



NEW BEDFORD COMMUNITIES OF WHALING: People of Wampanoag, African, and Portuguese Island Descent, 1825–1925





Bark *Sunbeam* (center) at a New Bedford wharf with brig *Harry Smith* and bark *Josephine*, undated photograph. Built in 1856 and active through 1908, the *Sunbeam* carried a diverse crew on all eighteen of its voyages. Its 1856 crew included two African Americans, at least three men of Portuguese descent, and at least three South Pacific Islanders. New Bedford artist and author Clifford W. Ashley, who spent six months on the bark during its second-to-last voyage in 1904, reported that the crew of thirty-four included eighteen men from the Cape Verde Islands, one Azorean islander, the Gay Head Indian harpooner Amos Smalley, two West Indians, a Nova Scotian, two Englishmen (one from the island of St. Helena), a Norwegian, and seven men born in the United States. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

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Portuguese Island Descent,
1825–1925

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New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
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New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
33 William Street
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Cover: Crew of bark *Sunbeam* cutting-in a blanket piece of whale on deck above the main hatch and blubber room, 1904, photograph by Clifford Ashley. Ashley, an artist and writer who documented the voyage, stated that of the thirty-nine men in the crew eight were “born American,” including himself and Captain Benjamin Higgins. He described the rest: “Mr. Frates, the third officer, was a Portuguese. . . . Thompson, boat-steerer was a St. Helena Englishman . . . August a ‘Gee’ from Lisbon; Smalley, boat-steerer, was a full-blooded Gay Head Indian. All the rest were blacks. Mr. Gomes, the second officer, hailed from the Island of St. Nicholas. Steward was Bermudian. The South Sea Islands, East Indies, Cape Verdes, Azores and Canaries, all were liberally represented in our list.” Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

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Dr. Michèle H. Smith, anthropologist at the University of Rhode Island, took time from her busy schedule to create a database approach and input entries from federal census records and crew lists. Emelia Peterson entered the invaluable data from John Milton Earle's 1861 report and completed library research during the summer of 2008. Bob Maker copied hundreds of manuscript crew lists in New Bedford, tracked down research leads, and generously shared his knowledge of the city's past. Jackie Veninger, historic consultant at MPMRC, also contributed to the database by entering both census records and information from New Bedford crew lists. Saundra Hall completed the entry work, cleaned and reorganized both project databases, and managed the creation and editing of the Indian whaler database.

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I first spent time with John Milton Earle's collection at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1994 with support from a Peterson Fellowship, an experience that shaped my admiration for Earle and his insights. It was during that time that I became aware of New Bedford's Indian community.

As always, a research journey means having the opportunity to reread and be inspired by others' work. This time around it was Elizabeth Little's remarkable research on Indian whaling on Nantucket, the exemplary methods of Daniel Vickers, the careful scholarship of Danny Mandell, and the insights of Mark Nicholas and Melissane Parm-Schrems on Mashpee Indian history. I don't always agree with their conclusions or narratives, but they never failed to challenge me to be clearer about what I did. Kathryn Grover and Don Warrin, the other members of the project team, made time to introduce me to New Bedford's rich resources and those who help preserve them.

Among the many New Bedfordites who have done this important work was the late Paul A. Cyr, a name always mentioned by those who go to the city to study, learn, and write. Cyr oversaw special collections at the New Bedford Free Public Library

and supported my work with advice and great stories. He is missed. Like all students and writers of New Bedford history, I owe him much. Lastly my thanks to Kathryn Grover for her careful and insightful editing and to Saundra Hall (1957-2014), my sweetheart, who supported this work in so many ways. She was there at the beginning and throughout the project. Sadly, she is not here now.

—*Russell G. Handsman*
Project Director

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—*Donald Warrin*

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—*Kathryn Grover*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study examines the presence and contributions of Native, African American, West Indian, St. Helenian, Azorean, and Cape Verdean people in whaling and shoreside whaling work. Wampanoag men were the first whalers, and as they helped build the region's offshore industry in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they continued a maritime tradition established thousands of years earlier. Their skills contributed to whaling's growth between 1815 and the mid-1840s; their presence on crews then persisted as the industry slowly declined after the Civil War. A two-year study of New Bedford-based, Wampanoag whaling and the development of a database of more than nine hundred entries has documented the lives and experiences of Native whalers from communities on the Cape, Islands, and the mainland.

For more than four generations, whaling was at the core of Wampanoag survivance, defining and shaping the complexly layered histories of community life, family histories, internal conflicts, and both interactions and confrontations with the outside world. It provided work, earnings, and sometimes careers for Native men, most of whom went whaling between the ages of twelve or fifteen and thirty-five. Much more than employment, though, whaling linked generations, who as they learned and shared skills and experiences created a real, material base for continuities across more than a century. In turn those relationships enabled later whalers to adapt to the industry's changing conditions. In the 1840s and 1850s, even as a color line emerged in New Bedford whaling, Wampanoag men were still able to work and advance because owners and recruiters valued the skills and contributions made by their ancestors.

Of all known whaling voyages with at least one Wampanoag Indian on board, about one third included either pairs or cohorts (age-based or family-linked) of Native men, a tradition that created six months to three years (or more) of on-board, shared experiences. As Wampanoag whalers sailed around the world, visiting foreign ports, and encountering other indigenous and creole societies, they developed skills and gained insights that later were integrated into ongoing community debates over tribal membership, land and resource use, and overseer abuses.

Native participation in deep-sea whaling began to decline by 1845, though some men working in crews or in onshore whaling-related trades were able to sustain and improve their domestic circumstances and communities by combining whaling with traditional pursuits. By 1900 only a few Wampanoag were working on whaling vessels; most men were farmers and fishermen, while others worked as day laborers or in the growing service trades.

African American, West Indian, and St. Helenian men and women in the New Bedford whaling industry, both as crew on the vessels and on shore in the trades and other jobs that supported it, were active in successive though roughly overlapping eras. Present in New Bedford from its settlement in the late 1750s, American men of African descent were involved in the local whaling fleet probably from an early point, though data documenting their participation is available for only a limited number of voyages. They were probably most heavily represented in crews before 1825, but

they were a notable presence too between about 1844 and 1847, before New Bedford whaling reached the peak of its productivity. By the 1850s they were increasingly relegated to onboard service jobs—cooks and stewards—from which occupational advance was virtually impossible. On shore New Bedford offered African Americans some opportunity in skilled whaling trades, though African Americans were predominantly involved in unskilled and service work, sometimes in support of the industry. By the Civil War their numbers in both crews and shoreside work had dropped markedly, and only a few were active in the last three decades of whaling from New Bedford.

Other largely English-speaking mariners of color—from the British, Dutch, and French West Indies and from the remote South Atlantic island of St. Helena—were only slightly represented in whaling crews before the war but became a significant presence afterward. Both the West Indian islands and St. Helena had offered ports at which antebellum New Bedford whaling vessels called for provisions, repair, and transshipping oil and bone, but as the market for whale oils shrank and expectations of profit became more tenuous the industry began to use the islands as sources of inexpensive labor. Because the islands offered West Indians and St. Helenians of African descent little chance of land ownership and virtually nothing other than menial employment, men signed onto whaling crews not only for the income, however slight, but also for the chance to migrate elsewhere for work. West Indian whalers were more likely than St. Helenians to settle in New Bedford, and while intermarriage with African Americans was notable people from both places retained significant features of their island cultures.

Atlantic islanders from the archipelagos of the Azores and Cape Verde were the first foreigners to participate in the American whaling industry. The location of these islands on the outbound trajectory of American whalers, which began cruising these parts of the Atlantic beginning in the 1760s, soon cemented their relationship as initial ports of call for provisions and additional crew. But it was not until the 1830s, with the ascendancy of New Bedford as the major American whaling port, that any significant settlement of Azoreans and Cape Verdeans developed in the city. And, until the growth of the cotton mills in the last decades of the century, it was whaling that drew these individuals and often their family members to initiate settlement. As New Bedford whaling began its decline and New Bedford mills expanded after the Civil War the Portuguese (Cape Verde still being part of the Portuguese empire at the time) population soon began its period of great growth, but whaling established the pattern of immigration to the city. “New Betefete” (in the lingo of the day) became the American city most identified, even today, with Portuguese and Cape Verdeans.

An important finding of this report is the relatively early date at which Azoreans and Cape Verdeans took on the important roles of whaling vessel captain and owner, also beginning in the 1820s. In addition, the Azorean and Cape Verdean communities, never in any sense unified by their Portuguese nationality, became far more separated from each other in the last decades of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth.

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INTRODUCTION

Russell G. Handsman

New Bedford is not a made-up, recreated museum village like Old Sturbridge Village or Plimoth Plantation; it is a living, post-industrial city still being shaped by ethnic communities. The roots of some of these communities reach back to the glory days of whaling in the 1850s—or even long before. New Bedford has a present and future, both of which are tied to a historical past that can be seen still in its landscapes, built environments, and, most importantly, in the faces and histories of its living communities.

The state of being alive and continuous was referred to often during the 1994 congressional hearings about creating New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (NEBE)¹ and underlies this study. It underlay as well Laura Orleans’s oral history-based “Faces of Whaling” and “Places of Whaling” projects.² Both used oral historical research among some of the city’s ethnic communities to illuminate the experiences and biographies of those who were involved in the last days of whaling and its shoreside industries.

Here the focus is longer, concerned with a century-long span, from 1825 to 1925, during which the industry in New Bedford grew, persisted, and then declined. Yet our focus has steadfastly remained on the people—the ethnic groups (beyond the well-known Yankee masters and seamen) whose skills and courage built the industry, kept it alive, and then saw it through its “death” between 1900 and 1925. In 2016 New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park published its first special ethnographical report on Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and the Jewish community in New Bedford whaling and the city’s early efforts to capture the industry’s heritage. This second study examines Wampanoag Indians, African Americans, Azorean and Cape Verdeans, West Indians, and St. Helenians, all of whom have descendants still working and living in the New Bedford of the twenty-first century.³

1. See the voices of community members at the hearing in *Hearing before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, of the Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, 103 Congress, on HR 3898, “To Establish the New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park in New Bedford, Massachusetts.”* Serial No. 103–94 (Washington, 1994). See also *The First Decade: A Retrospective, 1996–2006*, an overview of the park’s first decade and its many community-based projects.

2. Laura Orleans, “Faces of Whaling Oral History Project” (Report, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and the Ethnography Program, Northeast Region, National Park Service, Boston, 2000); Laura Orleans, “Places of Whaling Ethnography Project” (Report, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and the Ethnography Program, Northeast Region, National Park Service, Boston, 2002), collections of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (hereafter cited as NEBE).

3. Marla R. Miller and Laura A. Miller, *A Generous Sea: Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and the Jewish Community in New Bedford Whaling & Whaling Heritage*, Special Ethnographic Report New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (Boston: Northeast Region Ethnography Program, National Park Service, 2016). NEBE’s long-term management plan recommends the undertaking of a series of ethnohistorical studies to highlight the historical and contemporary relationships that particular ethnic groups or peoples have had with the city’s whaling industry.

The roots of this project extend to 2006, the tenth year of the park's existence, when anthropologist Brian C. Campbell completed an interim study report on the ethnohistory of whaling from New Bedford. Campbell's study summarized the long history of ethnic involvement in New Bedford whaling and identified some of the city's key archival resources.⁴ By late spring 2008, a research team had been organized, consisting of Kathryn Grover, a historian with extensive experience studying the histories of African-American communities, including those in New Bedford; Don Warrin, a historian from California who was then working on a book about Azorean and Cape Verdean communities and whaling;⁵ and anthropologist Russ Handsman, long experienced in the study of the ancestral homelands and histories of the Native peoples of southern New England.

Like the whaling crews of the 1820s, we were a diverse group of scholars who came to the project with specific academic and research backgrounds, differing levels of expertise in whaling history (Handsman was the novice), and distinct, though overlapping, ideas about key research questions. Still there was some common ground to begin with—the focus on ethnic communities and a shared sense of which archival resources would be critical to our work.

Beyond *The American Whaleman* (1928): Ethnic Communities and New Bedford Whaling

Whether we all at first knew it or not, our research into the long history of ethnic involvement in whaling began with the classic study of Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry* (1928) and then moved on to consider (or reconsider) a deeper research question: how and why are the whaling histories and experiences of native-born and foreign-born ethnic groups different? Hohman's volume still impresses us more than eighty years later. Written while Hohman was teaching at Northwestern University, after graduate work at Harvard with maritime historian Samuel Eliot Morison as a mentor, the book focuses on the economics of labor issues in the period of whaling he called "Full Sail," what today's scholars refer to as the industry's "golden age."

Hohman studied records familiar to all whaling historians now, especially ships' accounts, and discovered how the system of lays differentiated a crew by experience and skills while offering ordinary seamen the possibility of some advancement and the potential of earnings far beyond those of "average, unskilled shore workers."⁶ Hohman wrote a lot about the "average seaman," and therein lay the challenge: what happens to the idea or construct of an "average seaman" when one looks at his community, identity, and outward appearance? How do the ideas of ethnicity

4. Brian Campbell, "Lucem Diffundo ("We Spread the Light"): Illuminating the Ethnohistory of New Bedford's Whaling Legacy" (Interim Study Report, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and the National Park Service Ethnography Program, Northeast Region, Boston, 2006), NEBE.

5. See Kathryn Grover, *The Fugitive's Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); and Donald Warrin, *So Ends this Day: The Portuguese in American Whaling, 1765-1927* (North Dartmouth: Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, 2010).

6. Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1928), 240-43.

and identity complicate the understandings Hohman's study offers? By asking this kind of question, the work reported here moves into the realm of the so-called "new" social (and economic) history of whaling in which the concept of average seamen is sliced along lines of ethnicity, race, and gender. So some of what we try to accomplish has been both anticipated and modeled in others' studies over the last ten years.⁷

But there is something else going on as well: by linking ethnicity or ethnic groups to their communities, we are concerned to situate different "average" whalers within the ongoing, ever-moving histories of their communities on land, a research strategy that, we argue, can make a difference to our understandings of what motivated men to go whaling generation after generation. Without considering their communities, Hohman's research suggested to him that chicanery was involved (sometimes), or indebtedness (lots of truth there), or the love of adventure, all possibilities. But when one asks the question more specifically, why did Wampanoag or African American, Azorean or Cape Verdean, or men of other "foreign" communities go whaling, the answers (and research) lie in a close reading of their families' and communities' histories. And that is where these studies break off from Hohman's and Herman Melville's.

This work is also different because it explores questions of ethnicity and community against the long history of the industry. We begin as New Bedford whaling was being built after the Revolution, and then continue through its growth (Hohman's "Full Sail" period), stagnation, and decline in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and finally its slow disappearance over the first quarter of the twentieth century. Like any living, human-built system that persisted for more than a century, whaling's labor and economic practices changed often between 1825 and 1925. Hohman was well aware that the industry had changed, yet he did not trace out the implications. We do, however, because those changes affected who worked in the industry as well as their experiences and lives at sea and on land, generation after generation. It has become an often-repeated truism that New Bedford whaling was an ethnically diverse industry, but how and why that diversity changed and how those changes linked back to the city itself are less known.

The Key Resources are Still the Key Resources

There is another strong tie between our work and *The American Whaleman*—the rich, well-preserved, and accessible resources available in New Bedford and other places. Hohman celebrated these archives in his preface, referring to them as "large stores of documentary treasure," a partial listing of which he offered in his bibliography.⁸ In the way that Herman Melville forever linked New Bedford to whaling—what one saw in that place "was dragged up hither from the bottom of the sea," he wrote in *Moby-Dick*—we can say that the ongoing historiographic tradition of whaling studies is still being dragged up and out of New Bedford's archives, a real treasure that whaling created and one that is still well cared for in the city.

These resources were studied and analyzed by each of us.

7. See, for example, the essays in Glenn S. Gordinier, ed., *Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Power in Maritime America* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 2008).

8. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 337–39.

Whaling Records:

Crew lists and shipping papers for individual voyages from New Bedford, Fairhaven, Dartmouth, and Westport exist from the early 1800s through 1925. We accessed the microfilmed lists at the New Bedford Free Public Library (NBFPL) and other whaling papers by using finding aids such as Bruce Barnes's "Whaling Crew Lists on Microfilm" (1977). Lists at ten-year intervals (1825–1925) were copied from microfilm, some of which were then entered into project databases. Additional data on New Bedford whalers is available in Alexander Starbuck's *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1875) and the addendum compiled by Reginald B. Hegarty (1959); the surname card index in the Special Collections Department of New Bedford Free Public Library; and online through the Whaling Crew List Database, compiled from crew lists at NBFPL and New Bedford Whaling Museum (NBWM), and the Whaling History website, created by NBWM and Mystic Seaport Museum.⁹

Our studies suggest that the online materials overlap the index card files from the 1820s until the 1850s–60s, although in some cases the information is not identical. From about 1840 the online data seems to have been extracted from shipping papers and not crew lists; it contains information on whalers' lays and positions but not usually their residence, age, or birthplace/residence. The project databases we created from 1845, 1855, 1865, and 1875 crew lists help to fill some of these gaps.

Masters and mates, and less commonly individual seamen, compiled logs and journals for specific voyages that detail the day-by-day navigation, weather, and hunts. Collections of these are at NBFPL, NBWM,¹⁰ and the G.W. Blunt White Library, Collections Research Center, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Connecticut. In addition, merchants and shipping firms kept vessel accounts and account books including ledgers, crew and "slop" accounts (the purchases of individual seamen settled at the end of voyages), and day journals. These are organized on a firm-by-firm basis or by vessel and voyage and may be found principally in the same three repositories.

Records of Work and Life on Land:

Some shoreside industries kept and preserved such business records as account books, day journals, and ledgers. City directories exist for New Bedford and Fairhaven from 1836 through 1925, but not for every year. Both NBFPL and NBWM have printed and microfilm copies of directories, and Ancestry.com maintains a full range online. Decennial census records for New Bedford, both federal (from 1790 through 1920, except for 1890) and state (1855 through 1925, though only in published form from 1865) contain a great deal of information about ethnic communities and were

⁹ See https://www.whalingmuseum.org/online_exhibits/crewlist/about.php and whalinghistory.org. Hegarty's addendum to Starbuck was published as *Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports: A Continuation of Alexander Starbuck's "History of the American Whale Fishery," 1876–1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, 1959).

¹⁰ The New Bedford Whaling Museum (NBWM) holds several separate collections, all designated by a different abbreviation. Artifacts are contained within the NBWM collections. The abbreviation KWM designates logbooks and journals from Kendall Whaling Museum, which merged with NBWM in 2001. Logbooks and journals that NBWM acquired after the 2001 merger are designated by NBW; those acquired before the 2001 merger carry Old Dartmouth Historical Society (the original name of NBWM) numbers, designated ODHS.

indispensable. One of the project's databases includes samples of residents from the 1850, 1860, 1880, 1900, and 1920 New Bedford federal censuses who were involved in whaling or its shoreside industries.

Historic maps and atlases exist mostly covering the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. New Bedford had three principal newspapers that covered most or all of the period the study examines—the *Mercury* (1807–95) and the *Morning Mercury* (1894–1942), the *Republican Standard* (1850–1912) and the *Evening Standard* (1866–1923) (both merged in 1932 with the *Times* of 1902–32 to become the *Standard-Times*), and the *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* (1843–1914). A keyword finding aid developed by the late Paul A. Cyr of NBFPL exists for the *Mercury*, the *Standard*, and some of the city's short-lived English-language newspapers. Limited runs of these and other New Bedford newspapers are available digitally on GenealogyBank.com.

Oral histories of life aboard whaling vessels and ashore have been undertaken at intervals and preserved. In the early 1960s James Healy and Reginald B. Hegarty, curator of the Melville Room at NBFPL and author of the addendum to Starbuck, *New Bedford and American Whaling* (1960), *Birth of a Whaleship* (1964), and other volumes on whaling, conducted an important series of interviews with whaling outfitter and agent Morris Sederholm. And in the early 2000s Laura Orleans collected and transcribed fully or partially twenty-eight interviews in her “Places of Whaling” and “Faces of Whaling” projects that provided invaluable documentation for the last phase of New Bedford whaling. Orleans's reports, transcripts, and interviews are in the archives of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park.

There is also an incredibly rich and insightful secondary literature on New Bedford whaling and history that inspired and challenged each of us. References appear throughout the text and are listed in the bibliography at the end of this volume.

The Project Databases

From the beginning of this project, the scholars made a commitment to systematize and make more accessible some of the data gathered from primary resources, including census records and crew lists. In part we did this for analytical purposes, as databases would help us quantify some of the patterns and trends in ethnic whaling history, an approach that Hohman undoubtedly would have appreciated, if only these technologies and softwares had been available in the 1920s. Just as important, we see our databases as an important legacy of the project that offer future researchers organized and searchable research collections that may save them some time and enrich their research questions.

This report's Appendix A includes a more detailed description of the processes used to build each database; a summary description suffices here. Five specific and separate databases were created during the project using Microsoft Access 2003 and 2008 software, one including information from samples of federal census records and other lists, and four from collections of crew lists for New Bedford-based whaling voyages in 1845, 1855, 1865, and 1875.¹¹ The first database (table A.1) includes more than 5600 records entered from federal censuses accessed through Ancestry.com (1880, 1900, 1920), from work sheets provided by Kathryn Grover and Don Warrin

for 1850 and 1860, and from John Milton Earle's 1861 lists of Massachusetts Indians. The later census records were sampled by New Bedford ward and district and include only entries for people of color and ethnic groups of interest who were involved in the whaling-maritime or related shoreside industries.

The other four databases were created by inputting selected information from crew lists for outgoing New Bedford whaling voyages at ten-year intervals between 1845 and 1875 (table A.2). More than four hundred such voyages are represented by more than eleven thousand individual records; each record includes whaler surname, vessel name and rigging, sailing date, age, race/color (complexion), community affiliation (residence or birthplace or both), crew position, and lay. The voyages in each of the four databases represent nearly every whaling voyage that departed from the New Bedford Customs District, which included Dartmouth, Westport, Fairhaven, Mattapoisett, Marion (Sippican), and Wareham.

Having such databases means that researchers can now look more closely at a thirty-year time span during which New Bedford whaling reached its peak (1845 and 1855) and then began a slow decline (1865 and 1875) and can explore how the diversity and size of crews changed in a significant center of the industry. Hohman himself wondered about such changes: he developed the hypothesis that crews became more heterogeneous and cosmopolitan during the heyday and decline of whaling.¹² Our studies support this model, but only for the period of growth. The databases of crew lists can be searched by surname, which allows anyone to undertake biographical studies of individual whalers or groups of whalers—say, by age or community affiliation. In turn that research helps illuminate the career tracks of individuals or ethnic groups in whaling and how those patterns changed over the course of the industry's history. A biographical approach can integrate specific human faces, and stories, into the narrative of whaling history, something the concept of the “average seaman” cannot.

The seventeen thousand-plus total entries in the project's five databases represent the hard work and commitment of five individuals responsible for gathering and copying records from census and whaling archives, inputting data, and managing the final products through integration and “scrubbing”—Michèle Hayeur Smith of the University of Rhode Island, Bob Maker of New Bedford, Emelia Peterson and Jackie Veninger, consultants from the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, and Sandra Hall of Ledyard, Connecticut.

Beyond Whaling History

Even before the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park was created in 1996, its purpose and meanings were debated within and beyond the city. In his testimony before a congressional committee on national parks and public lands in June 1994, long-time New Bedford resident and local historian Carl J. Cruz explained its importance: “A whaling national park in New Bedford is an American story, deeply rooted in the American dream. It is about slavery. It is about integration. It is about

11. In addition, each researcher created smaller databases and biographic files relevant to the ethnic groups under study. More information on these can be found in Parts One-Three of the report.

12. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 51–52.

immigration. It's about opportunity. Whaling produced this opportunity that could not be found elsewhere in this country."¹³

This study traces over and looks beneath that vision of the American story, examining more closely who built this part of America. It becomes another chapter in the ongoing effort to document the diverse lives, experiences, and struggles of America's working classes.¹⁴ Arguably it was whaling, together with textile manufacturing, that shaped many of the landscapes and human communities of today's New England, histories that are still living in New Bedford and Lowell, Massachusetts, and Woonsocket, Rhode Island, all places with commitments to historical interpretation.

As so often happens in such work, cities themselves become part of the story as they are built and shaped, directly and indirectly, by the growth of an industry and its decline.¹⁵ Here New Bedford is that city. Because whaling was so fundamental to New Bedford's growth from urban seaport and commercial village to an early, maritime-based city and shaped its physical structure and cultural diversity for several generations, any study of the industry's ethnic communities may illuminate its still-hidden histories of community building, inequalities, and place making.¹⁶

Some of that happens in this report, helping to fill in the gap between Kathryn Grover's remarkable 2001 study of the cultures and communities of antebellum New Bedford and Kingston Heath's richly layered exploration of the city's later industrial landscapes.¹⁷ But there is much more work to be done to uncover and share the story of how this one part of America came to be. It turns out that there isn't an American story, but many stories, and some of them are about whaling, ethnic whalers, and their communities.

13. Cruz's voice from *Hearing before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, of the Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, 103 Congress, on HR 3898, "To Establish the New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park in New Bedford, Massachusetts."* Serial No. 103-94 (Washington, 1994), 78.

14. See Bruce Levine, Stephen Brier, David Brundage, Edward Countryman, Dorothy Fennell, and Marcus Rediker, *Who Built America?* vol. 1, *From Conquest and Colonization through Reconstruction and the Great Uprising of 1877* (New York: Pantheon Books and the American Social History Project, 1989).

15. See Joshua Freeman, Nelson Lichtenstein, Stephen Brie, David Bensman, Susan Porter Benson, David Brundage, Bret Eynon, Bruce Levine, and Bryan Palmer, *Who Built America?* vol. 2, *From the Gilded Age to the Present*. (New York: Pantheon Books and the American Social History Project, 2002).

16. Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).

17. Grover, *Fugitive's Gibraltar*; Kingston William Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001).

PART ONE

**FIRST WHALERS:
WAMPANOAG INDIAN COMMUNITIES AND
THE NEW BEDFORD WHALING INDUSTRY**

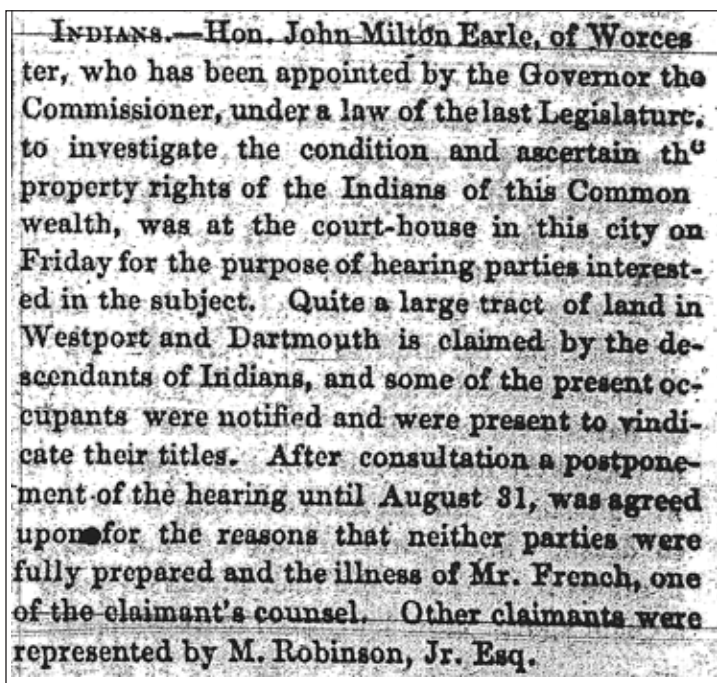
Russell G. Handsman

CHAPTER 1

THE ANCIENT, COLONIAL, AND POST-REVOLUTIONARY WORLD OF WAMPANOAG WHALERS

It's August 31, 1859, a Wednesday, and a diverse group has gathered at the Court House in New Bedford in response to an order from John Milton Earle (1794–1874), then Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Massachusetts. This hearing was the third Earle had called: the first two, on 5 and 11 August, had been adjourned so that Rodney Wainer and other local Indians could provide more information concerning their legal claims to the “present occupants of said lands” in the towns of Dartmouth and Westport, to the west of New Bedford proper (fig. 1.1).¹

In the hearing room that late summer day were four older women between the



INDIANS.—Hon. John Milton Earle, of Worcester, who has been appointed by the Governor the Commissioner, under a law of the last Legislature, to investigate the condition and ascertain the property rights of the Indians of this Commonwealth, was at the court-house in this city on Friday for the purpose of hearing parties interested in the subject. Quite a large tract of land in Westport and Dartmouth is claimed by the descendants of Indians, and some of the present occupants were notified and were present to vindicate their titles. After consultation a postponement of the hearing until August 31, was agreed upon for the reasons that neither parties were fully prepared and the illness of Mr. French, one of the claimant's counsel. Other claimants were represented by M. Robinson, Jr. Esq.

ages of fifty and seventy-five—Mary Knobler, Alice Cook, Charlotte Smith, and Deborah Borden. They were two pairs of sisters of mixed ancestry described in vital records as “people of color” and in the 1860 federal census as black. Mary and Alice were the second and fourth children of Paul Cuffe Sr., and the older sisters of Paul Cuffe Jr. who was called (or called himself) a Pequot Indian in his 1839 memoir describing his life as a mariner and whaleman. Charlotte and Deborah were the daughters of African American Benjamin Cook and his wife Catherine Almy; Earle’s 1861 census identified the sisters as Dartmouth Indians.²

Fig. 1.1. Newspaper article on Earle’s rescheduled hearing, *Republican Standard* (New Bedford), 11 August 1859.

1. Copies of Earle’s published meeting notice, and related documents, can be found in box 2, folder 9, John Milton Earle Papers (hereafter cited as JME Papers), American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

2. John Milton Earle, *Report to the Governor and Council, Concerning the Indians of the Commonwealth, under the Act of April 6, 1859*, Massachusetts Senate Document 96 (Boston: William White, 1861), appendix lxv, lxviii. Borden is there listed as “Boydén.”

One by one, Earle took depositions; each woman identified herself, carefully traced her Wampanoag ancestry using terms such as “pure Indian” or “half Indian,” and then spoke about how their immediate ancestors had once lived in wigwams or buried their dead on lands along Slocomb’s River, an area then under dispute in Westport. They all talked of a past only two or three generations removed but said little of their own lives and families; one might think their Native ancestries were but a distant memory.³

The public hearing in New Bedford was one of four Earle convened in 1859 and 1860 as he gathered information regarding the state’s indigenous inhabitants. “I soon found,” he later confessed, “that I had entered on a wider field of research, with much ground to traverse and little to gather, and that little so scattered and hidden . . . as to make the pursuit a matter of much labor, with comparatively insignificant returns.”⁴ Leavitt Thaxter, long-time resident of Edgartown on Martha’s Vineyard, made the problem more obvious in a September 1859 letter to Earle: “I believe, my dear sir, you have diligently and faithfully devoted the little time allowed you by the State, to gain all desired information. But, I think, you must feel, most sensibly, that a duty has been imposed upon you which it would be impractical for you, or any one, to perform in so limited a time, in a manner satisfactory to yourself, the Legislature, or the Indians.”⁵

Yet Earle labored on, convening hearings, visiting reservations, and corresponding extensively with town clerks and guardians, overseers, and leaders in several Native communities.⁶ From this correspondence Earle gathered data that he compiled into tables summarizing the ancestry, current residence and occupation, age, marital relations, and property holdings of specific, named Indians. These tables appear as an appendix in Earle’s 1861 report and are sometimes referred to as a census of Massachusetts Indians living in 1860. But the tables are not comprehensive; Earle did no real fieldwork west of Worcester County and readily admitted that his “schedules” for central and eastern Massachusetts were, at best, only partial approximations.

Still, Earle’s report makes obvious, in ways unexpected and surprising, that Native peoples continued to live everywhere in the commonwealth, not only in reservation-based communities but in village centers, rural enclaves, coastal seaports, and city neighborhoods.⁷ Consider, for example, a page from Earle’s appendix in which he lists five families linked to the Herring Pond tribe (fig. 1.2). Of these, only

3. See three pages of depositions in JME papers, Box 2, Folder 9. Earle’s work was reported in the *New Bedford Republican Standard* on 17 February, 5 May, 21 and 28 July, and 11 August 1859.

4. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 6.

5. Leavitt Thaxter, Edgartown MA, to John Milton Earle, 3 September 1859, box 2, folder 3, JME Papers.

6. A sample of about 130 letters Earle received is preserved in the manuscript collection of the American Antiquarian Society; Earle lived and worked in Worcester.

7. See, for example, Thomas Doughton, “Unseen Neighbors: Native Americans of Central Massachusetts, A People Who Had ‘Vanished,’” in Colin G. Calloway, ed., *After King Philip’s War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College and the University Press of New England, 1997), 207–30, and Russell G. Handsman, “Towards Archaeological Histories of the Nipmuc Indian Community in the ‘Lost Century’ (1820–1920)” (Revised paper, “Theoretical Foundation for Indigenous Archaeologies” 32nd Annual Chacmool Conference, Indigenous People and Archaeology, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, November 1999).

N A M E .	Age.	Sex or Condi- tion.	Tribe or Race.	Occupation.	Residence.	Stock.	Land in severalty.
Ralph Blackwell, . . .	49	Married, .	Herring Pond, .	Mariner, . . .	Herring Pond Plantation,	1 cow, 1 heifer, .	108½ acres, \$600.†
Mary A. Blackwell, . . .	31	" .	Marshpee, . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Eliza A. Jackson, . . .	55	Widow, .	Herring Pond, .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Ellen E. Folger, . . .	12	Girl, . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
William R. Conet,* . . .	29	Married, .	" . . .	Mariner, . . .	" . . .	1 cow, 1 heifer, .	105 acres, \$575.
Rhoda F. Conet, . . .	27	" . . .	Marshpee, . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Ezra R. Conet, . . .	2	Boy, . . .	Herring Pond, .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Solomon B. Conet,† . . .	4 mos.	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Christopher Danzell, . . .	29	Married, .	Narragansett, .	Cordwainer, . .	New Bedford, . .	" . . .	" . . .
Deborah Danzell, . . .	25	" . . .	Herring Pond, .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	53½ acres, \$167.
Alonzo S. Danzell, . . .	5	Boy, . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Ella Melissa Danzell, . . .	3	Girl, . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Eva F. Danzell, . . .	2	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Rosetta Danzell, . . .	3 mos.	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
James W. Denison, . . .	70	Married, .	Mixed, (for'gner)	Mariner, . . .	Nantucket, . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Sarah Denison, . . .	60	" . . .	Herring Pond, .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	56 acres, \$200.
John M. Denison, . . .	29	Single, . .	" . . .	Mariner, . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Susan S. Denison, . . .	25	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
James W. Denison, . . .	23	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
William Henry Denison, . . .	18	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Alexander G. Denison, . . .	27	Married, .	" . . .	Barber, . . .	California, . . .	" . . .	" . . .
Wife, . . .	Unk.	" . . .	Unknown, . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .	" . . .

Fig. 1.2. Page from the appendix to John Milton Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, showing entries for the Herring Pond Indian community, located near Plymouth.

two actually resided on the community’s reservation on Cape Cod Bay near Plymouth; the other families lived in New Bedford, Nantucket, and California.

The listings in Earle’s appendix also make clear that Native people were making a living in many “non-traditional” occupations such as barbering, shoe making, brick laying, railroading, and housekeeping while others worked as day or seasonal laborers on farms or in the commercial and industrial districts of Worcester, Fall River, Lowell, Boston, and other urban centers. Despite the changes wrought by mercantile and industrial capitalism, Indians in Massachusetts found ways to continue living within (or beyond) the bounds of their ancestral homelands while maintaining connections with their kin both locally and regionally.

In the current day, the facts of a persistent Native presence are widely known and accepted. But except in Native communities, Earle’s perspective was a novelty in mid nineteenth-century New England. The dominant historical discourse had, for more than a century, written Indians off the land and out of history, and stereotypes prevailed. “The very large number” of Indians living in Massachusetts on the eve of the Civil War are almost unknown to “the people among whom they dwell” because most assumed, Earle wrote, that “Indians cannot speak English, still live in wigwams, paint their faces, and carry tomahawks.”⁸ In contrast, Earle’s research and report captures some of the complexity of Native lives, making obvious that the indigenes of Massachusetts often were both Indians and citizens, committed and connected to their ancestral homelands and communities while participating in (and adapting

8. Jean M. O’Brien, “Vanishing’ Indians in Nineteenth-Century New England,” in Sergei A. Kan and Pauline Turner Strong, eds., *New Perspectives on Native North America: Cultures, Histories, and Representations* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 414–32; Russell G. Handsman, “Illuminating History’s Silences in the Pioneer Valley.” *Artifacts* 19, 2 (1991): 14–25; Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 8–10.

to) the economy and civic life of towns and cities. This was true also of New Bedford where, Earle reported, “There were about one hundred and fifty persons of the Indian race, drawn from various tribes, exclusive of the very considerable numbers at sea in New Bedford ships, whose residence is elsewhere.”⁹

In early August 1860, about a year after Earle’s hearings, New Bedford census takers began their work, compiling data on the city’s more than twenty-two thousand inhabitants. The same process was underway all across the nation so that by 1864 preliminary results were available in the form of published studies, comparing population and other data from thirty-four states and eight territories. Statistics on 587 different occupations reveal that Massachusetts was first or second in the nation in the number of caulkers, chandlers, mariners and mast-makers, riggers, rope makers, sail makers, ship masters, and shipsmiths, all related to maritime work including whaling.¹⁰ So it is not surprising that Earle’s tables would also document the pervasiveness of Indians working as seamen in ports on Martha’s Vineyard, the Cape, and southeastern Massachusetts (table 1.1).

In six Wampanoag communities on the Cape and islands, between 25 and 67 percent of adult men (sixteen years and older) made a living as mariners or in closely related industries.¹¹ The proportions are lower for mainland groups, yet even in such places as Dartmouth and Herring Pond, Native men were identified as mariners. Earle was not surprised by their numbers: “Situated as most of them are, near the seaboard, in the immediate vicinity of our fishing and commercial ports . . . nearly all of the males, first or last, engage in seafaring as an occupation.”¹²

The Mashpee Indian community, also called Marshpee in the nineteenth century, exemplified this pattern. Earle listed fifty-one men who made their living at sea, including forty-one native-born Mashpees, eight so-called “foreigners” (men of color who had married into the community), and two other Wampanoag from other places; in his census, that represents about one half of the adult men. The numbers recorded by the federal census taker in 1860 are lower than Earle’s yet point to the same pattern: of twenty-three Indian men between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five whose occupation was listed, twelve were mariners.¹³ Maritime pursuits clearly played an important role in the economy of mid nineteenth-century Wampanoag communities. As the whaling industry then provided many jobs, one might guess that Native men were part of the labor force in key ports such as New Bedford where, in 1860 when whaling was at its peak, sixty-eight whaling vessels departed and another eighty-three arrived home.

9. Russell G. Handsman, “Race and Survivance in Indian New England,” *CrossPaths* 11, 2 (2008): 4, 16–19; Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 6.

10. See “Recapitulation of the Tables of Population, Nativity, and Occupation,” in *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Secretary of the Interior and Superintendent of Census, 1860).

11. Percentages based on data in Earle’s appendix. I identified all adult males in each Native community and then counted how many worked as mariners, shipwrights, and so on. By mariners or seafarers Earle meant men who worked on trading vessels (coastal, intercoastal, and international shipping) and on whaling vessels.

12. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 6.

13. Mashpee data from *www.ancestry.com*; see four pages of listings (forty-three households) for the Marshpee District, South Sandwich, Barnstable County.

Table 1.1. Earle’s Data on Wampanoag Indian Seamen

Ancestral Community	Location	Number of Adult Men in the Maritime Industries
Chappequiddick	Vineyard	14 of 21 (67%)
Christiantown	Vineyard	5 of 13 (39%)
Deep Bottom	Vineyard	1 of 4 (25%)
Gay Head	Vineyard	30 of 67 (45%)
Marshpee	Cape Cod	51 of 110 (46%)
Yarmouth	Cape Cod	19 of 39 (49%)
Herring Pond	Plymouth County	9 of 24 (38%)
Middleborough	Plymouth County	1 of 3 (33%)
Dartmouth	Bristol County	5 of 43 (12%)
Fall River (Troy)	Bristol County	1 of 31 (3%)

Deborah Borden and Charlotte Smith, who attended Earle’s 1859 New Bedford hearing, lived in New Bedford’s sixth ward. Borden was a widow with three sons—one of them, Nathaniel, a mariner—and her sister Charlotte lived by herself. They were not the only Natives: Earle’s appendix lists ninety city residents representing twenty-eight households of between one and

nine persons from ten Wampanoag communities extant on the Cape (Marshpee and Yarmouth), Martha’s Vineyard (Chappaquiddick, Christiantown, Gay Head, and Deep Bottom), and Plymouth and Bristol Counties, Massachusetts (Herring Pond, Middleborough, Watuppa in Fall River, and Dartmouth) (fig. 1.3). Twelve of these households were of mixed ancestry; seven were comprised of members solely of Indian descent. Of eleven men listed as household heads for whom Earle recorded occupation, eight worked as mariners.

The existence of this New Bedford-based Native “community”—Earle elsewhere estimated its size at 150+ persons—likely reflects the historic growth of this place as an early maritime center after 1820. As the whaling industry was regenerated in the aftermath of embargos and the War of 1812, more employment possibilities on whaling vessels and in shoreside industries attracted both native-born workers and foreign-born immigrants. New Bedford’s population increased more than eighteen thousand persons (465 percent) between 1820 and 1860, and as the city grew so did its need for an even larger workforce, both unskilled and skilled laborers whose efforts kept the city alive.

As New Bedford developed, it became a magnet for Wampanoag Indians and others, a place where they could work, survive, and sometimes prosper while escaping perhaps the inequities and prejudices of reservation or small town life elsewhere. But even as centrifugal forces within Wampanoag communities drew Indians to New Bedford and its whaling industry, there were other social processes and cultural traditions that counteracted those forces, acting centripetally to maintain the complexity and connections of ancestral places and an ancient world. Earle stated of the Indians living and working in New Bedford or at sea, “Few of these consider themselves permanently located there, but generally, are looking forward to the time, more or less remote, when they shall return to the places of their nativity, finally to mingle their dust with that of their fathers.”¹⁴

14. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 6.

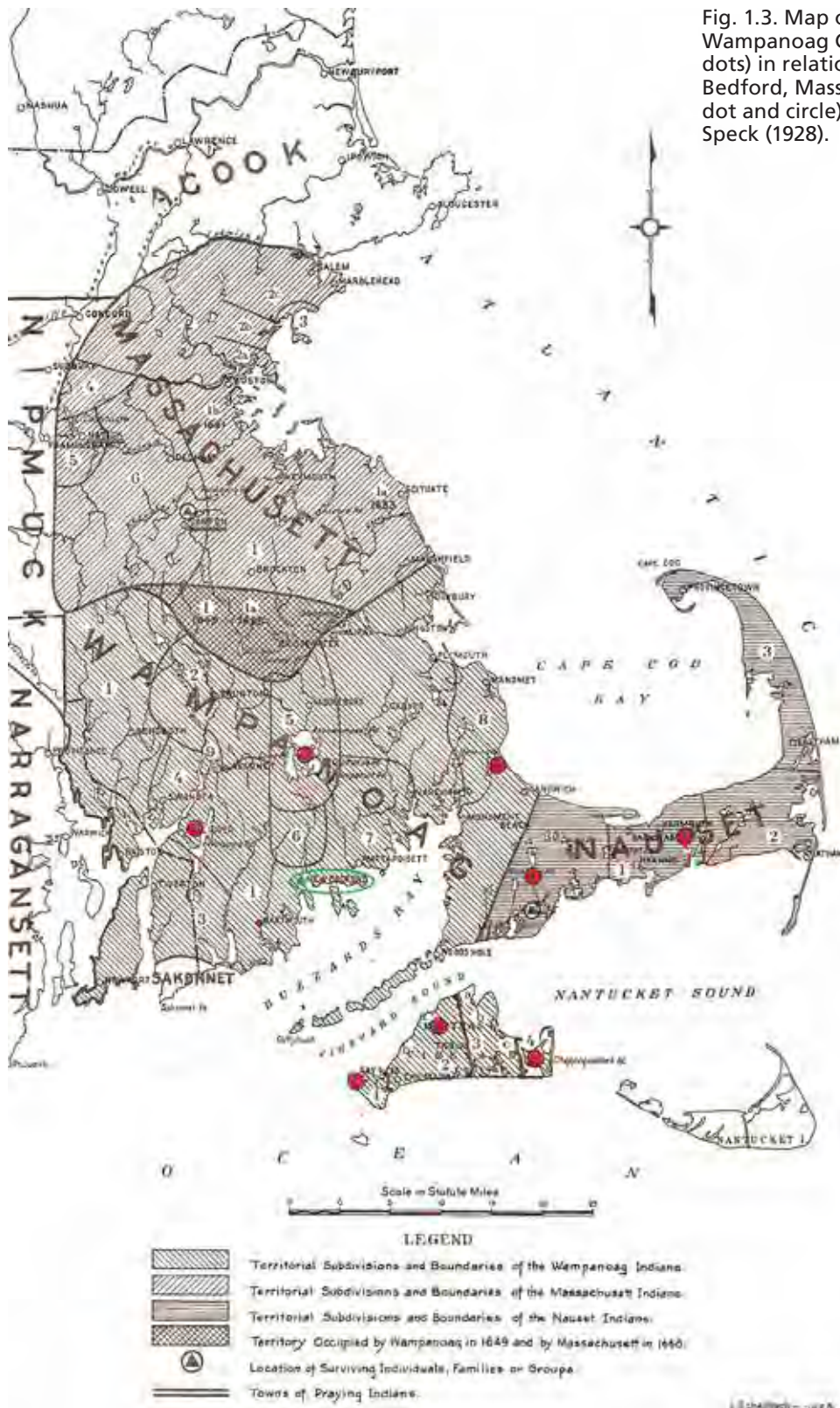


Fig. 1.3. Map of Earle's Wampanoag Communities (red dots) in relationship to New Bedford, Massachusetts (green dot and circle). Base map after Speck (1928).

The Ancient World Of Wampanoag Indian Whaling: Ancestral Homelands and Cultural Traditions

Sometime in the early 1790s, Thomas Cooper, a Wampanoag from Gay Head then in his sixties or seventies, shared a story with Benjamin Basset of Chilmark (fig. 1.4). Cooper had heard the story from his grandmother, one of many in which the whale-eating giant Maushop created landforms still recognizable today—the islands of Noepe (Martha’s Vineyard) and Nantucket, the variegated colors of the Gayhead cliffs and their fossil deposits, various offshore islands in Buzzards Bay and beyond, and even Sakonnet Point in Rhode Island at the very end of the Little Compton peninsula.¹⁵ Maushop’s favorite meal was broiled whale, and periodically

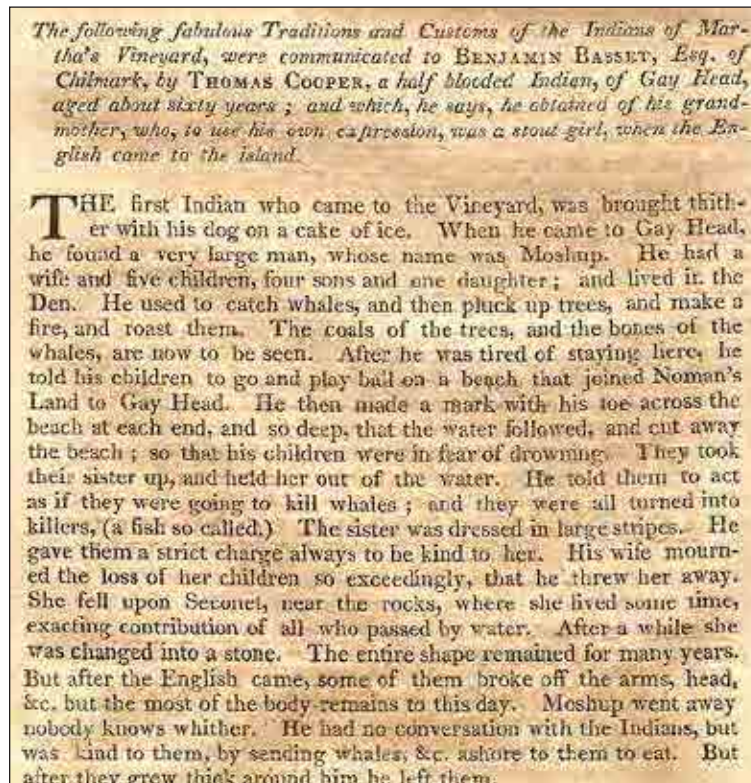


Fig. 1.4. Thomas Cooper’s Maushop story in Benjamin Basset, “Traditions and Customs of the Indians of Massachusetts,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (1792). Courtesy Research Library, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

he “sent whales ashore for the Indians to eat,” which helped them survive and grow in number so “thickly” that Maushop left.

The Maushop stories, linking Wampanoag people to whales and whaling, have been told forever as part of a cultural archive passed down to the current day. In that archive are stories about survival and loss, community relationships and cultural norms, the origins of a community (Cooper’s story tells of how the first Indian and his dog came to Aquinnah) and culture heroes, family histories and individual deeds, and significant events in Wampanoag history.¹⁶ As Wampanoag people traveled from place to place, much of the archive was always

15. See Maushop story in Elizabeth Reynard, *The Narrow Land: Folk Chronicles of Old Cape Cod* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), 26; for a selection of Maushop stories see William S. Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620–1984* (Hanover, NH: University of Press of New England, 1986), 172–234.

