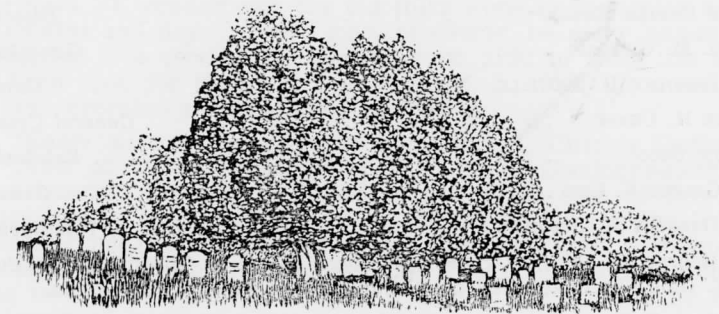


# THE DUKES COUNTY INTELLIGENCER

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THE LAMBERT'S COVE CEMETERY

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LOSS OF THE AMERICAN WHALESHIP COLUMBIA

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# THE LAMBERT'S COVE CEMETERY

By JOSEPH B. ELVIN

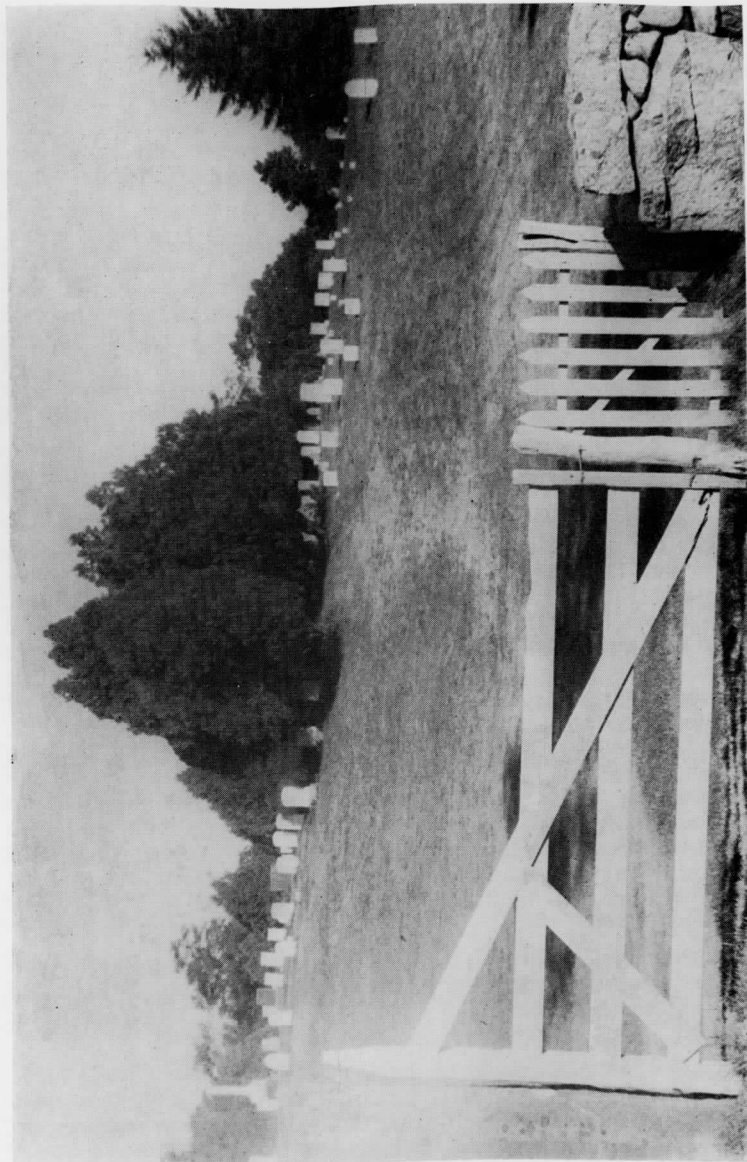
The Lambert's Cove cemetery has in it much of interest to anyone who enjoys going back in mind to earlier days and looking a little into the lives of those who settled in the Cove. It is not ancient in years although it is approaching its bicentennial. I have never heard of bicentennial celebrations for cemeteries being publicly acclaimed but perhaps in some instances it might be worth while.

Banks History has it that the oldest stones are dated 1771, but there is one which bears the date of 1762. It marks the grave of Beulah, daughter of Deacon Banford and Elizabeth Smith who died June 19, 1762, at the age of three years, 10 months and eight days. I wonder why the old folks were so particular as to the months and days. There may, of course, be older unmarked graves, but it is certain that for 76 years, 1762 to 1838, this land had been used for burials. Then on Dec. 2, 1838, the owner of the land executed a formal deed as follows:

"Know all men by these presents that I, Charles Cottle of the Town of Tisbury, County of Dukes and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, yeoman, in consideration of the sum of fifty-five dollars having been raised for the purpose of fencing the North Shore Burying Ground, do, of my free will, give, grant and convey a certain tract of land now occupied as a common burying ground, being so much as shall be fenced, less than one acre, to be held and improved by all who may have buried and all who wish to bury their dead thereon for their use and possession, and whereas this North Shore burying ground is bounded on all sides by my land, I do, by these presents, exempt myself, my heirs and assigns forever, for making or maintaining any part of the fence of said burying ground whatever, and I, the said Charles Cottle, do for myself, my heirs and assigns forever release, relinquish and quit all claim to the said burying ground for the purpose aforementioned, and I do hereby covenant and agree that I am lawfully seized in fee of the aforesaid burying ground and that I will warrant and defend the same against the lawful claims and demands of all persons whatsoever."

