

Journal of History of Martha's Vineyard and the Elizabeth Islands



THE DUKES COUNTY INTELLIGENCER

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The Indians and the English On Martha's Vineyard

Part I, The Arrival of the Mayhews

by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

The Character and Life Style Of the Indians

by GALE HUNTINGTON

Documents: *Jeremiah Pease Diary*

Bits & Pieces

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We urge you to visit the Society's new quarters in the Pease House this summer, to participate in its lectures, excursions and other special events, and, most of all, to give generous support to our Capital Fund Campaign.

Thank you.

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The Dukes County Historical Society was founded in 1922 to preserve the history of Dukes County for the public benefit. It is a nonprofit institution, supported by membership dues, contributions and bequests, which are tax deductible. Its annual meeting is held in August in Edgartown.

It maintains two historic houses, both providing guided tours to the public during the summer, one in Edgartown and the other in Vineyard Haven. A nominal fee is charged to non members.

In Edgartown, the Thomas Thomas Cooke House, circa 1765, is a on the corner School and Cooke Streets. Acquired by the Society in 1935, it is maintained as a museum of Island history.

Also on the Society grounds in Edgartown are the Francis Foster Museum and Gale Huntington Library. Both are open to the public year round. The Museum has an exhibition of the Vineyard's maritime heritage. The Library contains logs, journals, genealogies and other Island documents, plus many photographs and volumes of history.

The Edgartown property also includes the Gay Head Lighthouse exhibit with its 1854 Fresnel lens and the Carriage Shed containing various old boats and wagons, including an 1854 hand pumper fire engine. These, too, are open to the public all year.

In Vineyard Haven, the Society maintains the Jirah Luce House, circa 1804, formerly operated by the Tisbury Museum, now part of the Dukes County Historical Society. The exhibits are of early Vineyard explorers and settlers, and other aspects of local history.

The public is invited to visit the Society and also to take out a membership, which includes a subscription to this quarterly journal and free admission to our buildings.

The Indians and the English On Martha's Vineyard *Part I: The Arrival of the Mayhews*

by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

THE first Vineyard Indian to make a deal with the English was Epenowe. The story began in 1611, nine years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth.

But Epenowe wasn't the first Vineyard Indian to meet the English. The first were the thirteen "fast running Savages" at Lambert's Cove who, in 1602, greeted Bartholomew Gosnold, "armed with Bowes and Arrows without any feare. They brought Tobacco, Deer skins and some sodden [boiled] fish. These offered themselves unto us in great familiaritie . . . They came more rich in Copper then any before."¹

Gosnold, pleased by the generosity of the "tall big boned men, all naked, saving they cover their privy parts with a blacke tewed [tanned] skin. . . gave unto them certeine trifles, as knives, points, and such like."²

But that was only a welcoming gesture, nothing more. No deal was made. Just smiles all around. Gosnold weighed anchor and sailed his *Concord* off to Cuttyhunk, where he began an ill-fated settlement that lasted less than two months.

So, despite the earlier Gosnold visit, we must credit

¹ David B. and Alison M. Quinn, *The English New England Voyages, 1602-1608*, Hakluyt Society, London, 1983, p.125 (Quoting Archer's account). Capt. John Smith also mentioned that Capawack (the Vineyard) was "abounding" in copper when he came here in 1615: *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*, Edward Arber, Ed., John Grant, Edinburgh, 1910, p.205. But, of course, that is not proof copper was mined on the Vineyard.

² Quinn, p.149 (Brereton's Account).

ARTHUR R. RAILTON is Editor of this journal.

Epenowe with being the first Indian on Martha's Vineyard to have had any dealings with the English. He did it the hard way, beginning in 1611.

He was captured that year, along with another Vineyard Indian, Coneconam, and three others from the mainland, by Capt. Edward Harlow, sailing under the flag of the Earl of Southampton. They were taken to Spain to be sold as slaves, a not unusual practice in those days. Captain Harlow was unable to find a buyer so Epenowe was shipped to London. There he was acquired by Sir Ferdinando Gorges, a man who "had a genuine passion for America . . . though he never saw the country himself."

Writing some years later, Gorges told of his part in the Epenowe story:

. . . being understood that [the captives] were Americans, and found to be unapt for their uses, [the Spaniards] would not meddle with them, this [Epenowe] being one of them they refused. . . How Captaine [Henry] Harley [who brought Epenowe from Spain] came to be possessed of this Savage, I know not, but I understood by others how he had been showed in London for a wonder. . . he was a goodly man, of a brave aspect, stout and sober in his demeanor, and had learned so much English as to bid those that wondered at him, "Welcome! Welcome!" this being the last and best use they could make of him.³

Epenow was put to work as a servant at the Gorges estate where he learned a lot more about the English than just a few words of their language. No fool, he convinced Sir Ferdinando that he knew of a gold mine on Capawack (the Indian name for Martha's Vineyard). So in June 1614, Gorges gave "Captain Hobson, who was willing to go that voyage, and to adventure [invest] 100 pounds himselfe . . . command of the ship . . . carrying with them Epenow, Assacomet and Wanape, [two other natives] of those parts."⁴

³ Sir Ferdinando Gorges, *A Briefe Narration . . . of the Advancement of Plantations, etc.*, London, 1658. Reprint by The Prince Society, Boston, 1890. v.II, p.20 ff. Europeans had found that native Americans made poor slaves, they were unresponsive. But they provided a profitable sideshow attraction in London.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp.23-24. The other two had been captured on the mainland, probably Cape Cod.

The ship arrived at the Vineyard "and Comming to the Harbour where Epenow was to make good his undertaking," by leading the adventurers to the gold mine,

. . . the principal inhabitants of the place came aboard, some of them being his Brothers, others his near Couzens, who after they had communed together and were kindly entertained by the Captain, departed in their Cannowes, promising the next morning to come aboard again, and bring some trade with them.

But Epenowe, still no fool, had secretly arranged with his relatives "how he might make his escape without performing what he had undertaken." Sir Ferdinando had been told by Epenowe that the Indians would kill him when he came ashore if they learned he had given away "the secrets of his Country." So Gorges instructed Captain Hobson "to have three Gentlemen of my owne kinred to be ever at hand with him, cloathing him with long garments, fitly to be laid hold on," if the natives tried to take Epenowe away.

Gorges continues:

. . . his friends being all come at the time appointed with twenty Cannows [canoes] and lying at a certaine distance with their Bows ready, the Captaine calles to them to come aboard, but they not moving, he speakes to Epenow to come unto him . . . he being then in the wast of the Ship between two of the Gentlemen that had him in gard . . . comming to the Captaine, [Epenow] calls to his friends in English to come aboard; in the interim slips himself overboard, and although he were taken hold of by one of the company, yet being a strong and heavy Man, could not be stayed and was no sooner in the water, but the Natives sent such a showre of arrowes, and came withall desperately so neer the Ship, that they carryed him away in despite of all the Musquetteers aboard, who were for the number as good as our nation did afford; And thus were my hopes of that particular made void and frustrate, and they returned [to London] without doing more. . . But such are the fruits to be looked for, by employing Men more zealous of gain than fraught with experience how to make it.⁵

And so, Epenowe, the Vineyard Indian, was back home.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp.24-25.

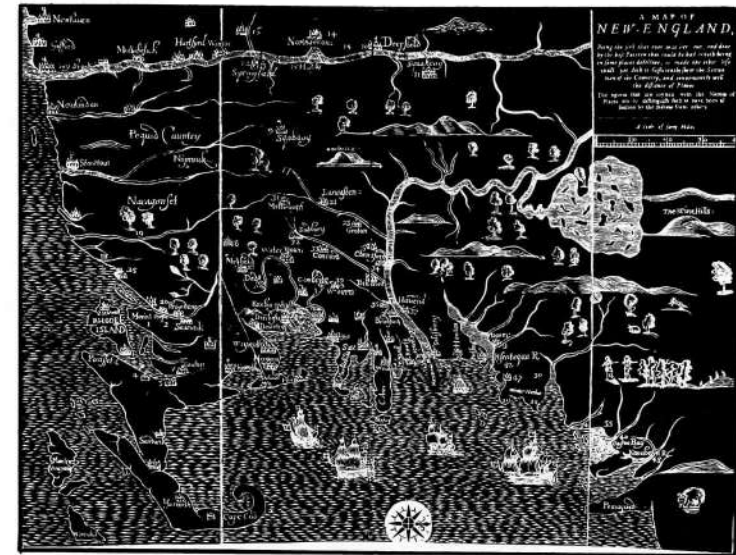
But the story doesn't end there. In 1619, Gorges sent Captain Thomas Dermer from London to find Captain Edward Rowcroft, who was thought to have been captured by Indians (he actually had been "slain in a quarrel," in Virginia by Englishman William Epps). In search of Rowcroft, Dermer visited various settlements along the coast, including the Vineyard, which visit he described in a letter to his minister in London, December 27, 1619:

. . . the next place we arrived at was Capawek, an Iland formerly discovered by the English, where I met with Epineu, a Savage that had lived in England, and speaks indifferent good English, who foure yeeres since being carried home, was reported to have been slaine, with divers of his Countrey men, by Saylers which was false. With him I had much conference, who gave mee very good satisfaction in every thing almost I could demand.⁶

The meeting was pleasant. The Vineyard Indians knew nothing of Captain Rowcroft, so Dermer continued to Virginia, where he learned that Rowcroft had been killed. Early in 1620, he headed for home, again stopping at the Vineyard.

Sir Ferdinando Gorges had received word from Virginia that Dermer had passed the Vineyard on his way south, without stopping. He knew nothing about the friendly meeting with Epenowe. He described the return visit:

. . . comming to Capawike . . . [Dermer] set himselfe and some of his people on shoar, where he met with Epenow, the Savage, who had escaped . . . This Savage, speaking some English, laughed at his owne escape and reported the story of it, Mr. Dermer tould him he came from mee, and was one of my servants, and that I was much grieved he had been so ill-used as to be forced to steale away; this Savage was so cunning, that after he had questioned him about me . . . conceived he was come on purpose to betray him, and conspired with some of his fellows to take the Captaine, thereupon, they laid hands upon him, but he being a brave stout Gentleman, drew his Sword and freed himselfe, but not without fourteen wounds. This disaster forced him to make all possible haste [back] to Virginia to



Map of New England, 1677, "being the first ever here cut," shows Massachusetts Bay Colony boundaries as vertical lines. West is at the top. The Vineyard is Martin's Vineyard. The Merrimack River dominates.

be cured of his wounds . . . he had the misfortune to fall sick and die of the infirmity many of our Nation are subject unto at their first comming into those parts; the losse of this Man, I confesse, much troubled me, and had almost made me resolve never to intermeddle in any of those courses.⁷

Bradford, in his history of Plymouth Plantation, tells the Dermer story more dramatically, adding incorrectly that Squanto, the famed Pilgrim benefactor and translator, was on the vessel. Bradford's version, like Gorges's, indicates that he, too, didn't know of the earlier friendly visit:

[Dermer] came to the Ile of Capawack (which lyes south of this place [Plymouth] on the way to Virginia) and the foresaid Squanto with him, wher he going a shore amongst the Indians to trad, as he used to doe, was betrayed & assaulted by them, & all his men slaine, but one that kept the boat; but him selfe gott aboard very sore wounded, & they [would have] cut of his head upon the cudy of his boat, had not the man reskued him with a sword. And so they

⁶ *Op. cit.*, v.I, fn pp.221 ff.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p.29-30.

got away, & made shift to gett into Virgina, where he dyed; whether of his wounds or the diseases of the cuntrie, or both together, is uncertaine. By all which it may appeare how farr these people were from peace.⁸

Sir Ferdinando, writing in another document, was more understanding of "how farr these people were from peace:"

...a little before this time, it happened there had been one [Captain] Hunt (a worthless fellow of our Nation) set out by certaine Merchants for love of gaine, who (not content with the commoditie he had by the fish, and peaceable trade he found among the Savages)...seized upon the poore innocent creatures that in confidence of his honestie had put themselves into his hands. And stowing them under hatches, to the number of twenty foure, carried them to the Straights [Gibraltar] where hee sought to sell them for slaves... This being known by our two Salvages [Epenowe and Manawet], they presently contracted such a hatred against our whole Nation, as they immediately studied how to be revenged.⁹

Epenowe's revenge had been swift. Captain Dermer died shortly after arriving in Virginia, whether due to his wounds or to disease, it matters not.