16. For examples see Helen A. A. Attaquin, *A Brief History of Gay Head; or “Aquinnah”* (Gay Head, MA, 1970) and Russell M. Peters, *The Wampanoags of Mashpee: An Indian Perspective on American History* (Mashpee, MA: Indian Spiritual and Cultural Training Council, 1987).

visible to them because their stories were and still are grounded in the land. When nineteenth-century Indians went to New Bedford to go whaling, for example, they traveled through storied landscapes—ancestral homelands—that, for a long time, had been shaped and reshaped by their ancestors. In turn the knowledge sedimented within ancestral homelands was a history of adaptations, continuities, and resistances that helped each generation survive.

Bird's-eye Views of Wampanoag Country

Outsiders found it difficult to conceive of these Native landscapes; nineteenth-century historians including Daniel Ricketson preferred instead to talk of a “vast wilderness” roamed over by Indians in pursuit of game where woods “re-echoed to the shrill war-whoop.” But seventeenth-century accounts and maps tell a different story. In 1605, for example, Samuel de Champlain depicted a Wampanoag settlement area on the Cape around Nauset Harbor (now Eastham), with planting fields and small hamlets of wigwams surrounded by forest patches of oaks, nut trees, and cedars (fig. 1.5).¹⁷ The area shown in this “bird’s-eye view”—drawn from a single prominent point, perhaps the maintop of the vessel—includes about thirty square kilometers (ten square miles) and was, at that time, part of a core area of an ancestral Wampanoag homeland, located at the tidal interface of land and sea. Like many others in Indian New England, this homeland included one or two important meeting places for clan ceremonies and elders’ councils, extensive fields of corn, and sacred sites such as cemeteries, brush piles, and sweat lodges.¹⁸ Dispersed throughout the core area were dozens of wigwams, alone or in pairs, or grouped in small hamlets with associated garden plots. An extensive network of paths connected all these living sites to one another and to a network of traditional resource locations—fishing sites, groves of nut trees, burned-over fields, wetlands, shellfish collecting places, and coastal beaches where stranded whales were sometimes found. As each resource location was used and re-used, a taskscape of activity areas, midden deposits, and features (roasting hearths, bedrock mortars, fish weirs) visibly marked each site and provided a material

17. Daniel Ricketson, *The History of New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts* (New Bedford: by the author, 1858), vi; Langton and Ganong, trans., “The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain (1613),” in H. P. Bigger, ed., *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*. vol. 1, 1599–1607 (Toronto, Canada: Champlain Society, 1922), 349–55; Robert S. Grumet, *Historic Contact: Indian People and Colonists in Today’s Northeastern United States in the Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 124–26, fig. 3.2.

18. Handsman, “Nipmuc Indian Community” (2000); Russell G. Handsman and Trudie Lamb-Richmond, “Confronting Colonialism: The Mahican and Schaghticoke Peoples and Us,” in Peter R. Schmidt and Thomas C. Patterson, eds., *Making Alternative Histories. The Practice of Archaeology and History in Non-Western Settings* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1995), 87–117; Alan Leveillee et al., “Dispersed Villages in Late Woodland Period South-Coastal Rhode Island,” *Archaeology of Eastern North America* 34 (2006): 71–89; Eva L. Butler, “Sweat-Houses in the Southern New England Area,” *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 6 (1945): 11–15; Eva L. Butler, “The Brush or Stone Memorial Heaps of Southern New England,” *Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Connecticut* 19 (1946): 2–11; Eva L. Butler, “Algonkian Culture and the Use of Maize in Southern New England,” *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut* 22 (1948): 2–39. The homeland at Nauset, mapped by de Champlain in 1605, is the same one explored by the Pilgrim party in December 1620 where they encountered “a great burying place,” one part of which was palisaded “like a churchyard”; see Dwight B. Heath, ed., *Mourt’s Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth (1622)* (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1963), 33–37.



Fig. 1.5. Samuel de Champlain's 1605 map of Malle Barre (present-day Nauset Harbor) showing settlement areas and planting fields, in *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain* (1613), reprinted in 1922 by the Champlain Society. Courtesy Research Library, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

basis for naming, storytelling, and remembering even after the places were no longer used.¹⁹

So underneath the ground of each homeland lies a complexly layered record of Wampanoag experiences, traditions, customs, and wisdom (especially about the resources and how to use them), a quilt-like archive pieced together in part through active processes of memory making and memory keeping.²⁰ Edward Winslow, one of the signers of the Mayflower Compact, recorded evidences of this indigenous archive in his 1624 *Good Newes from New England*:

Instead of records and chronicles, they [the Wampanoag] take this course. Where any remarkable act is done, in memory of it, either in the place or by some pathway near adjoining, they make a round hole in the ground, about a foot deep, and as much over; which when others passing by behold, they inquire the cause and occasion of same, which once being known, they are careful to acquaint all men,

19. The term “taskscape” is from Tim Ingold, “The Temporality of the Landscape,” *World Archaeology* 25, 2 (1993): 152–74. See also T. J. Ferguson and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, *History is in the Land: Multivocal Tribal Traditions in Arizona’s San Pedro Valley* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006).

20. Russell G. Handsman, “Landscapes of Memory in Wampanoag Country—and the Monuments upon Them,” in Patricia Rubertone, ed., *Archaeologies of Placemaking: Monuments, Memories, and Engagement in Native North America* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008), 161–93. 2008b. Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Storyteller* (New York: Arcade Publishing of Little, Brown and Co., 1981) is a remarkable representation of just such an archive from the Laguna Pueblo community of western New Mexico.

as occasion serveth, therewith; and lest such holes should be filled or grown up by accident, as men pass by, they will oft renew the same; by which many things of great antiquity are fresh in memory.²¹

The scale of de Champlain's map of Malle Barre is on the order of 10^4 powers, a view showing an area of about one hundred square kilometers, easily walked in a single day.²² Imagine, though, another bird's-eye view from higher above, at an order of 10^4 to 10^5 power encompassing ten thousand square kilometers. In the early 1600s and today, this is the scale of Wampanoag Country, an extensive social world of local, place-based communities and overlapping homelands stretching from eastern Rhode Island and Buzzards Bay eastwards and outwards to the Cape and Islands (see fig. 1.3).²³ Samuel de Champlain sketched other ancestral homelands at Patuxet, or Plymouth Harbor (fig. 1.6), and Monomoyick (now Chatham), but he never understood the size or interconnectedness of this larger Wampanoag world.

The Native peoples of this world shared a language and core of traditional beliefs as well as ancestral histories embedded in their homelands. They were also connected by a far-reaching system of social relationships—matriclans—that structured marriage and economic interdependence. In each homeland, several clans were represented by the families who lived there; in turn each clan's membership extended from homeland to homeland across the region, tying together households and families on the Cape with their kin on the Islands or around Buzzards Bay. As Wampanoag people moved back and forth through their country, they traveled through ancestral homelands that were familiar, always encountering kin along the way. This was true in the time of Samuel de Champlain and the Pilgrims, and also in the time of New Bedford whaling in the nineteenth century.

On the Archaeology of the Wampanoag's Ancestral Homelands

Conventionally New England archaeologists have assumed that the homelands partially mapped by de Champlain in the early 1600s began to emerge about one thousand years ago with the advent of corn agriculture, which enabled population growth and a permanence of settlements.²⁴ But more recent researchers, in both riverine and coastal settings, are documenting much longer histories of sedentism and place making, which suggests that the origins of ancestral homelands lay in the distant past.²⁵ On the Cape and Islands, these longer-term histories likely were

21. Edward Winslow, *Good Newes from New England* (1624; reprint, Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1996), 66.

22. In the now-classic "Powers of Ten" approach, 100 powers represents a square one meter on a side. At a scale of 10^4 , the square is 10,000 meters (10 kilometers) on a side. See Philip Morison and Phylis Morison, *Powers of Ten* (San Francisco: Scientific American Library and W. H. Freeman and Co., 1982).

23. Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England, 1500–1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) maps an even larger Algonkian world, Ninnimissinuok, in southern New England stretching from Newburyport and Cape Ann on the north to the Housatonic River and eastern Long Island on the south. That world includes the Wampanoag's neighbors: among them are the Narragansett, Mohegan and Pequot, Shinnecock, Nipmuc, and Paugussett. My model of homelands focuses on local, place-based, archaeological histories and assumes that each tribe's indigenous territory was comprised of a series of such landscapes. So I explore homelands in the plural whereas present-day Native communities talk of an ancestral homeland in the singular. See Handsman, "Landscapes of Memory."

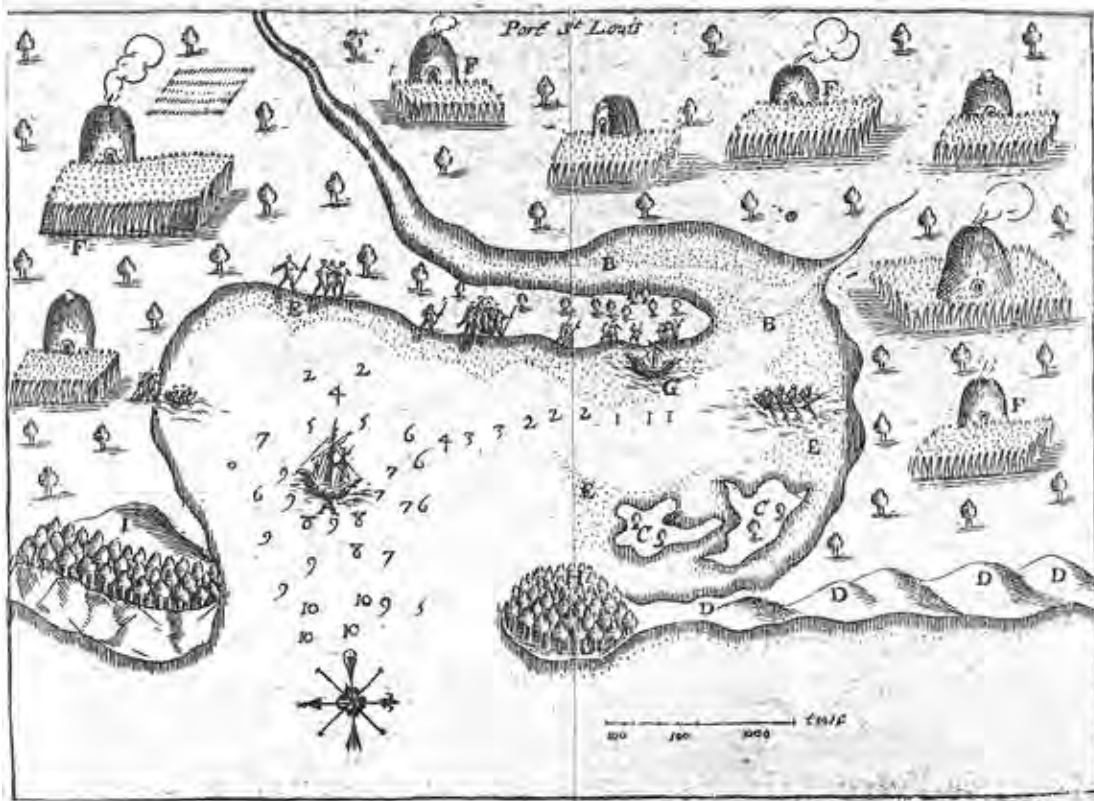


Fig. 1.6. Samuel de Champlain's 1605 map of Port St. Louis (now Plymouth Harbor), in *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain* (1613). Traditionally known as Patuxet, the Pilgrims entered this locality in December 1620. Courtesy Research Library, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

enabled and intensified by a rich and compressed ecology of marine habitats, estuaries, freshwater ponds and wetlands, forests, and meadows.²⁶ Before five thousand years ago, this diversity enabled Native peoples to begin settling into small regions on a seasonal basis and intensively using specific resources year after year. Over the next millennium, this settling-in process intensified; as the Wampanoag's knowledge of places and resources grew, so did their attachment to locales as

24. Kevin A. McBride and Robert E. Dewar, "Agriculture and Cultural Evolution: Causes and Effects in the Lower Connecticut River Valley," in William F. Keegan, ed., *Emergent Horticultural Economies of the Eastern Woodlands* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 1987), 305–28. Bert Salwen, "Indians of Southern New England and Long Island: Early Period," in Bruce C. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 15, *Northeast* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 160–76; Dean R. Snow, "Late Prehistory of the East Coast," in Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 15, *Northeast*, 58–69.

25. David J. Bernstein, *Prehistoric Subsistence on the Southern New England Coast: The Record from Narragansett Bay* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1993), and David J. Bernstein, "Long-Term Continuity in the Archaeological Record from the Coast of New York and Southern New England, USA," *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 1, 2 (2006): 271–84; Bragdon, *Native People*; Handsman, *Landscapes of Memory*; Handsman and Lamb-Richmond, "Confronting Colonialism."

26. Scott Nixon, "Marine Resources and the Human Carrying Capacity of Coastal Ecosystems in Southern New England before European Contact," *Northeast Anthropology* 68 (2004): 1–23.

evidenced by archaeological sites, both residential and task specific, that were used and reused extra-seasonally for centuries.²⁷

In coastal settings, these trends towards permanence and attachment were based in part on the availability of six different shellfish species. Some were present year round, others on a seasonal basis. But over the course of the annual subsistence calendar, between three and six species could be gathered each month and contributed both food and artistic materials to Wampanoag life.²⁸ Over centuries thick, well-stratified shell midden deposits grew over the land, visible signs of a continuous presence and living tradition. Some two thousand years ago, a turning point was reached in the long, continuous history of Wampanoag homelands. The evidence, clearest from the Cape, suggests that residential areas and taskscapes had become even more spatially focused and intensively used, as estuaries were compressed along the shoreline by rising sea levels. Concurrently the diversity of forest-and-field ecosystems increased as Indians periodically set fires to encourage white-tailed deer populations.²⁹

In this time of change, settlement areas were consolidated within each ancestral homeland. Specific homelands became the locus for group identities, the same cultural landscapes mapped by de Champlain and the roots of the historic Wampanoag communities later described in eighteenth-century accounts and enumerated, later still, by John Milton Earle. Often in each homeland, ancestral cemeteries were established adjacent to living areas, creating links between the living and the dead.³⁰ Seemingly this process of localization would have fragmented the Wampanoag social world. But clan relationships continued to weave communities and homelands together, as did ceremonies of renewal and remembrance. Periodically in the centuries before European contact, bones from ancestral, community-based cemeteries would be gathered and carried to special places. There, in prepared

27. See research findings and discussions in Elizabeth S. Chilton and Dianna L. Doucette, "The Archaeology of Coastal New England: The View from Martha's Vineyard," *Northeast Anthropology* 64 (2002): 55–66; Francis P. McManamon, "Prehistoric Cultural Adaptations and Their Evolution on Outer Cape Cod," in Francis P. McManamon, ed., *Chapters in the Archeology of Cape Cod, II: Results of the Cape Cod National Seashore Archaeological Survey, 1979–1981*, Cultural Resource Management Study No. 8 (Washington, DC: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, 1984), 339–417; William A. Ritchie, *The Archaeology of Martha's Vineyard* (New York: Natural History Press, 1969).

28. Elizabeth A. Little, "Observations on Methods of Collection, Use, and Seasonality of Shellfish on the Coasts of Massachusetts," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 47, 2 (1986): 46–59; Mary Lynne Rainey, "Maritime Resources in the Food Economy of Nantucket's Native Americans," *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut* 65 (2003): 19–29.

29. James W. Bradley, "Taylor Hill: A Middle Woodland Mortuary Site in Wellfleet, Massachusetts," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 69, 1 (2008): 27–43; McManamon, "Prehistoric Cultural Adaptations"; Leslie C. Shaw, "Woodland Period Occupations at the Willowbend Site, Mashpee, Massachusetts," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 69, 1 (2008): 44–54; Tim Parshall, David Foster, E. Faison, Dana MacDonald, and B. C. S. Hansen, "Long-Term History of Vegetation and Fire in Pitch Pine-Oak Forests on Cape Cod, Massachusetts," *Ecology* 84 (2003): 736–48; Marjorie G. Winkler, "A 12,000-Year History of Vegetation and Climate for Cape Cod, Massachusetts," *Quaternary Research* 23, 3 (1985): 301–12.

30. Frederick Dunford, "Ceramic Style and the Late Woodland Period (1000–400 B.P.) Sachemships of Cape Cod, Massachusetts" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2001). On such cemeteries see the analysis in Bradley, "Taylor Hill," an archaeological complex ca. 1300–1200 B.P. around modern-day Wellfleet Harbor.



Fig. 1.7. The core areas of the local Wampanoag homelands in the Buzzards Bay drainage, about 1,000 B.P. The core areas are represented by darker-shaded areas within the circles. The outlying spaces beyond each core would have contained more small settlements and traditional resource areas such as the Cedar Dell Pond site on what is now the campus of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, which was likely used by Wampanoag people from the homelands centered on South Dartmouth. Base map courtesy USGS Massachusetts-Rhode Island Water Science Center.

ossuary pits, cremated and bundled remains from different communities and clans would be comingled. So over the centuries the ancestors' spirits also helped sustain the connectedness of Wampanoag Country.³¹

Similar processes and histories likely occurred within the drainage of Buzzards Bay where Wampanoag homelands once stretched from greater Plymouth Bay (see fig. 1.6) westward to beyond the Westport River (fig. 1.7). Certainly by 5,000 B.P. there is archaeological evidence of a settling-in process and the formation of taskscape adjacent to interior wetland systems of freshwater swamps, shallow lakes, and kettle holes, or along tidal estuaries in Dartmouth, Fairhaven, New Bedford, and Acushnet. Around Annasnappet Pond in North Carver, Plymouth County, just beyond the headwaters of the Weweantic River, this process was underway even earlier, as ceremonial sites of cremation were being seasonally used there by 7,000 B.P.³²

As happened on the Cape and Islands, the slowing of sea level rise about three thousand years ago led to the development of a stable tidal and

31. Francis P. McManamon and James W. Bradley, "The Indian Neck Ossuary," *Scientific American* 258, 5 (1988): 98-104; Ramona L. Peters, "Consulting with the Bone Keepers: NAGPRA Consultations and Archaeological Monitoring in the Wampanoag Territory," in Jordan R. Kerber, ed., *Cross-Cultural Collaboration: Native Peoples and Archaeology in the Northeastern United States* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 32-43.

32. See data in William J. Chadwick and Joel I. Klein, "Stage IB Archaeological Survey, New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site, New Bedford, Massachusetts" (Report, John Milner Associates for Foster Wheeler Environmental Corp., Boston, and US Army Corps of Engineers, Concord, MA, 2003), Holly Herbster and Suzanne G. Cherau, "Archaeological Site Examinations: Spinning Wheel (19-BR-382), Spikey Pine (19-BR-384), and Sleeping Toad (19-BR-383) Sites; and Additional Intensive (Locational) Survey HS-5, HS-6, HS-7, and Lot 11, Acushnet Golf Course Project, Acushnet, Massachusetts" (Report 275, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1997), and Mary Lynne Rainey, "Final Report: Phase I Intensive Archaeological Survey for the Algonquin Gas Transmission Company. Proposed 2.1 Mile, 16 Inch Pipeline Loop in Dartmouth and New Bedford, Massachusetts. And Phase II Site Examination for the Apponagansett Swamp 1 Prehistoric Site (19-BR-343)" (Report 400.5, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1991). On North Carver see Dianna Lee Doucette, "Unraveling Middle Archaic Expressions: A Multidisciplinary Approach towards Feature and Material Culture Recognition in Southeastern New England" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2003).

estuary zone along the shorelines. In turn this resulted in more permanent settlement areas and intensively reused resource localities within the core areas of Wampanoag homelands centered around Sconticut Neck (Fairhaven), the peninsula from Clark's Cove to Apponagansett Bay (South Dartmouth), the lower reaches of Slocum's River from Potomska Point — Slocums Neck and Georges Pond to Goose Island — and the lands around both branches of the Westport River north of Horseneck Beach (Westport).³³ About one thousand years ago these ancestral homelands looked very much like the ones depicted by Samuel de Champlain on the Cape, with a settlement pattern of dispersed hamlets and midden sites joined by an extensive network of paths. Together these coastal-based homelands comprised one regional part of the much larger Wampanoag social world.

Bartholomew Gosnold and Bartholomew Gilbert entered this region in mid-May 1602, camping on Cuttyhunk Island for about a month almost two decades before the Pilgrims (fig. 1.8). They drew no maps but did observe the openness of the forested landscapes, with “high timbered oaks and cedars, straight and tall,” the fertility of the soils, and the great stores of “ground nuts” and shellfish. These landscapes were so productive, John Brereton later wrote, that “in comparison whereof, the most fertile part of all England is but barren.”³⁴ During their stay, members of the Gosnold party frequently encountered Wampanoag peoples who came by canoe loads from the mainland. Once protocols had been established between each group's leaders, trading ensued in which native furs and skins (beavers, otters, martens, fox, deer, and seals) were exchanged for knives and other goods (Brereton called them “trifles”). Even after most of the Wampanoag departed, six or seven Indians remained to help cut, carry, and load sassafras onto the bark *Concord*.

Gosnold and Gilbert sailed on 18 June 1602, their ship filled with commodities they had received from the Wampanoag or harvested from their homelands. Arguably this almost month-long encounter jump-started a history of interdependency which would, more than two centuries later, be intensified as whaling began to grow into a global industry.

33. Brian L. Howes and Dale D. Goehring, *Ecology of Buzzards Bay: An Estuarine Profile*, Biological Report 31 (Washington, DC: National Biological Service, US Department of the Interior, 1996), 22–24. See overview by Neill DePaoli and Maxine Farkas, “Patterns of Settlement and Land Use,” in Neill DePaoli et al., *Historic and Archaeological Resources of Southeast Massachusetts: A Framework for Preservation Decisions* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1982), 33–127, and data in Timothy L. Binzen, F. Timothy Barker, and Peggy Kelly, “Archaeological Reconnaissance and Intensive (Locational) Survey for the Little Bay Multi-Use Trail on Sconticut Neck, Fairhaven, Massachusetts” (Report, Archaeological Services, University of Massachusetts Amherst for MassHighway, Boston, 2003); Holly Herbster and Deborah C. Cox, “Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey, Town of Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts” (Report 1328, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 2002); Holly Herbster and Kristen Heit, “Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey, Town of Westport, Westport, Massachusetts” (Report 1494, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 2004); and William J. Sheppard, Alan Lee Harkin, and Patricia K. Sheppard, *People of the Coast: Archaeology and Education. Report of Multi-Year Reconnaissance and Intensive Archaeological Study* (Dartmouth, MA: Katharine Nordell Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies, 2002).

34. George Parker Winship, “Bartholomew Gosnold, 1602, Buzzards Bay,” in George Parker Winship, ed., *Sailors' Narratives of Voyages along the New England Coast, 1524–1624* (New York: Burt Franklin Reprint, 1968), 39–41. On the ecological diversity and productivity of the Buzzards Bay ecosystem, see Howes and Goehring, *Ecology of Buzzards Bay*.



Fig. 1.8. *Gosnold at the Smoking Rocks* (1842), oil on canvas by William Allen Wall. The clusters of figures in the foreground is reminiscent of the treatment in Wall's *Birth of the Whaling Industry* (1853; fig. 4.15). Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum (1903.1).

Maushop's Gifts: Ancestral Histories of Whales and Whaling

In early December 1620, a Pilgrim party from the *Mayflower* spied Wampanoags butchering a long-finned pilot whale (they called it a grampus) that had been stranded on the winter ice. Walking onshore later, they discovered several more and named the place Grampus Bay near what is now Wellfleet. These were not the only whales the Pilgrims saw. About a month earlier, while sailing Cape Cod Bay, they encountered “whales playing hard by us,” so many that they rued their lack of “instruments and means to take them.”³⁵

From this and other seventeenth-century accounts, it is clear that whales were an integral part of the marine ecologies of the Wampanoag world. For thousands of years, five species of plankton-eating, baleen whales (right whale, common finback, sei, minke, and humpback) plied the waters of the Gulf of Maine, each with its own seasonal migration routes and feeding grounds. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries the right whale was present in considerable numbers in southeastern New England during the later winter and spring, when warmer sea temperatures stratified the water masses and concentrated zooplankton for feeding. In comparison, the long-finned pilot whale or blackfish—likely the species the Pilgrims called grampus—was more common in the late summer and early winter, when mass strandings took place on the Cape.³⁶

35. Heath, ed., *Mourt's Relation*, 16, 32–33.

As Wampanoag people settled into their homelands, their understandings of whale species grew through careful observation; in turn they maintained and enriched an archive of cetaceous wisdom generation after generation. This included knowledge of whale habits and foodways, and of where and when whales might be seen alive or found dead. The Wampanoag, especially on the Cape and islands, remembered and reused named locations (traditional places) where drift whales (those stranded or washed ashore after death) were commonly found. After contact, Indian access to such places and to drift whales—the gifts of Maushop—was carefully maintained, for more than a century, by deeds and regulations on Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard, and the Cape. One January 1663 deed from the Vineyard stated, “Be it known unto all men by these presents that: I Touwanquatuk, sachem of half of Martha’s Vineyard, formerly freely gave land to my son Sakkagteanmou . . . I also give to Sakkagteanmou half the whale and half the whalebone of all of anything that is driven ashore on this half of Martha’s Vineyard.”³⁷

This tradition of whale watching and using clearly extends back into the time of a pre-European Wampanoag world. Blackfish remains (lobe-finned pilot whales) have been identified at nine archaeological sites, dating between 1,000 and 600 B.P., on Nantucket and the Cape and at Gay Head. Other sites have produced remains of humpback whale, adzes or spades made of whalebone, and ground-stone whale effigies, pendants, and bannerstones.³⁸ Another archaeological site in Massachusetts, beyond Wampanoag Country, is even more suggestive of the content of indigenous whaling archives and traditions. The Caddy Park site, located on a small drumlin overlooking the estuary of Quincy Bay south of Boston, was discovered in the spring of 1999. Salvage excavations recovered an assemblage of finely-flaked stone blades, a whaletail pendant and effigy gouge, ground stone fishing weights, and quartz tools from several caches, all carefully deposited in a dug pit sprinkled with red ochre sometime between six thousand and two thousand years ago (figs. 1.9 & 1.10).³⁹ Likely the materials were placed at a locale where drifted whales were periodically found and butchered, a taskscape where Maushop’s gifts were received and where, in exchange, offerings were made in remembrance of his many kindnesses.

36. Glover M. Allen, “The Whalebone Whales of New England,” *Memoirs of the Boston Society of Natural History* 8, 2 (1916) (Boston: Boston Society of Natural History, 1916); David D. Platt, Richard Podolsky, Harry Thurston, and Janice Harvey, “The Top of the Food Chain. Marine Mammals and Birds of the Gulf of Maine,” in Philip W. Conkling, ed., *From Cape Cod to the Bay of Fundy: An Environmental Atlas of the Gulf of Maine* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 97–117; James W. Bradley, Arthur E. Speiss, and Greg Early, “Mass Strandings of the Long-Finned Pilot Whale on Cape Cod: Implications for Native American Subsistence and Settlement,” *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 59, 1 (1998): 4–13.

37. Elizabeth A. Little and J. Clinton Andrews, “Drift Whales at Nantucket: The Kindness of Moshup,” *Man in the Northeast* 23 (1982): 17–38. The 1663 deed is quoted in Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts, Part 1* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1988), 242–45.

38. Bradley et al., “Mass Strandings,” 8; Little and Andrews, “Drift Whales,” 25–26; 1982: Charles C. Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians* (Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, 1935), 50, 61.

39. Thomas Mahlstedt and Margo Muhl Davis, “Caddy Park, Wollaston Beach, Quincy, Massachusetts: Burial? Cenotaph? Cache? Or Offering?” *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 63, 1–2 (2002): 11–23.

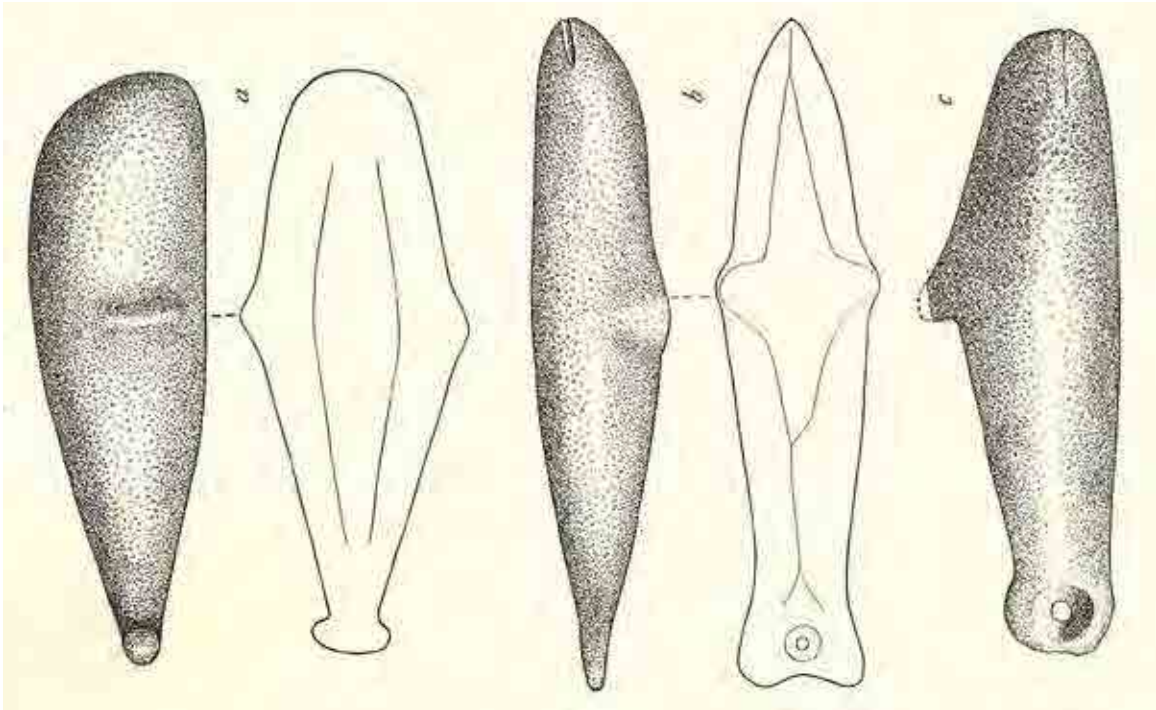


Fig. 1.9. New England whale effigies, in Charles C. Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians* (1935).

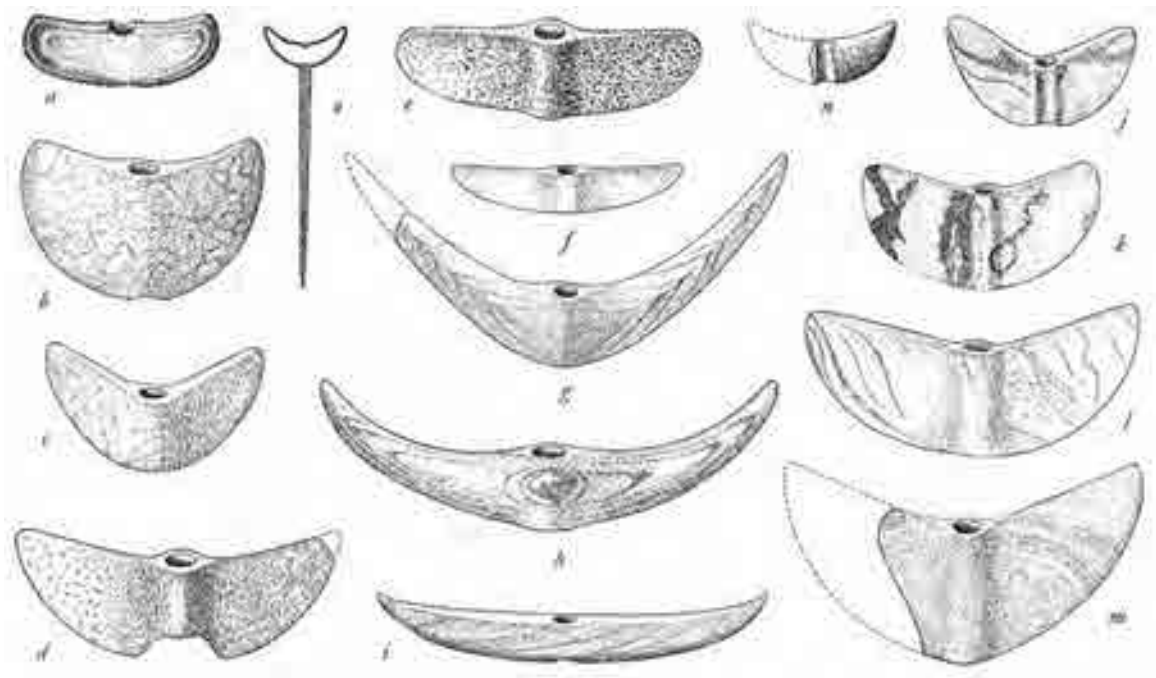


Fig. 1.10. New England whaletail pendants and bannerstones, used as weights on spear throwers, in Charles C. Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians* (1935).

Eighteenth-Century Wampanoag Whalers

It's early March 1758 and Richard Cook of Eastham, Massachusetts, is giving a deposition before John Freeman, a local justice of the peace. He remembers an incident from about eighteen months earlier, when he was on board Sylvanus Snow's vessel carrying wood across Cape Cod Bay to Billingsgate Beach at the mouth of what is now Wellfleet Harbor (figs. 1.11 & 1.12). Samuel Crook, an Indian, came alongside and asked Snow if he could build a whaling house at Billingsgate. According to Cook, Snow told the Indian he had nothing against him doing so but that he "was sorry to see so many white faces with you." Cook stated further that he "often heard said Snow say he did not pretend [would not venture] to hinder the Indians from going a whaling on the beach."

At issue were complaints of a year earlier from "Indians native" that Snow had, in fact, hindered their access to the beach, thus making it difficult for them to whale and fish and to cut "thatch" for their whaling houses. On first reading, more than fifteen petitions, depositions, letters, memorials, and reports from the case seemingly tell a story, common in the later seventeenth century, of the loss of traditional Wampanoag rights.⁴⁰ But a closer reading suggests this controversy is more meaningful and can serve as an entry point for exploring how the Wampanoag world of whaling was changing in the eighteenth century.

Samuel Crook, the Indian, was well known to his neighbors as a skilled boatsteerer who captained a crew of five non-Native colonists. Crook was part of the local Wampanoag community known as the Punonkanits or Potanumaquit (a subgroup of the Nausets) whose ancestral homeland (Pokonakanet), around Wellfleet Harbor's rich estuaries and islands, had existed for thousands of years.⁴¹ Some seventy-five years before the Billingsgate controversy, this homeland and adjacent ones were home to more than five hundred Wampanoag who lived in dispersed settlements covering an area of some 130 square kilometers.⁴² Crook's whaleboat was owned and managed by Lemuel Berry who was, it turns out, the actual focus of Snow's ire. He rightly suspected Berry and other "designing English people" of stirring up the Wampanoag in order to gain access to Billingsgate so they could use it as a site for on-shore whale watching and hunting. But Snow owned the lands at issue, and was determined to protect the economic potential of that near-shore whaling place, even insisting in March 1758 that whaling from Billingsgate was not really that productive, as "a single whale has not been caught there the last 12 months." His neighbors were realists, however, pointing out that Snow should not "take tribute of

40. James P. Rhonda, "Red and White at the Bench: Indians and the Law in Plymouth Colony." *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 110, 3 (1974): 200–215. Various documents from the Billingsgate controversy, 1757–1759, are preserved in vol. 33, Massachusetts Archives. The quoted passages here are from documents 31b (Cook's deposition) and 10 (Indian petition dated 17 March 1757).

41. Richard D. Holmes, Carolyn D. Hertz, and Mitchell T. Mulhollan, *Historic Cultural Land Use Study of Lower Cape Cod* (Lowell and Amherst, MA: Archaeology Branch of the Cultural Resources Center, Northeast Region, National Park Service, and Archaeological Services of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1998), 48–50; McManamon and Bradley, "Indian Neck Ossuary."

42. Harvard graduate Samuel Treat ministered to the Punonkanits and described their settlements and lives in a 1693 letter to Increase Mather; see John Langdon Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts*, vol. 3., 1659–1677 (Cambridge: Charles William Sever, 1881), 304–7. The landscape scale of Pokonakanet was on the order of 10⁴.

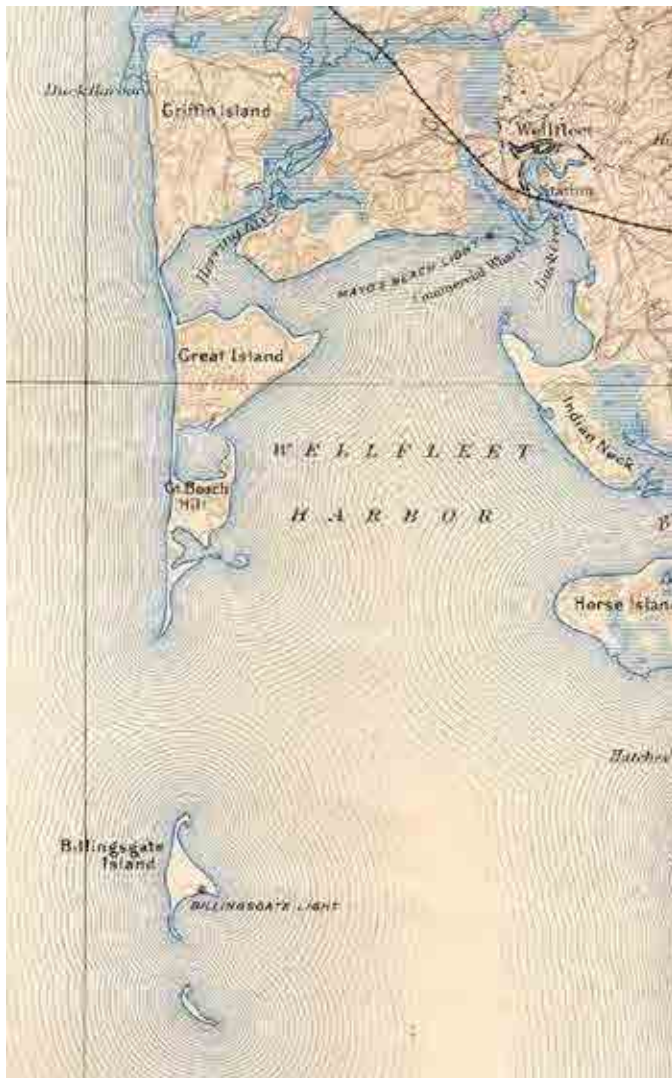


Fig. 1.11. In the eighteenth century, Billingsgate Island was still connected by sand bars to the north and was known as the beach or point at Billingsgate. Detail of USGS topographic map of Wellfleet Harbor (1893).

said Indians” as they composed at least half of the working boat crews.⁴³

These matters were brought to a close in early January 1759 when a committee reported its findings: the lands in question had, in fact, been conveyed to Eastham proprietors by “ancient sachems” and then eventually to Sylvanus Snow. But the boundaries of Snow’s holdings, they wrote, could not be clearly “ascertained as the rivers and brooks kept altering them,” not to mention the effects of tides and storm surges. Significantly it also reported that Snow had agreed “that the petitioners and others of the Neighboring Indians and their heirs, shall forever hereafter have a good right to whale on Billingsgate Point and also to cut thatch for their whale houses.”⁴⁴ The committee said nothing about those other “designing Englishmen,” although the report’s language makes clear that only the Indians had granted rights of access. By doing so, long-standing, indigenous traditions of resource use (Maushop’s gifts) were protected, in part because Wampanoag whalers were playing critical roles in the fledgling whaling industry.

Along-Shore Whaling in Wampanoag Country

Whereas the public charges of the colony are increased and whereas by God’s providence many whales and other fishes are cast on shore . . . This court now

43. See vol. 33, Massachusetts Archives, documents 31, 32b, and 33.

44. See committee report in vol. 33, Massachusetts Archives, document 33c.

ordereth that of every whale either cast on shore or bought of any Indian or Indians or taken on drift at Sea . . . there be one barrel of merchantable Oyle paid to the public treasury.

—Laws of Colony of New Plymouth, June 1652⁴⁵

Within a generation of the Pilgrims' landing in 1620, they and other colonists had realized two things: whales were a valued commodity and Indians had long observed them, knew where drifted whales might be beached and near-shore whales seen. By the mid-seventeenth century, those realizations were being expressed in the language of colonial laws and in the industry of along-shore whaling, an economic venture and seasonal way of life in which some of the roots and inequities of later deepwater whaling practices may be found.⁴⁶

Along-shore whaling was undertaken in twenty-foot long, light, cedar-boarded boats (or perhaps ocean-going dugout canoes) by crews of six, primarily from November to March when right whale cows and calves frequented the waters of southeastern New England. Their bases of operation were small, often impermanent sites



Fig. 1.12. Blackfish Creek in Wellfleet Harbor was named for the lobe-finned pilot whales that often drifted ashore in this locality, known earlier to the Pilgrims as Grampus Bay. Detail of USGS topographic map of Wellfleet Harbor (1893).

45. David Pulsifer, ed., *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England. Laws, 1623-1682* (Boston: William White, 1861), 61.

46. Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 41-62.

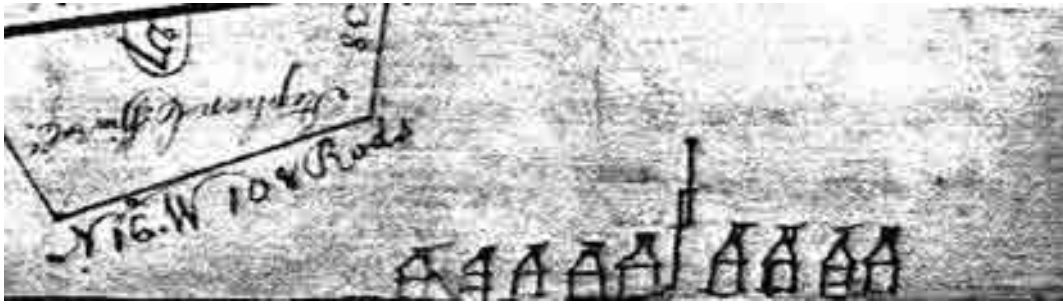


Fig. 1.13. A 1775 sketch of an along-shore whaling station at Siasconset. The look-out mast stands among whale houses of board and timber. Original in *Nantucket Proprietors' Records* 1: 135. Courtesy Nantucket Historical Association.

with single-story houses and/or wigwams and a wooden mast with rungs so one of the crew could climb higher to “observe the spouting of the whale” (fig. 1.13).⁴⁷ To date, sites of historic, along-shore whaling have been identified along the inner shore of Cape Cod from Barnstable to Truro and on the south shore of Nantucket where there were four stations before 1700.⁴⁸ Likely similar eighteenth-century sites existed on Chappaquiddick Island, Holmes Hole (Vineyard Haven), and at Gay Head on Martha’s Vineyard (figs. 1.14 & 1.15). Each along-shore whaling station was located near or within a Wampanoag homeland, so it is no surprise that Indians played key roles as boatsteerers and harpooners, as oarsmen, and even as laborers who helped process the kills:

The Indians, ever manifesting a disposition for fishing of every kind, readily joined . . . in this new pursuit [an existing tradition]. . . . By their assistance, the whites were enabled to fit out and man a far greater number of boats than they could have done themselves. Nearly every boat was manned in part, many almost entirely, by natives . . . they soon became experienced whalers, and capable of conducting any part of the business.⁴⁹

Because much of the along-shore whaling took place in the colder months when hunting and inland fishing were restricted, it was also work that integrated well with Wampanoag traditions and cultural cycles and kept Native men close to their local communities. And much like the traditional sharing of the resources provided by drift whales (and Maushop), some of the products of along-shore whaling—the fins and flukes, portions of the bone and meat—must have been carried back to Wampanoag communities to be shared there and across each homeland. Roger Williams described just such a Narragansett Indian tradition in his 1643 *A Key into the Language of America*: “The Natives cut them [whales] out in several parcels, and give and send

47. A 1782 description from Nantucket quoted in Elizabeth A. Little, *The Indian Contribution to Along-Shore Whaling at Nantucket*, Nantucket Algonquian Studies No. 8 (Nantucket, MA: Nantucket Historical Association, 1981), 19.

48. Locations are from John Braginton-Smith and Duncan Oliver, *Cape Cod Shore Whaling: America’s First Whalers* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2008); on Nantucket see Little, *Indian Contribution*.

49. Nantucket remembrance from Obed Macy, *The History of Nantucket* (Boston: Hilliard and Gray, 1835), quoted in Little, *Indian Contribution*, 29. Author’s bracketed addition. Clearly Macy saw Wampanoag offshore whaling as a “new pursuit.” I view it as a long-standing, ancestral tradition predating the seventeenth century

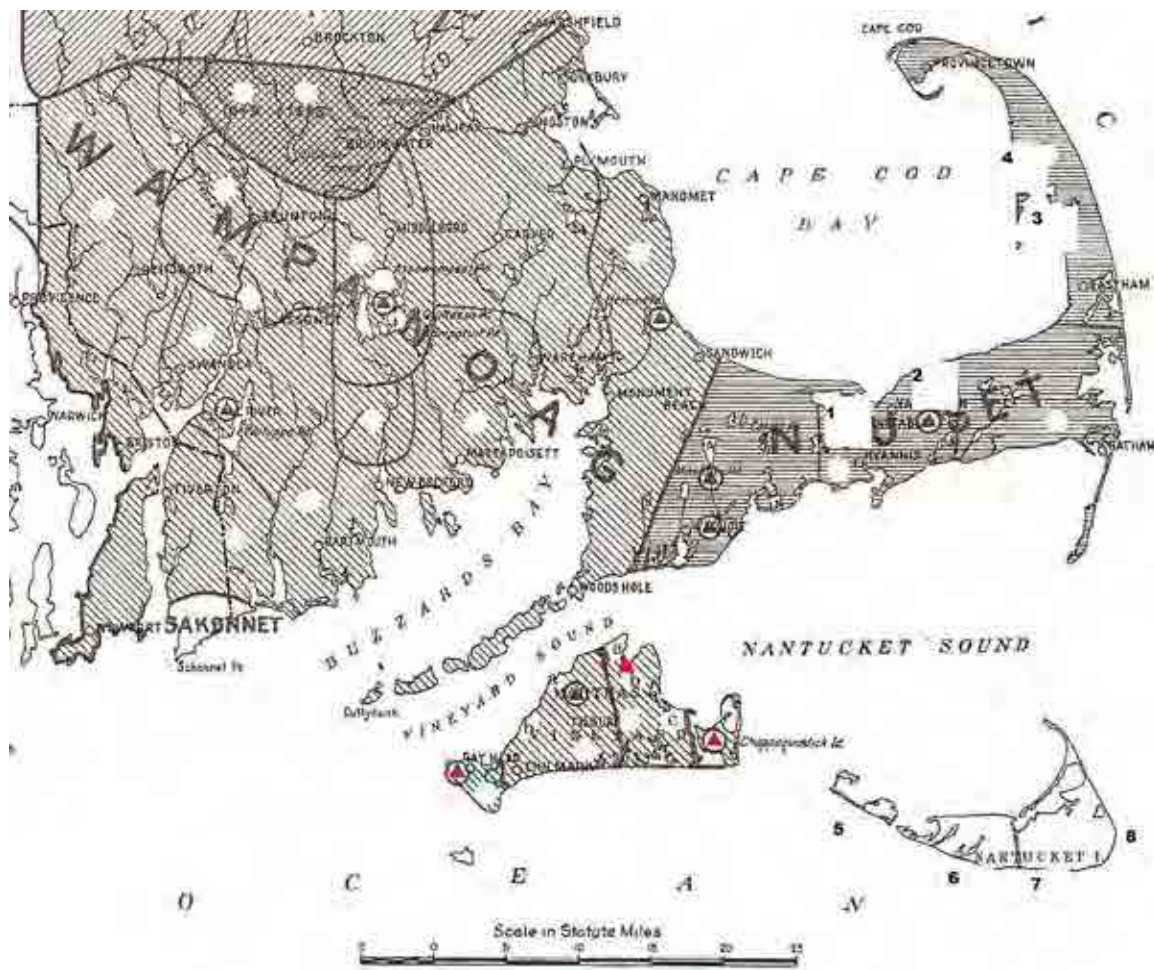


Fig. 1.14. Known along-shore whaling sites in Wampanoag country. Cape sites included Sandy Neck (numbered 1), Black Earth (2), Billingsgate (3), and Ryder's Cliff-Hogback (4). On Nantucket were Smith Point (5), Hummock Pond (6), Weweder (7), and Siasconset (8).

farre and neere for an acceptable present, or dish.”⁵⁰

Yet along-shore whaling was truly different, organized and capitalized predominantly by colonists who paid their crews, Native and otherwise, through a system of shares (portions of the profits after expenses), much like the lays earned by whalers later in the nineteenth century. Usually, this meant the owner received a quarter- to half-share while the captain, someone like Samuel Crook, and the crew divided what remained.⁵¹ It was a system that required account keeping and account books—and one that depended on the extending of credit. The world of ledgers and

50. Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (1643), reprint of 1936 ed. (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1997), 113.

51. Little, *Indian Contribution*, 32; Daniel Vickers, “The First Whalers of Nantucket,” in Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell, eds., *American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers from European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500–1850* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 267.