Seventeen years later, the same Charles Cottle sold to John Look some adjoining property "excepting the public burying ground bounded as the fence now stands." The burying ground was later enlarged by a gift of some of the John Look property.

In 1937-1938 Mrs. Alpheus Parker, who was born Etta Luce, daughter of Capt. Hiram Luce, began a project which became a labor of love for those who now are living in the Cove. She spent a great deal of time locating, deciphering and putting on paper the names of the "quiet neighbors" who lie in the burying ground. Her birthplace was the Hiram Luce place which is set well off the



The "quiet neighbors" of Lambert's Cove. A recently discovered deed shows the burial ground formally was given as such by Charles Cottle in 1838. Earliest gravestone is dated 1762.

Cove road near the Nelson Luce place now occupied by Mason Mayhew.

My first interest in the cemetery came about when Mrs. Parker (we always called her Aunt Etta) asked if I would help her to get her notes and sketches into shape so that a drawing might be made.

It is a far cry from the Cove to the drafting room of a high school in Springfield and the Polish boy who made the drawing. He became intensely interested in the job and in the lore of the island and I regret that I never had him here for a visit. The boy later was graduated from Kings Point, obtained his master's papers and went to sea.

Confusion in locating some of the lot lines and graves led to the making of a new plan, drawn to scale; however, the plan is hard to read and could not be included with this article. The names Lambert, Cottle, Norton, Luce, Vincent and all the others which I had heard about through many summers in the Cove, began to find places in the scheme of things which, with little effort, served to bring to light some of the intimate history of this stretch of road and the waters nearby.

In addition to Beulah Smith's stone there are four others bearing dates prior to 1800. They are as follows:

Abyah Smith, Died Dec. 13, 1771, Age 26 years, 3 months; John Cottle, Died April 21, 1793, Age 97 years; Amy, Wife of Shubael Cottle and daughter of Mrs. Samuel Allen, Died May 16, 1780, Age 69 years; William, son of William and Jemima Cottle, Died June 12, 1774, Age 4 years.

I have never before seen an inscription like that for Amy Cottle. In that connection I sometimes think it would have been of interest if the maiden names of the wives had been added to the memorials.

In addition to these four there are many ancient slate markers which are so badly weathered as to be illegible and also a good many graves which have field stone markers, head and foot stones, which may be those of old settlers or possibly Indian graves. Many such unmarked graves were listed by Mrs. Parker who was able to identify a number of them by one means or another.

It is interesting to note that the old slates, from which so many colonial grave markers were cut, came to these shores as ballast in ships from England. The slates themselves were quarried in Wales. This cannot be the whole story in view of the tremendous slate industry near Lake Champlain.

There is evidence of unmarked graves in the north corner of the cemetery and an effort is to be made to locate as many of these as possible. There is an old and badly weathered slate well down towards the corner that marks the last resting place of Maria or Moriah Norton which bears out my contention that there were

markers in that part at one time. There is a deplorable habit among those who cut grass and trim brush in old grave yards, of removing ancient stones. I have an idea that the straight row of small stones in the Cove Cemetery is the result of their having been removed from their original locations, piled under trees and then set as they are now by someone with a conscience in such matters.

During the process of trimming brush and cutting out interfering tree limbs there were uncovered three D. A. R. grave markers. In all probability they had been in the way of the mowers. It was curiosity as to the proper location of these markers that led me to go into the records of those who served their country during the Revolutionary War. Reference to Bank's History and to the Archives brought out the fact that they should be on the graves of Capt. Nathan Smith, Thomas Luce and Malachi Luce. On Captain Smith's stone there is a line carved which is apparently the name of the man who carved the stone.

In addition to the military there are six memorials which have to do with the church, and not the Lambert's Cove Methodist Church at that. They serve to tell us where six deacons of the West Tisbury Congregational Church are resting. They are:

