The Vineyard's First Harvard Men Were Indians
by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

The Sad Fate of the "Hopfull Indian Youths"

The Absolutely Very Last Word About Martha-of-the-Vineyard
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The Vineyard’s First Harvard Men Were Indians

by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

It was an impossible dream. Today, we would call it pie in the sky a wasteful, do-gooder program. But in the 1650s, there was no such objection; at least, not at first.

Paying for it, almost entirely, were the ordinary people of England, putting shillings and pence into their church collection plates. Those ordinary English folk, most of whom had never even seen a college, never mind attended one, gave from their scarce resources to send American Indians to Harvard—Indians who, a generation earlier, had never seen a book, written a sentence, or heard of an alphabet.

To be sure, the English were not told they were sending Indians to Harvard—they were told they were bringing heathens to Christ. And most of their money did pay missionaries, principally John Eliot and several generations of Mayhews, but no small part of it went to provide a Harvard education for four Indians.

The dream was much more ambitious. It was to educate numbers of Indians so they would return to their tribes and convert their brothers to Christ. The plan was so ambitious that a separate dormitory was built at Harvard to accommodate the “savages.”

The program lasted only 15 years with Indians attending Harvard for only five of them. Most of the money and time were spent preparing them for college; after all, their early book-education had been virtually nonexistent.

About twenty Indians took part in the program over the

ARTHUR R. RAILTON is Editor of this journal.

1 As late as Experience Mayhew (1673-1758), the Society was paying annual salaries to Mayhews. It is likely that no group of Indians ever had as much spent, per capita, on their conversion as did those on Martha’s Vineyard.
years. Only four ever got to attend classes at Harvard. And of the four, only one was graduated. He was from Martha’s Vineyard: Caleb Cheesachamuck, son of the sachem of Holmes Hole, Harvard Class of 1665.

There would have been a second Vineyard Indian graduating with that class except for a tragic shipwreck only weeks before commencement; had he survived, it would have given the Island two out of nine of Harvard’s Class of 1665. The other seven were all English.

It’s a complex story and it began in 1649, seven years after the first Mayhew arrived on Martha’s Vineyard.

... 

In July of that year, 1649, one of the last acts of the Long Parliament was to establish “A Corporation for the Promoting and Propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England.” The corporation consisted of a President, a Treasurer and 14 others, mostly prosperous London merchants, and it was named “The President and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New-England.” Only two of its members had ever been to America. Its stated purpose was to raise money to Christianize the Indians.

It wasn’t the first time an attempt had been made to raise money for that purpose, but none earlier had succeeded. Between 1647 and 1649, Edward Winslow published several tracts about the work of Christianizing the Indians in an effort to build support. The one which may have done the job was published in April 1649, and contained three letters by the Rev. John Eliot of Roxbury and one by Thomas Mayhew, Jr., of Martha’s Vineyard. Both missionaries described their work with the Indians. It was the first time anyone in England had heard of young Mayhew.

Once formed, the Corporation continued to publish tracts as a means of advertising its goals. The first of these, written

2 There are various spellings of this name, as with most Indian names. We have chosen the one used in Harvard College records.

3 Later Governor of Plymouth Colony, Winslow was the person most responsible for the passage of the Act and was one of the 16 men chosen as members of the Corporation.

by the Rev. Henry Whitfield after a brief and unplanned visit to the Vineyard, praised the young Martha’s Vineyard missionary. Whitfield wrote of him:

I saw but small and slender appearance of outward conveniences of life, in any comfortable way... he was many times forced to labour with his own hands... yet he is chearfull amidst these straits, and none hear him complain. The truth is, he will not leave the work, in which his heart is engaged.

Shortly after this publication, the Society bought young Mayhew a library of books, along with “some Howes and hatchets” for the Indians and began paying him an annual salary as it was doing for Rev. John Eliot of Roxbury, the only other New England missionary at the time.

To act as its agent, the Society established a Board of Commissioners of the United Colonies, with an office in New Haven, Connecticut. The English government, under Oliver Cromwell, had mandated special collections in all the churches of England and Wales. With the money collected, the Corporation bought large amounts of land in Suffolk and Kent, using the rent from these estates to pay for the missions, Eliot and Mayhew being the first on the payroll. After young Mayhew was lost at sea in 1657, the Commissioners began paying his widow an annual allowance and, as we shall see, even financed the education of his eldest son, Matthew. It was not until three years after she remarried in 1664 that the annual allowance to the widow Mayhew was stopped. After young Thomas died, the Society paid Thomas Mayhew, Sr., an annual salary for his missionary work as long as he lived.

There is evidence that the merchants in London who ran

4 Henry Whitfield, The Light Appearing More and More Towards the Perfect Day, London, 1651, pp. 2-3. Whitfield's unplanned stop at the Vineyard was the result of unfavorable winds, forcing his vessel into Holmes Hole harbor for several days, awaiting a wind shift. Going ashore, Whitfield spent his time with young Mayhew and visiting some of the Indian missions.

5 It is not clear how much was raised. One source says 4500 pounds, another, 12,000 pounds. In either instance, it was a large sum for that time and a tribute to the generosity of the English.
But it was no easier then than now to get into Harvard. The Commissioners discovered that the college was already filled with English scholars and they would have to "raise some building" for the six Indians to live in before they could be admitted. The building, they informed London, should "be strong and durable though plain," and they estimated it would cost no more than 100 pounds. The Society, eager to get started, authorized construction of "one Intyre Rome att the College for the Conveniencye of six hopfull Indian youthes... which Rome may bee two stories high and built plain but strong and durable." The cost was not to exceed 120 pounds, "besides glaue."8

The building, the first of brick at Harvard, was built larger than planned. Daniel Gookin, writing 20 years later, said it was large enough to accommodate 20 scholars and that it had cost between three and four hundred pounds. There is no record of the cost or of exactly when it was completed, but the record does show that it did exist in 1656. That year, responding to a request from Pres. Charles Chauncy of Harvard, the Commissioners authorized him to "improve the said building to accomodate some English Students."9 The college was vacant because no Indian students had yet completed their preparatory-school education, which had just started that same year.

We don't know for certain how the "hopfull" Indians were selected or by whom. What is known is that in 1656, nine unnamed Indians were enrolled in Schoolmaster Daniel Weld's preparatory school in Roxbury to study English. Surprisingly, one was a girl—surprising because even English girls didn't go to college in those days.10 At the same time, John Stanton, son of an interpreter working for the

6 Earlier, Richard Hakluyt had warned "that the conversion of the heathen was an imperative duty whose neglect would bring about the collapse of colonial enterprises."
7 Letter, Commissioners to Edward Winslow, Sept. 24, 1653.
Commissioners in New Haven, was enrolled at Harvard to prepare himself as a tutor for the expected Indian students. He was English, but "spake the Indian language well to further him for the worke."  

Two of the nine Indians at Roxbury were from Martha's Vineyard, selected, no doubt, by missionary Thomas Mayhew, Jr. The other seven had probably been chosen by Rev. John Eliot. 

Two years later, in 1658, the two Vineyard Indians, along with three others, were transferred to Elijah Corlett's grammar school in Cambridge, where they studied Latin and Greek. Schoolmaster Corlett, a highly regarded teacher, ran a preparatory school for students planning to enter Harvard. After a few years, the Indian students, both at Roxbury and Cambridge, were moved into boarding houses in those towns for room and board while continuing their studies.

The two Vineyard Indians were Joel Hiacoomes and Caleb Cheesachumuck. They soon became the top scholars in the class of six: the five Indians plus another Martha's Vineyard youth, Matthew Mayhew, son of Thomas Mayhew, Jr., who arrived early in 1658. 