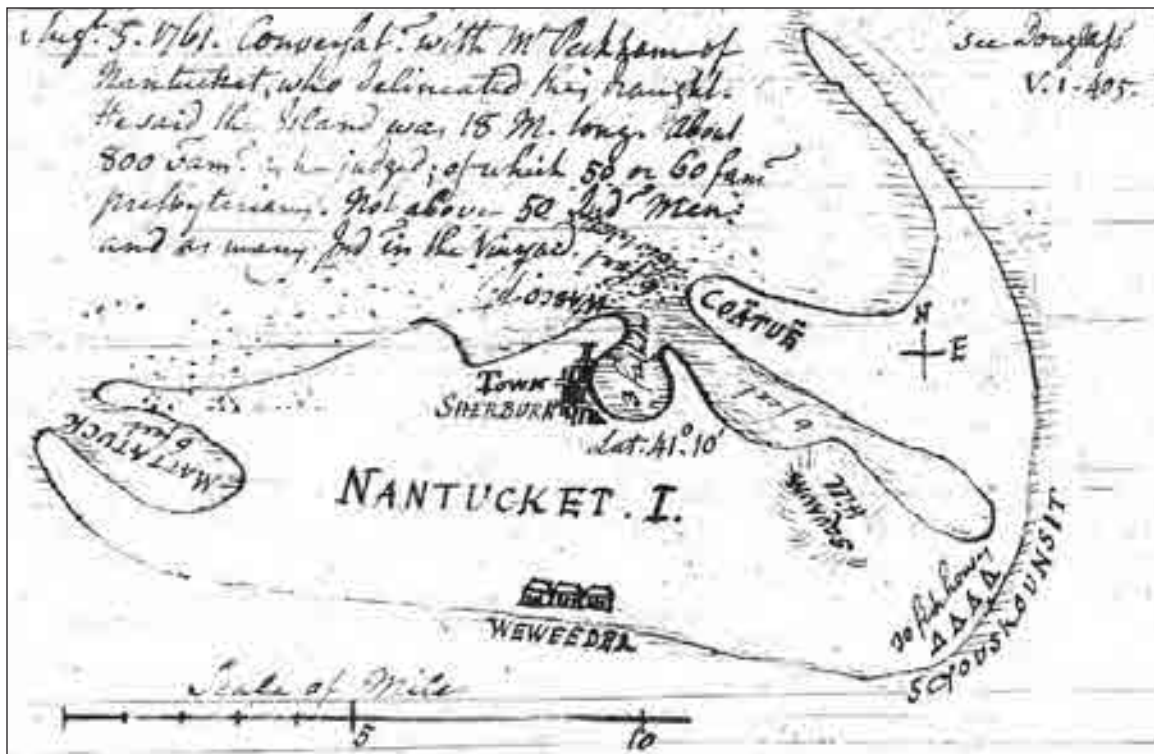


Fig. 1.15. Ezra Stiles's 1761 map of Nantucket shows two whale-house settlements, at Weeweeder and Siaconset. From Ezra Stiles Papers microfilm (1978).

credit also reached into the everyday lives of Wampanoag communities, especially those whose land base and traditional resource locations were being lost as colonial populations grew. For many Wampanoag men in the earlier eighteenth century, shoreside whaling seemed to be a pathway to economic survival.⁵²

How essential Natives had become to whaling in Massachusetts is plain in a 1725 law “for the regulation of Civilized Indians” that, in addition to banning the binding out of certain Indians and setting a limit of “Indian indebtedness,” stipulated that because “it is, of necessity, as well for the English as the Indians of Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard and many towns in the counties of Barnstable and Plymouth, that the Indians be employed in the whaling and other fishing voyages” the English were permitted to “agree or indent with any of the Indians for the purpose, for the year of two years, but no longer, at any one time.”⁵³ Yet many fared poorly, falling into cycles

52. Serving in the military was another way to make a living, one that sometimes conflicted with whaling. In 1724, for example, Lieutenant-Governor Dummer (Massachusetts) wrote, “Upon Sight hereof you must dismiss Cpt. Bourne Company of Indians [from Barnstable County, who were fighting Abenaki in Maine] and send them hither in one of the Sloops, That so they may lose no Time for Following the Whale Fishery, which is agreeable to my Promise made to them at enlisting.” Quoted in Allen, “Whalebone Whales,” 158; see also Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1878; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 31.

53. From *Massachusetts Acts and Resolves* (1874), 2: 363–65. Also see Yasuhide Kawashima, *Puritan Justice and the Indian: White Man’s Law in Massachusetts, 1630–1763* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), 219–20.

of dependency and debt, court hearings, and judgments that often led to long periods of indentured servitude. Martha's Vineyard Indian Jonas Cooper, for example, had fallen into debt to Nantucket whaleboat owner John Clark, who forced Cooper to "seal, bind and oblige himself to go a whaling for him both winter for the space of three years."⁵⁴ The constant employment of Nantucket Indians in the industry led to their petition in 1747:

How can we be any ways like Christians when we should be praying to God on the Sabbath day morning [but] we must be rowing after whal or killing whal or cutting up whal on Sabbath day when we should be at rest on that day and do no worldly labour . . . and when on land then we have no time to go to the meeting and then we are call to go away again to sea whaling. How can we serve God or to worship him on the Sabbath days or at any time when our masters lead us to darkness and not in light⁵⁵

By 1730, the available evidence suggests few Wampanoag whalers on the Cape and Islands were working on their own account.⁵⁶ Yet their labor and skills were still crucial as along-shore whaling transitioned to a more labor-intensive industry of whale hunting in deeper waters.

Early Wampanoag Offshore Whaling

By the late 1720s, after more than fifty years of success, along-shore whaling was in decline in southern New England. Right whales were seen much less frequently in Cape Cod Bay during the winter months, due in part to overhunting and changing whale habits. Meanwhile some Cape Cod colonists "found out the way of going to Sea Upon that Business," it was reported in Boston in March 1727, "and having had much Success in it, they are now fitting out several Vessels to sail with all Expedition upon that dangerous Design this Spring, more (its tho't) than have ever been sent out from among them."⁵⁷ Between 1730 and 1770 (inclusive), at least eleven whaling voyages set off from ports on Cape Cod including Barnstable (2), Eastham (1), Falmouth (6), Sandwich (1), and Wellfleet (1).⁵⁸ In that period, along-shore and small-scale, offshore whaling likely coexisted, together with the continued use of drifted whales. This mix would have enabled colonial and Wampanoag peoples there to continue working cooperatively on a seasonal basis during the fall and winter months when they could drive pilot whales ashore or hunt right whales from their cedar boats or small schooners and sloops.⁵⁹

54. Vickers, "First Whalers of Nantucket," 276.

55. Quoted in Vickers, "First Whalers of Nantucket," 278.

56. David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 185-207; Vickers, "First Whalers of Nantucket," 275-79.

57. On decline in right whale populations see analyses in Randall R. Reeves and Edward Mitchell, "Shore Whaling for Right Whales in the Northeastern United States" (Report, Arctic Biological Station, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec, for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, US Department of Commerce, 1987), 6-11, 39-49, 96; Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 31.

58. Data extracted from Judith N. Lund et al., "American Offshore Whaling Voyages, a Database," National Maritime Digital Library, 2009. <https://nmdl.org/aoww/aowv>.

By 1750, this way of life was disappearing on the Outer Cape, as evidenced by a decline in the number of whaling-related technologies recorded in probate inventories.⁶⁰

These changes in Cape whaling took place as offshore whaling in New England grew from a geographically dispersed and diverse enterprise into a more centralized, highly competitive Atlantic-based industry of larger ships and longer voyages, dominated by vessels, crews, and capitalists from Nantucket and Dartmouth on Buzzards Bay. For example, Nantucket whaling voyages numbered 348 between 1730 and 1770, more than 15 times the number that left from Cape and Vineyard ports.⁶¹ Before and after the American Revolution, whaling vessels from Nantucket alone accounted for between one-third and one-half of the totals for Massachusetts (table 1.2 & fig. 1.16).

The remarkable growth of Nantucket as an eighteenth-century whaling center required labor resources that could not be met by the island’s population which,

Table 1.2. Comparative Whaling Statistics for Massachusetts, 1771–1789

	Northern Fishery		Southern Fishery		Both Fisheries	
Port	1771–75	1787–89	1771–1775	1787–89	1771–75	1787–89
	N Vessels	N Vessels	N Vessels	N Vessels	N Seamen	N Seaman
Nantucket	65	18	85	18	2,025	487
Dartmouth	60	45	20	5	1,040	650
Cape	26	12	10	4	498	212
Boston	15	6	5	0	260	78
Vineyard	12	2	0	1	156	39
Swansea	4	0	0	0	52	0
Lynn	1	0	1	0	28	0
Cape Ann	0	0	0	2	0	28
Plymouth	0	1	0	0	0	13
Other	0	7	0	1	0	101
Totals:	183	91	121	31	4,059	1,608

Source: Thomas Jefferson, *Report of the Secretary of State, on the Subject of the Cod and Whale Fisheries, February 1, 1791 (1792)*.

59. Henry C. Kittredge, *Cape Cod: Its People and Their History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1930), 171–73. This model of cooperative survival is based upon the intriguing research of Anne E. Yentsch, “Farming, Fishing, Whaling, and Trading: Land and Sea as Resource on Eighteenth-Century Cape Cod,” in *Documentary Archaeology in the New World* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 138–60, which suggests that reciprocal and cooperative economies lasted in some places on the Cape into the later eighteenth century. If true, this would mean that Wampanoag whalers on the Outer Cape had different experiences from those of their kin on Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket, and such places as Mashpee.

60. Yentsch, “Farming, Fishing, Whaling,” 152.

61. Data extracted from Lund et al., “American Offshore Whaling Voyages.”

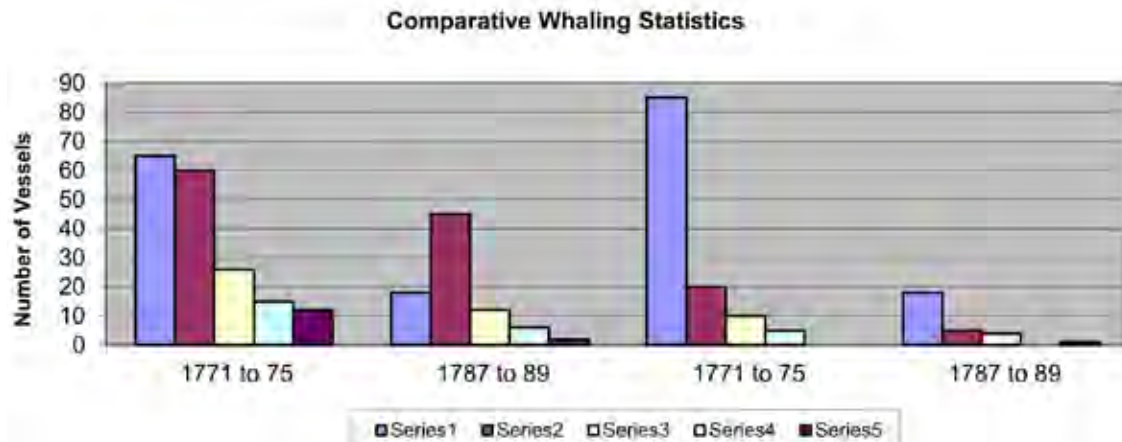


Fig. 1.16. Comparative statistics on numbers of whaling vessels by port, 1771–76 and 1787–89. Each port (or series) is represented by a different color bar: Nantucket is series 1, Dartmouth is 2, Cape ports are 3, Boston is 4, and Vineyard ports are 5. The first two groups of bars represent changes in the northern whale fishery; the second two are for the southern whale fishery (see table 1.1). Data were extracted from Thomas Jefferson, *Report of the Secretary of State, on the Subject of the Cod and Whale Fisheries, February 1, 1791* (1792).

in 1764–65, numbered 3,513 including 3,320 whites (904 males older than sixteen), 44 negroes, and 149 Indians. Island-based whaling companies, including the firm of Quaker William Rotch Sr., solved their needs by recruiting extensively from southeastern New England communities in eastern Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, the Cape, Martha’s Vineyard, and Block Island.⁶² Many of the recruits were Yankees, but by the 1770s almost 25 percent were Indians, blacks, and Portuguese mariners. Vickers has estimated that Indian whalers then comprised some 10 percent of the total work force in Nantucket whaling, perhaps some two hundred men (see table 1.1). Some were Nantucket-born; others were Wampanoags from communities on the Cape, Martha’s Vineyard, and Bristol County. In ten of those communities, the 1764–65 census counted between thirteen and 188 Indians, an average of seventy individuals per place, including fifteen to twenty adult men.⁶³

Other Indians also worked as whalers in the Nantucket industry, including seven Pequot and Narragansett who appear in a 1770 entry in William Rotch Sr.’s accounting ledger. The men were charged with various purchases including blankets, great coats, shirts and capes, trousers, shoes, knives, and cash. The entries refer to them as the “hands” of Oliver Smith of Stonington, to whom evidently they were indebted back home. Once their shares from a whaling voyage had been totaled, Rotch would have subtracted the amounts of their purchases; the remaining monies would have been paid or credited to Oliver Smith, as he “owned” their labor.⁶⁴ Rotch’s

62. Population figures from J. H. Benton Jr., *Early Census Making in Massachusetts, 1643–1765, with a Reproduction of the Lost Census of 1765* (Boston: Charles E. Godspeed, 1905); see Daniel Vickers, “Nantucket Whalers in the Deep-Sea Fishery: The Changing Anatomy of an Early American Labor Force,” *Journal of American History* 72, 2 (1985): 288.

63. The Indian communities included Edgartown (86 Natives), Chilmark (188), and Tisbury (39) on Martha’s Vineyard; Barnstable (13), Falmouth (62), Harwich (91), Sandwich (73), and Yarmouth (31) on the Cape; and Dartmouth (75) and Rochester (37) on Buzzards Bay. See Benton, *Early Census Making*.

journals also document payments to Smith “for Ammon Cinnamon, Derrick Thomas, and Benjamin Charles [a Pequot]” on sloop *Plotfish* in November 1771; to “Daniel Butler for In: Pocknut” (probably from Mashpee) who served on sloop *Friendship* in 1773; to George Macy for two Indians in the crew of sloop *Delaware* in 1773, to Samuel Wing “for his Indian Boy’ aboard brig *Temple* in 1774, and to Samuel Nye for “Moses Indian” on schooner *Warwick* in 1775.⁶⁵ In each case the entries represent an indentured relationship, formal or informal, so it is clear that some Nantucket-based Indian whalers in the later eighteenth century did not work as free laborers.⁶⁶ Further, their indebtedness only increased while waiting to ship out of Nantucket and at sea. Certainly among them were Wampanoag men from several communities on Martha’s Vineyard such as those de Crèvecoeur observed in the 1770s. “They often go, like the [other] young men of the Vineyard to Nantucket, and hire themselves for whalemens or fishermen; and indeed their skill and dexterity in all sea affairs is nothing inferior to that of the whites,” he noted, adding that “brigs of about 150 tons burthen, particularly when they are intended for distant latitudes; they always man them with thirteen hands. . . . Five of the thirteen are always Indians.”⁶⁷

By the mid-eighteenth century, colonial land encroachment on the Vineyard had restricted Wampanoag seasonal movements and subsistence activities. Colonial livestock had altered the landscape ecology of the island and had reduced white-tailed deer populations and disrupted traditional farming practices. In response, Wampanoag families were sometimes forced to open credit lines with storekeepers, beginning the familiar cycle of indebtedness, legal proceedings, and indentures. Between 1730 and 1800, Indian families on Martha’s Vineyard commonly purchased molasses, mutton, beef, and corn on account, indicating just how much their ways of life were being altered and why whaling was, for some, a much-needed pathway for survival.⁶⁸ David J. Silverman has cited numerous records of Vineyard Indians turning to whaling. In 1749 Gay Head Indian Abel George received three pounds from John Allen “for which he promas his Sun to go a whaling for me next spring.” Hezekiah Joel returned to Chappaquiddick from a whaling voyage in July 1797 and within a month spent his thirty pounds of credit on “liquor, cloth, molasses, a teapot, tobacco, and tools.” When Gay Head Indian Caleb Pond left on a whaling cruise from New Bedford in 1804, the provisions he needed — mittens, a waist coat and pea coat, three pairs of thick trousers, boots and shoes, shirts, tobacco, and a chest lock—put him twenty-five pounds in debt to the vessel’s owners.

The burden of debt was clearly substantial. In 1804 some Christiantown Indians petitioned, “Our men are sent on Long voyages to sea by those who practice in a more

64. Journal B, vol 1, 200, Mss 2, SG 1, ser. B, subser. 1, William Rotch Sr. Papers, NBWM.

65. Journal B, vol 1, 432; vol. 2, 720, 797, 841; vol 3, 957, William Rotch Sr. Papers.

66. This also seems to have been true of other “seamen of color,” as one Nantucketer described them. One sometimes sees references in Rotch’s journals to “[a named person] for his Portuge, or mulatto, or negro,” anonymous mariners locked in cycles of debt.

67. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1783; reprint, Oxford, Eng: Oxford University Press, 1997), 115–19.

68. Kawashima, *Puritan Justice and the Indian*. See also petition from Indian Proprietors of Chapaquidick, 4 May 1773, Massachusetts Archives 33:583; and Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 185–203.

soft manner that of Kidnapping, and when they Return with ever so great success they are still in debt and having nothing to receive.”⁶⁹ English visitor Edward Kendall noted in 1807 of the Aquinnah, “Ship owners come to their cottages, making them offers, and persuading them to accept them, and so rarely is Gay Head visited for any other purpose, that this was supposed, at the light-house to be my errand. This business of inviting the Indians is a sort of crimping, in which liquor, goods and fair words are plied, till the Indian gets into debt, and gives his consent.”⁷⁰

Similar circumstances prevailed in the Mashpee community on Cape Cod. In the mid-eighteenth century it included some 250 to 300 Indians living on their reserve in small, dispersed communities associated with wetlands and ponds or coastal estuaries (fig. 1.17). Despite the ecological richness of this long-used ancestral homeland, the Mashpee were finding it difficult to make a “traditional” living through hunting, fishing, and farming. Nearby colonists were constantly encroaching on their planting fields and long-used fishing sites, especially during the seasonal alewife runs.⁷¹ Gideon Hawley, then their minister and guardian, wrote of them in 1760, “The case is thus, an Indian having got into debt (he hardly knows how) obliges himself to go a whaling till he answers it: and because life is uncertain, his master obliges him in his Covenant or Indenture to include his Boy, who is bound to serve in case he should die or should not take up the Indenture by such a term or should get farther in debt to him.”⁷²

In response to community petitions of protest, Massachusetts created an autonomous Indian district in 1763 to be managed by five overseers, only two of whom were English.⁷³ But by then, Mashpee men were already whaling out of Nantucket, having been recruited, as both free and indentured laborers, by island merchants who worked closely with guardians, outsiders who controlled tribal finances in the 1740s and 1750s, and then again after 1788.⁷⁴ Although no analysis has yet resulted in any reliable numbers, it seems likely that about twenty-five to thirty-five Mashpee men went whaling in the last decades of the eighteenth century.⁷⁵ Some of these, such

69. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 204, 205–6, 207.

70. Kendall quoted in Daniel R. Mandell, *Behind the Frontier: Indians in Eighteenth-Century Eastern Massachusetts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 197–98.

71. Mandell, *Behind the Frontier*, 138–39.

72. Quoted in David J. Silverman, “The Impact of Indentured Servitude on the Society and Culture of Southern New England Indians, 1680–1810,” *New England Quarterly* 74, 4 (2001): 643.

73. Jack Campisi, *The Mashpee Indians: Tribe on Trial* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 84–86.

74. Mark A. Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags of Cape Cod, the Whalefishery, and Seafaring’s Impact on Community Development.” *American Indian Quarterly* 26, 2 (2002): 165–97; Mark A. Nicholas, “‘New Maritime History’ and Southern New England Indians,” in Jack Campisi, ed., *Eighteenth Century Native Communities of Southern New England in the Colonial Context* (Mashantucket, CT: Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, 2005), 212–30; Melissane Parm, “A Freedom to Suit Themselves: Negotiating Mashpee Indian Political Identity on Cape Cod, 1742–1834” (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2003), 200–204. Nicholas’s reconstruction of the Mashpee-Nantucket connection makes use of island account books kept primarily by merchants Sylvanus and Obed Macy; other data are from the Ship’s Papers Collections at the Nantucket Historical Association Research Library. See also the September 1794 indenture between Benjamin Turner, Indian of Sandwich, and Nathan Nye of Nantucket, Manuscript 335–f551, Nantucket Historical Association.

75. My estimate is based upon the total number of Mashpee men in the 1765 census (Benton, *Early Census Making*, 111), of which about half (n=50) were likely sixteen years and older.

as Nathan and Elijah Pocknett, were well-seasoned whalers whose steering and harpooning skills were desired and requested by Nantucketers. While on a whaling voyage on the *Mary Ann* to the South Atlantic in 1809–1810, the crew, including the Pocknetts, harpooned a sperm whale off Cape Verde which promptly disappeared. The captain ordered one of the Mashpee “Pognit” brothers to climb the mast; he did and, using his knowledge of whale behavior, spotted the leviathan to windward, three miles off. Eventually the whale was killed. On that same voyage of the *Mary Ann*, another Mashpee Indian, Michael Waunton, had signed over all his potential earnings for previous debts, which suggests that his skills and earnings may have been less than the Pocknetts. So even in the same year and vessel, different Mashpee

whalers seemed to have had different experiences, a fact indicating that crew lists and associated ships’ accounts need to be studied more closely.⁷⁶

What is more evident is how offshore whaling impacted the Mashpee community by contributing to its economic and social survival while enriching its cultural diversity. Some whalers who returned home with earnings used them to settle debts and improve their homes and livestock holdings; by the 1770s, more Mashpee families lived in “shingled cottages” than traditional wetus (wigwams). Some of the whalers’ earnings may also have found their way into the hands of those less fortunate, a group whose numbers increased in the last decades of the eighteenth century. Others benefited less



Fig. 1.17. Ezra Stiles’s 1762 map of Mashpee, from Ezra Stiles Papers microfilm (1978). At that time the Mashpee district included coastal lands now in the town of Falmouth. The settlement areas were concentrated around Ashumuit Pond, Santuit Pond, and South Cape on the coast.

76. Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags,” 174–77.

directly by converting wigwams into taverns where drink and intimacy were available to transient seamen.⁷⁷

Offshore whaling also impacted the sex ratio at Mashpee as the loss of men at sea (and also in the Revolutionary War and other conflicts) or their desertion in foreign lands resulted in more widows, unmarried young women, and fatherless children, problems that haunted Gideon Hawley. As the number of available Wampanoag women increased at Mashpee, so did opportunities for other men, including those of color, to find love and build relationships, resulting in families of mixed ancestry in which the wives were Indian. In 1800, Hawley counted 403 Mashpee residents. Of that total, he categorized 302 as full-blooded or three-quarter-blooded Indians, thirty-three as Negroes, Hessians (who deserted during the Revolution), and whites, and sixty-eight as “Mixt”/mulatto persons.⁷⁸ Some of the non-Native men of color who married into the Mashpee community likely came to know of it through their contacts with Indian men they met on whaling and trading vessels; Hawley himself identified whalers from England, Mexico, Bombay, and Cape Verde living there. As their numbers increased in the community after the Revolution, Hawley and other outsiders became more and more concerned the Indians’ power base might be eroded by the newcomers.⁷⁹

But if the resulting diversity in outward appearance (skin and hair color, for example) continually troubled contemporary outsiders, who assumed that such intermarriages meant the community would disappear as full-blooded members died out, the newcomers, or “New Mashpee,” were still slowly but surely accepted into the ancestral community. By 1795, the Mashpee referred to them as their “Inhabitants of Color” and carefully distinguished them from other “trespassers” who had no rights to use land or such resources as fish and timber or to participate in community affairs.⁸⁰ In the way that whaling brought newcomers into Mashpee, thereby enriching its cultural and genetic diversity, the experiences of being whalers and global travelers may also have informed the work of Mashpee Indian men as community activists in the 1790s. In this they were encouraged to argue for their liberty and equality—their rights as Indians and Americans—by a Barnstable/Baptist sea captain, whom Hawley identified as Deacon Nye, who often hired Mashpee men for his crews.⁸¹ Although more detailed studies are needed of those who signed petitions, it seems likely that late eighteenth-century Mashpee whalers were never far removed from their community’s debates and conflicts, which set important

77. Melissane Parm, “The Forging of Political Autonomy: The Mashpee Indians, Gideon Hawley and the Balance of Power,” in Campisi, ed., *Eighteenth Century Native Communities*, 191–211; Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags,” 180. Despite what some Mashpee earned from whaling, Gideon Hawley condemned its effects: “The long whaling voyages of my Indians injures their morals, and when they come home there is little else but drinking, whoredom, fighting, etc. etc.” Quoted in Parm, “Forging of Political Autonomy,” 195.

78. See Table 2 in Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags,” 183.

79. Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags,” 182, 185; Melissane Parm Schrems, “We ...Will Rule Ourselves’: The Mashpee-Wampanoag Indians Claim Independence, 1776–1834,” *Cercles* 19 (2009): 37–54.

80. See Schrems, “We ...Will Rule Ourselves,” for a detailed analysis of the standing of the New Mashpee.

81. Schrems, “We ...Will Rule Ourselves’”; Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags,” 187.

precedents for their descendants later in the 1800s.⁸²

Eighteenth-century Wampanoag Whalers around Buzzards Bay

On September 5, 1778, British troops landed on the west side of the Acushnet River and set fire to vessels and buildings in Bedford village, then a growing whaling port. At least thirty-four ships, mostly brigs, schooners, and sloops, were lost, together with ten dwellings and a series of shops, stores, barns, warehouses, and a ropewalk.⁸³

For almost a generation before the attack, whaling vessels had been leaving ports along the western coast of Buzzards Bay, from South Westport to Fairhaven and beyond. Although their total numbers in these years never challenged Nantucket’s supremacy, the region sent out more than two hundred vessels on whaling trips between 1760 and 1800 (table 1.3). Given that number, one would expect some involvement from Wampanoag men who lived in the towns bordering Buzzards Bay in the aftermath of King Philip’s War (1675–76). The Native communities that persisted in Dartmouth and elsewhere lived in small, enclave-like settlements scattered from North Watuppa Pond in Fall River through Dartmouth (a larger town then) to Fairhaven and beyond (fig. 1.18).⁸⁴ A 1698 account lists the known settlements—Assameekg and Nukkehkummees, Acushnet, “Major Winthrop’s Island” (possibly West Island in Nasketucket Bay), Sconticut Neck, and Slocum’s Island in the mouth

of the Slocum River.⁸⁵ There is also evidence that some Wampanoag families in greater Dartmouth lived among their colonial and Quaker neighbors and worked small farms while fishing, hunting, and collecting shellfish.⁸⁶ Some

Table 1.3. Whaling Voyages from Buzzards Bay Ports

Port	1760–75	1776–80	1781–1800
Dartmouth	28	0	6
New Bedford	9	0	99
Fairhaven	3	0	0
Mattapoisett	0	0	0
Westport	1	0	1
Totals:	41	0	106

Source: Lund et al., American Offshore Whaling Voyages Database, <http://nmdl.org/whaling>.

82. See discussion of Mashpee Rebellion in chap. 2.

83. Ricketson, *New Bedford*, 73–75. The village of 1778 was very different from that of 1765, described by Elmore P. Haskins, “The Story of Water Street,” *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches* 15 (1906): 9, as five houses, two shops, and a shoreside try works.

84. See Mandell, *Behind the Frontier*, 51, 84, 174–75.

85. On Sconticut Neck see Donald S. Smith, “Sconticut Neck and Its Indian Past” (Report, New Bedford Free Public Library, 1992); Grindal Rawson and Samuel Danforth, “Account of an Indian Visitation, A.D. 1698,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 1st ser., 10 (1809): 129–34; John R. Swanton, *The Indian Tribes of North America* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1953), 24–25; also see vol. 1, 535–37, ser. 2, Itineraries, 1760–1794, Ezra Stiles Papers, Yale University (microfilm edition).

86. See Christina J. Hodge, “Faith and Practice at a Early-Eighteenth-Century Wampanoag Burial Ground: The Waldo Farm Site in Dartmouth, Massachusetts,” *Historical Archaeology* 39, 4 (2005): 73–94.

fell into debt and were forced to lease their lands. In August 1735 Dartmouth Indians Abel and Mary Obadiah petitioned the Massachusetts General Court to be permitted to lease more than twelve acres, “our own proper inheritance,” to George Babcock for twenty-one years because the land was “some miles from the salt water where we get our fish.”⁸⁷ Others became indentured servants or committed their children to servitude until they reached adulthood (fig. 1.19). In October 1721, James Bryant, an Indian boy in Dartmouth, was bound over to Thomas Hathaway for seven years to “serve as a faithful servant” in exchange for which Hathaway was to feed, clothe, and lodge the boy and give “Abigal Bryant, the mother of the Lad, twenty shillings in money and a good fat Sheep.”⁸⁸ Aaron Suconish escaped his apprenticeship to Robert

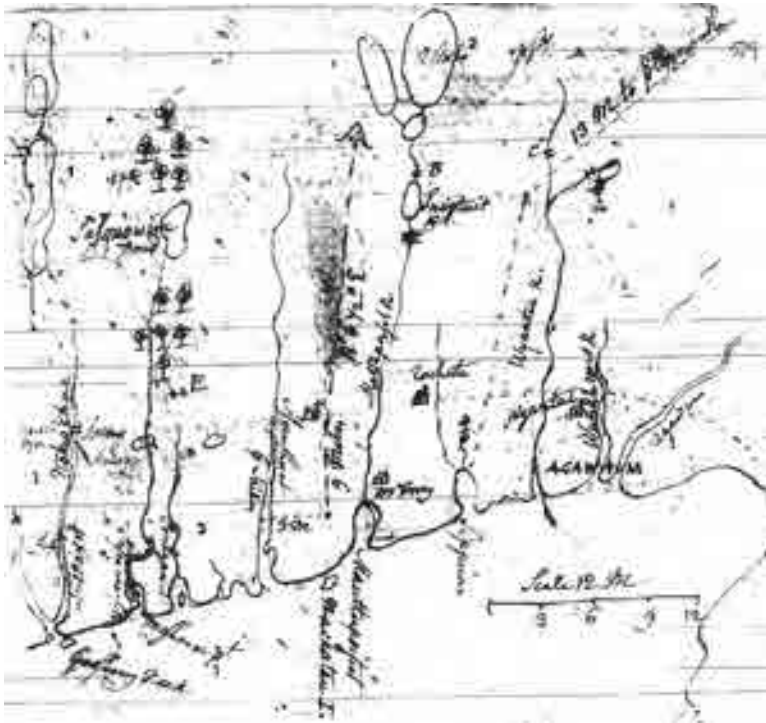


Fig. 1.18. Stiles’s 1762 map of Wampanoag Indian country, which covers area greater modern-day Bristol County from North Watuppa Pond in Fall River (1) to Assawompsett Pond in Lakeville (2), and then south to the coastline from Agawam in Wareham westward past Mattapoisett and the Acushnet River to Little Compton (far left corner). Area 3, centrally located between New Bedford and Westport, marks the locations of the 1698 Wampanoag settlement areas, where seventy-five Indians were living in 1765. From Ezra Stiles Papers microfilm (1978).

Earl of Westport in 1800 when he was about twenty years old and “had on, when he went away, a long blue pea-jacket lined with green baize, an olive coloured waistcoat, and striped Holland trousers.” As most masters did whose servants had run away, Earl offered a reward for his return and forbade anyone from “harboring or employing said Boy.”⁸⁹

Of the two hundred-plus whaling voyages that left New Bedford and nearby ports between 1760 and 1800 inclusive, almost none are represented in the standard whaling archives; those records begin about 1805–1815. So there are few extant crew lists or shipping papers to help identify Indian whalers. But there are other kinds of documents that can

87. “Petition of Indians Abel and Mary Obadiah, August 1735,” Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

88. “Witness to an Indenture, October 9, 1721,” Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society.

89. *Columbian Courier and Medley* (New Bedford), 21 November 1800.

sometimes illuminate the lives of Wampanoag men in this period, including account books kept by New Bedford merchants and suppliers. The two volumes of “petty ledgers” kept by William Rotch Jr. between 1790 and 1802 are of a double-entry format, with debits balanced against credits (contra) for each named individual, vessel, or company.⁹⁰ A year-long entry for 1793, indexed under the “Sandwich Company, for Indians,” includes numerous charges for great coats, combs, tobacco, knives, shoes, blankets, and trousers purchased by five Indians from the Upper Cape around Mashpee—James Mill, Josh Robbins, James Crook, Gersham Ketre, and

Jacob Tompon or Tumpum.⁹¹ Their total bill of £144-9-2 was balanced by “5 shares of Oil in the Brig *Mary*” from a voyage to Brazil; each share was worth £28-7-10.

Evidently these Wampanoag had been recruited and sent to New Bedford as whalers by Sandwich merchants, perhaps to work off debts back home. Seemingly, though, their earnings only paid for what they acquired while in New Bedford and while whaling, although there are entries for “cash when going home” for most of the men, a reminder that their communities were back on the Cape.

Early nineteenth-century crew lists also exist, often buried in larger collections

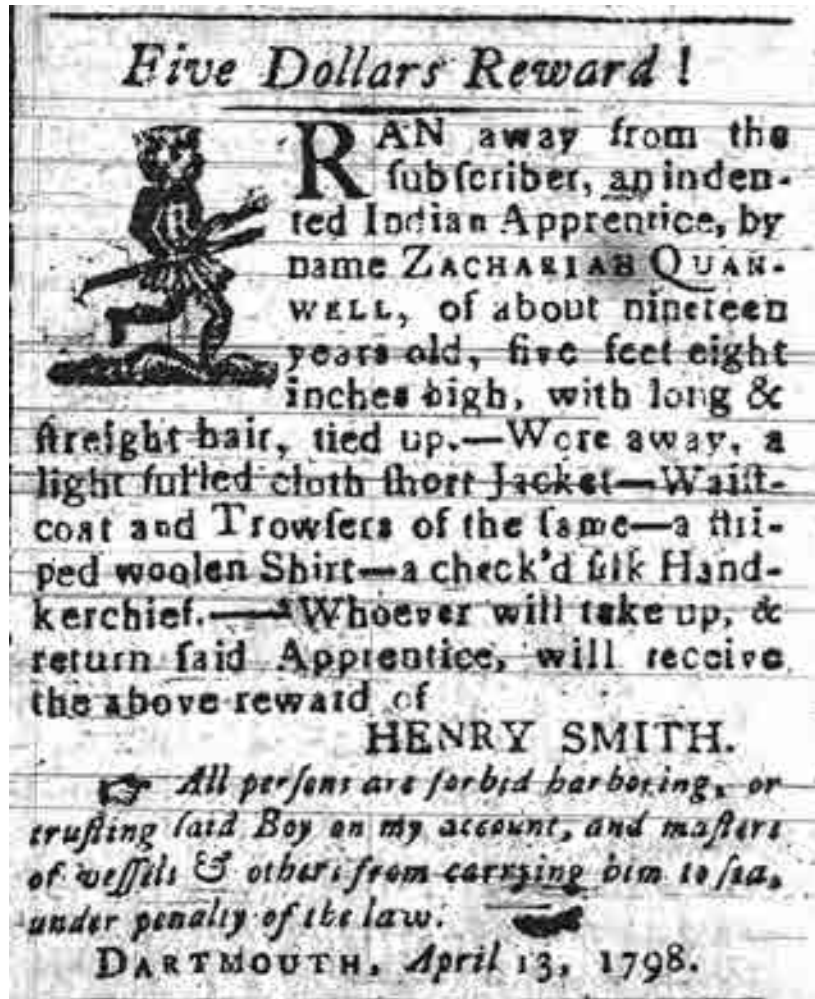


Fig. 1.19. Advertisement for runaway indentured apprentice Zachariah Quanwell, *Columbian Courier and Medley* (New Bedford), 20 April 1798.

90. Petty Ledgers, vols. 1 and 2, subgroup 3, subser. 4 box 5, William Rotch Jr. Papers. The Sandwich Company transaction appears on page 111 of vol. 1.

91. James Crook, an Indian from Sandwich, and the Tumpum Indian name appear in the Sandwich Vital Records, marriage intentions. See *Vital Records of Sandwich, Massachusetts to 1885, Volume I* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1996), 541, 543.

such as the Cory family collection at the New Bedford Whaling Museum research library.⁹² Several generations of Corys lived and worked as merchants, whalers, and weavers in the village of Westport Point. The ships' papers in the collection represent thirty-seven vessels engaged in coastal and intercoastal commerce and whaling between 1778 and 1831. Several sets of the papers are associated with the *Rhoda*, a single-decked, square-sterned schooner of about eighty-eight tons owned by Captain Isaac Cory (1746–1830). From the time the schooner was re-registered in late January 1804 and late December 1806, the *Rhoda* went whaling at least four times under master John Sanford and carried crews of twelve to fifteen men, including a mate, two boatsteerers (also called steersmen), a cooper, a cook, a shipkeeper, and six or more seamen/mariners, sometimes called oarsmen.⁹³

With the sixteen-man crew on the first voyage were a twenty-one-year-old Westport-born Indian, Jonathan Sakenish, and two “molattos,” John Martin, born in Barnstable, and Peter Hunter of Tiverton; all were to earn a 1/36th share for their work as “seamen,” about one half what the captain and mate received. Sakenish’s family were long-time Wampanoag residents of greater Dartmouth; their name appears in marriage records of the late eighteenth century.⁹⁴ John Martin may have been of mixed ancestry from a Cape Indian community, but when he shipped out on the *Rhoda* he lived in Westport. In November 1804, at the completion of either the first or second voyage that year, he signed a note for Isaac Cory: “Pay the amount of whaling voyage on the schooner *Rhoda* with Captain Sanford (after paying my accounts at the store) to Paul Cuffe,”⁹⁵ suggesting again that indebtedness was, for some whalers, a way of life.

On the third and fourth voyages of the *Rhoda* in 1805 and 1806, crews of twelve were standard with 1805 shares ranging from 1/15 and 1/20 (captain and mate) to 1/45 for the cook, an Isaac Simons. The first few months of the 1805 voyage went reasonably well; by early May, Sanford was able to write Cory reporting that “we have killed three whails, one large one and two small ones. We lost part of the large one on account of his sinking. But we have now on bord one hundred [barrels].”⁹⁶ Less than a year later, Isaac Simons, now identified specifically as an Indian, was aboard the *Rhoda* again, this time serving as an oarsman. He was then eighteen years old and likely shipped at a 1/40 and 1/36 lay for the voyage, about eight months long. Simons was born in Tiverton, according to the 1806 crew list, as were the mate, a seaman, and another oarsman. None of the other three were identified as Indian or mulatto, but the name “Simons” (also spelled as Semmons, Semons, Simon, and Simmons) is often associated with Indians and people of color in Dartmouth, Middleborough, Fairhaven, and New Bedford.⁹⁷ Another Isaac Simon, possibly the father of the

92. The ships' papers are in subgroup 1, ser. 1, boxes 25–40, MSS 80, Cory Family Collection, NBWM.

93. Relevant documents include an 1804 registration for the *Rhoda* (subser. 29, box 36, folder 7), crew lists and shipping papers for the 1804–5 voyages (subser. 29, box 36, folder 6), and a crew list and description for the 1806 voyage (subser. 29, box 36, folder 5).

94. *Vital Records of Dartmouth* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1929–30), 2:467. The surname was also spelled Sochonish, Suckconash, and Suscanish.

95. Subgroup 1, ser., box 36, folder 5, Cory Family Collection.

96. Captain John Sanford to Isaac Cory, 5 May 1805, subser. 29, box 36, folder 1, Cory Family Collection.

mariner on the *Rhoda*, appears in William Rotch Jr.'s petty ledgers as a “blk man on the Ship Barclay.” During voyages in 1794 and 1795, he earned enough to settle his account with Rotch and other merchants in New Bedford. He appears again in the Rotch ledgers in 1797, when some of his earnings from “taking the ballast out of the ship *Wareham*” were used to pay for an earlier purchase of a half-bushel of corn.⁹⁸ Other Simonsons of Indian ancestry were whalers, including Thomas Simon, who went whaling out of New Bedford in 1808 on the *Maria* at the age of forty-five,⁹⁹ together with James Hicks, an Indian from Martha’s Vineyard, and Henry Peters, a Gayhead Wampanoag, age seventeen.

That 1808 crew list and twelve others from pre-1810 voyages (1807–1809) provide a small sample, a window into what whaling in New Bedford looked like on the eve of that port’s growth into a dominant center.¹⁰⁰ Of the 199 crew in these thirteen lists (table 1.4), seventy (35 percent) were identified as Indian, Negroes, or mulatto with Indians representing less than 5 percent of the total, about one half the figure for

Table 1.4. Crew Diversity, Selected Pre-1810 Voyages, New Bedford

Vessel	Crew Size	N Indians	N Negroes	N Mulattos
Danube, 1808	15	0	5	3
Diana, 1807	14	3	2	3
Herald, 1808	20	0	0	0
Lucy, 1808	13	0	1	0
Maria, 1808	15	3	2	4
Martha, 1808	16	1	5	2
Martha, 1809	15	0	1	1
Phoebe Ann, 1808	15	0	2	1
Sally, 1808	15	0	3	2
Thacher, 1808	13	0	2	1
Triton, 1808	13	1	1	2
Walker, 1808	20	0	8	4
Winslow, 1808	15	0	4	3
Totals:	199	8	36	26
Percentages:	100	4	18	13

97. *Vital Records of Dartmouth* 2: 484.

98. Petty Ledgers, vols. 1 and 2. subgroup 3, subser. 4, box 5, William Rotch Jr. Papers, Rotch Family Collection, NBWM. The Simon entries appear in 1:129 and 2:80.

99. This Thomas Simons also appears in the Rotch Jr. ledgers as a whaleman on the *Barclay* voyages in 1794 and 1795. See Petty Ledgers 1:130.

100. The thirteen voyages represent one-half of the total number that departed from New Bedford (n=26) between 1807 and 1809. Starbuck, *American Whale Fisher*, 206–10.

Nantucket crews some fifty years earlier.¹⁰¹ Yet on each of two voyages three Indians were present, 20 percent of each total crew. On the *Maria*, those Wampanoags came from different communities in Bristol County and on Martha's Vineyard. The crew of the *Diana* included Indians from Chilmark and Dartmouth and a Narragansett from Charlestown, Rhode Island. The one Indian on the 1808 voyage of the *Martha* was a fifty-five-year old from Long Island, perhaps a long-experienced Shinnecock or Montauk mariner.

Certainly this sample may include other Indians "hiding" whose ancestry was not known, or ignored, or misunderstood by the list maker. As the sample sizes grow and samples are compared year to year, voyage to voyage, some of these hidden Wampanoag whalers may become more visible: the James H[W]icks on the 1808 *Maria* list could be, for example, the Indian James Weeks who whaled out of New Bedford five more times between 1810 and 1825. In the fifty-plus years after the controversy over Billingsgate Point, whaling was transformed from an along-shore, place-based process into an offshore, Atlantic-based world. As this happened, Wampanoag whalers and their communities were not left behind. On the eve of New Bedford whaling, Indians from the Cape and islands were already making their way to the mainland, just as earlier generations went to Nantucket. What John Milton Earle discovered in 1859–60 was, in reality, a long, ongoing, continuing history of Native survival and community building, one that began when Maushop first gave his gift of whales to the Wampanoag people.

101. I counted Indians and mulattos as listed under the column headed "complexion." Negroes include persons identified that way as well as those whose complexions were described as black or blackman. The thirteen lists were copied from the microfilm collection of whaling crew lists at the NBFPL.

CHAPTER 2

WAMPANOAGS IN NEW BEDFORD WHALING, 1815–44

In June 1825, the ship *Richmond*, captained by Abram Gardner, left New Bedford on a productive, almost year-long voyage to the Brazilian whaling grounds. The diverse crew of twenty-one ranged in age from fifteen to forty-four and included two Portuguese from the Western Islands (Azores), three blacks (presumably African American) from Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and Bristol, Rhode Island, and five men of Wampanoag ancestry from Mashpee, Martha's Vineyard, and Dartmouth. The Wampanoag men were James Quepish (twenty-six years old), Jeremiah Squib (sixteen), Francis Peters (forty-four), Henry James (fifteen), and John Elisha (thirty), all identified as Native or Indian on the crew list. By May 1826 the vessel and crew were home with 153 barrels of sperm oil, 1,870 barrels of whale oil, and 11,389 pounds—almost six tons—of whalebone.¹

About the same time, the New Bedford-based ship *Good Return* was also successfully whaling on the Brazil Banks; among her crew were seven Indians from Mashpee—Solomon Attaquin, Rowland T. Gardner, Aaron Keeter, James Mye (sometimes listed as Nye), Nicholas Pocknet, Ebenezer Quepish (the twin brother of James on the *Richmond*), and Isaac Simons Jr.² There is no hard evidence that these ships ever met up while whaling, yet in each case the numbers of Wampanoag men on board likely created a Native subcommunity connected by common ancestry and culture, a small group that, in the quieter moments of the voyage beyond the routines of work and fraternal ceremonies, would have shared news of their families and discussed issues faced by their ancestral communities.³

Back home at Mashpee in the 1820s, the community persisted despite continuing intrusions from their colonial neighbors who wanted access to tribal lands and wood supplies. As more and more outsiders married in, they also debated what rights should be extended to the newcomers, being careful to limit their access to tribal lands and their participation in decision making.⁴ Similarly the Wampanoag communities at Gay Head and elsewhere on the Vineyard continued to experience and question the impacts of exogamous marriage; some condemned the influx of “Negroes and Molattoes” and wondered if their land base was in jeopardy or if the children of “mixed marriages” would retain their language and customs. Some of what was happening could be tied to whaling, as Cape Verdean and other Portuguese men were among those marrying Native women.⁵

1. From 1825 crew list (microfilm), NBFPL.

2. This data was kindly provided by historian Nancy Shoemaker from a crew list in Record Group 36 (US Custom Service), National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region (Boston), Waltham, MA.

3. See Margaret S. Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experiences of American Whaling, 1830–1870* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 116–38.

4. Campisi, *Mashpee Indians*, 90–97; Schrems, “We . . . Will Rule Ourselves,” 209.

5. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 223–41.

There were other concerns shared widely across Wampanoag Country in the 1820s, including the federal government’s desire to relocate all Eastern Indians to lands west of the Mississippi. In response to queries from Jedidiah Morse, commissioned to study the feasibility of the proposed policy, the Reverend Phineas Fish of Mashpee wrote:

They [the Mashpee Indians] are of public utility here, as expert whalers and manufacturers of various light articles; have lost their sympathy with their brethren of the forest; are in possession of many privileges, peculiar to a coast, indented by the sea; their local attachments are strong; they are tenacious of their lands; of course, the idea of alienating them and removing to a distance, would be very unpopular.⁶

So on each ship Indians would have had much to talk about, matters of concern to them but unknown to their shipmates. Those who did the talking belonged to the same ancient world even if they lived in different places and sometimes led different lives on shore.

The Research Model

The twelve Wampanoag men who sailed together in 1825 on the *Richmond* and *Good Return* came from three different Wampanoag communities on the Cape (Mashpee) and islands (Gayhead and Christiantown) and from a Wampanoag family who lived in Dartmouth. Their movements to New Bedford (fig. 2.1) were typical of this time as Indian men sought employment in the growing whaling industry. At least three of the men—John Elisha, James Nye, and Nicholas Pocknet—had sailed from the port several times between 1822 and 1824; for others, including fifteen-year old Henry James from Tisbury, their voyages were a new experience.

After some waiting, their ships sailed away in search of whales in the South Atlantic, returning to New Bedford after voyages of ten to eleven months (figs. 2.2 & 2.3). Once back in port, they may have stayed for a while working on the docks and waiting for their accounts to be settled before heading home to family and friends. For many Wampanoag in the nineteenth century, this cycle of movement between their homes and New Bedford, to whaling grounds and then back, was repeated for some part of their lives with periods of “time-off” as they married, stayed home to raise their families, or found other ways to make a living.⁷ As a group, these movements suggest that several different scales may be used to study the lives and experiences of Wampanoag whalers. At the smaller end is the on-board subcommunity of Indian whalers who sailed on each vessel; at the larger is the persistent social world of the Wampanoag people and the even larger, global world of whaling. In between—in the middle range—are the face-to-face local places of ancestral communities as well as the Native neighborhoods in New Bedford itself. That place began to grow in the 1820s, one part of the larger, ethnically diverse, urban-based population of “harpooners, cannibals, and bumpkins,” as well as the Yankee patricians and their daughters whom Herman Melville celebrated in *Moby-Dick*.⁸

6. Jedidiah Morse, *A Report to the Secretary of War, of the United States, on Indian Affairs* (New Haven: S. Converse, 1822), 70. Author’s emphasis in quote.

7. See Jason Mancini, “Beyond Reservation: Indians, Maritime Labor, and Communities of Color from Eastern Long Island Sound, 1713–1861,” in Glenn S. Gordinier, ed., *Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Power in Maritime America* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 2008), 23–44.

Each of the different scales of small and middle-range communities and neighborhoods are defined by a physical space (the vessel, parts of the city, the bounds of the ancestral community back home) and by social processes that bind that particular community together. On board, daily work routines (usually described in logs as “all hands employed in ship’s duty”) helped create a shared sense of purpose,

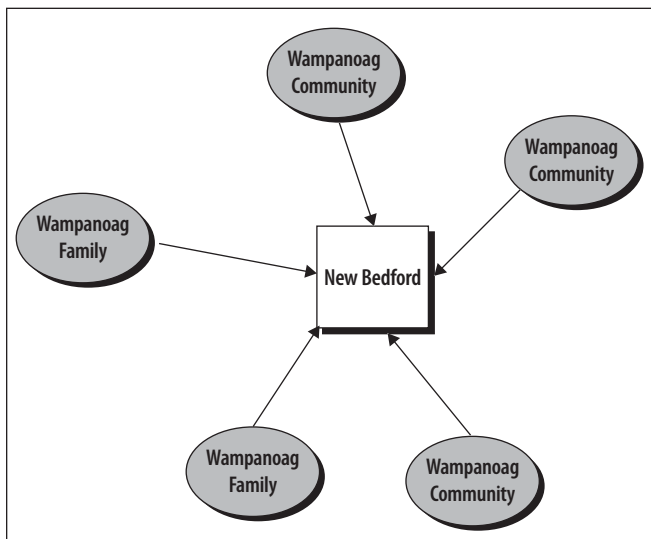


Fig. 2.1. The movement of Indian whalers to New Bedford.