And that was the last violence between Indians and Englishmen on the Vineyard and the only conflict, violent or otherwise, in which the Indians came out ahead.

Dermer's wounding occurred while the Pilgrims were sailing across the Atlantic looking for a place to colonize. It was almost a quarter century later that the Mayhews settled on the Vineyard. Much happened to the English-Indian relationship during those years, as we shall see.

Unfortunately, finding the truth of that relationship is not easy. All written accounts of those years are from a single viewpoint: that of the English. There is none telling how the Indians viewed the events. Frederick Freeman, Cape Cod historian, wrote in 1878:

Could we take up the views and opinions of Indians

⁸ Bradford's *History of Plimouth Plantation*, Wright & Potter, Boston, 1898, p.118.

⁹ Bradford has a different explanation for the killings, saying that the Vineyard Indians thought Dermer had come to avenge the way mainland Indians had abused several shipwrecked sailors who had been recently captured and used "worse than slaves." p.119.

themselves respecting the invasions of early New England, and write aided by such lights and counsels and struggles of the aborigines, doubtless the subject might be more fairly and adequately presented. The people who fought against them and took possession of their heritage were not the best qualified to be exponents of Indians' views, or motives to action, nor to be alone their judges.¹⁰

Despite sporadic events like the Epenowe-Dermer fight, the relationship between the colonists and the Indians started out peacefully.

In 1621, Edward Winslow, governor of Plymouth Colony, wrote to a friend in England, praising the friendly reception they had received from the Indians, including those on Martha's Vineyard. The English were not seen as invaders, but as discoverers, with whom they were willing to share their continent:

We have found the Indians very faithful in the covenant of peace with us, very loving, and ready to pleasure us. . . seven of [the Indian princes] have sent their messengers to us to that end. Yea, an isle at sea [Martha's Vineyard] which we never saw, hath also . . . yielded willingly to be under the protection and subject to our sovereign lord King James. . . we, for our part, walk as peaceably and safely in the woods as in the highways of England. We entertain them familiarly in our houses. . . They are a people without any religion or knowledge of any God, yet very trusty, quick of apprehension, ripe-witted, just. The men and women go naked, only a skin about their middles.¹¹

Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoags, the tribe that Winslow and the Pilgrims had met, went so far as to inform the English in 1623 of a plan by the Massachusetts tribe to attack Thomas Weston's colony at Weymouth, north of Plymouth. Included among those planning to attack were the Indians on Martha's Vineyard:

¹⁰ Frederick Freeman, *The Aborigines of 1620 and After*, Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1878, p.4. This work is one of very few written at that time that attempt to see history from the Indian viewpoint.

¹¹ Alexander Young, *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, Little Brown, Boston, 1841, p.195. Also Neal Emerson Salisbury, *Conquest of the Savage*, doctoral dissertation, UCLA, 1972, p.84. Salisbury believes the Wampanoags were friendly with the Pilgrims out of enmity toward the Narragansetts.

At our coming away, [Massasoit] . . . privately . . . revealed the plot of the Massacheuseucks . . . against Master Weston's colony, and so against us, saying that the people of Nauset, Paomet, Succonet [Falmouth], Mattachiest, Monomet, Agowaywam [Wareham] and the isle of Capawack [Martha's Vineyard] were joined with them.¹²

Weston, no friend of the Pilgrims, was planning to set up an unauthorized colony south of Plymouth. Robart Cushman, a man "allway intimate with Mr. Weston," had written to Governor Bradford from London in 1622 warning him:

Mr. Weston hath quite broken off from our company, through some discontent that arose betwext him and some of our adventurers [shareholders], & hath now sent 3. smale ships for his perticuler plantation. . . The people which they cary are no men for us, wherfore I pray you entertaine them not. . . It is likely [Weston] will plant to the southward of the Cape, for William Trevore hath lavishly tould but what he knew or imagined of Caewach [Martha's Vineyard], Mohiggen, & and Narigansets. I fear these [Weston] people will hardly deale so well with the savages as they should. I pray you therefore signifie to Squanto, that they are a distincte body from us, and we have nothing to doe with them, neither must [we] be blamed for the falts, much less can warrente their fidelitie. . .¹³

On the reverse of the letter to Bradford, John Peirce, "in whose name the [colony's] patent was taken," wrote:

. . . as for Mr. Weston's company, I thinke them so base in condition (for the most parte) as in all appearance not fitt for an honest mans company.¹⁴

But Governor Bradford was not about to sit by while Indians attacked the Weston colony, however "base" its people might be. He had just heard from a fishing-boat captain of a massacre of 400 English in Virginia. Furthermore, he had just put the Pilgrims to work building a fort after hearing rumors of threatened attacks by Indians, "especially the Narigansets." If those southern Indians destroyed the Weston settlement, Plymouth might be next.

¹² Young, p.323.

¹³ Bradford, pp.147-8.

¹⁴ Bradford, pp.149.

He dispatched Capt. Miles Standish, his defense chief, to take care of the threat.

Standish arranged to meet with leaders of the Indians involved. It was an ambush he had set up. The Indians were brutally killed in a savage struggle. "Captain Standish and his attendants returned in triumph to Plymouth bearing with them the head of Wittawamet [a sachem], which they set on a pole over the fort."

When the report of this deception and slaughter reached Holland, Reverend Robinson, to whose Leyden congregation Captain Standish had once belonged, wrote to Governor Bradford: "Oh, that you had converted some before you killed any."¹⁵

About ten years later, around 1635, four Englishmen and, perhaps, their families made the first settlement on Martha's Vineyard. They were on a voyage to Virginia when, it is believed, their ship anchored off today's Edgartown. The voyage had been tragic, many passengers and crew dying from distemper. Provisions were low. The small group of four men decided to stay, coming ashore at a spot later called Pease's Point. The names of those four are not on record. Others from Cape Cod joined them over the next few years.

In March 1642, before coming to the Vineyard, the Mayhews acknowledged the existence of these previous settlers. By this time there were eleven men. In a document in the New York State Archives, the two Mayhews, father and son, "freely [gave] to the Men now inhabiting upon the Island, viz. the Vineyard, [a] Tract of Land . . . for a Township..."

The 1642 document then listed those men by name:

Wee are the Men inhabiting and their Heyres, to whom this gift of Land was given, whose names follow: Isaac Robinson, Thomas Trapp, Nicholas Horton, John Pease, Thomas Bayls, Simeon Athearn, Thomas Birchard, John Ballee, Thomas Butler, Joseph Norton, Isaack Norton.¹⁶

¹⁵ Freeman, p.47. For details see *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*, v.2, p.765.

¹⁶ New York Secretary of State, Deed i, 72, as copied in 1644 "by John Birchard. . . when hee lived on Martha's Vineyard." This controversial topic, known as the Pease Tradition, is too complex to detail here, but it will be the subject of a future article.

Thus, there were eleven Englishmen, presumably with families, already living on the Vineyard when the Mayhews were granted settlement rights. They had lived there peacefully with the Indians for a number of years, indicating that the Vineyard Indians held no animosity to the English, despite the Weston colony massacre and the Epenowe kidnapping.

The English settlers of Plymouth were making no attempt to convert the Indians. Proselytizing was to come later under an initiative headed, not by a religious sect, but by a group of London businessmen, founders of the Massachusetts Bay Company. It was this enterprise that brought the Mayhews to New England. The company was issued a patent in 1628 by Charles I, covering territory between the Charles and Merrimac rivers, and extending three miles south of all streams flowing into the Charles and three miles north of those that fed the Merrimack, a huge territory. Matthew Craddock, a prosperous London merchant who had invested in the enterprise, was chosen its first governor.¹⁷

The next year, 1629, Governor Craddock bought a ship of 200 tons and chartered three others, one of which was armed. The fleet crossed the Atlantic with about 200 persons and 100 head of cattle, arriving in Salem in June.

In the instructions Craddock had given John Endicott, whom he had sent to Salem shortly before, he emphasized that more than profits were involved in the new enterprise:

... we trust you will not be unmindful of the mayne end of our plantation by endeavoring to bringe the Indians to the knowledge of the gospell ... to draw them to ... our religion.

Craddock was not the first to see the commercial value of Christianizing the Indian. Rev. Richard Hakluyt, an early promoter of English settlements, had warned "that the conversion of the heathen was an imperative duty whose

¹⁷ In 1640, these rather imprecise bounds caused a dispute, especially over land south of the Charles. Bradford, pp.438 ff.

neglect would bring about the collapse of colonial enterprises."¹⁸

Despite his lofty goal, Craddock had no intention of leaving London for a life in the wilds carrying the gospel to the savage. To him, the company was an investment, another of his commercial enterprises. Being a shrewd businessman, he knew it could not be managed from London. Decisions could not wait for lengthy round-trip voyages. So with greater foresight perhaps than he realized, he proposed a bold move at the London meeting of the stockholders:

... after other business had been disposed of, Matthew Craddock, the Governor of the Company, read certain propositions conceived by himself; viz., that for the advancement of the plantation, the inducing and encouraging persons of worth and quality to transplant themselves and families thither, and for other weighty reasons therein contained, to transfer the government of the plantation to those that shall inhabit there ...¹⁹

Thus, Matthew Craddock, entrepreneur, planted in the colony the first seeds of conversion of the heathen and of independence from England. Because he refused to emigrate, independence, of course, forced his retirement as governor. The stockholders elected John Winthrop, who was willing to emigrate, to replace him. Late in March 1630, five ships carrying Winthrop and 900 colonists, sailed from Southampton, England, to get the enterprise underway. After a two-and-a-half-month voyage, Winthrop and his fleet anchored in Salem harbor. John Endicott, who had led the pilot group of colonists, turned the governorship over to Winthrop.

Craddock, however, was still the spark plug of the adventure. He sent a number of employees, headed by an agent, to set up a trading post with the Indians. His first agent was Philip Ratcliffe who, in June 1631, only a year

¹⁸ William Kellaway, *The New England Company*, N.Y., 1962, pp.1-2.

¹⁹ Robert C. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Ticknor & Fields, Boston, 1864, p.342.

after his arrival, was banished from the colony for uttering "most foul, scandalous invectives against our churches and government." Along with banishment, he was whipped and his ears cut off.

Such cruel punishment was condemned in England. One letter writer told Winthrop that he had heard "divers complaints against the severity of your government. . . cutting off the lunatick man's ears."²⁰

Ratcliffe's banishment left the struggling Craddock enterprise without a leader and Thomas Mayhew, later to become proprietor of Martha's Vineyard, was hired for the job. Mayhew, a Southampton textile merchant, had sold bedding and other items to the Massachusetts Bay Company, and was, no doubt, already known to Craddock.

And so, about 1631, Thomas Mayhew, with his 14-year-old son, Thomas, and, it is thought, his first wife, crossed the ocean to a new life on the Craddock farm in Medford. It was there the Indian trading post had been established, a short distance up the Mystic River from Boston harbor.²¹

The trading post soon expanded into an estate, then to a plantation, "even to the point of laying out a deer park" for supplying deerskins. The enterprise also established a fishery in Scituate and built a house at Marblehead.²² Mayhew's job was to manage this expanding enterprise, buying various commodities, some to be shipped to Craddock in England, others to be sold in the colony.

Craddock was a hard man to please and it wasn't long before, from his London headquarters, he began to criticize his new agent. He wrote to the Company treasurer that he was ruining himself "by reposing trust in maney not worthy to bee trusted."²³

The colony was no longer as peaceful as it had been earlier.

²⁰ *Winthrop's Journal*, James K. Hosmer, Ed., N.Y., 1908, v.I, p.64.

²¹ It is surprising that so little is known about the early years of Mayhew's life. The dates of his two marriages, of his son's birth, and of his coming to the colony are all imprecise.