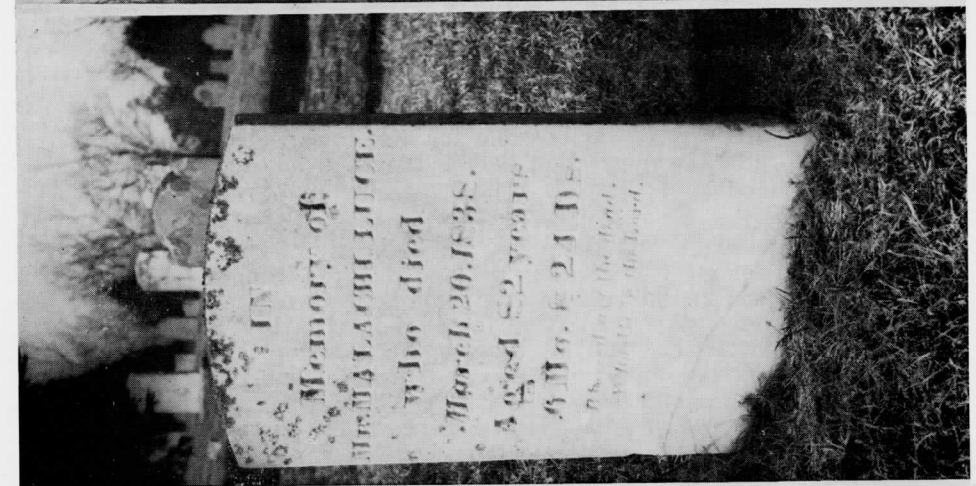
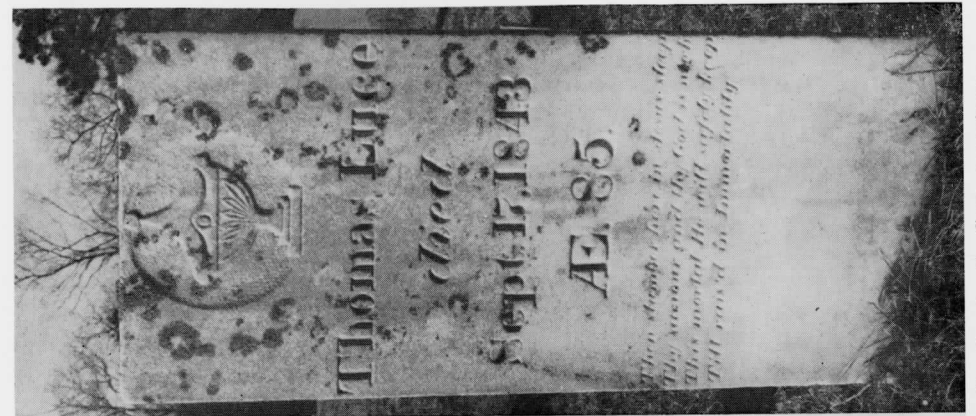
Deacon Davis Cottle, 1813-1879; Deacon Elliott Cottle, 1847-1873, (He and his wife died the same day in Memphis, Tenn.); Deacon Bartlett Pease, 1701-1784; Deacon Alfred Norton, 1797-1872; Deacon Banford Smith, 1722-1811; Deacon John Cottle, 1778-1842.

It being a free country a man might drive his horse and buggy past the Methodist Church and go on for three or four miles to the church of his choice. Still, three miles behind a horse on a hot summer morning, or a cold day in winter, is somewhat of a journey.

Coming back to Capt. Nathan Smith, my interest led me to talk with Herbert Norton of the days that are long gone and the people who lived in those days. When we got to talking about the Captain we drifted around among the shallows and deeps of the lore which surrounds the region known as Lambert's Cove.

The house in which Herb was born lies, as many know, right on the easterly line of the town of West Tisbury. The house was built about 1763 by Capt. Nathan Smith. Later on, Nathan's son Jabez sold the place to Deacon Alfred Norton and his brother, Eliakim. Both these men lie in the Cove cemetery. Again, later on, Deacon Alfred bought out his brother Eliakim. The property included about 250 acres and abutted the land of Constant Norton and ran thence westerly to the clay works, better known as the brick yard. Part of the land is now included in the Makonikey development. The brick yard, by the way, manufactured common brick and fire brick and continued so long as the supply of cord wood was sufficient for its needs.

It seems that Jabez Norton, for one reason or another, decided that he had had enough of the island and so elected to



These Lambert's Cove men served in the Revolutionary War and their gravestones are in the Lambert's Cove cemetery.



migrate to the state of Maine. His migration is typical of the period and accounts for the frequent recurrence of Vineyard names throughout Maine. Now Jabez loaded all his belongings onto a small vessel and set sail for his new home. As has often happened, he never reached his destination, for in some manner the main boom of the vessel swept him overboard and he was drowned. Thus Jabez was never gathered to his fathers in Lambert's Cove and there is no memorial to him. When the inscription on a tombstone reads "Lost at sea" we are prone to let our fancy turn to whaling or heroic deeds of self sacrifice and we must not let our faith be shaken by such a mundane ending as was that of Jabez Norton. He was lost at sea.

Capt. Nathan Smith was the island's most talked of hero of the Revolution. He was the captain of a company enlisted for defense of the seacoast, engaged Oct. 3, 1775 for two months, three days. He is also listed as Captain, 1st Company Seacoast Officers, Jan. 6, 1776, also Jan. 15, 1776, 10 months and seven days. As Herb told it to me, Captain Nathan "worked the hummocks", which is to say that he moved rapidly from place to place along the beach. In this way it was possible for him to so deploy a small force as to give the impression that a large and quite formidable army was holding the beaches against the enemy.

At one time the British ordered that all island cattle be driven to the shore and there be taken aboard their ships to be slaughtered for meat as occasion demanded. Now Nathan was no ordinary person and he refused to give up his cattle and as a result he had the only yoke of oxen on the island for a time. Another yarn tells how Nathan and his brother took a trip to Canada and that when they were ready to return they were told that they could take out of that country anything they could carry in their hands. There is no record of what Nathan brought but the story has it that his brother brought home a crowbar. What particular virtue that bar possessed is anybody's guess and the story goes on to say that the bar has been reported to be in the possession of one of the Fischer boys.

