbated after the abolition of slave trading by the British in 1807, which led to the practice of sending any slaves recaptured from illegal British slave-trading ships to Sierra Leone for resettlement.

At the urging of Quakers and abolitionists in England and America, Paul Cuffe sailed to Sierra Leone in 1811 to assess the situation among the various freed-slave communities, British government officials and private traders, and the local African people and to see whether he could suggest ways to improve their conditions. After several months in Sierra Leone, he sailed to England to consult with the leaders of the African Institution, an organization that was committed to promoting commerce and civilization in Africa and providing continuing advice on British colonial policy there. He received a remarkably warm reception from both the Quaker community and the leaders of the African Institution in England.

Choosing Liverpool as his commercial base, Cuffe made two trips to London to pursue various aspects of his Sierra Leone initiatives. He spoke to the members of the African Institution about the potentials he saw for raising export crops and setting up factories and shipyards, similar to those he was familiar with at home, which could be used to process goods for export and build ships for transporting such cargoes. Cuffe’s recommendations were based on the idea that the Africans, both the returned freed slaves and the local population, would be provided with the assistance needed to initiate and carry out these activities.

While still in England, however, Cuffe discovered that some of the British merchants in Sierra Leone saw his plans as a threat to their protected monopoly positions and had taken measures to undermine his efforts. One of the merchants sent a letter to the African Institution warning them that Paul Cuffe “was an unscrupulous businessman and not to be trusted.” The merchants also conspired to have a young man from Sierra Leone, Aaron Richards, forced off Cuffe’s ship in Liverpool and held captive, first in Liverpool and then in Portsmouth. Richards was serving as an apprentice to learn navigation with the hope that he might become a skilled mariner and even a future captain of

ships sailing out of Sierra Leone. Cuffe tried on his own to get Aaron Richards released in Liverpool. When that failed, he enlisted the support of influential Quakers and leaders of the African Institution, who in turn interceded with the British Admiralty and arranged for Richards' release.

From England, Cuffe and his crew sailed back to Sierra Leone and set about organizing his Nova Scotian friends into a "Friendly Society... that would serve as the catalyst for the development of an African People to be counted among the historians' nations, and it would keep records of its actions to ensure that future historians would be able to reconstruct the story of that nation's rise and progress."

When Cuffe returned to Westport from Sierra Leone in April of 1812, the onset of the war between England and the United States rendered the cargo he was carrying from the British colony of Sierra Leone illegal and the Newport customs officials seized his ship. Undaunted, Paul Cuffe rode the stagecoach to Washington where, through the intercessions of his Quaker friends, he was received by President James Madison (a first for a Black American) and the Secretaries of State and Treasury, who issued orders that his ship and cargo be released. But the war prevented any further involvement with Sierra Leone until after it ended in 1814.

In 1808, Cuffe had been welcomed into membership in the local Meeting of the Quakers in Westport, and its members had strongly supported his Sierra Leone mission. Upon returning home from Sierra Leone and being thwarted by the war from maritime activity, he became more actively involved with the local Meeting. He was appointed to a committee to decide whether a new Meetinghouse building should be constructed and, if so, to oversee and raise the funds for that undertaking. Paul became a leader of that committee and contributed half of the cost of the new building.

After the war with Britain ended, Paul Cuffe led a third trip to Sierra Leone. He transported 10 families, totaling 38 people, on his brig *Traveller*. The agreement with these new settlers was that they would work to assist the local people to become more productive and able to engage in world trade with local commodities, rather than exporting slaves. He had been promised financial support for this venture from the African Institution in London, but that support failed to materialize, and he ended up meeting most of the costs himself. Some of his passengers stayed on in Sierra Leone and some later moved on to the new colony of Liberia, where they reportedly prospered.

A new American organization called the American Colonization Society was being formed about the same time that Paul Cuffe returned from his third trip to Sierra Leone, and its leaders sought his support and endorsement. While its goals of resettling freed slaves in Africa initially seemed consistent with Cuffe's own, it soon became clear to him and other African American leaders that the Society was mainly sponsored by slaveowners who were more interested in removing the free black presence from American society than they were in supporting African development. Cuffe did not give it his support.

Early in the following year, 1817, Paul Cuffe came down with an illness that eventually led to his death on September 7th. He was buried the next day in the

cemetery behind the Westport Friends Meetinghouse and was honored and memorialized in many halls and sanctuaries around the Atlantic in the following months.

One of the most eloquent and authoritative of these tributes was by the Reverend Peter Williams Jr, Minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in New York City, who had been a close friend of Paul Cuffe for many years. The following excerpts from his discourse give his assessment of him:

In his person, Captain Cuffee was large and well proportioned. His countenance was serious, but mild. His speech and habit, plain and unostentatious. His deportment, dignified and prepossessing; blending gravity with modesty and sweetness, firmness with gentleness and humility. His whole exterior indicated a man of respectability and piety.

He was so conscientious that he would sooner sacrifice his private interests than engage in any enterprise, however lawful or profitable, that might have a tendency, either directly or indirectly, to injure his fellow men. For instance, he would not deal in ardent spirits, nor in slaves, though he might have done either without violating the laws of his country, and with great prospects of pecuniary gain.

In 1797, Captain Cuffee, lamenting that the place in which he lived, was destitute of a school for the instruction of youth; and anxious that his children should have a more favorable opportunity of obtaining education than he had had, proposed to his neighbours to unite with him in erecting a school-house. This, though the utility of the object was undeniable, was made the cause of so much contention, probably on account of his colour, that he resolved at length to build a school-house on his own land, and at his own expense. He did so, and when finished, gave them the use of it gratis, satisfying himself with seeing it occupied for the purposes contemplated.

As a private man, he was just and upright in all his dealings, an affectionate husband, a kind father, a good neighbor and a faithful friend. Pious without ostentation, and warmly attached to the principles of Quakerism, he manifested, in all his deportment, that he was a true disciple of Jesus; and cherished a charitable disposition to professors of every denomination, who walked according to the leading principles of the gospel.

Captain Cuffee was a judicious and a good man. His thoughts ran deep, and his motives were pure. Such was his reputation for wisdom and integrity, that his neighbours always consulted him in all their important concerns, and, oh! what honor to the son of an African slave, the most respectable men in Great Britain and America were not ashamed to seek to him for counsel and advice!"

The Struggle for Respect:

Paul Cuffe and His Nova Scotian Friends in Sierra Leone

PAUL CUFFE HAD, over the years, earned the respect and admiration of many of his contemporaries who had come to know him. Leading citizens of New Bedford, Westport, and Providence counted him as their friend and partnered with him in business ventures. But when he ventured out of this circle of acquaintances, he often had to prove his legitimate claim for respect. The well-known story of his encounter with a prejudiced fellow passenger in the stagecoach on his way home from meeting with President Madison and other leading government officials is but one of what must have been an endless number of challenges to his legitimacy and worth as a human being.

Prominent Quakers and abolitionists who knew him, or knew of him, in North America and England, however, sought him out in 1807 to help rescue their troubled effort to establish a viable colony in Sierra Leone that would provide a model for “civilizing” Africa. When he finally traveled to Sierra Leone in 1811 to investigate the possibilities, he found an existing community of “freed slaves” who had been enticed with promises of freedom and respect but who instead had, over a period of two decades, been subjected to mistreatment, broken promises, and outright suppression. Some of their leaders had even been executed as a result of their efforts to achieve their legitimate rights.

Paul Cuffe quickly befriended these African “Nova Scotians,” who were actually slaves from America who had gained their freedom during the Revolutionary War, spent eight years in a kind of semi-slavery in Nova Scotia, and then been taken voluntarily to Sierra Leone to populate a new British-sponsored settlement in 1791. Cuffe recognized in them the same yearning for freedom and equality that motivated him, and he sought to collaborate with them in advancing that cause. He also encountered the prejudices and domination of white English officials, merchants, and slave traders who sought to frustrate these efforts and keep the black settlers “in their place.”

Cuffe worked with the Nova Scotians to organize a Friendly Society and to draw up a petition that he carried to London to present to British officials in the summer of 1811. In London, he also sought support from the African Institution—a group that was committed “to stimulating trade with Africa, without itself trading, to promote African education and improved farming methods, and to be a watch-dog against the slave trade.”²

Cuffe was very warmly received in England by both government officials and members of the African Institution. He was granted special rights to trade with Sierra Leone and was encouraged to continue working with the black settlers there. Unfortunately, when he returned to Sierra Leone, the welcome he received from the white English officials and traders there was not nearly as warm;

nonetheless, Cuffe continued his efforts to “buck up” the Nova Scotians. When he returned to the United States, despite some difficulties with local customs agents, Cuffe was applauded for his efforts on behalf of African development and was promised support from many quarters.

Although Cuffe had intended to return to Sierra Leone in 1812 to continue his efforts, war between the United States and Great Britain forced a postponement for four years. When he did return in 1816, taking with him thirty-eight black settlers, he was older and less vigorous. Meanwhile, developments in Sierra Leone had weakened the position of the Nova Scotians, and the British colonial administration had initiated new programs that enhanced white authority. The struggle for equality and respect for the former slaves, initiated by the Nova Scotians and encouraged by Paul Cuffe, was eclipsed by white colonial domination that set the pattern for Africa for the next century and a half.

Several recent studies have greatly enriched our understanding of the early settlement efforts in Sierra Leone.³ This paper draws upon these studies in order to provide a better understanding of the interaction between Paul Cuffe and the various other groups involved in the Sierra Leone colony. It also attempts to illuminate the struggles Paul Cuffe and the leaders of the Nova Scotians faced in their attempt to improve their condition.

Some History

Those not familiar with Africa’s history may be inclined to think of it as a continent inhabited by primitive tribes largely untouched by the outside world in the early eighteenth century. In fact, European and American ships had been visiting the ports of western Africa since the sixteenth century and had built up trading posts, often managed by westerners or children of interracial relationships. In the early years, the trade had consisted mainly of commodities—timber, ivory, and handicrafts exchanged for manufactured goods. But in the latter seventeenth century, and throughout the eighteenth century, African exports had shifted mainly to humans, who were exchanged for rum and fancy textiles. The slave trade, which was well organized and permeated many interior regions, had become a significant aspect of the local culture, along with the tribal hierarchies that managed it. Thus, there had been much interaction between the local peoples and their tribal leaders along the African Coast, on the one hand, and the western commercial traders, agents, and shippers, on the other, prior to initiation of resettlement efforts in the late eighteenth century. Resettling freed African slaves was a new activity, but it was occurring in places where there had been a long history of slavery-oriented interaction between the native populations and Europeans.

African resettlement was actually an outgrowth of the American Revolutionary War. The British had offered freedom to slaves who would cross over to areas of British control in the rebelling colonies. When the British lost the war, the freed blacks would have faced re-enslavement if they had remained in the United States, so many of them were moved to Nova Scotia or found their way to England, where they often ended up as indigents on the streets of London and

washing out any cleared lands and bringing diseases that wiped out 86 immigrants by September. At that point, Captain Thompson departed for home, his crews having remained healthy by staying on board the ships loaded with ample supplies.

Attrition of the settlers continued until in December 1789, when a new Temne chief burned the settlement at Granville Town to the ground in retaliation for the burning of one of his villages by a British naval crew. As Peterson describes it, “the first settlement had become in reality the victim of climate, disease, poor soil, and the political vicissitudes of life constantly threatened on one hand by European ship captains and on the other by the local population.”¹¹ These were all circumstances, or conditions, that might have been anticipated prior to launching the settlement plan.

The second wave of settlers, from Nova Scotia, who arrived in Sierra Leone in March, 1792, was not much better prepared for the vicissitudes that they were to encounter.¹² The leader of the expedition, John Clarkson, an erstwhile naval officer, had never been to Sierra Leone. An ardent abolitionist and brother of Thomas Clarkson, he went to Nova Scotia to meet with prospective settlers and arrange their passage to Sierra Leone. Although he tried to present a balanced picture of the risks and dangers of the venture, the Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were so eager to get out from under the semi-slavery to which they were being subjected that they flocked to sign up. Nearly 1,200 boarded the 15 ships that sailed out of Halifax on January 15, 1792.

Before leaving England for Nova Scotia, John Clarkson had discussed with the leaders of the Sierra Leone Company the terms that he might offer to the settlers. Key among them were allotments of land for houses and farms and absence of quit rents on those lands. He had also been led to believe that the Company would send directives to their agents in Sierra Leone to lay out those allotments and assemble tools and materials with which to build shelters. He promised these terms to the potential settlers in Nova Scotia, but the Company failed to come through on any of them.

The Black Loyalists had established strong, religious-based communities in Nova Scotia with charismatic leaders, engaging mostly in exuberant ceremonies that mixed African and Christian elements. Clarkson was very successful in establishing strong ties with these religious leaders, and many of them came to see him as a kind of Moses leading them out of Egypt to the promised land. Their belief in his divine powers was reinforced when, on the long voyage to Sierra Leone, he miraculously recovered from an illness they thought had killed him.

Upon arriving in Sierra Leone, Clarkson received letters from the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company asking him to take on the role of superintendent and stay for some months, if not indefinitely, to get the settlers established. He agreed to do so primarily because of his commitment to help the Nova Scotians get established.¹³

Clarkson stayed on until the end of the year (1792) and accomplished much. He established cordial relations with the local African leaders, thereby reinforcing rights to use the land. By and large, he treated the Nova Scotian settlers with respect and won their admiration and devotion. He also established his authority

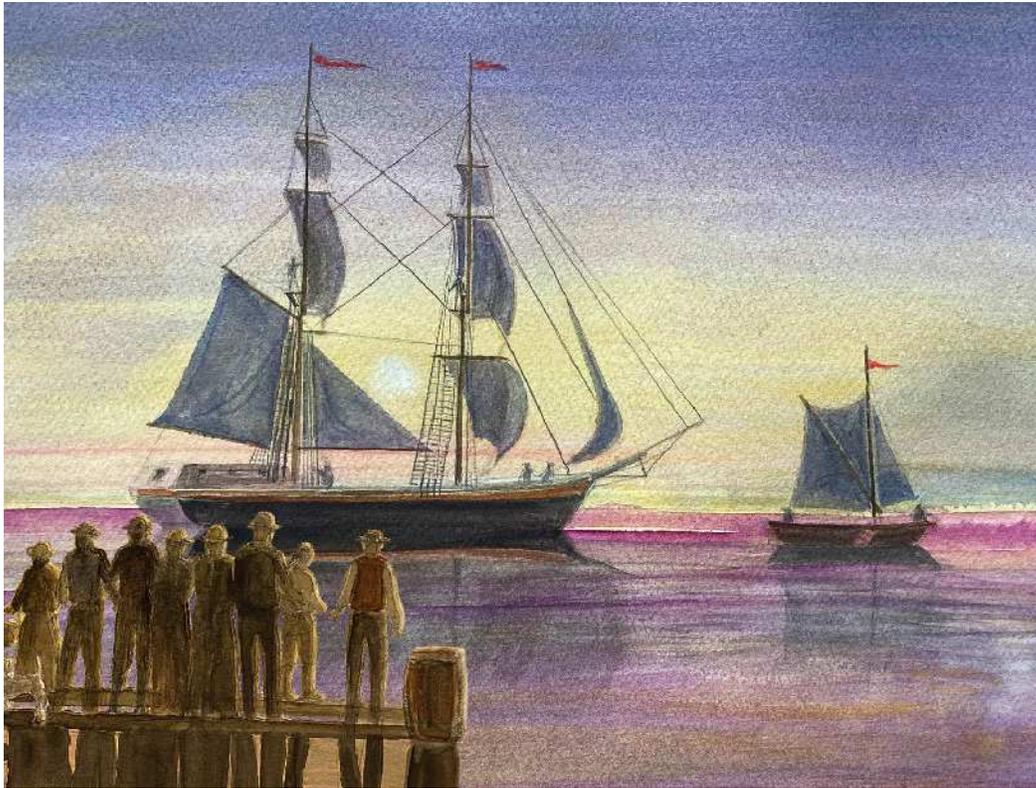
over the British staff and, despite their many failings, got them to perform their duties at a modest level. He began the process of distributing land, never raising the issue of quit rent. Although many individuals, both white and black, had died during those first nine months, the mood of the community was generally upbeat after surviving the first rainy season and entering the more comfortable dry season.¹⁴

The fundamental problem was that what Clarkson had done and promised to gain the support of the Nova Scotians and the local African leaders was clearly at cross purposes with what a new set of Sierra Leone Company directors in London wanted. Their objectives were to establish a commercially viable plantation system run by British officials using local Africans as laborers. To the extent that the Nova Scotians were allotted any land for their own production, they should pay quit-rent to the Company.

When Clarkson left Freetown, he promised to return and resume his role as a benevolent head of the community. But upon reaching England, he quickly discovered that the Company directors were displeased with his failure to advance their interests and did not intend to send him back to Sierra Leone. In the meantime, those who had replaced him in directing affairs in Freetown, supposedly on a temporary basis, reversed many of his policies, stopped land distribution, and undermined those vestiges of local authority for the blacks that had carried over from the original settlers.¹⁵

The third wave of settlers in Sierra Leone was a group called "Maroons." These were former slaves who had escaped from Spanish owners in Jamaica and moved up into the mountains in 1655, when the British displaced the Spanish rulers. The Maroons established their own social and political organization, which resisted outside control for 140 years.¹⁶ They became very skilled guerrilla fighters in order to defend their independence. The British authorities tricked one group of them into surrendering in 1795, then rounded them up and shipped them off to Nova Scotia, where they, too, had a miserable existence for five years. Subsequently, 550 of them agreed to be moved to Sierra Leone. They arrived just in time to help the British authorities there to put down a rebellion by the freed slaves who had been shipped to Freetown in 1792. The Maroons stayed on in Sierra Leone, some of them composing a kind of local militia to support the authorities.