²² Raymond McFarland, *A History of New England Fisheries*, p.53.

²³ Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the 17th Century*, Harvard U., 1955, p.28.

In the fall of 1632, disputes with the Indians were becoming more frequent, as thousands of English arrived. The confrontations were usually over the occupation of Indian lands. But, for the English, there was no need to worry: the problem was soon solved by divine intervention. Edward Johnson in *Wonder-Working Providence* told of God's solution:

In the Autumne following, the Indians, who had all this time held good correspondency with the English, began to quarell with them about their bounds of Land, notwithstanding they purchased all they had of them, but the Lord put an end to this quarrel . . . by smiting the Indians with a sore Disease, even the small Pox; of which great numbers of them died, yet these servants of Christ, minding their Master's businesse, were much moved . . . to see them depart this life without the knowledge of God in Christ. . . This contagious disease was so noisome and terrible to these naked Indians, that they, in many places, left their dead unburied, as appeared by the multitude of bones of dead carcasses that were found up and down the countries. . .

Reverend William Hubbard, writing in 1680, also believed that this ravaging disease, which the English had brought to the colony, was the helping hand of God, doing His best to further the cause of the settlers:

. . . in a sense as it was of old, God cast out the heathen to make room for his people, some parts of the country being thereby made to look like a mere Golgotha.²⁴

Thomas Mayhew, as head of the Craddock plantation, quickly became recognized in the colony. On May 14, 1634 he, along with 80 others, was admitted as a freeman of Massachusetts Bay. He was listed as "Mr, Mayhew," one of the few on the list to be given that title.

But he was having problems. The Massachusetts General Court fined him for a breach of the order "against imployeing Indeans to shoot with peeces." He and John Pynchon, son of the treasurer of the colony, had obtained

²⁴ *MHS Coll.*, 2nd Series, v.3, p.127 and pp.194-5.

permission from the authorities to give guns to the Indians for hunting. It isn't clear why these two men did it, but perhaps it was to enable the Indians to bring in more furs.

The General Court, "clearly expressing the community's sense of danger, levied a fine not only upon the two men but upon the Court of Assistants [that had granted approval] for ignoring the public interest. . ."²⁵

Dissatisfaction with the Craddock enterprise intensified. Israel Stoughton, writing to John Stoughton in 1635, said that Craddock's "private plantation at Medford never amounted to much, though its presence did much to disturb the colony, since Craddock's men were unruly."²⁶

In another letter to England, Israel Stoughton wrote: "There coming this friend Mr. Patricson (Mr. Craddock's agent here) so happily in the spring. . ." Mr. Patricson did not come that spring, happily or otherwise, but a new agent did, a Mr. Joliffe.

But Mayhew was not fired; Joliffe's job apparently was merely to oversee his work, checking on his honesty. As Craddock wrote to Winthrop:

For if Mr. Mayhew doe really approve his Integrity I shall desire to Continue him in my Employment . . .

The London merchant, in today's idiom, carefully watched the bottom line. He continued to be "suspicious that his profits were small because of the dishonesty of Thomas Mayhew." In 1636, he asked "Governor Winthrop personally to investigate the situation, his specific charge being that Mayhew had been in business for himself contrary to his understanding with [me]." Apparently, in a settlement of Craddock's charge of dishonesty, Mayhew had agreed to leave, but not to engage in business competitive with his former employer before June 1637. Craddock claimed that Mayhew had broken the agreement and, to make things worse, was using the Craddock name to take away suppliers

²⁵ *The Pyncheon Papers*, Carl Bridenbaugh, Ed., Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985, p.7. The fine against the Assistants was later dropped, but apparently not those against Pyncheon and Mayhew.

²⁶ *Letters from New England, 1629-1638*, Everett Emerson, Ed., U. of Mass., 1976, p.183.

and customers.²⁷

Governor Winthrop must have known that Craddock was right. Mayhew's partner in his new enterprise was the Governor's son, John, who was later appointed Governor of Connecticut. A 1636 document mentioned that "Thomas Mayhew, the young Winthrop's partner in a venture thither [Connecticut] accounts for them [Bermuda potatoes] at 2d; corn at 9s per bushel; pork at 10 pounds per hogshead; oranges & lemons, 20s per C.; and they made on the voyage twenty od pounds."²⁸

In April 1636, Mayhew, still writing from Medford, perhaps from the Craddock office, in a letter to John Winthrop Jr., made clear they were partners:

Concerning the bermuda voyadge, . . . wee shall gaine twenty od pownds: Now that accompt cleared and the Cattell wintring paid for there will not be much coming unto yow of the 80 od pownds I borrowed of yow . . .²⁹

Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts seemed to have been involved in the partnership. He had a farm in Medford near Craddock's. In a letter to his son in Connecticut, after describing a ship that had gone on the rocks near Boston with a loss of cargo, he reported:

Mr. Mayhew . . . could get but little provisions, and at extreme rates . . . I have sent to Ipswich for your cattle and your servant; for it will be great loss to keep them there. I will take the others from Mr. Mayhew so soon as grass is up.

Craddock in January 1637, after learning from Joliffe what had been going on, again wrote to Winthrop, asking for action from the government:

Worthei Sir, the greyffe [grief] I have beene putt to by the most vyle bad dealings of Thomas Mayhewe. . . The Lord in mercy Freey me from this. . . and good Sir lett me

²⁷ Margery R. Johnson, *The Mayhew Mission to the Indians*, doctoral dissertation, Clark U., Worcester, Mass., 1966, p.23. Also *Winthrop Papers*, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1943, v.III, p.308. It is not easy to be certain of exactly what was taking place between Mayhew and Craddock at this time. The author believes this account to be correct, but does not claim infallibility.

²⁸ *MHS Coll. 4th Series*, v.VII, p.31.

²⁹ *Winthrop Papers*, v.III, p.253.

intreate your selfe and those in authority there to take some Course that Thomas Mayhew may bee answerable For that Estate of myne . . . [I] hardely thinke It Could be possible that a man pretending sincerity in his actions could deale so vilely as he hath and doeth deale by me.³⁰

Joliffe reported soon after that he had found many major discrepancies in Mayhew's accounts. Once more Craddock wrote to Winthrop:

What Is not sett downe Is spent: most extremeley I ame abused, my servants write they drink nothing but water and I have in an account lateley sent me Red Wyne, sack and aqua vitae above 300 gallons besides many other to intollerable abuses, 10 pounds for tobacco, etc.³¹

But Governor Winthrop had no desire to help Craddock against his son's partner. Besides, he was having his own troubles. He had been voted out of office in 1636, being succeeded by "a flashy young outsider, Henry Vane." The following year, the election was held across the river in Cambridge where Winthrop's support was strong and he was returned to office.

Neither Vane nor Winthrop seems to have investigated Craddock's complaints: "no record of any court action against Mayhew has been found. . . at any rate [he] parted company with his employer and continued in business as an independent merchant."³²

Mayhew's management of the Craddock enterprise again was questioned by no less a person than Roger Williams, the Rhode Island dissident. Williams had owed Craddock between 50 and 60 pounds for goods he had received during Mayhew's tenure. After Mayhew left, Williams was hounded by the new Craddock agent (Jollies, as Williams spelled the name) for payment. Williams wrote to Governor Winthrop from Rhode Island, explaining that he had already paid the bill:

. . . I long since put [the money] into [Mayhew's] hand, and

³⁰ *Op cit.*, v.III, p.344-5.

³¹ *Op cit.*, p.346.

³² Johnson, pp.23-4. It isn't clear exactly when Mayhew ended his connection with the Craddock business. Perhaps as late as 1636.

he into Mr. Jollies, who . . . [now] sues for dammages, which I question: since I have not failed against Contract and Content of the first Agent . . .³³

Nobody has ever provided any proof that Mayhew misappropriated any money, but certainly Mr. Craddock in London was sure that Mayhew had ruined his business:

. . . I should have there [in Medford] above 11,500 pounds if I be well dealt with . . . accordingly I gave order to have moneys Remitted home to mee; in steed thereof I ame Charged by Tho: Mayhewe without the knowledge of Jno. Jolliffe with great sums, whereas my expresse order was he should doe nothing in my buisynes without Jno. Jolliffs Consent.³⁴

A month later, in March 1637, he again wrote to Winthrop, saying he was losing between 300 and 400 pounds a year. He owed the Massachusetts Bay Company money that he could not pay because of those losses. Some with "ill mouthes," he wrote, were blaming him for problems not of his doing:

. . . were I not overpressed by my heavey burdens there laded on me by T.[homas] M.[ayhew], I would stop some of there mouthes . . . god forgeeve him that Is the Cause of it. . . I harteley pray you advize . . . my servant Jno. Jolliffe whereby hee may bee in possession of all my estate there and that it may bee publikeley knowen mr. Mayhewe neither had nor hath power or order to deale Fore me since the tyme of John Jolliffs arrivall there . . .

Mayhew's personal life had not been uneventful during those years either. Not long after he came to America in 1631, his first wife died. The date and place are not recorded. What is known is that in 1634 he married Jane Paine, widow of Thomas Paine, a wealthy London merchant. Where the wedding took place is not known. She had one son, who, like Mayhew and his only son, was named Thomas, making three Thomases in the family.

Soon after Joliffe arrived to supervise him, probably in 1635, Mayhew moved his family to Watertown, a few miles southwest of Medford. There, by his second wife, Jane,

³³ *Winthrop Papers*, v.IV, p.38.

³⁴ *Op Cit.*, v.III, p.349.

Mayhew had three children: Hannah, 1635; Bethsa, 1636; and Mary, 1640. The fourth daughter, Martha, was born in 1642, but the place is unknown; there is no record of her birth in Watertown. She may have been born in England. (It would seem that she must have been named after the Island he had bought the year before.) In 1639, Thomas Mayhew Sr., was appointed legal guardian of the seven-year-old Thomas Paine by Gov. John Winthrop and authorized "to receive & recover the rents issues & proffitts of the . . . land & tenements [in Whittlebury, Northampton, England] . . . due unto the said Thomas Payne. . ."³⁵

In 1635, the Mayhews, as mentioned above, had moved from Medford to Watertown, where he bought 12 acres on the Charles River. Mayhew knew the area because, in the summer of 1634, he had supervised the building of a mill near the property for Craddock and Edward Howe of Watertown. In August 1635, after Mayhew moved to town, Howe sold his half to Mayhew for 200 pounds in a complicated financial deal in which "Mayhew gave a bond and mortgage for 400 pounds." In 1639, Mayhew bought Craddock's half, with a mortgage of 240 pounds. In 1640, he sold the mill to Deputy-Governor Thomas Dudley, for 400 pounds, subject to the Craddock mortgage, which Mayhew then paid off.

But there was another outstanding mortgage, the one owed to Howe. "No evidence has been discovered of the redemption of the mortgage of Mayhew to How, and that bond of Mayhew was one of the items in the Inventory of Mr. How, who died in the summer of 1644."³⁶

In 1636, Mayhew was elected Watertown Representative to the General Court in Boston. He apparently kept a skiff

³⁵ *Notebook Kept by Thomas Lechford, 1638 to 1641*, American Antiquarian Soc., University Press, Cambridge, 1885, p.185. Young Thomas Paine had inherited properties in Northampton, England, on his father's death.

³⁶ *History of Watertown*, p.1038, author, publication date, etc., not recorded by author. Sorry. Its account of the ownership of the mill, the first in Watertown, is confusing. A court case between Howe and Dudley contesting Mayhew's right to sell Howe's half because of the outstanding mortgage apparently was settled in Mayhew's favor by Governor Winthrop.

at Muddy River to expedite his trip to the State House. In 1637, two vagrants were whipped for "having taken away Mr. Mayhew's skiff," on Muddy River. At that time Muddy River was a shallow, slow-moving stream that separated Brookline and Watertown from Boston; parts of it remain today, forming Boston's Fenway.