Nathan Smith's powder horn was interesting in that on it were carved the records of all the battles and adventures in which the captain had been involved. This relic is in the collection of Miss Dorris Hough in Vineyard Haven. Nathan's sword went through the great fire in Tisbury and came off second best. According to Herb Norton it was in the possession of the late Amos Smith.

Byways are forever tempting whether they be in the country or simply in the mind and so it turned out to be while Herb and I talked about the Cove cemetery. We came upon the name of Martin Luce who died in the year 1818. Martin lived to the west of Paul's Point, near the shore of the Lily Pond. The pond itself has suffered badly during the hurricanes of recent years but there are still evidences of the old house. Martin was not endowed with too great a supply of this world's goods but in one way or

another he made the best of a meager living. He had an extra finger which caused him to be called "Five Finger Martin."

About the same time that Nathan Smith was "working the hummocks" there was a British frigate lying offshore of Paul's Point, on station to intercept any colonial shipping that might venture in those waters. There was always a demand for fresh vegetables and other produce aboard His Britannic Majesty's ships and this one was no exception. Martin used to load his boat with produce of one kind or another and row out to the frigate and thus add to his income. There was not a whole lot of money in it but it did help out.

Martin used to beach his boat on the Lambert's Cove shore not far from where in later years Otis Luce had a shed where he left his oxen or his horse, as the case might be, while he hauled his traps. This was most convenient to some of Martin's friends when they cooked up a scheme for borrowing the boat and in the dark of the night to row off and capture the frigate. They figured that in all probability there would not be more than one man on watch on deck at night and that they could board and take the prize without bloodshed. There does not seem to be any detail as to the success of the venture other than to say that they failed in their attempt.

So far as Martin was concerned, he knew nothing about the affair until he went to his boat in the morning. He was shocked at the condition in which he found the craft. The neighbors who had made up the crew must have been nervous and had a goodly supply of chewing tobacco for the boat was thoroughly plastered with juice. Martin was later quoted as saying that it looked "like the battle of Squirt — nobody killed — nobody hurt."

When congenial folk sit by the fire, drink tea, eat sandwiches and talk of the old days they usually find it hard to stick to a given line and proceed to hop around a given area like a rabbit in new snow. It was in this manner that the name of Daniel Luce came into the telling of tales.

There are two Daniel Luces in the burying ground but neither of them can be the one who built the house on the curve beyond the Cottle houses and nearly opposite the road to the Lambert's Cove beach. This house was later owned by Miss Almira Norton who lived there alone in the last years of her life. It was bought after her death by General Preston Brown. The General planned to overhaul the old house but it proved to be in such bad repair that it was torn down and the present house built.

At the time Daniel Luce owned it there was a small store in part of the house, which was run for the benefit of the Cove dwellers. The story has it that in a part of the house remote from the living quarters there was a room in which an insane man had been confined and that a ring bolt in the wall was the one to which he had been fastened.

We came upon the name of Edmund Cottle who died in 1809. We speculated as to whether this Edmund was related, or how related, to the Edmund Cottle who ran the lumber yard at the beach end of the path to the shore which is still used to gain access to the Lambert's Cove beach. It is interesting to drive along the Cove road and see the lumber yard of the present Edmund Cottle on the land surrounding one of the Cottle places.

Deacon Davis Cottle's is not one of the older dates in the graveyard but he was one of whom there are tales to tell. He was a Deacon of the West Tisbury Congregational Church and was a respected citizen of the town. His name is linked with that of William Athearn whose house in the cove is a mile beyond the cemetery. William Athearn was a whaling captain and at one time went on a voyage of 52 months. His was rather a small place with two small ponds, one to the north and one to the south of the house. His outhouse stood pretty close to the road on the side toward the Methodist parsonage. Three young fellows, Alpheus Parker, Fred Tilton and Otis Luce, used to get fun out of pelting stones at the small building just to hear Captain Athearn rave at them.

The Methodist Church stands on a rise not too far from the Athearn house and there had been a minister called to the church who came to his charge on his honeymoon. The same young men who pelted the outhouse planned more devilment. They took wood from Captain Athearn's pile and dropped it along the road between his house and the parsonage. His wrath knew no bounds and of course he blamed the new parson and gave him a hard time. Young fellows were much the same then as now.

At one time William Athearn was at work for Davis Cottle, hoeing potatoes. Part way through the morning Davis came to the field, grabbed a hoe and began to make it fly among the plants. When he had tired himself he left, but his son John came to the field and, following his father's example, set a fast pattern for William to follow whereat William remarked: "Why don't you dig up all the old Cottles — maybe you'd get the hoein' done faster."

Down below the hill at the back of the cemetery there is a tall monument to Constant Norton. He had been a hard working, thrifty member of the community. He owned a grist mill which was located on the brook which runs from the cranberry bog across the Cove road to the North and thence to the Sound. Joseph Chase Allen has written about the mill and I shall not attempt to duplicate his efforts. There is still some evidence of the old building if one is willing to work into the brush a hundred yards.