The Commissioners were so impressed by the accomplishments of Caleb and Joel that they sent to England a certificate signed by Pres. Charles Chauncey of Harvard testifying that the two Indians "trained up at the Grammar-Schoole in Cambridge" were able to translate part of a chapter of Isaiah into Latin and then to construe it. So great an achievement was this considered to be that the President's certificate was printed in John Eliot's A Further Account of the Progresse of the Gospel, published in London in 1659. 

The following year, another certificate was sent to London, stating that Caleb and Joel had successfully translated David's Psalms.

Clearly, these two Vineyard Indians were Schoolmaster Corlett's prize students.

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Joel Hiacoomes, one of the two, was 11 years old at the time. He was the son of the first Indian converted by Thomas Mayhew, Jr. One writer has stated, without citing a source, that Joel's father, known simply as Hiacoomes, had become a servant in the household of Governor Mayhew shortly after his conversion. Both the Governor and his son, Thomas Junior, rarely travelled without an Indian companion, but whether the Indian was a servant or interpreter, we do not know; perhaps both. Whatever their role, the Indians were paid by Society money from England. 

Daniel Gookin wrote of "travelling on foot between Watertown lecture and Cambridge with Hiacoomes and Thomas Mayhew, Jr." Even when he sailed to England on that ill-fated voyage in 1657, young Thomas had an Indian youth with him. We do know that Hiacoomes, the elder, was "employed by Mr. Mayhew" as one of his two interpreters, each being paid a salary of 10 pounds a year by the Society, making him and his colleague the most prosperous Indians on the Island, no doubt.

The second Indian scholar from the Vineyard was Caleb Cheesachumuck, son of the sachem of Holmes Hole, from whom Governor Matthew, in August 1668, bought one-quarter "of all that land which is called Chickenmow" for 10 pounds. 

There were three other Indians in Corlett's school, but unfortunately we have no record of their names or where they came from. One of them died in the spring of 1660, reducing the class to four Indians and Matthew Mayhew. 

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12 Ruby Martyn, unpublished ms., undated, DCHS. 
13 Deed fragment, DCHS, dated Aug. 10, 1658; also Book A., p. 24, Proprietor's Records, Dukes County Court House. "The highest political status (in the Indian village) was that of sachem ... who owned bounded territories, collected tribute from persons who farmed, hunted, and fished his lands and waters, exercised authority and administered justice ..." p.4. The sachem was often elevated to virtual "kingship" by colonial authorities, giving him authority he did not really have, p.14. Yasuhide Kawashima, Portian Justice and the Indian, Wesleyan U. Press, Middletown, Conn., 1986 
14 Two of the four Indians at Weld's School also died that year. Plymouth Colony Records, v.X, p.245 (as copied by RLP)
Matthew, son of Thomas Mayhew, Jr., was the only English student supported by the Society at Corlett's school. He arrived a few months after his father was lost at sea in 1657. His mother and grandfather had urged the Commissioners to pay for the education of the lost missionary's sons. The Society agreed to educate only one of the three boys, so Matthew, the eldest, was enrolled in Corlett's Grammar School in Cambridge early in 1658. He studied there until 1663, but was never admitted to Harvard College.

The Commissioners were somewhat doubtful about the wisdom of their decision, as their letter to the Society's Treasurer, September 26, 1658, makes clear:

Mrs. Mayhew (the widow of the deceased whom he left poor with 6 or 7 children) desires that 3 boys might be brought up in learning to fit them for after service amongst the Indians, which we are slow to assent unto in regard they are very young & the charges will be great before they be fitt for employment & then uncertain how their mindes may be addicted or their hearts inclined for this work, yet for the support & the encouraging of others we have allowed her 20 pounds & taken upon us to defray the charge of the eldest sonne of about 10 years now at School for this yeare & shall be willing to doe further for him or her as you shall please to advise.

The Society approved and "eldest sonne," Matthew, studied at its expense in Cambridge for nearly six years; his mother received her widow's allowance until 1667.

By 1660, seven years after the program started, the Society members in London were beginning to get impatient. Their dream of educating many Indians at Harvard was not coming true despite all the money they had invested. There were more teachers and missionaries on their payroll than students and the program was being challenged by the

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15 Mrs. Mayhew asked that all three sons be educated by the Society; her father-in-law, the Governor, asked for only two. He even wrote to his friend and former business associate, John Winthrop, Governor of Connecticut, urging him to use his influence with the Society to have his request approved. The Winthrop Papers, Mass.Hist.Soc.Coll.,4th series, v.VII, 1865, p.35.
authorities. Their concern was evident in a letter they wrote to the Commissioners that year:

... we are glad to hear of the progress which the 5 Indian Youths have made at the university... but it is wondered by some hear that in all this time there are noe more... it appears by the account sent that there are about twenty Teachers under salary; we desire theerfore that since our books, accounts and actions have bine lately inspected... and are exposed to the view of the nation, you would please to bee more particular in your next accounts, which wee hope will give publicke satisfaction.

The Commissioners answered that there were six, not five, students “maintained att our charge,” failing to point out that none was, as London seemed to believe, studying at the “university.” All were still in the two preparatory schools. Three of the original nine Indians, they also reported, had died that summer “in which hath bine much mortality amongst the Indians.” They were not enthusiastic about their non-Indian student, Matthew Mayhew:

... wee yet continue the charge of educating [Mayhew’s] eldest son, about twelve years old; his skill in the Indian language wee know not; but wee shall consider whether it bee not convenient to bee att further charge than this yeare; unless his parents will give him up to us for this worke and bee hee willing to consent thereto; we shall bee slow to take many more English or Indian youthes upon our charge for education till wee have some experience of those on whom wee much hath bine bestowed.

Matthew was unwilling or unable to learn the Indian language and two years later, in 1662, the Commissioners decided that something had to be done, otherwise he would never be able to preach to the Indians, as they were training him to do. On September 16, they formalized their decision, all of them signing it:

And whereas Mathew Mayhew is devoted by his parents to the worke and a considerable charge hath for his father’s sake bin expended on him; the Commissioners expect that together with his other learning hee apply himself to learn the Indian language having now an opportunitie to attaine the same, otherwise the Commissioners will be necessitated to consider of some more hopfull way of expending the stock betruested in theire hands.16

However, it wasn’t until nearly two years later, some time late in 1663, that the Society dropped its support of Matthew. That year, it suffered a considerable decline in income, forcing it to reduce expenditures, as London informed the Commissioners, April 9, 1663:

... we have not any money in cash, our present Revenew being not above 320 pound per annum... which means wee are constrained to improve that little wee have for the best advantage... and for that end wee desire that for the present as few bookes as possibly may bee bought; as aliose that the charges concernig Mistris Mayhew, Mathew Mayew, Mr. Stantons son, Captaine Gookin; extraordinary gifts to Indians; or any other exepenses... may be forborne.17

The Commissioners responded in September, stating that “we are much sollicited by Cordiall friends18 to this worke to continue that small allowance to Mistris Mayhew; her husband being the first or one of the first whose hart god stired up effectually to labour in this worke... we have therefore... thought it most expedient to allow her, yet remaining a poor desolate widdow with six children, as formerly six pounds, but shall lett her know she must expect noe more without your honors further order... John Stanton and Mathew Mayhew bee according to your honors advise discharged.”19

John Stanton never did any tutoring of the Indians, as he was being trained to do, and Matthew never did serve as a missionary although for about six years the Society had paid all their school expenses, including food and clothing, in the expectation that they would “laboure in this worke.”20

17 Ibid., p. 291.
18 Probably Mayhew’s friend, Gov. John Winthrop of Connecticut, had urged the Commissioners in New Haven to keep paying Mrs. Mayhew’s annual allowance.
19 Ibid., p. 293.
20 This experience made the Society more cautious when the next Mayhew was proposed for a scholarship. He was Nathan, son of Rev. Experience Mayhew, Harvard Class of
Young Mayhew, now 15 years old, returned to the Vineyard just in time to help celebrate the end of his mother's widowhood. In 1664, she married Richard Sarson.