After a decade of good economic times, things suddenly got worse. In 1640, the Long Parliament in England swept away the power of Catholic Charles I and the religious persecutions ended, sharply reducing the flow of discontented Puritans to the colony. Between 1630 and 1640, more than 16,000 emigrants, most of them Puritans, had come to New England to escape Catholic rule, bringing with them goods and money. But this migration suddenly stopped in 1640, and hard times set in.

Like other businessmen, Mayhew found himself in financial trouble. The mill had been profitable, but now was doing poorly. Daniel Gookin, writing in 1792, credited God for Mayhew's difficulties, hinting that it was God's way of getting him to move to the Vineyard:

[Mayhew's] abode was Watertown, where he had good accomodations of land, and built an excellent profitable mill . . . which in those first times brought him in great profit. But it pleased God to frown upon him in his outward estate; so that he sold what he had in Massachusetts, to clear himself from debts and engagements, and about the year 1642, transplanted himself to Martha's Vineyard, with his family.³⁷

Gookin was slightly off in the date. The purchase of Martha's Vineyard actually was in 1641. It isn't clear how Mayhew arranged it financially, although not much money was involved. He was having problems. Just prior to the purchase, he had written to Governor Winthrop, asking that he be excused from paying a delinquent tax bill. It was an urgent appeal, as though he was close to bankruptcy. He asked the Governor to respond immediately:

Right Worshipful, I am to pay my owne Rate [tax] and some

³⁷ *Gookin's Historical Collections*, Chap.IX, p.202. MHS Coll. v.I, 1st series, 1792.

5 pounds for other men that I owe it unto and although that I have had bills due from the Countrey [England] one yeare and 7 monethes synce for 70 and old pouds I must now have my goods sold except I pay out this money . . . if there be noe remedy but my goods must be strayned and sold, I desire your worships advice per this bearer which is the Constable . . . he comes unto you for counsell in [my] behallfe. . . Mony is verry hard to gett upon any termes. I know not the man that can Furnish me with it. I could not gett the 100 pounds of Mr. Gibbons. . . and when I was syck and in necessities, I could not gett any of the treasurer. I delight not to Compleyne.³⁸

There is no record of what the Governor may have done to help his son's partner, but Mayhew continued having money problems. In 1640, an arbitration panel of four men, one of them being another new Craddock agent, was ordered by the court to arbitrate a dispute between Mayhew and Valentine Hill, a Boston merchant, in the amount of 300 pounds.³⁹

By July 23, 1641, he seemed to have worked out of his difficulties, if that is what this rather obtuse letter to Governor Winthrop suggests:

Worshipfull Sir, I have delivered Mr. Russell my accompt And doe hereby intreate you to satisfie him and this shalbe your Full discharge. I suppose I left a Coppy of the accompt with your worshipp not having ells at present. I Rest Your worships to commaund. [This letter, for some reason, was written from Charlestown.]

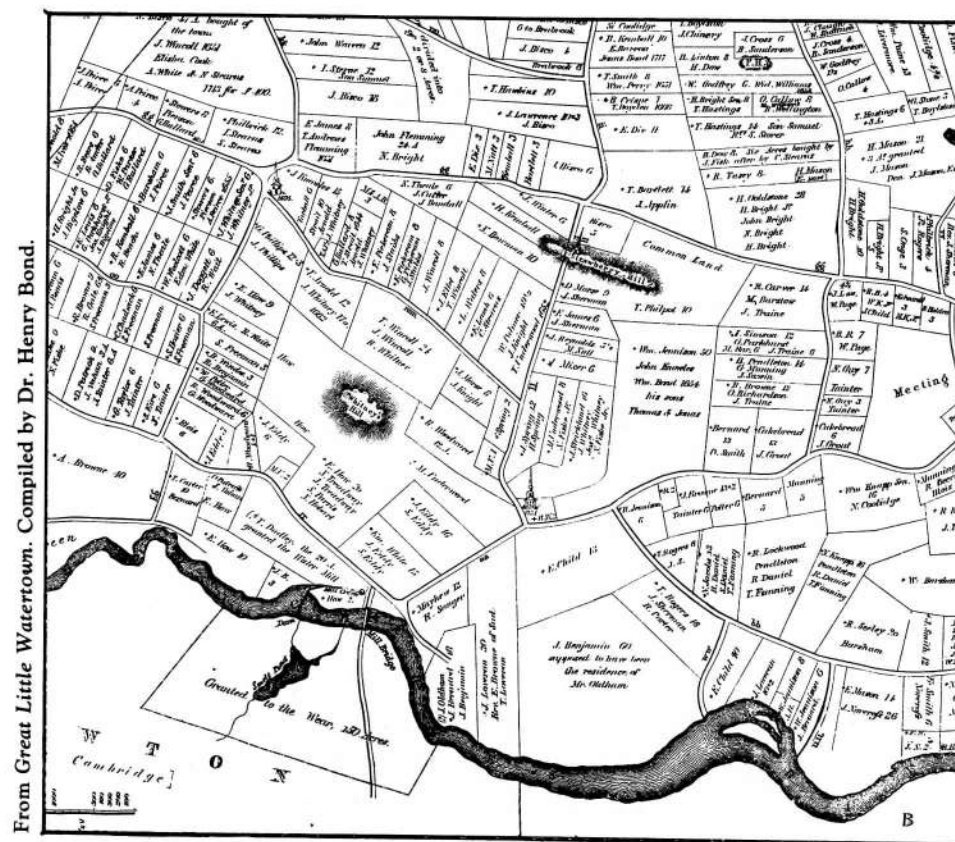
As the depression worsened, the destitute colony sent two ministers to England to try to restore the flow of immigrants and money. The Long Parliament, controlled by Puritans, had "aroused popular interest in converting the red men . . . [and the ministers] sought to turn this spirit to the colony's favor by advertising the need for immigrants and funds to help spread the Gospel."⁴⁰

To do this, the two emissaries, Reverends Thomas Weld and Hugh Peter, published the first of a series of publicity

³⁸ Winthrop Papers, v.IV, p.240.

³⁹ Lechford Notebook, p.350-51.

⁴⁰ Salisbury, p.126.



Watertown map shows Mayhew's land to right of Mill Bridge which he built in 1639. Rectangle south of river is 150 acres he was given in exchange for bridge.

tracts in London, urging the English to begin spreading the gospel among the heathen. The first tract, *New England's First Fruits* (1643), moved a group of wealthy widows in London to contribute. The tracts started a popular movement to further missionary work and six years later the Long Parliament created the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England. Subsequently, this organization paid annual salaries to the Mayhews for their mission work with the Indians of Martha's Vineyard.

The movement continued and collections were ordered taken in every parish in England and Wales, raising as much

as 7654 pounds in a single year, mostly by half-penny donations. This money was invested in land and buildings in England and the income from rentals of the properties was to be used to finance Indian missions in New England.

A few years earlier, in 1639, a royal charter had named Sir Ferdinando Gorges proprietor and governor of Maine, confirming a grant he had earlier received from the Council for New England. That grant, inexplicably, included as part of Maine the islands south of Cape Cod, namely the Elizabeth Islands, Nantucket and, of most interest to us, Martha's Vineyard.

In 1641, Sir Ferdinando sent his agent, Richard Vines, to New England to sell off part of his holdings. It was probably about this time that Thomas Mayhew began to plan to buy the islands south of Cape Cod. In September 1641, another salesman, James Forrett, came to Boston from New York to sell land rights owned by the Earl of Stirling. Lord Stirling's royal charter covered Long Island and all islands to the east, including some in Gorge's grant, namely Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and the Elizabeths.

Mayhew, in 1639, had borrowed 240 pounds, using the Watertown mill and dam as collateral. In 1640, he "conveyed to Governor Dudley, for 90 pounds, the rent of his wear [dam] for the last four years, which is by lease let to Robert Lockwood, Isaac Sternes and Henry Jackson . . . [and] the river-side and inheritance of the wear forever, subject to [Craddock's] mortgage."

The next year, 1641, Mayhew built the first bridge over the Charles River, very close to his house. He began to charge tolls, which aroused strong public opposition. As a result, in December the bridge was taken over by the town.

On June 2, 1641, the General Court agreed that "Mr. Mayhew shall enjoy the 150 acres of land on the south side of the Charles River, by Watertown wear [the mill dam]." This land was granted in compensation for the loss of the

From Great Little Watertown, 1630-1930.



Thomas Mayhew house in Watertown, built in 1636, with later addition.

bridge. But apparently he sued the Colony for more, because on October 17, 1643, the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed this resolution:

Mr. Mayhew is granted 300 acres of land in regard to his charge about the bridge by Watertowne mill, and the bridge to belong to the country.

Other land grants were made that year, one being 72 acres in Watertown to Henry Green, whose son was studying for the ministry and who may have had a role in the junior Mayhew's religious interest. They would have been about the same age and were in the same small town.

Mayhew, discouraged over his financial prospects, must have decided that this was the time to make a bold move. It was, he may have thought, now or never.

So, in the fall of 1641, Thomas Mayhew, now 50 years old, with five children and a pregnant wife, decided to make a new start in life. He would begin a settlement on the islands south of Cape Cod.

He went to James Forrett, agent of Lord Sterling, who on October 13, 1641, did grant unto "Thomas Mayhew at Watertowne, Merchant, and to Thomas Mayhew his Sonne,

free Liberty and full Power. . . to Plant and Inhabitt upon Nantuckett and two small Islands adjacent, and to enjoy the said Island. . . forever. Provided, That Thomas Mayhew and Thomas Mayhew his Sonne. . . doe render and pay yearly. . . such an Acknowledgement as shall bee thought fitt by John Winthrop Esq, the Elder, or any two Magistrates in the Massachusetts Bay, being chosen. . . by John Winthrop. . . or any two magistrates in the Massachusetts Bay, being chosen for that end [by] Lord Sterling. . . and the said [Mayhews]."⁴¹

The document mentioned only Nantucket by name, so ten days later another was written adding Martha's Vineyard and Elizabeth's Isles.

Knowing that Sir Ferdinando also claimed the islands, Mayhew, on October 25, 1641, entered into another agreement, this with Richard Vines, Ferdinando's agent, giving him the right

to settle Capoak [Martha's Vineyard] and Nanticon [Nantucket], paying unto the said Ferdinando Gorges . . . forever annually, as two Gentlemen indifferently by each of them chosen shall judge to bee meet by way of acknowledgment.

Neither grant mentioned ownership or purchase, only the right to inhabit. Ownership, apparently, remained with the Indians until purchased by the English settlers. Neither grant listed a purchase price, only an annual fee to be set by disinterested parties. As far as records show, no such fee was ever set and no annual payments were ever made. In Ferdinando's grant, the Mayhews were required to set up a government "such as now Established in ye Massachusetts." No such government was set up for years.

With authority to inhabit the islands, Mayhew began to sell settlement rights to residents of Watertown and other places. Records don't exist of who bought such rights.

⁴¹ Franklin B. Hough, *Papers Relating to the Island of Nantucket, with Documents relating to the Original Settlement of that Island, Martha's Vineyard, and other Islands adjacent, known as Dukes County, While under the Colony of New York*, privately printed, Albany, N.Y., 1856, pp. 1-2.

However, the document of March 16, 1642, referred to above in connection with the Pease tradition, also listed five associates of the Mayhews and stated that they had "equal power in government." This was before any had moved to the Island and gave them power to join with the Mayhews in the choice of the settlement location:

wee the said Thomas and Thomas [Mayhew] hereby grant unto John Doggett, Daniel Pierce and Richd. Beeres, and John Smith and Francis Smith with ourselves to make choice for the Present of a large Towne upon the same Terms that wee have it: And also equal Power in Government with us, and equal Power in admission of all that shall present themselves to come to live upon any part. . . of all the Island.

The elder Thomas Mayhew did not emigrate with the first settlers. He remained in Watertown. He sent Thomas Junior, listed as partner on the grants. With him, probably early in 1643, came "diverse families."⁴²

Selling shares in a settlement on a remote island where none, perhaps not even the Mayhews, had ever been could not have been easy. The depression that began in 1640 had worsened.