More settlers were brought to Sierra Leone after the British government outlawed its subjects from commanding slave ships across the Atlantic in 1807. The British Navy was charged with enforcing this law, and their crews were rewarded financially when they captured such slave ships and "rescued" the slaves. The "freed" slaves were brought into British colonial ports, such as Freetown, and "apprenticed" as servants and laborers or enlisted into a kind of local militia. The designers of this policy had perhaps anticipated that it would put a stop to the slave trade, which it did not do. Instead, many slave ships were captured, their masters and crew brought before local courts, and their freed passengers absorbed one way or another into the local society. "By the end of 1811 (the year Paul Cuffe first visited Sierra Leone), 1,991 slaves had been captured (recaptured) and deposited in Freetown."¹⁷



*Paul Cuffe in the brig Traveller sailing past Westport
Point en route to Sierra Leone. – Watercolor by Raymond C. Shaw*

of settlement in Sierra Leone, had become a much smaller and less influential segment by 1811, twenty-four years after they first arrived. Their expectations of self-rule, or at least of having a significant role in the governance of the colony, had been submerged under white dominance of the colonial administration at the center and the increasing government-sanctioned missionary role in the new rural settlements. White traders also dominated commercial activity.

Paul Cuffe's Response

When Paul Cuffe arrived in Sierra Leone in March, 1811, he sought to meet first with Governor Columbine, and then contact nearby local tribal chiefs (to whom he gave gifts of religious and historical books), and build relations with the leaders of the Nova Scotian groups.²⁶ As Sidbury suggests, the Nova Scotians' assessments of the history and current conditions in Sierra Leone were probably quite different from those Cuffe had heard from the Governor.

Cuffe found that white traders were uncooperative and that they offered him low prices for the goods that he had imported. Consequently, he dealt mainly with the Nova Scotians. He clearly identified most closely with the positions of the Nova Scotians, although he criticized them as being "too prone to idleness, too fond of liquor, and too inclined toward (religious) doctrinal disputes."²⁷ Nevertheless, he worked with their leaders to draw up a petition to the Governor and Parliament, urging that Africans from English colonies and America be encouraged to come to Sierra Leone to engage in agriculture, commercial trade, and whaling.

This petition is interesting on several counts. First, although many of the Nova Scotians had initially engaged in farming, by this time a number of them had taken up commercial activities, often employing local natives, or recaptured slaves to work on their farmlands. By moving into commerce, they were more directly challenging the white traders who had dominated that field from the beginning. The fact that the petition called for opening up trading opportunities for Africans, both those already in Sierra Leone as well as those who might respond to the invitation, was a direct challenge to the white trading community. It is not surprising, therefore, that a representative of the white traders “wrote a scathing denunciation of Cuffe to Zachary Macaulay in London, saying that he had never known a more unprincipled, mercenary individual, that Cuffe was no better than a slave trader.”²⁸

Despite this message, Paul Cuffe was warmly received in England and given every courtesy by the leaders of the African Institution and government officials. One experience in particular demonstrated his resolve and sense of self-worth to them: When a British Royal Navy ship impressed a young member of his crew, Aaron Richards, in Liverpool, Cuffe proceeded directly to London and, with the help of influential friends, obtained his release.

From England, Cuffe sailed back to Sierra Leone and set about organizing his Nova Scotian friends into a Friendly Society that “would serve as the catalyst for the development of an African People to be counted among the historians’ nations, and it would keep records of its actions to ensure that future historians would be able to reconstruct the story of that nation’s rise and progress.”²⁹ He also bought a house to serve as a permanent base in Freetown, signing over his power of attorney to Dave Edmonds, the Nova Scotian who had become his most trusted friend in the colony.³⁰

In February 1812, Cuffe sailed from Freetown for home “to build the third leg on which his African vision would stand.”³¹ Here again he encountered a hostile reception when Newport customs agents seized his ship because it was carrying cargo from a British colony, something that had been outlawed during Cuffe’s absence. Once more he headed directly to the seat of power, and with help from his respectful friends, met with President Madison and the Secretaries of State and Treasury, who released his ship. Sidbury also states that “in Washington he cemented his status as the nation’s most prominent man of color.”³²

On his return trip to Westport, Cuffe stopped in several towns along the way, meeting with supporters of the Sierra Leone project, giving talks about the colony, and distributing his *Brief Account of the Settlement and Present Situation of the Colony of Sierra Leone in Africa*. He was attempting to generate both financial support and potential recruits for settlement. He “began organizing voluntary societies in port cities to serve as African American allies of the Friendly Society and as nodes in a mostly black Atlantic commercial system.”³³ Another function of these societies was “to screen and recruit people of good character who might want to travel to Sierra Leone.”

The War of 1812 with England put a damper on these activities. Initially Cuffe sought permission from Congress to continue trading with Sierra Leone, but this was denied. Most New England states were opposed to the war but southern

states supported it, and southern representatives were not inclined to give special permission for a black man to engage in trade with an enemy colony.

After the war ended in 1814, both the American and British governments continued to impose trade restrictions that prevented Cuffe from resuming his efforts to build profitable trading relations among America, Africa, and England. Finally, in December of 1815, he was able to sail from Westport for Freetown on his brig, *Traveller*, with a commercial cargo and thirty-eight men, women, and children of color who had signed on to settle there. They were mainly farmers rather than persons with mechanical or other skills. He was not able to raise funds from the African Institution or other sources to support the cost of these settlers, so Cuffe ended up paying for their travel and an initial stake of supplies himself. He helped them get settled for two months and then sailed home with a cargo of African commodities. The trip was very costly for him financially and perhaps physically.

Paul Cuffe's Purpose

Sidbury concludes that Paul Cuffe

worked to bring an African people into being, so that they could participate in the expansion of liberty through commerce and self-determination...Their 'country', or nation-state, was almost surely going to be the Sierra Leone that he foresaw emerging from colonial dependence as an autonomous black polity. It would serve as the crucial base from which blacks would become independent merchants, navigators, and finally legislators, a base from which the next generation of black children would disprove assertions that 'people of colour are not capable of business,' by showing that they could perform 'upon a level with our neighbours the white Brother...Two things mattered: a place where freed slaves could live in societies controlled by black people, and the creation of a commercial network 'between America and Africa and between England and Africa,' which would bring back together people separated by slavery and the history of warfare that had prevented them from rising into the community of nations.³⁴

These great hopes, that resonated as strongly in the latter half of the twentieth century as they did in the early nineteenth century, were undercut in Sierra Leone at that time by the continued dominance of a white-led colonial government, white traders, white missionaries who organized the resettlement villages, and the exclusion of blacks in their own "country" from the positions of responsibility and respect that had been so easily promised to them by well-meaning benefactors as inducements to get them back to Africa.

Special Relationships

With the Rotch and Wainer Families

PAUL CUFFE EVOLVED from an unschooled child living within the Wampanoag community on the south coast of Massachusetts into a charismatic and inspirational leader widely known and respected on both sides of the Atlantic. He was born on the island of Cuttyhunk in 1759, the son of a freed slave and a Native American woman. He was largely self-educated but attained a high level of literacy. He learned other skills, such as navigation and shipbuilding, through on-the-job experience. Within the short lifespan of fifty-eight years, Paul Cuffe became a highly respected leader in many organizations and causes, especially those devoted to abolishing slavery and bringing progress to the people of Africa; he also actively supported Quaker groups in America and England working to improve the lot of their fellow man.

Throughout his life, he built powerful relationships with key people in America, England, and Africa who would be most helpful in advancing the causes to which he was committed. Two of the most important of these relationships were with very different families living and working in southeastern Massachusetts: the Rotches, a prominent and wealthy Quaker family of Nantucket and New Bedford, and the Wainers, a humble Native American and African American family of Dartmouth and Westport.

The Rotches

We do not know exactly when Paul Cuffe first met members of the Rotch family, but it probably was when he was still a teenager. The fact that William Rotch Jr. was born in the same year as Paul Cuffe supports the likelihood of their early relationship. In any case, he developed an extremely close and multifaceted relationship with the Rotch family that lasted well beyond his death.

The Rotches were among the most prominent families of Nantucket before and during the Revolutionary War and in New Bedford, where they moved their base of operations, after the war. In addition to being well-respected members of the Quaker community, they were leaders in the whaling industry and ran successful financial and coastal trading businesses. The intimate relationship between Paul and William Rotch Sr. and William Rotch Jr. over some forty years provides a powerful example of a sincere, unprejudiced, honorable friendship in that era of black slavery and native suppression.

Paul Cuffe crewed on whaling ships in 1773, 1775, and 1776. We do not know whether he crewed on any of the Rotches' whaling ships, but he may well have. In 1775, fifty-eight whaling ships sailed out of Nantucket, more than from any other town in North America. In 1776, the whaling ship on which Paul Cuffe sailed was captured by the British Navy and taken to Brooklyn, New York, where he

and the other crew members were held captive on a prison ship for three months. After his release, Paul returned to his family home in Massachusetts. Around that time, he learned about the British Naval blockade of Nantucket and other offshore islands and that their inhabitants were in need of supplies.

Leonard B. Ellis quotes William Rotch Sr.'s description of the difficulties his ships encountered while trying to get supplies to the island (p. 2 of the biographical sketches):

From the year 1775 to the end of the war we were in continual embarrassments (sic). Our vessels were captured by the English, and we were sometimes in danger of being starved. The exposed situation of the islands made it extremely difficult to elude the numerous cruisers that were always in the vicinity, and months would frequently elapse before any supplies could be obtained from the main land.

Paul Cuffe, being aware of this problem for the people of Nantucket, undertook to acquire a small sailing vessel that he used to deliver goods to their island home. This required navigating through the natural hazards of Buzzards Bay and Nantucket Sound while avoiding the British blockade and numerous pirate ships along the way.

According to Daniel Ricketson's *History of New Bedford*, published in 1858, Paul Cuffe, at the age of about twenty: (p. 257)

undertook a trip to Nantucket with a boatload of produce, but in crossing Buzzards Bay was seized by "refugee pirates," who robbed him of his boat and cargo. Nothing daunted, in connection with his brother,...they built another boat; and having procured a cargo upon his credit, Paul again started for Nantucket, and was again chased by pirates; but night coming, he escaped from them, but ran his boat upon a rock on one of the Elizabeth Islands, and so badly injured her as to render it necessary for him to return to his home on the Westport River. After having repaired his boat, he again set off for Nantucket, reaching there in safety this time, and disposed of his cargo to good advantage. On a subsequent voyage, however, he was again taken by the pirates, and deprived of all except his boat. Still he continued his trips to Nantucket until he had acquired enough to look for a more lucrative business.

Given the prominence of the Rotch family on Nantucket during the War, it seems reasonable to speculate that they were engaged with Paul Cuffe in his Nantucket ventures, especially if he had previously been aboard one of their whaling ships. They may have even helped Cuffe obtain the use of a boat and financed his purchases of goods to bring to them.

After the war, when Paul Cuffe entered the coastal shipping business, he continued to utilize the services of the Rotch family in conducting his financial affairs. There are stories in Ricketson's book (p. 255) of how Paul Cuffe, when he was denied a seat at a table in the main room of a tavern in New Bedford, informed the innkeeper that he was on his way to dinner at the Rotch home. Another story from Ricketson tells about a time when William Rotch Sr. was invited to dinner at the home of Paul Cuffe and his wife, Alice, after attending a gathering at the Friends Meetinghouse in Westport. Upon seeing that there were

the house on it was most likely much larger and more suitable for them than the one that the Wainers had just purchased. It was probably a joint decision of Paul and Michael to buy the Eddy property and move the Wainers into that residence. When Michael did repay Paul the original \$2,500 purchase amount a year later, he concurrently sold the Hix Bridge property to his oldest son, Thomas, thereby raising a part of the money needed for the new transaction.

Mary Wainer, Michael's wife and Paul Cuffe's sister, died in December of 1804. Two months later their son, Jeremiah Wainer died from injuries suffered at sea while commanding the Cuffe-Wainer ship *Ranger*. These two tragedies at the core of the two families must surely have drawn them even closer together. Michael, who was eleven years older than Paul, seems to have largely given up his sailing voyages by this time and was spending most of his time at home. Having taken on an apprentice cordwainer, Henry Peters, shortly after he moved to his new homestead, he was undoubtedly active in this trade and busy instructing and supervising his new employee. But he probably still visited the shipyard and the nearby Cuffe family home on a regular basis.

One final testimony to the close relationship between Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer is that Michael, when he drew up his will in 1814, designated Paul Cuffe, along with his eldest son, Thomas, and his immediate neighbor, Tillinghast Tripp, as the executors of his will. The fact that Paul Cuffe made his final long trip to Sierra Leone shortly after Michael's death, and then became ill and died within a few months after his return, meant that the burden of executor fell mainly on the other two designees.

Summing Up

In one sense, the Rotches provided Paul Cuffe with strong connections to the outside world—to the Quaker community, the abolitionist community, the financial and business world, and to the upper echelons of the English, European, and American societies. The Wainers, on the other hand, helped Paul Cuffe build his connections with the Native American community and the seamen and workers along the south coast of Massachusetts. These two sets of relationships began when Paul was a teenager and lasted throughout his life. Mutual respect and great affection were manifest in both. Ultimately, his relationships with the Rotches and Wainers helped Cuffe realize his full potential and achieve great respect in a world that was rife with prejudice, suppression, and disrespect for persons of his heritage.

Selected Transcriptions:

From the Westport Friends Monthly Meetings

THE FOLLOWING TRANSCRIPTIONS are from the minutes of the Men's Meetings of the Westport Society of Friends. They include all of the entries relating to Paul Cuffe for the period from 1808, when he became a member of that Meeting, until his death in 1817. The minutes clearly demonstrate the respect in which he was held and the support he was given by this group. An interesting fact that links this chapter and the previous chapter is that Gardner Wainer, Paul Cuffe's nephew, and Rhoda, Paul Cuffe's niece, were admitted to the Dartmouth Friends Meeting in 1810.

Requesting and being received into membership in the Society:

1808 2nd month. *Inform that Paul Cuffe requests to come under the care of friends, We therefore appoint Jeremiah Austen, Prince Wing, and Abner Potter to visit him and take a solid opportunity with him in order to discover the motive and sincerity of his request and fitness to become a member of our Society and report to next meeting. (p. 111)*

1808 4th month. *The committee in the case of Paul Cuffe's request reported that they have had several opportunities with him and he appeared to them to be sincere in what he has requested, therefore after considering thereon we do with the concurrence of the Women's meeting receive the said Paul Cuffe under our care as a member of the society, of which Prince Wing is to inform him. (p. 114)*

Receiving support from the Society for his first voyage to Africa:

1810 9th month. *Our friend Paul Cuffe informs this meeting that he had thoughts of making a voyage or visit to Africa if his friends had unity with his prospect – We therefore appoint John Mosher, Abner Potter, Benjamin Davol, Philip Dunham, Joseph Tripp and Resolved Howland to advise with Paul in the subject and report to next monthly meeting. (p.143)*

1810 10th month. *The committee to advise with Paul Cuffe respecting his prospect of making a voyage to Africa report that they had attended to their appointment and left him at liberty to pursue his prospect as way may open, and presented a few lines as a letter of recommendation which being read was approved herein and signed by the Clerk and is as followeth—*

From the Monthly Meeting of the religious society of friends called Quakers, held in Westport in the State of Massachusetts, United States of America the 13th day of the 10th month, 1810:

Our friend Paul Cuffe having informed us that he has some prospect of making a voyage to Africa, we hereby certify that he is a member of our Society and a

man whose orderly life and careful conduct has recommended him to the esteem of his friends, desiring that he may experience divine preservation in his present undertaking, we recommend him to the friendly attention and assistance of all well-disposed people where his lot may be cast. Signed by direction and on behalf of said meeting. Ebenezer Baker, Clerk (p. 145)

Evaluating sincerity and fitness of new applicant members in the Society:

1812 9th month. *Westport meeting informed that Humphry Eldredge requested to be admitted a member of our Society, after considering thereon, we appoint David Tripp, Paul Cuffe and Prince Wing to visit him and endeavor to enquire into his sincerity and fitness to become a member and report to a future meeting. (p. 168)*

1812 11th month. *The committee that was appointed to visit Humphrey Eldridge reported that they believe him to be convinced of friend's principles and his endeavoring to support them after considering thereon this meeting received him as a member of our Society and Jeremiah Austin is appointed to inform him thereof. (p. 168)*

Deciding on the need for a new meeting house and arranging construction:

1813 1st month. *The situation of this meeting house coming before us at this time, after Prince Wing, Ebenezer Baker and Paul Cuffe to take it into consideration and see what alteration would be best reflecting it and estimate the cost and report to next monthly meeting. (p. 170)*

Westport Quaker Meeting House and Paul Cuffe Monument.



– Photograph by David C. Cole

1813 2nd month. *The committee to view and examine the old meeting house in order to ascertain whether it may be best to repair it or build a new one, report in favor of building a new house to take down the high part of the house and let the lower part stand to hold meetings in while the new house is in building the new house to be forty-five feet by thirty with galerys with sliders for the accomodations of mens and womens meetings to be held spate much in the form meeting houses are generally built with a portch fourteen feet by ten. The committee find that a new house of the above description can be got built for twelve hundred dollars with working in what stuff that may be utilizable from it out of that part taking down. After deliberate consideration thereon we unite therewith. Paul Cuffe and Ebenezer Baker is appointed to have the care of cutting some of the principle xxxxxx for the meeting house.*

We appointed Isaac Peckham, Joseph Tripp, Samuel Hewitt, Ebenezer Baker and Charles Baker to put out subscriptions for the purpose of building a new meeting house.