Matthew's new stepfather, Richard Sarson, had been an early settler on the Island, but was not among the first. He "obtained the favor of the elder Mayhew" by his work in certain land deals and after marrying the widowed Jane Mayhew, he became one of the select insider group that controlled the Island under Governor Mayhew.

The Sarsons had only two children, a boy and a girl. The son, Samuel, in turn, had two daughters, thus the name Sarson ended, except for Sarson's Island, described on the inventory of his estate as "a small island in Sanchacantucket Pond, near the gut." It is still there and is now a bird sanctuary.

When Matthew left Cambridge in 1663, it is not clear how many Vineyard Indians still remained in school there and in Roxbury. It is clear that there was at least one besides Caleb and Joel, but we don't know who he was or if there were others. In 1662, the Commissioners had informed Thomas Mayhew that one “of those Indian Scollars at Mr. Welds [would] bee removed to the gramer Schoole att Cambridge at the expiration of this yeare and hee [Weld] is allowed to take another youth now sent from Martha's Vineyard.” That youth was not named. Three Indians studied at Roxbury from 1663 until 1666, after which only two are shown on the expense sheet. We have no way of knowing if any was a Vineyarder.

In 1661, two years before Matthew was sent home, the two prize scholars, Caleb and Joel, accomplished what the

Society had been dreaming of for years: they entered Harvard as freshmen in the Class of 1665. Indian College at last had Indian students within its walls. The two youths must have rattled around in a building built to accommodate twenty, but, no matter, after a delay of seven years, Indian College was finally housing Indian scholars.

Although it is not mentioned in the record, there is the possibility that the separate Indian College dormitory was a way of segregating the Indians from the other Harvard students. In 1664, when Joel and Caleb were in their Junior year, President Chauncey wrote to the Society in London, intimating such may have been the case:

... as concerning schooles for the Indians ... it were to bee wished that both in Grammer Schooles, and in our Colledge also, there should be appointed by yourselves a fit salary for schoole masters and Tutors in the Colledge for every Indian that is instructed by them to encourage them in the worke, wherein they have to deal with such nasty salvages, and of whom they are to have a greater care and diligent inspection.

"Nasty salvages" were they? The good President did not hesitate to credit himself with success in civilizing those "salvages:"

... I have trained up two of the Indians and instructed them in Arts and languages untill that nowe they are in some good measure fit to preach to the Indians and doe it with hope of comfortable successse ..."
the son of the Marshal-General of the Colony of Massachusetts; the son of the Commander of the Colony's military; and the son of a Selectman from Cambridge.

It is unlikely that Caleb and Joel were accepted as full members of such a group. After all, it was a highly refined society for two Indian youths from Martha's Vineyard who had grown up in wigwams.

Accepted or not, Caleb and Joel proved to be students the college was proud of. Gov. John Winthrop, Mayhew's friend and sometime business partner, writing to Gov. Robert Boyle of the Society in London, November 3, 1663, made that clear:

I make bold to send herewith inclosed a kind of Rarity, the first perhaps that your honor hath seen of that sort from such hands: it is two papers of Latin composed by two Indians now scolars in the College in this Country, & the writing is with their own hands. If your honor shall judge it worth the notice of the Gentlemen of the honorable Corporation and the Royall Society, you may be pleased to give them a view of it . . . being a real fruit of that hopefull worke that is begun amongst them . . . I received them of those Indians out of their own hands, & had ready answers from them in Latin to many questions that I propounded to them in that language, & heard them both expresse several sentences in Greeke also. I doubt not but those honorable laudatores Scientiarum will gladly receive the intelligence of such vestigia doctrinae in this Wildernesse amongst such a barbarous people.24

Tragically, one of those two exceptional scholars did not live to receive his degree with the Class of 1665. Joel Hiacoomes, after compiling an outstanding academic record and within a few weeks of his graduation, returned to the Vineyard for a visit. On the return voyage to Boston, the vessel he was aboard foundered and all passengers and crew were lost. It is not certain how they died. Some accounts state that they made it safely to shore on Nantucket, but were murdered by Indians on that island.

Daniel Gookin, a strong supporter of the non-combatant


Joel Hiacoomes autographed one of his Harvard books in this fashion. Indians during King Philip's War, lived in Cambridge and knew the two Vineyard students. Here is how, in 1674, he described Joel Hiacoomes and his tragic death:

I remember but only two [Indians] that lived in the college at Cambridge; the one named Joel, the other, Caleb; both natives of Martha's Vineyard. These two were hopeful young men, especially Joel, being so ripe in learning that he should, within a few months, have taken his first degree of bachelor of art in the college. He took a voyage to Martha's Vineyard to visit his father and kindred, a little before the commencement; but upon his return back in a vessel, with other passengers and mariners, suffered shipwreck upon the island of Nantucket; where the bark was found put on shore; and in all probability the people in it came on shore alive, but afterwards were murthered by some wicked Indians of that place; who, for the sake of the spoil in the vessel, which was laden with goods, thus cruelly destroyed the people in it; for which fault some of those Indians was convicted and executed afterwards. Thus perished our hopeful young prophet Joel. He was a good scholar and a pious man, as I judge. I knew him well; for he lived and was taught in the same town where I dwell. I observed him for several years, after he was grown to years of discretion, to be not only a diligent student, but an attentive hearer of God's word; diligently writing the sermons, and frequenting lectures; grave and sober in his conversation.25

And thus, the two Vineyard scholars in Indian College, who had studied so hard for so many years to earn a Harvard diploma, were now reduced to one: Caleb Cheeshamuck, son of a sachem of Holmes Hole, living

alone and in failing health in Indian College. Col. George Cartwright, Royal Commissioner, visited the college during the final weeks of Caleb's senior year. In a report to London, he described Indian College as something less than luxurious:

At Cambridge they have a small colledge, (made of wood) for the English; and a small pile of bricks for the Indians, where there was but one; one was lately dead. 26

Alone in that "small pile of bricks," ill with tuberculosis, Caleb completed his senior year and became the first, and the only, Indian to earn a Harvard degree during the Colonial period. The official listing of graduates in the Class of 1665 puts his name at the end, out of alphabetical order: "Caleb Cheeschamuck. Indus." 27

During his senior year, Caleb had "composed a Latin and Greek Elegy on the death of an eminent minister and subscribed them, 'Cheeshahteamuk, Senior Sophistra.'" That was also the way he inscribed his name on an address to his "most honoured benefactors," written in Latin and still preserved in the archives of the Royal Society in London. 28

Sadly, he never returned to the Vineyard to celebrate his graduation. The illness which had plagued him during his senior year kept him at Charlestown, "where he was placed by Mr. Thomas Danforth, who had inspection over him, under the care of a physician ... where he wanted not for the best means the country could afford, both of food and physic." 29

A report by the Commissioners to the Governor of the

26 Col. Soc. Mass., v. p. 128. The good Colonel, who had come over from London to see what was going on, was concerned about more than buildings. He wrote: "It may be feared that this colledge may furnish as many sciamatics to the church, and the Corporation as many rebels to the King, as formerly they have done, if not timely prevented." (Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc. for 1889, p. 87, as quoted in above-cited work.)
27 Col. Soc. of Mass. v. 15, Boston, 1923, p. 85.
Society in London, September 13, 1665, tells of Caleb’s final illness:

... the other surviving [Indian] took his degree this summer of Bachelor of Art but is now fallen into a deep Consumption, an epidemical disease among the natives & mortall soe that there remains littell hope of his life.