Ships with relief supplies were sent from England to keep the colonists alive. The weather was so bad during the summer of 1642 that the situation had become desperate. Governor Winthrop described it, crediting God as usual:

Corn was very scarce all over the country, so as by the end of the 2nd month, many families in most towns had none to eat, but were forced to live of clams, muscles, cataos, dry fish, etc., . . . this came by the just hand of the Lord, to punish our ingratitude and covetousness. . . And indeed it was a very sad thing to see how little of a public spirit appeared in the country, but of self-love too much. . . The immediate causes of this scarcity were the cold and wet summer, especially in the time of the first harvest; also, the pigeons came in such flocks (about 10,000 in one flock) that beat down, and eat up a very great quantity of all sorts of English grains. . . there was such abundance of mice in the

⁴² Banks says that Mrs. Mayhew went to England at about this time and that explains why her husband stayed in Watertown. Perhaps she had gone there for the birth of daughter Martha in 1642.

barns that devoured much there. The mice also did much spoil in orchards, eating off the bark at the bottom of the fruit trees . . . So many enemies doth the Lord arm against our daily bread . . .

At this time a ship arrived at Massachusetts Bay with an unusual cargo. Winthrop wrote:

One of our ships . . . arrived with 20 children and some other passengers out of England, and 300 pounds [money valuation] worth of goods purchased with the country's stock, given by some friends in England the year before; and those children, with many more to come after, were sent by money given one fast day in London, and allowed by the parliament and city for that purpose.

It isn't clear how helpful the English thought they were being by sending orphans or abandoned children to a depressed colony, but their intentions were no doubt good. Capt. John Smith, Admiral of New England, had proposed as early as 1616 that England send "fatherless children to the colony where by their hard labour [they] may live exceeding well. . . masters [could] take ten, twelve, or twentie . . . for apprentices. The Masters by this may quicklie growe rich; these may learne their trades themselves, to doe the like; to a general and an incredible benefit, for King, and Countrey, Master, and Servant."

A letter that came with the ship had another surprise:

Whereas the plantation in New England have, by the blessing of Almighty God, had good and prosperous success without any charge to this state, and are now likely to prove very happy for the propagation of the gospel in thos parts, and very beneficial and commodious for this kingdom and nation, the Commons now assembled in parliament do . . . [order] that all merchandizes, goods exported, etc., into New England . . . shal be free of all custom, etc.

Being exempt from paying duty hardly seemed what the starving colonists most needed just then. Neither, it would seem, were more children.

It is obvious that in 1643 the Mayhews were not leaving a prosperous Watertown. By moving, they must have been hoping to find a better life.

Hard times had not improved the feelings of the English for the Indians. They still were not sending out missionaries to convert them to Christianity. Even more than at the beginning, Indians were thought to be savages, heathens. Little fraternization was going on. In September, 1643, Winthrop, in his journal, unintentionally provided a sense of how the community felt:

There arose a sudden gust of N.W. so violent for half an hour, as it blew down a multitude of trees. It lifted up their meeting house at Newbury, the people being in it. It darkened the air with dust, yet through God's great mercy it did no hurt, but only killed an Indian with the fall of a tree.⁴³

"It did no hurt, but only killed an Indian."

Fear of Indian attacks had become so strong that Winthrop and others decided to federate the New England colonies for protection. The United Colonies of New England was created, administered by two representatives each from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Haven and Plymouth. If any was attacked, the others would join the battle. It was a military defense pact, with no commitment to carry the gospel to the heathen or even to improve relations with them. Yet, as we shall see, the commissioners of the United Colonies were soon to become the agents for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in dispersing money to missionaries to the Indians.

The years 1643 and 1644 were among the most tumultuous in New England's history. There was fighting between the Indians and the English, usually brought on by disagreements over land rights. The English claimed they had bought the land legally, but the Indians thought it still theirs to use. Occasionally, Indians joined with the English in fighting other Indians over territorial rights. Crime and sinning had increased sharply among the English and, if the journal of Governor Winthrop can be believed, the colony, so rich in its early promise, was becoming a place of turmoil.

⁴³ Winthrop Journal, *The History of New England*, Wait & Son, Boston, 1826, v. II p. 124.

In January 1643, two sachems near Providence, complained to Governor Winthrop that, against their wishes, they had been forced by a chief sachem to sign a paper selling land to a group of 12 Englishmen. Winthrop told them their case would be decided by the court in June. The new English "owners" submitted a statement four pages long, proving they had bought the sachems' land legally and that if the court took it away from them they were ready to fight.

The court called in the two complaining sachems, "giving them to understand upon what terms they must be received under us." The terms were that they must subscribe to "the ten commandments" which, it turned out, were only nine, one which forbids "coveting your neighbor's house . . . or anything that is your neighbor's" was dropped. Apparently, this was thought to be unnecessary; it was the English who were doing the coveting.

The Indians' answers were agreeable. Asked if they would worship the true God, meaning the English God, they responded that "we desire to speak reverently of Englishman's God and not speak evil of him, because we see the Englishman's God doeth better for them than other Gods do for others." When told they must agree not do any work on the Lord's day, they replied, "It is a small thing for us to rest on that day, for we have not much to do any day. . . ." Ordered to "suffer your children to read God's word . . . and to worship him in his own way," they again agreed, saying "As opportunity serveth by the English coming amongst us, we desire to learn their manners."

After agreeing to the nine commandments, the Indians were taken to Governor Winthrop, who presented them with "a form of submission" to which "they freely subscribed." He wanted to be sure they knew what they had agreed to:

Being told that we did not receive them in as confederates but as subjects, they answered, that they were so little in

respect of us, as they could expect no other.⁴⁴

With that "they departed joyful and well satisfied," wrote Winthrop, something that seems hard to believe. They had not, despite total submission, been given their land back.

That was the colony's attitude toward the Indian when the Mayhew settlers moved to the Vineyard. Governor Winthrop, in his journal, recorded the move on December 3, 1643, adding that one important person who had signed up did not go:

Some of Watertown began a plantation at Martin's Vineyard beyond Cape Cod, and divers families going thither, they procured a young man, one Mr. Green, a scholar, to be their minister, in hopes soon to gather a church there. He went not.⁴⁵

With the young minister declining to emigrate, it fell upon Thomas Mayhew Jr., to take over the role of spiritual leader. We don't know when the young man, then in his twenties, began preaching to the tiny band of English settlers in Great Harbour, as Edgartown was called. Not a trained cleric, he had no record of any special interest in the church prior to coming to the Island. But then there is almost nothing on record about him before he came to the Vineyard.

Nor is there any record, during the first years of settlement, of any attempt by him to Christianize the Indians. His first convert, Hiacoomes, came to the English on his own initiative. The main interest of the settlers was peaceful co-existence. Reports of the continuing conflict in New England and of another terrible massacre of the English in Virginia no doubt had reached Great Harbour, giving the settlers added concern for their safety.

Despite Matthew Craddock's instructions years before that the "mayne goal" of colonizing Massachusetts was to bring

⁴⁴ *Op cit.*, v.II, p.122.

⁴⁵ *Op cit.*, p.152. Winthrop may not have made this entry exactly on the date of the settlement, but with his close relationship to the senior Mayhew, it surely must have been at about this time. This makes the generally accepted date of settlement, 1642, incorrect. Henry Green, the man who went not, did go to minister in Reading, Mass., where he died less than three years later.

the gospel to the savages, no such work was being done, either in Massachusetts Bay or the Vineyard.

Evidence of this is in an address given at Harvard College's first commencement, September 26, 1642, one year before the Vineyard settlement. The speaker, probably President Henry Dunster, outlined the ten goals of the new institution. Sixth on his list was this:

By stirring up some to shew mercy to the Indians, in affording maintenance to some of our godly active young Schollars, there to make it their worke to study their language, converse with them and carry light amongst them, that so the Gospel might be spread into those dark parts of the world.

It is possible that young Thomas Mayhew Jr., then in Watertown, learned of Dunster's message and accepted the challenge. He had never studied at Harvard (or any other college we know of), yet it was said that he had a good knowledge of Latin and Greek, as well as a passing knowledge of Hebrew. Where he learned these languages is unknown. He was an intelligent person, as his later writings make obvious, and he could have been self-taught.

Whatever his training, he took up the challenge and did "study their language, converse with them and carry light amongst them," as President Dunster had hoped his Harvard students would do. (None of which did, incidentally.)

Thomas Prince, writing 80 years later, had this to say about young Mayhew's ministry:

... soon after their Settlement on the Island, the new Plantation called him to the Ministry among them. But his English Flock being then but small, the Sphere was not large enough for so bright a Star to move in. With great Compassion he beheld the wretched Natives . . . [and] GOD, who had ordained him an Evangelist for the Conversion of these Indian Gentiles, stirred him up with an holy Zeal.

46

In a "sphere not large enough for so bright a Star,"

⁴⁶ Thomas Prince, *Some Accounts of Those English Ministers, 1726*, published as an appendix to *Experience Mayhew's Indian Converts*.

Mayhew, some time after 1643, began a relationship between his family and the Wampanoags that lasted for generations. It was a relationship with many twists and turns.

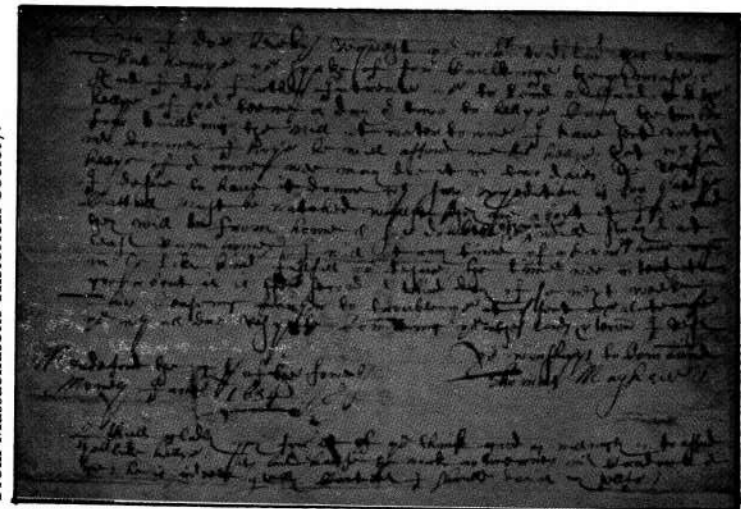
Sadly, we know nothing of how the Indians reacted to the arrival of the Mayhew settlers. Clearly, it was peaceful. Perhaps the eleven Englishmen already living on the Vineyard, had demonstrated that the white men were not enemies. We don't know.

Nor, sadly also, do we know whether Epenowe, who had won that first confrontation nearly a quarter century earlier, was there to welcome them.

But we do know much about the English-Indian relationship during the following 150 years, as we shall see.

(To be continued)

From Massachusetts Historical Society.



Letter from Mayhew, in Medford, to Governor Winthrop, June 12, 1634, asking him "to lend Mr. Cradock the hellpe of your teeme, a day or two to hellpe carry the timber for building the mill at Watertowne."



The Character and Life Style Of the Indians

by GALE HUNTINGTON

This article has been excerpted from a talk Gale Huntington gave to the Martha's Vineyard chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in the 1950s. He doesn't recall the exact year. Mr. Huntington was Librarian at the Dukes County Historical Society at the time and an avid student of the Indian. For his devoted and distinguished work as Librarian, the Society, on his 80th birthday, named its library, the Gale Huntington Library of History.

UNLIKE what most folks believe, the American Indians have as many different "nationalities" as do Europeans. One way they can be categorized is by physical differences, another is by language.

On the language basis, the American Indians are divided into several large groupings. In North America, these include the Algonquian, the Souian, the Athapaskan, Irroquoian, Moscoian, and others. The languages of these groups can be as different as English and Portuguese.

The Algonquian peoples, to which the Vineyard Indians belong, formed one of the largest linguistic groups. It extended from the Carolinas to Labrador, west almost to the Great Lakes. In what is now New England, there were about a dozen distinct tribal groupings, all Algonquian except for one Irroquoian group west of the Connecticut River. The Algonquians of New England included the Pequots, the Narragansetts, the Wampanoags, Nausets,

Massachusetts, Abananki and others.