1813 4th month. *Representatives that were appointed to the Quarterly meeting reported that the Quarterly meeting united with the proposition that this meeting sent to them respecting building a new meeting house and ordered their treasurer to pay this meeting four hundred dollars when the building is completed. (p. 172)*

This meeting concludes to build a new meeting house forty-five feet by thirty with a portch fourteen feet by ten, and we appointed Paul Cuffe, Ebenezer Baker, Prince Wing, Abner Potter, Joseph Tripp, George Brightman and Samuel Hewitt to superintend the said building and see that it is completed and report when done. (p. 173)

1813 8th month. *The committee that was appointed to have the care of building the new meeting house are authorized by this meeting to call on our treasury for money that may be needed for the purpose of the said house and he to pay the same as far as he is able. (p. 176)*

Receiving support from the Society for his second voyage to Africa:

1813 11th month. *Our esteemed friend Paul Cuffe informed this meeting that he had a prospect of going to the city of Washington on business of importance and requests a few lines setting forth his right of membership among friends, he being a member of our Society and this meeting unites with him in the said prospect and the clerk is directed to give him a copy of this minute. (p. 179)*

1814 3rd month. *The committee appointed in the fourth month last to superintend the building of the meeting house in Westport reported at this time that the House was finished and the cost had amounted to eleven hundred and ninety-eight dollars and the committee is dismissed. Our friend Paul Cuffe returned a copy of a minute granted him in the 11th month last. (p. 181)*

1815 11th month. *The copy of a minute granted to our friend Paul Cuffe being returned, the following recommendation is approved of and signed by the Clerk. Our friend Paul Cuffe who is a member of our religious society informed this meeting that he has a prospect of making a voyage to Africa on business and in a particular manner, with the laudable view of endeavoring to promote the temporal*

The Remarkable Story of Cuff Slocum

CUFF SLOCUM, UNTIL now, has been known for essentially one thing—being the father of Paul Cuffe. This has earned him a few lines in articles about his famous son and a few pages in the more extended biographies of Paul Cuffe. These publications note that he had been brought to New England as a young slave, gained his freedom somehow, married a Native American woman, and together with her, conceived and raised ten children, one of whom was Paul Cuffe.

This chapter represents a first attempt to delve more deeply into various available sources of information— some old and some new— in order to present a more complete and accurate story of Cuff Slocum. We seek to demonstrate why he should receive much greater recognition for his remarkable accomplishments. In many respects, he provided a launching pad for his son Paul and his daughter Mary. Mary married Michael Wainer, Paul Cuffe's long-term friend and business partner, and Mary and Michael had five sons who became captains on Cuffe/Wainer ships.

Essentially nothing is known about Cuff Slocum's early life in Africa, except that his given name (a version of the name Kofi) indicates that he was from the Ashanti area of West Africa, and that he was brought to Newport, RI on a slave ship. But information on what happened after he arrived in North America, although still limited, has some solid foundations. Three deeds and a will provide critical reference points for his story, but there is much more to be gleaned from his own records, the records of those with whom he interacted, and various studies that give insight into the conditions of the times and places in which he lived. All of these provide us with a fascinating and inspiring story.

The first recorded document about Cuff Slocum is the 1742 bill of sale transferring his ownership as a slave from Ebenezer Slocum to John Slocum. The next records are the registration of his intentions to marry Ruth Moses in 1746 and their actual marriage in 1747. The Dartmouth Vital Records document the birth of their first child, David, in 1747 in Dartmouth, but there are no official records beyond that. Family records, however, show the rest of their nine children born between 1748 and 1766 but do not indicate where those births occurred. Other evidence suggests that the second son, Jonathan, was born in Dartmouth and that the other eight children were born on Cuttyhunk Island.

A deed from the office of the Town Clerk of Gloucester, Rhode Island, records that in 1762, Cuff and Ruth purchased a 156-acre property in northwest Rhode Island from Nicholas Lapham of Dartmouth, Massachusetts. Another deed registered in Bristol County, Massachusetts, in 1766 records the purchase of a 120-acre farm in Dartmouth from David Brownell, also of Dartmouth. Then there is Cuff Slocum's will, in which he declares that John Slocum set him free. He therein bequeaths his Gloucester property to his two older sons, David and Jonathan, and his Dartmouth farm to his two younger sons, John and Paul.

There are three other important sources of information about Cuff Slocum. The first is a mention of him in the first biography about his son Paul Cuffe written in 1807.³⁵ The second is an Exercise Book that belonged to Cuff Slocum in which he and others made notes and scribbles about events in his life and those of his family.³⁶ The third item is a statement written in 1851 by Ruth Cuffe, daughter of David Cuffe, that records a story she had heard a half-century before; the statement describes the circumstances surrounding her grandfather's gaining his freedom and of his later marriage to Ruth Moses.³⁷ Then there are more recent publications that provide information on the conditions of the times and places where Cuff Slocum and his family lived, which provide useful background and supplements to this story.

The Deed of Sale and Becoming a Free Man

The deed of sale entered into between Ebenezer Slocum and his nephew John Slocum on February 17, 1742 in the town of Dartmouth transferred the ownership of "a certain negro man of about twenty-five years of age named Cuffe" from Ebenezer to John Slocum for a price of £150.³⁸ This deed provides no indication of John Slocum's intentions with regard to the negro man named Cuffe, but there is strong evidence that, within a few years, John Slocum granted Cuffe his freedom.

There is a statement at the beginning of Cuff Slocum's will that reads, "I Cuff Slocum formerly a cervant of John Slocum and thence by him sett free and now a free man." While this makes clear that it was John Slocum who freed him, it does not provide a date for when this occurred or what were the steps that led to his freedom.

Our hypothesis is that John Slocum attributed earnings or value of work to Cuff at a rate of £50 per year, which would match his purchase price after three years. This would be consistent with the following statement by his granddaughter, Ruth Cuffe: "[W]hen grandfather Cuffe had worked long enough to pay for himself then his master freed him."

Ruth's narrative supports the following conclusions about the freeing of Cuff Slocum:

- At the time of Cuff's purchase in 1742, his new owner, John Slocum, purchased Cuff with the intention of freeing him after he had worked for a sufficient period of time to, in effect, pay off his purchase price. There is no record of what this rate of payment was or when the period started and ended, but given that Cuff was purchased in February of 1742, and that he took actions, mentioned below, indicating that he was a free man in 1745, it seems reasonable to conclude that he worked off his purchase price over a period of three years at a rate of £50 per year.
- The identity of the "squire" who drew up a paper recognizing Cuff's freedom is not known for sure, but it appears to be a cousin of John Slocum by the name of Holder Slocum. Captain Holder Slocum owned a large homestead farm in Dartmouth at that time and in 1751 acquired possession of the three western islands of the Elizabeth Island chain—Pasque, Nashawena, and Cuttyhunk.

As described below, Cuff Slocum and his family worked for Holder Slocum on Cuttyhunk for an extended period. It seems reasonable, then, to assume that Holder was the one who drew up the paper granting Cuff his freedom and then immediately hired him.³⁹

- According to Ruth Cuffe's testimony, his former owner, John Slocum, advised Cuff at the time of his becoming a free man, "to live a steady life and to take good care of his money that he was going to work for and save it so as to get him a home sometime or other." As described below, Cuff took that advice to heart.

The Deed of Sale of Cuff Slocum

Know all men by these presents, that I Ebenezer Slocum of
 Dartmouth in the County of Bristol and Province of the Massachusetts
 Bay in New England yoman for and in Consideration of the sum
 of one hundred and fifty Pounds Currant Money or Equivale
 bills of Credit and in the old manner to me in hand at the Request
 and Request the Delivery here of well and truly said by
 John Slocum of Dartmouth town County and Province aforesaid
 yoman the Receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge to be true
 with fully Contented and thereof do by these Presents acquit
 Exonerate and Discharge the said John Slocum his heirs
 Executors and administrators for Ever have Bargained sold
 bestowed and Delivered and by these Presents in Plain and open
 market do by these Presents bargain sell bestowed and Delivered
 to the said John Slocum a certain Negro Man of about twenty five
 years of age Named Cuffe to have and to hold the said Negro Man
 to him the said John Slocum his Executors and administrators
 and to his and their one proper use Benefit and behoof for Ever
 and the said Ebenezer Slocum do hereby Publish and Declare
 that I am the true and lawfull owner of the said Negro man and that I
 have in my self Good Right full Power and lawfull authority to sell and
 Dispose of the said Negro Man in Manner as aforesaid and also do
 hereby Covenant Promise bind and oblige my self my heirs Executors and
 administrators to warrant secure and Defend the said Negro Man unto
 the said John Slocum his heirs Executors and administrators and against
 the lawfull Claim and Demand of all and Every Person and
 Persons whome so Ever for Ever in witness whereof the said Ebenezer
 Slocum hath here unto set my hand and seal this sixteenth day of
 February in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and forty
 two and in the sixteenth year of the Reign of George the second
 King of Great Britain &c

Signed Sealed and Delivered E Ebenezer Slocum
 In the Presence of
 Lebanon Allen
 Anna Allen

1742 Date
 above mentioned

- Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library



Cuff Slocum's home overlooking the harbor on Cuttyhunk Island. – Watercolor by Raymond C. Shaw

Cuff Slocum's Exercise Book and Book of Accounts found in Paul Cuffe's papers contain a record indicating that he and one of his sons, probably David, the eldest, also worked on helping to build a house on Cuttyhunk for Rebecca Slocum in 1764. They were each paid 3 shillings per day for this work. This fact provides an indicator of the going rate of compensation for them. If we assume that Cuff was credited for working six days a week for 52 weeks per year for Holder Slocum at 3 shillings per day, this would translate into £47 and 8 shillings per year, which can be rounded up to £50 per year.

Over the period of sixteen years from 1751 to 1767 that he was living and working on Cuttyhunk, Cuff Slocum might have earned a total of about £800. Since living expenses were presumably not very great, as the family probably produced most of their own food and clothing and did not have to pay for their housing, these earnings provided the funds with which Cuff and Ruth Slocum purchased two large farms on the mainland in the 1760s.

Purchasing Two Large Properties

In 1762, Cuff Slocum purchased a 156-acre property in the village of Gloucester in the northwest corner of Rhode Island for £90 from Nicholas Lapham, a resident of Dartmouth, Massachusetts.⁴⁷ This property was some forty miles from his subsequent farm in Dartmouth, as the crow flies, and a much longer journey by pathways on horseback or foot. It is not clear why Cuff Slocum purchased this property. Perhaps he just wanted to be a property owner, and this was a relatively low price for land. It appears that Cuff never engaged in any farming or woodcutting activities on this property and he may never even have visited it.

These two properties were to the south of the Cuff Slocum farm, with Rachel's abutting the south boundary of his farm, and Dorcas' abutting the south boundary of Rachel's property.⁵³

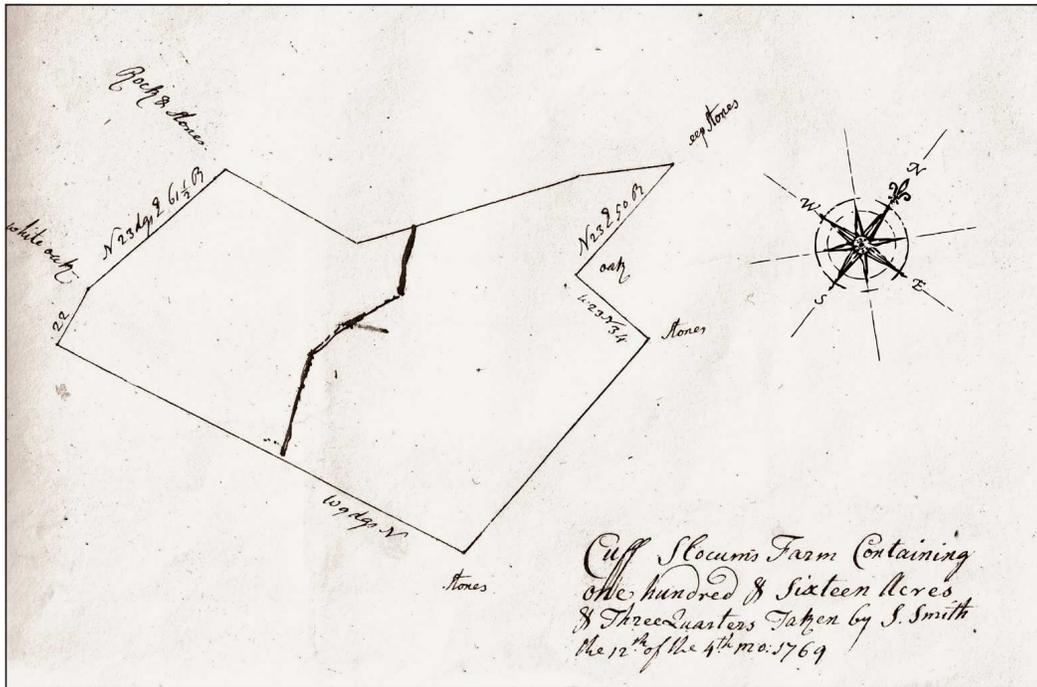
The Cuff Slocum farm was about 0.8 mile east of the Head of Westport. Developed in the late seventeenth century, this was the first significant settlement area in what became the Town of Westport. Jonathan Soule was the abutter to the west.⁵⁴ His brother James would later be appointed as executor of Cuff Slocum's will. Enos Gifford and Phillip Allen were the abutters to the east. Both of them were descendants of early Dartmouth settlers who had bought land from the original proprietors in the 1670s and 1680s.

The original house on Old County Road appears to have been replaced by a newer structure in the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Eric Gradoia examined the house and suggested there was evidence that an ell was brought from

Deed of sale of David Brownell's Dartmouth property to Cuff Slocum.

*Of all People to whom these Presents shall come -
I, David Brownell, of Dartmouth, in the County of Bristol, in
the Province of ye Massachusetts Bay, yeoman - Send
Greeting - Know ye, that I ye s^r. David Brownell, for
and in consideration of six hundred and fifty Spanish
silver milled dollars in hand before the envealing hereof
well and truly paid by Cuff Slocum, of Chilesmark, in
Dukes County and Province afores^d. the receipt whereof
I do hereby acknowledge, and myself therewith fully satisfied
contented and paid and thereof and of every part and
parcel thereof do exonerate, acquit and discharge him, the
s^r. Cuff Slocum, his heirs, exec^s. adm^s. forever ^{or more} - a
certain tract or parcel of land lying in the township
of Dartmouth afores^d. containing, by estimation, one hundred
and twenty acres, be the same more or less, it being bounded
as followeth - northerly on the country road - westerly on
land belonging to Jonathan Soule - southerly on land Enos
Gifford gave to his daughter Rachel Wilbur - easterly partly
on said Gifford and partly on Philip Allen's, or according
to the Deed I had of Solomon Southwick.
To Have and to Hold the s^d. granted and bargained
premises, with all the appurtenances and privileges to the
same belonging, or in any wise appertaining to him, ye s^r.
Cuff Slocum, his heirs and assigns forever, to his and their
proper use and benefit forever. And I, the s^r. David*

- Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library



Plat of Cuff Slocum's farm in Dartmouth. – Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

some other property and subsequently added to the east side of main house. The house, at 761 Old County Road, is recorded in the Westport Historic Inventory as probably having belonged at one time to Cuff Slocum.⁵⁶ It would be more accurate to say that this property was the site of the original house that Cuff Slocum acquired in 1766 but that the original structure has been replaced.

Moving to the Farm in Dartmouth

The Cuff Slocum family moved from Cuttyhunk to the new farm in the spring of 1767 in time to plant the crops for the coming growing season. They probably sailed across Buzzards Bay in a shallop, carrying their household belongings with them. These goods undoubtedly included spinning wheels and other instruments for spinning wool and flax into thread for their clothing. When they arrived at their new home, they had a sizeable load of new shingles that Cuff had previously contracted to buy from David Brownell for delivery in March, 1767, so presumably one of their first tasks was to re-shingle the house. This is an indicator that the house was at least 20 years old.

Managing this new farm was very different from the shepherding that Cuff Slocum and his sons had been doing on the islands, but on the other hand, similar to the kind of farm work that Cuff Slocum had probably done for Ebenezer, John and Holder Slocum some years before. They may have hired oxen for plowing their fields and then seeded their crops by hand.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, Ruth and her older daughters continued to care for the household chores of fabricating clothing, preparing the food, and caring for the younger daughters. They also had an orchard on the farm, and there is some indication that they may have made cider and sold some of the fruit.⁵⁸

my wearing apparel. I give unto my two sons, viz. John Cufe and Paul Cufe to be equeally divided between them my aforesaid sons. I also give unto my son Paul Cufe my fuze gun.

Item: my mind and will is that I so will and order my two said sons namely John Cufe and Paul Cufe to provide and keep one cow for their mother, meaning my afore mentioned wife so that she may be reasonably supplied with milk for her own use and comfort during the time she shall remain my widow.

Item: I give unto my son John Cufe my bed and bedding to be that bed of mine with a blue and white striped ticken. I give unto my son Paul Cufe my bed and bedding that he commonly sleeps on.

Item of this my last will & testament I do nominate, constitute and appoint, make and ordain my well beloved friend Neighbor James Soule the hatter to be the executor of this my last will and testament desiring him as a friend in all love to take a prudent care to see the same duly a & truly fulfilled according to the true intent & meaning hereof and I do hereby utterly disallow, rebucke & disoune all & every other testaments wills legacies and bequests & executors by me in any way before danme willed and bequested. Ratifying and confirming thes & no other to be my last will & testament. In witness whereof I have here unto set my hand & seal this fifteenth day of August in the seventh year of his lord Majesty and in anno Domini, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one. Signed sealed and...by the said Cufe Slocum with this the afore written to be his last will and testament in the presence of the subscribers:

Witnesses: Benjamin Earl, Constant Hart, Ephraim Sanford

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cufe Slocum'. The script is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first letter 'C' being particularly large and prominent.