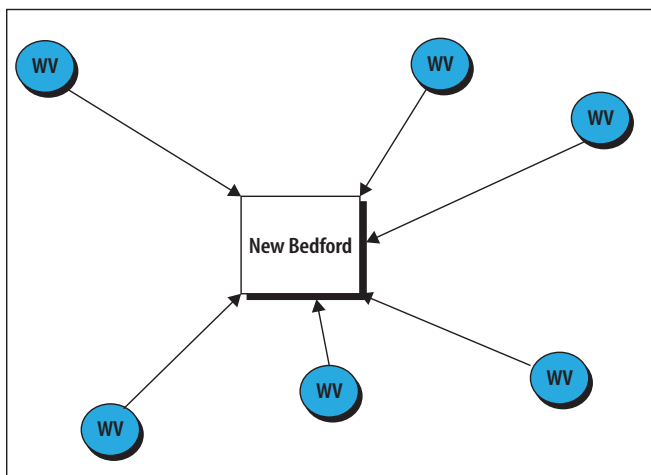


Fig. 2.2. Modeling the movements of Wampanoag Indian whalers from New Bedford. In the diagram above, the men leave on whaling vessels (WV).

though cultural and rank differences may have dampened that feeling. In the back-home communities, routines of work were a social glue, but so too were patterns of intermarriage, traditions of land use and belief, shared ancestry and lineal descent, social interactions and reciprocity, and participation in tribal affairs. Some of these features would also have been present in New Bedford, as Wampanoag families would have carried their culture, traditions, and memories with them. But one might expect new kinds of social processes to emerge, shaped or intensified by the realities of “city” life—living together as extended families in tenements or on the same street, pooling resources in order to survive, or claiming spaces where Indians could gather to share news and celebrate their ancestral identity beyond the public gaze.⁹ By exploring the grounded realities of such processes, one might be able to determine if there ever was an Indian community in New Bedford, or if Indians there mostly defined and differentiated themselves on the basis of their ancestral communities.

Conceptually identity is very different from community; it’s about who people (or individuals) say they are or how they talk about their cultural or ethnic

8. See in particular chap. 6, “The Street,” in Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (1851).

9. Handsman, “Nipmuc Indian Community”; Russell G. Handsman, *Being Indian in Providence* (Booklet, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, 2009).

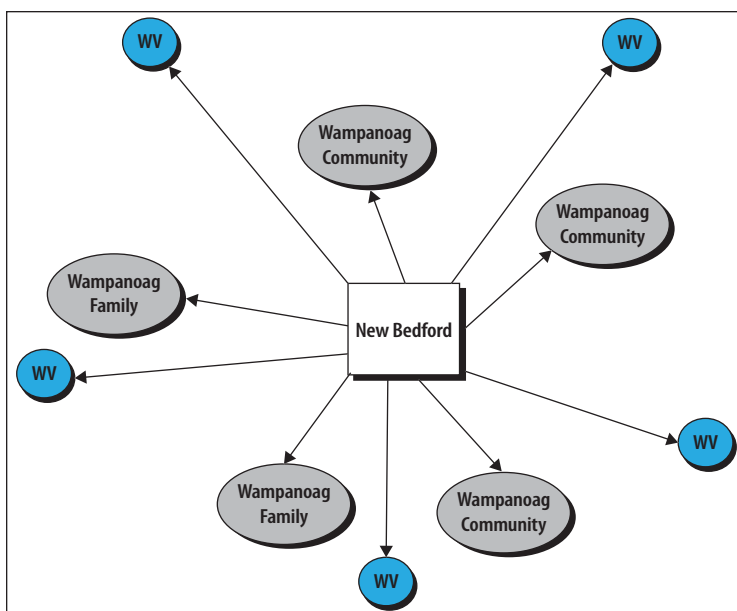


Fig. 2.3. Modeling the return to port of Indian whalers and their return home.

ancestry, or it's about what various outsiders (census takers, crew list makers, investigators, historians, and so on) say about someone's ancestry/ethnicity.¹⁰ When insiders talk about their identity, they may be expressing a shared, community-based perspective. Or they might be articulating something more personal, a sense of who they are and where they "belong," which might change with age or circumstances. Consider Paul Cuffe Jr., son of the celebrated merchant-activist, who grew up in Westport surrounded by a community of color that

included many families of mixed Wampanoag/African/African American ancestry. His 1839 memoir, titled *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Paul Cuffe, a Pequot Indian*, stakes a claim (and rightly so) to a specific Native ancestry—though his was Wampanoag, not Pequot—one very different from his father's. But this claim raises two questions: was Paul Cuffe Jr. of some Wampanoag community, and what evidence do we have that he participated in that, or any Native, community? Without any more evidence, what we know is that Paul Cuffe Jr. was a sometime-whaler of Wampanoag ancestry.¹¹

In nineteenth-century New England, matters of identity were intertwined with widespread ideas about race, and that blurring had consequences for Native peoples.¹² Many believed that skin color and other characteristics were directly related to ancestry and cultural identity, so, for example, one could tell by looking who was of Indian ancestry. If one's phenotype didn't look Native, then one would be identified as belonging to some other "racial group" such as "free person of color" or mulatto or black, the categories used (along with white) in the 1840–60 federal censuses. The more intermarriage there was between groups, the less typical individuals looked, or so it was thought.

Historically, cross-cultural intermarriages, involving either persons of color

10. Handsman, "Nipmuc Indian Community."

11. Paul Cuffe Jr., *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Paul Cuffe, a Pequot Indian* (Vernon, NY: Horace N. Bill, 1839; reprint, Mashantucket, CT: Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, 2006). See later in this chapter for more on this identity issue.

12. Handsman, "Race and Survivance"; Russell G. Handsman, *RACE Matters in Indian New England* (Booklet, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, 2008).

or of foreign-born ancestry, had been common in Wampanoag communities since at least the mid-eighteenth century.¹³ In 1802, it was reported from Mashpee that “very few of the pure race were left.”¹⁴ Later, in 1823, a census of 375-plus Indians on Martha’s Vineyard (Gay Head, Christiantown, Deep Bottom, and Chappaquiddick) found that fifty-seven persons (only 15 percent) were “full-blooded,” meaning their parents and grandparents were not of mixed ancestry.¹⁵ In the same way, Earle’s later and partial list of Mashpee families in 1861 includes sixty-four married households of which thirty-nine, or 61 percent, represented unions between Native men and women while 39 percent were between Native women and outsiders (then called foreigners or coloured) or Native men and outsiders.¹⁶ To many guardians and other outsiders in the nineteenth century, the facts of Indian intermarriages, expressed through a language of blood quantum, were an undeniable sign that New England Indians would soon be fully assimilated into a larger society and thus culturally extinct.¹⁷ Others were less certain, including Earle. While acknowledging the facts of intermarriage—“the people of Gay Head, like those of the other plantations,” he wrote, “are a mixture of the red, white, and black races”—Earle also celebrated their ongoing traditions of land use and governance:

Yet it is no more remarkable that the whole civil polity of the tribe, by which a community residing in the State, and nominally of the State, and subject to its laws, is yet a sort of imperium in imperio [sovereignty within sovereignty], not governed by the laws to which it is nominally subject, but having its own independent law, by which all its internal affairs are regulated. This law is the unwritten Indian traditional law, which, from its apparent favorable working is probably well adapted to their condition and circumstances as any that can be devised.¹⁸

At Gay Head, traditional law governed how the community saw and interacted with outsiders (foreigners) who had married in, defining their rights to land while denying them a vote. In a January 1860 letter to Earle Zaccheus Howwoswee explained, “We the proprietors on gayhead wish to conduct our own business separate from the foreigners & strangers. We never have allowed them any pole right on gayhead. Therefore they have not any [right] in our Land but work on their wife’s portion of land.” He clarified this statement in September 1860: “[We wish] our voters to be the native Indians of the soil, not foreigner[s]. You will understand what I mean by native

13. Daniel R. Mandell, “Shifting Boundaries of Race and Ethnicity: Indian-Black Intermarriage in Southern New England, 1760–1880,” *Journal of American History* 85, 2 (1998): 466–501; C.G. Woodson, “The Relations of Negroes and Indians in Massachusetts,” *Journal of Negro History* 5, 1 (1920): 44–57.

14. See “A Description of Mashpee,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser., 3: 1–12 (1815).

15. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 299–31. The 1823 census, compiled by Frederick Baylies, a local schoolteacher, is preserved as a manuscript (MSS A, S53) in the collection of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. In his cover letter of March 1823, Baylies refers to the difficulty of the research and the future disappearance of Indians from the Vineyard: “It is not probable,” he wrote, “there ever will be another [full-blooded] Indian child born on the Island.”

16. I counted only married couples in this sample from Earle’s Appendix. Of the 39 Mashpee households represented by marriages between Native men and women, 19 included husbands who worked as mariners.

17. Handsman, *RACE Matters*.

18. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 33

Indian of the soil: if [they] belong or come from another indian settlement, we do not call them foreigners.”¹⁹

Traditional Wampanoag law and customs defined the relationships between an ancestral community and the rights and obligations of its members. It didn’t matter if someone’s mother or father had married a non-Native outsider, nor did it matter how much someone “looked Indian.” The offspring of intermarriages were seen as Indian with full rights and responsibilities as community members, as long as a lineal descent relationship could be proved. Once proof had been given and accepted, what mattered most was what individuals of known Indian ancestry did—how they behaved and interacted with their community even if they lived and worked apart. For example, Earle identified twenty-two non-Native men who married Mashpee women, including mariners William Brown, William Gardner, Samuel Godfrey, Stephen Van Rensselaer, John Vallou, and John Webster, all men of color. Their children would have been considered to be of Mashpee Indian ancestry, according to custom, but that didn’t necessarily mean they all would have been seen as community members. That depended upon how they participated in Mashpee affairs as they came of age.²⁰

The idea of race confounds the search and study of Indian whalers in New England. When used to assign a cultural or ancestral identity on the basis of phenotypic features such as skin color, race often acts as a mask, hiding persons who are Indian beneath other labels such as mulatto, black, colored, or “free persons of color.”²¹ This process of racializing identity—naming by color and not culture—intruded into the making of crew lists in whaling ports throughout nineteenth-century New England, but not in any consistent or standardized way. In New Bedford between 1815 and 1844 Wampanoag people were often listed as Indian or Native or Native Indian in the column headed “complexion;” sometimes the terms were also used for indigenes from the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands or New Zealand. Less frequently other color terms were used such as yellow, copper, and black to describe whalers who on other lists were called Indian. While Wampanoags Lily Page, from the Watuppa community, and James Francis from Chilmark were consistently identified as Indian, Francis Peters, described in the 1823 Vineyard census as half-Indian, one-quarter black, and one-quarter white, was variously listed as Native (1825), yellow (1826, 1828), and dark (1832). Elemouth Howwoswee, a whaler from Gay Head, was listed in various New Bedford crew lists as Indian (1819), Native (1820, 1824), and “yellowish” (1830); the 1823 census identified him, as it did James Francis, as “full Indian.”²²

19. Howwoswee’s letters can be found in box 2, folder 3, John Milton Earle Papers.

20. Schrems, “We ...Will Rule Ourselves,” explores the eighteenth-century roots of this custom in Mashpee.

21. During the 1830 and 1840 census work, enumerators were asked to count the number of free whites, free colored persons, and slaves in a household by gender and age groups. Presumably they did this by looking and sometimes asking questions, grouping individuals who looked alike phenotypically. But even if one ignores the effects of race-based counting, federal censuses are still woefully inadequate in New England. For example, the 1820–1840 lists from Martha’s Vineyard are only partial at best. See Jerome D. Segal and R. Andrew Pierce, *The Wampanoag Genealogical History of Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts*, vol. 1., *Island History, People and Places from Sustained Contact through the Early Federal Period* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2003), 575–77. Similar problems exist at Mashpee where even in 1870 most of the community’s residents are listed as black. See Francis G. Hutchins, *Mashpee, the Story of Cape Cod’s Indian Town* (West Franklin, NH: Amarta Press, 1979), 142, for a table summarizing how Mashpee’s residents were categorized in federal and state censuses.

Wampanoag whalers from Mashpee and nearby Sandwich, such as Daniel Babcock, James Nye, and the Pocknets, were almost always called Indian, at least in the first half of the nineteenth century. Evidently their association with that well-known Native place on the Cape trumped any physical characteristics. But John Elisha of Freetown and New Bedford appears on five lists (1820–25) as Indian or Native, apparently without any obvious connection to a Wampanoag community in Bristol County. Wampanoag whaling captain Amos Haskins was of a copper complexion on two lists (1843, 1847) and dark in 1849; otherwise there were no entries for four more voyages between 1841 and 1860.²³ Given that race “colors,” in complicated ways, how crew lists were created, finding Indian whalers in New Bedford requires a methodology that does not depend predominantly upon phenotypic characteristics. When whaling historians use that approach, they underrepresent the presence of Indian whalers, often including them in terms such as black or African American.²⁴

My approach was more labor intensive, beginning with published censuses of Indian mariners and with crew lists where terms such as Native and Indian were used.²⁵ Each list was then added to by checking data files at the New Bedford Free Public Library and this project’s data bases of whaling crews (1845–1875) and census records. Secondary resources were also consulted for additional names of Indian whalers.²⁶ Family names, birthplaces, and residences were compared and combined to generate a series of spreadsheets (first in Excel and then in Access) showing individual whalers and their New Bedford-based voyages for thirty-year periods, starting in 1815. Names were added to each list only if their geographic or age information fit into an existing sequence. To date the Indian whaler database includes more than 750 entries representing almost three hundred different whalers for the period between 1825 and 1925. This resource is invaluable in the study of individuals’ whaling careers, the tradition of cohort whaling, and each Wampanoag community’s involvement in the industry. By selecting groups of records from the Indian whaler database for comparison to other samples of crew lists, one can also identify trends in Wampanoag involvement and how those changed over a century.

22. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 290, 229.

23. See Haskins’s biography in chap. 3.

24. See, for example, Martha S. Putney, *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalers Prior to the Civil War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987), and Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), in particular the discussion of tables and methods (234).

25. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*; Richard L. Pease, *Report of the Commissioner Appointed to Complete the Examination and Determination of All Questions of Title to Land . . . at Gay Head* (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1871).

26. At NBFPL these sources were index cards of whalers’ names and the online database of whaling vessels and crews available at www.newbedford.ma.gov/Library/Whaling. My research methods are based upon the work and insights of Mancini, “Beyond Reservation,” and that of other staff from the Research Department of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. Secondary sources were Daniel R. Mandell, *Tribe, Race, History: Native Americans in Southern New England, 1780–1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Putney, *Black Sailors*; and Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*.

My approach certainly missed some Indian whalers. And it was also conservative, as non-Native whalers were not added just because they happened to share names with those of Indian descent. Still, a name-based approach is especially critical from 1840–1850 onward when the writers of crew lists used terms such as Indian and Native much less frequently, employing instead a color-based system of abbreviations for complexion and hair color.²⁷

The whaler lists also allow for the study of Native communities at sea and for the tracing of movements between ancestral communities or family-based households and New Bedford (see figs. 2.1–2.3). In later phases, after 1850 when federal census records become more data rich, the lists become central to the creation of a second set of spreadsheets focused on the Indians living in New Bedford. Finally, both sets of Wampanoag-oriented lists provide an entry point for exploring how Indian whalers and their families are connected to their communities back home: do they return periodically; do they or their families maintain a presence there; are they involved in tribal politics; what goes on back home that helps us understand why Wampanoag men went whaling out of New Bedford and elsewhere in the nineteenth century?

Theoretically the Wampanoag Indians who went whaling from New Bedford could have been from ancestral communities — or from enclaves or family-based households still connected to those communities. Melville’s Tashtego, for example, was of Gayhead ancestry though we don’t know much about where he lived or whether he kept in touch with his family. Melville stated only that Tashtego was “an unmixed Indian from Gay Head, the westerly promontory of Martha’s Vineyard, where there still exists the last remnant of a village of red men, which has long supplied the neighboring island of Nantucket with many of her most daring harpooners.”²⁸ Other Indian whalers may have been of Wampanoag or mixed ancestry and thus Native by descent. But they were not necessarily connected to a living, ancestral community. To begin differentiating between these different kinds of Indian whalers, one has to move beyond the record-keeping of the whaling industry to community and tribal archives of petitions, guardian and overseer reports, and the ongoing relationships between Massachusetts and its Native inhabitants.

Key Research Goals

By tacking back and forth among different research scales, from data set to data set and period to period, historical patterns of individual and group experiences begin to emerge. In turn those patterns are central to the achievement of four research goals:

- Illuminate and enrich the story of Wampanoag Indian whalers by tracing both continuities and changes in their participation over a century (1825–1925), and by linking their whaling experiences to their ancestral communities beyond New Bedford.
- Contrast the experiences of Wampanoag Indian whalers with those of whalers of Native ancestry; in what ways were their lives different and how do those differences help illuminate the lives of Native peoples who lived apart from indigenous

27. The 1840 crew lists are especially problematical as there is almost no information in them regarding ancestry or birthplace or skin color.

28. Herman Melville, “Knights and Squires,” chap. 27 of *Moby-Dick*.

communities yet maintained their identity as Indians? In what ways and when were Wampanoag whalers' experiences different from those of other mariners of color?

- Deepen understandings of the New Bedford-based Indian enclave whose origins and ongoing history are rooted in the city's whaling industry. By the 1820s, there were similar Indian "communities" in most of the larger cities of southern New England including Providence and Boston (Handsman 2009). Earle's data from 1859–60 suggests that New Bedford's was larger and more diverse than others as the city was home to some 100+ Indians from nine different ancestral communities on the Cape, Islands, and Bristol and Plymouth Counties.
- Trace New Bedford's development as an ethnically diverse city in southern New England, again a story that is rooted in the growth and decline of whaling in the nineteenth century. How might new understandings of Indian whalers and the Indian community in the city help illuminate the historical and social processes of New Bedford's urban landscapes?²⁹

Wampanoag Whalers and New Bedford Whaling, 1815–1844

Between July 1828 and July 1831, Paul Cuffe Jr. left New Bedford on three whaling voyages—on the ship *Hydaspe*, the Fairhaven bark *Quito*, and ship *Trident*—for the whaling grounds of the Brazil Banks, the south Atlantic, and the Pacific. Identified in the crew lists as yellow and copper, Cuffe was of mixed Wampanoag ancestry, the sole Indian mariner among crews of fourteen to twenty-seven men, most of whom were not people of color. Cuffe did not return to New Bedford with the *Trident* in June 1834, having left the ship in Callao, Peru, to join the crew of the *Charles*. After a series of adventures recounted in his memoir, he made his way to New Bedford via the Edgartown ship *Vineyard*, arriving in the later spring of 1836, having been away almost five years.³⁰ In the next seven years, Cuffe may have gone whaling once or twice more before his death at the age of fifty-two on 17 June 1843.

How typical were Paul Cuffe Jr.'s whaling experiences when compared to those of other Indian whalers of the period? A study of voyages between 1815 and 1844 (a thirty-year period, or a generation) provides some context for understanding the growth of New Bedford whaling in this initial period and for exploring the roles, contributions, and experiences of Wampanoag Indian whalers, some of whose lives were very different from Paul Cuffe Jr.'s. Six groups of New Bedford crew lists (1815, 1820, 1825, 1830, 1835, and 1840) and data files at the New Bedford Free Public Library yielded 322 entries representing 134 individual Indian whalers and 214 voyages that left New Bedford and other ports in the custom district. Vessels with at least one Indian whaler account for more than 24 percent of the total New Bedford voyages for the first two decades of the period (table 2.1).³¹ But between 1835 and 1844, when almost 750 whaling voyages left the port, the sample only includes thirty-five, about 5 percent. In part this drop-off in the number of voyages with at least one Indian on board may be due to statistical error, as two-thirds of the crew lists for 1835 are "missing." But the decline may also reflect changes in the whaling industry that led to less Native participation between 1845 and 1874.

29. See Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007) for an example of researching and writing urban history through Indian eyes.

30. Cuffe Jr., *Narrative*, 16–20.

Table 2.1: Numbers of New Bedford Whaling Voyages, 1815–1844

Decade	New Bedford Voyages	Voyages in Data Base with 1+ Indians
1815–1824	237	69 (29%)
1825–1834	512	110 (22%)
1835–1844	749	35 (5%)

Note: Numbers of New Bedford voyages based upon Starbuck, *American Whaling Voyages* (1878).

In this thirty-year period, at least 134 individuals of Indian ancestry went whaling out of New Bedford (table 2.2). Most of these were of Wampanoag descent, coming from four ancestral communities on Martha's Vineyard (57 percent) and the Cape (19 percent), and from smaller enclaves dispersed across Bristol and Plymouth counties (17 and 3 percent, respectively). Two individuals of Native ancestry were from Nantucket while another four

Indian whalers came from outside the Wampanoag world, including Narragansetts George Warmesley, Absalom Pearson, and George Porter. Of the 134 Indian whalers, only twenty-eight (one-fifth) appeared on four or more crew lists; of these, one half were from three ancestral communities on Martha's Vineyard—Gay Head, Chappaquiddick, and Christiantown—Wampanoag places that sent more than half of the total Indian whalers to New Bedford in this period. Sixty-two of the total men went whaling only once, but this figure is likely too high, as some of them may appear on other crew lists that were not studied. This possible undercount applies especially between 1816 and 1830 when voyages were shorter and many vessels went out once or more each year.

An analysis of age groups is revealing (fig. 2.4). Of the 294 entries for which there are data, almost 60 percent are associated with Indians between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four; the next age group (ages twenty-five to thirty-five) accounts for another 30 percent. In other words, nine Indian whalers out of ten in this period were between fourteen and thirty-five years old. Compared to the distribution of age groups of all Wampanoag men living in four communities on the Cape and Vineyard in 1849 (columns 2-5, fig. 2.4), Indian whalers were younger; fewer men older than thirty-five went whaling than stayed at home.

Wampanoag men came to New Bedford seeking adventure and economic opportunity at a time when the industry was still growing. Whaling was also a way to generate income needed to marry and start a family. At Gay Head, for example, sixteen whalers from 1815 to 1844 can be identified in the 1849 community census (see fig. 2.4); of these, ten were married and had started their families between the ages of twenty-seven and forty-seven, after their careers as whalers had generated some income. How much income is a difficult thing to assess: shipping papers for the period are almost nonexistent, so we know little of these whalers' positions and lays until the 1840s.³² But some data do exist. For example, the annual guardians' accounts

31. The groups of crew lists preserved at NBFPL represent 75 to 95 percent of all outgoing New Bedford voyages (using Starbuck's lists for comparison) with the exception of 1835, when only nineteen lists are available on microfilm, less than 30 percent of the outgoing voyages. Likely there are additional 1835 lists preserved in the Record Group 36 (U.S. Custom Service), National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region. Every crew list in each sampled year was studied.

32. This also makes it difficult to explore the question of indebtedness for this generation of Indian whalers. But intensive explorations of New Bedford account books for the period may help.

Table 2.2. Profile of 134 Indian Whalers, 1815–1844

Number of Whalers	Residence	Ancestral Community	Age Range In Years
	<i>Bristol County</i>		
3	Dartmouth	Various	14–32
4	Fairhaven	Scotcutt	15–56
8	New Bedford	Various	19–44
1	Taunton	Cohannet	16–25
1	Troy (Fall River)	Watuppa?	24–33
6	Westport	“Dartmouth”	20–40
	<i>Plymouth County</i>		
3	Middleborough	Middleborough	26–32
1	Rochester	Assonet	18
Subtotal: 27 (20%)			
	<i>Cape Cod</i>		
1	Barnstable	Mashpee	52–57
1	Falmouth	Mashpee?	22
15	Mashpee	Mashpee	14–50
8	Sandwich	Mashpee	16–42
Subtotal: 25 (19%)			
	<i>The Islands</i>		
33	Chilmark	Gay Head	14–45
11	Edgartown	Chappaquiddick	15–31
14	Gay Head	Gay Head	16–41
18	Tisbury	Christiantown	15–51
Subtotal: 76 (57%)			
2	Nantucket	Nantucket	16, 41
4	<i>Other Places</i>	Narragansett Pocasset	20–39
TOTAL: 134			

kept for the Chappaquiddick and Christiantown Indians on Martha’s Vineyard sometimes contain entries listing monies received from an agent for a specific whaling voyage. In turn those monies were then paid out to the named whaler or to a relative or heir if the whaler had died on the voyage. The range in earnings seen in these entries reflects differences in crew position and experience. James DeGrass, then twenty years old, earned almost \$250 on his 1837 voyage on bark *Pioneer*; by December 1843 he had advanced to the position of third mate on the bark *Draco*, for which service he received a lay of 1/57 and earned \$536.52 in May 1847. By that time he was married and had a six-year-old child.³³ Some twelve years later, DeGrass’s name appeared in Earle’s Christiantown list as a farmer, age forty-one, and married with two daughters and a son.³⁴ Chappaquiddick and Christiantown accounts for 1837 lists payments ranging from \$264.60 (to Richard Gould, on ship *Champlain* of Edgartown, on which Joseph Peters received \$289.10) to \$564.04 (to Frederick Webquish, on Nantucket ship *Sarah*).³⁵

33. Data from the “1837 Accounts for the Indians and People of Colour of Chappaquiddick and Christiantown,” in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” Microfilm roll 2, box 3, Massachusetts Archives, and from the crew list for the *Draco*, available online from the Whaling Archives, NBFPL.

34. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix. v.

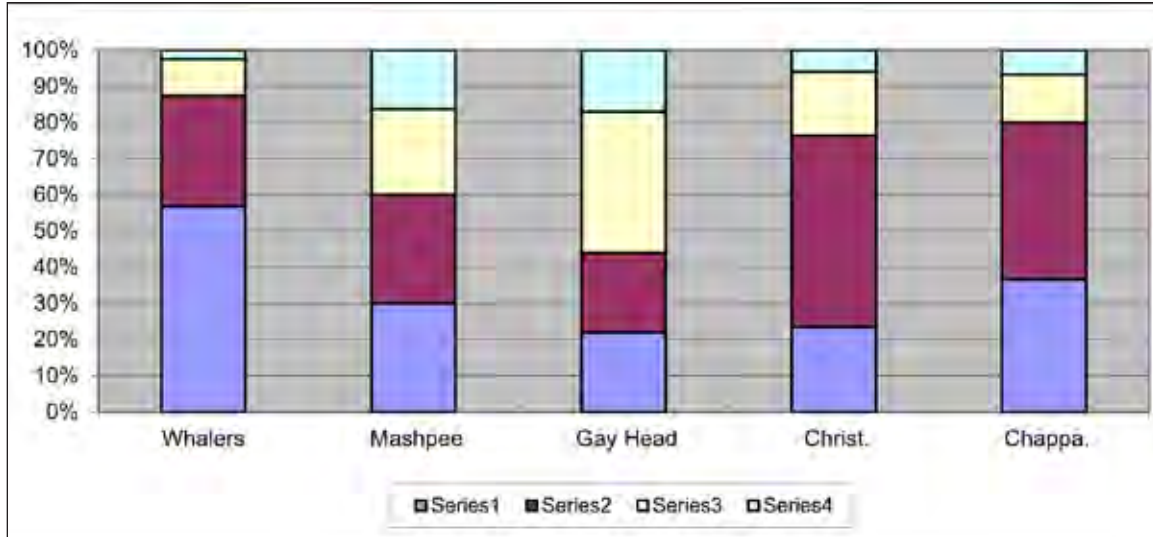


Fig. 2.4. Comparison of age groups of Indian whalers, 1815–1844, with ages of men in ancestral communities. Age group series—1: 14–24 years, 2: 25–35 years, 3: 36–46 years, 4: 47–57 years. Sample Groups—1: Indian whalers, 1815–44, 2: Mashpee men (1849), 3: Gay Head men (1849), 4: Christiantown men (1849), 5: Chappaquiddick men (1849). *Report of the Commissioners Relating to the Condition of the Indians of Massachusetts* (1849).

Of the total 214 voyages in the 1815–44 sample, single Indians appear on 72 percent of the lists (n=153); the other sixty-one lists contain more than one Indian whaler, from two to six individuals per voyage. A smaller group of seventy-two complete manuscript and online crew lists (those with at least one Indian on board), which represent 34 percent of the studied voyages in this period, was used to study further the diversity of whaling crews and assess Indian participation in this period. In this sample of crew lists, thirty include one Indian, twenty lists record two Indians per voyage, and twenty-two lists include three or more Indian whalers (table 2.3).

Between 1815 and 1844, Indians accounted for between 4 and 31 percent of some of the sampled whaling crews out of New Bedford. For those voyages with one Indian, the numbers ranged from 4 to 10 percent depending on the average crew size, which grew from eighteen to twenty-five over the period. If multiple Indians were on board, they comprised between 8 and 14 percent of smaller-sized crews and 17 and 31 percent of larger-sized crews. When grouped or compared with other whalers of color (table 2.4), Indians accounted for at least two of the crew on average for all the sampled voyages in the period, comparable to the number of black seamen in the sample. As the decades went by, the average percentage of all “colored” whalers declined from 33 percent in the decade between 1815 and 1824 to 9 percent between 1835 and 1844.³⁶

To be the only Indian on a whaling vessel out of New Bedford between 1815 and 1844 was a very common experience, accounting for almost three-fourths of the 214

35. From “Accounts for the Indians and People of Colour of Chappaquiddic and Christiantown,” 1837, In “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” Microfilm roll 2, box 3, Massachusetts Archives.

36. The small size of the sample for the decade ending 1844 may be somewhat skewing this trend. But Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 51, notes a similar pattern.

Table 2.3. Indian Whalers from a Selection of 72 Crew Lists, 1815–1844

Decade	N of Voyages	N of Indians		
		One	Two	Three+
1815–1824	22	9	8	5
1825–1834	46	19	11	16
1835–1844	4	2	1	1
Totals:	72	30	20	22

voyages in the sample. So Paul Cuffe Jr.’s experiences and those of Tashtego in *Moby-Dick* were the norm. Still, sixty-one voyages, or about one-quarter of the departing vessels, had more than one Indian on board, and, of those, almost one-half (46 percent) left with three or more, suggesting that some Wampanoag whaling continued

to be undertaken by small groups reminiscent of the way that whaling looked in the early days of along-shore and offshore hunting.

There were thirty-seven pairs of Indian whalers sailing on the same voyage, among crews of twenty to twenty-two men. No pair sailed together more than once, which suggests that close relationships of blood or friendship were not involved. But in about half of the cases, individuals from the same ancestral community, Gay Head on Martha’s Vineyard, were whaling together; that tendency perhaps indicates that some sort of mentor relationship was at work. For example, Elemouth Howwoswee, an experienced whaler in the 1820s, shipped out with three different Gay Headers early in their careers. Two other men from the community, James Bassett and James Francis, did the same between 1820 and 1830. In 1830 Gay Headers Joseph Stevens and Henry Peters were among a crew of twenty-two aboard the Fairhaven ship *Amazon*. The crew also included one African American from Philadelphia, two men from the Azorean island of Faial, one from the Sandwich Islands, and sixteen men from Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The *Amazon* left from New Bedford harbor on 25 July, took its first sperm whale on 7 August, and was standing off Faial with several sick men aboard on 17 August. After a layover in mid-October at the Tristan de Cunha archipelago, the vessel took “a bullock and one hog” and continued to whale in the South Atlantic. By Christmas 1830, the crew had taken twenty whales and spent the day “stowing down” oil and bone. The next four months were quiet ones during which the *Amazon* gammed (visited) with several other vessels; Captain Arthur Cox traded a “bag of Oil and a Bundle of bone” to the *Frederick Augustus* of Newport for a “Barrel of potatoes and onions.” At “Rio Janerio” on 26 March 1831 the *Amazon* discharged 1290 barrels of oil and 13,661 pounds of

Table 2.4. Diversity of Whaling Crews, 1815–1844

Decade and N of Voyages	N of Indians		N of Blacks		N of Mulattos		% Whalers of Color	
	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.
1815–1824 (22)	1–5	2	0-10	3.5	0-2	.5	8–67	33.5
1825–1834 (46)	1–5	2+	0–5	2–	0-3	.4+	4–45	20.7
1835–1844 (4)	1–6	2.5	0	0	0	0	4–17	9

whalebone and spent six weeks refitting and provisioning; then Cox sailed the *Amazon* to the African coast. In early July the ship lay at anchor for a month at “Angrapaqunna Bay” in southwest Africa to caulk the ship and took three right whales; in late summer and early fall it struck twenty-two whales and lost only two, which sunk. The *Amazon* spent its second Christmas at sea sailing to the Northwest Brazil Banks, “got through the Gulf Stream” on 19 January 1832, and reached the east end of Long Island on 27 January. The ship passed Gay Head, Stevens’s and Peters’s home, the next day and arrived in New Bedford on 29 January. Joseph Stevens, however, had deserted and was no longer in the crew, though Earle listed him as a fifty-year-old mariner living at Gay Head in 1861.³⁷

One-half of all the pairs of Indian whalers consists of persons unrelated who came from different communities or towns and were often thrown together by the randomness of the recruitment process or by being in the right place (New Bedford) with necessary skills and perhaps a reputation. Men from Mashpee went whaling with Indians from Gay Head or with whalers of Indian ancestry from Dartmouth and New Bedford, seemingly without knowing one another before shipping out. Sometimes, though, there are richer stories hidden beneath the “facts.” Between July 1828 and later January 1832, Arthur Cox of Hallowell, Maine, captained three whaling voyages to the Brazil Banks, sailing on the ship *George and Martha* twice (1828, 1829) and then on the *Amazon* in 1830.³⁸ Cox was only twenty-five years old when he commanded the first voyage of the *George and Martha* although he went whaling out of New Bedford in 1827 on the ship *Good Return*. On each of his voyages between 1828 and 1832, Indians were between 9 and 14 percent of the diverse crews of twenty-one or twenty-two men. There were three on the 1828 voyage (Lily Page, Ephraim Prince, and Joseph Stevens), two in 1829 (Page and Stevens again), and Stevens and Peters on the *Amazon*. Across the three voyages and more than three years, Joseph Stevens was the constant Indian presence. But he was a less experienced whaler than either Page or Prince, both of whom had served at least three times before and were more than nine years older than Stevens. Likely they served as Stevens’s mentor on the two voyages of the *George and Martha* and helped him to build skills that ensured his hiring for the *Amazon* voyage.

The *George and Martha*’s crew of 1828 is one of twenty-eight voyages, or 13 percent of the sample of 214, that included three or more Indian whalers. These voyages took place in each decade of the thirty-year period, with a concentration between 1825 and 1834. Actual cohort size varied between three and six (the latter only the 1843 voyage of the ship *Adeline*). Two-thirds of these voyages included three Indians on crews primarily of twenty to twenty-two men, or about 14 percent of that work force. Most of the Indian whalers who participated as cohorts on the twenty-eight voyages came from ancestral communities on Martha’s Vineyard and the Cape (Mashpee). But on sixteen voyages Indian whalers came from multiple communities, so the cohorts also included men of Wampanoag (or other Native) ancestry from families in Bristol and Plymouth counties. Ten of the twenty-eight cohorts were

37. Journal of the Whaling Ship *Amazon*, Captain Arthur Cox, Log 85, Manuscripts Collection, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.

38. See *Whaling Masters* (Federal Writers Project 1938) for information on Cox’s career. On each of the three voyages, Cox kept a logbook/journal now preserved in the collection of the George W. Blunt White Library of Mystic Seaport; see Log 85, Manuscripts Division. That log was used to tell the story of the *Amazon*’s 1830 voyage.

rooted in a specific ancestral community such as Gay Head (six), Chappaquiddick-Christiantown (three), and Mashpee (one), while two others were family-based. Assuming that a minimum of 15 percent of all New Bedford whaling voyages between 1815 and 1844 had cohorts of three or more Indians, the 1825 voyage of the *Good Return* seems less of a rarity. More importantly the pattern of cohort whaling amongst Wampanoag men is an entry point for exploring the relationships they had with their communities.

Wampanoag Whalers of Christiantown and Chappaquiddick

In the mid-1820s, Wampanoag from Christiantown, a small community on the northwestern corner of Martha's Vineyard, began to go whaling out of New Bedford; their labors helped to sustain the community for some thirty years. An earlier generation from that place had worked on whaling vessels out of Nantucket. Over a seven-year span between 1825 and 1833, Christiantowners—Solomon Weeks and Francis Peters (sometimes Peterson), and Franklin, George, Amos, and Asa Peters, all sons of Francis—went whaling alone or together on the ships *Columbus*, *Enterprise*, *Leonidas*, and *Brandt*. Francis Peters went whaling with George and Asa on the 1828–29 voyage of the *Enterprise*; brothers George and Franklin sailed together on the *Brandt* on two voyages from 1830 to 1832.

In 1807, Christiantown consisted of “nine families and thirty-two souls, of whom one male and six females are pure.”³⁹ The community's land base was small and precious to those who lived there, providing small amounts of land for gardens and pasture. In December 1823 some members of the community petitioned the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives to reject another petition from three Christiantown-born women living off the reservation who wanted to sell the land they still had rights to in the community. The December petitioners explained that to allow the sale of “the land we hold as joint tenants in common” would jeopardize the community's future and its ability to support its poor. The petition was signed by whalers Solomon Weeks and Franklin, George, and Asa Peters. Their grandparents, George and Anna Peters, also signed.⁴⁰

Later, in 1828, the Christiantown community comprised seven houses and associated outbuildings, primarily for livestock. Francis and Hepzibah Peters lived there then, as did their son George Peters, who shared a house and worked a farm with Johnson Simpson, his son-in-law.⁴¹ Solomon Weeks, an experienced whaler, lived in another house, and the Samuel Mingo family, one of whose sons, Joseph, became an important whaler in the next generation, lived in another.⁴² Francis Peters, Samuel Mingo, and George Peters all appear in the accounts kept by the tribe's guardians in

39. From “A Description of Duke's County, August 13th, 1807,” Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 2d ser., 3 (1847): 38–94.

40. See “Natives and Inhabitants in the Town of Christiantown,” December 1823, in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 2, box 3, “Accounts and Correspondence, Chappaquiddick and Christiantown, 1811–1865,” Massachusetts Archives.

41. In February 1849, Johnson Simpson petitioned the Massachusetts House of Representatives for \$230 to help pay the expenses of caring for George Peters, his father-in law, who was “unable to move or care for himself.” Document in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 2, box 3, Massachusetts Archives.

1837, which documented that they received monies for building or repairing stone walls used to mark the boundaries of the common lands.

By the late 1840s, the community owned 390 acres, including common woods, and was home to forty-nine individuals, nine of whom were “at sea.”⁴³ The Christiantown “census” of 1849 lists three former whalers—Francis Peters (then sixty-seven years old); Johnson Simpson (misnamed Joseph Simpson in the list), who was then forty-two and married with three daughters (no future whalers there); and thirty-four-year-old Asa Peters, married to a Chappaquiddick woman with two young sons. By 1859, Asa Peters was forty-six and still living in Christiantown with five more children, two daughters and three sons; retired from whaling, he was farming twenty-two acres. Johnson Simpson had died, leaving a widow and two grown daughters. So had Francis Peters, whose widow, Hepzibah, lived with her two married daughters, Martha Spencer and Charlotte Belain, also widows.⁴⁴

A small group of eight men from the Wampanoag community of Chappaquiddick, an island off the eastern shore of Martha’s Vineyard, went whaling out of New Bedford on eighteen different voyages between 1826 and 1843. Typically they were young, mostly between sixteen and thirty-four years old, and single. One 1807 chronicler described the pattern: “the old men only are farmers, and are assisted by the women who sow and hoe the corn: the young men are seamen.”⁴⁵ Seven of the eight were Wampanoags—Charles Brown, Frederick Cook, Francis Goodrich, Richard Gould, John Layton, Michael Madison, and Johnson Simpson. The eighth man, William Mathews, was a “coloured foreigner” (actually from Baltimore, Maryland) who went on three whaling voyages between 1828 and 1833. He married a Chappaquiddick woman, Margaret Prince, in 1844 after his whaling days were over.⁴⁶ From that moment on, he lived at Chappaquiddick and raised a family of two sons and two daughters.

In 1828, the Chappaquiddick community numbered 110 persons living on some seven hundred acres, including 111 acres of “Indian Woodland” owned in common. Four hundred acres of arable uplands were divided among seventeen households, each with between fifteen and forty acres; these holdings were “in fee,” meaning that the lands belonged to each family and were not under the control of the guardian. An inventory taken in 1828, as the lands were being divided among the families, lists each household and its holdings, which provides a context for the at-home world of each of the Chappaquiddick whalers (table 2.5).⁴⁷

42. See “Inventory of the Real and Personal Estate belonging to the Indians and People of Colour Now Resident at Christiantown,” 1828, in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 2, box 3, Massachusetts Archives.

43. Data from Francis W. Bird, *Report of the Commissioners Relating to the Condition of the Indians of Massachusetts*, Massachusetts House Document No. 46 (Boston, 1849).

44. They all appear in the Christiantown “census” in Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix, v–vii.

45. From “A Description of Duke’s County, August 13th, 1807,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d. ser., 3 (1847): 38–94.

46. Marriage notice in the *Vital Records of Edgartown, Massachusetts to the Year 1850* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1906), 146.

Table 2.5. Whaling Households at Chappaquiddick, 1828

Whaler	Age, 1828	Household Head	Land Holdings	Livestock
Brown, Charles	10	Abraham Brown	26+ acres	23 c, 3 sh, 5 sw
Cook, Frederick Cook, Thaddeus	20 10	Molly Cook	27+ acres	3 c, 8 sh, 1 sw
Goodrich, Francis	24	—		
Layton, John	20	Thomas Lathon	25+ acres	none
Madison, Michael	24	William Maddison	16+ acres	none
Mathews, William Future wife: Prince, Margaret	21? 3	Lawrence Prince	20+ acres	0c, 2 sh, 1 sw

Legend: c = cattle, sh = sheep, and sw = swine.

Despite the fact that this group of Chappaquiddick whalers came from the same community, none ever went whaling on the same vessel as the others, and only Michael Madison, Frederick Cook, and William Mathews ever whaled with other Wampanoags from Martha’s Vineyard. Cook and Mathews each did it once—Cook with Simeon Johnson on the *Eagle* (1829) and Mathews with George Belain of Gay Head in 1831 on the *Hercules*.

Madison sailed with Franklin and George Peters from Christiantown on the 1830 voyage of the *Brandt* and then only with George on the *Brandt* again in 1831.

This pattern of not whaling together at Chappaquiddick is very different from what happened in other communities on the Cape and Vineyard. It may be an artifact of the sample of Chappaquiddick whalers, which seems too small given how important whaling was in the community’s life. For example, Earle’s figures (see table 1.1) indicate that two-thirds of Chappaquiddick men were mariners, which suggests that records of other whaling vessels and voyages need to be discovered and added to the sample. Yet this pattern may be real, a reflection of this community’s dynamics. Some two decades after the 1828 land division at Chappaquiddick, a group of commissioners who visited there found the community “remarkably healthy and temperate” and that its residents lived in “good frame houses,” with spare rooms “adorned with pictures and curiosities collected in the eastern and southern seas,” likely while on whaling voyages. Yet the commissioners also discerned “social alienations” and “bitterness towards neighbors.” They noted that the community found it difficult to work together to maintain fences and walls, so much so that wandering cattle were a great nuisance. There was also little evidence of town meetings or other group processes.⁴⁸ Clearly Chappaquiddick was an ancestral enclave of Wampanoag people who benefited from the labors of their whalers. But at sea and on land, there may have been times when the people who lived there didn’t work together as a community.

47. See 1828 “Inventory of the Real and Personal Estate belonging to the Indians and People of Colour now Resident at Chappaquiddick.” In “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” Microfilm Roll Two, Box 3. Massachusetts Archives.

48. See Bird, *Report of the Commissioners*, 6–12.

Gay Head Whalers and Their Community

In 1807, the Wampanoag community at Gay Head consisted of thirty-four families and 142 persons, living together on three thousand acres on the western end of Martha's Vineyard. Actually the population was larger, including another one hundred persons, mostly children “put out to service in English families” and men out whaling primarily on Nantucket vessels. The community also made a living by farming, hunting and gathering, and fishing, by renting their communal pastures to their non-Native neighbors, and by selling cranberries from their bogs and clay from the multicolored cliffs at Gay Head, the very cliffs stained by Maushop as he ate his meals of whales (fig. 2.5).⁴⁹

In many ways this picture did not change over the next generation. In 1823 the community still numbered 250 and Gay Head men were still active whalers, serving on vessels out of Nantucket, New Bedford, and elsewhere. The 1815–44 list of Indian whalers includes fifty-one men (38 percent of the total) and 121 entries covering the period between the 1815 voyage of the ship *Maria* and the 1843 voyage of the ship *Adeline*. From 1815 to 1844, Indian men from Gay Head were more numerous on New Bedford whaling vessels than those from other Wampanoag communities. Their age

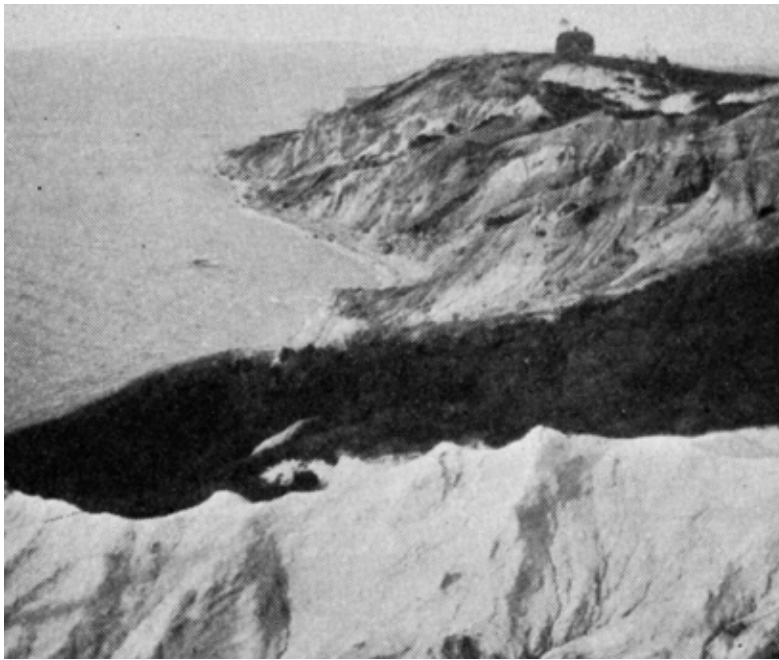


Fig. 2.5. The multicolored sands and clays on the Gay Head cliffs were the result of Maushop's messy meals. After Frank G. Speck, “Territorial Subdivisions and Boundaries of the Wampanog” (1928). Courtesy Research Library, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

distribution fits well within the overall sample; almost two-thirds were between fourteen and twenty-four years of age, while another quarter were between twenty-five and thirty-five when they went whaling. No Gay Head men in the sample shipped out after the age of forty-six. Again there is evidence that these Wampanoag whalers married and started their families towards the end of their careers as mariners (table 2.6).

Overall the fifty-one Gay Head whalers undertook 121 voyages from New Bedford, an average of more than two voyages per man.⁵⁰ The most prolific

49. From “A Description of Duke's County, August 13th, 1807,” Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 2d ser., 3 (1847): 93–94.

50. The range was from one to eleven voyages per man.

Table 2.6. Comparative Ages of Gay Head Whalers

Whaler	Ages while Whaling (from Crew Lists)	Age when Family is Started
Bassett, Leander	16–23	29
Belain, George	20–34	33
Belain, William	15	31
Cuff, Levi	17–22	Single at 40
Cuff, Paul	15	Single at 37
Howwoswee, Zaccheus	27	Married, no children
Jeffers, Amos	31	33?
Jeffers, Thomas	15–17	28
Jeffers, William	37–41	34
Johnson, Prince	14	37
Johnson, Simon 2nd	15–19	Single at 33
Manning, Thomas 2nd	17–18	42
Peters, Samuel	21–24	31
Stevens, Joseph	16–21	Single at 50
Weeks, Tristram	29	45
Williams, John	22–24	Married, no children
	Range: 15–41	Average age: 34.3 years

Note: Ages were calculated by using the data on children’s ages in Gay Head in Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth* (1861).

whaler in the sample was Elemouth Howwoswee, who started whaling at the age of nineteen on the ship *Martha* in 1817 and continued through the 1840 voyage of the ship *Massachusetts*, a total of eleven voyages. Between 1817 and 1824 he went out just about every year from New Bedford, usually with a month or two layover between voyages. Howwoswee doesn’t appear much in the census records or other lists at Gay Head (not surprising considering how frequently he was away), but we do know he married Elizabeth Cook, from another Gay Head family, on 4 June 1840, four months before leaving on the *Massachusetts*.⁵¹

Other Gay Head men also frequently whaled out of New Bedford in this

period, including James Francis (nine voyages) and Nathan Bassett, George Belain, Philip Dodge, and Isaac Johnson (five voyages each). Gay Head men sometimes went whaling in cohorts of two or three in this period. In a sample of eighty-eight voyages, thirteen involved pairs or threesomes; on one, the 1843 voyage of ship *Adeline*, seven Gay Head men between the ages of fifteen and thirty-four were on board. The oldest was first mate George Belain, an experienced mariner; likely he served as a mentor to the others who included his younger brother William (age sixteen), and Joel Jared (or Jarrett, also age sixteen), Zaccheus Cooper, and twenty-two-year-olds Jonathan Cuffe and William Weeks, all of whom were still inexperienced seamen. The seventh Gay Head Indian was seventeen-year-old Thomas Jeffers, a boatsteerer. The *Adeline* sailed to the Northwest Coast on a voyage lasting almost three years.⁵²

The Gay Head who went whaling together also lived together in their settlement, bounded on three sides by the sea. In 1849 the tribe included 174 individuals, of whom

51. Marriage notice in the *Vital Records of Chilmark, Massachusetts to the Year 1850* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1906), 56.

52. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 396–97.

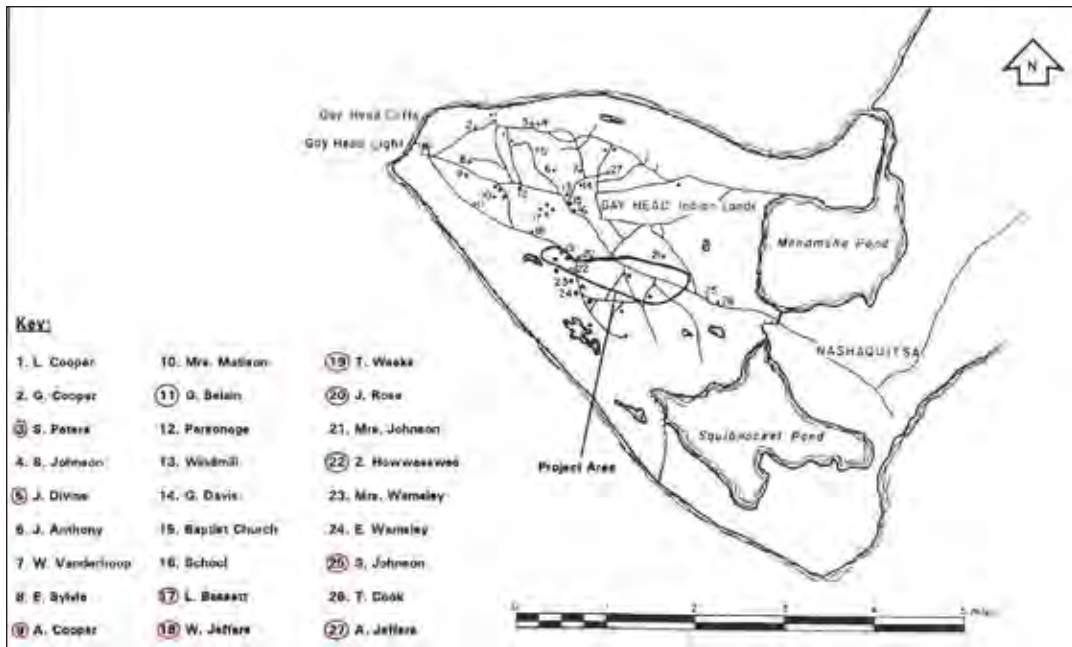


Fig. 2.6. Whalers' houses (circled in red) at Gay Head, about 1840. Number 22, marked with a green square above, belonged to Zaccheus Howwoswee. Map after Glover and McBride, "Tribal Trust Lands" (1992).

162 were Wampanoag; ten more men were at sea.⁵³ Of the twenty-seven houses in the community (fig. 2.6), whalers and their families lived in eleven of them—Samuel Peters (age thirty-eight), John Devine (thirty-five), Aaron Cooper (fifty-eight), George Belain (thirty-nine), Leander Bassett (thirty-nine), William Jeffers (forty), Tristram Weeks (forty-five), Isaac Rose (thirty-seven), Zaccheus Howwoswee (fifty-six), Simon Johnson (fifty-four), and Amos Jeffers (sixty-four). Together there were forty-eight persons in their families, or 28 percent of the community. The houses of other whaling families, including the Cuffe brothers, Elemouth Howwoswee, Prince Johnson, several Bassetts and Coopers, and the Francis group, are not depicted. Some probably lived with relatives whose houses are shown; others may have lived elsewhere in Gay Head or the nearby village of Chilmark. It is likely that at least one-third of Gay Headers then depended upon whaling for some of their livelihood.

Zaccheus Howwoswee still lived in one of the houses in 1858. Born in January 1792 of Gay Head parents, he worked as a whaler in his youth, primarily sailing out of Nantucket; his only documented New Bedford voyage was in 1821 aboard the Westport brig *Almy* when he was twenty-seven. In the 1871 Gay Head census he is listed as a seaman and farmer, almost eighty years old; he also appears in Earle's earlier list, fifty-seven years old and married, working thirty-four acres with eight cattle and two swine. The site of his homestead and farm was along Old South Road on the reservation, an ancient neighborhood that survived into the early twentieth century.⁵⁴ In the early 1990s, archaeological studies of the Howwoswee homestead identified the structural remains of a one-story, three-bay home (kitchen, sitting/

53. Bird, *Report of the Commissioners*, 18–23.

work room, and bedroom) with a massive central chimney as well as the foundations of several outbuildings. Stone walls and orchard remains were also present. The excavated assemblage included European-made creamwares and pearlwares as well as New England red earthenwares used for cooking, dairying, and eating, clay-smoking pipes, and glass bottles. Clearly some of Zaccheus's earnings as a whaler allowed him to participate in the regional market economy, being an Indian and Yankee all at once.

But Zaccheus Howwoswee was much more, serving as the first parish clerk of the Gay Head Baptist Church in the 1830s and later as its deacon and senior deacon. He was also involved in community issues. He signed petitions and traveled to Boston to testify before the Massachusetts Legislature. Most memorably, in 1838 Zaccheus Howwoswee spearheaded the effort to write a petition asking the legislature to pass an act "prohibiting the sale of ardent spirits to the Gay Head Indians." A committee report, dated 6 March 1838, offers background on ardent spirits:

It is obtained sometimes from towns on the Vineyard, but principally from New Bedford. There are sixty or seventy of the tribe employed as whalers on board the New Bedford ships, who are in the constant habit of bringing and distributing rum in this manner when they are at home. The proceeds of their voyages, amounting in most cases to several hundred dollars, are generally spent intoxication and riot. They lay up [put aside] nothing.⁵⁵

The report stated that the Gay Head Indians sent two individuals to bear the petition to Boston. "They were sensible and interesting men," the committee noted. "One of them had a native gift of eloquence. His language was fluent, simple, and graphic. The committee was much moved by his statements and appeals." This one was almost certainly Zaccheus Howwoswee, whose signature was first on the petition, followed by fifty-six others. Among them were the names of whalers Simon Johnson, Michael Madison, Amos Jeffers, Tristram Weeks, Henry Peters, Coombs Cooper, Aaron Cooper, and William Weeks. Who should know better about the life of whalers; who better able to gauge the effects of whaling on the Gay Head community than its mariners? The act banning the sale of alcohol to Gay Head Indians passed on 12 April 1838.

Mashpee Indian Whalers and the Mashpee Revolt of 1833–1834

In March 1838, the selectmen of the Mashpee Indian community, together with other legal voters, sent a petition to the General Court of Massachusetts that sought access to their meeting house for church services. Although the building was meant for Native use, it had over the years become the exclusive domain of Reverend Phineas Fish and his congregation of seventy to one hundred white residents. Fish had been minister and guardian of the tribe since 1811, after the death of Gideon Hawley. Meanwhile the Mashpee were forced to worship with their own minister, E. G. Perry, at a school house "that will not hold over seventy and our children have to stay

54. Pease, *Report of the Commissioner*; Suzanne Glover, Kerrylynn Boire, and Kevin McBride, "Intensive (Locational) Archaeological Survey, Individual Lots Abutting Parcels I, IIA, IIB, III, Tribal Trust Lands" (Report 434-2, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1993).

55. Legislative packet for Massachusetts Acts 1838, Chap. 101, Massachusetts Archives. The packet includes the community's original petition, the committee's report, and a handwritten version of the final act, approved 12 April 1838.

outdoors while we are crowded in. . . . Is this right, we ask your Honors?”⁵⁶

The Mashpee petition makes obvious that tribal leaders did not hesitate to involve the state in intercultural conflicts. The document was signed by thirty-six men; among them were selectman Solomon Attaquin, then twenty-nine years old; William Mingo, Isaac Simons (Jr.), and Abel Skipper, all between fifty and seventy years of age; and Aaron Keeter and Joseph, Nicholas, and Timothy Pocknett, in their thirties. These eight men, about a quarter of the signers, were experienced Wampanoag Indian whalers whose names appear in the Phase I (1815–44) whaler database.

Twenty-six Mashpee men account for forty entries and twenty-six voyages in the database; twenty-three of those voyages left New Bedford between 1820 and 1830. Sixteen of the men are represented by only one voyage, and only one, Jeremiah Squib, shows up in more than three crew lists; he went whaling five times out of New Bedford between 1823 and 1830. The contrasts between the numbers of Mashpee men and voyages and those of Gay Head are noticeable: between 1820 and 1830, twenty-nine Gay Head Indians are represented by fifty-five entries, 1.5 times as often as Mashpee men in the same period even though the latter community was then 1.25 times larger.

Seemingly Mashpee Indian whalers before 1840 are underrepresented in the 1815–44 database, even though offshore whaling there had been an important economic pursuit since the mid-eighteenth century.⁵⁷ In part, Mashpee men may have preferred to go whaling out of other ports closer to their ancestral homeland—Nantucket and Falmouth, Provincetown, and Plymouth, ports from which more than 340 whaling vessels departed between early 1820 and late 1830.⁵⁸ For example, Nicholas Pognet (Pocknet) and William Mingo went whaling on the *Sarah Herrick* out of Falmouth in 1820; four other Mashpee men—Timothy Pocknet, Goliah Squib, John Holmes, and Spencer Edwards—were aboard the bark *Brunette* on an 1840 voyage; they were 20 percent of the crew.⁵⁹ Boston, home to a small whaling fleet, was also a possibility as Mashpee Indians frequently visited there throughout the nineteenth century to connect to a small, impermanent enclave of kin and friends.⁶⁰ Further afield, Mashpee Zaccheus Pocknet/Pooknet was issued a seamen’s protection certificate in New London, Connecticut, in November 1817, showing him to be an

56. Petition from the Selectmen and Legal Voters of the District of Mashpee, March 1838, “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 2, box 2, Massachusetts Archives.

57. Nicholas, “Mashpee Wampanoags”; Parm, “A Freedom to Suit Themselves.”

58. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 230–80.

59. Crew lists in the collection of the Falmouth Historical Society, Falmouth, MA. Both the *Sarah Herrick* and *Brunette* were owned and operated by Elijah Swift whose Bar Neck Company (shipbuilding and whaling) operated out of modern-day Woods Hole between 1827 and 1852. See Suzanne Glover and Edna Feighner, “Intensive (Locational) Archaeological Survey and Site Examination Investigations, Marine Resources Center, Woods Hole, Falmouth, Massachusetts” (Report, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1991).

60. In October 1823, an attorney for the “Overseers of the Poor in Boston” wrote to the Governor and Council to complain that the overseers had received no response from the Mashpee Overseers concerning an overdue bill for “paupers belonging to the Mashpee tribe.” In “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 1, box 2, Massachusetts Archives.

Indian born in Sandwich, Massachusetts.⁶¹ Undoubtedly related to the well-known Mashpee whaling family of Pocknets, Zaccheus's name does not appear on any online New London or New Bedford crew lists.

As a group, 60 percent of the Mashpee men who went whaling out of New Bedford were between fourteen and twenty-four years old. Far fewer men between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-six went whaling, although the number of older Mashpee whalers in the sample who were forty years old and older (eight men, or 22 percent of all Mashpee whalers) suggests that some returned to whaling later in life, perhaps during times of economic need (fig. 2.7). Meanwhile their peers were living “off the land” as farmers and fisherman, hunters and gatherers, while also earning some money repairing roads and bridges, caring for the community's poor, or working for non-Natives on their farms.⁶²

Of the twenty-three whaling voyages involving Mashpee men between 1820 and 1830, only three crews included three or more from the community—the 1823 and 1825 voyages of the *Good Return* (with three and seven Indians on board, respectively), and the 1825 trip of the *Richmond* where three Mashpee men, two Queepishes (brothers or cousins?), both age twenty-six, and sixteen-year-old Jeremiah Squib served in the crew. Four pairs of Mashpee men went whaling together, including Simon and Timothy Pocknet on the 1824 voyage of the *Triton*, where they were joined by James Francis, an experienced whaler from Gay Head. In January 1833 Joshua Pocknett and Joe Mye signed on as seamen, at lays of 1/160 and 1/175 respectively, on the Falmouth ship *William Penn*, bound for the Pacific “to obtain a cargo of sperm oil.” By late September the ship was at Oteewhy (Savaii), one of the Navigator Islands known today as Samoa. First-hand accounts maintain that many of the crew, perhaps included Pocknett and Mye, were sent ashore for food and supplies—fruits and yams, poultry and swine, firewood and fresh water. Some part of the party intruded into resource spaces local leaders had established as taboo, and despite being asked to desist the party persisted. A Sandwich Islander in the crew was killed, the first mate was wounded, and the rest of the shore party captured. While they were held the first mate died and the *William Penn* sailed for Hawaii; the captured crew was then ransomed and taken aboard another whaling vessel in early December 1834. Both Mashpee men returned to Falmouth in April 1836: Mye earned \$24.98 after his accounts were settled, but Pocknett was in debt to the ship. He had run up a bill of \$66.35 during the trip for shoes, caps, and trousers; a Shaker Hat; blankets, knives, paper and tobacco as well as spending cash when the vessel laid over in Rio. When his earnings were subtracted, Pocknett owed \$46.38.⁶³

Other Mashpee men also shipped out with Wampanoag Indians from different communities. In July 1826, when he was fifty-two, Benjamin Pognet/Pocknet went whaling on the *Parnasso* with twenty-two other men, among them three blacks

61. Entry from Seamen's Protection Certificate Register Data Base, <http://library.mysticseaport.org>.

62. The mixed economy at 19th-century Mashpee was described in 1802: “Beside the farmers, some of the men are whalemens; others catch trout, alewives, and other fish in the rivers. Several of the women cultivate the ground; and many of them make brooms and baskets, and sell them among their white neighbours, but more frequently carry them over to Nantucket” [from “A Description of Mashpee, in the County of Barnstable. September 16th, 1802” in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d. ser., 3 (1815): 1–7. See also “Mashpee Tribal Accounts,” in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” Microfilm Roll 1, Box 1, Massachusetts Archives.

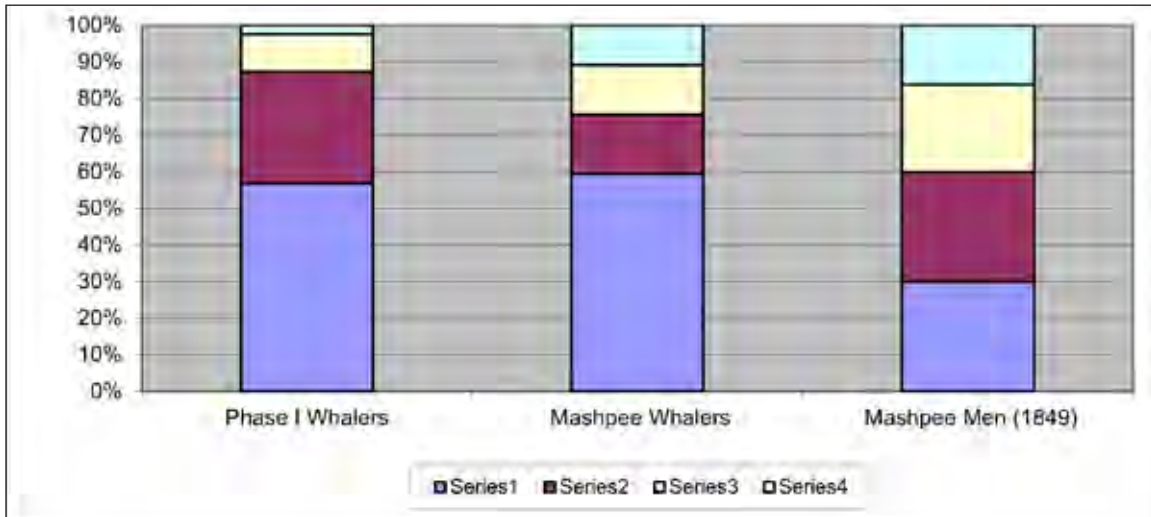


Fig. 2.7. Age groups of Mashpee Indian whalers. Age group series—1: 14–24 years, 2: 25–35 years, 3: 36–46 years, 4: 47–57 years. Sample groups—Phase I (1815–44) Indian whalers, Mashpee whalers (1820–30), Mashpee men (1849). When compared to the entire 1815–44 sample of Indian whalers, more older men 47 years or older from Mashpee went whaling.

(one from the Sandwich Islands), William Mingo (age thirty-nine, and also from Mashpee), two men of mixed Native-African American ancestry from Westport, and John Williams from Gay Head. Their voyage to the Brazilian Banks lasted twenty-two months and returned in early June 1828 with 350 barrels of sperm oil and 1,200 of whale oil.⁶⁴ The *Parnasso* was captained by Hiram Covell, the fourth voyage he had led since 1823 with Wampanoag men among the crew. Benjamin Pognet/Pocknet was present on Covell’s 1825 voyage of the *Parnasso* together with three Indians from Martha’s Vineyard; among them was John Williams, his shipmate in 1826.

In 1849, the Marshpee or Mashpee Indian District included some thirteen thousand acres, much larger than any other Wampanoag reservation. Its Indian residents lived in neighborhoods dispersed across the district, often adjacent to lakes, ponds, or tidal estuaries. Of the twenty-six Mashpee whalers in Phase I, the houses of eight appear on an 1858 map (fig. 2.8). These dwellings of Solomon Attaquin and William Mingo stood on the south end of Mashpee Pond, Joseph and Timothy Pocknet lived at east side of John’s Pond, and Aaron Keter, Nicholas Pocknet, and Jeremiah Squib had houses along the west side of the Popponessett estuary. Rowland Gardner’s house was located on the western side of the district along one of the roads to Falmouth. Although Mashpee families lived farther apart than those at

63. This story of the 1833 voyage of the *William Penn* was stitched together from a remarkable set of documents preserved in the archives of the Falmouth Historical Society, including ship accounts kept during the voyage (including a crew list) and the logbook, where the incident at Savaii is under-reported in entries between September 26 and September 28, 1834. What happened then was reported in Boston, Nantucket, and New Bedford (*Daily Mercury*) newspapers; those accounts are available in Rhys Richards, *Samoa’s Forgotten Whaling Heritage: American Whaling in Samoan Waters, 1824–1878* (Wellington, New Zealand: Lithographic Services, 1992), 41–43, and (1992:41–43) and R. Gerard Ward, ed., *American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790–1870: A History, Geography, and Ethnography Pertaining to American Involvement and Americans in the Pacific*, vol. 6 (Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1967), 6: 392–97, 399–402, 404–6.

64. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 258–59.

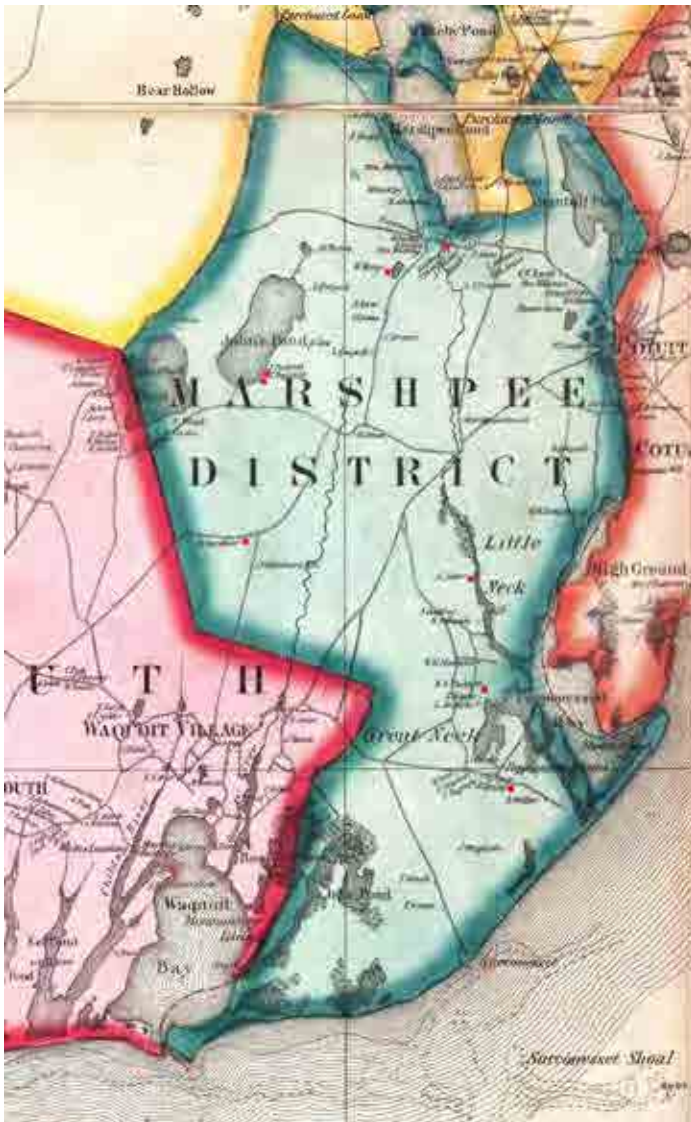


Fig. 2.8. “Marshpee District,” detail from Henry F. Walling, *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket, Massachusetts* (1858). The houses of Mashpee whalers, marked by red dots, are clustered along the outlet of Mashpee Pond, near John’s Pond, and along Little Neck.

Gay Head, Christiantown, and Chapaquiddick, they too comprised a true community that, during the nineteenth century, often banded together to protect their rights as Indians and protest changing policies that affected their lives and futures.

Between 1833 and 1835, the community challenged the overseer system at Mashpee, which precipitated a constitutional crisis in Massachusetts known as the Mashpee Rebellion.⁶⁵ The controversy revolved around the conflicts between a state-mandated overseer system and community-based practices of governance, resource use, and record keeping. In May 1833 the Mashpee, “speaking as the voice of one man” about continuing abuses and the loss of valuable land and forest resources, petitioned the Governor and Council to seek their support for the formal creation of a tribal system of governance. Predictably a committee was organized and sent to Mashpee, with explicit orders from Lieutenant Governor Levi Lincoln to investigate wrongdoings and accusations while making obvious “that disorder and resistance [by Mashpee people] to any rightful

65. Barry O’Connell, ed., *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 163–274; Lisa Brooks, “Regenerating the Village Dish. William Apess and the Mashpee Woodland Revolt,” in *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 163–97; Campisi, Mashpee Indians, 99–118; Daniel R. Mandell, “We, as a Tribe, Will Rule Ourselves’: Mashpee’s Struggle for Autonomy, 1746–1840,” in by Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury, eds., *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2003), 29–340; Parm, “A Freedom to Suit Themselves.”

control over their property by the Guardians appointed by Law, will be promptly and severely punished.”⁶⁶

The committee arrived on 30 June to find that the Mashpee Indians had organized a new government and barred outsiders from the reservation five days earlier. Hearings and arrests of three rebellion leaders ensued, followed by more community meetings and investigations, followed by a committee report that made no recommendations for institutional change. The matter did not end there, however, as the events of summer 1833 led to public debates, newspaper editorials by William Lloyd Garrison and other abolitionists, and the eventual passage of an act in 1834, “Incorporating Mashpee as an Indian District.” The act granted the community powers to elect tribal selectman, convene town meetings, make acts, and pass taxes. What happened during the Mashpee Rebellion is well documented, especially in William Apes’s 1835 essay, *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Mashpee Tribe; or, The Pretended Riot Explained* (fig. 2.9).⁶⁷ Apes (or Apess), an ordained Methodist minister of Pequot ancestry, arrived in the community in May 1833 and immediately became a rebellion leader—others characterized him as an outside agitator—as well as an astute observer of and writer about the events. His essay, one of the earliest and richest ethnographies of a Wampanoag community in nineteenth-century New England, tacks back and forth between the histories of what transpired and how those realities were interpreted and misinterpreted by other commentators. As remarkable as his *Indian Nullification* essay is, Apess did not really analyze the roles played by different parts of the community: who was involved; did all Mashpee support the actions and sign petitions; how did different groups understand the significance of becoming an independent Indian town? Did whalers participate in the Mashpee Rebellion?

Evidence from petitions hold some initial answers, including a remarkable document in the Massachusetts Archives that might be called the Mashpee Indian “Declaration of Independence.”⁶⁸ Dated January 1834, the signed document is preserved as a continuous scroll of written pages tacked together with sealing wax. Here the story of overseers’ abuses and community concerns is recounted through a rhetoric of independence and freedom from the current system of “enslavement.” In at least two places, specific mention is made of maritime pursuits. In one, while discussing the loss of the community’s wood resources, the document refers to the “several tons of our most excellent ship timbers” that are cut and carried off each year. “We do not want it cut, for we do not no [know] but we shall want to build a ship ourselves.” Then, near the bottom of the memorial, the signers make clear that any new legislation must retain a provision “that no one [in the community] can sell their

66. These quotes are from “Documents Relative to The Mashpee Indians,” a collection of materials associated with the Rebellion, compiled and published as Massachusetts Senate Document No. 14 (1834, Boston).

67. William Apes, *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Mashpee Tribe; or, The Pretended Riot Explained* (Boston: Jonathan Howe, 1835).

68. I discovered this document in the Archives’ legislative packet that accompanies “An Act to Establish the District of Mashpee” (Massachusetts Acts, Chapter 166, March 1834). It is titled “Memorial of the Mashpee Indians” and dated January 1834, after the momentous events of the preceding summer. Its text has never been published although Apes refers to the document and its signers in his 1835 essay. From what I can tell, most scholars of the rebellion have not seen it.

land without a ‘mutual consent.’” Perhaps, the document continues, this provision might be changed in the future—but not at this time, as too many in the community were “ignorant in making trades. All tho [though] we are happy to state . . . that we have many who are capable of doing business any where and kind of common Merchantable or seafaring business to navigate a ship to any port of the globe.”

The memorial was signed in two ways, by seventy-nine males and ninety-two females “on the Plantation” and on behalf of seventy-nine more males and another thirty-seven females “who are absent and will not return [to Mashpee] to live under the present law.” Among the men who were away were those “absent at sea,” all of whom were “opposed to having Masters.” In the second list of males’ names are those of five whalers (Isaac Simons Jr., Abel Townsend, William Mingo, Solomon Attaquin, and Timothy Pocknett) who appear in the Phase I database. Another five whaling men were among the group of signers in residence—Aaron Keter, Nicholas and Joseph Pocknet, James Mye, another Isaac Simons, and Jeremiah Squib. All together, twelve documented Mashpee whalers signed or were listed on the 1834 memorial during the Rebellion, only 6 percent of the total.⁶⁹ Certainly there were many more whose whaling careers were not linked to New Bedford and thus do not appear in the project database.

By the mid-nineteenth century, everyday life had become normalized as the Mashpee community went about its business of being and acting like other

Massachusetts towns, “except” that it was primarily and predominantly Wampanoag. An 1849 report described the pursuits of the tribe as “exclusively agricultural, with the usual exceptions”—thirty men were said to be sea. Presumably many of those thirty were younger, the next generation of whalers. Their fathers and grandfathers, once whalers themselves, had retired from that life, some to become farmers who produced “potatoes and different grains,” including “seventy or eighty

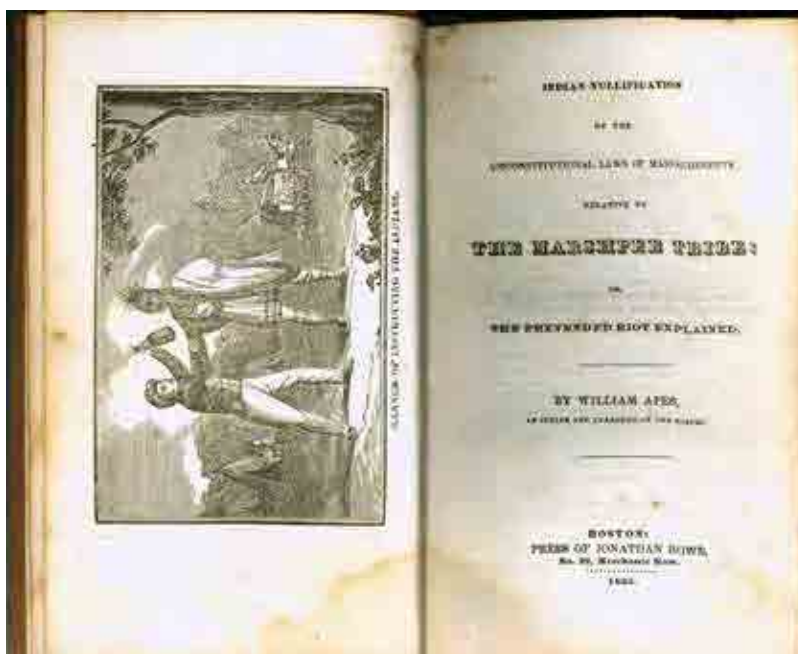


Fig. 2.9. Title page and frontispiece to William Apes, *Indian Nullification* (1835). Courtesy Special Collections, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

69. Of these ten, eight appear on an 1832 list of Mashpee proprietors, and seven signed the later 1838 petition regarding the meeting house. The 1832 list is in “Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians,” microfilm roll 2, box 2, Massachusetts Archives.



Fig. 2.10. Solomon Attaquin, photograph in Simeon L. Deyo, *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts* (1890).

bushels of corn annually” and kept stock including “16 horses, 76 horned cattle, 43 swine, 554 fowl, and 19 sheep.”⁷⁰

Some, however, chose a different path, making a living in other ways. Born 28 January 1810, Solomon Attaquin began whaling at the age of fourteen and worked on coastal traders until his late twenties (fig. 2.10). By then, he had amassed some capital and used it, along with funds supplied by partners, to build a vessel from timbers harvested on the reservation. The Native of Mashpee became a coastal trader, carrying supplies and passengers between the Cape and Nantucket (fig. 2.11). By 1840 Attaquin had retired from the sea, and he built and opened the Hotel Attaquin, where for the next fifty years he hosted visitors who came to fish Mashpee’s famous trout streams including Daniel Webster and Grover Cleveland. Coupled with his knowledge of Mashpee’s ecology, Attaquin’s “native fishing and hunting instincts guaranteed good sport to all whom he

induced to try a day with rod or gun at Mashpee.”⁷¹ Throughout his long life, Solomon Attaquin also served his community as a selectman, postmaster, tax collector, fish warden, and parish moderator, and he often traveled to Boston to present petitions and meet with legislators, a lifetime of commitment that began with the Mashpee Revolt in 1833.⁷²

Indian Whalers of Southeastern Massachusetts

Between 1815 and 1830, James Quonwell, referred to as black, coloured, and dark on crew lists, went whaling out of New Bedford ten times. Joseph Quonwell II was on five whaling voyages between 1818 and 1834. They were probably cousins; their fathers, James Quanawin and Joseph Quanawin, were likely the sons of Peter Quanawin, a mulatto man from Tiverton. They were successful farmers of color in Dartmouth and New Bedford and had the means to purchase property in the late 1780s. The Quam-Quan-Quonnin name appears on both the 1724 and 1763 lists of Dartmouth Indians and the Quanawin-Quonwell family intermarried frequently with other Indians and people of color in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁷³

70. Bird, *Report of the Commissioners*, 25.

71. From *Cape Cod Magazine* 1, 2 (1915): 21–23.

72. Francis G. Hutchins, *Mashpee, the Story of Cape Cod’s Indian Town* (West Franklin, NH: Amarta Press, 1979), 129–31.

73. The 1724 Dartmouth Indian list is in “Indians, 1705–1750,” Massachusetts Archives 31:113. The 1763 list is in *Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts*, 25 August 1763 Massachusetts Historical Society. For intermarriages, see *Vital Records of Dartmouth, Massachusetts to 1850* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1930), 2: 376. See also Kathryn Grover’s Research Notes, “New Bedford African Americans born in or before 1850” and her *The Fugitive’s Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 47.

INDIAN ENTERPRISE. The Barnstable Patriot mentions that there has been recently launched at Popponnesett harbor, Marshpee, a sloop, which was built by the Indians principally, and is intended for a packet and wood coaster between Marshpee and Nantucket.—She is said to be of a good model, and well constructed. The timber of which she is built grew upon the plantation. She is called the “*Native of Marshpee*,” and is commanded by Capt. Solomon Attoquin, an intelligent and active native.

Fig. 2.11. “Indian Enterprise,” *New Bedford Mercury*, 13 October 1837.

There is little doubt that James and Joseph Quonwell II were partly of Wampanoag ancestry, descendants of Native families who had once lived in the homelands of Bristol County. But that ancestry doesn’t necessarily mean that either Quonwell, or others of mixed ancestry from the region, were Indian whalers who

interacted with Wampanoag communities on the mainland or elsewhere. Instead they may have been part of a social network of extended families of color and mixed ancestry who lived apart or in small enclaves dispersed across southern Bristol County. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the regional population of color probably never exceeded 2 to 4 percent of the total population. But some evidence suggests that some families of color did move to New Bedford in the period, drawn perhaps by the economic possibilities of whaling and the growth of the port.⁷⁴ In the twenty years between 1820 and 1840, New Bedford’s population of color grew more than 250 percent while that of some neighboring towns declined (table 2.7). Among the newcomers were men of mixed Indian-black ancestry who found work as whalers on the almost six hundred voyages that left New Bedford between 1825 and 1835.

Twenty-eight men of Indian ancestry from “greater” Bristol County went whaling out of New Bedford on seventy-seven voyages between 1815 and 1844; on twelve of these voyages, they shared space with other Indians from the region. These twenty-eight men, ranging in age from fourteen to forty-three, included five Wampanoags from ancestral communities in Fairhaven (Daniel, Stephen, and William Simon, a father and two sons) and Middleborough (Barnas Combs and Benjamin Simons), places long connected by blood, marriage, and travel. Whaling men also came from other mainland Wampanoag communities: Lily Page, who took part in seven voyages between 1821 and 1830, was linked to Watuppa, a Wampanoag settlement on the shores of North Watuppa Pond outside Fall River; Isaac Rose was from the scarcely known community of Teticut near Taunton, north of Fall River. Rose, born in 1811, served on five whaling voyages out of New Bedford between 1827 and 1841; on his last voyage, on ship *Golconda*, he was third mate. On four of the crew lists Rose identified Taunton as his residence. By 1849, Rose was thirty-seven years old and living in Gay Head with his wife Harriet, a Gay Head Wampanoag, and an infant child (see fig. 2.6).⁷⁵

74. In 1840, 1,345 persons were employed in “the navigation of the ocean.” That number and the data in Table 6.7 are from Census for 1820 (1821) and *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States* (1841), both available at www.census.gov.

75. Rose also appears in Earle’s 1861 list of Gay Head Indians and in the 1871 report by Richard L. Pease, where he is identified as a seaman and farmer.

Table 2.7. Free People of Color in Selected Bristol County Towns, 1820 and 1840

Town	1820 Population	1840 Population	% Change
New Bedford	210	767	265
Dartmouth	172	50	-71
Fairhaven	36	47	31
Fall River/Troy	46	26	-44
Westport	47	NA	NA

Ephraim Prince and John Elisha, of Dartmouth and New Bedford, appear consistently as Indian and Native on their crew lists, which suggests that they identified with their Wampanoag ancestry in ways that the Quonwells may not have. Between 1820 and 1834, they participated in sixteen whaling voyages, about one a year, but never with one another. The

Prince family’s roots are both Wampanoag and black and extend back into the early to mid-eighteenth century in greater Dartmouth.⁷⁶ Ephraim Prince apparently started his maritime career as an eighteen-year-old indentured apprentice serving on the trading brig *Leander*, from which he absconded in April 1819 (fig. 2.12). By July 1824 Prince was aboard the ship *George and Martha*, the first of nine whaling voyages he took over the next ten-plus years. On seven of these voyages, Prince was the only whaler of Indian ancestry on board; on the other voyages he was joined by one or two men from Gay Head and, on the 1828 voyage of the *George and Martha*, by Lily Page.

John Elisha, like Ephraim Prince, came from a family of mixed ancestry that lived in greater Dartmouth as early as the mid-eighteenth century.⁷⁷ Born sometime in the early 1790s, Elisha’s whaling career began in 1820 and continued for the next decade, during which he served on seven documented voyages, including one with James Quonwell in 1824 and three others on which there were Mashpee men, including the 1825 trip of the *Richmond*. His later life is still “buried”: he (and the Elisha name) does not appear in census records from the 1840s and 1850s.⁷⁸

In mid-June 1825, the brig *Amazon* left New Bedford on a whaling voyage to Africa with a crew of twenty-one, including three Indians—Stephen Simon, fifty-six years old, his fifteen-year-old son Daniel, and William Simon, also fifteen. All were members of a large extended family whose ancestral histories were linked to Wampanoag settlements around Assawompset Pond in Middleborough and Sciticut Neck on Buzzards Bay in Fairhaven. For centuries Native peoples had moved back and forth between these two locales, visiting kin, hunting and fishing, and collecting shellfish.⁷⁹ The family patriarch was William Simon (1640?–1727), who moved to

76. In the marriage records of Dartmouth to 1850, various Princes are identified as Indian, mustee, mulatto, and black. Ephraim’s grandparents may have been Job Prince and Deborah Ephraim, both Indians of Dartmouth who married in 1763. See Vital Records of Dartmouth to the Year 1850, Volume Two, Marriages (1930:375), Boston.

77. In the marriage records of Dartmouth to 1850, various Elishas are identified as Indian and people of color including Abner Elisha, Indian of Dartmouth, who married Polly Slocum, a mustee (mulatto), in 1784. They may have been John Elisha’s parents. See Vital Records of Dartmouth to the Year 1850, Volume Two, Marriages (1930), Boston.

78. In a curious coincidence, Jane Quonwell, a sister of Joseph Quonwell II, marries Rufus Elisha, a Punkapoag Indian in 1828. Their daughter’s daughter, Sarah Ann Lisha, shows up as an orphan in the New Bedford Overseers’ Records of the Poor in December 1858. Special Collections, New Bedford Free Public Library.

Sconticut before King Philip’s War (1675–76), settled there and became a well-known Indian blacksmith and minister who preached at numerous Wampanoag settlements throughout Bristol and Plymouth counties, including several around Assawompset Pond (fig. 2.13).⁸⁰ By the early eighteenth century, though his sons and their families remained at Sconticut Neck, William Simon had resettled at Assawompset Pond. The next two generations of the extended Simon/Simons family, including the brothers Benjamin, Simon Sr., and William Simon, were also connected to both places. Both grew up at Sconticut and in the 1760s moved to Betty’s Neck at Assawompset Pond. Their sons Benjamin Simon Jr., a mariner, and William grew up on Betty’s Neck while their kin still lived at Sconticut.⁸¹

The next generation of the Simon family continued this pattern. Benjamin Simon/Simons/Simond, the third of that name, lived in Middleborough and went whaling out of New Bedford on four voyages in 1815–16.⁸² This Benjamin’s sister was Martha Simon, whose famous portrait was painted by Albert Bierstadt in 1857 and wrongly titled *The Last of the Narragansetts* (fig. 2.14). Martha had grown up around

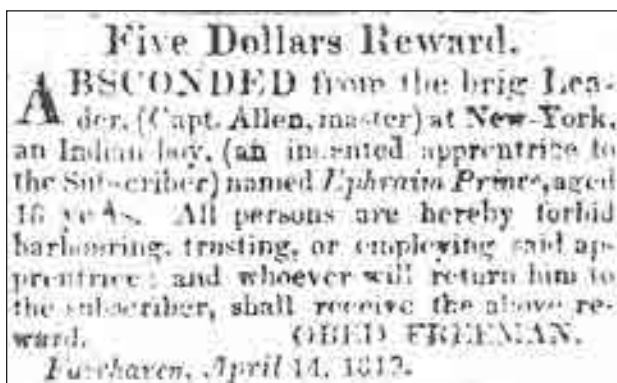


Fig. 2.12. Runaway notice for Ephraim Prince, New Bedford *Weekly Mercury*, 16 April 1819.

Assawompset Pond but spent the latter years of her life living on Sconticut Neck, where Henry David Thoreau and Daniel Ricketson visited her in June 1856.⁸³ Later in 1858 Daniel Ricketson of New Bedford penned the poem “The Last of the Wampanoags” after seeing Bierstadt’s portrait of Martha. Though he corrected her ancestry, Ricketson was still convinced that she was the last of the full-blooded Wampanoag Indians from the mainland.⁸⁴ Stephen Simon, the father on the *Amazon* voyage, and the

79. Assawompset Pond, in present-day Middleborough and Lakeville, is part of an extensive wetlands system formed during the early postglacial period more than 12,000 years ago. This landscape became an Wampanoag homeland sometime in the sixth millennium. It was known to the Wampanoag as Netawamet, “old home lands,” indicative of this place’s ancient settlement history

80. Mandell, *Behind the Frontier*, 51; Smith, “Sconticut Neck.”

81. Betty’s Neck, a peninsula along the southeastern shore of Assawompset Pond in present-day Lakeville, was known as Quitaab. Later in the nineteenth century, Wampanoag Zerviah Gould Mitchell, the well-known descendant of Massasoit, lived on Betty’s Neck with her daughters. Fruits and vegetables raised on their farm were sold to the nearby Sampson’s Tavern in Lakeville, together with baskets and brooms they made. Martha Simon worked at Sampson’s Tavern in her youth. See Duncan Ritchie and Ray Pasquariello, “Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey, Betty’s Neck, Lakeville, Massachusetts,” Public Archaeology Laboratory Report 1193 (2001).

82. Benjamin (III) Simons married Mahala Dick in October 1824; both were identified as Indians. See *Middleborough, Massachusetts Vital Records* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1990); 2:237.

83. Smith, “Sconticut Neck.” Earlier, in October 1855, Thoreau visited Betty’s Neck; see Robert F. Sayre, *Thoreau and the American Indians* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 226, and “The Last of Their Race,” *Republican Standard*, September 11, 1856, 1.



Fig. 2.13. Assawompset Pond in Lakeville and Middleboro, detail of USGS topographic map (1893). Betty's Neck, an Indian community, is outlined in red.



Fig. 2.14. Martha Simon, oil on cardboard by Albert Bierstadt, 1857. Courtesy Millicent Library, Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

older cousin of Benjamin³ and Martha, married Bethiah Jeffers (possibly linked to the Wampanoag family on Martha's Vineyard) in March 1794 and their son Daniel was a New Bedford-based whaler, serving on five documented voyages between 1825 and 1830 including the one on the *Amazon* with his father, then 56 years old. Aside from the crew lists, we know little of the later lives of Stephen and Daniel as they don't appear on census lists after 1820.

Westport's Whalers of Mixed Ancestry

On 27 August 1816, Paul Cuffe Sr. wrote to Gardner Wainer, a son of his longtime business partner and brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, then living in Scipio, New York. "I have lately returned from Gay Head," he reported, "accompanied With The company of my wife, brother David, brothers John wife and Charlotte White."⁸⁵ Likely the Cuffes of Westport visited Gay Head often: Paul's two older brothers, David and Jonathan, had settled there and married into the Wampanoag community. In the 1823 census of Gay Head Indians, Jonathan Cuffe, age seventy-three, is listed as one-half Indian and one-half Negro. His and Paul's parents were Ruth Moses, a Wampanoag woman, and Kofi Slocum, an African man. Jonathan's wife Elisa, sixty-seven years old, is listed as "full-blooded."⁸⁶

The name of the older David Cuffe does not appear in the 1823 census, but a younger David does. Evidently a grandson of one of Paul Cuffe Sr.'s brothers, this David Cuffe was thirty years old, married to Mary Dodge, from a Gay Head family, and had two daughters and two sons, three-year-old Levi and one-year-old Jonathan. Together with another brother, Paul, born soon after the census was

84. Ricketson, *New Bedford*, 96.

85. Quoted in Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, ed., *Captain Paul Cuffe's Logs and Letters, 1808–1817: A Black Quaker's "Voice from within the Veil"* (Washington DC: Howard University Press, 1996), 448–49.

86. The 1823 census, compiled by Frederick Baylies (see Silverman 2005:229–241), is preserved in MSS A, S53, "The Names and Ages of the Indians on Martha's Vineyard," in the manuscript collections of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.

taken, this generation of Gay Head Cuffe men were whalers who sometimes shipped out of New Bedford on voyages between 1837 and 1844 when they were between fifteen and twenty-six years old. They never went whaling together and seldom with other Gay Head Indians except that Jonathan, who was a boatsteerer, served with other men from the community on the 1840 and 1843 voyages of the ship *Adeline*. On the latter trip, Jonathan Cuffe joined six other Gay Headers—George Belain and his younger brother William, William Weeks, Zaccheus Cooper, Thomas Jeffers, and Joel Jared (Jaret/Jarrett). Ranging in age from sixteen to thirty-three, these men, about one quarter of the entire crew, served as first and third mates (George Belain and Jonathan Cuffe), boatsteerers (Cooper, Jeffers, and Weeks), and greenhands (William Belain and Joel Jared) and earned lays that ranged from 1/28 and 1/57 (for mates) to 1/200 (for greenhands).

The 1843 voyage of the *Adeline*, to the Northwest Coast, took almost three years to complete and was incredibly productive. Whaling historian Alexander Starbuck noted that the vessel sent home oil and bone from six hundred whales.⁸⁷ Evidently though, there were problems during the *Adeline's* stay in the Hawaiian Islands in March 1844: Englishman James Robinson, who had joined the crew at Maui in early March, was arrested two weeks later and charged with “riot and an attack on the king.” Two other men deserted at the same time while a fourth was discharged. Not much more is known about what happened. Jonathan Cuffe and William Weeks were not on board the *Adeline* when the ship returned in late April 1846, having died at sea on 10 November and 7 December 1845 respectively.⁸⁸

There were other connections between the diverse community of color in Westport and the Gay Head Indian community. A Wampanoag woman, Chloe Cuffe, married Paul Wainer, the son of Michael Wainer, in 1804. Evidently they moved back to the mainland where they raised a family including five sons, three of whom—Uriah (born 1811), Asa F. (1813), and Rodney (1819)—went whaling out of New Bedford on nine different voyages between 1831 and 1841. Their father, Paul, also went whaling infrequently; he served as captain on an 1821 voyage of the New Bedford brig *Protection* to Hudson's Bay. The roots of the Wainer family extend into the later eighteenth century and include intermarriages between local Wampanoags and African Americans.⁸⁹ Michael Wainer, the patriarch of the family, also had a son Rodney, born about 1805 by his second wife, Mary White of Little Compton.⁹⁰ This Rodney was a mariner as well, as witnessed by his 1850 Westport census listing, but his name does not appear in any

87. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 396–97.

88. The unfinished story of the *Adeline's* 1843 voyage is based upon the outgoing crew list, shipping paper, and a report from a U.S. Customs Agent on Maui, all at the New Bedford Free Public Library, and the on-line listing at www.newbedford-ma.gov/Library/Whaling. During the 1840s and 50s, riots were relatively common in the Islands as whalers challenged local authorities and their rules for shore-side behavior (Busch 1994a). See also report on riot in New Bedford *Mercury* (Weekly), November 22, 1844, 3:3 as well as the report of the deaths of Cuffe and Weeks in New Bedford *Mercury* (Weekly), May 1, 1846, 3:5.

89. See listings in *Vital Records of Dartmouth to 1850*, Volume II, *Marriages* (Boston: New England Historical Genealogical Society 1930, 523). There Michael Wainer, business partner of Paul Cuffe Sr., is described as a mulatto.

90. This Rodney was an under-aged heir in 1815 when Michael died; Wiggins, ed., *Cuffe's Logs and Letters*, 364–65.

New Bedford crew lists until 1846. By 1859–1860, he was a farmer living in Westport and appears in John Milton Earle’s list of Dartmouth Indians.

Paul Cuffe Sr. and his children positioned themselves differently with respect to their Indian ancestry. The mixed ancestry of Paul Cuffe is well known. Despite his 1780 assertion that he was Indian and thus not liable to pay taxes, much of his career was connected to the black community and the Pan-African movement.⁹¹ Seemingly he had little patience for the traditions and practices of his Wampanoag relations. In November 1816 he wrote of the inability of the overseers at Gay Head to take care of their own affairs:

I have true Conditions to Consider whether they Do or Do not Stand in need of nursing farthers and mothers, whether they are not too much in an Infan state for self Government. Permit me to Mark with a few observations what I am Som what A witness to. I Saw You fields Destroyed for want of Care. . . . I Learnt by Information that an Act passed At Your Annual Meeting that all Clay taken Away by Strangers Should pay a Duty of \$1 per ton but I Could not Lern that thare had Ever had been Any thing paid into the treasure. These evidences All been witness that thare is a Great need of Reformation among you as a moral people.⁹²

Yet, of the two sons and five daughters of Paul Cuffe Sr., four, at various times in their lives, connected with their mother’s Wampanoag ancestry, including Mary and Alice; Ruth, who for a time lived in the Watuppa Indian community outside Fall River; and Paul Jr. (1792–1843), in his 1839 memoir, published four years before he died. Titled *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Paul Cuffe, A Pequot Indian*, it is an account of an adventurer and strong-willed man, intolerant of authority. He recounted his early experiences working on intercoastal and international shipping voyages, both part of his father’s world. His life as a whaler fills the remaining pages. Even as Cuffe recalled events of a decade or more earlier, his accounts of whaling are mostly true. The memoir records six whaling voyages between 1811 and 1837 in which Cuffe participated for some or the entire trip. Of these six voyages, crew lists exist for five of them (table 2.8), the details of which largely corroborate his memories, especially for the five-year period between July 1831 and March 1836 when Cuffe was away from Westport and New Bedford on the Galapagos and Society Islands.⁹³

91. Lamont D. Thomas, *Paul Cuffe: Black Entrepreneur and Pan-Africanist* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 10.