The Wampanoags lived between the Narragansetts and the Massachusetts. Their chief village was near Mt. Hope, Rhode Island. When the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Massasoit was the great sachem of the Wampanoags.

It was the Wampanoag tribe in the Algonquians who were inhabiting what we now call Martha's Vineyard when the English arrived in the 1600s. The term wampanoag means easterner.

They were a tall people, considerably taller than the English. And they were relatively light-skinned with straight dark hair and dark eyes. Well proportioned physically, they were strong, agile and had exceptionally keen reflexes. Before the English arrived they had virtually no sicknesses or diseases except arthritis. A happy people, they had a strong poetic feeling in their character.

The Wampanoags lived in permanent villages. The houses were called wigwams. Some circular, others rectangular, they could be as large as 30 feet across, or 40 feet long. The wigwam was framed with saplings firmly fixed in the ground and bent over to meet at the top. The sides were covered with skins or bark or mats made of woven cattail rushes, with an opening at the top for the smoke from the hearth to exit. The largest wigwams often had two or three hearths inside.

The hearth was the heart and center of the home, as it was with the English until stoves and much later central heating came along. In cold weather, a fire was kept burning in the hearth continuously. Usually a huge earthenware pot was on the hearth, containing something very much like chowder, except that our Indians had no milk. The chowder base was corn meal and anything else that was handy, meat from deer, rabbits, muskrats, quahaugs, fish and other foods. They roasted meat and fish over the coals and made cakes of cornmeal.

They had another method of cooking. That was the bake hole and that's where we got our clambake. They dug a hole

GALE HUNTINGTON, now Editor Emeritus of this journal, was its first Editor, a post he held for nearly 20 years. Without his dedication, it is unlikely that the *Intelligencer* would have survived. He also served as Society Librarian and taught history, among other subjects, in several mainland schools, finally returning to teach at Tisbury High School until his retirement. During his university graduate studies, he became enamored of the history of the American Indian, especially of those on the Vineyard.

in the ground, lined it with stones, got them as hot as they could and then covered the stones with seaweed on top of which they would put clams, oysters, fish and sweet corn, plus another layer of seaweed. The results, as every clam bake lover knows, were delicious.

Unfortunately, our Indians knew little about community sanitation. They were a very healthy people nonetheless. The usual way to get rid of cooking refuse was to heave it outside the wigwam door. By the time summer arrived, the village had a rather pungent smell. But that was no problem because in summer the Indians left their wigwam village to live in teepees along the ponds until cold weather came again. Wild animals foraged in the refuse piles and by fall the village was once again habitable.

The family group consisted of the father, who was very much the man of the wigwam, and the mother, the children and perhaps a grandparent as well. They slept on raised skin-covered couches around the outer wall of the wigwam, their feet toward the hearth.

Most families were strictly monogamous. There were, on occasion, plural marriages, usually out of necessity, such as the death of the father. In that case, the squaw and children would often move in with a neighboring family and sometimes polygamy resulted.

Without such an accepted system, no one would provide for the fatherless family. There was no social security, no insurance policies. The young son was not big enough to hunt or fish. So what happens? In this very caring community, the neighbor takes the widow and children in. And the widow becomes a full partner in her new family. Thus there was plural marriage. It was socially accepted.

There was another way in which plural marriages occurred. That was when there were too many children in the family, say six or seven, an unusually large number. Three or four would generally be considered a large family. With six or seven children, the mother has to tend a larger garden, she has to sew more moccasins and leggings, she

has to work more than she thinks she should.

So she suggests that a young girl in the village move into the wigwam to help her. And so another plural marriage is born, plus, no doubt, more children. But plural marriages were unusual, especially among the Wampanoags.

Some Indian tribes were democratic, many even communal. But not the Coastal Algonquians, and that includes the Vineyard Indians. Here, as elsewhere among the Algonquians, there was a rigid class system, based on birth. There was an upper class that was almost a nobility. All the sachems belonged to this upper class, as did the sagamores and the paw-waws. Their children always married within their class. The caste system was based on ownership of land, which was handed down in a straight line from father to son, from mother to daughter. There was a second class, sort of a middle class, with some rights and privileges, and beneath them the common people.

At the very top of this Wampanoag society was Massasoit, the Great Sachem; beneath him were the lesser sachems, all owing him loyalty and fealty. There were four such lesser sachems on Martha's Vineyard. One headed the Chappaquiddicks, another the Nunnepoags in Edgartown, another the Takemmys in mid-Island and a fourth the Aquinahs, at the western end of the Island. Under those four sachems, there were a number of sagamores, who ruled lesser villages, like the Nobnockets of Holmes Hole.

The sagamore of Nobnocket owed allegiance to the Sachem of Takemmy on Tisbury Great Pond. The sachem of Takemmy was a subject to the Great Sachem, Massasoit, (and later his son, Metacomet) at Mount Hope. That system broke down when Metacomet, called Philip by the English, went to war against the colonists in 1675 in what came to be called King Philip's War. He asked the sachems of the Cape and the Islands to help him. They refused. That began the breakup of the Wampanoag hierarchy.

When the Mayhew settlers arrived, there was a large Indian population on the Vineyard. Some have estimated

it at 3000; some say it had been even larger. A few years before, a plague had visited the Island, as it did most of eastern New England, killing hundreds. For an Indian community, 3000 on this Island was very dense. It was possible because these Indians had an economy that worked well. They had a good, sound agriculture, totally in the hands of the women. The men were excellent hunters and they seem to have practiced some sort of conservation, at least where deer were concerned. They were good fishermen, going after whales, blackfish and swordfish in their sea-going canoes.

But perhaps most important was the inexhaustible supply of shellfish in the saltwater ponds that ran along the south shore. It was that food resource that permitted the Indian population on Martha's Vineyard to grow so large. It was more than well-fed, it was a well-functioning civilization.

So, you ask, why is there only a handful of Indians left on the Island? And an even smaller handful in Mashpee on the Cape; and among the Narragansetts around Westerly. Where did they all go? And why?

They were not exterminated by the settlers, at least not deliberately. But they were virtually wiped out, all the same. Here is what happened.

Remember that before the Europeans arrived, the Indians had almost no diseases at all. Because they had few diseases, they had little resistance to disease, few antibodies in their blood to fight off the new viruses and germs the Europeans brought with them: illnesses like the common cold, influenza, pneumonia, chicken pox, measles and scarlet fever. The devastation caused by these European diseases was terrible. When measles struck an Indian village, it became a deadly plague. Smallpox was even more devastating.

Another thing that happened was equally tragic. The Indian culture and economy were sound, functioning well. But when the white man arrived with his illnesses and his God, the Indian was convinced by material possessions like



Map by Lincoln Dexter of Indian tribes in Massachusetts, circa 1640.

guns and metal tools, that the new culture was superior to his. He was told that it was God's doing that the Europeans were superior. So he tried to adopt the foreigners culture and tried to do it all at once. The results were disastrous.

The Indians became, in a generation, a society without a culture, neither Indian or European. It was too much to absorb in such a short time. And the settlers didn't help. They believed that it was God's will that they had been brought here to convert the heathen, to show him their God. They did it in a manner the Indians couldn't understand.

Quickly, the best land came into the hands of the English. It was all legal, the English said, because the Indians had accepted their laws and culture. They were pushed into less desirable areas, like Major's Cove on Sengecontacket, and the west side of Lagoon Pond, and Christiantown on the north side, and Deep Bottom in West Tisbury. Places where their need for agricultural space was denied them.

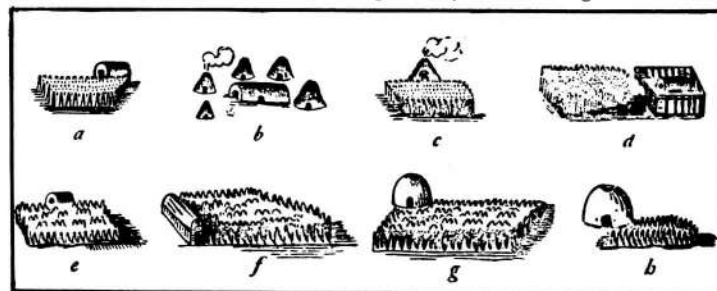
So the Indian was destined to live in abject poverty and disease. He no longer could live as an Indian and he didn't know how to live as an Englishman.

There was, for a while, one group that was able to hold on. It was the Gay Head Aquianahs, living far to the west of the English settlements. Their remoteness saved them, but also they had a most remarkable sachem. His name was Mittark and he announced, "We will sell absolutely no more land to the whites." And he held to it for as long as he lived. He said, "We will adopt those parts of the white man's culture that are best for us, and do so only gradually." He held to that, too. And so, Gay Head survived as an Indian community longer than any other.

I must say something about our debt to the Indian. The Indian has given us an awful lot; far, far more than he got from us. I'll list a few. He gave us corn; he gave us the canoe, the moccasin and the snowshoe. He gave us the sport of lacrosse and other competitive games, including one not unlike football. He gave us some of the most beautiful place names we have in our country. Names like Massachusetts, Connecticut, Mohawk, Dakota, Shenandoah, Menemsha and Chappaquiddick.

As Rev. Jeremy Belknap, founder of the Massachusetts Historical Society, wrote back in 1783: "What a pity that this race tends towards its end!"

From *Antiquities of the New England Indians*.



Houses and gardens of New England Indians when the English arrived. Bottom row is typical of coastal settlements, such as the Vineyard.

Documents

Jeremiah Pease Diary

Jeremiah Pease fans will be happy to have his diary back. We have omitted it for two issues due to space limitations.

This 1825 segment ignores the inauguration of President John Quincy Adams of Braintree and the opening of the Erie Canal. On the Island, such events pass notice.

One national event is mentioned: the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument, at which the Marquis de Lafayette, Revolutionary War hero, was the honored guest. A contingent from the Island attended because Rev. Joseph Thaxter, Edgartown's parson for many years and a Revolutionary war veteran, offered the opening prayer, a great honor. The sloop, Thomas, Captain Chase Pease, Jeremiah's brother, was chartered for the sail to Boston. Jeremiah was aboard.

Jeremiah sold his shop on North Water street, suggesting he may have given up his cordwaining. Yet, he worked several days putting leather on the bottom of ship John.

The Pease diary is the best account of Island happenings from 1819 to 1857.

March 1825

(continued)

16th. ESE. Went a-fishing to the S. side of the Vineyard [sic] this day. Benjamin Worth kills Whale so near the Boat in which I was fishing as to give me a favourable opportunity to see all the manoevers.

18th. NNW, fresh breeze. Schr. *Rising Sun* tows in the Whale. Went a-fishing.
19th. SW. Mr. Worth & others are engaged in cutting up the Whale, trying, etc.

21st. NE, fresh breeze. Went fishing, cold.

22nd. ENE. Ditto.

27th. WNW. Went to H.Hole to the Funeral of Br. Robinson's Wife. Return same evening. Hebron [Vincent] sick with the Meezles.¹

31st. WNW, high wind. Went to Chapaquidick on Particular business [special marks].²

April 1825

1st. WNW, fresh breeze. Went a-Fishing.

3rd. Ditto to ENE, severe Storm [sic] with snow, several Vessels driven on shore at H.Hole & T.Cove.

4th. NNW; high wind. Annual Meeting for the choice of Governor, etc. Adjourned until tomorrow 1/2 past 9 A.M.

5th. WSW to SW. Town Meeting.

9th. NNW, SW. Went to H.Hole to Schr. *Diligence*.

10th. NNW, SW. My family are sick

¹ Hebron Vincent (Jeremiah spells it Vinson) was apprenticed to Jeremiah about seven years before, probably as a cordwainer, Jeremiah's craft at that time. Hebron grew up to become a Methodist minister and historian of Wesleyan Grove campground, which probably pleased devout Methodist Jeremiah very much.