Cufe Slocum (his own signature)

Date written at the bottom: June 29, 1772

Ruth Cuffe's Testimonial

About Her Grandfather's Freedom And Some Interesting Related Stories

IN 1851, JAMES B. Congdon, an early researcher into the life of Paul Cuffe, apparently invited Ruth Cuffe to write down her memories about how her grandfather, Cuff Slocum, gained his freedom. That document, preserved in the New Bedford Free Public Library's collection of papers relating to Paul Cuffe, provides fascinating insights into the Cuff Slocum story and to the interconnections among families descended from Cuff Slocum—the Cuffes and the Wainers—and also among the families that freed him and interacted with him on his way to success as a free man—the Slocums and the Hulls.

Ruth Cuffe's testimonial, written in 1851, recounts a story that she was told fifty-three years before, in 1798, when she was only seven years old...and the story describes events that probably occurred fifty-three years before that, going back all the way to 1745. Given such long periods between the actual events in 1745 and the transcription of the story in 1851, it is not unreasonable to expect some factual errors, but the basic story does appear to hold together if some of the key actors are re-identified.

We start off with a transcription of the full document as written by Ruth Cuffe and follow that with comments on the individuals identified in it and some hypotheses as to possible corrections regarding the people in the story.

As nigh as I can remember it was fifty-three years ago that I was to work at my brother-in-law Gardner Wainer's in Westport on the eastern side of the River and my sister wanted me to go to the store at Russeles mill in Dartmouth and buy her some things out of the store. She told me to go to Captain Hull's store and do my trading for she had all their trading done at his store and I went for her, and when I got their, their was several men in the store and Mr. Hull told me to take a seat and sit down and wait a little while till he had waited upon them men and then he would waite upon me and as soon as they was gone out of the store he asked me what my name was. I told him that my name was Ruth Cuffe. He asked me what my father's name was. I told him that my father's name was David Cuffe.

Then Mr. Hull told me that my grandfather Cuffe was a slave man to his father. He told me that his father bought my grandfather Cuffe so that he should have his freedom, and his father wrote down the month and day that he purchased him and how many dollars he gave for him, and when grandfather Cuffe had worked long enough to pay for himself then his master freed him. His master paid him good wages and when he had worked long enough to pay for himself, his master gave him his freedom. The day before, he went to a Squire's house and had a paper rote to give Cuffe his freedom and the next morning the Squire brought the paper

to his house and carried the paper with him and he got there just as they were sitting down to breakfast and they all sat down and Cuffe with them and after they had some breakfast the Squire told Cuffe to take his seat as he wanted to talk with him. The Squire then asked him did he want to be a free man and be his own man. He said that he wanted to be free but he had no money to buy himself and he wanted his master not to sell him to no one and when he made his will to give his children his property to fix it so that his children never should sell him for he was afraid that he would be sold away to the west and put on the plantation. His master told him that never should be. The squire told Cuffe that he would be a free man in a few minutes. He then took the paper out of his pocket and showed it to Cuffe. The squire told Mr. Hull to write his name on the paper and he did. And then he told Hull's wife to write her name on the same paper and she did. Then the squire gave the paper over again to Cuffe and told him he then was a free man – his own man and he must go from there that same day. Then Cuffe cried and covered himself with tears. He said that he did not know what to do and where to go he knew not. He had no home and no money for food that they had ought to let him know of it 2 or 3 weeks ago. Then it would not be so hard to him for then it was a rainy day and where to go he knew not. The squire told him that he must certainly go from there that day for that would show that he was his own free man and gone from there. The squire told him he would hire him and give him good wages. He hired him right away, and his master Hull though would hire him next month and give him good wages. The squire then gave Cuffe his paper that he wrote and told him to put into his chest in his protection carrying it with him at his house and keep it safe. Then his master that had been, gave Cuffe good advice while the squire was there. He told him to live a steady life and to take good care of his money that he was going to work for and save it so as to get him a home some-time or other. So Cuffe took 2 suits of his everyday clothes and went away from there that same day.

This Captain Hull told me at the time I was in his store and he said about the time my grandfather Cuffe had his freedom, Ruth Moses came up from Harawig, and after a while my grandfather married her. She came into Dartmouth and worked their till she married and Captain Hull told me that the Slocomes would not have my grandfather Cuffe's children to go by the name of Slocumbes so they called them by their father's name Cuffe. I was about seven years old when we had to go by the name of Cuffe. I remember it well.

Family relations of persons mentioned in the story: Cuffes and Wainers

Ruth Cuffe states that she was the daughter of David Cuffe. David was the first son of Cuff and Ruth (Moses) Slocum, born in Dartmouth in 1748. David married Hope Page of Freetown in 1771. His younger sister, Mary (b. 1753), married Michael Wainer (b. 1748) in 1772. David and Hope (Page) Cuffe had six children, the third being Rhoda and the fifth being Ruth. Rhoda married Gardner Wainer, the second son of Michael and Mary (Cuffe) Wainer and therefore Mary's first cousin. Ruth Cuffe never married but lived in Indian Town in the North Westport and Troy (Fall River) border area and was reportedly a "Doctress" in later life.

Ebenezer Slocum (b. 1705) was born in Dartmouth and was the first owner of Cuff Slocum, having purchased him in Newport, Rhode Island around 1728. He married Bathsheba Hull in Newport, where the bride lived, in 1728. Bathsheba Hull was the daughter of Tristram Hull and Elizabeth Dyer. A genealogy chart shows the ancestors of Rebecca and Bathsheba Hull and linkages between the Hull and Slocum families in the eighteenth century.

Bathsheba was the great-granddaughter of Tristram Hull (b. 1624), an early settler of Barnstable, Massachusetts. Her line ran from Tristram through Joseph (b. 1651) to Tristram (b. 1677). Bathsheba was also the granddaughter of Mary Dyer, who was hanged on Boston Common in 1660 for preaching Quaker heresy.

Another descendant of Tristram Hull was Hannah Hull (b. 1697), whose lineage ran from Tristram through John Hull (b. 1654). She married Holder Slocum (b. 1697) of Dartmouth in 1721. Holder Slocum was a cousin of Ebenezer Slocum and played an important role in the lives of Cuff and Ruth Slocum.

Who actually told the story about Cuff Slocum?

Ebenezer Slocum sold Cuff Slocum to his nephew, John Slocum (b. 1717), son of his brother, Eliezer (b. 1694). This transaction is recorded in a deed of sale dated February 16, 1742, which describes Cuff Slocum as a negro man of about twenty-five years of age. The price paid for Cuff Slocum was £150. (See p. 39.)

The release of Cuff Slocum from slavery and making him a free man, as described in Ruth Cuffe's testimonial, took place probably about three years after John Slocum purchased him in 1742. According to Ruth's story, the owner of the store in which she was told the story was a Captain Hull, and he said that it was his father who freed Cuff Slocum many years before.

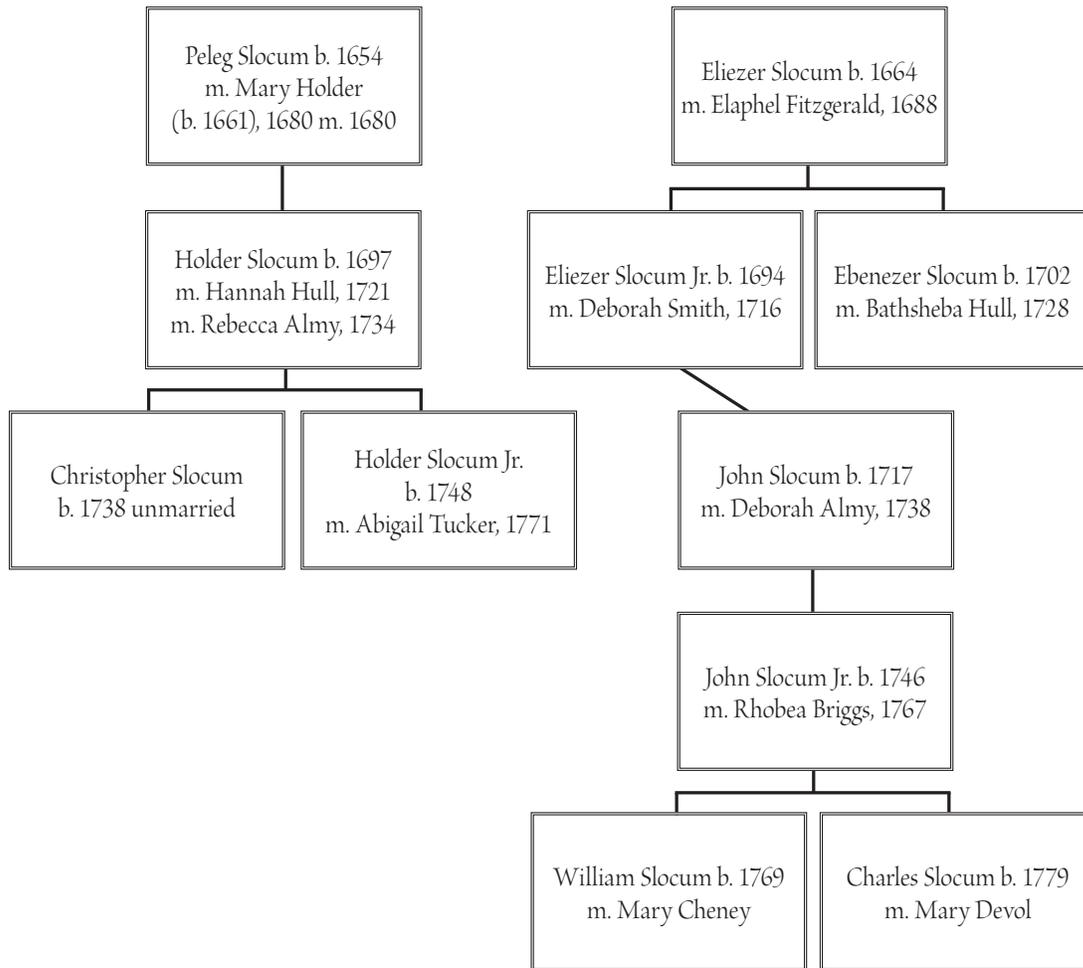
While there definitely was a store owned by a Captain Hull in the Russells Mills section of Dartmouth at that time (around 1800), there is clear evidence that it was not his father who freed Cuff Slocum. The deed of sale clearly establishes that it was John Slocum who purchased Cuff in 1742, and the first sentence of Cuff Slocum's will from 1772 states that

I Cuf Slocum formerly a cervant of John Slocum and thence by him sett free and now a free man,.

Thus, the questions are: Who could rightly claim that his father had been the one to set Cuff Slocum free? And who might have been the person telling the story to Ruth Slocum about the freeing of her grandfather? Is it possible that Ruth misunderstood when Captain Hull said it was his father rather than someone else's father?

There are two people who were, according to the story, involved in the process of freeing Cuff—the owner and the squire. The owner was definitely John Slocum, but who was the squire? It is our belief that the squire was Holder Slocum, a prominent resident of Dartmouth and a first cousin once removed of John Slocum. Holder Slocum was the person who subsequently employed Cuff Slocum to look after his livestock during the summer grazing season on the three western Elizabeth Islands he owned. He may well have hired Cuff Slocum immediately after the latter gained his freedom, as Ruth Cuffe's story indicates was the stated intention of the squire.

Descendant Chart of Giles and Joan Slocum



year 1737 and was entertained at the house of Captain Slocum. His *Journal*, on that occasion, contains the following entry:

Holder Slocum lent us his shallop to go over to Nantucket; but the wind not favoring, we had a satisfactory meeting at a large farm of his on an island bearing his own name, and after the meeting set sail for Nantucket; had several large meetings there, and I rejoiced to see the growth and increase of Friends on the island, where God hath greatly multiplied his people and made them honorable.'

Slocum's Island, referred to above, was probably Nashawena Island, next to Cuttyhunk in Buzzards Bay. Holder's first wife, Hannah, died at her father's house in Jamestown, Rhode Island, on August 28, 1725 and was buried there in Friends' ground. His second marriage, to Rebecca Almy of Tiverton, Rhode Island, took place on January 4, 1733 or 1734.

This sketch attests to several interesting facts:

- Shallops were popular small sailing and rowing craft used for traveling along the New England coast and to the nearby islands.
- Holder Slocum had a "large farm" on one of the Elizabeth Islands, probably either Nashawena or Pasque, in 1737. It is not clear what kind of farm it was. While some evidence points to a sheep station for warm weather grazing, it could have been used for something else. Nor is it clear how many people were living on the island, if they lived there year-round, or whether there were substantial dwellings on the property; the sketch does suggest, however, that there were some people residing there for at least part of the year at that time.

More insights on the activities of the Slocums on the Elizabeth Islands

The insights from the Slocum genealogy are further reinforced by excerpts from the book by Alice Forbes Howland: *Three Islands: Pasque, Nashawena and Penikese* (pp 57-60).

Although Peleg Slocum seems to have owned Nashawena from 1693 until it was acquired by his son Holder in 1742, it would not appear that he ever lived on the island and it is pretty clear that he lived on his big farm at Barney's Joy across the Bay. He evidently owned at least one boat which he sailed himself, occasionally to Nantucket to hold or attend Quaker meetings.

Nashawena and Cuttyhunk afforded good summer grazing in those days, and cattle were taken over from the mainland in boats each spring and brought back in the autumn. The old stone pound where the cattle were rounded up for these trips is still standing (1964) near the mouth of Slocum's River, and it may be supposed that Peleg sent his own cattle over to the island, and perhaps those of some of his neighbors as well, for which grazing privileges they would have paid him a fee.

Peleg died in 1733 at the age of 79. In 1743 Peleg's son Holder, then 46 years old, came into possession of part of the east end of Nashawena from 'fellmonger' (a dealer in sheepskins or other hides) Thomas Bailey and others. Eight years later in 1751, Holder acquired all of the land on Nashawena, Cuttyhunk and Penikese that Peleg had owned... We know little of Holder's activities or if he ever lived on the island, but inasmuch as his son, Holder Jr. is listed as 'of Dartmouth' in a Court Record in 1794

against John Slocum of Chilmark (remember that Nashawena was part of the town of Chilmark in those days), it would seem that Holder Jr. owned the island but lived on the mainland while John lived either on Nashawena or Pasque.

Now comes a gap in our story as there appears to be nothing to tell us what happened on Nashawena or who was living there from 1745 to the time of the Revolution. As early as 1775 the British Sloop of War Faulkland made a surprise visit to the Elizabeth Islands and seized livestock from Naushon and Pasque, and it is more than likely that they took cattle, sheep and hogs from Nashawena as well; so those years when British warships were continually in the waters of the Bay and Sound must have been a time of fear and deprivation for the people living on the islands.

In an earlier part of her story, Howland reports that life on Pasque and Nashawena was not always so dismal or uninteresting. In her chapters on Pasque, she tells the following story (pp. 6-7):

Pasque was the scene of a small but relatively important intrigue in 1779 when a group of British officers from a fleet lying in Tarpaulin Cove 'spent the evening of April 2nd in a frolic at the house of John Slocum on Pesque (sic) Island" Now, Slocum was a Quaker and well-known for his Tory sympathies, but after hearing his 'guests' discussing plans to attack and burn Falmoth the following day, loyalty to his neighbors overcame his Tory leanings, and he sent a messenger secretly down the island and across to the mainland to warn the people there of their danger. The British met a well-organized force of militia, which had been hastily summoned from Barnstable and Sandwich, and were successfully repulsed; and they must have wondered how their plans – laid so carefully two islands and ten miles away – could have been anticipated.

Christopher, the oldest son of Holder and Rebecca Slocum, had inherited Cuttyhunk from his father and later passed it and other properties in the Elizabeth Islands along to his two brothers, Peleg and Holder Slocum Jr. The inventory of his mother's estate shows that Christopher had billed his mother, Rebecca Slocum, £60 for grazing her 285 sheep on Cuttyhunk for three years, suggesting that the annual charge for grazing this number of sheep was £20. Unfortunately, we have no way of estimating how many sheep might have been grazing on the western Elizabeth Islands that Christopher Slocum and his brothers owned at that time.

Also included in the inventory of Rebecca Slocum's estate was a "ferryboat lying at Christopher Slocum's wharf together with her anchor, rigging, sails and appurtenances" valued at £43, 6 shillings and 8 pence. This would be a reasonable description of a shallop.

What can we learn from these stories?

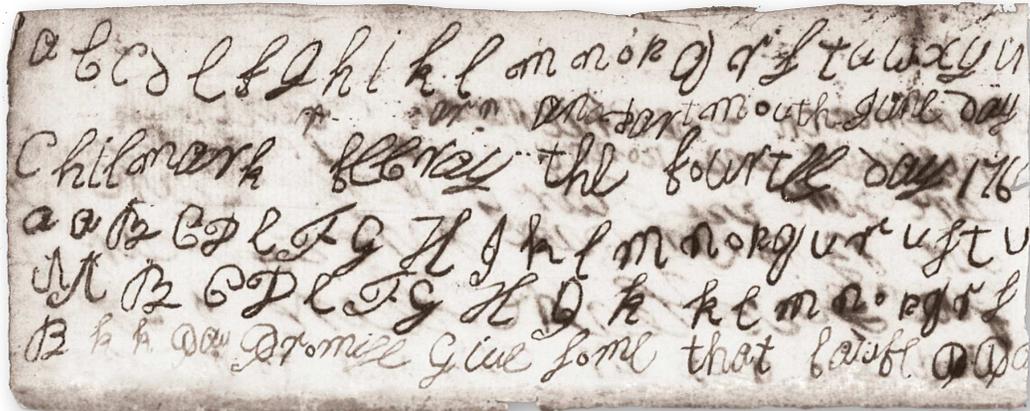
- Peleg Slocum owned at least Nashawena from 1693 until his death in 1743 when it passed to his oldest son, Holder Slocum. But Holder appears, according to Rev. Chalkley's story, to have been in charge of activities there in 1733 which included some kind of a farm.