There are so many memorials to so many interesting folks who at one time lived in the Cove that it would seem worth while to pursue the subject further. However, this all started with the name of Capt. Nathan Smith and it is better to keep to the original plan. From the roster of Captain Smith's company we find others who now lie near him who should perhaps be identified by markers

so that those who wander through the cemetery might know them and perhaps weave about them a dream of the days around 1776.

The name of Lambert's Cove is of course derived from the Lambert family which lived on that part of the road which is now, and long has been, disused. The road used to run past the Nathan Smith place and over the hills past a tannery, a blacksmith shop and so on until it passed the Lambert place which is, as things are today, just beyond the Look pasture. The road then came back to the present road between the cemetery and my house.

In the western corner of the cemetery there are four stones. They are plain marble and mark the graves of: Hannah, wife of Elisha Lambert, 1803-1871; Elisha Lambert, drowned at sea, July 14, 1846; Charles Lambert, died June 8, 1896; Betsy A., wife of Charles Lambert, 1832-1882.

There was a time when Charles Lambert had business at the Look Washburn slaughter house which was located across the road from my home. According to Harry Horton, Mr. Lambert set a locust hitching post to which he tied his horse. That post is still solid and can be seen by anyone who is curious. This seems to settle the question of the comparative durability of locust and other woods when set in the ground, for the post is probably around 70 years old.

On top of the hill near the roadway, we find two stones: Mary Lambert, Died Dec. 18, 1877, Age 90 yrs., 7 mos., 13 days; and Samuel Lambert, Died April 11, 1815, Age 57 yrs., 3 mos., 20 days.

I set out at the beginning to tell a little about Capt. Nathan Smith but from that point I have wandered far. There is almost no end of the tales that might be told of the people who once lived in Lambert's Cove but it seems best to end here rather than wander any farther afield at this time.

## A CAPTAIN WHO KNEW THE PACIFIC

JOHN H. PEASE, 1793 - 1879

Typical of the breed of Vineyard men who sailed to all corners of the Pacific Ocean, John H. Pease of Edgartown was born on Chappaquiddick and in 1882 sailed as first officer of the whaleship *Thames* of New Haven. This ship took the second group of missionaries to the Sandwich Islands on that voyage, and Mr. Pease gave up his room to the wife of a missionary. A child, named Seaforth Stewart, was born after the vessel rounded Cape Horn.

John H. Pease married the daughter of Dr. Samuel Wheldon and they had a son, Samuel Wheldon Pease who, at 19, sailed as boatsteerer with his father, then master of the *Chandler Price*. Young Samuel suffered an illness of the hip and after four months of suffering died at Lahaina in the Pacific.

In 1847 Captain Pease picked up bits of wreckage in the Pacific and deduced that a whaleship had been lost. After weeks of searching among the islands, he rescued the survivors of the wrecked ship *Columbia* from Sydenham's Island, purchasing their release by paying 200 pounds of tobacco to the natives. On this voyage he also discovered a chain of uncharted islands.

In all he made 16 voyages and spent 33 years at sea. He never drank a glass of liquor, chewed tobacco, or smoked a pipe or a cigar in his life. After his retirement he kept the Ocean House, a hotel on North Water Street. He lived to be 86 years old.

\* \* \* \*

The author of this introduction is unknown. A simple marble shaft in the Edgartown cemetery bears the name of John H. Pease and the inscription — "He Believed in the Lord." Also on the shaft are inscribed the names of "Betsey, wife of Capt. Pease, fell asleep in Jesus, May 25, 1868; Samuel W., son of John and Betsey, died at Maui, Oct. 22, 1846, Age 19; John Jr., died at sea, Ap. 30, 1868, age 33 years, 11 mo."

—Editor

## LOSS OF THE AMERICAN WHALESHIP COLUMBIA

By Thomas R. Crocker, Cooper of the Ship

(Communicated for "The Friend," Honolulu, Dec. 1, 1846)

The ship *Columbia* sailed from New London, Conn., June 18, 1844, Reuben Kelly, Master, and after a successful voyage arrived at Honolulu on the 1st November, 1845, with 2700 barrels of whale oil. She lay here for some time. Having recruited she started on a cruise on the line for sperm oil. On Jan. 4th we made Byron's Island and remained there during the day; we left there the same night and proceeded on the voyage until Jan. 6 on which day land was raised to the leeward as far as could be discerned from the masthead. The ship was immediately kept off for the land intending to pass it to the southward.

At 7 o'clock the wind increased, and at 8 it blew a strong breeze, accompanied with much rain and darkness. The ship's course was altered to S. W. and at 10 o'clock again changed to west, so as to give the land a wide birth. At this time the ship was going about eight knots, with topgallant sails set, and the wind a little on the starboard quarter. About 10:30 o'clock a flash of lightning disclosed to the man on the lookout the tops of cocoanut trees right ahead, and before the helm could be put down the ship was amidst the surf. All hands immediately rushed upon deck just as the first breaker washed over her. Every effort was made to save the three larboard boats, but before they could be cleared away the ship was on her beam-ends and the boats knocked to pieces. The captain then ordered the men to get into the rigging to save their lives.