Thus, some time early in 1666, Caleb Cheeschamuck, Indus, of Holmes Hole, the first person from Martha’s Vineyard to graduate from Harvard, died in Charlestown, Massachusetts. He was 20 years old.

In the fall after Caleb’s graduation, another Indian, described as “a towaredly lad and apt witt for a scholler” moved into the empty Indian College. Morison, in his history of Harvard, identifies him as John Wampus, a Nipmuc sagamore from the area near Grafton, Massachusetts. He left after one year, preferring a career as a mariner.

Six Indians were still in the Weld and Corlett preparatory schools, one of whom, as mentioned above, may have been from Martha’s Vineyard, but none ever made it to Harvard.

One ground-floor room at Indian College building had, since 1659, been used as a print shop. A printing press had been sent over that year from England by the Society to print the first Indian language Bible and the empty building, owned by the Society, was the logical place to install it. By 1663, the 1200-page Bible was completed, making the Indian-language Bible, as translated by Rev. John Eliot, the first Bible published in America. By this time, Joel and Caleb were enrolled in Harvard and living in the building, perhaps sharing it with a non-academic Indian. Samuel Morison explains:

Almost any day the students, when passing through the Yard, could peer through the windows of the Indian College, and watch the Indian ‘devil’ James Printer sweating at the hand lever.30

Plan of Harvard College Yard. The first Harvard College is shown as Number 3; Indian College as Number 4; Stoughton College, built in 1699 with the bricks from Indian College, is Number 6; Massachusetts Hall, Number 7, was built in 1720 and still exists.

It seems likely that the Indian printer’s devil, James, lived in Indian College, sharing space on the first floor with the press. The two scholars from the Vineyard, most likely, slept and studied upstairs. There must have been a communal dining hall for all the Harvard students, as there are no records of separate payments for food for the Indians after they left preparatory school.

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30 Morison, op. cit., p. 349. The printer’s devil was a convert of John Eliot, who had sent him there as an apprentice, to be paid by the Society while working on the Indian Bible and other tracts.
Conjectural sketch of Indian College by H.R. Shurtleff is more substantial than the "small pile of bricks" described by Col. Cartwright in 1665.

By 1670, the Commissioners reluctantly admitted to the Society in London that things had not worked as they had planned:

It hath been to the eye of reason a great discouragement the loss of so many precious instruments fitted by the Lord with a spirit, and abilitie to further their good, as also the cutting off by death the Indian Schollers, which were sundrie, of them very hopeful buds, and they who were best acquainted with them, are persuaded of their eternall well being... wee now finde it very difficult to procure an addition of fit persons to labour in that worke of the Lord.  

The brick Indian College, "a structure strong and substantial," no longer was needed for "Indian Schollers." In 1676, a new brick college for Harvard's English students was "built at the publick charge... twenty chambers for students, two in a chamber; a large hall, which serves for a chappel; over that a convenient library." The old Indian College was now used only as a print shop and it fell into serious disrepair. In a few years, private printers, off campus, began to take over the work of the old press and the building became empty.

In 1693, the Commissioners, at the request of the Harvard Corporation, voted "that the Indian Collidge be taken down, provided the Charges...[be] not more than five pounds." Two years later, the Commissioners were asked by the college if "the bricks belonging to the Indian Collidge...may be removed and used for an Additional Building to Harvard Collidge."

The disheartened Commissioners agreed, "provided that in case any Indians should hereafter be sent to the Collidge, they should enjoy their Studies rent free in said building."  

Apparently, it wasn't until the spring of 1698 that the college building was actually torn down and the bricks reused. Judge Samuel Sewall, in his diary that year, wrote:

In the beginning of this Moneth of May, the old Brick Colledge, commonly called the Indian Collidge, is pull'd down to the ground, being sold to Mr. Willis the builder of Mr. Stoughtons collidge.

Only four Indian scholars ever lived in Indian College: Caleb, Joel, John Wampus and, in the Class of 1679, the last one, Eleazar, who, like Joel Hiacomes, died before his graduation. Much later, after the Indian College had been torn down, a fifth Indian attended Harvard. He was Benjamin Larnell, Class of 1716, but, like all his predecessors except Caleb, he died before he was graduated. A protege of Judge Samuel Sewall, for whom he had been a servant, young Larnell died in 1714 in the Sewall home.

Thus ended the dream of those Englishmen who had created, with such hope, the Corporation for the Promoting and Propagating of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England. Their goal of turning Indians into missionaries by

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33 Kawashima, p. 108.
educating them at Harvard had proved to be impossible. Not one of the Harvard Indians lived to fulfill that dream.

There was another, much greater, loss. That was to Martha's Vineyard.

What a difference it would have made to Island history had those two Harvard-educated Indians returned home in 1665, the only college-educated men on the island, to protect their tribe from the exploitation that was to follow.

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The Sad Fate of the "Hopfull Indians"

FROM our viewpoint today, it is impossible to imagine the trauma that must have developed in the minds of those Indian youths who were selected in 1656 to exchange life in a wigwam for a college education. They were very young — some only ten years old — when they entered preparatory schools in Roxbury and Cambridge.

What an emotional wrenching it must have been for their families as well. These youngsters were being shipped away to a totally new life, a life of different foods, different clothing, different personal habits, different environments. Not to mention the strain of adjusting to a formal education in English, Latin and Greek, under English schoolmasters as unfamiliar with their past as the Indians were with that of their teachers and English classmates.

No wonder that the consequences were so tragic. What else could have been expected?

It is impossible to recreate a complete roster of the score or so "hopfull Indian youths to bee trained up in the college," but we are able to account for the fates of some.

- Weld's School, Roxbury: Educated nine Indians; two went on to Corlett's School; two died; fate of other five is unknown.
- Corlett's School, Cambridge: Educated eight Indians; two went on to college; two died; fate of other four is unknown.
- Harvard College: Educated four Indians; one was graduated; but died shortly after; two others died while in school; one dropped out and found a new occupation. A fifth Indian attended Harvard some years later, but he died while still in college.

Tracking all these young Indians by name is impossible; the record is not complete enough for that. However, we
can do it with some:

- Joel Hiacoones, Martha's Vineyard, died shortly before graduation either by drowning in a shipwreck or being murdered by Indians on Nantucket.
- Caleb Cheeshamuck, Martha's Vineyard, completed his college education, died less than a year later of tuberculosis.
- John Wampus, Grafton, Mass., attended Harvard one year, dropped out, had a relatively successful life.
- Eleazar, home unknown, attended Harvard but died before his graduation.
- Benjamin Larnell, protege of Judge Samuel Sewall, attended Harvard after Indian College was abandoned; died before graduation.
- Sassamun, home unknown, may have attended Corlett's School or Harvard very briefly before Indian College was built. He became an assistant to King Philip and was murdered by Philip's men when he warned the English of the preparations for war.
- Unnamed Martha's Vineyard youth, son of Miohquoo, Indian preacher, never went to school in Cambridge, but was chosen by Thomas Mayhew, Jr., to accompany him to England in 1647. Along with all on board, he died when the vessel was lost at sea.
- Job, home unknown, attended Corlett's School, but never went to Harvard. In 1669, was teaching Indians at Ogoumonkquamesit, and thus is an exception, along with John Wampus, to the tragic story.