² As regular readers know, when Jeremiah is doing something that he prefers not to disclose, he makes a special mark after the entry, probably indicating that he is recording details in a more confidential file. At least, that is our supposition. Unfortunately, that special file has not, as yet, been uncovered.

with the meezles, about these days. Bartlet Fisher drowned at the South side, having been fishing.

12th. W to SW. I returned from the Schr. *Diligence* at 1/2 past 1 o'clock P.M.

13th. W. Engaged in giving my Deposition in an Action between Asa Swift of Fairhaven & Wm. Stone of Newburyport, relative to Schr. *Mercury* which arrived here in the year 1823.³

15th. SW. Went to the records on account of T.M.Coffin & Henry Marchant's business (returned, 1 day).⁴

17th. SW. Quarterly Meeting at H.Hole.

19th. ENE. Went to the records on acc't. of T.M.Coffin & H.Marchant business. Returned at evening (1 Day).
22nd. SW, pleasant. Schr. *George Washing* [sic], Ephm. Marchant Jr., Master, from Africa arrives. Attended her as Inspector.

23rd. E, light & pleasant. Heman Arey raises his house.⁵

24th. SSE. Brother Foster preaches.

26th. SW. Schooner *G. Washington* sails for Boston.

26th. SW. Engaged in business of T.M.C. & H.M.

27th. S. Engaged in business of the Town. Went to the Records, 1 day with 1/2 the expense of horse & carriage.

³ This involved a shipment of ivory which had been seized and held by the sheriff in Edgartown, perhaps for non-payment of duties. Jeremiah, as usual, does not explain.

⁴ During these years there were two courthouses on the Island: one in Edgartown; the other in Tisbury (today's West Tisbury). The records were apparently in Tisbury.

⁵ House is at 2 South Water St., Edgartown, now part of the Edgartown National Bank. Arey was the town's best cabinetmaker.

30th. W. Engaged in planting corn.

May 1825

1st. Wind SW. Sloop *Thomas*, Brothers Chase & A.D.Pease arrive from Charleston.

2nd. ENE. Engaged in viewing wood lot, etc., for I.D.P.⁶

3rd. SW. Went to Falmouth, returned same evening. Rains at night.

4th. NNW, cool after the rain. P.M. wind ESE. Samuel Osborn's large house raised today.⁷

6th. NNW. Ship *Planter* of Nantucket, Clement Norton, Master, from the Brasil Bank with a full cargo of Oil arrives.⁸

7th. Wind SW. Sloop *Thomas* & Schr. *Hiram* sail for Boston.

9th. E. to SSW. G.T.Cornell's child dies, being weakly & having the Meezles.

10th. SW. Town Meeting for the choice of Representative (voted not to send . . .).⁹

11th. ENE to SSE. Set an arm for Wm. Holley, broken by a fall from the Mill Vane.

12th. SW. The arm above mentioned swells a little, I therefore slacked the bandage which releives the pain. Engaged as one of the appraisers of

⁶ I.D.P., plus Chase and A.D. of previous entry, were three of Jeremiah's brothers.

⁷ House is at 62 North Water St., Edgartown, next to the Library, now part of the Daggett House. There seems to have been a building boom in progress.

⁸ Clement Norton of Edgartown, son of Lot, married Martha Pease. They had seven children. He died in the Sandwich Islands in 1846.

⁹ This was a common occurrence. The town would vote not to spend the money to send a Representative to Boston. Nobody seemed concerned about taxation without representation, however.

(sic) the Estate of Nathaniel W. Fisher, late 3rd. Mate of the unfortunate Ship *Globe* of Nantucket.¹⁰ Appointed one of the Comm. on the Estate of S. Buter [Butler?].

13th. SW. Recd. of Timo. Coffin Jr. a power of Attorney to collect money at Nantucket. See his Receipt.

14th. NW. Went to Nantucket on business of the Town, etc.

15th. ENE to SSE. returned.

16th. SSE. The Agent of the Ship *John* of Edgn. commences fitting her for the Pacific Ocean on a whaling voyage.

19th. SW. Rec'd. an Insult from the Revd. Mr. Thaxter, which . . .¹¹

20th. NW to SW. Assisted in putting down spouts at the Saltworks for Thos. Cooke, Esq.

21st. SW. Searched the Probate records for the will of Jacob Norton per request of Grafton Norton.

25th. Wind SW. Attended Town Meeting & was chosen Moderator.¹²

26th. NW. Brig *Resident*, Capt. Matthew Pease, sails on a whaling voyage in the Atlantic Ocean. This day preambulated the lines between Cornelus Huxford & Elisha Dunham's land at Chapaquiddic.

30th. NW to SE. Court of Common Pleas sets today if the Juge (sic) arrives from Nantucket in time. I was drawn to serve as one of the Grand Jurors for this year.

¹⁰ For details of the *Globe* mutiny see *Intelligencer*, August 1989.

¹¹ Why doesn't Jeremiah tell us more! Thaxter and he had been very close until Jeremiah, a year earlier, was "born again" as a Methodist. Thaxter had taught Jeremiah the skill of bonesetting. This entry was written with emotion, being underlined (a rarity) with the final word, "which," boldly crossed out.

¹² Another job for jack-of-all-trades Jeremiah.

31st. SW Attended Court.

June 1825

1st. Wind SW. Assisted in fixing the saltworks pump, etc. for T.Cooke, Esq. Court rises.

2nd. SSW. Assisted in taking up & putting down the spouts of T.Cooke, Esq.'s saltworks.

3rd. SSW. Engaged in surveying land at Cape Poge for the United States which Thos. Jernegan & others sold for the purpose of moving the Dwelling House, upon fees \$2.50.¹³

4th. ENE, gail with rain. Daniel McKinzee's Child dies.¹⁴

6th. SW. D. McKinzee's [child] is buried. Funeral service by Rev. Wm. Hubbard & Henry Marchant.

7th. SW. Mr. Dexter falls down the Ship *John*'s hold and hurts himself badly. Very warm. Thurm. 80.

8th. SW, very warm. Thurmometer stands about 80.

10th. Ditto. One of the Legs of Bartlet Fisher, who was drowned Apr. 11th., found on the south beach and his Vest & part of his Shirt.

14th. NNW. This day a great number of our Citizens (myself one of the number) sail for Boston in sloop *Thomas*, C.Pease, master, to view the scene which is to take place on the 17th Inst. Arrived in Boston on the 15th at night. Went on shore on the 16th in the morning. I had the honour of seeing Genl. Lafate [sic] several times.

¹³ Four acres were purchased at \$20 an acre onto which the Keeper's house was moved when it was threatened by bank erosion. For more on this see *Intelligencer*, November 1983.

¹⁴ The child was the twin daughter of Capt. Daniel and Phebe McKinzee, aged 10 months and 20 days.

It was a splendid possession on the 17th which the newspapers of the present and History in future will give a complete account of.¹⁵

21st. SW. Sailed from Boston for Edgartown with our passengers and arrived on the 22nd.

25th. S. Went to Holmeshole on business of the Town, returned same day. Notified their Selectmen to run the lines between the Towns, etc., etc.

28th. SW. Went to H.Hole after Doct. D. Fisher by request of Joseph Mayhew, his son Charles being very sick of a fever. Returned immediately. Watched with Charles Mayhew.¹⁶

30th. SW. Charles Mayhew dies at about 5 o'clock, being 5 years & [8] months old. He was a very pleasant Child.

July 1825

1st. Wind SW. Attended the funeral of the Child above mentioned. Service by the Revd. J. Thaxter.

2nd. E to S. Brother David Culver arrives with his wife, being stationed on this Circuit as a Methodist Preacher.

¹⁵ The event was the dedication of the Bunker Hill monument. The reason so many Edgartown folks made the trip to Boston was because Rev. Joseph Thaxter, pastor of the Congregational Church in Edgartown, was the official chaplain for the occasion, a great honor. Featured speaker was Marquis de Lafayette, Revolutionary War hero. Reverend Thaxter, you will recall, had "insulted" Jeremiah just a month earlier. The long boat trip to Boston must have been strained for the two of them. It is unfortunate that Jeremiah doesn't tell us what happened.

¹⁶ Dr. Daniel Fisher had just moved to Tisbury from Dedham the year before to practice medicine. He married Grace C. Coffin four years later, in 1829, went into the whale-oil business in Edgartown and soon was the Island's richest man.

3rd. SW, pleasant. Br. Culver Preaches first time, rains at night.

4th. S to W & E, rains a little. This day Elijah Stewart, Esq. Charles Butler & Joseph Huxford, Jr., Selectmen [of Edgartown], Ichabod Norton, Esq., & Jeremiah Pease Assisting Committee, go to Holmeshole according [to] arrangement to meet the Selectmen of Tisbury in order to establish the boundary line between Edgartown & Tisbury. Met at Mr. Nathan Smith's Tavern, present: Matthew Merry, Wm. Ferguson & Stephen Skiff, Selectmen of Tisbury. After discussing the subject the most part of one day, we could agree upon nothing & adjourned. Returned at evening.¹⁷

9th. SW. Began to reap my rye.

11th. Calm A.M., P.M. SW, very warm, Thermometer stands at 90. Assisted T. Cooke, Esq., in raking hay, etc.

12th. SW, warm. Assisted as above.

14th. SSW. Assisted in putting leather upon the Ship John's bottom.¹⁸

15th. SSW, rains a little. Ditto.

16th. NE to SW. Assisted T. Cooke, Esq., in raking hay, etc. This day my Boys finish gittin in my Rye.

19th. SW. Mrs. Hoag, a Quakeress [sic] Preaches in the Revd. J. Thaxter's Meeting house at 10 a.m. Large congregation. She performed extremely well. Mrs. Hoag goes to H.Hole to preach at 5 this afternoon.¹⁹

¹⁷ Selectmen of two towns "could agree upon nothing." The more things change . . .

¹⁸ Jeremiah was a cordwainer, a leather craftsman. Was this common: covering a ship's bottom with leather?

¹⁹ This must have been the first time a woman preached from those pulpits.

20th. SW, very warm and remarkably dry. Br. E.J. Taylor comes & removes his furniture, he being stationed this year at _____.²⁰

22nd. Calm & SSW, remarkably warm all day, the evening the warmest I think that I ever Experienced. Engaged this day in putting leather upon the Ship John. L. Norton's house moved about this time.

23rd. SW, very warm. Engaged as above mentioned a part of the day.

24th. SW, light. For the week past the weather has been warmer than ever known on this Island before.

26th. SW. Some articles reported to have been found at the S.Beach. went to Chap., Washqua, fishing, etc.

28th. SW & calm. A remarkable Drouth. Watched with Mr. Stephen Raymond, he being sick of a fever.

30th. SW. At 2 A.M., Set out with a number of our Brethren for Falmouth camp meeting, arrived in about 4 hours at the encampment. The scene was solemn and interesting. Continued there until August 1. Arrived home about 11 A.M.

August 1825

1st. ESE to ENE, a little rain. Mr. Henry Pease's house raised.

2nd. NE, rains. Camp Meeting breaks up. 2 packets arrive with a number of our Brethren & sisters from meeting, bound to Nantucket. Brother Horton one of the Preachers stationed at Nantucket comes with them and preaches this evening. A very comfortable meeting.

3rd. N. Packets sail for Nantucket.

²⁰ Reverend Taylor later became famous as Chaplain at Boston's Seaman's Bethel.

4th. SW. Samuel Huxford's child dies AE about _____.

5th. SW. Samuel Huxford's child buried. Complaint entered against Ebr. Smith for abuse to his family, etc.

6th. SW. Trial of Ebr. Smith at D.Fellows, Jr., office. Sent to Jail.

10th. SW, very warm & dry. The news of the Ship *Loan* having 1400 BBLs oil arrive per Ship Wm. & Eliza of N.Bedford. Signed with W.C. & I.D. to F.B., etc., etc.²¹

11th. NE to ENE, very great drouth, the corn withers fast.

13th. SW. Quarterly meeting, several Brethren attend from H.Hole. A fine Thunder shower, being more rain this night than has fallen for 2 or 3 months past. This is the most severe drouth that has been known for 40 years.