The ship still having a heavy press of sail on her, and laying broadside to the wind, it was found necessary to cut away the masts. After much difficulty an axe was obtained, and the main and mizzen top-mast rigging having been cut away, these masts went over the side, easing the ship considerably. Still the surf broke over her as high as the mizzen-top, and the starboard quarter boat was dashed into the rigging upon the men who had betaken themselves there to save their lives.

The situation of these poor fellows was now so perilous, that to preserve themselves they were obliged to cut the boat adrift. We had thus lost four boats, and in the course of a few moments two more were washed off the house. We now watched for a favorable opportunity to descend the rigging and lash more securely the only remaining boat. After much difficulty and danger this was effected, but the labor was vain and useless, for in a few minutes the force of the waves stove the boat and rendered our situation more discouraging, if possible, than before.

Thus we were deprived of all our boats, and as they appeared the only means of escape from our perilous position, their loss left

us but little hope. The crew raised a shout several times to ascertain if there were any inhabitants on the island, and once a light was seen on the shore at some distance from us. About one o'clock in the morning the clouds broke away and the moon's light enabled us to see the land, and at the same time disclosed to us the imminent peril of our situation.

Some of the men were contriving means to effect their escape from the ship, which was now going to pieces; others, having but few clothes on and exposed during the whole time to the action of the surf, were almost dead from cold and exhaustion. About two o'clock two men made an effort to reach the shore with a line made fast around their bodies; but they failed and it was with much difficulty that they were again drawn on board: in fact the attempt well nigh proved fatal to both.

It was now determined to remain in the ship until morning, or as long as she would hold together. Before going further in my statement I must bear evidence to the intrepidity and presence of mind of the captain. Throughout the whole of this trying scene he acted with firmness and judgment, and encouraged us at all times both by word and example. When the danger was the most imminent, his calmness was the more conspicuous, and his efforts for our safety the more daring.

At sunrise another effort was made to reach the shore, and two men starting with a line, after much difficulty and danger, succeeded in reaching the beach. Here the line was made fast to a rock, and one by one we proceeded to haul ourselves along it to the shore. Before all had left the ship, the natives began to assemble and some of them even succeeded in getting on board, but they offered no assistance to the crew.

Their first step was to cut the rigging and sails to pieces, and while some were engaged in this work of demolition, others commenced an active search for tobacco, appropriating all they could lay their hands on, even forcing the crew to give up the little they had in their mouths.

We were not allowed to touch any of the things that had washed on shore, and one man nearly lost his life in making an effort to secure a bible that had been given to him by his mother. They wrested the book from his hands, tore it to pieces, and divided the leaves among themselves. This course they pursued with everything that came on shore, and in numerous instances the end and use of an object had to yield to this strange system of justice: for instance, a boat was divided among the different claimants — one took a part of the leg — another the sole — another the heel, and so on until nothing remained.

The natives of this island subsist almost entirely on cocoanuts; occasionally they obtain a few fish. They are extremely indolent, compelling the women to perform all manual labor.

After two days spent in much anxiety and suspense, they concluded not to kill us, we having made them understand that a ship would come and furnish them with tobacco for our liberation. The ship's company was then divided among the chiefs, including some who lived at a distance of 25 miles. I fell to the lot of one who lived about 20 miles from the beach.

Although provisions sufficient to have fed us a year came on shore from the ship, we were not allowed to touch it, and as we went to our different places of destination it was with the thought that starvation would close our career. It is useless to attempt a description of our sufferings. One man traveled six miles over the burning sands and exposed almost naked to the rays of the sun, to obtain a small piece of hard-bread not as large as the palm of his hand. On another occasion a dog was killed and eaten raw, and so famished were we that the flesh appeared the most delicious morsel that had ever passed our lips. Thus we lived and suffered for the space of 23 days, when to our joy a sail was described in the horizon. It proved to be the Ship *Chandler Price*, John H. Pease, master.

After five days negotiating, Captain Pease succeeded in ransoming us for one hundred pounds of tobacco. He treated us in the most kind and friendly manner, and he will always be remembered by the unfortunate beings he rescued with feelings of the deepest regard and gratitude.



## ANNUAL REPORTS

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Annual Meeting, August 14, 1963

The Council of the Dukes County Historical Society has met once a month since the last annual meeting August 22, 1962.

Most exciting accomplishment for the past year has been the very successful membership drive chairmaned by Mrs. Guy W. Stantial of Chilmark. A brochure was prepared and mailed to a list of taxpayers and summer visitors totalling over 3,000, with the following returns. Total new members 317 of which 256 are annual, 52 sustaining and 9 life members. Broken down by towns, Edgartown leads off with 71 annual, 16 sustaining and 2 life members, total 89; Tisbury gained 48 annual, 13 sustaining and 3 life members; Chilmark was third with 48 annual, 10 sustaining and 2 life; Oak Bluffs had 48 annual and 5 sustaining; West Tisbury dropped down to 20 annual, 5 sustaining and 2 life; and from Gay Head, came 4 annual memberships, 20 from off-Island. Mrs. Stantial's committee consisted of Mrs. Reid, ex-officio, and the secretary, Mrs. Mayhew with Dr. Riggs providing 2 block prints for the brochure and Mrs. Joseph B. Kraetzer assisting with publicity.