It is not clear why so much tragedy accompanied the Indian College program, but there are certain facts that may help explain it. One is that the young students were exposed to many new diseases and a totally different life style. After a life in the "wilds," they moved into an urban setting. Another factor could well have been the mental stress placed upon them by their new existence: by their studies, by the daily routine of attending classes, chapel and organized activities.

We know so well the problems of being a teen-ager at any time in history and of the strain that accompanies going away to college. These were compounded many times in the case of these young Indians, scarcely in puberty when they were uprooted from their natural life and thrust into the large villages of Cambridge, Roxbury and Boston.

Daniel Gookin, who knew Joel and Caleb, gave this summation of the Indian College program:

In truth, the design was prudent, noble, and good; but it proved ineffectual to the ends proposed. For several of the said youth died, after they had been sundry years at learning, and made good proficiency therein. Others were disheartened and left learning, after they were almost ready for the college. And some returned to live among their countrymen; where some of them are improved for schoolmasters and teachers, unto which they are advantaged by their education. Some others of them have entered upon other callings: as one is a mariner; another, a carpenter; another went for England with a gentleman, that lived sometimes at Cambridge in New-England, named Mr. Drake, which Indian, as I heard, died there not many months after his arrival. (Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1792, v.1, p.172.)

Neal Salisbury explained the health problems this way in his 1972 doctoral dissertation:

Those praying Indians most actively pursuing success in English terms by acquiring an education became — whether physically or psychosomatically — most susceptible to the pathological destruction inflicted by the English (p.218).

Samuel Eliot Morison, in his history of Harvard, agrees:

'Even now one reflects with sorrow on poor Joel, Caleb, and Eleazar, imbued with ambition to be the schoolmasters and saviors of their people, toiling against every healthy instinct of their race to achieve that proficiency in the Seven Arts and Learned Tongues without which, so their white masters insisted, they could never qualify as purveyors of regenerating grace. . . . (p.360).

Whatever the reason, it was a sad ending to a noble experiment and it surely must have given surviving Indians good reason to doubt the English God's charity.
The Absolutely Very Last Word About Martha-of-the-Vineyard (well, almost!)
by MELISSA T. HOWLAND

I have long been in awe of the wonderful work of the Island's foremost historian, the late Dr. Charles E. Banks. But one conclusion in his book, History of Martha's Vineyard, has always bothered me.

After laying the ghost of "Martin" of Martin's Vineyard, Banks then clouds the issue. In his chapter titled, "What Is the Correct Name of the Vineyard?," he flatly concludes:

Unfortunately, the theory advanced that some Martha Gosnold, mother, wife or daughter of the explorer, was so honored, fails of realization because a careful search among the females of the family at that period does not reveal a Martha in any remote generation, who could be available as the patroness... If any Martha was thus complimented, she was not a Gosnold, and in view of the existing customs and observances of that period, it is doubtful if the name of any woman other than the sovereign or some princess, would be selected...

As a young girl, this really disappointed me. My romantic inclination wanted it to be his wife or daughter that honored our Island with her name.

Later, as I plopped through English history, I realized that the good Doctor was dead wrong in a part of that statement.

1 Charles E. Banks, History of Martha's Vineyard, DCCHS, 1966, v.i. p.74. Banks, an indefatigable researcher, believed at the time he wrote this, about 1910, that Gosnold had given the name to Noman's Land, not the larger island. The good Doctor Banks wasn't always right, but then, who is?

MELISSA T. HOWLAND of Lambert's Cove, daughter of Harold Tinker, English master emeritus, Choate School, has been a "summer girl" on the Vineyard since age 11. A Brown graduate, she has been a year-round resident since 1961 and, like her husband, enjoys setting aignt the occasional tilted conclusion in Banks.

There was no Martha anywhere in the Tudor line and, if Gosnold had been prescient enough to gamble on the Stuart ascendancy, there was none there either.

So I have stubbornly stuck to the original legend.

Now, after an exchange of letters with John G. Mosesson, President of the Gosnold Society and current owners of Otley Hall, the ancestral home of Bartholomew Gosnold, near Ipswich in Suffolk, England, I feel equipped to say: "Listen to this, dear Doctor Banks."

Mr. Mosesson states that genealogical records and other sources show there were two Marthas eligible as patronesses of our Island:

- It is fairly certain that Bartholomew named it for either his mother-in-law, Martha Golding (she was also his aunt), or for his first-born daughter, Martha, who died in infancy before the voyage. He later had another daughter also named Martha.

- Gosnold's wife, Mr. Mosesson continued, was Mary, second daughter of Martha Golding, and not Catherine, as stated in Banks' history. He pointed me to several sources of these facts, one right under my nose at the library of the Dukes County Historical Society, Warner F. Gookin's Bartholomew Gosnold, Discoverer and Planter.

Gookin dates the first Martha's baptism as April 24, 1597. She died in infancy, but the date cannot be determined from church records. Certainly she had died before 1607, when he named another daughter (his third, possibly fourth), Martha. But if the first Martha had died prior to his 1602 voyage, why did he name his second daughter, born that same year, Susan?

Yet Gookin is not willing to credit the name to the infant Martha:

- It seems quite unlikely... that Bartholomew would have given the name "Martha" to the island of his discovery in America if his first-born child, to whom he had first given

2 Mr. Gookin was the Society's historian for many years. His book, one of the best on the Gosnold voyage, was published by Archon in 1963, and is available at our library.
the name, had died before that event.\(^3\)

But how about "in memorium"? Or perhaps she was still alive when he sailed in 1602. My romanticism triumphant!

Gookin's choice is not little Martha, either alive or dead, but her grandmother, Martha Golding, born Martha Judde; she was Gosnold's mother-in-law and aunt, and it was she who played Isabella to his Columbus. It was she who had persuaded another of her nephews, Sir Thomas Smythe,\(^4\) to provide the financial backing that made his 1602 voyage possible.

Warner Gookin works it out this way:

Little Martha of the Judde family in the course of years became a grandmother, and her name was given to Bartholomew's first-born child, Martha Gosnold. In her honor, therefore, Bartholomew named this island... Martha Golding, daughter of the adventuring City of London,\(^5\) ... and it was her name, having become that of his own child, that he wished to perpetuate in the New World.\(^6\)

Well, if the Biblical Naomi could be famous as a mother-in-law, why shouldn't Martha Golding? That, too, satisfied my romantic bent. But then Gookin obfuscates matters, straddling the fence in a statement later on (try parsing this paragraph-sentence!):

The Vineyard became, as a matter of fatherly sentiment, the namesake of Gosnold's little daughter Martha, perpetuating in the name of this beautiful and enduring island, the given name of the child's grandmother, Martha Golding, of whom much has been said in earlier chapters.\(^7\)

Good heavens! Who's on first? At any rate, for seventy-five years, the good Doctor Banks has denied a Martha her American namesake and now, at last, Martha has the final word. But which Martha? Golding or Gosnold?

To my romantic, but also practical mind, it seems quite simple: both of them. I suspect that's what Captain Bartholomew had in mind all along.