Exploring Cuff Slocum's Book: The Exercise Book and Book of Accounts

ONE OF THE important sources of insight into the life of Cuff Slocum and his family is the document preserved at the New Bedford Free Public Library entitled "Exercise Book and Book of Accounts of Cuffe Slocum." For many years, this document was available to the public only on microfilm at the New Bedford Free Public Library, and it was very tedious to scroll through and analyze. But it was recently copied digitally and is now available on a number of websites.⁶¹ This has made it much easier to study the document in detail and compare the handwriting on different pages to gain a better comprehension of the contents.

An initial realization is that the entries were written not just by Cuff Slocum; clearly there are entries by others. The challenge, then, is to try to figure out who the other writers might have been and why their entries may have found their way into this particular notebook. Probably an even greater and more important challenge is to tease out the various bits of information contained in this document and put them into some kind of context of Cuff Slocum's life and those of his family's.

In the following discussion, we will look at the different styles of writing, then at the content of some of the excerpts, and finally mesh some of the messages with what we already know of Cuff Slocum's life. This first entry is an example of Cuff Slocum's writing and his typical pattern of practicing the writing of the alphabet.



– Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

Different writing styles

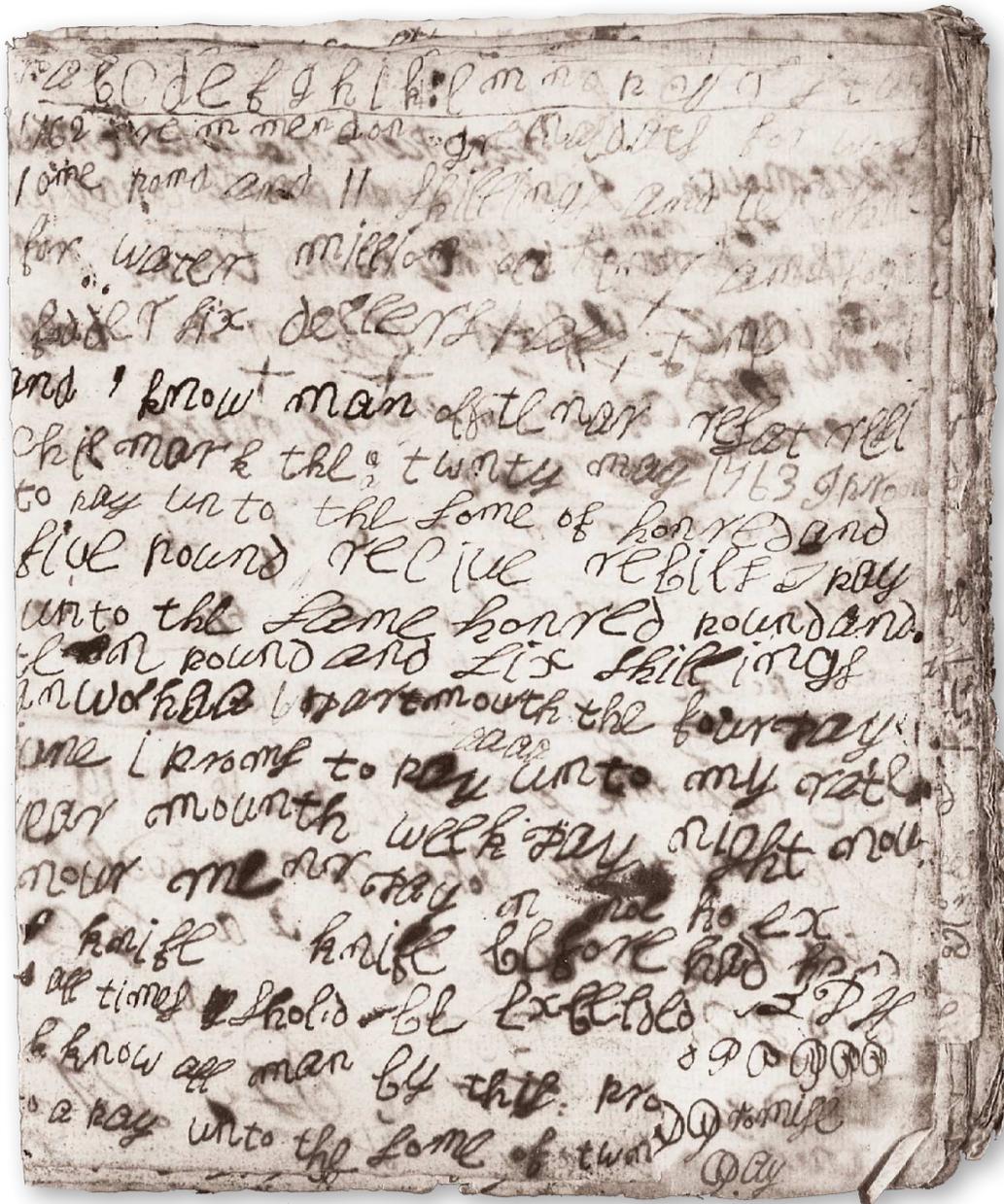
Copied below is the first page of Cuff Slocum's Exercise Book. It provides a good example of his writing both in terms of writing style and content. The style is rough and crude, but distinctly of his style as it shows up later in the book. In some cases, the entries are written in printed letters, and in others it is cursive. The content is typical in that it starts at the top with practice writing of the alphabet.

This is followed by numerous random entries, some of which appear to be practice exercises in writing some words. There are several references to pounds and shillings, which was the currency of his time, and also a reference to the town of Chilmark. Cuttyhunk at that time was a part of the town of Chilmark, so he was practicing writing the name of the town in which he lived.

One discernable phrase is: "I promise to pay," followed by undecipherable words. Below that is a practice line: "year month week day night."

On the opposite page, the excerpt is from later in the book. It contains at the top Cuff Slocum's usual practicing of the alphabet in mostly cursive lower-case letters, and in the next row, in capital letters.

The writing in the lower part of the page is distinctly different. It presents, in well-formed cursive writing, a listing of the birth dates of all ten children of Cuff



- Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

Building a house for Rebecca Slocum

In the next excerpts, we have two examples relating the same story. The first appears to be written by Cuff Slocum, whereas the second is by someone else with more skilled handwriting.

The two entries record that: “in 1764 Master Rebeker Slocum had a debt to Cuff for work on a house at Cutthunker.” Next comes this entry: When the house was raised, I was work three days for 9 shillings. Second time k fend come I work 5 days 15 shillings. When mason come I work 12 ½ day one pound 17 shilling 6 pence and my boy work 12 ½ days one pound 17sh 6 pence lawful money.” The final entry in the lower document, written in October of 1770, indicates a “Capen Potter debt to one gallon melon 13 4, two quart rum 9 s(hillings.)”

These entries provide a number of interesting insights:

- The house for Rebecca Slocum, widow of Holder Slocum, was built in 1764 on Cuttyhunk Island.
- Cuff Slocum helped to build the house but was not the primary builder.
- The principal builders probably came over to Cuttyhunk by boat from Dartmouth and brought the various building materials with them.
- Cuff and one of his sons, probably David, the eldest, helped a mason for 12 ½ days each.
- The rate of pay for both Cuff and his son was 3 shillings per day.
- Their total earnings for the work on the house was 4 pounds, 18 shillings, 12 pence, or nearly 5 pounds for 33 days of work.
- The price for two quarts of rum was 9 shillings, the equivalent of 3 days of work.

– Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

Who was Mary Prince?

On the next page, the Exercise Book shows that Cuff had a number of dealings with a woman named Mary Prince. She may have been a neighbor on Cuttyhunk or one of the nearby islands. His first transaction is for “fore shillings and six pence old (tenor).” On the next three lines: half boshil (bushel) flix (flax) seed done by 1764 25 day Mary Prince half boshil corn and five pounds

Chimark 1764 match brigly appen
for promy my wife to pay for your
board your and your mans for three
day board three pound of d

– Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

that someone had promised to pay Cuff Slocum’s wife “for your board and your mans for three days the amount of three pounds old tenor.” Given the year of this transaction, it raises the question as to whether these boarders might have been put up in Rebecca Slocum’s new cottage on Cuttyhunk and that Ruth Slocum prepared their meals. It seems very unlikely that they could have stayed in Cuff Slocum’s house with their nine children at that time. There is no indication as to who the boarder was, but he might well have been a friend of the Slocums staying in their house with their blessing.

An uncertain quotation

There are two excerpts from Cuff Slocum’s Exercise Book that have been quoted in writings about Paul Cuffe, which indicate the true nature and purpose of Cuff. The first, in Cuff’s own writing, says (as can best be determined): “Do

Do good to all and mind ^{whom} not to
1766 febray mary prime hat three

– Courtesy of the New Bedford Free Public Library

good to all and and mind.” Then written directly under that in more stylized script this is repeated: “Do good to all and mind not to.” Clearly, neither statement has been completed, so one can only guess what the remainder might have been.

Later in the exercise book there is an entry that may or may not be by the same writer, which says: “Do good all. Do good to all. Do good at all time, larn read. Cuffe Slocum mister.” It is this latter version that has been quoted and attributed to Cuff Slocum. But it is clearly not his handwriting. Whether it reflects something that he said to the writer or it was the writer’s interpretation and expansion of the phrase cited above is unclear, but the fact that it reflects Cuff Slocum’s philosophy is unquestioned.

New Revelations from Old Deeds: The Properties of Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer

OVER THE LAST few decades, there has been growing interest in and research on the lives of Paul Cuffe; his father, Cuff Slocum; and his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer. Various authors have speculated on where they lived and what properties they owned. As new sources have become available or more accessible, we have found that the properties attributed to the three of them have been incorrect in many cases. The most significant discovery is that the property at 1504 Drift Road in Westport, recorded as “Paul Cuffe’s Farm” on both the National Register of Historic Places and the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth was in fact not his farm/homestead. A portion of this paper is devoted to identifying his correct homestead.

The property holdings of Cuff Slocum have already been discussed in Chapter Five and will not be described here as they were in previous versions of this paper.⁶²

In the process of researching these matters, we spent considerable time in the Bristol County Registry of Deeds offices in Taunton and New Bedford as well as the Probate Records department in Taunton. We also collected much additional information that we felt shed light on not only the properties owned by Paul Cuffe, Cuff Slocum and Michael Wainer, but also on the families and activities of the prior and contemporary residents and property owners of the South Coast region of Massachusetts.

Herein we share that information along with our sources so that others who are interested can trace those records and verify or question our findings. Three other families, the Sowles (Soules), the Eddys, and the Allens, were particularly important to our research and we have added additional information about them in appendices.

Paul Cuffe’s Properties

There has been much conjecture and debate about where Paul Cuffe lived, where he had his docks and boatyards, and where his “homestead,” his windmill, salt works, “machine lot,” “Allen lot” and “meeting house” properties were located. Paul Cuffe owned many properties in Westport and Dartmouth during his lifetime, some of which were included in his will or in the later inventory of his estate, but the will and inventory do not provide information about their location. We have attempted to pin down the locations and uses of those properties. We note that his ownership of some of the properties was the result of mortgage-based loans he made to several widows of friends or relatives or business activities in which he was engaged.

An Overview

In the spring of 1767, as described previously, Paul Cuffe moved with his family to the farm that his father had recently purchased in Dartmouth (now Westport). That farm was most likely his home base for at least the next fifteen years.

He is recorded as living in an Indian Style house in 1783, the year he married Alice Abel Pequit. There is no record of how long he and Alice lived in that house, but a Caleb Briggs was living in that house in 1788, so by then they had moved elsewhere. Paul had inherited the western half of his father's farm, which included the house and barns. His mother had the right of occupancy on the property until she died in 1787, but Paul, Alice, and their growing family may well have resided in that farm home while his mother was still alive.

In 1789, two years after his mother's death, Paul purchased a small property from Isaac Soule on the west bank of the East Branch of the Acoaxet River, where he established his shipyard. He probably moved to a residence at or near that property by 1790, when he is recorded in the national census along with other neighboring families in that area. He had definitely built a substantial house there by 1798, when his residence is recorded as being valued at \$620 in a national tax assessment. He increased the size of this riverfront holding in 1800 by about one-half through a purchase from Lemuel Soule. He then increased this holding by four acres in 1813 by a purchase from David Soule and this remained his home-stead until he died in 1817. All of these acquisitions and holdings are described in greater detail below.

Paul and Alice (Pequit) Cuffe's Indian-Style House

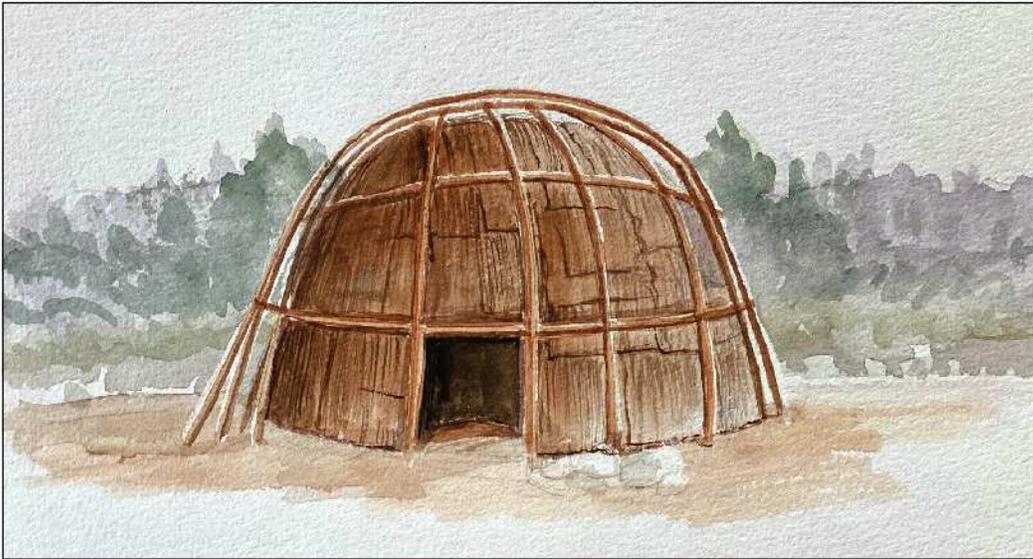
On February 25, 1783 Paul Cuffe and Alice Abel Pequit were officially married in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and on September 23rd of that year, they were recorded as living in an Indian-style house in a deed transferring a 600-acre property from Timothy Russell to William Snell.

This deed has very complicated lines and bounds, but it refers back to a 1772 survey of the property recorded in "The field notes" of Benjamin Crane, Benjamin Hamilton, and Samuel Smith. The field notes indicate that the survey of Timothy Russell's farm included the adjoining lots of John Russell.

The beginning of the statement of lines and bounds in the Russell to Snell deed states: "beginning at an old maple tree in the brook or ditch for a corner bound in Destruction Swamp." This deed later has the following provision:

The above bounds and lines include nine acres and a half over and above ye above said six hundred acres which...is not here conveyed. Three acres thereof I formerly sold to a Mullato man called Clarence Gray as reference being had to ye deed of conveyance thereof... Six acres thereof I have sold to James Fisher whereon said Fisher's dwelling house stands and is bounded off by deed as may appear. The other half-acre is that whereon an Indian Style house stands that Paul Cuff now lives in."

It is not possible to determine exactly where this Indian-style house was located, but it was probably near Destruction Swamp and Brook, along what is now known as Fisher Road, which may have some connection to James Fisher's



The Indian-style house where newlyweds Paul and Alice Cuffe lived may have looked like this wetu. – Watercolor by Raymond C. Shaw

dwelling house. It is also not clear whether Paul Cuffe owned this property or was just occupying a house on the property. The deed does not mention Paul Cuffe's ownership, as it does for the Gray and Fisher properties.

There is no record of how long Paul and Alice Cuffe lived in this house, but the Notebooks of Henry Worth record that in 1788 this "Indian House" was occupied by Caleb Briggs. In the 1790 census, Caleb Briggs was a neighbor to Henry Gidley, Elijah Macomber, Samuel Gidley, John Ricketson, James Fisher, Eliphalet Packard, Noah Packard, and Stephen Russell, all familiar names along Fisher Road north of Destruction Brook toward Gidley Town.

Paul Cuffe's Wharf and Shipyard

Paul Cuffe purchased his first property on the west bank of the East Branch of the Acoaxet River on March 19, 1789, from Isaac Sowle for four pounds, 18 shillings and 5 pence.

The property, carved out of the southeast corner of Isaac Sowle's homestead, contained 35 square rods (0.22 acres) and was bounded on the east by the East Branch of the Acoaxet River and on the south by land of Joseph Sowle, a distance of 8 3/4 rods, thence north 4 rods and thence east, in a line parallel to the south boundary, to the river. The direction of the south boundary is given as west 7 degrees north and the north boundary is parallel to it, or east 7 degrees south. The deed also granted Paul Cuffe an access way from his wharf along Isaac Sowle's south property line to Drift Way.

Eleven years later, in 1800, Paul Cuffe purchased an adjacent piece of property from Lemuel Sowle, the heir of Joseph Sowle and a first cousin of Isaac Sowle. This new property, carved out of the northeast corner of Lemuel Sowle's homestead, was approximately one-half the size of the previous purchase and thus increased the size of Paul Cuffe's dock and boat works by fifty percent. The combined properties had approximately 50 rods (0.31 acres), being 6 rods (100 ft) north to

Properties Purchased to Assist Widows of Friends or Relatives

Paul Cuffe, in his late years, provided financial assistance to several widows after their husbands had died. These properties ended up in his possession when he died in September 1817, and were included in his estate inventory and will.

The “Meeting House Lot” of Catherine Cook

The “Meeting House Lot” refers to a property that Paul Cuffe purchased from the widow Catherine Cook in 1816. She was selling this and another property to raise the funds needed to settle the estate of her late husband, Benjamin Cook. The property surrounded the Allens Neck Meeting House, which is still located at 739 Horseneck Road, in the town of Dartmouth.