14th. SW. Brothers J. Mayhew & D. Culver preaches this day. The Presiding Elder does not attend on account of sickness in his family.

25th. E, calm & SW. Visited Mr. Daniel Vincent & Lady. D.P. & Wife, J.P. & Wife were the company. We were very cordially received & politely treated.²²

26th. ENE. Surveyed a piece of land for Thos Cooke, Esq.

29th. SW, pleasant. Daniel McKinzie's child dies, AE about 13 months.²³ Attended the funeral service by Revd. Jesse Pease. News of the death of Mr. John G. Godfrey (arrives from N.York) by yellow fever. Mrs. Patience Dunham dies of old age.

31st. NNW. Assisted Thos. Stewart in

²¹ What could this mean?

²² Daniel Vincent was an Edgartown farmer. Who was D.P. and why does Jeremiah seem surprised at being treated politely?

²³ This was the twin to the girl who died earlier.

making out his account of the settlement of his Father's Estate. 1 day.

September 1825

1st. Wind NNW. Ship *John*, Jethro Daggett, Master, haws [sic] down the harbor.

2nd. NNW & SW. Ship *John* sails for the Pacific Ocean on a Whale voyage. Engaged in making out accounts for Thos. Stewart.

3rd. S to SSE. Ship *John* anchors in H.Hole last night & goes to the Cove today.

4th. N to NE. Ship *John* goes to sea. Zadock Norton's Child dies, aged 18 months.²⁴

5th. N to SSE. Engaged in making out Accts. for Thos. Stewart.

6th. ENE. Engaged in copying a Draught of one of the Plain divisions of land. F.Baylies' child dies at night, 1 o'clock.

7th. ENE to SSW. Engaged in writing division deed for the heirs of Thos. Stewart. Mr. Leavitt Thaxter's Academy raised.²⁵

8th. ENE, rains. Attended the funeral of the child above mentioned.

²⁴ For more about Zadock, who later changed his name to Francis Addlington, see "The Slandering of Jeremiah Pease, *Intelligencer*, February 1990.

²⁵ The building is at 60 Davis Lane, Edgartown, a private home.

9th. ENE to SSE. Engaged in writing Deed etc., for T. Stewarts.

10th. ENE. Capt. Thos. West's son drowned at H.Hole up upsetting of a Boat.

13th. SSW. The Corner Stone of the new Jail laid.²⁶

15th. SW. Went to S.Smith Esq's on business of Capt. P.Norton & others, 1/2 day.

16th. SSW. Engaged in business for the above mentioned. 1 day.

17th. EN to NE, stormy, rain, high tide. Matthew Pease's Child dies, Aged [1] year [and 5 months].

19th. NNW. The above Child buried. Went to the records office on Bus. of P.Norton & ____ [unclear]. 1 day.

20th. NE, light. Engaged on business of the above. 1/2 day.

24th. WNW. News of the arrival of Rowland Jones, Columbus Worth and 2 young men of Nantucket, having arrived in N. Allens [New Orleans], who were a part of the crew of the unfortunate ship *Globe*. [In margin:] This proves a mistake.²⁷

25th. SW. Schr. *Hirum* arrives from the straits of Bellisle.

26th. N, gail. went to Chapaquiddick on business, etc.

²⁶ Does anyone know where the jail was located?

²⁷ This must have been a traumatic experience for the families involved. These four young men were killed in the *Globe* mutiny in the Pacific.

Where there's a Will, there's a Way . . .

to help preserve and publish

Dukes County history.

When drafting your will, won't you please remember to include the Dukes County Historical Society among your bequests.

1990 Regional High School Historical Essay Contest

There were more entries on more varied subjects in this year's essay contest for Regional High School students than ever before. The quality of research and presentation was very good and the judges had difficulty ranking the three winners.

To be considered for an award, an essay must discuss Dukes County History and the research must be done, to a significant degree, at the Society library. The purpose is to acquaint highschool students with the resource materials and research assistance available in our Gale Huntington Library of History.

The Society is pleased to announce the 1990 winners:

First Prize, \$50.

Tammy Noyes

*Hereditary Deafness: A Comparative Study
Between Martha's Vineyard and the Weald*

By comparing the social and geographical characteristics of the Vineyard and the Weald in Kent County, England, the author explains the unusual frequency of deaf-mutism on the Island in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

Second Prize, \$30.

Jessica Burt

From Canvas to Cottage City

The evolution of the Island from a farming community into a summer resort is detailed in this history of Wesleyan Grove Campground. Today, of course, we know Wesleyan Grove as the Campground and Cottage City as Oak Bluffs.

Third Prize, \$20.

Jilana Maynard

Epenowe

Perhaps the first Vineyarder to travel to Europe, Epenowe, a Wampanoag Indian, was among the first to discover the true goals of those early English adventurers.

The Officers and Council of the Society congratulate these three winners and extend their thanks to all the other students who submitted essays in this annual competition. It is our hope that all participants have developed a heightened interest in the fascinating history of this Island.

All those who submitted essays receive a one-year membership in the Society, which includes a subscription to this journal. The Essay Committee is especially grateful to Mr. Benjamin Kindzia and the other teachers at the High School for their help in making this year's contest a success. And the Committee's special thanks go to Anne Coleman Allen, Society Librarian, for her dedicated work on this project.

Bits & Pieces

Those who enjoy Vineyard history owe much to two men, Richard L. Pease and Dr. Charles E. Banks. Doctor Banks, author of our three-volume history, is well known and needs no special appreciation here.

But Richard L. Pease does. His contributions are generally unknown. Yet, he may even be the more important.

RLP, as he is familiarly known around DCHS, died in 1888, years before Banks began his *History of Martha's Vineyard*. He, a man of many positions including those of teacher, Postmaster, census taker, Clerk of Courts and Register of Probates, spent much of his life gathering data for what was to be his grand work, a history of the Vineyard. The shelves of our archives have notebooks filled with his beautiful penmanship. But, as often happens, he spent too much time taking notes and not enough time writing his book.

Fortunately, his notes survived. Banks leaned heavily on them, as he did on RLP's daughter, Harriet, the Island's first genealogist. It was with her help that he published the third volume of his history, the premier work on Island genealogy.

There's a cruel irony to all this.

Had RLP written his book, the history of the Island would be different. And different in a way important to RLP. It all involves the so-called "Pease Tradition."

RLP, a Pease, believed the tradition to be fact. In 1857 he wrote a definitive, straightforward account of

those first English settlers, led by John Pease. Nary a suggestion of "local tradition has it," or "it is believed that," or any other phrase that suggests, "Well, that's a good story, but just the facts please."

To RLP it was fact. And, research shows, it is fact.

For reasons unknown, CEB (Charles E. Banks) saw it differently and he devoted many words to destroying belief in what he called "The Legendary Settlement Before 1642." So much so that one is tempted to say he "doth protest too much, methinks."

Perhaps he was driven by a search for the truth, but, more likely, he was protecting his own point of view.

One man, who, like RLP, has a family interest in proving the story, refused to go along with CEB's version. He is Ardis C. Trapp Jr., of Leesville, Louisiana, a most unlikely spot to find a researcher into Island history. His interest stems from the fact that one of John Pease's associates in that first settlement was a man named Trapp.

The story is too long to go into on here, so we will, in a future issue, tell it in detail, thanks to the thorough research of Ardis C. Trapp Jr.

The point of all this is that had RLP, who lived to be 74 years of age, shortened his research and started to write, he would have changed history. But his time ran out.

Instead of Thomas Mayhew being famous as the first English settler, the honor would go to John Pease, Thomas Vincent, Thomas Trapp and Joseph Norton.

But Doctor Banks had the last word.

So if there's something you must get done, do it. You might change history.

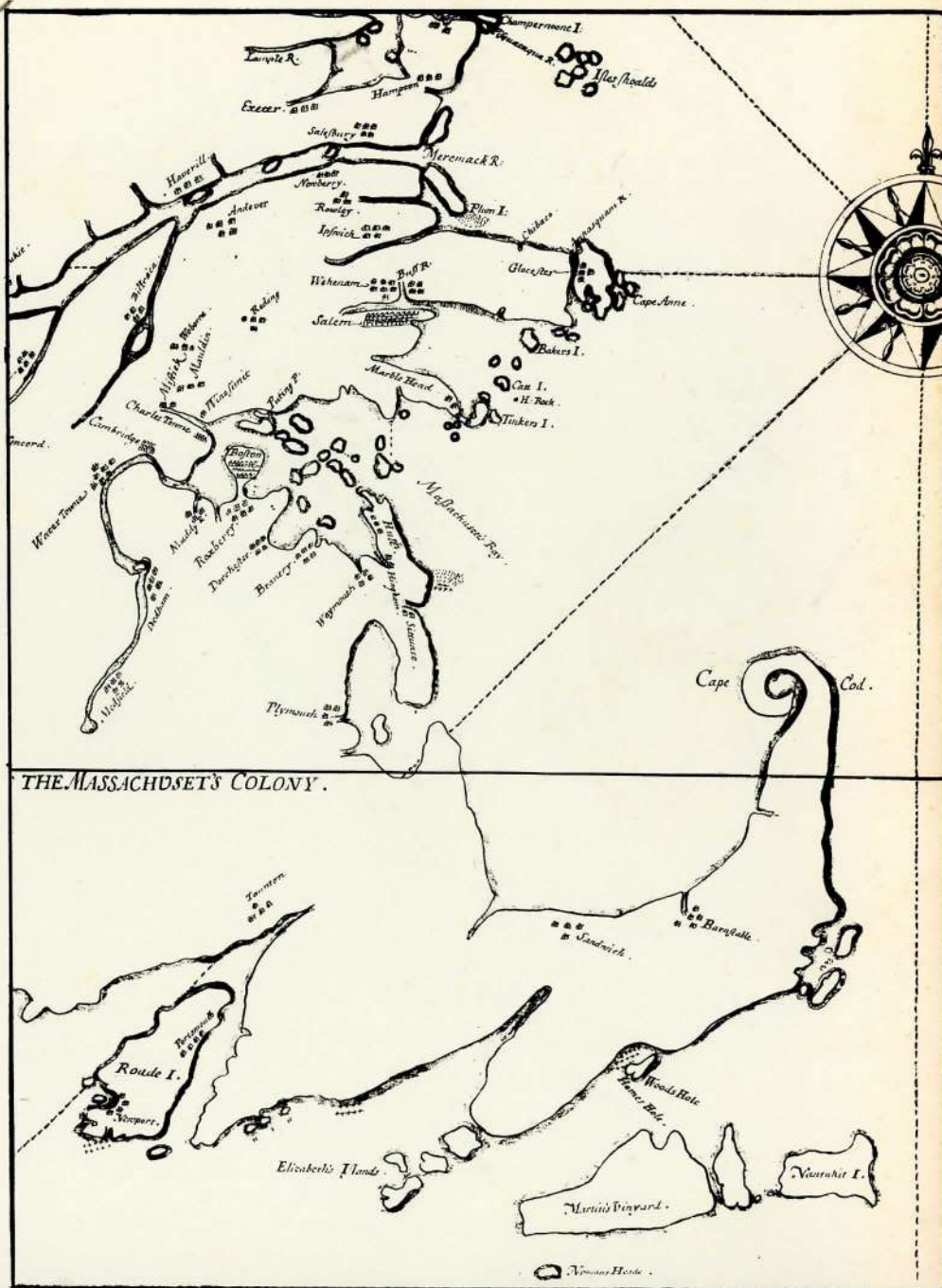
Massachusetts Colony Seal



The seal of Massachusetts Colony has an Indian saying "Come over and help us," a quotation from the Bible. It is unlikely that any Indian ever made that request.

Maps and Charts

There will be an exhibition of Early Maps and Charts of Martha's Vineyard at the Society's Jirah Luce House in Vineyard Haven from June 12 through September 8, 1990. Included among many others on display will be those printed in this issue.



The Massachusetts Bay Colony included the territory north of the horizontal line. The map was drawn in 1678 for the Blathway Atlas. The Mayhews lived at Mistick (Medford) and Watertown, both shown, before moving to the Vineyard.