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4 Gookin calls Smythe the Cecil Rhodes or J. Pierpont Morgan of his day (p. 41).
5 London's financial district is known as the "City of London."
6 Gookin, p. 43.
7 Gookin, p. 132.
MOMENTS IN HISTORY

The Day the Dams Burst

by MARY BEETLE ATHEARN

There was perhaps no person who ever lived on this island who was as anti-establishment as Simon Athearn (1643-1715). Nor was there any who was more devoted to the ideals of democracy. It was he who tried unsuccessfully to deny Thomas Mayhew the undemocratic authority of “Governor for Life.” He was, it seemed, constantly in court fighting against some injustice, or what he believed to be an injustice. His great-great-granddaughter was Mary Beetle Athearn (1873-1923), daughter of Elias and Eunice Mayhew Athearn. They lived in West Tisbury next to the Old Mill. The house is still there, the one with the boxed-in well in the front yard. On September 26, 1888, Mary was deeply affected, as one can easily understand, when a severe storm flooded the center of West Tisbury and threatened to wash away her home.

Mary was 14 years old at the time and wrote the following description of that day soon after the event. We thank Elmer Athearn, another descendant of the rebellious Simon, for making this vignette of Island history available.

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1 Athearn took his case to Governor Andros of New York and Mayhew was upset. The diary of Increase Mather contains this entry in 1675: “At Martin’s Vineyard diverse honest people are in great trouble, their estates sequestered by reason of Mr. M____________ complainting to the Governor of New York.

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2 Crocker’s dam was at the Mill Pond in North Tisbury, later part of Seven Gates Farm.

3 Mr. Roch’s meadow is the land beside and behind the West Tisbury Police Station; Mr. Flint’s was on the west side of Mill Pond and is now a swamp.

4 Miss Green was the school teacher; Carrie West, a neighbor; Lena, Mary’s younger sister; Mr. Mayhew’s store is now Alley’s.

5 Later Mrs. Willis Hancock.

6 Brandy Brow, at the triangle in West Tisbury. Aunt Mary’s house is no longer there.

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Postcard, circa 1910, of the scene of the flood. Mary lived in the first house to the left of the mill, at right.

Placid now, but in 1888 the brook flooded the road and the mill.
was so high it had to come over. In a very few minutes it rushed over so much that it was impossible for anyone to come over the bridge without long rubberboots. The water came across Mr. Rotch's meadow, over the road to George Hunt's meadow\(^7\) down to the great pond, and across the bridge over the brook bridge down stream. It came also from Mr. Flint's meadow over the road into the beginning of the lane and over Mr. Johnson's meadow downstream.\(^8\)

The water pulled the wool-house.\(^9\)

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\(^7\) George Hunt was G. H. Luce, Mary's cousin and neighbor. He married Miss Greene, the school teacher.

\(^8\) The lane is now Thomas Maley's driveway; Mr. Johnson's meadow is the present Garden Club parking lot area.

\(^9\) Wool house was a small storage building located at the time between today's Police Station and the Mill Pond.

Mill River, which had caused all this havoc, starts in North Tisbury near the Chilmark border and had, at the time, several dams on it to supply water power for grist mills. It was the bursting of these several dams that brought near disaster to West Tisbury and much concern to Miss Mary.

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\(^{10}\) Factory is today's Martha's Vineyard Garden Club, formerly the Sattinet Factory, which produced a durable cloth of cotton and wool.
Postcards of Edgartown

North Water St., from near Main St., about 1900; Kelley House in distance.

High School, about 1915. Catholic Church, at left, has no steeple as yet.

Summer St., Edgartown, Mass.

South Summer, looking toward the church, before curbings and paved streets.

A few years later, Catholic Church with steeple, surrounded by open fields.
Volume III of Banks’s history was mostly her work.

But it was Richard who was the totally dedicated researcher of Island history. Many writers have leaned heavily on his research through the years, including Charles E. Banks, who calls him the Vineyard Antiquary in his history of the Island.

Richard Luce Pease, born August 31, 1814, died in his Edgartown home on Sunday morning, September 2, 1888, at 74 years of age. All those interested in Island history owe him a great debt, including the editor of this journal whose article about the Indian College at Harvard in this issue leaned heavily on Pease’s notes.

August 1835
6th. Thursday. This day I expect to hear from “home.” Waited patiently till the mail arrived — went to the office and found a letter from Mary. Evening spent at Rev’d. Erastus Otis’s — went at 6 and staid till after nine.1 Very pleasant visit. While conversing of “old times,” of which the old brethren often speak, I felt the fire burning within. How much those first pioneers of the Gospel of Christ endured! How much those who first rallied around the unfurled banner! How large the debt of gratitude we owe to the “fathers of the church”; they labored and we have entered into their labors. They bore the toil and burden in the heat of the day; we reap the rich fruits of their labors and exertions. May God enable us to prize them as we ought.2

7th. Friday. Cloudy and cool. Nothing of note occurred today. “Aunt Smith” from Middletown was here today. After tea took a walk with Brother Jennison to Elder Merrill’s; and with his son we went to his orchard, then to the Camp Ground. Came home — played the flute, wish . . . etc. etc.3

August 8th. Saturday. Weather pleasant — warmer — expected a letter from my father, but was disappointed; however, I hope to receive one soon — say next mail. Very few times more shall I call at the Post Office to enquire for letters from my friends. Soon I hope to see them. The time of my departure from Wilbraham draws near. Soon must I bid it a final adieu. Soon I must leave it forever! It was good for me to meet with my brethren. My hopes, my resolutions, my strength was increased.

Praise the Lord, O, my soul. After meeting, walked out to meditate. The moon shone brightly — all nature seemed at peace — and my mind felt the influence of the scene. All within was peace; peace such as the worldling knew; which passeth understanding.

9th. Sunday. Weather uncomonomly pleasant. Forenoon, got my hair cut, did not go to meeting.4 Afternoon, Young Pease becomes so rapturous when writing about religion that one would think he was studying to become a minister. He never did go into preaching. His vocation was education and, later, public office of many kinds.

Richard was a romantic and playing the flute always seemed to make him homesick for his love, Mary, and for his Vineyard “home.”

5 Music was an important part of Richard’s young life. The Vineyard Singers were to become an important part of the Island’s Camp Meetings, the first of which began on the very day Richard returned to the Vineyard. He makes no mention of it.
Journal. Evening at my room. 10h. 30m., time to go to bed.
13th. Thursday. The last one that I expect to spend in Wilbraham. Thermometer at 83 degrees. Wrote in the album of Mary C. Hastings, Ashburnham. The mail did not arrive so early as usual. Received a letter from Mary, but none from my father! It has miscarried. What shall I do? I cannot write home and receive an answer in time. But I must console myself with the hope — almost forlorn, 'tis true — of yet receiving it.

Friday. Morning, wrote to my father, but cannot send the letter till tomorrow. Cloudy weather. Evening went up to the Hon. Abel Bliss's and Elder Otis's, staying as before till after 9. My soul seemed to catch the heavenly flame while conversing on religious topics of former times when the people of God endured a great fight of affliction. Great is the goodness of the Lord, therefore will I praise him. To thee, O God, do I commit myself. Receive me into thy care.

15th. Saturday. Arose before the sun and took a walk of one or two miles before breakfast. This gives a good appetite for victuals, likewise fits one for studying profitably, enabling the body by the exercise to support the mind in its labors. Took a walk to the graveyard, visited the tomb of Rev. E. Hyde once more. On the tombstone of Miss Harriet Cornelia Merrick, I found the following lines written with a pencil:

As roses sometimes in the budding hour,
So friends, oft wither in affection's bower,
And smarting 'neath the new inflicted pain,
Our rebel spirits urge us to complain,
This thought, to check our tears, our griefs control,
Like distant music, steals across the soul,
The same kind hand which makes our fondness weep,
Will wake our loved ones from their fatal sleep.
Returning, stopped at the office, and found to my great joy, a letter from my father, which I feared I should never see. Likewise, a letter from Frederick P. Fellows. Evening, first part of the day, then went to the store and bought a Key to Hitchcock's Book Keeping and some cards (.69 cts.). Afterwards, went to Mr. Stocking's room and had some music.