In his will, signed April 18, 1817, Paul Cuffe “returned this property to the widow (Catherine Cook) and Benjamin’s heirs, they “paying what the land cost and interest.” It is not clear whether he meant for them to pay what he had paid for the property in 1816 or some other amount. It is clear from these several actions that Paul Cuffe was essentially helping out the widow and her family, including her son and his son-in-law, Pardon Cook, and his daughter, Alice Cook, and that he owned the property for a very limited period of time.

The John and Lucy Castino Property

Paul Cuffe’s acquisition of the Castino property was somewhat similar in purpose to that of Catherine Cook’s Meeting House lot. John Castino, son of Raymond Castino, both mariners, married Lucy Maccumber (Macomber), daughter of Noah Macomber, in June 1807. That same year, the couple purchased a lot of 40 rods from Nathaniel Sowle.

The property abutted the east branch of the Acoaxet River on the east, David Sowle’s property on the south, and Nathaniel Sowle’s property on the west and north. This David Sowle property was the same four-acre parcel that Paul Cuffe would buy for his homestead in 1813, as described previously. Thus, when Paul Cuffe acquired his homestead land, John and Lucy Castino were the abutters to the north, along the riverfront.

John Castino died, probably in early 1813, and his wife was appointed executor of his estate. On July 13, 1813, Lucy Castino sold this property to Paul Cuffe, who was the highest bidder in a public auction. She retained the right of dower and continued to reside in the house on this property.

In his will, probated in 1818, Paul Cuffe gave to his daughter, Mary Cuffe Phelps, and her heirs and assigns the house and lot of land that he had bought from Lucy Castino. On February 17, 1818, Alvin Phelps, husband of Mary Phelps, purchased Lucy Castino’s right of dower to this property.

The Deborah Sowle Property

Captain Ebenezer Vose Sowle died in May of 1814. In August of 1816, his widow, the administrator of his estate, sold a nine-acre property to Paul Cuffe for \$315, probably under a mortgage agreement to help provide funds for the widow.

The property is described as follows: “starting at a heap of stones by the wall in Pardon Kirby's line thence south eleven degrees and a half west about 32 rods to a heap of stones for a corner, thence east twelve degrees south 25 rods and 5 feet to the orchard wall, thence north eight degrees east 7 rods to the northwest corner of the orchard, thence east 18 degrees south 28 rods, 7 feet as the wall stands to Gideon Cornell's land thence north 18 degrees east 23 rods and 10 feet to Pardon Kirby's line, thence west 28 degrees north fourteen rods, thence west 14 degrees north in said Kirby's line to the first mention bounds. So, bounded by Pardon Kirby on the north, and probably the east by Gideon Cornell.”

The Deborah Sowle property was located on both sides of Drift Way, approximately one mile south of the Paul Cuffe homestead. This property was inherited by Paul Cuffe's daughter Alice Cuffe Cook, who built a house on the west side of the road.

Two Salt Meadows Near Horseneck

In 1812, Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer purchased a salt meadow from Robert Wilcox. It was located in the Horseneck area and adjoined the Let. It was bounded as follows:

beginning at a stake the edge of the upland, a bound between the meadow of Robert Giffords formerly from thence east forty degrees and half north by a range of stakes to the cove, then we begin again at said stake first mentioned, from thence east eight and twenty degrees south along by the edge of the upland thirty rods and one half to a stake, then southerly and easterly along by the edge of the upland or as the Return gives it, until we come parallel with the northwest corner of Jonathan Gifford's house thence east in the same range to shore or let, so-called. The meadow is bounded easterly on the let, northerly on Giffords, so called, westerly on the upland and southerly on Benjamin Wilcox meadow.

In 1816, Paul Cuffe purchased a second salt meadow in the Horseneck area from Jeffrey Wilcox for \$100. It was at a place called “The Opening,” and was bounded as follows:

Northward on the creek, westward on a lot of Salt Meadow now or formerly belonging to William Sanford, southward partly on the Sand Hills and the land formerly belonging to Salburys, easterly on meadow formerly belonging to George Allen now in the possession of the heirs of Benjamin Wilcox and for a more particular description reference may be had of the last will and testament of Joseph Allen in which he gave said lot of Meadow to his son Abner Allen; and said meadow was afterwards conveyed from said Abner to my honoured father William Wilcox of said Westport, deceased, and to his heirs.

The Windmill at the Point

This property apparently involved a lease of an existing windmill at Acoaxet (Westport) Point by Paul Cuffe, Washington Davis, and Samuel Hicks, from the owners, Philip and Humphrey Macomber, for \$120 for as long as they should continue to operate the mill.

The mill was located a little north of Charles Macomber's dwelling house. According to the report on the so-called Benjamin Hicks house at 1865 Main Road, Westport Point, submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Charles Macomber owned and resided in this house from 1794 to 1805. Thus, the mill was located on the property on the west side of Main Road, north of Cape Bial Lane, now 1853 Main Road. We have not found a record of the later disposition of this windmill by Cuffe, Davis, and Hicks; the length of time they may have operated it; or when it might have been dismantled.

Cuffe & Howards Store in New Bedford

Lamont Thomas (pp. 41-45) provides an informative discussion of the store that Paul Cuffe was engaged in at the corner of Water Street and Union Street in New Bedford with his two sons-in-law, Peter and Alexander Howard. Both Peter and Alexander were freed slaves, who had worked at Paul Cuffe's boatyard as skilled carpenters on construction of the ship *Alpha* in 1806. Soon thereafter, they married two of Paul and Alice Cuffe's daughters, Naomi (Sarah) and Ruth, and in 1809, they opened Cuffe & Howards store specializing in products from the West Indies.

The property was apparently rented from Seth Russell Sr., who had purchased the land from his father Joseph Russell III. Around 1820, the younger Russell sons, Seth Jr. and Charles, erected the Sundial Building at this location. After Peter Howard's death, his brother Alexander became partners with Richard Johnson. Following Alexander's death, his widow Ruth (Cuffe) married Johnson, who appears to have moved the business to South Water Street in New Bedford.

The Salt Works

Paul Cuffe entered into a joint business agreement with Joseph Tripp on April 21, 1817, to establish a 2,000-square-foot salt works on the eastern edge of Joseph Tripp's property.

They agreed that the salt works would be developed on land at the eastern-most part of Joseph Tripp's farm; that the cost of preparing the facilities would be shared; that Joseph Tripp would be responsible for managing the operation of the salt works; and that he, Tripp, would receive an annual rent of five dollars for the land plus one-fifth of the annual salt production.

This agreement was made only five months before Paul Cuffe's death and seems to suggest that the intention was to start the salt production by the summer of 1817. There is a provision in Paul Cuffe's will that his wife should receive the proceeds from this activity and that, in the event it was not functioning, she should receive an annual sum of one hundred dollars instead. This suggests that the expected income from Paul Cuffe's four-fifths' share of the production might have been a similar amount.

The property on which we believe the salt works was to be located was purchased by Joseph Tripp and his brother, Benajah, in two transactions. The first involved acquisition of a one-acre parcel from John Avery Parker, the wealthy shipbuilder, and his brother-in-law, Levi Standish, on August 22, 1816. The parcel was described as: "beginning at the southeast corner of David Kirby's land by the

been that during the period from 1792, when he sold the property at Russells Mills, until 1800, when he acquired the Eddy homestead, Michael was moving his investments from shipping into farmland, which he later sold to two of his sons.

Excerpts from Eight Property Deeds

- 1789, April 13, Edward Wing of Dartmouth, yeoman, to Michael Wainer of Dartmouth, NBRD, Book 12, p. 127:

"An Indian man" for £25 4 s. land in Dartmouth (sic), a "part of the land that I bought of William Ricketson," 9 acres, beginning in the north line of John Ricketson then east 17 degrees north 32 rods, then north 5.25 rods to David Wing, then west in Wing's line 39 rods, then 42 rods on a straight line to the point of beginning.

- 1792, April 4, Chistopher Slocum to Micel (Michael) Wainer, NBRD, Book 12, p. 533:

For £14 8s. paid by Mical Wainer of Dartmouth Mariner, 8 acres situated in Dartmouth, bounded as follows: beginning at the southwest corner of Samuel Macombers land, being also the northwest corner of this lot and thence south seven degrees and three quarters east in John Ricketsons line about 86 rods to a stake for the southwest corner thence east 7 degrees north about 15 rods to a stake for a southeast corner then begin again at Samuel Macombers corner first mentioned thence east seven degrees and a half north in said Macombers line about 15 rods to a stake for a northeast corner thence south seven degrees and 3/4 east parallel with the westerly line till it comes to the southeasterly corner aforementioned. bounded westerly on John Ricketson's land southerly on Jonathan Gifford's land easterly on my own land, northerly on Samuel Macomber's land."

Witnesses Christopher Slocum 2nd and Benj Russell.

Recorded 21 April 1793.

Note that in this deed, Michael Wainer is identified as a "mariner," whereas in most of the subsequent deeds he is identified as a "yeoman." At the time of this purchase, Michael and Paul Cuffe were commanding the ships that they jointly owned.

- 1793, Holder Slocum to Michael Wainer, NBRD, Book 13, p. 269:

Holder Slocum of Dartmouth, yeoman, for £25 10s, paid by Michael Wainer of Dartmouth, Mariner, a parcel of land situated in Westport, bounded off at the southwesterly corner of my land joining to Edward Wings land in manner following, beginning at the corner of the wall the southwest corner of my land thence north seven degrees and a half west thirty three rods and nine feet to a corner of the wall thence east seven degrees and a half north five rods and five feet to a stake, thence south seven degrees and a half east thirty three rods and nine feet to a stake in the south line of my land, thence on a strait line to the bound first mentioned.

25 January 1793, recorded 16 April 1794.

Holder and Abigail Slocum

Witnesses Edward Slead, Ackurs (sic) Sisson.

cove, then we begin again at said stake first mentioned, from thence east eight and twenty degrees south along by the edge of the upland thirty rods and one half to a stake, then southerly and easterly along by the edge of the upland or as the Return gives it, until we come parallel with the northwest corner of Jonathan Gifford's house thence east in the same range to shore or let, so-called. The meadow is bounded easterly on the let, northerly on Giffords, so called, westerly on the upland and southerly on Benjamin Wilcox meadow.

The following year, Michael Wainer purchased a small, irregular piece of farmland that abutted the southwest corner of his homestead farm from Charles Derrow as follows:

- 1813 Charles Derrow to Michael Wainer, NBRD, Book 21, p. 330:
Charles Derrow of Westport for \$202, paid by Michael Wainer of Westport yeoman, 5 acres 126 rods beginning at a corner of a wall thence west 15 degrees north forty one rods, thence south 15 degrees and 1/2 east six and 1/2 rods thence south 3 degrees west 18 rods thence east 15 degrees south 38 rods, thence north 7 degrees east 24 rods to the first mentioned bound, bounded westerly and southerly on John Davis land, easterly and northerly on the said Wainer's land.
– 4 June, 1813, recorded 28 April, 1814.

Michael Wainer died on August 4, 1815, and on October 29, 1816, Paul Cuffe was appointed executor of his will. Because Paul had been away on his last trip to Sierra Leone from December of 1815 to July of 1816, the executor responsibilities for Michael Wainer's estate were taken over by Anselm Bassett, Adam Gifford, and Daniel Wing.

In his will, Michael Wainer bequeathed to his widow, Mary White Wainer, and his last son, Rodney, the main farm house and land on both sides of Drift Way for their use and improvement until Rodney attained the age of 21. Eldest son Thomas received land on the east side of Drift Way at or near the southeast corner. Son Michael Wainer Jr. received land at the northwest section of the farm, and son Paul received land on the west side of Drift Way, bordering with Luthan Tripp to the north.

Summing Up Michael Wainer

Michael Wainer and Paul Cuffe were related by marriage and were close friends and partners in many ventures. Five of Michael and Mary Wainer's sons were ship captains who sailed on and captained ships owned by Michael and Paul. Paul's sister, Mary Slocum Wainer, died in 1804; Michael married Mary White in 1806, and they had one son, Rodney, in 1807.

A familial connection with the Michael and Mary Wainer homestead has been maintained over the years. Their descendants still own parts of the old farm property and recall visits to an old farmhouse on the west side of Drift Road when they were young. The property is now heavily overgrown with invasive plants and trees, but there is a burial plot surrounded by walls, some foundations, a fiberglass hull of an old sloop bearing the name "Wainer Truth" with a 1988 Massachusetts registration, and other testimonies to the legacy of this family.

Appendix A – Previous Owners of Cuffe and Wainer Properties

As part of an effort to identify the various properties in Westport and Dartmouth that were owned by Paul Cuffe and his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, we have searched through the deeds and wills to trace the prior owners back to the original purchases by the Plymouth Proprietors from the Wampanoag People. There are three families that we found to be of particular importance in this research—the Sowles, the Eddys, and the Allens. In the following sections we trace these three families' holdings.⁶³

Properties of the Sowles in Dartmouth—17th, 18th, and early 19th Centuries

George Sowle (ca. 1594-1680) was a passenger on the Mayflower and one of the 35 original proprietors of Dartmouth (Dartmouth Proprietary) who received one share (or 1/35th) of the distribution of 70,000 acres purchased from the Wampanoags in 1652. He lived and died in Duxbury, but he was one of the few original proprietors who did not sell off his share. He passed his share to two of his sons, Nathaniel and George.

In the Dartmouth Proprietors Land Records, there is the following entry:

George Sowles share...all that belongs to George Sowle share is yet in the Sowle hand or possession only 44 acres sold to Eleazer Slocum. To Nath. Sowle 1/2 of p(ro-prietor)'s share bearing date Jan. 22, 1658.

George Sowle divided his share in the Dartmouth Proprietary in 1658 between his two sons, Nathaniel (1637-1702) and George (1639-1704), who settled in Dartmouth and raised their families. Nathaniel's sons, Nathaniel, Silvanus, and Jacob (a fourth son, Miles, may have been mentally or physically handicapped), and George's sons, William and Nathan, and his daughter Mary's husband, Joseph Devol, received parts of the original land owned by George Sowle. In 1708, they set out the boundaries of each person's property. (See deed transcription, pp. 92–94)

Interestingly, in the 1708 division, the homesteads or probable dwelling places of three of these offspring were identified as follows:

- William² Sowle (son of George¹), west side of the Paskamansett River.
- Nathaniel² Sowle (son of Nathaniel¹), west side of the Acoaxet River.
- Nathan² Sowle (son of George¹), west side of the Acoaxet River.

There is no mention of a homestead or dwelling place for Jacob, Silvanus, or Miles Sowle. In the division, Nathaniel's sons were granted properties next to William's homestead on the Paskamansett River, and George's sons were given some properties on the Acoaxet River.

There were three large properties shown as belonging to the Sowles on the Crane maps of the west side of the east branch of the Acoaxet—now Westport—River. Two are roughly rectangular and the third is shaped like a slice of pie, with the broad end along the bank of the river and the narrow end up near what is now Main Road. The southern parcel is recorded as 132 acres belonging to Nathaniel³ Soule (Nathaniel², George¹) on Feb. 25, 1742–43. The middle parcel went to George's son Nathan³ (George², George¹), who passed it on to his two sons, John⁴

and Timothy⁴ (Nathan³, George², George¹), and they are recorded as the owners of 129 acres as of March 22, 1742-43 on the Crane maps. The northern parcel went to Jacob³ Soule (Nathaniel², George¹) (1687–1747-48) and consisted of 145 acres.

The Jacob Soule property (homestead), as shown on the Crane maps, had a northern boundary recorded as East 10° north, and the south boundary as East 17° south. Thus, there was a 27° difference in the boundaries of the pie. These radial lines were carried over into many of the subsequent divisions of this property and are helpful in identifying which properties were part of the Jacob Soule homestead.

Jacob Soule divided his property among his four surviving sons, Joseph (1710/11-1793), Nathaniel (1717/18-1769), Benjamin (1719-1803), and Stephen (1726/7-1789). Stephen received the western tip of the pie, Joseph the southern portion, Nathaniel the middle portion, and Benjamin the northern portion.

Property holdings on the Noquochoke River, circa 1714 (see Endnotes).