Total membership to date is 720 with 570 annual, 85 sustaining, 58 life and 7 honorary. 29 members were lost during the year, 9 by death, 7 resigned, and 13 were dropped for non-payment of dues.

The long anticipated publication of the late Warner Foote Gookin's biography of Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, sponsored by the Society, completed, edited and annotated by Philip L. Barbour, should be on the market any moment now. Mrs. Frances T. Ottemiller, director of the Shoe String Press, the publisher, in a letter dated July 17, said that after a series of unanticipated delays the book should be in their hands, "all jacketed . . . by the end of the month, but this may be a little more than we can expect." The price of the hardcover edition is tentatively listed as \$8.00.

Our own island Guide book, issued in 1956, is virtually sold out of the 1st edition of over 4000, and a revised edition bringing it up to date, is in the printer's hands.

Other business that has concerned the Council has been extensive work on the lens tower and the usual percentage of repairs in the old Cooke house.

Most valuable accessions this year were the century-old portraits of Captain Alexander Weeks and his wife Hopestill Norton of Edgartown, together with French photographs on ivory of their youngest son Benjamin and his wife Frances whose great-grand niece Mrs. F. Riley Dodge of Boston presented them to the Society.

A beautiful collection of Igorot Indian beadwork and costumes from the Philippines brought home by John W. Mayhew in 1913 was given by Mrs. Mayhew. A tea set of the Faith Hope and Charity pattern has been offered by Miss Hope Gray and accepted for exhibit with warm appreciation.

Several additions to the library have been made including the new Coffin genealogy and John Daggett's delightful "It Began with a Whale."

Signed:

Eleanor Ransom Mayhew,

August 14, 1963

Secretary

### A REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

(As it appeared in the Vineyard Gazette August 16, 1963)

#### Mrs. Reid Is Re-Elected Head of Historical Group

Michael Straight Gives Talk on Sand Creek Massacre —  
Mrs. Mayhew's Service Appreciated

The annual meeting of the Dukes County Historical Society was promptly called to order at 8 o'clock on Wednesday evening at the Federated Church parish house in Edgartown by the president of the society, Mrs. George H. Reid.

The minutes of the previous meeting were waived, and the secretary, Mrs. Benjamin C. Mayhew reported, among other things, that during the past year the society membership had increased to 720. This was followed by the treasurer's report, read by John W. Osborn, and the recommendations of the nominating committee for next year's officers, read by Benjamin F. Morton, which were both approved. The officers for the coming year are: Mrs. George H. Reid, president; George H. Chase, vice president; E. Gale Huntington, secretary; Flavel M. Gifford and Miss Bertha DeLoura, directors.

Then followed the curator's report read by Miss Dorothy Scoville, some comments by the genealogist, Mr. Gifford, and Mrs. Reid's reports as housekeeper and president. Mrs. Guy S. Stantial arose at this point and read a resolution presented by Henry B. Hough which was voted upon and approved. Its text follows:

#### In Official Posts in the Society

"Whereas — Eleanor Ransom Mayhew, in official posts in this society over a period of years, has brought to its service a devotion to the heritage of Martha's Vineyard, a knowledge of the people and events past augmented by research and special studies, and a capacity for successful completion of major historical projects.

"Be it resolved, that the warm appreciation of the Dukes County Historical Society be expressed by formal vote and that this resolution be made a permanent record.

"Be it further resolved, that a copy of the resolution be sent to Mrs. Mayhew and published in the Vineyard Gazette."

It was then quite fitting for Dr. Sidney N. Riggs, who has been adopted by Indians himself and given the name, Eagle's Nest, to introduce the guest speaker of the evening, Michael Straight, who gave an illustrated lecture on the Sand Creek Massacre, a considerable part of which he took from his book, Carrington.

Mr. Straight first commented on certain resemblances between the Vineyard and the country his story concerns. A writer may have a great desire to recreate, he continued, but his ability to recreate the past in a country which changes so rapidly is very limited. "However, there is a quality of the West which is like the Vineyard . . . the country doesn't change. It is there, and it dominates."

The plains of southeastern Colorado are all sage and buffalo grass. At their northern border is the Platte River, and the Arkansas River skirts the south. Both are winding and treacherous. Between the two of them was the last of the great Indian battlegrounds.

#### Massacre of Sand Creek

A monument in the ghost town of Chivington commemorates the massacre of Sand Creek, an event which Mr. Straight feels was "one of the truly regrettable tragedies of the West." A ridge and a clump of cottonwoods are the only things which now mark this neglected monument in American history.

Mr. Straight recounted the massacre's history from the beginning. Following a trail from William Bent's fort, he took his audience to the once-embattled Cavalry post, Fort Lyons, one of the four army posts in the massive plains area. In 1864 Colorado was threatened with an Indian war, but as the country was in the throes of the Civil War, Lincoln and Stanton could not possibly spare any additional troops for Colorado.

Early in September of 1864, on the morning Atlanta fell, four soldiers and three Indians approached Fort Lyons. The commanding officer, Major Edward Wynkoop, was furious with the sergeant for bringing them in, for he was under instructions to shoot all Indians on sight.