Sunday, 16th. Morning rather rainy. Heard Mr. Patten preach from 'Lord, revise thy work.' Afternoon, Mr. Raymond, from 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' The time of my leaving this place approaches. I have spent the last Sabbath. On the fourth morning after this I expect to start for home. One week from tonight I anticipate being with her from whom I have been separated (sic) for months! My absence appears as a dream. Can it be that I am one hundred and fifty miles from home? But once on the railroad the distance will decrease most rapidly. O Lord, preserve thou my life, prosper me on my journey, and bring me again to my native isle.

Mon. 17th. Weather very warm. Thermometer 84 degrees above zero. No exercises today. Preparing the Hall, Meetinghouse, etc., etc. Evening at Mr. Lee Rice's, had some music. Present, the two Miss Fisks, Miss Philips, Miss Drake. Came home, went to bed, being "tired and sleepy."

Tuesday, 18th. Morning pleasantly. Today, the examination commences. The visitors begin to arrive. Mr. Lindsey took dinner with us, likewise Professor Holdich of Middletown University and Mr. Smith. The Ladies Hall was ornamented in a beautiful manner with evergreens. Over the teacher's desk was the Motto "Mind invaluable" in large letters drawn on whole sheets of paper and covered with the leaves of pine glued on. Around the Hall, evergreens in abundance — pictures executed by the Ladies, fixed on green bays (?); some were gracefully ornamented with wreaths of evergreens and flowers. Over the building waved a large flag with these words upon it, "Liberty" — "Temperance." At 4 1/4 P.M., we had some rain which lasted with some intermission through the evening. Attended a debate on the question: "Do brutes reason?" Mr. Abel Stevens and Miss Hyde arrived and took tea with us.

2 Quite a different scene from graduation day in 1988.
Richard stayed at Taber's Tavern in New Bedford, located at Union and Water Streets, the scene of this 1810 painting by William A. Wall.

Wednesday, 19th. Today the term closes. Paid Mr. Hardy $6.11 cts. for my tuition and board for 2 days. Paid Mr. Clark's bill, $19.00. Carried back to the store Day's Algebra (cost $1.25), slate (18 3/4) and sandstand for which I had not paid. Received in return 3 books at 25 cts., 25 cts., 25 cts., and 2 cakes of maple sugar, 7 cts.; for the difference (sic) had to allow discount!!! Rec'd. 39 1/2 cts.

Thursday, 20th. Arose early — waked for the last time in Wilbraham. Got an early breakfast — stage drove up — but could not carry me. Much disappointed. Hurried off in search of a horse and waggon to carry me to Monson; had just got the horse tackled when Sawyer drove up in Fuller's waggon saying that all the rest had gone and he had come for me — got into the waggon — drove down and took my trunk. Bade farewell to Mr. Patten at the gate and proceeded to Monson. Arrived in time for the stage ($1.00 fare). Started in 3 stages — going along we had some fine singing. At Sturbridge left the Misses Fisks, Mr. King and some others. Saw Mr. Weaver, formerly at Edgartown. Arrived in Worcester in time for the cars. Left at 4 P.M. for Boston, but owing to the loss of a screw, did not reach our journey's end till 10 o'clock. Hired a conveyance to the Mansion House, Milk Street (20 cts.). Went to bed. Next morning (21st) I was out early; found my way to Thos. Jernegan's Store, 112 Hanover St. Saw Mr. Gustavus Horton and Frederick Allen. Called on Chas. Worth, Charlestown. Visited the Common, saw the Providence company of infantry accompanied by the celebrated Boston brass band and escorted by the Boston Fusilleurs. Afternoon at Faneuil Hall, heard

Richard Fletcher, Peleg Sprague and H.L.Otis, about 5 thousand were present. Evening at Maebzel's Exhibition of Automatons: Chess player, rope dancer, trumpeter, etc. "Consolations of Moscow" (50 cts.). Went to my lodgings.

22nd. Up in the morning early. Called at the Herald office, bought some S.S. Books ($1.40 cts.). Left Boston at 8 1/2 o'clock, arrived about 6 P.M. Stopped at Taber's. Saw Capt. 10 Sunday School books. That was the Christian Herald. 11 Robert Taber ran a tavern at Union and So. Water Sts., in New Bedford (see painting opposite).

End of Journal

Raymond, Charles Snow. Called at Ambrose Vincent's. 23rd. Sunday. Up by 4. At 6 left for Holme's Hole in the Steamboat Telegraph, Barker. Arrived at my uncle's before 9. Called at Capt. Thos. Bradley's; went to meeting with Emily. Came back, took dinner, went to my uncle Silvanus's and with him came down "home." Arrived just about tea time; got my supper and soon found myself on the way to the residence of Mary! There I found her even as I left her. O, how sweet to meet with those whom we love! How much more so with one, dearer than aught on earth beside. Again I find myself at "home."

Steamer Telegraph, only two years old, carried Richard back to his Island home.
Regional High School Essay Contest Winners

In this the second year of the Society’s essay contest for Regional High School students, there were nine finalists, an increase of one-third over last year. The topics were varied and of good choice, including subjects related to maritime history, transportation, government, architecture and early settlers. All subjects must involve Dukes County history. Another requirement is that the authors must do some of their research in the Historical Society library. The purpose is to acquaint them with this community resource and, it is hoped, to expose them to the virus of Island history, hoping they catch it.

We feel good about this year’s results and are pleased to announce the following winners:

First Prize, $50.
Eleonora Holley
Subject: Baylies’ Churches
An examination of the work of Frederick Baylies, Jr., architect and builder of the three old Edgartown churches: Federated (1828), Baptist (1839) and Methodist (1849).

Second Prize, $30.
Julian Wise
Subject: The Martha’s Vineyard/Constitution Connection
A report on the role of one of the two delegates from the Island in the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1788.

Third Prize, $20.
Geoffrey Robert Freeman
Subject: Martha’s Vineyard Lightsips
A historical review of several of the lightships in the waters around the Vineyard and the hazards they encountered.

The Officers and Council of the Society congratulate these three winners and extend their thanks to the others who took part in this competition. All finalists will receive a one-year membership in the Society, which includes a subscription to this journal.

Books

The Adams Family of Martha’s Vineyard
by Henry E. Scott, Jr.

Mercury Publishing, Rutland, VT, in cooperation with the New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1987, illus., 64 pp. $17.50

Review by Alvin J. Goldwyn

Henry E. Scott, Jr.’s name is familiar to readers of this journal. Four or five of his articles have appeared here since 1981, the topics ranging from World War II defense operations on the Vineyard to old-up-Island houses.

Scott's deep interest in old houses was, in fact, the direct inspiration for this book. Tracing the history of his own house in Chilmark in order to verify the legendary history of a nineteenth-century landowner, one Mayhew Adams, the author found himself willy-nilly involved in the history of the whole numerous Adams family. For starters, there were four different Mayhew Adamses. The Adams Family of Martha’s Vineyard is a record of the clan and its houses.

The first Adams to settle on Martha’s Vineyard was Eliashib Adams, a cordonaire, born in Barnstable in 1699. His son, the first Mayhew Adams, was a third cousin of the Revolutionary War patriots, Samuel Adams, Jr., and John Adams, Jr. But, as Scott admits in his preface, “Unlike their relatives on the mainland, the island Adams family can hardly be said to have distinguished themselves in any field of endeavor of national significance. They were for the most part fairly ordinary and very typical people (sea captains and farmers) of their day — except for the midgets...”