92. Paul Cuffe, Westport, to Joel Rogers, 3 November 3, 1816, transcribed in Wiggins, ed., *Cuffe’s Logs and Letteres*, 474.

93. See Cuffe Jr., *Narrative*, 306, 16–20. In 1836, Mary Cuffe (Paul Jr.’s wife) illuminated the man in a letter she wrote to William Rotch Jr., the executor of Paul Sr.’s estate: “I am told that my husband is a first rate whaleman. And is abundantly qualified for a Boat Leader [boatsteerer], and might obtain an excellent Lay. Shall he under those circumstances remain idle & inactive and use up the annual pittance which ought to be appropriated for the support of his wife & children.” Here Mary referred to Paul Jr.’s sizeable inheritance from his father, which included the family farm and a trust of five hundred dollars plus one-fourth of the annual earnings from the brig *Traveller*, all of which was supposed to generate sufficient support for Paul Jr. and his family. See Paul Cuffe Sr., “The Will of Paul Cuffe (1817),” *Journal of Negro History* 8, 2 (1923): 230–32. Evidently the strategy was not working well by the mid-1830s, some twenty years after Paul Sr.’s death. Mary died on 10 August 1855 in New Bedford of consumption; she was sixty-one years and eight months old. The letter extract is quoted in Dorothy Sterling, ed., *We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997), 226. Mary Cuffe’s death notice is in “Deaths Recorded in the New Bedford *Mercury*, 1845–1874,” vol. 1, Special Collections, NBFPL.

Table 2.8. Paul Cuffe Jr.'s Documented Whaling Voyages

Vessel	Dates of Voyage	Cuffe's Connection	Memoir Pages
<i>Atlas</i>	1811 (Nantucket)	On board (no crew list)	6–7
<i>Hydaspe</i>	7/1828–5/1829	On crew list, did not return	Not in memoir
<i>Quito</i>	1/1829–4/1830	On crew list	Not in memoir
<i>Trident</i>	7/1831–6/1834	On crew list, did not return	15–16
<i>Charles</i>	6/1833–	Cuffe joins ship in Peru	16
<i>Golconda</i>	12/1832	Cuffe joins ship in Peru	16–17
<i>Vineyard</i>	9/1832–3/1836	Cuffe joins in Peru; returns to NB after almost 5 years	20
<i>Delight</i>	11/1836–10/1837	Not on crew list	21

In 1834–35 Cuffe spent time in Paita, Peru, a coastal port on the northern coast where in the mid-1830s many New England whaling vessels stayed over for liberty and to gather such provisions as potatoes, onions, watermelon, and eggs.⁹⁴ Paita consisted of several unpaved streets, and some two hundred houses. Its population of four thousand, beyond whalers, some clergy, merchants, and officials, consisted mostly of indigenous

Natives, metizos, and blacks.⁹⁵ Cuffe was in and out of Paita for almost two years and periodically may have reflected upon the phenotypic diversity of the Indians and lack of any visible “color line,” conditions that would have perhaps reminded him of home and his extended family’s heritage. His time on the Society Islands, some five months in later 1835, was also filled with native encounters; his memoir describes their houses, foodways, and feasting practices. Cuffe celebrated their lives and “attendant blessings” and acknowledged “the many acts of benevolence, shown to him, ‘a stranger,’ more than fourteen thousand miles from the land of his nativity.”⁹⁶ Yet nowhere did he draw any sort of comparison or connection between these indigenes and his Wampanoag relatives back home.

These silences continued after Cuffe returned to New England. On the last page of his memoir, he described two 1838–39 visits to Michael Wainer Jr., the son of the family patriarch, who had been making a living as a farmer in New Stockbridge,

94. Briton Cooper Busch, “Whaling Will Never Do For Me”: *The American Whaleman in the Nineteenth Century* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 176.

95. William L. Lofstrom, *Paita, Outpost of Empire: The Impact of the New England Whaling Fleet on the Socioeconomic Development of Northern Peru, 1832–1865* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1996). In a wonderful historical coincidence, Cuffe’s stay in Peru almost overlapped with that of Charles Darwin and his voyage on *The Beagle*. Darwin was in Callao, the seaport of Lima, for six weeks in the summer of 1835, just after Cuffe had left for the Society Islands; see Cuffe Jr., *Narrative*, 18–20. After Callao, the *Beagle* headed off on its significant trip to the Galápagos, which Cuffe’s ship, the *Trident*, had visited the year before Darwin’s arrival and had supposedly taken six hundred tortoises with them (*ibid.*, 16.). The number seems inflated. Prior to the 1830s, the average tortoise catch per whaling vessel was about two hundred but led nonetheless to the species’ slow decline. See Thalia Grant and Gregory B. Estes, *Darwin in Galápagos: Footsteps to a New World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 81–86.

96. The Society Islands are in French Polynesia, east of Samoa. See Cuffe Jr., *Narrative*, 18–19, 20.

Madison County, New York, since 1814–15. At that time, some Stockbridge and Brothertown Indian families (mostly Mahican and Delaware) still lived in the area, having resettled there in the 1770s and 1780s.⁹⁷ By the late 1830s, most of them had moved west, leaving the land to native-born and newer residents like Michael Wainer, who by then had started a family with his second wife. In 1839, Paul Cuffe remarked upon the beauty of New Stockbridge’s landscapes and the productivity of its farmlands and suggested that Oneida Creek would be “an excellent place for erecting manufactories of cotton or wool.”⁹⁸ Yet he shared no stories of its earlier Indian residents, who had successfully built a stable community modeled after a rural New England village, much like the ones in Westport and Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

Paul Cuffe Jr. died in New Bedford on 17 June 1843 at the age of fifty-two, some sixteen years and two months before John Milton Earle held his public hearing. If Cuffe had been alive then, he might have spoken out just as his sisters and other “Dartmouth Indians” did. But that didn’t happen. Despite the title of his memoir—his mother’s ancestry was not Pequot but Wampanoag—there is little in his memoir about “being Indian.” Paul Cuffe Jr. was thus a whaler of Indian ancestry, but not a whaler who had lived among or interacted with his Indian relations at Gay Head.⁹⁹

On the Indians of New Bedford, 1815–1844

In the lifetime of Paul Cuffe Jr., New Bedford grew from a small seaport that had survived the British attack of 1778 to a thriving whaling center, yet still not at its peak when Cuffe died. In 1834 the village’s compactness and maritime orientation are clearly visible map drawn by New Bedford banker and selectman James Bunker Congdon (fig. 2.15). By 1840 New Bedford was home to 12,087 people, including 767 “free colored persons,” a census category designed to embrace African Americans, Indians, and persons of mixed Indian ancestry. The growth of the whaling industry was largely responsible for both the density and diversity of the resident population, the village’s commercial institutions and many meetinghouses, and the public face so vividly described by both Herman Melville and Frederick Douglass.¹⁰⁰ In 1831 Daniel Ricketson described early New Bedford as a paradise for the Indian, who in his view disappeared as whites encroached:

Scarce two centuries ago, this spot was one forest wild, the abode of the tawny Indian and wild beast; its vast wilderness had never been penetrated by civilized man, nor the peace of its people injured; the smoke arose free from the unmolested wigwam, and the woods re-echoed to the shrill war-whoop; the wild deer bounded through the glade, and the light canoe was swiftly paddled over the Acushnet. Then the Indian with a light heart roved over the soil where our town now rests, and with careless joy, through the forest that once crowned yon hill, pursued the animated

97. T.J. Brasser, “Mahican,” in Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 15. *Northeast* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978), 206–9.

98. Cuffe Jr., *Narrative*, 21.

99. His mother’s family, the Pequids, were Wampanoags from Dartmouth and appear in early 18th-century documents.

100. Robert K. Wallace, *Douglass and Melville: Anchored Together in Neighborly Style* (New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2005), 3–21.



Fig. 2.15. New Bedford village, 1834, surveyed and drawn by James B. Congdon. The compact settlement encompassed about 450 acres then and was home to some 9,300 people. Courtesy Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center, Boston Public Library.

Vineyard, Cape Cod, and greater Bristol County to find employment. Given their presence, Ricketson's 1831 lament about the "disappearance" of Indians from New Bedford seems overstated.

Yet despite their numbers and contributions, there is little evidence that an Indian enclave or community existed in New Bedford village for much of the first half of the nineteenth century. A systematic search of the original manuscript copy of the 1840 New Bedford census at the New Bedford Free Public Library only identified two "Indian" whalers, William Johnson of Gay Head (and his wife) and Joseph Quonwell (II), living with his wife and two other "colored" men between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-six. Quonwell's name also appears in the 1845 town directory as a

chase. Oft this has been the scene of the feast, the dance, and the song of fearless, thoughtless joy.

But these have all departed: our mansions have succeeded the Indian's hut, and he is now known but by a few mouldering bones turned up by the plough-share, and we daily tread above the graves of his once mighty race. The same ethereal vault o'erarches this land, the seasons roll on as before, and the waves break upon the same shores, but not to the Indian: he has long since been gathered to his fathers, and we are now the undisputed lords of the land.¹⁰¹

Clearly Wampanoag Indians were an integral part of New Bedford's whaling industry between 1815 and 1844. To date more than 130 whalers—both Indians and those of Indian ancestry—have been documented, men who provided skilled, experienced labor during the growth of the industry and who came to New Bedford periodically or frequently from communities on Martha's

101. Ricketson, *New Bedford*, vi–vii (preface dated 31 March 1831).

mariner living at 147 Ray Street. A study of this community directory identified two other whalers in the 1815–44 database—Francis Goodrich (from Chappaquiddick on Martha’s Vineyard) and Isaac Johnson (from Gay Head), who boarded in various buildings on Wing, First, and County streets. Isaac D. Rose, then single and still living in Taunton, is listed in several directories between 1838 and 1841 and always boarded on Sixth Street.

But these whalers are the only five men of Wampanoag ancestry from a pool of 130+ Indian whalers. Where were all the others? For local Indian whalers, going home to family was always an option between voyages. Those from more distant communities might have stayed over in village boardinghouses or found beds in the “hurriedly built tenements” or “basement rooms of private homes,” spaces of great concern to the members of the New Bedford Benevolent Society.¹⁰² In such cases, there is little doubt that census takers missed many in the transient population of whalers, a problem reminiscent of how the “homeless” are often undercounted in federal censuses today.

Still, there is little known evidence to indicate that a stable, family-based Native community existed in New Bedford between 1815 and 1844. Yet by 1859–60, John Milton Earle seems to document such a community. Taken together these sources suggest that it only began to emerge after 1845 and then with some rapidity. In turn this emergence may reflect changes in the whaling industry which, in complex ways, affected the living that Wampanoag men might have made as whalers. One response was for Indians to do less whaling out of New Bedford after 1845. Others, more skilled and experienced, may have continued. Still others may have chosen to move to the city anyway, for other livings could be made there by both Wampanoag men and women, some of whom then remained connected to their ancestral communities back home.

102. Daniel Ricketson’s November 1845 annual report for the society describes these spaces, all too often occupied by the village’s poor and transient population. See New Bedford Benevolent Society Records, 1829–1893, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Also see Grover, *Fugitive’s Gibraltar*, 126–27, on the public health issues of such spaces.

CHAPTER 3

WAMPANOAG WHALERS IN THE INDUSTRY'S MIDDLE PERIOD

Sometime between 1848 and 1853, William Allen Wall painted a scene of the Wamsutta Mills that captured at once the past, present, and future of New Bedford (fig. 3.1). The city's agrarian past, represented by the bucolic pasture scene in the foreground, was still very much present then as farmers in the surrounding countryside helped sustain New Bedford's residents, many of whom were no longer tied to the land. Instead they were living and working in the growing city of some 16,500 persons whose economic fortunes were tied to whaling and a set of closely integrated, shoreside industries along the waterfront.

In the background, Wall painted a contrast between the looming and very visible mill—the future of New Bedford came to be tied to industrial production—and the less visible maritime industries, represented in the right background by vessels under sail. In some ways, Wall was predicting a future, rightly it turns out, where whaling would gradually decline while mill work would come to dominate the city's life and social fabric. For some of the thirty-year period between 1845 and 1874, though, whaling still dominated the economic life of the city: it cast a large ecological and social shadow as the shipboard and shoreside industry, its laborers, and their families needed to be sustained. The continued preeminence of whaling in turn offered continuing and new opportunities for Wampanoag Indian whalers.

In 1848, New Bedford was home to 255 whaling vessels, almost the same total as the next four most active ports (New London, Nantucket, Sag Harbor, and Fairhaven) combined and more than 35 percent of the total whaling fleet along the Eastern United States.¹ The industry had grown remarkably in the 1830s and 40s, almost doubling the number of wharves so that by 1851 the structures covered thirty-seven acres of filled, estuarine deposits along the west bank of the Acushnet River. By 1857, the industry in New Bedford reached its pre-Civil war peak of 329 registered vessels, valued at twelve million dollars and employing some ten thousand seamen.² Beneath these facts, other factors of change were at work in this thirty-year period. The worldwide demand for lubricants and illuminants—driven by the rise of industrialization and urbanization—led the industry into the Pacific and Indian Oceans on longer voyages in larger vessels. Three to four years at sea became the norm. As new whaling centers emerged around trans-shipment points, even more labor resources were needed. In New Bedford, these needs were solved through the continuing recruitment of unskilled whalers from towns all over the Northeast—the so-called Yankee farm boys—as well as more experienced men from the Azores, Cape Verde Islands, and elsewhere.³

1. Data from *The New Bedford Almanac and Whaleman's Annual, for 1848* (New Bedford, 1847).

2. Richard A. Voyer, Carol Pesch, Jonathan Garber, Jane Copeland, and Randy Comeleo, "New Bedford, Massachusetts: A Story of Urbanization and Ecological Connections," *Environmental History* 5, 3 (2000): 355–58.



Fig. 3.1. "Wamsutta Mills," oil on canvas by William Allen Wall, 1850. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Signs of these changes are already noticeable in New Bedford crew lists of 1840. In that year the ports of the custom district undertook 127 different outgoing voyages. These crew lists are longer than earlier ones, and they offer fewer details on ages, complexions, and hair colors. Residences, however, are usually named, and individual crew lists read like a geography lesson in the towns and cities of New England. For example, a smaller group of thirteen 1840 crew lists for voyages with at least one Indian on board indicates that Indians comprised between 4 and 15 percent (mean = 6.6 percent) of those crews, whose average size was twenty-three (table 3.1). Other men from southern New England were an average of 46.4 percent of these crews, so a little more than half of them (53 percent) came from places within 150 miles of New Bedford. The remaining half were from elsewhere in New England, New York, and Pennsylvania (21.3 percent) or from other states, countries, and islands. A sample of thirty-three voyages with Indians on board between 1845 and 1874 reveals a similar diversity.

3. See Dolin, *Leviathan*, 205–52, and Lance Davis, Robert Gallman, and Teresa Hutchins, *Productivity in American Whaling: The New Bedford Fleet in the Nineteenth Century*, Working Paper No. 2477 (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1987).

Table 3.1. Analysis of Whaling Crews, 13 Voyages with Indians Aboard, 1840

Vessel	Crew Size	N of Indians	% of Indians	Residences of Other Crew Members													Missing Data	
				New Bedford	MA	RI	CT	Other New England	NY	PA	Midd. Atlan.	Other US	Fayal	Sand. Isles	Foreign			
<i>Adeline</i>	28	4	14%	1	5	7				7	2							2
<i>Charleston Packet</i>	21	1	5%	2	5						3	2	1					7
<i>Elizabeth</i>	13	2	15%	4		2	1				1							3
<i>Emma</i>	20	1	5%	12	2									4				1
<i>Frances</i>	23	1	4%	4	2	1					5	1					2	7
<i>Hector</i>	29	1	3.5%	5	8	2				5	1		1				1	5
<i>John</i>	23	1	4%	6	5	2				1	2				1			3
<i>Lalla Rookh</i>	22	1	4.5%	5	4	1	1			1	3						2	3
<i>Lafayette</i>	22	2	9%	3	7	2	2			1	1		2		1			1
<i>Maria</i>	23	1	4%	1	5		2			1	4	3					2	4
<i>Massachusetts</i>	26	1	4%	3	4	1	1			2	7	1	3	1				2
<i>Solon</i>	20	2	10%	1	6		1				4						1	5
<i>Washington</i>	25	1	4%	5	2	1	1			1	3		2				1	9

Key: New Bedford = New Bedford, Fairhaven, Dartmouth, and Westport; New England = Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine; Middle Atlantic = New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia; Other US = all other states; Sand. Isles = Sandwich Islands; Foreign = other countries. Some data are missing. These 1840 New Bedford voyages are the only ones that had at least one Indian on board; one out of ten included at least one Indian.

Wampanoag Whalers, 1845–1874

However, in the larger context of all 127 crew lists from the 1840 voyages, the names of only nineteen verifiable Wampanoag Indian whalers appear. If we assume an average crew size of twenty-two or twenty-three for that year, only 0.7 percent of New Bedford whalers in 1840 were Wampanoag or of other Indian ancestry, compared to the 2.2 percent calculated from a comparable analysis of seventy-six crew lists from 1830.⁴ Over the course of one decade, the percentage of Indian whalers working out of New Bedford decreased by two-thirds at a time when the industry was still growing. An analysis of 1855 crew statistics reveals an even lower proportion of 0.4 percent.⁵

Several factors might account for these changes. For example, as the length of individual voyages increased, one would expect fewer Indian whalers to be leaving New Bedford in any given year because the pool of available men would be smaller. But more of the decline is likely related to labor changes instituted in an era of growth and increasing competition. The demand for whalers (and the desire for adventure) resulted in an influx of young, inexperienced men to New Bedford who filled many of the open spots on each vessel, leaving fewer positions for Indians and making it more difficult for younger Native men to break into the industry. In turn this pattern suggests that the generation of Wampanoags who went whaling between 1845 and 1874 participated in a different industry than their predecessors, one in which it may have been more difficult to make a living as a whaler while also remaining rooted in an ancestral community. Still, the facts and figures on Indian whalers also suggest they continued to be a presence on New Bedford whaling crews.

Between 1845 and 1874, 173 entries were generated for Indian whalers, which represents 102 whalers and 127 voyages.⁶ In this thirty-year period, the terms Indian or Native were used only rarely on the crew lists; color-complexion terms such as black, dark, and yellow appeared more frequently. The identification of Indian whalers (or whalers of Indian ancestry) in the 1815–44 phase was therefore primarily based upon surnames and residences (community affiliations), using the first-phase database as a starting point, together with published lists of Indian mariners.⁷ The approach was conservative throughout; if, for example, a recognizable surname could not be linked to a known Indian community or family and a definable age range, that whaler/voyage was not entered into the 1815–44 database. It's likely this approach

4. The 1830 and 1840 comprehensive samples include 76 and 127 crew lists respectively from the microfilmed records at NBFPL. In each case the total number of lists represents more than 95 percent of the voyages listed in Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*. Average crew sizes (19–20 in 1830 and 22–23 in 1840) are from Table 7 in Davis et al., *Productivity in American Whaling*.

5. The Indian whaler database includes eight entries for the 91 voyages from New Bedford in 1855, on the average crew size of 24.5 persons.

6. The 1845–65 crew lists were entered into project databases using Access software, which allows those data to be searched by name, complexion, residence, and age. Indian-related data were then identified and re-entered into a specific database of Indian whalers. The final database for Phase II Indian whalers (1845–65) was built from a systematic analysis of three sets of New Bedford crew lists (1845, 1855, and 1865) and from data files at the New Bedford Free Public Library including the index card files of whalers and the on-line crew lists and shipping papers available at www.newbedford-ma.gov/Library/Whaling.

7. These lists are Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth* (1861), and Pease, *Report of the Commissioner* (1871).

undercounts the number of New Bedford-based voyages taken by Indian whalers in this period because residential and age data were not always included on each crew list. Still, a conservative approach avoids the problem of including whalers with recognizable surnames who were not Wampanoag or of Indian ancestry.

Of the 127 New Bedford-based whaling voyages with at least one Indian on board, seventy left in the decade between 1845 and 1854, twenty-nine between 1855 and 1864, and twenty-eight from 1865 to 1874. Together these voyages represent about 5 percent of the total departures in the thirty-year period. Even if one assumes that half of the voyages with Indians were missed, only one whaling crew in ten included Wampanoag or other Native men between 1815 and 1844.⁸ Compared to the totals for 1815–44 (Phase 1), there are more than 40 percent fewer entries and voyages and 25 percent fewer Indian whalers documented for the period between 1845 and 1874. Some of the decline is due to longer voyages and the increased availability of unskilled labor. But the changing history of New Bedford whaling also is a factor as the industry felt the disruptive impacts of the Civil War, the loss of vessels in the Arctic disasters of 1871 and 1876, and the decline in whale oil prices as the production and distillation of petroleum grew.⁹ In the fifteen years between 1860 and 1874, one-half fewer whaling vessels left New Bedford and nearby ports, a total of 804 compared to the 1,609 that departed between 1845 and 1859. Fewer voyages necessarily meant fewer crew positions and thus less participation for any ethnic group, including the Wampanoag and other Indian whalers.

Of the 102 documented Indian whalers in this second phase, most were of Wampanoag descent and again came from four ancestral communities on the Cape and Islands, including Mashpee (23 percent of all Indian whalers in the period), Gay Head (47 percent), Christiantown (7 percent), and Chappaquiddick (8 percent).¹⁰ Whalers from these four communities accounted for 85 percent of the total number of Indian mariners, an increase of 10 percent over the 1815–44 period (table 3.2). In addition Joseph Ammons, from the Narragansett Indian community in southern Rhode Island, also shipped out of New Bedford on three voyages between 1845 and 1851, including the *James Maury* (1851) on which he served as second mate. Two more Indians from Native or mixed communities on eastern Long Island with the surname of Cuffee (unrelated to the Cuffes of Westport) also went whaling out of New Bedford in 1865, Abraham on the *Eagle* and Wickham on the *Eugenia*. They represented a new generation of Indian whalers in the Montauk communities around Sag Harbor and Southampton, New York.¹¹

In Phase II (1845–74), the names of far fewer whalers from families of Indian or mixed ancestry in Bristol County appear on crew lists—about one-quarter of the total from Phase I. The names of the Quonwells or Simons are absent, and there are no entries for John Elisha, Isaac Hunter, Lily Page, or Ephraim Prince. This absence is expected as these men all would have been in their forties as Phase II began, too

8. I used vessel counts from Starbuck to calculate the total vessel counts for each year between 1845 and 1874.

9. Everett S. Allen, *Children of the Light. The Rise and Fall of New Bedford Whaling and the Death of the Arctic Fleet* (Orleans, MA: Parnassus Imprints, 1973), 209–66; Dolin, *Leviathan*, 309–69.

10. Of the 86 Wampanoag whalers from the Cape and Islands, 64 (74 percent) appear in the community lists in Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, which again confirms the accuracy of his research.

Table 3.2. Profiles of Indian Whalers, 1845–1874

Number of Whalers	Residence	Ancestral Community	Age Range in Years
	BRISTOL COUNTY		
5	Dartmouth, Westport	Dartmouth	18–44
1	Taunton	Cohannet	34
Subtotal:	6 (6%)		
	THE CAPE		
1	Falmouth	Mashpee	15
21	Mashpee	Mashpee	17–53
1	Sandwich	Mashpee	18
Subtotal:	23 (23%)		
	THE ISLANDS		
14	Chilmark	Gay Head	13–51
8	Edgartown	Chappaquiddick	20–53
33	Gay Head	Gay Head	13–51
1	Rochester	Gay Head	24–39
7	Tisbury	Christiantown	15–28
Subtotal:	63 (62%)		
	OTHER PLACES		
4	Charlestown, RI Long Island	Narragansett	36–41
		Shinnecock	18–39
6	Unknown	Unknown	
TOTAL:	102		

old, perhaps, to have gone whaling. Other familiar family names do appear, however, including Cuffes and Wainers from Dartmouth and Westport. An age analysis of the Phase II Indian whalers is revealing. Of the 154 entries for which there are data, more than half (53 percent) are associated with men between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four while another 26 percent were between twenty-five and thirty-five; eight Indian whalers out of ten in Phase II were thirty-five years old or younger (fig. 3.2). Compared to Phase I whalers, however, there are more older whalers (between the ages of thirty-six and forty-six) in this sample, as if some men extended their careers perhaps in response to a need for skilled, experienced whalers. Few Indian men went whaling after the age of forty-six. Still it is clear that whaling remained an important source of income for younger Wampanoag men and provided them the means to build capital before starting families of their own.

11. Philip Rapito-Wyppensenwah, "Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Native American Whaling of Eastern Long Island," in Gaynell Stone, ed., *The History and Archaeology of the Montauk*, 2nd ed., vol. 3 of *Readings in Long Island Archaeology and Ethnohistory* (Mattituck NY: Amereon for Suffolk County Archaeological Association and Nassau County Archaeological Committee, 1993), 437–44; see also Marion Fisher Ales, "A History of the Indians on Montauk, Long Island," in Gaynell Stone Levine, ed., *History and Archaeology of the Montauk*, 1st ed., vol. 3 of *Readings in Long Island Archaeology and Ethnohistory* (Stony Brook, NY: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, 1979), 13–125.

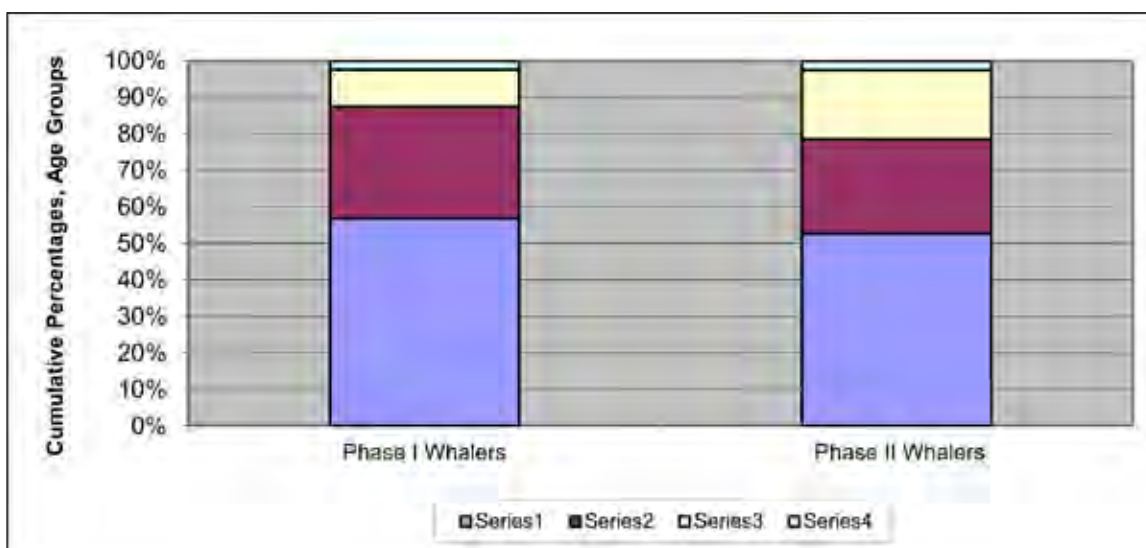


Fig. 3.2. Ages of Indian whalers, phases I (1815–44) and II (1845–74). Age group series—1: 14–24 years; 2: 25–35 years; 3: 36–46 years; 4: 47–57 years.

The Advancement of Indian Whalers

A large ship owner in the whaling fleet remarked that an Indian would always draw a larger share than another man of like general qualifications, in whatever situation he was placed; and an old whaling captain said that an Indian would see a whale further than any other person, and, as a boat-steerer he was sure to capture it, than any others.

—John Milton Earle, 1861

Sometime in the 1860s or 1870s, Matthew Howland, owner of a fleet of New Bedford-based whaling vessels, answered a young Canadian's questions concerning potential earnings and the possibility of career advancement. "The crew of a whaler," he wrote, "are paid by a share in the oil take; the share of a green hand would not likely to amount to more than \$350 or \$400 at the end of a three-year voyage. . . . The promotion of an energetic young man, however, is rapid, since a large proportion of the foremast hands are ignorant blacks and men of mixed blood who have no ambition to rise."¹² Beyond the caricatures and stereotypes Howland offered, questions remain about the historic realities of work and advancement on whaling vessels in the 1845–74 period. How diverse were whaling crews of the period? What percentage of foremast hands were mariners of color? Did Indians, as a group, advance up the career ladder in predictable ways, even as more and more crew positions were filled with young "outsiders" with little experience? Is there any evidence that whalers of color received less pay for doing the same job as Yankees or foreign mariners from other countries?¹³

12. Quoted in Allen, *Children of the Light*, 126. See also James Farr, "A Slow Boat to Nowhere: The Multi-Racial Crews of the American Whaling Industry," *Journal of Negro History* 68, 2 (1983): 165.

13. See Lee A. Craig and Robert M. Fearn, "Wage Discrimination and Occupational Crowding in a Competitive Industry: Evidence from the American Whaling Industry," *Journal of Economic History* 53, 1 (1993): 123–38, and Farr, "Multi-Racial Crews."

For voyages in this second phase, often there are shipping papers linked to the crew lists, so some data on crew positions and lays helps explore these questions. Other data are also available in a sample of thirty-four crew lists that represent 27 percent of all Phase II voyages with at least one Indian on board (table 3.3). For each list, the crew size and number of Indians, blacks, and mulattos were counted. Crew size in this sample varied between fifteen and thirty-two men, including from one to six Indians. Overall, whalers of color comprised between 3 and 40 percent of these crews. On 65 percent of the voyages there was at least one Indian and one or two other persons of color; on the remainder there were two or more Indians and three or four or more other blacks and mulattos. Whalers of color in this sample, averaged 13.7 percent of the entire crew in the 1845–74 phase, substantially less than 21.1 percent of crews in the 1815–44 phase. Although more research is needed, it is becoming evident there are fewer men of color overall on New Bedford whaling vessels between 1845 and 1874.

But even if crews were less diverse in their appearance and ancestry, Indian whalers were still able to progress along a career ladder (fig. 3.3). After their initial voyages as boys or greenhands, Indian whalers in their teens and early twenties served as “ordinary seamen” or boatsteerers and then became fourth and third mates later in their careers. Of the 115 entries on crew positions, sixty-one Indians (53 percent) served as mates of some kind, beginning in their mid-twenties and continuing into their mid-forties. Twenty-eight of thirty-three Indians were second and first mates on Phase II voyages, usually when they were in their thirties and forties. But some, including the Webquish brothers from Mashpee, also held senior positions when they were younger, in their mid- to late twenties. Perhaps their skills and cultural ancestry provided them with opportunities in an era when more experienced seamen were fewer in number.

The life histories of five of the thirty-three Indians who served as second and first mates in this period is illustrative.¹⁴ Isaac Johnson and Isaac D. Rose were Gay Head Indians whose whaling careers in New Bedford began in the 1820s, when they were in their teens, and continued into the early 1850s. Johnson was born in Gay Head about 1808. His mother, Hannah Johnson, was the daughter of Isaac and Macy Johnson, both of whom appear on Baylies' 1823 list of Martha Vineyard Indians.¹⁵ The whaleman Isaac, then fifteen years old, is also on that list, where he was described as half-Indian, one-quarter black, and one-quarter white, which suggests that both his mother and unknown father were of mixed ancestry.

Johnson's first appearance on a crew list was for a voyage of the Fairhaven ship *Amazon* in 1824, when he was seventeen. He then appeared on six more lists between 1825 and 1850, with two gaps of four to seven years each. Presumably he began as a greenhand, likely progressing to boatsteerer by his mid-twenties. On the 1845 voyage of the ship *Rebecca Sims* of New Bedford, Johnson is listed as a boatsteerer at a lay of 1/80. His next and last position for which there are data was second mate on a two-year long voyage of the Provincetown bark *Samuel and Thomas*, on which five other Gay Head Indian men served. Johnson, thirty-nine years old in 1846, shipped at a lay

14. For seven of these thirty-three, longitudinal data (four or more voyages, ten or more years) exists.

15. The 1823 list of Frederick Baylies, comp., “The Names and Ages of the Indians on Martha's Vineyard,” 1823, MSS A, S53, New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), Boston.

Table 3.3: Diversity of Whaling Crews, 1815–1844 and 1845–1874

Decade and N of Voyages	N of Indians		N of Blacks		N of Mulattos		% Whalers of Color	
	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.
1815–24 (22)	1–5	2	0–10	3.5	0–2	.5	8–67	33.5
1825–34 (46)	1–5	2+	0–5	2+	0–3	.4+	4–45	20.7
1835–44 (4)	1–6	2.5	0	0	0	0	4–17	9
1845–54 (17)	1–6	2	0–6	1.5+	0–2	.2+	3–40	16.6
1855–64 (5)	1	1	0–2	.8	0	0	3–20	9.8
1865–74 (12)	1–5	1.9+	0–6	2+	0–1	.1	3–32	14.8

of 1/27 and was likely married with a family, though he does not appear on any of the known Gay Head lists or on the federal censuses of 1850–70.¹⁶

Johnson's contemporary, Isaac D. Rose was a Bristol County Wampanoag by birth (1811) and a Gay Header by marriage; Earle listed him and his second wife, Harriet Walmsley, there with an eleven-year-old son and sixteen-year-old daughter. By 1860 Rose was forty-seven years old and identified as a farmer, though he had gone whaling out of New Bedford five times between 1827 and 1844 and then twice more between mid-1845 and mid-1855. He began whaling when he was sixteen. On the last three of these voyages Rose served as third mate twice and then as second mate on the 1852 voyage of the *Clara Bell*.¹⁷ Both Isaac and Harriet Rose appear in the 1870 Gay Head federal census. On Richard Pease's 1871 list, they were listed with two daughters; Etta (Harriet E.) was born in 1860 after Isaac's whaling career had ended. Other than working a small farm with several milk cows, a pair of oxen, three cattle, and a swine, Isaac Rose also served the Gay Head Indian community as town clerk. Harriet and he were still living in Gay Head in 1880 with Etta, who taught school; Isaac, sixty-eight years old, was still farming.

Richard Gould, a Wampanoag Indian from the Chappaquiddick community,

16. An Isaac Johnson of Gay Head married Sarah Johnson in May 1838; likely this is the whaler though their subsequent lives remain unknown. Marriage notice in the *Vital Records of Chilmark, Massachusetts to the Year 1850* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1906), 57.

17. In 1860, Isaac Rose was mentioned in "A Summer in New England," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, September 1860, 442–61. Recounted there is the story of two reporters' visit to Gay Head during which they shared a meal with Isaac and Harriet Rose, whose house they described as small yet of "a better sort" than others in the community. Rose was described as "very intelligent and well mannered," a "professional sailor who made his last voyage as a first mate" (451–52).

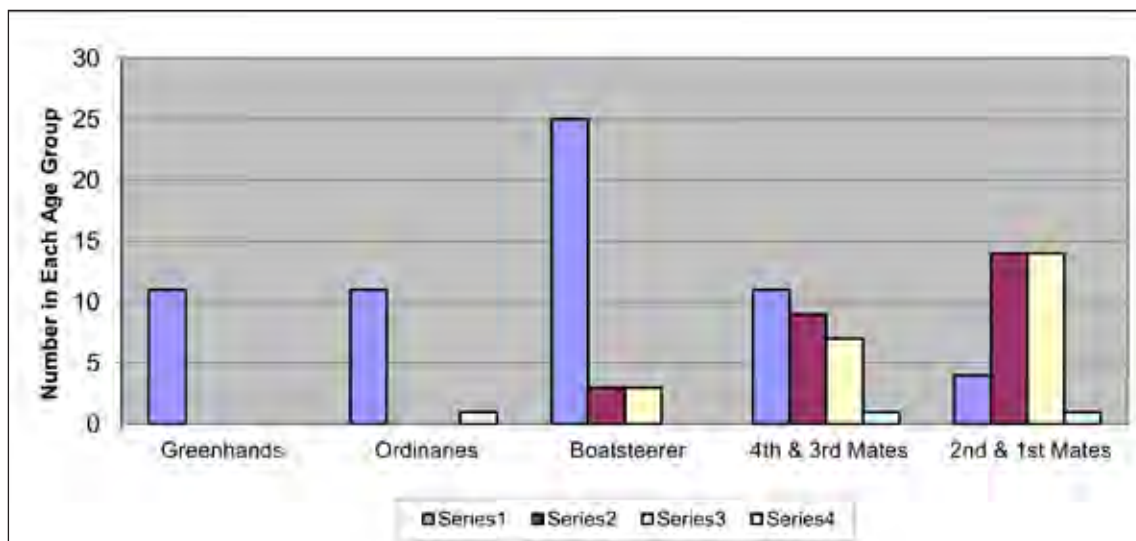


Fig. 3.3. Crew positions by age group, Indian whalers. Age group series—1: 14–24 years; 2: 25–35 years; 3: 36–46 years; 4: 47–57 years.

served as a second or first mate on four New Bedford-based whaling vessels between 1851 and 1863.¹⁸ Born about 1820–21, Gould was not represented on any extant crew lists in New Bedford, which suggests that he gained experience elsewhere, perhaps sailing out of Nantucket ports in the late 1830s and 1840s. By 1860 Gould, his Narragansett Indian wife Sarah, and their son Richard W. were living in Ward 4 of New Bedford, and the federal census listed him as a thirty-nine-year-old seaman. His household included five other men, four of them seamen, from Rhode Island and Pennsylvania and an Irish immigrant domestic servant. By 1870, the Gould family had moved to Boston, where they lived in a tenement in the city's third ward with ten others, all people of color listed as mulattos and blacks from the West Indies, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Massachusetts. The men variously worked as laborers or mariners including Gould, then fifty years old, who is listed as being “at sea.” In the 1880 census, neither Richard nor Sarah Gould appear in any Massachusetts listing, but their son Richard, then thirty-one years old and a laborer, lived in Boston's Hyde Park.

Amos Haskins Jr. (1816–1860) was among the best known of Wampanoag Indian whalers (fig. 3.4). His parents were both Indian: his mother, Bathsheba Occuch (Akoochuk/Ocooch), was from a Gay Head family whose roots extend to the mid-eighteenth century, and his father, Amos Sr., was from an ancestral community in Rochester or Mattapoissett. The family lived in Mattapoissett in the 1820s and 1830s, when Amos Jr. and his brothers were growing up.¹⁹ Not much is known of Haskins's early whaling career. He first appears on New Bedford crew lists in 1841 and 1843, when he was in his mid-twenties and served as second and first mates respectively on the New Bedford bark *Chase* and the Mattapoissett brig *Annawan II*. Clearly by then

18. Gould is listed in Bird, *Report of the Commissioners* (1849), and Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth* (1861).

19. The household of Amos and Bathsheba is represented in the 1830 federal census for Rochester, Massachusetts by two adults and four children (two sons and two daughters), all “free colored persons.”



Fig. 3.4. Captain Amos Haskins, daguerreotype, about 1855. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

he was an experienced whaler who had built his skills on earlier voyages, perhaps out of Nantucket where he might have joined crews with other Gay Head Indians (table 3.4).

Soon after the return of the *Annawan II* in early October 1844, Haskins married Elizabeth Farmer, an African American, in New Bedford. The couple settled in that city and began their family. By 1850 Haskins had gone whaling three more times, once as first mate of the Mattapoisett bark *Elizabeth*. He and his wife lived in New Bedford with three daughters between the ages of six months to four years, Elizabeth's mother, and Alexander and Margaret Kell, African Americans who were probably boarders. Over the next few years Haskins was master on at least two whaling voyages on the bark *Massasoit* out of Mattapoisett. The net proceeds from those voyages likely provided some of the capital he used in October 1852 to buy 7.75 rods of

land and a "cozy New Bedford house" at 109 William Street, within ten blocks of the waterfront.²⁰ In August 1857, Haskins paid off the mortgage on this property, although he was cited for back taxes three times between 1859 and 1861.²¹

The 109 William address is where the family is recorded in the 1859 New Bedford directory. The 1860 census recorded that Amos and Elizabeth had had two more daughters by then, making five in all, ranging from two to fourteen years old. Amos was identified as a seaman in that census. In November 1861, however, Haskins was lost at sea from the *March*; he was forty-five years old.²² His grave in the city's Rural Cemetery is marked. Haskins's widow Elizabeth continued to live on at 109 William Street at least until 1875.

Amos Haskins's whaling career spanned more than twenty-five years during which he progressed, apparently from youthful service as a greenhand and boatsteerer, to senior positions as mates and then captain in the 1850s. While master of the *Massasoit*, his crews included five to six other whalers of color (about 30 percent of the crew in each case), more than twice the number than in crews when he was

20. The quote is from A. B. C. Whipple, *The Whalers* (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1979), 69.

21. New Bedford Land Records: Volumes 24:501-502 (1853), 25:230 (1853) and 34:276-277 (1857). Tax problems documented in Volume 48:358-360.

22. Sadly one of Amos and Elizabeth's daughters, Emma Kell Haskins, also died in November 1861. Notice from "Deaths Recorded in the *New Bedford Mercury*, 1845-1874, Volume II." Special Collections, New Bedford Free Public Library.

Table 3.4. Amos Haskins's Whaling Voyages

Vessel	Departure: Time and Place	Destination	Rank	Lay
<i>Chase</i>	April 1841 from New Bedford	Atlantic whaling grounds	2nd mate	1/34
<i>Annawan</i>	April 1843 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	1st mate	1/23
<i>Cachalot</i>	April 1845 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	"mate"	
<i>Willis</i>	November 1847 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	"mate"	
<i>Elizabeth</i>	April 1849 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	Mate	1/17
<i>Massasoit</i>	January 1851 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	Captain	1/14
<i>Massasoit</i>	November 1852 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	Captain	1/15
<i>Oscar</i>	September 1857 from Mattapoissett	North Pacific	Unknown	
<i>March</i>	May 1860 from Mattapoissett	Atlantic whaling grounds	1st mate	

not in charge. The crew on the 1852 voyage of the *Massasoit* included four other Wampanoag whalers from Gay Head and Chapaquiddick, including the brothers George and William Belain who served as first and second mates respectively.

Samuel J. Haskins, Amos's younger brother by some thirteen to fifteen years, was also a New Bedford-based Indian whaler who served on six or seven crews between 1846 and 1865. He started whaling as an ordinary seaman at age fourteen on the *Annawan II* and then served as boatsteerer at least twice between 1850 and 1856 before advancing to second mate in the late 1850s. Earle listed Samuel Haskins as a single, twenty-eight-year-old mariner and member of the Gay Head community. By 1870, he had married and was living in Gay Head with his wife and two infant children; in the 1870s Haskins and his wife had three more children, one of them Theodore, born in 1872. The 1880 census lists Samuel J. Haskins as a fifty-year-old sailor, and by 1900 he was a farmer, seventy years old and still living in Gay Head with his wife and two grown children. One of them was Theodore, who worked at a Coast Guard station and farmed on the Vineyard until the mid 1920s, when he and his family resettled in New Bedford. Theodore's granddaughter is Edith Andrews, born and raised in New Bedford and still active in Wampanoag Indian affairs.

Being Indians and Citizens:

Wampanoag Whalers and Their Communities, 1845–1874

Of the 127 whaling voyages with Indians on board between 1845 and 1874, twenty-four (almost one in five) included two or more Indians, somewhat less than the 25 percent of voyages with two or more in crews in the 1815–44 period. Three-fourths of the pairs or cohorts of Indian whalers involved men from the same ancestral community, mostly from Mashpee or Gay Head, which indicates that some whaling

recruiters continued to focus on Wampanoag settlements as a source of skilled mariners in their twenties. In two cases, the 1850 voyage of the *Samuel and Thomas* and the 1852 journey of the *Massasoit*, the groups of five or six Indian whalers included youth in their teens and older experienced men who may have been acting as mentors.

The “tribal” lists in Earle’s 1861 report indicate that between 25 and 67 percent of adult Wampanoag males from four communities on Martha’s Vineyard were involved in the whaling industry (see table 1.1). There are sixty-three whalers (62 percent of the total) in the 1845–74 database from these same communities; Gay Headers account for three-quarters of the total while the other, fifteen men, were from Chappaquiddick and Christiantown, smaller communities where whaling still played an important economic role in the mid- to late nineteenth century. In 1860, these two reservations were each home to fourteen or fifteen families and fifty to seventy-five individuals. Between 65 and 75 percent of each population was between ten and fifty years old, while those older than fifty and young than ten were almost balanced, data that suggest these were stable, viable communities.²³ In both places, whaling provided employment and income, especially for younger Wampanoag men. About 1860 Earle wrote, “The young men usually go to sea, or seek employment, away from home, till they have obtained money enough to build them a comfortable house, so that they have a home, and then employ their time in fishing, or any other paying employment which they can obtain, and their land gives them work for any time that is not more profitably occupied.”²⁴

Seventeen Wampanoag men worked as whalers from Christiantown and Chappaquiddick on twenty-three New Bedford-based voyages between 1845 and 1871. More than 80 percent of them were between fourteen and thirty-five years old. Nine men from the Chappaquiddick community appear in the 1845–74 database, eight of whom lived in the ancestral community in family households or in houses of their own (Francis Goodrich and Thomas Layton); Richard Gould lived in New Bedford with his family. These eight included two pairs of brothers, Frederick and Thaddeus Cook and Francis and Simeon Goodrich. Francis Goodrich’s whaling career began about 1829 in New Bedford and continued into 1851 when he returned from a voyage on the New Bedford ship *Draper* when he was forty-three or forty-four. While he was away, his wife and two children lived in the family home on the south side of the reserve.

Two Chappaquiddick men, James W. Brown and Thomas Layton, were the younger brothers of whalers with connections to New Bedford in the 1830s; another, George Henry Simpson, had an uncle (Johnson Simpson from Christiantown) who served on whaling vessels in the late 1820s and 1830s. Both George Simpson and Joseph Sams Jr. began their careers before the age of seventeen; their earnings would have contributed valuable income to their families, each of which included two or three of their siblings. Joseph Sams went whaling when he was sixteen on the New Bedford ship *Cornelius Howland* in 1854 but died on the voyage. His earnings of \$17.93 were paid out to his widowed mother Jane in July 1858, two months after the *Cornelius Howland* returned to port.²⁵

23. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 15, 25.

24. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 17.

Most of the Chappaquiddick Indian whalers in the 1845-74 period appear in Earle's 1861 lists as single mariners between the ages of twenty and thirty-four. By 1860 both Francis Goodrich and Thomas Layton were older, fifty-three and forty-six years old respectively, and were farming small plots and raising livestock even though the quality of the soil on Martha's Vineyard was sandy and poor and not easily replenished (fig. 3.5). Still in the 1870 census of the Chappaquiddick community, four men are listed as farmers, ages thirty-nine to fifty-seven, including William Belain, a Gay Head mariner in his youth, and Isaac Joab, a Wampanoag mariner originally from Deep Bottom (now part of Tisbury on the Vineyard). Six men were mariners, four of them in their forties including Frederick Cook who, like his brother Thaddeus, went whaling out of New Bedford in the early 1850s.²⁶

Eight Wampanoags from the Christiantown community participated in eleven New Bedford-based whaling voyages between 1845 and 1871; the majority took place between 1845 and 1855. They were between fifteen and thirty-four years old, and, unlike the Chappaquiddick mariners, there were no older men among them. Of the eight, six lived with their natal families or in houses of their own (James DeGrass, Joseph Mingo, and Asa Peters) on the reservation in West Tisbury (fig. 7.6). The DeGrass brothers, James W. and George W., went whaling out of New Bedford in the later 1840s; James was second mate on the bark *Draco* (1847), while George served as a boatsteerer once, on the New London ship *Phenix* in 1846. James, who was older by some six years, actually began his career in 1834, when he was seventeen, on the New Bedford bark *Pioneer*; he followed another brother, Silas, who went whaling in 1826 and 1830. Both George and James DeGrass appear in Earle's 1861 list as heads of household. James was married and farming sixteen acres. Joseph Mingo and Asa Peters, also of Christiantown, became farmers after whaling for a while in the late 1840s and early 1850s (fig. 3.6). By 1860 Mingo, then thirty-three, had married a Gay Head woman and was working eight acres. Asa Peters, whose three older brothers went whaling on seven voyages from New Bedford between 1827 and 1835, had become a farmer by 1860, when he was forty-six years old. He farmed twenty-two acres, was married to a Chappaquiddick woman, and had six children then between two and nineteen years old.²⁷

In the 1870 census of the Christiantown Indian community, then forty or more persons identified as blacks, were enumerated in eleven households. Only one adult man, Charles W. James, was listed as a farmer, and Earle had identified him as part of the community in 1861. Six men between the ages of seventeen and forty-nine called themselves mariners, including George De Grass and William Sanders/Saunders, both of whom Earle had also listed. Another five men, between thirty and fifty years old, worked as laborers, while three were skilled artisans, one a fisherman (Asa Peters), and two carpenters, Joseph and Samuel Mingo. In his youth, Joseph Mingo had been a whaler; in his thirties after marriage, he became a farmer; later on in his forties, he worked alongside his father as a carpenter.

25. See "1858 Accounts for Christiantown and Chappaquiddick Indians," in "Accounts and Correspondence, Guardians of the Indians," Massachusetts Archives.

26. See the 1870 federal census for Edgartown, MA, which enumerates fifty-two "blacks," mostly from the Chappaquiddick community.

27. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix vii.



Fig. 3.5. Chappaquiddick Indian settlement, detail from Henry F. Walling, *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket, Massachusetts* (1858). Five houses of known whalers are marked with green dots.



Fig. 3.6. Christiantown Indian settlement, detail from Henry F. Walling, *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket, Massachusetts* (1858). Five houses of known whalers are marked with red dots.