One of the Indians was an old man with one eye. He gave the major a slip of paper, saying that the Cheyennes were willing to accept Governor Evan's proposal to come in on peaceful terms. Major Wynkoop asked why this answer hadn't been brought in forty-five days earlier. One Eye replied that the Cheyennes had tried to come, but that every time they had approached, they had been fired upon.

#### Saw Indians as Human Beings

A sudden change came over Wynkoop. He asked One Eye if he hadn't thought he was going to be killed. One Eye replied yes, he had thought he was, but he was hoping that someone would find the paper on his body. Wynkoop for the first time saw the Indians as human beings, and he became possessed with an almost religious conviction that the Indians were telling the truth. He agreed to go visit the Cheyennes.

Among his officers was a Scotch-Irishman from Maine, a fervid abolitionist named Silas Soule. He was the only officer who saw that Wynkoop was doing what he had to do.

At dusk, the party came to the Smoky River. Suddenly, over the hill came 1,000 Indians, and the soldiers were a mere band of 130. However, the Indians merely escorted the soldiers to their camp at the Big Timbers.

Here, Wynkoop had the Cheyenne chief, Black Cattle, come to an agreement, despite the war wishes of a young chief, Bull Bear. Black Cattle agreed to hand over four captives in return for a safe journey to Denver to talk with Governor Evans.

Along the way, Wynkoop stopped the preparations for an Indian war and sent the homesteaders back to their harvests.

Denver, however, was in a headlong rush towards war, Governor Evans had panicked and had formed a third regiment of militia. At first he wouldn't listen to Wynkoop, saying, "I cannot disband the regiment. They were formed to kill Indians, and Indians they must kill." However, he eventually came to his senses and agreed to meet the chiefs at Camp Weld, where the third regiment was forming. As the Indians arrived in Denver, there was a massive peace demonstration staged by the aristocracy.

#### Introduced the 3rd Character

Mr. Straight then introduced the third main character in his story, John Milton Chivington, the hero of the battle of Glorietta, and now the military commander of Colorado. He was aggressive and ambitious, the promoter of a tough Indian policy, and the organizer of the third regiment. It is suspected that he got his position by assassinating his commanding officer.

He had just recently suffered a sharp, political defeat, and he fancied himself a future President, he was yearning for victory.

At the conference at Camp Weld, Evans made Black Cattle Wynkoop's prisoner. This was perfect, and a close, working relationship developed between white man and the Indian. There were no incidents for over two months.

Major Wynkoop was then transferred, and Fort Lyons was taken over by Captain Scott Johnson. He instructed the Cheyennes to winter at Sand Creek.

Suddenly, one evening, Chivington arrived with his third regiment. They had enveloped all in front of them like a giant amoeba. They overcame Fort Lyons, and the next morning, Chivington attacked the Sand Creek settlement, killing 168 Indians, 110 of whom were women and children. The bodies were thoroughly mutilated the next day.

Chivington sent in a false report to Washington and became the hero of the day. However, two men, Wynkoop and Soule were determined that the massacre should not go unrevenged. Together with a man named Sam Tappan, they brought Chivington to trial and broke him, even though it eventually cost Soule his life.

Mr. Straight analyzed the massacre as an expression of Chivington's personality. It was a way for him to escape the psychological and political dilemma which confronted him. But the massacre was also an expression of Wynkoop's personality, for without the trust he had created, the Indians would never have wintered in Sand Creek.

Mr. Straight concluded by commenting on the age-old wisdom of Heraclitus concerning the logos or interrelationship of good and evil and how this is painfully acute in this tragedy in our past.

A few back issues of the *Intelligencer* are available at fifty cents each at the Dukes County Historical Society in Edgartown.

Vol. 2, No. 1 — Dr. Sidney N. Riggs' illustrated article on "*Vineyard Meeting Houses*."

Vol. 2, No. 2 — "*The Episcopal Churches of Martha's Vineyard*," by Dr. Riggs; the "*Annual Report and Account of Accessions*" by Eleanor Ransom Mayhew, Secretary, and second installment of Rebecca Smith's *Journal*.

Vol. 2, No. 3 — "*Years of Innocence on Martha's Vineyard*," by Henry Beetle Hough. "*Some Gay Head People About Sixty Years Ago*," by Eva Ryan. "*A Cache of Indian Artifacts*," donated by George Magnuson.

Vol. 2, No. 4 — *The Singing Tiltons and Some of Their Songs* by E. G. Huntington, also a continuation of Rebecca Smith's *Diurnal Records For The Year 1813*.

Vol. 3, No. 1 — *Merrily They Rolled Along — On Skates — Five Miles At Sea*, by C. Nelson Bishop; *Sand Dunes and Sea Law* by Stanley King.

Vol. 3, No. 2 — *The Peddle Cart* by Flavel Gifford; *Rounding Cape Horn* by Elon O. Huntington; *Annual Report* by Eleanor Ransom Mayhew, Secretary.

Vol. 3, No. 3 — *The Story of Pasque and the Pasque Island Club* by Alice Forbes Howland.

Vol. 3, No. 4 — *Adventure on St. Augustine Island* by Capt. Henry Pease, 2nd; *Some Vineyard Authors* by Dorris S. Hough.