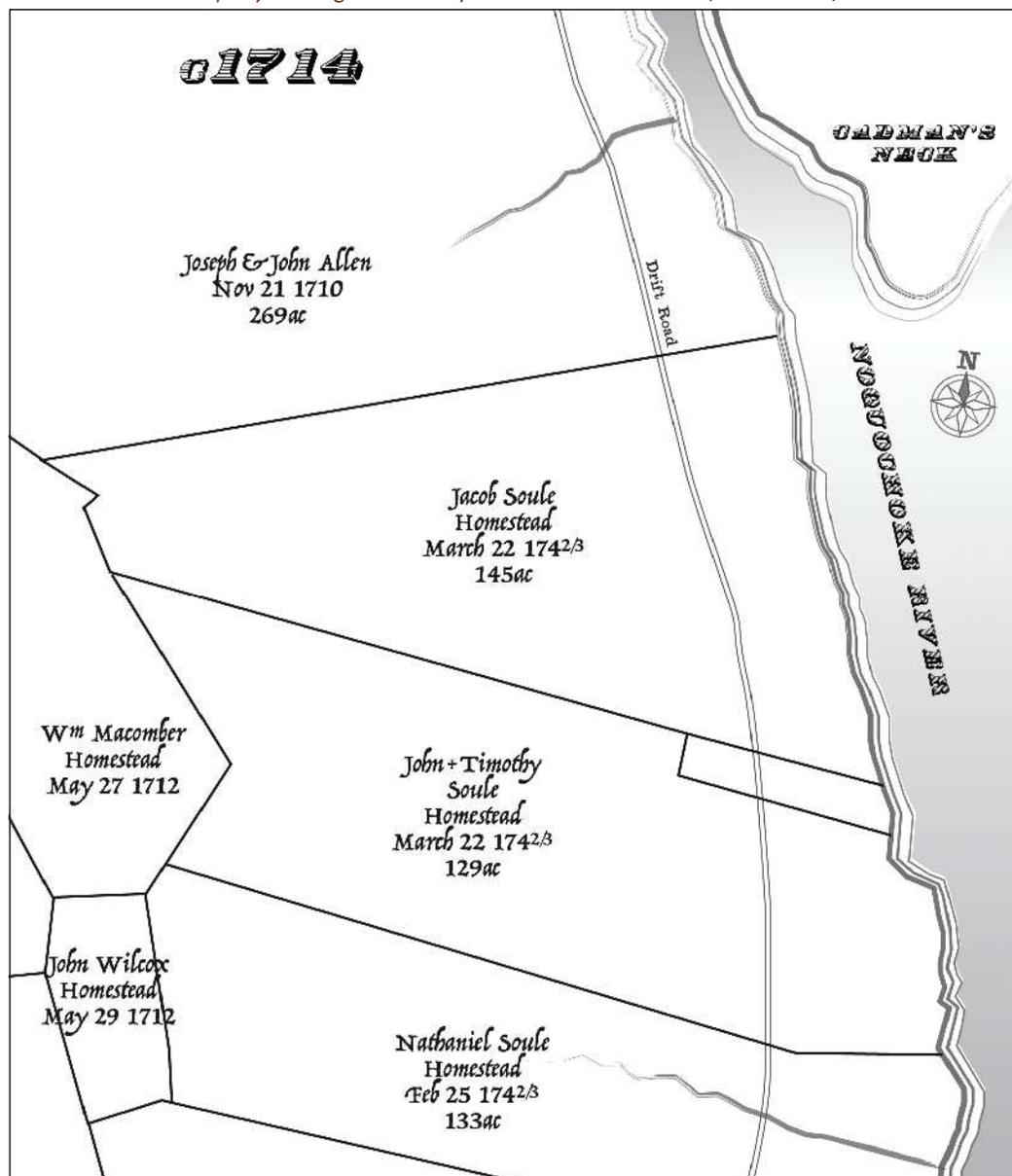


Illustration by Raymond C. Shaw; based on Crane Maps

Nathaniel⁴ Sowle had only one son, Isaac⁵ (1742-1791), who inherited his father's farm. It was Isaac Sowle who sold to Paul Cuffe the first segment of his wharf in 1789, a 35-rod parcel cut out of the southeast corner of his homestead property on the bank of the east branch of the Westport River.

After Isaac died, his property was divided among his wife, Sarah, and four children: David, b. 1766, Nathaniel b. 1772, Martha b. 1769, and Phebe b. 1778. An 1813 deed records that David Sowle sold to Paul Cuffe a parcel of more than four acres adjacent to his wharf, which became Paul's homestead.

Joseph Sowle (1710/11-1793) also had only one son who grew to maturity, Lemuel (1745-1814), and it was he who sold a second parcel of 15 rods to Paul Cuffe in 1800, which increased the size of the latter's wharf area on the Westport River by about fifty percent to 50 square rods or 0.31 acres.

Between 1796 and 1802, there were a number of property transactions involving various Sowles or those who bought property from Sowles and then resold those properties within a year or two. A list of these transactions is presented below:

Soule and Allen Family Properties along East Branch of the Acoaxet River, 1725-1750,

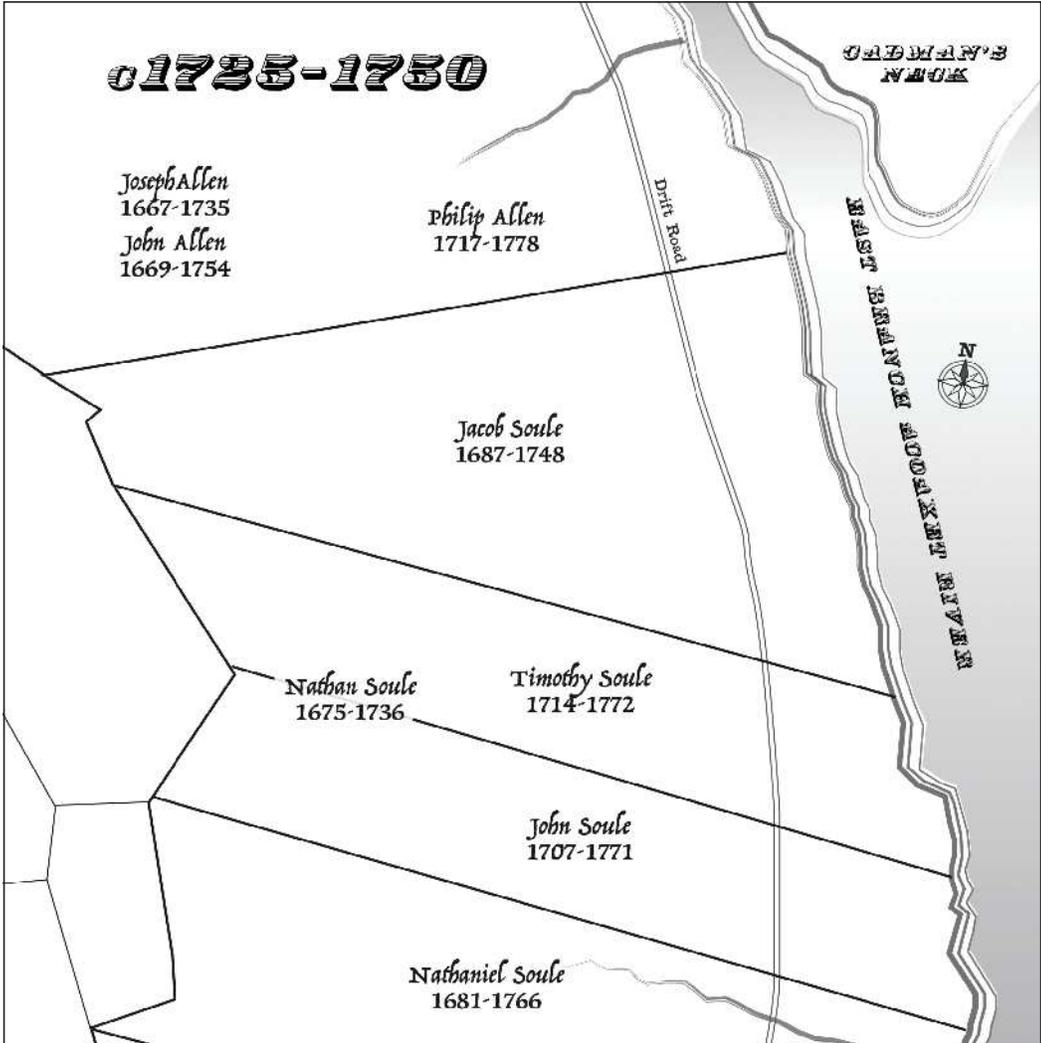


Illustration by Raymond C. Shaw; based on Crane Maps

Paul Cuff agrees to make and maintain at his own expense a good and lawful fence around the whole of said lot that adjoins the said Lemuel Sowle's land.

- 1801 Book 16, p. 36. *Lemuel Sowle to Robert Earl, \$100: 25 acres. Beginning at northeast corner of land sold to John Davis, then north as the wall stands 36 rods [594 feet] to Paul Cuff's land, then west in Paul Cuff's and Wesson Kirby's line to the northeast corner of Michael Wainer, then south along Michael Wainer's line to the northwest corner of John Davis, then east to the point of beginning. Bounded east on Luthan Tripps property, north on Paul Cuff and William Kirby's properties, west on Michael Wainer's property and south on John Davis's property.*

The Paul Cuffe land that this deed refers to is the Allen Lot, and the Michael Wainer land is the western part of his homestead, formerly the Eddy homestead. This is also the western part of the Benjamin Sowle property that Lemuel Sowle purchased in 1796.

- 1801 Book 16, p. 42. *Lemuel Sowle to Humphrey Howland, \$3360: 66 acres, homestead farm of Lemuel Sowle. Bounded south on Daniel Tripp's and Michael Wainer's properties, west on Michael Wainer's property, north on the property of the heirs of Isaac Sowle and east on Paul Cuff's property and the river.*

This farm centered on the farmhouse now in ruins at 1461 Drift Road. Lemuel Sowle inherited this house from his father, Joseph, who built it circa 1750. In the WHC Inventory, it is mistakenly identified as the house of Benjamin Sowle, who, as stated above, lived some distance north on a farm of equal acreage. The will of Joseph Sowle provided for the establishment of a family cemetery, likely the "Tillinghast Tripp" cemetery along the west side of Drift to the south of the house, and Joseph and his wife probably account for two of the unmarked stones in the front row. Quaker records note that Benjamin Sowle and his wife are buried on the Joseph Sowle farm as well.

The following year, Humphrey Howland sold this property to Daniel, Luthan, and Tillinghast Tripp by deed registered in Book 18, p. 496-7, NBRD. All three of these Tripps were immediate neighbors and close friends of Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer.

- 1801 Book 16, p. 49. *Lemuel Sowle to Raimon Castino, 46 rods for \$30: Beginning at Wesson Allen's northeast corner bound from thence westerly in said Wesson's line 12 rods 4 ft to Wesson's northwest corner bounds from thence North one degree east four rods to a stake with stones about it from thence east four degrees north to ye wall thence as said wall runs to the river. Right to pass and repass on grantors land to driftway. Must make and maintain a lawful fence. Abutters: Lemuel Sowle on North and West, river on East and Wesson Allen on South.*
- 1801 Book 16, p. 51. *Lemuel Sowle to John Davis, 25 rods [sic; actually 25 acres]: Beginning at Daniel Tripps's southwest corner, then north 13.00" west by Tripp 36 rods [594 feet], then west 6.30" south 66 rods [1089 feet], then south 12.00" east along Wainer's line until it meets the northwest corner of the Isaac Sowle heirs, then east along the line of Isaac Sowle's heirs to the point of beginning, bounded east*

Allen, easterly on property of David Allen and the river, southerly on property of Daniel Tripp and westerly on property of Lemuel Sowle.

- 1801 Book 16, p. 55. *Lemuel Sowle to Wesson Allen \$30: 46 rods, Beginning at northeast corner of Isaac Sowle heirs, then west 11 rods and 12 feet [192.5 feet] to Allen's cross wall, then north 1.00" east 4 rods and 1 foot [67 feet], then east 4.00" north along the wall to the river, bounded east by the river, south by property of Isaac Sowle's heirs, west property of Lemuel Sowle and north property of Raimon Castino.*
- 1801 Book 16, p. 56. *Lemuel Sowle to David Allen, \$34: 48 rods [0.3 acres], Beginning at Paul Cuffe's southeast corner, then west 12 rods and 12 feet [210 feet] to a cross wall, then south 13 degrees east 4 rods and 2 feet, then east 11.30 degrees north to the river, bounded north on property of Paul Cuffe, east by the river, south and west by the property of Luthan Tripp.*

Division of the Estate of Isaac Sowle in 1807

- 1807 Book 18, p. 432.
Division of the estate of Isaac Sowle, 66 acres, bounded north by property of John Davis and Daniel Tripp, east by the river, south by property of Paul Cuffe, Luthan Tripp and Tillinghast Tripp, and west by property of Michael Wainer.
1st parcel: To widow, Sarah Sowle. 22 acres, bounded north by John Davis, east by Nathaniel Sowle, south by David Sowle and Luthan Tripp, west by Phebe Sowle Anthony. Beginning at northwest corner of meadow adjoining east side of highway at corner of Daniel Tripp, then S 13.00' E 31 rods and 3 feet [514.5 feet] to a corner of a stone wall; W 5.00' N 33 rods [544.5 feet] to a corner; S 8.00" Wt 3 rods [49.5 feet]; W 90.00' 21 rods [346.5 feet] to the northwest corner of a meadow; South to Luthan Tripp's line; West along Tripp's line 40 rods [660 feet]; North to John Davis; East along Davis' line to the point of beginning.
2nd parcel: to son, David Sowle: Beginning at a rock on the river at the Nathaniel Sowle SE corner, then W 3.00' S to a heap of stones by a wall on the west side of the driftway at the SW corner of Nathaniel Sowle, then N 21.00' W 19 rods [313.5 feet], then W 5.00' S 33 rods [544.5 feet], then S 8.00' W 3 rods [49.5 feet] [this is notch still visible on the north boundary of 1415 Drift], then South to Tripp's line, then East to Paul Cuffe's land [at the junction of the Lemuel Sowle lot NW corner and Isaac Sowle lot SE corner] Bounded E on the river, S on Paul Cuffe and Luthan Tripp, W on Sarah Sowle, N and E on Nathaniel Sowle
3rd parcel to son, Nathaniel Sowle: beginning at Daniel Tripp's boundary at the river, then W 49 rods [808.5 feet] to the NW corner of a meadow on the east side of the driftway, then S 15.00' E 31 rods and 3 feet [514.5 feet], then S 20.00' E 19 rods [313.5 feet] to a heap of stones for a southwest corner, then E 3.00' N to a rock by the river. Bounded east on the river, south on David Sowle, west on David Sowle and Sarah Sowle and north on Daniel Tripp.
4th parcel to daughter, Phebe Sowle Anthony: the remaining part of the Isaac Sowle homestead consisting of 15 acres at the west end of the property.

following that is to say to begin at a white oak tree which is a bound of said lott of land and to run north 19 degrees 1/2 westerly 2 rods and 1/2 to a stake by the marsh and from thence to run west 19 degrees and 1/2 southerly through the lott to the road. All on the southerly side of said line to belong to said Nathaniel, Jacob and Miles and further we have set out and divided unto the said Nathaniel, Jacob and Miles all the upland between the last mentioned line and the salt marsh meadow that lies below the swamp or bog joining to the meadow with so much of the said swamp as to take in part of the water that is in said swamp and near the meadow with one rod wide of upland on the west side of said swamp for a conveniency to come to said water.

Thirdly all the remainder of said lott on the west side of Pascomanset River to William Soul.

Fourthly we set out and parted unto said William Soul the southerly part of the land that lies on the west side of Coaxet River where the said Nathaniel and Nathan Soul now dwell to be parted from the rest as follows: to begin at the northwesterly corner of that parcell of land supposed to belong to Increase Allen at a stake which is a bound of our said land and is from the land of William Woods 140 rod distant on a north 16 degrees easterly course and from said stake to run on the same course, viz. north 16 deg. easterly 87 rods & 1/3 to a stake and from thence to run west 16 degrees northerly across the lott unto the line at the Road. All on the southerly side of said line to belong to said William Soul.

Fifthly, we have set out and parted unto the above said Nathaniel Soul, Jacob Soul, Miles Soul that part whereon the said Nathaniel Soul now lives to be divided and parted from the rest in manner following, viz. to begin at a heap of stones below the now dwelling house of said Nathaniel Soul, which is reputed to be an ancient bound erected by our fathers aforesaid for a dividing bound between their land and to run south 17degrees westerly 119 rods 14 yards for the width of this part and home to said Allens land, then begin again at a heap of stones and measured east 1/2 degree southerly 40 rods to a heap of stones and from thence north 30 degrees easterly 3 rods to the edge of the bank and so on the same course into the creek then from the first mentioned heap of stones west 17 degrees northerly through the lott unto the head. All the land between these lines and the last land divided unto William Soul and the land of said Allen to belong to them the said Nathaniel Soul, Jacob and Miles Soul.

Sixthly, we parted and set out to Nathan Soul that part whereon he now dwells to begin at said ancient bounds and to extend South 17 degrees easterly 103 rods and 1/3 lacking a foot to a heap of stones for the width of his said part and from them east 17 degrees southerly to the water and then west 17 degrees northerly from the bank 276 rods into the edge of the flag Swamp and from thence north 17 degrees easterly 26 rods & 1/2 and one foot and from thence west 17 degrees northerly unto the aforesaid lines, these lines to be the northerly extent of said Nathan's part.

Seventhly we parted and set out for Joseph Devol a piece joyning to said Nathan Souls and on the northerly side being in width 16 rods & 1/2 and 1 foot extending

In 1757, Ichabod Eddy of Dartmouth bought a third tract of land, this one containing 19 acres, from Wesson Soule for £20.⁶⁵ This tract was bounded on the north by Ichabod Eddy's own land; on the east by John Soule's land; on the south, partly by Nathaniel Soule's homestead and partly by John Soule's land; and westerly by land belonging to Robert Crossman. Thus, this was probably an addition on the south side of the original purchase in 1747 from Timothy Soule. It too was inland being at the west end of John Soule's land.

These three tracts totaled about 175 acres, with Ebenezer Eddy's homestead property and residence probably in the original tract. It was from these three tracts that the 100-acre parcel purchased by Paul Cuffe in 1799 and resold to Michael Wainer⁶⁶ in 1800 was carved out.⁶⁷

In 1776, Phillip Allen sold two 20-acre parcels to Ichabod Eddy⁶⁸ and to his son, Henry Eddy.⁶⁹ The price for each was £100. They were parallel lots fronting easterly on the river. Ichabod's was the southern parcel, and it was bounded on the south by Benjamin Soule's land and on the north by Henry Eddy's land; both lots were bounded on the west and north by Phillip Allen's land. The sequence by which this property came into the ownership of Phillip Allen is described below. In 1799, Ebenezer Eddy, sold this 40-acre property, which he had inherited from his father, Ichabod Eddy, to Paul Cuffe.⁷⁰

Appendix C – Tracing the Origins of the “Allen Lot”

These notes seek to provide the background of the so-called “Allen lot” that was purchased by Paul Cuffe from Ebenezer Eddy in 1799.

Ralph Allen (1615-1691) came from Sandwich to Dartmouth in about 1663 and purchased large tracts of land, around what was later called Allens Pond, from Governor Bradford's widow, Alice; from Constant Southworth; and from Sarah Warren.⁷¹ He distributed these tracts among his several sons: Benjamin, Increase, John, Zachariah, Joseph, and Ebenezer. Their holdings in the early eighteenth century can be seen on the maps derived from the field notes of Benjamin Crane, Benjamin Hammond, and Samuel Smith (henceforth known as Crane records).