In July 1850, the bark *Samuel and Thomas* left Mattapoisett on an almost two-year-long whaling voyage. Among the crew of sixteen men were six Wampanoag from the Gay Head community, three of whom were between sixteen and twenty-three years old, including Joel Jared, the third mate. The other three, between thirty-nine and fifty-one years old, included first mate George J. Belain (father of William Belain, a boatsteerer at age sixteen). Three of the men, the two Belains and Joel Jared, had served together before on the 1843 voyage of the New Bedford ship *Adeline*. George Belain shopped at lay of 1/17, second mate Isaac Johnson at 1/27, third mate Jared at 1/40; Samuel Haskins and William Belain, still both in their teens, were boatsteerers who shipped at 1/70 and 1/58 lays, respectively. Jonathan Francis, then fifty-one years old and the cook on the voyage, was the sixth Gay Header.

Commanded by Thomas F. Lambert, the *Samuel and Thomas* was at sea for twenty-three months. Joel Jared kept a journal of the voyage, as he had during the 1846–50 voyage of the New Bedford ship *Amethyst*, on which he had been a boatsteerer along with Joseph Belain of Gay Head and William S. James of Christiantown. Jared's drawing and illustration skills are evident in both journals: in the *Amethyst's* he often sketched other vessels the ship encountered or painted scenes of anchorages, including a memorable one from July 1849 when the *Amethyst* was anchored at Tombez [Tombe], a harbor in the Solomon Island chain.

On the *Samuel and Thomas*, Jared had more responsibility and less time to draw and paint, so his journal is mostly illustrated with block stamps of different kinds of whales, representing the kills made (and whales sometimes lost) on different days (fig. 3.7). On one page near the beginning of this journal Jared kept a running tally of the twenty-nine whales taken between the first, on 23 August 1850, and 8 August 1851, almost a full year. Many of the stamps are annotated with the names of the harpooners and their whaleboats. Of the twenty-nine whales, at least nine were specifically attributed to one of the Gay Headers (George or William Belain, Isaac Johnson, or Samuel Haskins), more than 30 percent of the total. The second year of the voyage was also productive, including one remarkable day, 25 April 1852, when the crew took seven whales off the Bahamas. Jared then reported the *Samuel and Thomas* crossed the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras on 4 June and was “bound home”; the vessel arrived in Mattapoisett on 11 June with “breezes from the SW.”²⁸

In January 1845, while the *Adeline* was at sea, seventy-eight Gay Head Indians (forty-six women and thirty-two men) signed and sent a petition to the Massachusetts General Court “praying for a law to protect their Cranberries.” In it they complained that the annual harvests were being abused by “people who have no rights to gather them” and by Native proprietors who had rights but overused them, “caring little for the Benefit of the Tribe.” They asked the legislature to enact laws and penalties regulating the gathering. Of the thirty-two men who signed the petition, seventeen were whalers with documented voyages between 1821 and 1870. The names of George and William Belain and Joel Jared were absent, for the *Adeline* did not return to New Bedford until late April 1846.²⁹ In the 1850s and 1860s, the harvest and sale of cranberries—those not reserved for home use—was one of the few sources of cash income available to Gay Head Wampanoag families, together with the sale of clays from their cliffs and the leasing of pasture lots to other Vineyarders. In the latter case, proceeds were used to care for the community’s sick and poor.³⁰ In this small-scale, mostly traditional economy, whaling played a crucial role, providing much-needed capital and work experience, as Earle noted:

Nearly every man on the Head has spent a greater or less portion of his life at sea, usually at whaling. They commence young, frequently before getting the schooling necessary for business; and those who are successful, when they have accumulated enough to build a house, return and settle down; while those who are not, usually continue seamen through life, or find a new home abroad.³¹

Between 1845 and 1874, forty-nine Gay Head Wampanoag men went whaling out of New Bedford or nearby ports and accounted for eighty-eight entries in 1845–74 data base, or 51 percent of the total. Eighteen of these whalers, including Samuel Haskins, went out more than once. From 1845 through 1859, Gay Head whalers ranged in age from fourteen to fifty-one; about 20 percent of them were between their mid-thirties

28. The story of the *Samuel and Thomas* is based on the crew list and shipping papers preserved in the whaling collection at NBFPL and Jared’s journal of the voyage, Kendall Whaling Museum Logbook No. 633, NBWM.

29. See Massachusetts Acts 1845, Chapter 202. The community petition can be found in the legislative packet that accompanies this act, Massachusetts Archives.

30. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 32.

31. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 36.

and mid-forties, men who were prolonging their whaling careers while sometimes serving as mentors for their sons or other community youth. George Belain played that role on both the 1850 voyage of the *Samuel and Thomas*, when he was forty, and the 1852 voyage of the *Massasoit*, the latter commanded by Amos Haskins. On that

voyage seventeen-year-old John Divine Jr. (age 17) and fourteen-year-old George Henry Simpson of Chappaquiddick served respectively as an ordinary seaman and greenhand.

George David, William Jeffers, and Isaac Rose, all Gay Headers, also went whaling in their forties and left behind wives and young children. By 1860, David was fifty-one years old and Rose forty-seven; both were farming, having retired from the whaling life. Jeffers, age fifty-one, was still a mariner (fig. 3.8).³² Philip Dodge, then in his thirties, went whaling twice between 1848 and 1857, thus continuing a New Bedford-based career he started at the age of twenty in 1834 on the ship *Herald 2d*. In 1860 Dodge was a single

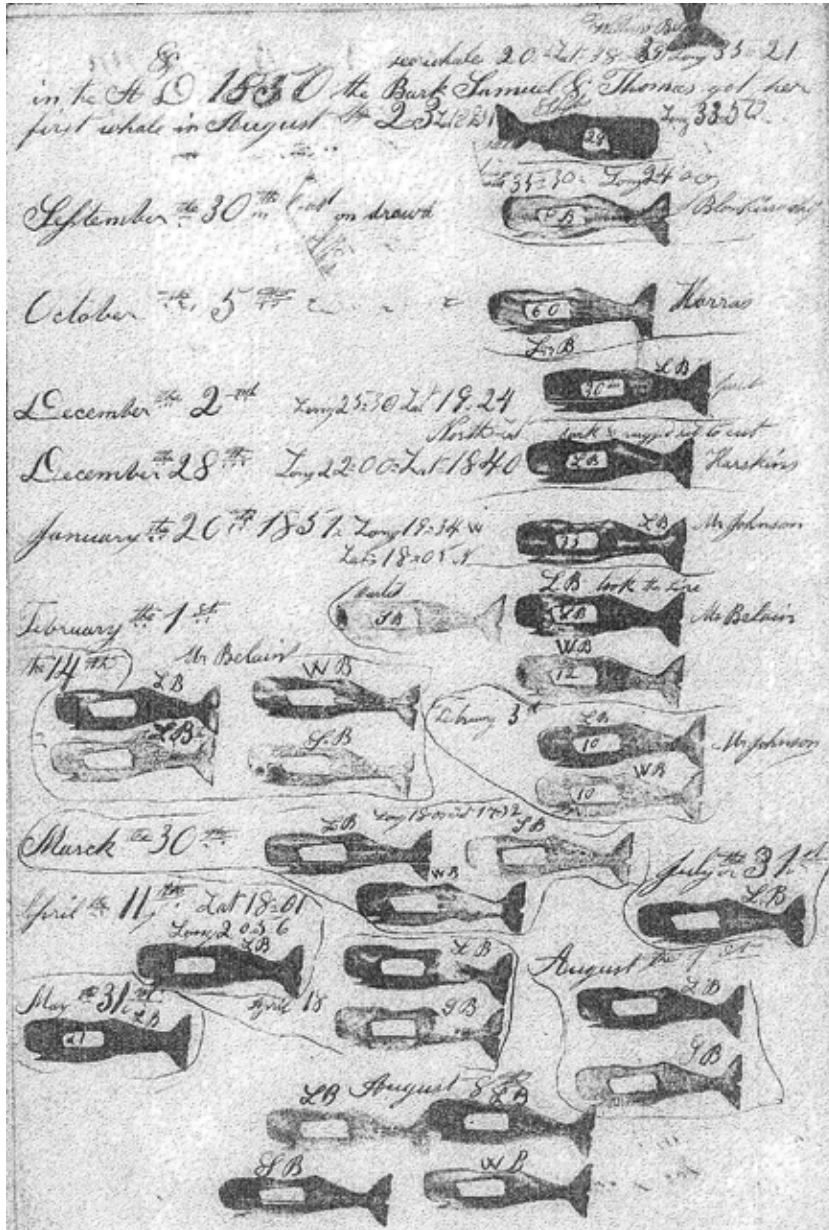


Fig. 3.7. Record of whales killed on the *Samuel and Thomas*, August 1850-August 1851, drawn by third mate Joel Jared. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum Library.

32. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix xii.



Fig. 3.8. Deacon Thomas Jeffers (1828-1916) and Aaron Cooper of Gay Head, about 1900. After his whaling career in the 1840s and 50s (seven documented voyages between the ages of fifteen and twenty-six), Jeffers (at left) was active in Gay Head affairs into the early 1900s. Aaron Cooper, Jeffers' contemporary, was listed as a farmer in Earle's 1860 census. His name does not appear in any crew lists although his father went whaling in the 1820s and 1830s. Courtesy Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 2004.1.283.11.

mariner. Likewise Isaac Johnson's career spanned a more than twenty-five years, beginning in 1824 and culminating with his service as second mate on the 1850 voyage of the *Samuel and Thomas*. Other Gay Head men began their careers in the late 1840s or early 1850s, including Simon Johnson 2nd, Abel Manning, Thomas Jeffers, and Joel Jared. Jeffers was a second-generation whaler; his father Amos Jeffers was thirty-one, married, and had at least six children when he joined the crew of the schooner *President* out of New Bedford in 1816.³³ Thomas was born about 1826 and started his whaling career at age 15 on the 1840 voyage of the *Adeline*. Over the

next twenty years, he appears on six more crew lists, advancing from boatsteerer to 4th, 3rd, and then first mate, age 26, on the 1853 voyage of the *March*. By 1860, Jeffers was still whaling, married to a Gay Head woman; they had three young children, ages 1-5, including two sons Thomas C. and Amos. In the next decade Thomas Jeffers retired from whaling, appearing in Pease's 1870 list and in the 1880 federal census as a farmer. In 1880 his son Thomas C. was twenty-six and a fisherman.

Joel Jared (also spelled Jerett, Jerrod, Jearard) was almost the same age as Thomas Jeffers. Born about 1827 to Josiah Jerrod, from a "colored family" of Mashpee," and his wife Olive, a Gay Head Howwoswee, Jared grew up in Mashpee. By the early 1840s he was living with his family at Gay Head; his father signed the 1845 cranberry petition. He began whaling when he was sixteen on the 1843 voyage of the ship *Adeline* and continued for more than fifteen years; he was boatsteerer on the *Amethyst* (1846-50), third mate on the *Samuel and Thomas* (1850-52), and second mate on the New Bedford bark *Anaconda* (1856-60). By 1860 Jared was thirty-three and married to a Gay Head woman; they then had no children, and Jared's older brother Abraham was living with them.³⁴ Both were mariners. Their parents also

33. Amos and his wife Bethiah appear on the 1823 census of Vineyard Indians in the Gay Head community; they are both listed as half Indian, one-quarter black, and one-quarter white. Their six children ranged in age from three to fifteen and did not yet include Thomas. See MSS A, S53, NEHGS.

lived in Gay Head at the time; Josiah Jerrod was sixty-one years old and also identified as a mariner although he was away, staying in a hospital for the insane in Taunton, Massachusetts.³⁵ Abraham Jared and his mother Olive appear in Pease's 1871 Gay Head list, but Joel Jared does not, nor was he listed in the 1880 federal census. Yet in his journals he left a remarkable record of his life as whaler; they are among the dozen or so such documents that can be associated with Indian whalers.³⁶

Between 1860 and 1874, almost 70 percent of Gay Head whalers were between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four, almost 25 percent more than had gone whaling in the fifteen years previous. A younger generation of Gay Head Wampanoag had begun to build whaling careers including four Belains (all sons of George J.), Alexander David, Charles Madison, Daniel Nevers, four Peterses (all sons of Samuel Peters), Benjamin Rodman, James Sylvia, and three sons of William A. Vanderhoop, a foreigner (and "colored person") from Surinam who came to Gay Head sometime in the 1830s, married a Gay Head woman, and settled into the community. Between 1860 and 1874, this group participated in twenty-six voyages out of New Bedford.

Many of these new whalers were the sons (and sometimes grandsons) of men who appear in the 1815-44 database, and who in their later shoreside lives became community leaders and activists (fig. 3.9). In January 1863, for example, five Wampanoag men—Thomas Jeffers, Zaccheus Cooper, Samuel Peters, Charles Mingo, and George Belain, all whalers in their earlier lives and now Gay Head selectmen—signed and sent a petition to the Massachusetts General Court that sought state aid for a surveying and mapping project meant to create a formal record of the bounds of both common and individually owned lots in the community. According to the selectmen, this need, and the petition, had been reviewed and approved by a "unanimous vote past [passed] at a Town meeting held on the 17th January 1862." After legislative review and approval, the work began within a year but was not completed until the spring of 1871.³⁷

Meanwhile other acts and petitions were written that affected the Gay Head Indian community and its residents. In June 1869 the Massachusetts Legislature passed "An Act to Enfranchise the Indians of the Commonwealth" through which "all Indians and people of color, heretofore known and called

34. Abraham Jared went whaling twice out of New Bedford between June 1842 and February 1848 (see entries in Phase I data base).

35. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix xii.

36. I'm indebted to Nancy Shoemaker for pointing me towards Jared's journals. She has identified eighteen logs and journals kept by New England Indians, thirteen of which can be linked to Wampanoag whalers.

37. Pease, *Report of the Commissioner*. The January 1863 petition is preserved in a legislative packet at the Massachusetts Archives; see materials associated with Massachusetts Resolves, 1863 Chapter 42. See also Massachusetts Acts, 1862 Chapter 184, Section 5 for the original provision concerning the mapping project at Gay Head. Beneath the 1863 petition were long-standing community concerns about its land base. For more than fifty years, there had been conflicts with Chilmark residents regarding the reservation's boundaries. And in August 1859, Zaccheus Howwoswee wrote John Milton Earle to complain of community members who "go away from Gayhead and leave their parents and never return but their children or grand children will come for us to support or claim to be equal with us in our common stock," including access to land. See Howwoswee to Earle, August 1859, box 2, folder 3, Earle Papers. Certainly Howwoswee was pointing, in part, at whalers.

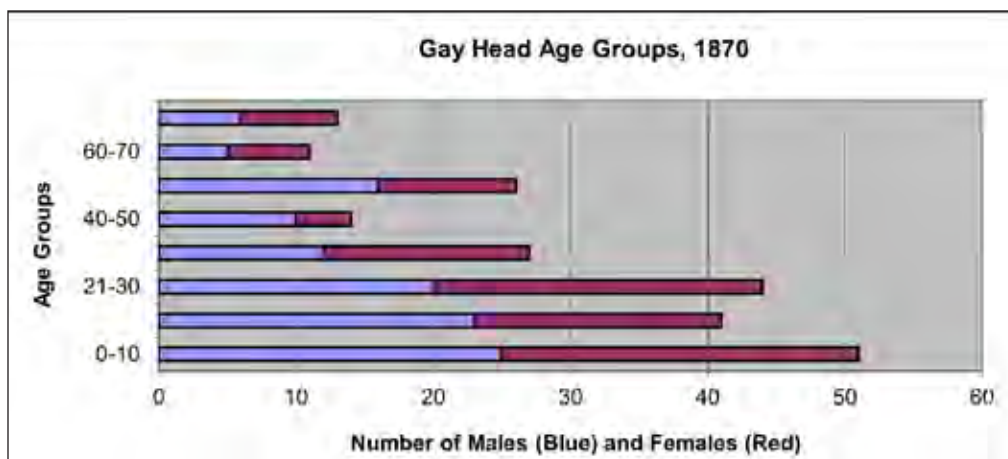


Fig. 3.9. Age groups, Gay Head, 1870.

Indians, are hereby made and declared to be citizens of the Commonwealth, entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities. . . to which [other] citizens are entitled or subject.”³⁸ The seemingly democratic intent of the 1869 act was, however, disputed by Wampanoag communities at Gay Head in part because of other provisions that likely would erode ancestral land bases. “All lands heretofore known as Indians lands and rightfully held by any Indian in severalty, and all such lands which have been or may be set off to any Indian,” the act stated, “shall be and become the property of such person and his heirs in fee simple.”³⁹

The Gay Head community’s concerns had been outlined in a petition received in February 1869, more than four months before the act was passed in Boston. This document was approved unanimously “at a town meeting legally notified and held on January 30, 1869” and signed by Aaron Cooper (selectman), Thomas Jeffers (treasurer and selectman), and Isaac D. Rose (clerk), all former whalers working on behalf of the community.⁴⁰ In response to this petition, the legislature appointed a joint committee to travel to Gay Head and meet with the community. This meeting happened during the summer of 1869, and the committee’s report, printed in January 1870, did not advocate for the overturning of the 1869 “Enfranchisement Act;” instead it recommended that Gay Head be incorporated as a separate town with “all the powers, privileges, rights, and immunities” that other Massachusetts towns then received. In April 1870, an “Act to Incorporate the Town of Gay Head,” was passed, which

38. Massachusetts Acts, 1869 Chapter 463. See the insightful study by Ann Marie Plane and Gregory Button, “The Massachusetts Indian Enfranchisement Act: Ethnic Contest in Historical Context, 1849-1869,” *Ethnohistory* 40 (1993): 587–618.

39. Massachusetts Acts, 1869 Chapter 463, Section 2.

40. The January 1869 petition is preserved in a legislative packet at the Massachusetts Archives; see materials associated with Massachusetts Acts, 1870 Chapter 213. There is a second petition from eight residents who did wish to become “citizens of the commonwealth” so that they had rights to own and improve property. Among them was Samuel J. Haskins, brother of Amos Haskins, a whaler of Gay Head ancestry (through his mother) who had spent lots of time living on the mainland. In the community’s eyes, Haskins would have been granted access to land for farming but would not have been eligible to “own and sell land” as an individual the way full-time residents could.

legalized once and forever the status of that Wampanoag community.⁴¹

Certainly the younger generation of Gay Head Indian whalers participated in the community meetings of the 1860s and 1870s when they were at home. They may have even discussed the issues while at sea. In a sample of sixteen such men, eleven went whaling with one or more Gay Headers but on only five different voyages. On four of those, only pairs of community members were involved, but there were five on the almost four-year voyage of the New Bedford bark *Atlantic* in 1872, almost four years in length, including Daniel Belain (age seventeen), Abram Cooper (twenty), and Francis F. Peters (twenty), whose fathers were involved in the debates over land rights and citizenship.

Interestingly, although there were three sets of Gay Head brothers (the Belains, Peters, and Vanderhoops), a total of eleven men active in New Bedford whaling then, none of them ever shipped out with a sibling. Still, these whalers and those whose active careers had ended lived in the small, face-to-face community of Gay Head on a reservation of thirty-four hundred acres. In Pease's 1870 census there were 227 residents in fifty-five families (households); sixty-nine were men twenty-one and older. Of these, according to the federal census taker, at least twenty-nine were active or former seamen.⁴² About one-third of these mariners lived in the same neighborhood on the Gay Head reservation, on Old South Road, a primary east-west route on the southwest side of the peninsula (fig. 3.10). In the second half of the nineteenth century this settlement, organized around the Congregational church, consisted of about a dozen household complexes, some multifamily and multigenerational. Among them were the homes of Samuel J. Haskins, Benjamin Rodman, the three Vanderhoop brothers (who lived with their parents), and the Wamsley/Wormsley families, which also included young mariners.

Other large Gay Head Indian families of mariners, including the Belains, Coopers, and Peters—who accounted for another nine mariners in the 1870 federal census—lived in a second, more dispersed neighborhood at the northern end of the reservation. George J. Belain's household of twelve included his five sons, four of whom went whaling out of New Bedford seven times between 1864 and 1875, and his fifty-one-year-old son-in-law Levi Cuff (son of David Cuffe, nephew of Paul Cuffe Sr.), also a New Bedford-based mariner between 1837 and 1855. Levi and his wife Melissa Belain Cuff had three children of their own in 1870; in the next decade the family moved to New Bedford. No matter where they lived, the small scale of Gay Head everyday life and intermarriages among the families living there created a setting within which the community could share news, debate issues, and tell stories of their

41. See "Report of the [Joint] Committee of the Legislature of 1869, on the Condition of the Gay Head Indians," Senate Report No. 14 (Boston, January 1870). The discussion there of the supposed "racial" diversity and inexperience of the community to govern itself is both fascinating and progressive for its positions: "Thus we find that so far from Gay Head being all of a class, or so exclusively made up of one race as to present a dangerous example of 'caste,' it is in fact decidedly mixed, while as yet, if any one blood predominates it is undoubtedly the Indian. But suppose it were otherwise, and that negro blood did indeed prevail; should it be said of Massachusetts that she refused to incorporate a body of her citizens into a town because they were black? God forbid" (11).

42. Pease, *Report of the Commissioner*, 27, states of Gay Head men, "Not a few lead a roving, unsettled life, seafaring men, 'often absent for years at a time, frequently without their friends knowing where they are.' So this census, although prepared with much care, can only be considered as approximately correct."

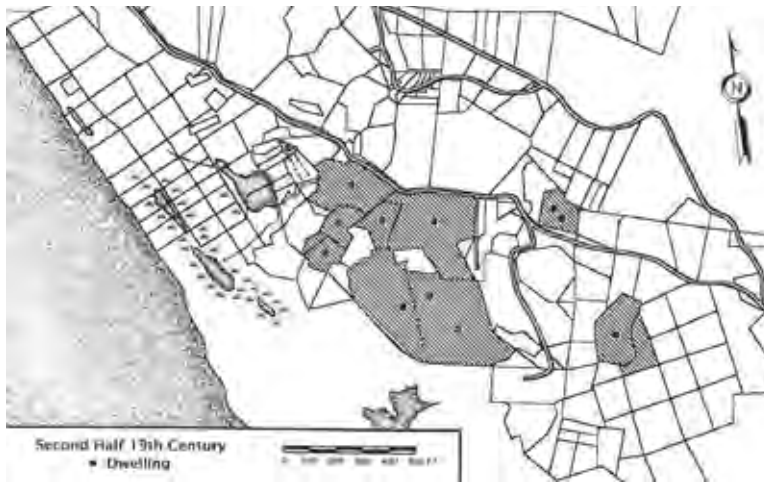


Fig. 3.10. The Old South Road neighborhood, Gay Head, later nineteenth century, map from Kevin A. McBride and Suzanne G. Cherau, "Gay Head" (1996). Whalers' houses are marked in red.

experiences beyond the island.

Mashpee Whalers, 1845–1874

Like their kin on Martha's Vineyard, the Mashpee community in the 1850s and 1860s made a living through traditional pursuits and by participating in a larger, cash-based economy. In the aftermath of the Rebellion, tribal selectmen were authorized to sell wood

reserves from the common lands and use the proceeds to maintain district services, a right then extended in 1842 when the commons were divided among much of the population. The result was the almost complete cutting and sale of timber resources by the early to mid-1850s, resulting in much new growth and a dramatic increase in the white-tailed deer population; by 1861 Earle described Mashpee as "being the only place in the State, except perhaps Naushon Island, where they [deer] have never been exterminated."⁴³ In turn, these changes enabled community survival and also made Mashpee into a recognized hunting and fishing destination generating cash income for some tribal members, including Solomon Attaquin.⁴⁴

Still the growing tourist industry had its limits, and whaling continued to be an important economic pathway for Mashpee men, especially the younger generation. The 1845–74 data base includes thirty-eight entries for twenty-eight Mashpee Indians who went whaling out of New Bedford, mostly between 1845 and 1859. Of these, Earle in 1861 listed only about 40 percent, which suggests that there were other accessible ports from which the community's men could go whaling. In the 1850s, for example, an average of thirty-six whaling vessels departed each year from Nantucket and places on the Cape.⁴⁵ The New Bedford-based Mashpee whalers were mostly between fourteen and twenty-four years old and composed more than 71 percent of the total number of Mashpee whalers, a higher proportion than the 60 percent of 1815–44 Mashpee whalers in this age bracket. Many of the men sailed on only one voyage, although three Webquish/Wepquish brothers (Jesse Jr., Levi S., and William) went

43. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 52.

44. Annual tribal accounts between 1844 and 1865 contain income entries for the sale of fishing permits (trout and pickerel) and wood, the leasing of mill pond rights, and the receipt of state appropriations. Over this twenty-year period, wood sales declined while other income sources grew. Documents in the "Guardian Accounts for Mashpee," Massachusetts Archives.

45. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*.

on multiple trips between 1845 and 1860. Jesse R. Webquish Jr.'s documentation is the most complete. He took part in four or five voyages over more than twelve years, during that time advancing from boatsteerer to first mate on both the New Bedford ship *James Maury* (1851) and the Fairhaven bark *Amazon* (1856). His younger brother Levi whaled out of New Bedford at least three times starting in 1852 and later served as second mate on the 1858 voyage of the ship *Bartholomew Gosnold*.

The Pocknet family line, whose men first went whaling in the early 1800s, continued the tradition with father Moses and son Alexander, who shipped out together on the New Bedford bark *Dryade* in 1847; its crew also included William Nye and the brothers Sylvanus and Oakes C. Tobey from Mashpee, all greenhands like Alexander Pocknet. Grafton Pocknet, Alexander's brother, and Nicholas Pocknet, perhaps a cousin, both went whaling in 1851 on the ship *Liverpool 2d* out of New Bedford, together with four other Mashpee men between the ages of thirteen and seventeen; all were greenhands and ordinary seamen in a crew of thirty men and shipped at lays of 1/175 or 1/190.

Between 1860 and 1875 we know of only four New Bedford-based whaling voyages with Mashpee men, three departing in 1865 and one in 1873. Isaac Hendricks, then thirty-six years old, shipped as boatsteerer on the 1873 voyage of the New Bedford bark *Marcella*. In part the low numbers of voyages were due to the Civil War, which effectively shut down the industry for a time. Seventeen Mashpee men served in the Navy during the war, thus reducing the number available for whaling.⁴⁶ Of these seventeen, four were whalers with known New Bedford experience.

The 1870 federal census of the community confirms that whaling, and other maritime pursuits, continued to be an important economic venture for Mashpee men. Of ninety individuals for whom an occupation is listed, one-third made their living as seamen (70 percent); twenty-one of these thirty men were between the ages of fourteen and thirty-five. Another third were laborers, and 28 percent were farmers. The remaining five men had more specialized skills, being a merchant, shoemaker, blacksmith, and two ship builders.⁴⁷ Among the twenty-five farmers were Matthias Amos, Watson Hammond, William Nye, Moses Pocknet, and Timothy Pocknet, who had been whalers in the 1840s and 1850s. By legislative act Mashpee became an incorporated town in 1870; it was just like any other Massachusetts town except that its population was still overwhelmingly Wampanoag. Incorporation allowed town residents to manage their own affairs by creating ordinances and choosing leaders from the community, an effective strategy for maintaining a separate cultural identity and legal existence and for controlling the rights of outsiders.⁴⁸

46. Simeon L. Deyo, ed., *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts* (New York: H.W. Blake and Company, 1890), 715.

47. Data extracted from the 1870 federal census of Mashpee in which only two persons were identified as Indian; the remaining people of color were called blacks or mulattos. The population at that time included 308 entries. The shipbuilders included John Mashow and a son, John A., well known from Westport history. In 1870 the Mashow family of nine (mis-spelled Marhord in the census) apparently were living in Mashpee, the ancestral home of John's Wampanoag wife. Another of the sons, Charles W., is listed as a seaman in the census. His older brother Isaac, identified in 1870 as a laborer, appears on a crew list in 1851 as a greenhand on the bark *A. R. Tucker* out of Dartmouth.

48. Campisi, *Mashpee Indians*, 112–18.

As in Gay Head, the Mashpee community debated the provisions of the 1869 Enfranchisement Act, speaking out at a public hearing held on the reservation in early February 1869. Among those who opposed citizenship—and the loss of Indian-ness as a separate legal status—were Matthias Amos, William Simons, Nathan Pocknet, and Solomon Attaquin, all whalers in their youth. No young Mashpee men spoke out, but certainly this community issue must have been a topic of conversation on board the whaling vessels of the late 1860s and early 1870s.⁴⁹ Young whalers would also have discussed community issues in the context of the small, family-based neighborhoods that were part of Mashpee life in the late nineteenth century. One neighborhood was located in the town's northern end, south of Mashpee Pond (fig. 3.11). Here along a well-traveled east-west highway leading toward the Santuit River was the community's residential and commercial core where some seven active or former whalers lived, including the three Godfrey brothers who are listed in the 1870 census.

At the southern end of Mashpee township, near the coast, was another Wampanoag neighborhood south and west of the confluence of the Mashpee and Santuit Rivers (fig. 3.12). The 1880 Barnstable County atlas there depicts another thirteen houses, including seven occupied by active or former mariners. Elijah W. and Phebe A. Pocknet (Pocket on the map) lived in one dwelling with their four children, including son Elijah Jr., listed as a twenty-four-year-old mariner in the 1880 census. Elijah Pocknet Sr. had gone whaling out of New Bedford at least three times between 1855 and 1860. The house of Nathan S. Pocknet was also shown on the 1880 atlas

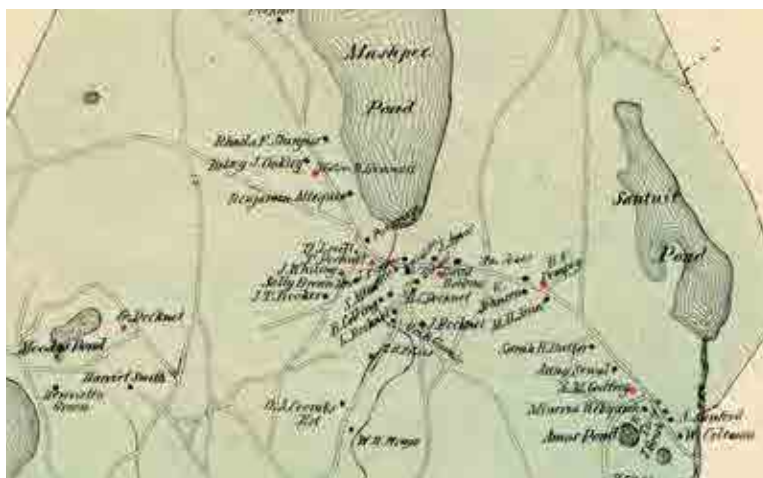


Fig. 3.11. Northern Mashpee neighborhood, detail from George H. Walker, *Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts* (1880). Whalers' houses are marked with red squares. Base map courtesy Historic Mapworks, Westbrook, Maine.

plate; he and his family appear on Earle's 1860 Mashpee list, where he is identified as a mariner. But his name did not appear on any New Bedford crew list between 1825 and 1840, when he would have been an active whaler.

Two brothers, Foster L. and Silas P. Pells, thirty and thirty-one years old respectively and listed as seamen in the 1870 census, lived in this neighborhood with their families. Neither apparently went whaling out of New Bedford, nor

49. See "Hearing before the Committee on Indians at Marshpee," Massachusetts House Report No. 502, 1869. Among the memorable voices there was that of Nathan Pocknett, about sixty years old, who argued that the community was not ready for citizenship in part because its youth were not adequately educated. Legislator Rodney French questioned, "Don't you know that a good many men have made governors of States and members of congress, that never had anything more than a common school education?" Pocknett replied, "Yes, sir, just as a great many men have made navigators with only a knowledge of the three rules." My sense is that Pocknett was talking about Wampanoag whalers.



Fig. 3.12. Southern Mashpee neighborhood, detail from George H. Walker, *Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts* (1880). Mariners' houses are marked with red squares. Base map courtesy Historic Mapworks, Westbrook, Maine.

did Elias DeGrass, whose house was in between the Pells brothers and whom Earle had listed as a mariner. Mariner Charles Alvis lived with his parents Sampson and Hannah in 1870, sharing a house north of Wells Pond with his daughter Bethiah and a younger sister. By 1875 Sampson Alvis, a farmer then in his early seventies, had died. Charles lived on in South Mashpee for a while, but he is not listed among Mashpee residents in the 1880 federal census. His former wife Jemima is, however; she took care of Eben Quippish, a

twenty-year-old seaman and later community leader, and his two younger sisters; they considered her to be their mother.

Wampanoag Whalers and the New Bedford Indian Enclave, 1845–1874

Two images bracket the years during which New Bedford continued to grow from a bustling whaling and mercantile port into a small-scale industrial center (fig. 3.13). In 1839, John Barber's eye caught the limits of the village of twelve thousand persons and the more wooded, less settled areas to the north and south (fig. 3.14). Thirty-six years later William Allen Wall depicted New Bedford from the still-rural head of the Acushnet River (fig. 3.15). The town had become a city of almost twenty-six thousand residents—seventeen thousand of them employed—with a bustling harborside, mills and mill villages, almost six thousand foreign-born residents, 157 sites where goods were manufactured, 667 mariners and master mariners, and 907 cotton factory operatives.⁵⁰ Walls' painting depicts the denseness of that city with its church spires and smokestacks, a landscape that seemingly stretched limitlessly and forever.

In a longer context, New Bedford first grew substantially in the 1820s and 1830s when its historically highest rates of population growth were achieved. Certainly it was whaling and its closely related maritime and shoreside industries that fueled this growth and helped shaped the city's economy. The 1853 *Massachusetts Register's* business directory for Bristol County lists an anchor supplier, twenty boat builders, seven caulkers, twenty-eight coopers, a cordage manufacturer, a firm that inspected and gauged oil (presumably whale), seventeen firms that specialized in the processing

50. Data from *The Census of Massachusetts, 1875*, vol. 1, *Population and Social Statistics* (1876).

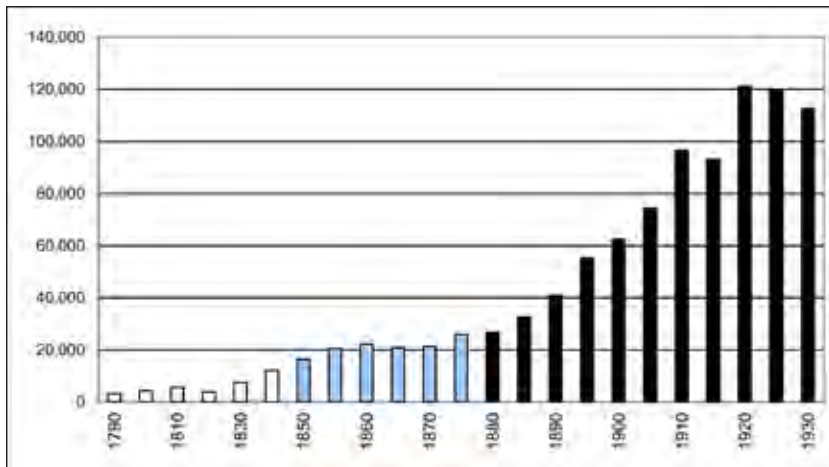


Fig. 3.13. New Bedford population, 1790–1930. The blue bars represent the 1845–74 period.

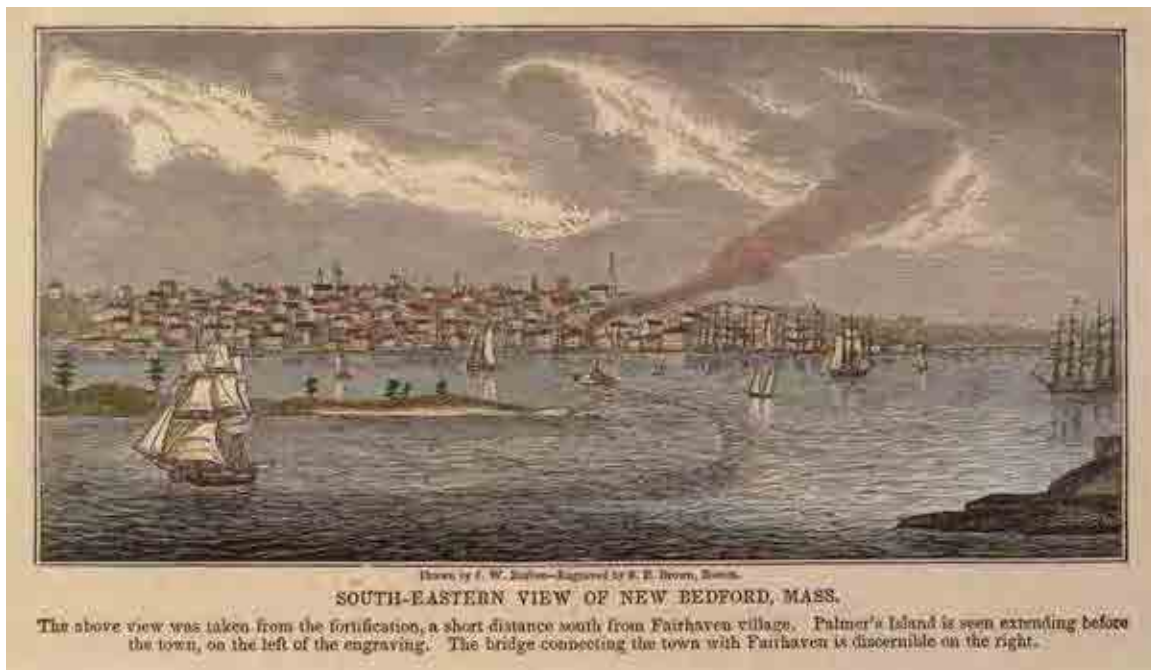


Fig. 3.14. New Bedford, engraving by John Barber, 1839. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

of oil and candles, three suppliers of nautical instruments (all in New Bedford), seven rigging firms, thirteen makers of sails, eight ship chandleries, ten shipping offices, nine ship yards, and 6 spar makers. Clearly the footprint of the whaling industry was large.⁵¹

By 1865, New Bedford's cultural diversity was well established. With 20,853 persons it was the largest city in Bristol County. Fourteen percent of its residents were



Fig. 3.15. "View of a City," watercolor by William Allen Wall, 1875. Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

foreign-born (2,933), the same percentage as in 1855. In both years, many of these immigrants were from Ireland and England, but there were substantial numbers of people of Portuguese origin, 196 in 1855 and 516 in 1865, many of whom were tied to the whaling industry. In 1865, New Bedford's Portuguese population was by far the largest in Bristol County, more than seventeen times the size of the next largest enclave—the thirty persons in Dighton. The city's population of color also contributed to its diversity. Residents who were black, mulatto, or Indian numbered 1,657 in 1855 and 1,517 in 1865, 7 to 8 percent of the total population. If one assumes that the country of nativity and one's skin color are reliable indicators or estimators of diversity, then about 20 percent of New Bedford's population in 1855 and 1865 were non-Anglo, non-Yankee, nonwhite residents. By 1875, that proportion had risen to more than 31 percent, almost one in three.⁵²

In the 1865 state census, eighteen Indians were enumerated in New Bedford; none had been counted in 1855. But John Milton Earle's research and the community

51. From 1855 onward New Bedford's population continued to grow but more slowly, and it wasn't until the 1890 census that the city exceeded 40,000 residents. In the next 40 years as the whaling industry declined, the city kept growing at an average rate of 29 percent per decade, reaching its historic population maximum in 1920 with 121,217 people. So whaling laid the foundation for the city but even at its height (1855), the population (20,389) was only about one-sixth of what it was to be.

52. The data on population and diversity in 1855 and 1865 are from the Abstract of the *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* for 1855 and 1865 (1857, 1867), invaluable resources that are available online.

lists he generated indicate that there were as many as seventy-eight Indian residents, primarily of Wampanoag ancestry, in the city in 1860 (table 3.5). Of these, one third were from Gay Head while another 28 percent were associated with what Earle referred to as the Dartmouth Indian tribe. Of eleven adult males whose occupations were listed, six made a living as mariners and two as laborers; three worked variously as a barber, cordwainer, and shipkeeper.

Certainly the existence of urban-based Indians in mid nineteenth-century New Bedford would have been a surprise to many city residents, who likely thought Indians only “looked” (dressed) like the Penobscot party of thirty from Maine who camped out on Purchase Street near the railroad depot in September 1845, making and selling baskets.⁵³ Or they might have thought, mistakenly, that Indians only lived on the better-known reservations on the Cape or Martha’s Vineyard, the places they read about in the daily or weekly newspapers.⁵⁴ Or, most commonly, city residents believed that most extant Indians were not really Indians at all, having intermarried “outsiders” so much as to have “diluted the purity of the race.” By questioning each of these beliefs and by attempting to document their urban presence, Earle suggested that Indians were, in fact, an integral part of the emerging early modern world of New England cities.

Clearly there were Wampanoag Indian mariners in New Bedford who had been drawn there by continuing employment opportunities in the whaling industry. The Indian whaler database for 1845–74 contains the names and voyages of more than one hundred different whalers who served on vessels in and out of the New Bedford

custom district. Many of their names appear in Earle’s 1861 community lists; his data suggest most were not full-time residents of the city. This study supports that finding: it is rare for a Wampanoag whaler to appear in a New Bedford directory of the time.⁵⁵ There are exceptions, such as Isaac Johnson from Gay Head who boarded in the city in 1845, and Joseph Mingo, also of Gay Head, who is listed in the 1867, 1869, 1871,

Table 3.5. Earle’s New Bedford Indians, 1860

Ancestral Community	N of Households	N of Persons	Occupations
Chappaquiddick	2	6	mariner, barber
Gay Head	6	26	mariners
Marshpee	4	7	mariner, laborer
Herring Pond	1	6	cordwainer
Middleborough	1	2	no data
Watuppa (Fall River)	2	4	mariner
Dartmouth	8	22	laborer, shipkeeper
Deep Bottom (Vineyard)	1	3	no data
Other Indians	1	2	no data
TOTAL:	26	78	

53. See “Penobscot Indians,” *Weekly Mercury* [New Bedford], 12 September 1845, 2.

54. It was common then for New Bedford newspapers to share the news of legislative studies and appropriations that affected Indian reservations in Wampanoag and Nipmuc Country.

55. I checked New Bedford directories for 1845, 1849, 1852, 1856, 1859, 1865, 1867, 1869, 1871, 1873, and 1875.

1873, and 1875 directories as a boarder on South Water Street and later Howland Street. They are only two of more than one hundred known men, which suggests that the Wampanoag whalers who came to New Bedford were predominantly short-term occupants with no real connections to the city.

There were, however, just as Earle suggested in 1861, some Indian men (and whalers) who were longer-term residents: Richard Gould, a Chappaquiddick Indian whaler, lived in New Bedford with his family between 1852 and 1860; James E. Henry, married to a Gay Head woman and listed as a seaman in the 1860 census, and his sons William A. and James Jr., listed in the 1870 census; and Jesse Webquish Jr., a Mashpee whaler between 1846 and 1858 who first appeared in an 1865 New Bedford directory and whose widow continued to live in the city until she died in 1871. These three households were among thirty-five in New Bedford that can be documented as having been occupied by Wampanoag and other Indians, or by families of mixed/Indian ancestry, at various times between 1849–50 and 1875. Of these thirty-five households, fourteen can be linked to ancestral communities on or near the Cape and Islands (40 percent), while another sixteen (46 percent) were associated with people of mixed/Indian ancestry whom Earle identified as “Dartmouth Indians” or “Troy/Fall River Indians” from Bristol County.⁵⁶

Sixteen, or almost half of the thirty-five households, had at least one mariner or seaman or someone working on the docks as a stevedore, rigger, or shipwright (table 3.6). Peter Fowler, a Micmac Indian from Halifax, Nova Scotia, married to a Wampanoag woman of Herring Pond/Dartmouth Indian ancestry, is the only Indian rigger documented to date. The Fowlers, a family of three, lived in New Bedford's fourth ward between 1852 and 1867; after Peter's death in February 1867, his widow remained in the city until 1871. David F. Wainer, a shipwright from the family of Westport Wainers—his father was John, son of Michael Wainer Sr.—lived with his young family in the city's fifth ward in the late 1850s and 1860s and evidently left the city before 1870. Other men worked as unspecified day laborers and hostlers (teamsters) or provided specialized services such as barbering.

In the sixteen Native households with larger families of five persons and more, mothers and their older daughters “kept house” (an understated phrase often used by the 1870 census takers). But in nine cases, the Indian “households” consisted only of one or two women who commonly worked as domestics in the homes of others. Most of these women were between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five and came to New Bedford mostly from Gay Head or Mashpee in the 1860s or 1870s. Mary Handy and Frances Pocknet (Packnett), both from Mashpee Indian families, worked as domestics in the city while in their twenties and were listed in the 1870 census for New Bedford. Louisa Nevers from Gay Head was one of three female servants living in the household living of whaling merchant Edward C. Jones in 1860. Nevers's husband was a mariner, and so was her son Alexander, who went whaling as a greenhand on the Marion schooner *Admiral Blake* in 1875.

56. Methodologically I started with Earle's list of city residents and then searched federal census records and other documents (community directories) for other relevant or matching entries. Of the twenty-six households in his list (table 3.5), I was able to confirm seventeen while discovering others he did not know about. Still, given the vagaries of census taking, especially in neighborhoods of color, my revised numbers are likely on the conservative side.

Table 3.6. Profiles of New Bedford's Indians, 1845–1875

Ancestral Community	N of Households	N of Persons	Occupations
Chappaquiddick	2	7–8	seaman, barber, schoolteacher
Deep Bottom (Vineyard)	2	4	domestics
Gay Head	6	27–32	seamen, laborers, barbers, domestics
Marshpee	3	6	mariner, domestics
Herring Pond	1	5	shoemaker, farm laborer
Watuppa (Fall River)	2	8–11	mariner, stevedore
Dartmouth	14	50–53	mariners, shipwright, rigger, shipkeeper, laborer, hostler, cartman, dressmaker
Other Indians	5	7 (women)	domestics
TOTALS:	35	114–126	

Twenty-four of the Native households could be linked to sequences of census records and directory entries spanning periods between two and twenty-six years. On average these households remained in New Bedford for 14.5 years in the 1845–74 period, which suggests that there was some residential stability among the city's Indians, which might then be evidenced by patterns of neighborhood settlement. To test this hypothesis,

data from city directories were mapped onto the 1871 city map. An area seven blocks (east to west) by thirteen blocks (north to south) contained all the known residences occupied by Indians or those of Indian ancestry (fig. 3.16), and is essentially the historic core of New Bedford in the 1820s–1850s.⁵⁷ Within that area, however, there are four streetscapes along North and South Water, South Second, and South Sixth Streets where Dartmouth Indian families lived near or alongside Wampanoags from Chappaquiddick, Gay Head, Mashpee, and Herring Pond. Fifteen such closely spaced addresses were identified on these four streets, almost 40 percent of the known Indian residences in the city between 1845 and 1874. None of these streets were exclusive Indian enclaves, however, nor were there any single buildings occupied only by Indians. African Americans, Azoreans, and Cape Verdeans also lived here.

So there are some indications that Indians lived together along some of the streets of Wards Four and Five in the city. But there are few signs that New Bedford's diverse Indians were building a common, urban-based community in the period. No evidence has been found of intertribal organizations like those that emerged in Providence in the early twentieth century,⁵⁸ nor does it seem that the city's Indians gathered together at or identified with specific urban spaces. Instead their ancestral communities, homelands, and histories "back home" still seemed to be at the core of their cultural identities, even when they lived in New Bedford.

57. Thirty-nine Indians were listed in New Bedford directories between 1849 and 1875. See "City of New Bedford," *Atlas of Bristol Co., Massachusetts from Actual Surveys by and under the Direction of F. W. Beers* (New York: F. W. Beers and Co., 1871) and maps in Robert Ricketson Murphy, *How the Core Community Grew: A New Bedford Historical Sketch* (Baltimore County, MD: privately printed, 2008), NBWM.