Most Vineyarders, and most readers of the Intelligencer, are interested in the pedigrees of Island families and Island houses. As the generations of Adamses succeeded each other, they intermarried with almost all the familiar Vineyard names, from Allen and Attemer through Nickerson and Norton to Robinson and Tilton.

Along with some detail on the vital statistics of these worthies, Scott gives the location, description, and sometimes photographs and floor plans of their homes. An amazing amount of information is crowded into few pages. It may be difficult to find any particular building or individual (the organization is loosely chronological and there is no index), but browsing is rewarding.

As hinted above, the “little ladies of Chilmark,” the most famous of the Island Adamses, are given due. In the text, Scott acknowledges many sources for his monograph beyond a few standard Adams family histories listed in the bibliography.

The Adams Family is a significant documentation of Island life and of an important Island family.
News of the Society

From the Director:
The Society's biggest news of the winter (and of many winters) is the purchase of the Ritter House (1796) in Vineyard Haven and our merger with the Tisbury Museum. The necessary legal steps are now underway and when completed the Tisbury Museum will be operated as a branch of our Society. Anthony Van Riper, who was president of the Tisbury Museum, will become a vice-president of the Society and Sydny White, a founder, will become a Council member.

On behalf of the Society, we welcome them (it's really not necessary as they both have been members for years!) and all members of the Tisbury Museum and look forward to expanding our exhibition and program schedules together. Historic structures analyses of both the Ritter House and the Cooke House will be prepared by a preservation architect so plans can be developed for immediate repairs and, eventually, long-term restoration.

A development office is also being organized. Its purpose will be to expand our membership and to raise funds for the restoration and expansion programs. It will probably be located, at least temporarily, in the Ritter House. We hope that each Society member will consider himself or herself a committee-of-one to assist these projects.

Much to our regret, Esther Mills, membership secretary and bookkeeper during much of 1987, resigned at the end of the year. Pamela Gardner has replaced her and has taken on the responsibility for our new computerized membership and financial record systems. Our changeover to the computer has caused the mailing of our annual membership letters until this month. From now on, renewals will be spread throughout the year monthly.

Members of the Tisbury Museum will become Society members.

Despite the rain, the fourth annual Christmas in Edgartown Open House was well attended. The new winter exhibition, Vineyard Needlework, was opened at that time and will continue through March. It includes samplers, quilting, knitting and embroidery from the early 18th to late 19th centuries. Names of many of the makers are known and add to our picture of life here in earlier times. Thanks go to all the volunteers who contributed to the success of this annual event.

A special pleasure was in helping with the research project of the Edgartown third graders as they created "Artifact Boxes" for exchange with unknown classes somewhere else in the country. The boxes contained clues to the natural history and life of Martha's Vineyard that could lead the recipients to locate the Vineyard and identify its unique qualities.

Our museum took on a new meaning for the students as they recognized the importance of lighthouses, ferry boats, whaling gear and other seafaring artifacts. Their individual reports back to us after their visits are impressive both for what they learned and for their excitement with their discovery of our collections.

This summer we plan to arrange an exhibition of materials related to the Vineyard's 19th century trade with China. The Pagoda Tree, on South Water Street, is living evidence that local mariners were there. We would be grateful for any information on the China trade that you can supply.

Beginning January 1st, we added 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. to the hours we are open during the winter months. Please stop in Wednesday through Friday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., or Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to see what your Society is doing.

MARIAN R. HALPERIN

From the Librarian:
Our genealogical resources have been generously enlarged by a recent gift from Ellen Murray and the late Virginia Murray, two Edgartown sisters who have been members of the Society for many years. Their gift is a complete run of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for more than sixty years, ending with the last issue of 1987.

This accession has already engendered several patron requests for material from the 1930s, for example, which heretofore was not available in our library.


The author lists, as being held by NEHGS, "Charles E. Banks' Copy of Dukes County Court Records." It will be interesting to learn the NEHGS record of provenance for that material from Banks and also to examine the copy to see whether it is written in the fine, familiar hand of Richard L. Pease (see installments of his "Sketch Book," in this issue), who, it seems, copied everything! A further report will follow as we track down the origin of this item. We already know that NEHGS has a large cache of Charles E. Banks material.

Kawashima does not seem to have visited our library or to have investigated our large collection of original deeds and legal documentation of Indian affairs from the seventeenth century on. Close and extended scrutiny by both federal and tribal researchers here has indicated the importance of our holdings.

We languish still from the lack of a modern complete encyclopedia. Even more pressing is our need for volunteer help. All are welcome.

A sad final note. Mrs. Muriel Crossman, our librarian from 1976 until 1983, died in December at her California home. She came here from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, where she had served for many years as head librarian and was a colleague of Nelson Coon, who urged her to take the position here. A person of great ability and vitality, she returned frequently after her retirement to visit her many friends on the Vineyard. She is missed.

ALVIN J. GOLDWYN
Those who write about Vineyard history have generally ignored the subject of money. Who paid how much for what? Where did the money come from to buy land from the Indians (if, indeed, it was paid for with money).

You'll get no definite answer here. It's a research project that will take many, many hours in many archives.

But in researching the Indian College article for this issue, I came upon a few fragments about money.

In 1678, Thomas Mayhew, the Governor, wrote to the Commissioners in Connecticut, reporting on his mission work. He made these reports often, on request of the Society that paid him. In this letter, he writes, "there are twelve [Indians on the payroll] here. Iacomes and Toquanno have had 16 pounds several years; they well deserve it; the rest fifty shillings apiece which is forty one pound. Metack hath had sometimes more..."

The Governor was 87 years old at the time. He did not start being paid as a missionary until his son's death. Before he was lost at sea in 1657, the younger Thomas had been getting 50 pounds a year; Peter Folger, an assistant, was paid 30 pounds, and two Indians "employed by Mr. Mayhew as interpreters, 20 pounds."

The following year, 1657, the young Mayhew received 50 pounds, Folger 20 pounds, the two Indians 20 pounds, and, a new entry, Mr. Mayhew senior, 10 pounds. The Mayhews also received 40 pounds to encourage the formation of a new Indian town on the Island.

By the end of 1658, when it seemed certain that Thomas Junior would not be back, a new schedule of salaries was worked out. Governor Mayhew was paid 20 pounds, Thomas Junior's widow, 20 pounds, Folger was raised to 25 pounds, the two Indians stayed at 20 pounds, and a "Mrs. Bland, for helpfulness in Physicke and Chisurgery att Martin's Vinyard," received 2 pounds.

Governor Mayhew got a raise in 1659, his salary going to 30 pounds, but his widowed daughter-in-law's allowance dropped to 10 pounds. Folger went back to 20 pounds, but Mayhew was given money to hire four Indian teachers to help him.

Payments went along at this level (widow Mayhew's allowance dropped to 6 pounds) until 1672 when Governor Mayhew's salary was increased to 40 pounds and he was given 57 pounds for "sundry Indian Teachers and Rulers on Martin's Vinyards and Nantucket."

We have no way of knowing what other cash was flowing to the Vineyard, but the Mayhews, Peter Folger and, to a much lesser extent, a few Indians seem to have been doing well. In 1658, 40 pounds had considerable value: Governor Mayhew paid 20 pounds for one half of Chickemoo. That was most of the land between the Lagoon and Lake Tashmoo.

But that wasn't his best buy. The year before, he had bought Naushon Island from Sachem Quaquauquigat. The price: two coats. A.R.R.
More Postcards of Edgartown
(See pages 124 and 125)

Steamer Uncatena left Edgartown early each morning for New Bedford.

Water Street
from the Willow

North Water St. At left, the four-story Osborn Tower, about 1910.