The line of descent from Ralph Allen to Philip Allen, who sold the property to the Eddys in 1776, ran through his son, Joseph, (1642-1704) and Joseph's sons, Joseph (1667-1735) and John (1669-1754). These latter two Allens, Joseph and John, are frequently listed as J & J Allen in the Crane records. They owned a large 800-acre tract on the west side of the Acoaxet or east branch of the Westport River running from Main Road to the river, lying between two large tracts belong to Jacob Soule on the south and Joseph Peckham on the north, and opposite Cadman's Neck.

Joseph Allen (1667-1735) apparently was never married and had no children, so that his joint holdings seem to have passed to his younger brother, John. John Allen (1669-1754) married a cousin, Deborah Allen, and they had three children, only one of whom, Philip Allen (1717-1778), was a male.

By his will dated 9 November, 1751,⁷² John Allen appointed his son, Philip, as executor, and after granting some household items to his two daughters, Hannah Russell and Deborah Cornell, granted all the remainder part of his estate both real and personal in the township of Dartmouth to his son, Philip.

These properties probably included the tract mentioned above on the western shore of the Acoaxet River. This is the line by which Philip came to have a sizable holding of land in this area from which he sold two 20-acre adjacent tracts to Ichabod Eddy and Henry Eddy in 1776, two years before his death.⁷³ These two tracts were at the southeast corner of Philip Allen's holdings at that time as his property is cited as bounding the two Eddy tracts on the west and north, with the river on the east and Benjamin Soule's property on the south.

After Ichabod Eddy's death in 1795, his widow granted all rights of dower to her two sons, Zephaniah and Ebenezer Eddy.⁷⁴ There is a series of deeds in that same year that transferred the rights of several Eddy family members to Ebenezer Eddy as follows:

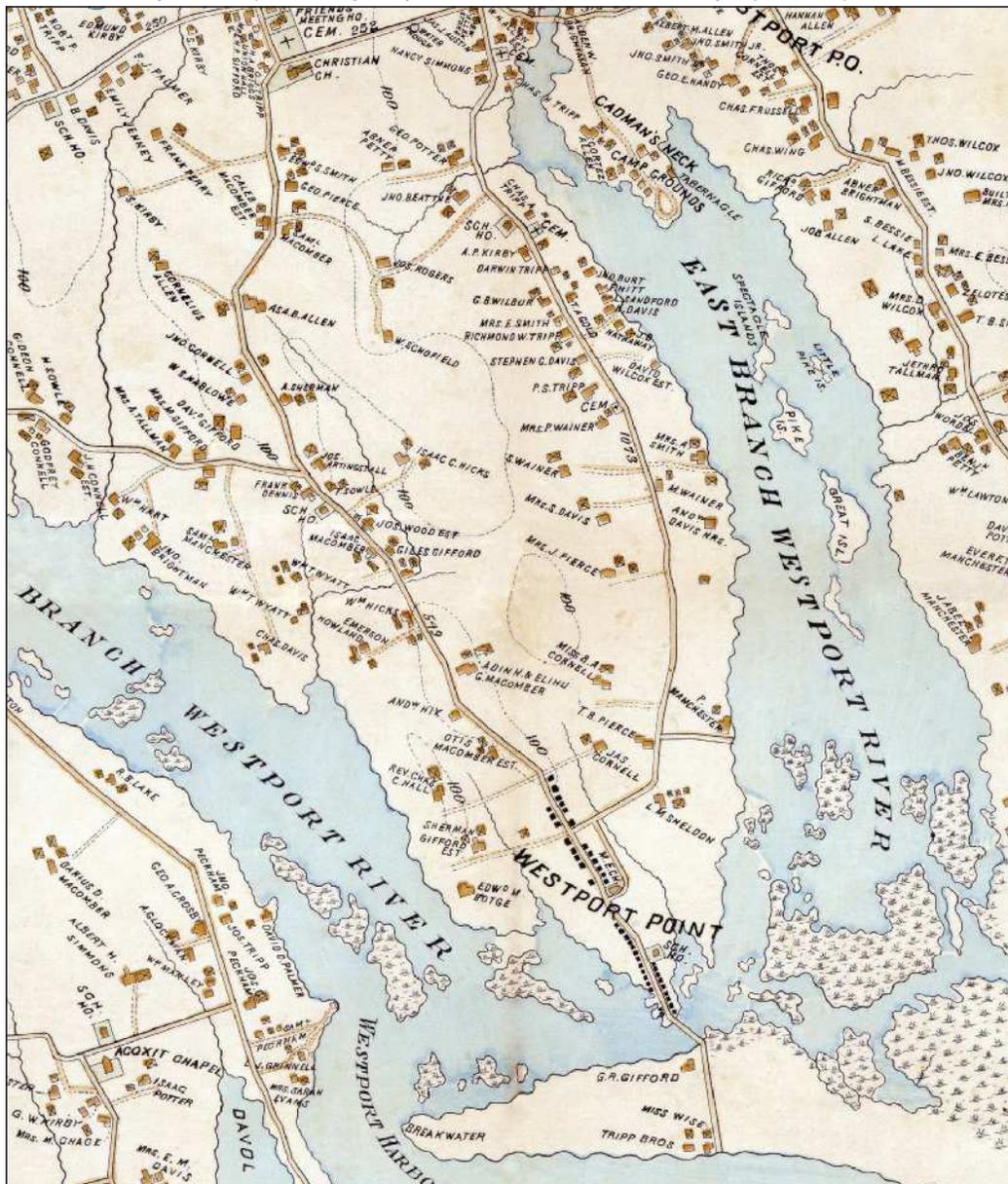
- *Zephaniah Eddy to Ebenezer Eddy for \$290, land left to Zephaniah by his father, Ichabod, namely, "All my lands which I bought of Philip Allen lying east of Drift Way together with all lands I bought of my son Henry, lying eastward of Drift Way both of which lieth together bounded east by the river and west by Drift Way."*⁷⁵
- *Henry and Ruth Eddy of Easttown, New York, to Ebenezer Eddy for \$1,000, 20 acres bounded north by Daniel Tripp's land, East the River, South John Davis land and west by Drift Way, adjoining Ebenezer Eddy's land, with buildings, wharfs, etc.*
- *Nathan Eddy of Easttown, New York, to Ebenezer Eddy for \$650, 60 acres, willed to him by his father, Ichabod Eddy, bounded north by Wesson Kirby's land, East by Isaac Soule heirs and Samuel Soule, South by Zephaniah Eddy and west by Benjamin Soule, Jacob Soule and Oliver Soule.*

The first of these appears to refer to the 40-acre "Allen Lot." The second and third appear to refer to two parts—20 plus 60 acres—of the 100-acre property that Ebenezer Eddy sold to Paul Cuffe in 1799, which Paul, in turn, sold to his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, in 1800. The missing 20 acres of this 100-acre tract may be the tract referred to in the second item above as "adjoining Ebenezer Eddy's land," indicating that Ebenezer had already acquired it in his father's will.

Notes

1. The story of this project in the district of Abyei in Sudan is told in the book by David Cole and Richard Huntington, *Between a Swamp and a Hard Place: Developmental Challenges in Remote Rural Africa*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1997.
2. Fyfe, Christopher. A *History of Sierra Leone*. Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 1962. p. 105.
3. Wilson, Ellen Gibson. *Loyal Blacks*. New York, Capricorn Books, 1976.
Wilson, Ellen Gibson. *John Clarkson and the African Adventure*. London, MacMillan Press, 1980; Thomas, Lamont D. *Rise to Be a People: A Biography of Paul Cuffe*. Urbana and Chicago, Univ. of Ill. Press, 1986; Braidwood, Stephen J. *Black Poor and White Philanthropists: London' Blacks and the Foundation of the Sierra Leone Settlement 1786-1791*. Liverpool University Press, 1994; Clifford, Mary Louise. *From*

The Cuffes and Wainers established themselves along the western shore of the East Branch of the Westport River from just below Cadmen's Neck to halfway to Westport Point.



—from 1871 Map of Westport, Library of Congress

- Slavery to Freetown: Black Loyalists after the American Revolution.* Jefferson, North Carolina, McFarland & Co. 1999; Campbell, James. *Middle Passages: African American Journeys to Africa, 1787-2005.* New York, The Penguin Press, 2006; Schama, Simon. *Rough Crossings: The Slaves, the British, and the American Revolution.* New York, HarperCollins, 2006. (Paperback); Pybus, Cassandra. *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty.* Boston, Beacon Press, 2006; Sidbury, James. *Becoming African in America: Race and Nation in the Early Black Atlantic.* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.
4. The discussion in this section draws heavily on Braidwood and on Pybus, Chps. 5 and 7.
 5. Peterson, John. *Province of Freedom: A History of Sierra Leone 1787-1870.* London, Faber and Faber, 1969. p.17. Clifford, *From Slavery to Freetown*, p.70 claims that "an eminent English Quaker doctor and abolitionist, Dr. John Fothergill, sent Smeathman to Sierra Leone in 1771 to examine the possibility of establishing plantations there using black labor from England."
 6. Fyfe, *History*, p. 15.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid. p. 16.
 9. Peterson, *Province of Freedom*, p.23.
 10. Fyfe, p.19.
 11. Peterson, p.27.
 12. This section draws heavily on Pybus, Chps. 9 and 11.
 13. Ibid. p. 80.
 14. Ibid. p. 127
 15. Ibid. Chp. 9.
 16. The most extensive discussion of the Maroons and their role in Sierra Leone that I have found is in C. Fyfe, *History*, Chps. III and IV. See also Schama, *Rough Crossings*, pp. 390-97, where he describes the Maroon history as "a strange, sad epic." Mavis Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796*, provides an interesting history of these ex-slaves before they came to Sierra Leone.
 17. Fyfe, *History*, p.114.
 18. Peterson, p.21.
 19. Peterson, p.27.
 20. Pybus, p. 149.
 21. Pybus, p. 153 ff.
 22. Ibid.
 23. This process of deterioration is aptly described in Pybus' Chp. 11, entitled, "Promises Unfulfilled in Sierra Leone," and Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks*. Chp. 15, entitled, "The Pursuit of Promises" and Chp. 19, entitled, "The Law of the Settlers."
 24. Peterson, p. 63.
 25. Ibid. p. 80.
 26. This section relies heavily on Thomas, Chps. 7-9, and Sidbury, pp. 145, ff.
 27. Sidbury, p. 151.
 28. Thomas, p. 55. Macaulay, an ex-Governor of Sierra Leone, much disliked by the Nova Scotians, had returned to London and taken up the position of honorary secretary of the African Institute.
 29. Sidbury, p. 154.
 30. Ibid. p. 155.
 31. Ibid.
 32. Ibid. Also see the log of Paul Cuffe's trip to Washington to meet President Monroe in Wiggins, *Captain Paul Cuffe's Logs and Letters*, pp. 208-218.
 33. Ibid. p. 160.
 34. Ibid. pp. 163-4.
 35. Paul Cuffe Papers, item 815.
 36. Ibid. Items 81-103.
 37. Ruth Cuffe's statement is presented and analyzed in Chapter Six.
 38. A copy of the bill of sale is available on the <paul-cuffe.org> website in the Documents section.
 39. Alice Forbes Howland's, *Three Island: Pasque, Nashawena, Penikese*, 1964, has the following statement: "in 1751 Holder (Slocum) also acquired all the land on Nashawena, Cuttyhunk and Penikese," p. 60.
 40. Intentions of Marriage. Paul Cuffe Manuscript Collection (PCMC), New Bedford Free Public Library (NBFPL), Book 1, Frames 79-102.
 41. Records of Town of Dartmouth, Marriages, 1667-1787 and Deaths, 1687-1781, p. 48.
 42. Pierce and Segel, Vol. II, p.197.
 43. None of the children other than David appear in the vital records of either Dartmouth or Chilmark, so there is no specific record as to where they were born, but other records of the family seem to indicate that they were living on Cuttyhunk from sometime in 1750-51 until they moved to Dartmouth in 1767.
 44. See Salvador, George. *The Black Yankee*. (1969), p. 12. And Thomas, Lamont. *Rise to Be a People*. (1986), p.5.
 45. See Howland, Ibid., and Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983.
 46. See the inventory of the estate of Rebecca Slocum, Probate records for Bristol County, Taunton, MA. Items 1054-1094
 47. Deed recorded in Town of Glocester, RI. Registry of Deeds Book 7, p. 252,

April 7, 1762. The deed was originally drawn up in Dartmouth, MA before Benjamin Akin, Justice of the Peace. The Lapham family was among the early settlers in Dartmouth and were staunch Quakers. Nicholas Lapham was probably a friend of Holder and John Slocum—both involved in helping Cuff Slocum gain his freedom.

48. Information on property transactions in Gloucester,

RI was obtained from the Gloucester town historian.

49. During the colonial period, British authorities adopted a “mercantilist” trade policy designed to restrict the outflow of their coinage. This policy was applied also to the North American colonies which resulted in a shortage of English money in the colonies. As a substitute the colonies made use of the Spanish milled silver

dollar that was minted in Mexico and other Spanish colonies in South America. Colonial authorities sought to maintain a stable exchange rate between the English pound and the Spanish dollar but this proved difficult and the exchange rates fluctuated over time and differed in the several colonies. See Jordan, Louis, “Colonial Currency” website.

50. PCMC, Scrap Book, p. 10.

Detail of Buzzards Bay on this 1776 Map of New England shows Nashawena Island identified as “Slokums Island.” The Slocum homestead was located near “Slokums Harbor” at the mouth of the Paskamansett River.



From a colonial map of New England, 1771-1776, Library of Congress

51. Enos Gifford purchased this and other adjoining properties from his father Christopher Gifford for £1,000 in 1736 (New Bedford Registry of Deeds [NBRD]) Book 4, p. 136. He sold this 120-acre property to Solomon Southwick of Newport, RI for 500 Spanish milled dollars on April 3, 1763 (NBRD, Book 7, p. 251); and Solomon Southwick sold the same property to David Brownell for 326 Spanish milled dollars on February 5, 1765 (NBRD, Book 8, p. 142).
52. The agreement to supply shingles to re-shingle the house is recorded in the PCMC Book 1, p. 8.
53. 1759, Enos Gifford to Rachel Wilbour, Bristol County Registry of Deeds (BCRD), Book 47, p. 240. Enos Gifford to Dorcas Manchester, (BCRD, Book 5, p. 537.)
54. It is probable that this Jonathan Soule, born in Dartmouth, December 10, 1710, and died there October 17, 1779, was a grandson of an original Mayflower settler, George Soule, who had also been one of the original proprietors who acquired large tracts of land along the South Coast from the Wampanoags in 1652. Source: Sprague, Waldo Chamberlain, "The Dartmouth Branch of the Soule Family," in *The American Genealogist*, Volume, 39, #12 (January 1963).
55. Gradoia, Eric, "Remarks on the Cuffe Slocum house, 761 Old County Road, Westport, Massachusetts." Report prepared for the Westport Historical Society in 2016.
56. See also Wertz, Richard, *The Head of Westport: A Brief History and a Walking Tour Guide to Its Historic Houses*. Westport Historical Commission, rev. ed. from 2009, p. 34.
57. A plan for crop planting was drawn up by John Slocum in 1780 showing a pattern for planting seeds four feet apart in mounds, 160 mounds per acre. This may have been for corn fields. See PCMC, item 18.
58. In modern times there is a very popular fruit farm, Dartmouth Orchards, located one mile to the east on Old County Road.
59. Pierce, Andrew, and Segel, Jerome. *Wampanoag Families of Martha's Vineyard*, Heritage Books, 2016, p.197.
60. Bristol County Probate Records, Vol. 22-23, 1771-1775, Item 125-126, pp. 225-227.
61. The most easily accessible site is the Town of Westport, Massachusetts website: Historical Documents: Paul Cuffe Personal and Family Papers: Items 81 to 103.
62. This chapter presents a modified version of a paper entitled: "New Revelations from Old Deeds: The Property Holdings of Cuff Slocum, Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer" by David C. Cole, Richard Gifford and Betty F. Slade, with maps by Raymond C. Shaw, presented at the symposium, *Paul Cuffe (1759-1817) Following His Footsteps*, Westport, September 16, 2017.
63. Spelling of the name Soule is sometimes Soule or Soul. In this text we have used whichever spelling was used in the underlying document or map.
64. NBRD, 1747, Book 5, p. 474. Timothy Soule (1714-1772) was a son of Nathan (1680-1736), a grandson of George (1639-1704) and a brother of John (1707-1771).
65. NBRD, 1757, Book 7, pp. 66-67. Wesson Soule (1735-1825) was a son of Nathaniel (1681-1766), and grandson of Nathaniel (1637-1699 or 1702?).
66. NBRD, 1800, Book 16, p. 390.
67. NBRD, 1799, Book 15, p. 169.
68. NBRD, 1776, Book 10, pp. 16-17.
69. NBRD, 1776, Book 10, p. 17
70. NBRD, 1799, Book 15, p. 170.
71. According to Beverly Morrison Glennon, *Dartmouth, The Early History of a Massachusetts Coastal Town*, p. 110, these properties were later divided among his descendants. The former Warren property, Barney's Joy, was left to Ralph's son Ebenezer. The former Bradford property was divided between his sons Zachariah and Increase. One-third part of the former Southworth land was granted to his son, Joseph, by a deed dated January 18, 1678-79. One-third part of the former Southworth land was granted to Joseph's sons, Joseph Jr. and John Allen at the same time.
72. His will was admitted to probate on July 2, 1754.
73. The two deeds for these transactions are in Book 10, pp. 16-17, February 22, 1777.
74. NBRD, March 30, 1795, Book 14, p. 531.
75. NBRD, March 30, 1795, Book 14, p. 531.

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