58. Handsman, *Being Indian in Providence*.

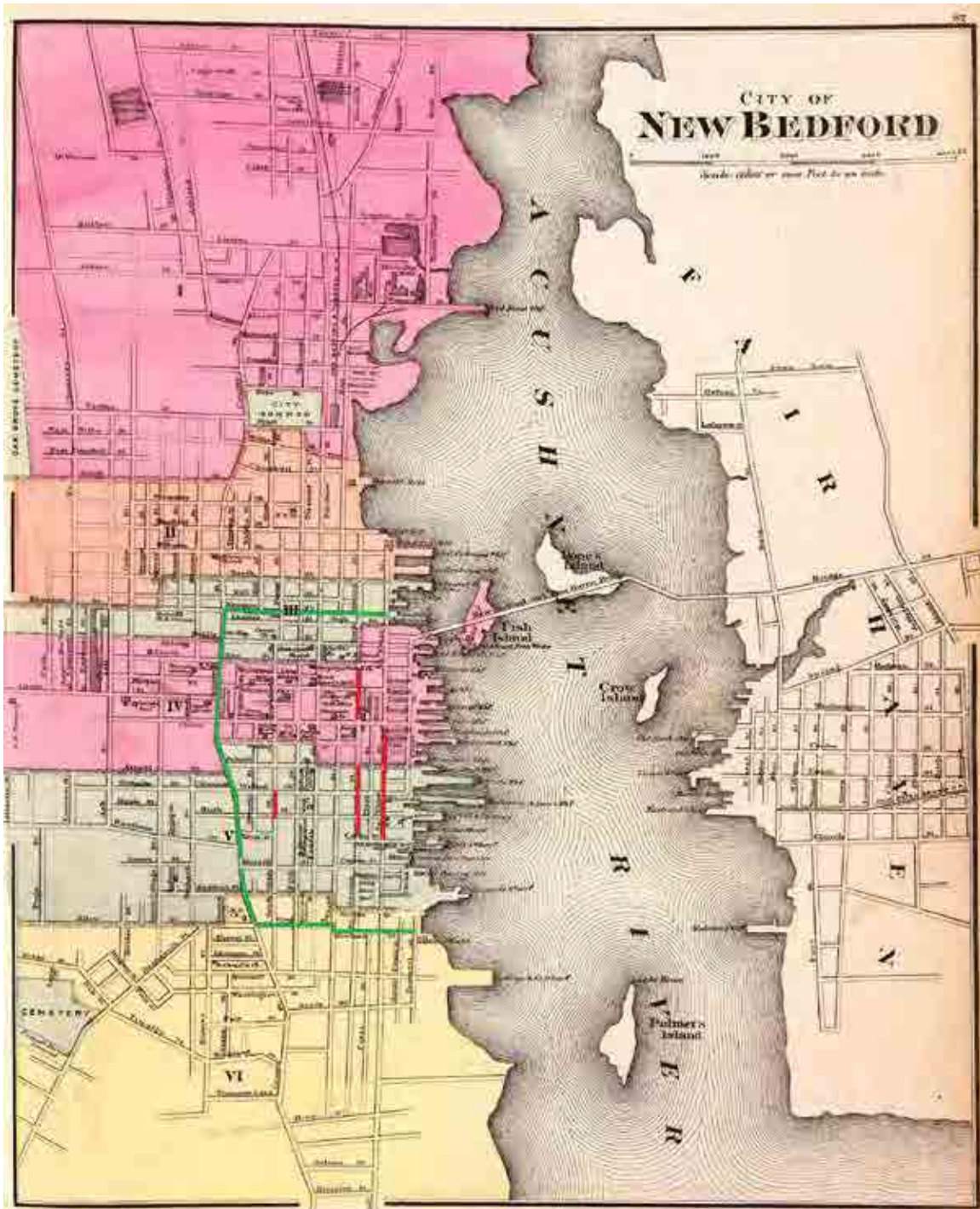


Fig. 3.16. "Indian" addresses in New Bedford, 1871. The green line encompasses all known residences; the red-shaded streets, in Wards 4 and 5, designate the locations of known clusters. Base map F. W. Beers, *Atlas of Bristol County, Massachusetts* (1871).

The so-called “Dartmouth Indians” may have been, however, another matter. At his 31 August 1859 public hearing in the New Bedford Court House, Earle was introduced to some of the descendants of families of mixed ancestry who still lived in “the ancient town of Dartmouth” (meaning to include the towns of Dartmouth, Westport, and New Bedford), some of whom still preserved their Indian identities and the memories of ancient burial places. He numbered them at about one hundred and listed about forty households consisting of single men or women, married couples, and families of four to eight or more persons.⁵⁹ Among them were Cuffes, Wainers, and the Indian doctress Charlotte White of Westport as well as lesser-known persons whose mixed ancestries were unclear. Many Dartmouth Indians worked as farmers, but Earle identified at least four mariners all living in Dartmouth—Oliver Boston, Silas Dix (Dick), Henry Miller, and John Vincent. Of these, only Silas Dix appears on New Bedford crew lists, for three whaling voyages between 1844 and 1857. But other whalers of mixed ancestry linked to the Dartmouth Indians have also been identified. Benjamin P. Cook, grandson of Paul Cuffe Sr. and also of Westport, sailed on four whaling voyages between 1842 and 1853. Asa and Rodney Wainer began their careers in the 1840s and continued them into the 1850s. David Cuffe of Westport and New Bedford was a grandson of Paul Cuffe Jr. and was in the crew of the New Bedford bark *Junius* on its 1845 voyage.

Earle maintained that this group of Indians was different because they had “escaped the special, paternal care and guardianship of the State” and having “no common lands or funds” had built their own lives, “mingled” (intermarried) with others in their towns, and now enjoyed “the comforts and privileges of social life” and “citizenship.”⁶⁰ The Dartmouth Indians had no recognized, reserved lands in the mid-1800s, nor did they have a long history of involvement and petitioning with the state. In Earle’s eyes, they were not Indians in the way the Gay Head or Mashpee still were. Instead they continued to live among their neighbors in Dartmouth, Westport, and New Bedford and to intermarry with one another and with other people of color, being citizens and Yankees.

For Earle, Paul Cuffe Sr. exemplified what a Dartmouth Indian was and could become. Yet the first and second generations that followed Captain Cuffe found it more difficult to survive, prosper, and provide for their children’s futures.⁶¹ In part, this was why some Dartmouth Indians as a group began legal action in the early 1850s to reclaim parts of their ancestral homelands, an ongoing process that Earle encountered in 1859 and after. In early 1851 Ruth Cuffe, the younger sister of Paul Sr., then in her late eighties and living at Watuppa, a Wampanoag reservation outside Fall River, described some aspects of her family genealogy for Joseph Congdon of New Bedford, who was then collecting documents on Indians and people of color in the area.⁶² She explained that several of her older sister Mary Wainer’s children were living, including Rhoda Wainer Drummond, a niece married to Samuel Drummond

59. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, appendix lxxv-xii.

60. Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, 112.

61. For all of the insightful scholarship directed at Paul Cuffe Sr., very little is yet known about what happened to his descendants in the nineteenth century. The later histories of Dartmouth’s and Westport’s communities of color have yet to be written, so it is not known if or how their lives and futures were shaped and limited by prejudice and inequality.

(from Watuppa originally) who resided in New Bedford on Orchard Street, south of Kempton's Corner. "I do think," she urged Congdon, "it will be for the Better to [get] their names and all their Children's names to p[ut] into the Record," for she appeared to anticipate the need for a genealogy if the land claim moved forward.⁶³

By 1859 lawyers had been hired by both sides. Each then began communicating with Earle, who collected more information during his visits and hearings in New Bedford that summer.⁶⁴ In his 1861 report, Earle mentioned the ongoing land claim but offered no opinion as to its outcome. The issue persisted, heating up again in January 1863 when sixty-nine people, "Rodney Wainer and others, Indians of the Dartmouth Tribe," signed a petition asking the Attorney General to "bring a suit or suits to vindicate the title of said Tribe" to tracts in Dartmouth and Westport "now occupied by white men unlawfully . . . and put them in possession of the same." Of the sixty-nine who signed, Earle had listed forty-five in his list of the Dartmouth community, including Rodney and Asa Wainer, Benjamin P. Cook, Samuel Cuffe, Oliver Boston, and Thomas H. Jones, all New Bedford-based whalers. Also signing was Rhoda M. Taylor, daughter of Paul Cuffe Sr., then about sixty-eight years old and living on little means in Westport, at "Tripps Wharf on the very spot where she was born." Her first husband, Alvan or Charles Phelps, had squandered her property, including one-eighth part of the brig *Traveller* that she had inherited from her father. She then remarried John Taylor, a sailor who in his old age could not provide for them. So in 1862 and 1863, a group of Westport residents requested and were granted support for her as an Indian.⁶⁵

In October 1863, the Dartmouth Indian land claim was the subject of another two-day public hearing, convened in New Bedford by an appointed legislative committee. In January 1864, the committee published its report, which reviewed the legal history of land holdings in the disputed area:

Possession of this large tract was gradually taken, and probably the Indians were only excluded from such portions of it as the proprietors actually occupied, so that their occupancy was not entirely relinquished until about sixty years ago. Some of the Indians still remember the possession of their ancestors. To this recollection was gradually joined, no doubt, the belief that the possession was founded on a right to the soil, and hence arose, very naturally, the claims which the Dartmouth Indians now put forth.⁶⁶

62. Hugo Dubuque, *A Fall River Indian Reservation* (Fall River, MA, 1907).

63. Ruth Cuffe's letter to Joseph Congdon is Manuscript B86-33.2 in the collection of the New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library. Ruth's information rings true as Rhoda and Samuel Drummond appear in the 1850 New Bedford census and in community directories for 1852 and 1856. But neither signed the 1863 petition.

64. Asa F. Wainer wrote Earle in February 1861: "according to what I hear from those Living in dartmouth and westport, they say that they always [knew] great neck belonged to indian heirs. And if So I am needing the benefit of my rights as well as the rest for I have a very large family" [in fact Asa and his wife had seven children, ages six months to 18 years]. John Milton Earle Papers, Box 2, Folder 5, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

65. The January 1869 petition from the Dartmouth Indians is in a legislative packet associated with Massachusetts Resolves 1863, Chapter 40, Massachusetts Archives. Two petitions concerning Rhoda M. Taylor exist in legislative packets for Massachusetts Resolves 1862, Chapter 103, and Resolves 1863, Chapter 44.

The committee studied those claims against the record and content of seventeenth-century land deeds (from Plymouth Colony Records) and then denied them, which effectively ended any sort of legal standing for the Dartmouth Indians. Yet generations of their descendants continued to live in New Bedford city and beyond, keeping alive their identity—just as they do today.

66. See “Report of the Commissioners Appointed under the Resolve of March 28, 1863 . . . Regarding Title of the Dartmouth Tribe of Indians,” Senate Report No. 2 (Boston, 1864).

CHAPTER 4

WAMPANOAG WHALERS, NEW BEDFORD, AND THE END OF WHALING

Some twenty-five years after William Allen Wall painted Wamsutta Mills (see fig. 3.1), O. H. Bailey and Company prepared and published another view of the city, the 1876 *View of the City of New Bedford* (fig. 4.1). Here the waterfront with its wharves and shoreside industries are foregrounded, while Wamsutta Mills lies to the northeast surrounded by a neighborhood of workers' houses. The agrarian landscapes at the outskirts of the still-growing city of almost twenty-six thousand people are visible in the background, to the west toward Dartmouth and to the north to Freetown. A closer look at the bird's-eye view makes plain the city's urbanism—streets lined with multistoried buildings, market places and commercial districts, churches, cemeteries, and schools.¹ Moving, as if walking, east down Union Street from County Street, the density of buildings increases; at the waterfront wharves, jutting out into the harbor, are piled with barrels of whale oil and lined with vessels used for whaling, fishing, coastal trading, and international shipping.

Drawing this view from the east made the city's waterfront more visible and reminded viewers of the historic importance of maritime industries to the early growth of New Bedford. Ironically, though, by 1875 whaling was very much on the wane, continuing a slow downward trend that would persist over the next fifty years until May 1925, when the last whaler, the schooner *John R. Manta*, departed for a three-month voyage, the last successful whaling cruise from the port. Between 1875 and 1885, the number of mariners in New Bedford fell by 375, a 56 percent decline, to a total of 292 men. The number of whaling vessels departing from New Bedford decreased from fifty in 1875 to seventeen in 1885 and six in 1895. In 1905 seven whaling vessels left the port; nine left in 1915, and only the *Manta* left in 1925.² Losses were also apparent in other regional ports, including Sag Harbor, Fairhaven, and New London, where only five vessels still operated in 1880.³ These changes in the scope and scale of the whaling industry suggest that the lives and communities of Wampanoag

1. C. H. Vogt, lithographer, *View of the City of New Bedford, Mass.* (Milwaukee, Wi: O. H. Bailey and Co., 1876). One can navigate a version of the 1876 view at the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center website, Boston Public Library, <http://maps.bpl.org>, which offers a virtual walking tour of New Bedford in 1875.

2. The 1875 data on mariners is from *The Census of Massachusetts, 1875*, vol. 1, *Population and Social Statistics* (Boston, 1876); the 1885 data are from *The Census of Massachusetts, 1885*, vol. 1, *Population and Social Statistics*, part 2 (Boston, 1886); those numbers include persons involved in the whale fishery as well as other mariners. In 1880, 128 men were engaged in New Bedford whaling; see George E. Waring, comp., *Report on the Social Statistics of Cities*, part 1, *The New England and Middle Atlantic States—New Bedford* (Washington, DC: Census Office, Department of the Interior, 1886), 261. Data on vessel counts are from Lund et al., "American Offshore Whaling Voyages." In early 1888, the New Bedford whaling fleet still numbered seventy-four vessels—sixty-two ships and barks, two brigs, and ten schooners. See William L. Sayer, ed., *New Bedford, Massachusetts: Its History, Industries, Institutions, and Attractions* (New Bedford: Merchant Publishing Company, 1889).

3. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 305.



Fig. 4.1. View of the City of New Bedford, Mass., 1876, map by C. H. Vogt and O. H. Bailey and Co. and published by Leonard B. Ellis, New Bedford. Courtesy Library of Congress.

Indian whalers may have looked different from 1875 onward. What happened to the “urban Indians” of New Bedford as the city’s economy changed?

Wampanoag Whalers: Facts and Figures, 1875–1925

The database for Indian whalers between 1875 and 1925 contains seventy-seven entries for forty-three men and sixty voyages, about a 55 percent reduction compared to the figures for 1845–74 (table 4.1). Although the numbers are, again, surely on the conservative side, the reductions are expected given the lack of opportunities, especially after 1875. Still, even in this era of industry decline, forty-three Wampanoag men, primarily between the ages of fourteen and thirty-five, continued to go whaling as they had in the past. Older Indians also went whaling, most notably Joseph Belain of Gay Head and New Bedford, whose long career continued after 1910 when he was in his sixties and early seventies. The same four ancestral Wampanoag communities are represented in this group of later whalers; Gay Headers again dominated, accounting for 63 percent of the total number of men, including those who participated in thirteen of the sixteen voyages that took place between July 1901 and September 1920.

In the database of sixty voyages, seven vessels departed in 1875 with a total of thirteen Indian whalers. These seven voyages represent about 13 percent of all the vessels that left New Bedford that year, so about one vessel in seven or eight

Table 4.1. Profiles of Wampanoag Indian Whalers, 1875–1925

Number of Whalers	Residence	Ancestral Community	Age Range in Years
	The Cape		
7	Mashpee	Mashpee	18–43
Subtotal:	7 (16%)		
	The Islands		
5	Edgartown	Chappaquiddick	17–44
27	Chilmark Gay Head New Bedford	Gay Head	16–71
2	Tisbury	Christiantown	15–28
1	Chilmark	Christiantown	45
1	Falmouth	Christiantown	36–39
Subtotal:	36 (84%)		
TOTAL:	43		16–71

had at least one Indian on board. Put another way, an estimated one percent of the total whaler force on 1875 voyages was Wampanoag.⁴

A sample of twenty crew lists between 1875 and 1925 containing at least one Indian—33 percent of the total voyages—provides some data on crew diversity (table 4.2). Over this half-century “whalers of color” comprised about 30 percent of each crew, almost double the number on 1845–74 crew lists. In fact, the phenotypic diversity of whaling crews after 1874 is much like that of the period between 1815 and

1844 (see table 6.4), except that men of color from the Atlantic island possessions of Portugal, Britain, and other nations replaced native-born American whalers.

The whaling industry’s decline impacted the lives of those who lived in Wampanoag communities on the Cape and Martha’s Vineyard. Fewer voyages and vessels meant fewer opportunities for initial participation and experience-building, and thus for longer-term careers. Over time, one would expect the numbers of community-based Indian whalers to decrease as alternative occupations became more viable pathways for household survival. A study of male occupations in four Wampanoag communities (Chappaquiddick, Christiantown, Gay Head, and Mashpee) as recorded in five federal censuses (1870–1920, excluding the lost 1890 census) reveals some significant trends.

In 1870 and 1880, between 28 and 67 percent of Wampanoag men made their living as mariners and seamen, including whalers, but those proportions fall dramatically in the decades leading to 1900 when most men were no longer whaling (fig. 4.2). Of the sixty New Bedford-based voyages with Indian mariners from 1875 onward, 39 left port between 1875 and 1889, or 65 percent of all voyages in that period. In this fifteen-year period most Indian whalers were twenty-five years old or older, men whose careers would have started in the 1845–74 period, such as Abram Cooper of Gay Head (five voyages between 1870 and 1887), John Keeter of Mashpee (four voyages, 1865–80), and Benjamin E. Rodman of Gay Head (six voyages between 1862 and about 1880). Cohort Wampanoag whaling also continued in this period: there were seven voyages with at least two Indians on board, including the 1875–79 cruise of the New Bedford barks *Laetitia* and *Benjamin Cummings*, which each departed in 1875 with men from Mashpee and either Gay Head or Christiantown.

4. I calculated this by dividing the total number of Indian whalers in 1875 (13) by the total number of names on the 1875 New Bedford-based crew lists, using one of the project’s data bases.

Table 4.2. Diversity of Whaling Crews, 1845–1874 and 1875–1925

N of Voyages	N of Indians		N of Blacks		N of Mulattos		% Whalers of Color	
	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.	Range	Avg.
1845–54 (17)	1–6	2	0–6	1.5+	0–2	.2+	3–40	16.6
1855–64 (5)	1	1	0–2	.8	0	0	3–20	9.8
1865–74 (12)	1–5	1.9+	0–6	2+	0–1	.1	3–32	14.8
1875–1904 (12)	1–5	2	0–13	5+	0–2	.7	6–45	27.8
1905–25 (8)	1–2	1.25	2–12	7.8	0–1	.25	9–61	32.5

Despite these continuities, the cultural tradition of whaling slowly disappeared from Wampanoag communities in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and redefined how the younger generation made its start in the world. For two generations, starting in the early 1800s, men from the Mashpee

family of Pocknets had been whalers with connections to New Bedford; the careers of Moses Pocknet and his son Grafton, born in 1800 and 1836 respectively, followed the familiar track of whaling followed by family making and farming (table 4.3). But Grafton’s sons grew up in a different era and started their adult lives as day laborers. By 1910 (groups 11–14 in fig. 4.2), there are only three Wampanoag men, all from Gay Head, still involved in whaling (not including Joseph Belain, who was living in New Bedford then), and they left the industry by 1920. One became a fisherman, another a farm laborer, and the third, William Vanderhoop, died in his seventies. Working as day laborers at a variety of tasks became an important option in all four communities, especially in the 1880s and 1900s (see groups 5–8 and 9–12 in fig. 4.2).

More specific data on Wampanoag Indian occupations in 1917–18 were gathered from the World War I draft registration cards completed by Massachusetts men, in June 1917 for those between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one and in September 1918 for men between eighteen and forty-five years old. Eighty-three men between the ages of fifteen and forty-five, self-identified as Indians from Wampanoag communities and households on the Cape and Vineyard, completed the process at the Barnstable County Courthouse. In this group there were no mariners or seamen; farmers and fishermen numbered fifteen each and there were twenty laborers, fifteen skilled artisans (mostly carpenters, painters, and mechanics), sixteen who provided services (postal workers; lighthouse keepers on Nantucket, the Vineyard, and Boston Harbor; garage workers and grocery clerks; caretakers and chauffeurs), and three who were unemployed.⁵

In the 1920 census, men between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four and between twenty-five and thirty-five who had mostly whaled “in the old days” were now working as farmers (sometimes on cranberry bogs on the Cape), fishermen, day laborers, skilled artisans, or in the service industry as chauffeurs, cooks, or teamsters. In the Mashpee community, employment especially had a seasonal rhythm as both

5. Data were gathered from World War I registration cards available at www.ancestry.com. Registration was required by national law.

Table 4.3. Occupational History, Pocknet Family

Pocknet Family	1850	1860	1870	1880	1900
Father, Moses	whaler	farmer	farmer		
Son, Grafton		whaler	seaman	laborer	farmer
Grandsons: Alexander, Grafton Jr., Brazilla				ages 1, 15	day laborers, ages 19, 35

men and women increasingly worked for summer residents or at camps or resorts.⁶ By 1925, there were few Wampanoag men left with any real connection to New Bedford whaling

except for a few elders in each ancestral community; their stories helped keep the industry’s history alive even if their skills were no longer needed or valued.

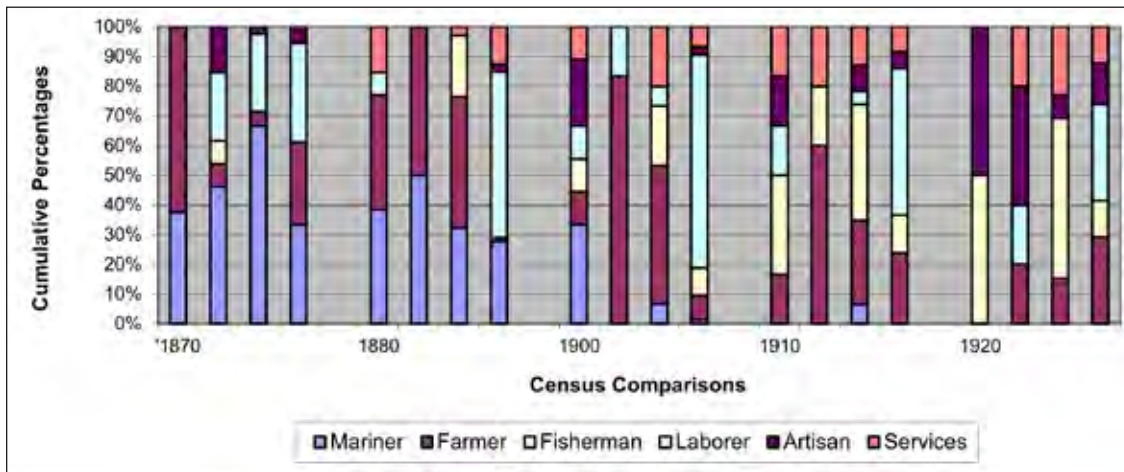


Fig. 4.2. Changing Wampanoag occupations, 1870-1920. Groups 1-4: Chappaquiddick, Christiantown, Gay Head, and Mashpee Male Occupations from the 1870 census. Groups 5–8: Same communities, 1880 census. Groups 9–12 are from the 1900 census, 13–16 from the 1910 census, and 17–20 from the 1920 census. Occupational series include mariners and seamen, farmers and farm laborers, fishermen, laborers, skilled artisans such as carpenters, shoemakers, plumbers, blacksmiths, and machinists or mechanics, and service workers such as waiters, postmasters and mail carriers, cooks, merchants or grocers, chauffeurs and teamsters, and those who worked at the Coast Guard station or in the Life Saving Service near Gay Head.

Whalers of Christiantown and Gay Head

By 1900, the long history of Wampanoag whalers from Christiantown was almost at an end. Both Joseph Mingo and his son Samuel G. appear in that year’s census as farmers. In 1880 Samuel, then twenty years old, was listed as a “sailor,” and he went whaling out of New Bedford at least three times while in his twenties, between 1879 and 1889; his father had been a New Bedford-based whaler in the 1840s and 1850s.

6. Earl Mills Sr. and Alicja Mann, *Son of Mashpee: Reflections of Chief Flying Eagle, a Wampanoag* (North Falmouth, MA: Word Studio, 1996), and Carle C. Zimmerman, “Good-Natured Littleville [the Mashpee Indian Community],” in *The Changing Community* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938), 158–90.

By early 1890, Samuel Mingo was engaged in Arctic whaling out of San Francisco; he served as second or first mate on at least three voyages between March 1890 and late 1892. Both Joseph and Samuel Mingo appear in the 1910 census, the father as a farmer then eighty-four years old and the son as a fifty-year-old teamster. The Mingos were just about the only Wampanoag families then remaining in Christiantown.⁷ In 1920, Samuel Mingo was listed as a fifty-nine-year-old carpenter living with his wife Nellie; in 1930 the couple was living in Oak Bluffs, where Samuel worked as a laborer. He died in 1935.

Between 1875 and 1920, the year of Joseph Belain's last trip, twenty-seven men from Gay Head went whaling out of New Bedford on forty-two different voyages. Sixteen of them sailed on only one voyage, while five were in the crew on three or more voyages: Joseph Belain was on ten whaling voyages, Amos P. Smalley on five, and William H. Cook on four. Over the course of these years, Gay Head whalers were mostly thirty-five years old or younger until 1904 (table 4.4). Their numbers then declined as fewer young men went or continued in whaling. In the last eight documented New Bedford voyages between 1907 and 1920, only Luther and Napoleon Madison (possibly brothers) were younger than twenty-five when they served on the New Bedford brig *Daisy* (1909–11); the remaining four men were between thirty and seventy-one years old on their seven voyages.

In mid-June 1898 the Mattapoisett bark *Platina* left New Bedford for the South Atlantic under Captain Thomas McKenzie, master of a diverse crew of twenty-six men. On board were five Wampanoag men from Gay Head between the ages of twenty-eight and thirty-one, three others who lived in the United States (including one born in Germany), and eighteen Portuguese citizens from the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands. The *Platina* was one of only eight whaling vessels that left New Bedford that year on thirteen voyages. Their crews contained on average twenty-two men and typically included six U.S. and twelve Portuguese citizens with some English, Dutch, and other foreign-born men. All the voyages were bound for the Atlantic whaling grounds; their sole quarry was sperm whales whose oil was in demand as an industrial lubricant and thus could be sold at a profit, though the going price of forty to fifty cents per gallon in the late 1890s was only a quarter of its value in the 1850s.⁸ On the *Platina*'s almost three-year-long voyage between June 1898 and May 1901 the crew processed some three thousand barrels of sperm oil.⁹

The mariners on that voyage included five Indians, three light-skinned Anglos, and eighteen blacks, dark-skinned, or light-skinned men from the Atlantic Islands controlled by Portugal. On the twelve New Bedford voyages that year, mariners of color (Indians, blacks, and mulattos) comprised between 9 and 71 percent of crews, the average being 28 percent, similar to what had prevailed on 1815–44 voyages (see table 2.4).¹⁰

For one of the Gay Head Indians, eighteen-year-old William Lang, the voyage on the *Platina* was a first experience, and he served as a greenhand and boatman at

7. C. G. Hine, *The Story of Martha's Vineyard* (New York: Hine Brothers, 1908), 151–52.

8. Dolin, *Leviathan*, 354.

9. The *Platina*'s successful voyage is documented in the log of her 1898 voyage preserved in the Whaling Logbook Collection at the New Bedford Free Public Library (see *Platina* logbooks on microfilm rolls 58 and 59).

Table 4.4. Gay Head Indian Whalers, 1875–1920

Age Groups	1875–1889	1890–1904	1905–1920
14–35 years	20	12	5
36–57+ years	8	1	6
Totals:	28	13	11

a 1/165 lay. But Lang died at sea in June 1900. His personal effects were sold for \$24.87; when his earnings of \$209.44 were added to his personal estate and advances (and the calculated interest on them) and the cost of ship's goods were

subtracted, William's twin brother Joseph received \$3.00 when the *Platina* returned. Wilbur S. Jereard, a somewhat experienced boatsteerer shipping at a lay of 1/75, did somewhat better: he receiving \$10.00 from earnings of \$351.84 when he left the bark in October 1899 while in Faial.¹¹ Amos Smalley, then twenty-one years old and the steward and boatsteerer, received a lay of 1/100th, worth \$504.30, and earned \$213.00 at voyage's end. Henry Jeffers, thirty-one years old, was the most experienced of the Wampanoag whalers on the voyage. He served as third mate at a lay of 1/40 and then as second mate at a 1/30 lay, which eventually earned him \$936.00 after his accounts were settled.

Both Jeffers and Smalley went whaling together again on the *Platina's* next voyage (1901–3), along with Jeremiah Diamond, another Gay Head Wampanoag, in a crew of thirty that including ten U.S.-born men, nine Portuguese, and seven British citizens. Jeffers served as the second mate; Smalley and Diamond were boatsteerers though Diamond's lay, less than half of Smalley's, signified his inexperience. Both men deserted in Faial on 24 September 1902. Henry Jeffers returned to New Bedford a year later with \$1,009.00 for his efforts after his \$171.75 in expenses on the voyage (mostly cash advances while at Faial and Barbados) were deducted. About six months later, in April 1904, Jeffers shipped out on the *Platina* again, this time as first mate and the only Indian on board. On 1 July 1906 Jeffers was killed by a whale, and his older brother Thomas collected \$1,063.83 on the ship's return.¹² The 1901–3 trip of the *Platina* was the last documented New Bedford-based voyage on which more than two Gayheaders served.¹³ Amos Smalley was still whaling in 1910, according to his census listing, but by 1920 he was a forty-two-year-old fisherman living in Gay Head. His cohort Jeremiah Diamond became a machinist and auto mechanic after his short-lived experience on the *Platina*, which made three more whaling voyages out of New Bedford between April 1904 and August 1910, mostly for sperm oil, before being abandoned and broken up for firewood on the Cape Verde Islands in 1914.¹⁴

10. The thirteen voyages were undertaken by the schooners *Adelia Chase* (two voyages), *Charles H. Hodgdon* (two), *Eleanor B. Conwell* (two) and *Pedro Varela* and barks *Bertha* (two), *Greyhound* (two), *Morning Star*, and *Platina*.

11. The story of the *Platina* and her crew was reconstructed from the outgoing crew list and from the ship's accounts preserved on microfilm roll 90, J. and W. R. Wing Papers, Whaling Business Records, NBFPL.

12. Data from the 1901 *Platina* crew lists and the 1901–03 crew accounts, microfilm roll 59, and the ship's accounts for 1901 and 1904 voyages, microfilm roll 90, J. and W. R. Wing Papers, Whaling Business Records, NBFPL.

13. Four of the *Platina's* voyages, 1898–1910, were captained by McKenzie; at least one Gay Head Wampanoag served on each of them.

14. "Is Broken Up for Firewood," *Boston Daily Globe*, 2 April 1914.

Data from six federal censuses (1870–1930) confirm that Gay Head men moved from whaling to other occupations in the early twentieth century (fig. 4.3). The shift was underway by 1880, when only one-third of the community's men were listed as sailors in that census; by 1900 and 1910 only three men were counted as seamen and none in 1920 and 1930. As whaling declined, Gay Headers first turned to farming, on their own lands or others', and then to fishing for both household consumption and for resale to urban markets. By 1905–10, 30 to 40 percent of Gay Head's men were fishing for a living, providing employment for many who, in an earlier generation, would have gone whaling.¹⁵ One focus for their activity was the shoreside settlement of Lobsterville on the north side of the island beyond the reservation's boundaries. First established in the 1880s as a warm-season station for spring and summer runs of different species, the village became a more permanent port where cat boats, dories, and trap boats were moored for use by both Native fisherman and their non-Indian neighbors.¹⁶ Pound nets, set in shallow bays and inlets, were the preferred technology and brought in mackerel, sea-herring, menhaden, flounder, and other species. Packed in barrels, the fish were sent by boat to New York, New Bedford, or Woods Hole; at the last site, they were moved onto rail cars and shipped to Boston.¹⁷ In 1906 the harbor and channel at Menemsha was dredged to create a larger, more protected port for both fisherman and the intercoastal traders of Vineyard Sound.

The 1915 state census counted thirty-three fishing boats in Gay Head that produced almost five hundred thousand pounds of fish, eighteen hundred bushels of mollusks, and more than fifty-five thousand pounds of crabs, lobsters, and shrimp.¹⁸ By the 1920s and 1930s, more than half of all the adult men in Gay Head were making a living as fisherman.

Between 1900 and 1930 employment in “service industries” became another viable pathway for Gay Head Indians as the Vineyard's tourist economy and full-time resident population grew.¹⁹ The historic roots of this process lie in the post-Civil War period, when Methodist summer camp meetings, hotels and inns, and then residential developments sprang up around Oak Bluffs on the northeastern side of the Vineyard near present-day Vineyard Haven.²⁰ On weekends, New Bedford steamers arrived at piers at Oak Bluffs and nearer the Gay Head cliffs; tourists could visit the famous lighthouse, ride on an oxen-drawn cart operated by Indians, dance

15. Data from the *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1905*, vol. 1, *Population and Social Statistics* (Boston, 1909). In 1910 Gay Head fisherman included George Cooper (age nineteen), Marshall Jeffers (twenty-six), Grover Ryan (nineteen), and Charles (twenty-seven) and William Vanderhoop (nineteen), all born too late to become whalers. See also listing of Gay Head fishermen in the 1907 *Martha's Vineyard Directory* (Boston).

16. Gloria Levitas, “No Boundary is a Boundary: Conflict and Change in a New England Indian Community” (Ph.D. diss, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1980), 266–72.

17. Frederick W. True, “The Pound-Net Fisheries of the Atlantic States,” in G. Brown Goode, ed., *The Fisheries and Fishing Industries of the United States*, Section 5 (Washington D.C., 1887), 1: 595–609.

18. Data from *The Decennial Census of Massachusetts, 1915* (Boston, 1918). In that same year, Mashpee fishermen produced eighty-two hundred pounds of fish and more than thirty-two hundred bushels of mollusks.

19. Between 1875 and 1925, the population of Dukes County (Martha's Vineyard) grew about 19 percent; over the next decade (1925–35), population growth exceeded 15 percent as more year-round residents moved to the island. Data abstracted from Massachusetts state censuses.

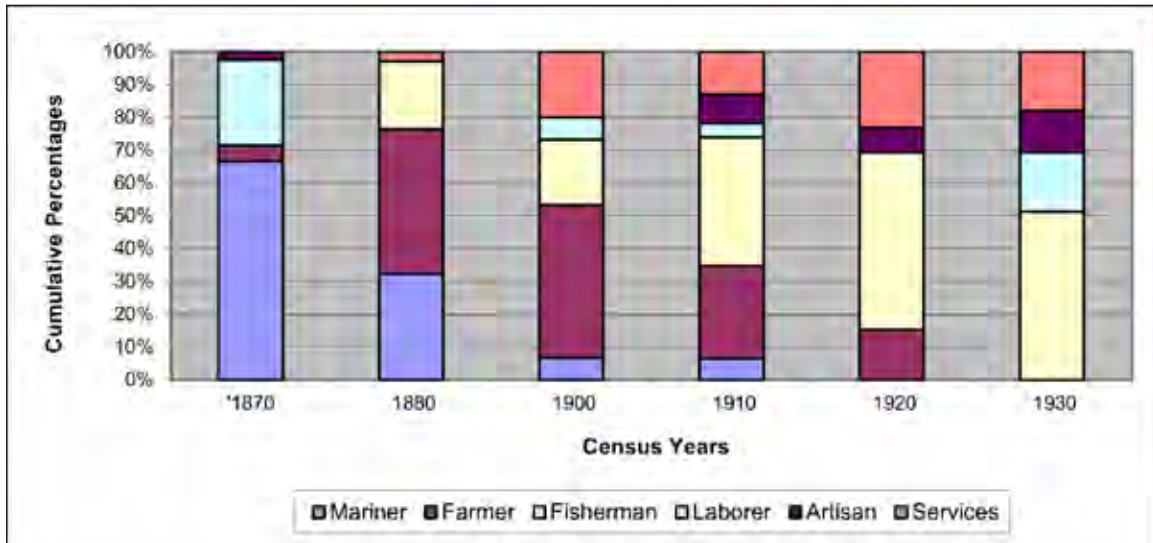


Fig. 4.3. Occupational history of Gay Head Indians, 1870–1930. Occupational series include mariners and seamen, farmers and farm laborers, fishermen, laborers, skilled artisans such as carpenters, shoemakers, plumbers, blacksmiths, and machinists or mechanics, and service workers such as waiters, postmasters and mail carriers, cooks, merchants or grocers, chauffeurs and teamsters, and those who worked at the Coast Guard station near Gay Head.



Fig. 4.4. Gay Head Indian with ox team at lighthouse, photograph in *Fifty Glimpses of Martha's Vineyard Island* (1897).

in a pavilion, and snack on box lunches provided by Gay Head residents (fig. 4.4).

By 1900, the United States government had established a life-saving station at Gay Head where six community members worked, men such as Theodore Haskins whose fathers and/or brothers had been whalers in the 1870s. This employment continued into the 1910s and 1920s (at the United States Coast Guard station) though by 1930, only two Indians worked there of a crew of nine. The generation of Gay Head men from 1900 to 1930 also worked as skilled artisans—carpenters, house

20. Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 75–101; Henry Beetle Hough, “Summer Resort,” in Eleanor R. Mayhew, ed., *Martha's Vineyard: A Short History and Guide* (Edgartown: Dukes County Historical Society, 1956), 83–99; Levitas, “No Boundary is a Boundary,” 316–28.

painters, plumbers, blacksmiths, masons, and auto mechanics—and as chauffeurs, cooks in restaurants and hotels, postal carriers, and farm managers. Their wives, sisters, and mothers found employment as domestics.

As Gay Head's economy was transformed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, its long-standing settlement area around Old South Road (see figs. 2.6, 3.10 & 3.11) was also affected. By 1900, many of the houses whalers had initially before 1850 had been abandoned or moved north to be relocated along the State Highway where the village and Aquinnah tribal headquarters are today.²¹ In the later 1890s professional botanist, anthropologist, and long-time Vineyard resident Edward S. Burgess (1855–1928) explored the sites and stories of the Old South Road neighborhood with older community members. They created a map of abandoned houses, cellar holes, and outbuildings, remnant vegetations, and an archive of family memories, since restudied in the 1990s (fig. 4.5).²² Among his informants was “Old

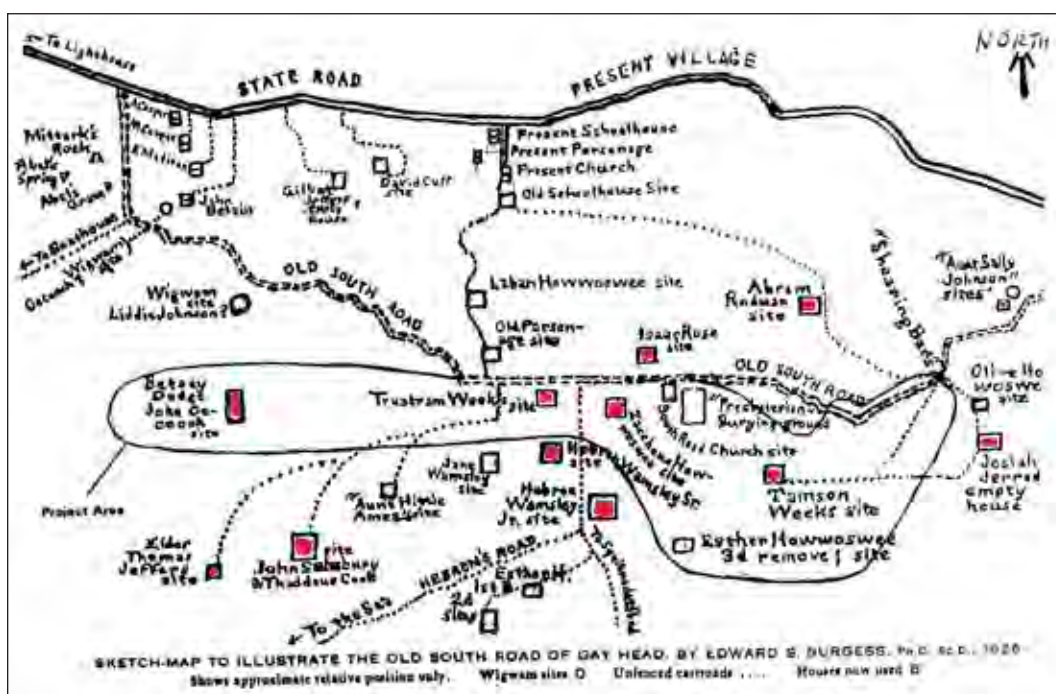


Fig. 4.5. The Old South Road neighborhood, map based on Suzanne Glover and Kevin McBride, “Tribal Trust Lands” (1992). The twelve dwellings in red were built and furnished with whalers’ earnings.

21. Most often the settlement move is “explained” as the need to move closer to fishing ports and the highway that linked Gay Head to other Vineyard communities. Yet it also seems that as the community turned away from farming and raising livestock and from heating its homes with peat there was less reason to stay on in the historic neighborhood along Old South Road.

22. See Robert H. Lowie, “Edward Sanford Burgess,” *American Anthropologist* 30, 3 (1928): 481–82; Suzanne Glover and Kevin McBride, “Intensive (Locational) Archaeological Survey and Additional Testing: Parcels I, IIA, IIB, III, and Easements, Tribal Trust Lands” (Report 434–1, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1992); Suzanne Glover, Kerrylynn Boire, and Kevin McBride, “Intensive (Locational) Archaeological Survey, Individual Lots Abutting Parcels I, IIA, IIB, III, Tribal Trust Lands” (Report 434–2, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Pawtucket, RI, 1993); Mancini, “Beyond Reservation”; McBride and Cherau, “Gay Head.”

Aaron Cooper, most Indian-looking of the Indians then left on Gay Head,” who was then eighty and had been a whaler in the 1840s; he married Phebe Pocknett of Mashpee and farmed for the rest of his life (see fig. 3.8).²³ His father, also Aaron Cooper, whaled out of New Bedford at least twice in the 1830s.

The Remarkable Career of Joseph G. Belain

The 15 September 1897 edition of the *New York Times* carried a story, “Escape from an Ice Pack,” which detailed how Captain Joseph Whitehead, his wife, and several of the crew of the bark *Navarch* out of New Bedford (and San Francisco), had eventually escaped from the vessel, trapped in late July ice some 120 miles northeast of Point Barrow, Alaska. The event, and tragic later loss of some fifteen crew members, were national news; so was the subsequent dramatic rescue of more than 250 other whalers from seven vessels also trapped by ice later that fall. The 1898 rescue party, undertaken by men from the U.S. Revenue Cutter *Bear*, was authorized by President William McKinley.²⁴

In the initial party that escaped in mid-August with Captain Joseph Whitehead was the *Navarch*'s first mate, Joseph G. Belain, a Gay Head Indian whaler then almost fifty years old. Born in late November 1848 to whaleman George Belain and his wife Sophia, Joseph Belain was one of four sons who were whalers like their father. He first appears on New Bedford crew lists (and those of nearby ports) in 1866, when he was seventeen, on a voyage of the Dartmouth ship *Cape Horn Pigeon*. After that voyage he was part of no fewer than ten other New Bedford crews between May 1869 and September 1920, more than fifty years.²⁵ Starting in 1886, Belain also served on fourteen Arctic whaling voyages out of San Francisco over the course of more than a decade, mostly on steam-powered barks including the *Navarch* in 1897.²⁶

In federal censuses between 1870 and 1920 Belain was described as a single mariner, a sailor, or at sea. In 1900 Belain was living in New Bedford (though he appears to have been whaling out of San Francisco then) with his sister Melissa Belain Cuff, widow of Levi Cuff and daughter-in-law of David Cuffe, older brother of Paul Cuffe Sr. He still lived in New Bedford in 1920 with Bessie James, the widowed daughter of Melissa and Levi Cuff, and was listed as a “whaleman.” Joseph Belain remained an active whaler after his adventure on the *Navarch*—in some sources his skills are credited with saving the Whitehead party. He served on at least five New Bedford voyages in the early twentieth century when most Gay Headers had left the

23. Quote from Edward S. Burgess, *The Old South Road of Gay Head or Musings on Discontinued Byways* (1926; reprint, Edgartown, MA: Dukes County Historical Society, 1970), 6.

24. See also “The Ill-Fated *Navarch*,” *New York Times*, 10 October 1897, and “Disaster, Desertion and Death,” *San Francisco Call*, 27 October 1897. Also see William L. Boyd, “Jarvis and the Alaskan Reindeer Caper,” *Arctic Journal* 25, 2 (1972): 74–82, and John Bockstoce, “The Arctic Whaling Disaster of 1897,” *Prologue: the Journal of the National Archives* 9, 1 (Spring 1977): 27–42.

25. Joseph Belain was also first mate on the schooner *Valkyria*, captained by Joseph Vieira, on a trip from Bermuda that arrived in New Bedford in mid-August 1919 with eight other crew. It's not clear if this was a whaling voyage or not but Belain signed on in Bermuda.

26. As first mate, Joseph Belain kept the *Navarch*'s logs/journals on its 1893–97 and later, fateful 1897 voyages. These are in the collection of the New Bedford Whaling Museum as Old Dartmouth Historical Society Logs 224 and 272.

industry. On all of them he was first mate, mostly on schooners with crews of thirteen to twenty-four men predominantly from the Cape Verde Islands, the Azores, and the Dutch West Indies. His last known venture was on the 1920 voyage of the schooner *William A. Graber*, a six-month trip to the Atlantic grounds undertaken when he was seventy-one; the schooner returned with 517 barrels of sperm oil.²⁷

On Wednesday, 20 October 1926, Joseph G. Belain died at the age of seventy-seven after a long illness in the New Bedford home of his niece, Bessie James. His obituary that day in the *New Bedford Evening Standard* summarized his illustrious career as a New Bedford whaler from the Gay Head Indian community. During his funeral, a carrier pigeon is said to have alighted on his casket and to have remained there until the service ended (fig. 4.6).²⁸ Belain was survived by his older brother John W. Belain, who still lived at Gay Head where he had raised a family of ten children while working as a farmer and fisherman for much of his adult life. Three of John's sons, Joseph's nephews, came of age in the 1880s and 1890s when they could not choose to start their lives as whalers; still, Daniel Belain, John's second youngest son, did enlist in the U.S. Naval Reserves in June 1918 (fig. 4.7).

New Bedford's Indians, 1875–1930

New Bedford in 1880 was a city of 26,845 people, 12,371 males and 14,474 females of whom 5,923 were foreign-born and 1,555 “colored” including, according to the federal census, one Chinese resident and thirteen Indians.²⁹ Over the next decade and a half, 1880–95, the city experienced a remarkable growth spurt averaging seven percent per year (fig. 4.8). By 1895 the population was 55,251 of which 22,714 were foreign-born—an increase of more than 280 percent—and 1,565 “colored.” There were also eighteen Chinese men and eighteen Indians, equal numbers of men and women.³⁰

Throughout this period, and in the censuses to follow, official enumerators always undercounted the city's resident Indian population. They often assumed that phenotypic characteristics (skin color, hair and eye features) were a reliable indicator of one's ancestry, identity, or community. Here New Bedford's “Indians” can be made more visible by tracing individual and family histories of residency, by using surnames and household cycles³¹ to identify those who were from and linked to ancestral Wampanoag communities on the Cape and Vineyard, those who “belonged” to or were descended from Earle's Dartmouth Indian group, and those who, when given opportunity, “self-identified” as Indians, often of “Native-mixed ancestry” from Massachusetts or other states. Between 1875 and 1925, New Bedford's Indian population was diverse in both origin and community affiliation and sometimes

27. Reginald B. Hegarty, comp., *Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports, 1876–1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, 1959), 45.

28. Attaquin, *Gay Head*, 36.

29. George E. Waring, comp., *Report on the Social Statistics of Cities, part I, The New England and Middle Atlantic States—New Bedford* (Washington, DC: Census Office, Department of the Interior, 1886), 255.

30. 1895 census figures from *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1895. vol 1, Population and Social Statistics* (1896, Boston).

31. As individual families grow and shrink through births, marriages, and deaths, their households expand and contract in predictable cycles.

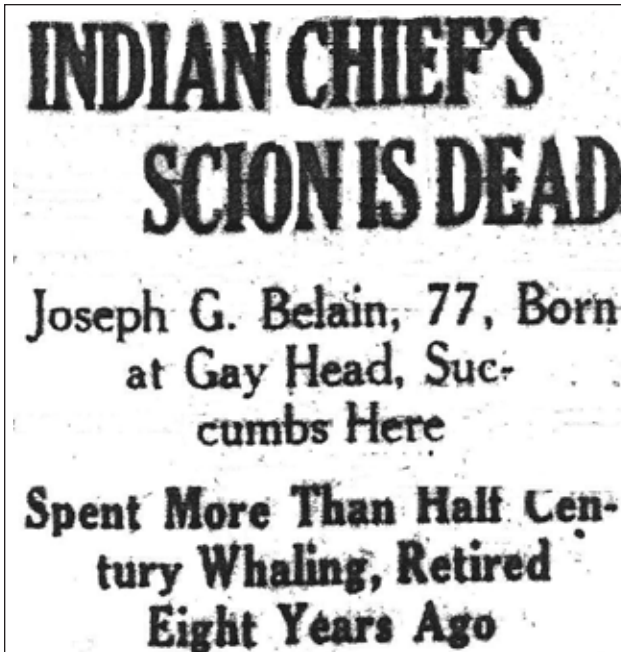


Fig. 4.6. Headline from Joseph G. Belain's obituary, New Bedford Evening Standard, 20 October 1926.

REGISTRATION CARD		REGISTRAR'S REPORT	
1 Name of holder <i>Daniel W. Belain</i>	Registration No. <i>113</i>	1 <i>black</i>	<i>black</i>
2 <i>Gay Head</i> <i>Mass.</i>		2 <i>black</i>	<i>black</i>
3 Date of birth <i>Oct 25th 1896</i>		3 <i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
4 Where born <i>Gay Head, Mass. Indian</i>		I certify that my entries are true (if the person certified for and if such persons that I have registered in this report, and that all of his property which I have knowledge of has been except as follows:	
5 <i>None</i>			
6 If not a citizen of the United States, give name of country			
7 Place of residence <i>Gay Head, Mass. Indian</i>		<i>E. W. Handschoop</i>	
8 Name of registrant <i>myself</i>		<i>June 5th 1918</i>	
9 Place of registration <i>Gay Head, Mass.</i>		<i>The registrant of this card has en-</i>	
10 Name of vessel <i>John W. Belain</i>		<i>listed in the</i>	
		<i>U. S. Reserve</i>	
		<i>(Naval)</i>	
		<i>E. W.</i>	
<i>Daniel W. Belain</i>			
REGISTRAR CARD			

Fig. 4.7. Draft registration card for Daniel Belain, 5 June 1918.

Table 4.5. New Bedford's Indians, 1880–1900 and 1910–1930

	N of Households		No of Persons		Occupations								
	1880–1900		1910–1930		1880–1900			1910–1930					
	1880–1900	1910–1930	1880–1900	1910–1930	Males			Females					
Ancestral Community													
Dartmouth	9	8	33	23	blacksmith day labor hack driver shoemaker waiter	coachman farm labor hotel waiter stable work	cook dressmaker domestic servant	caretaker city labor warehouse worker	caterer teamster	domestic servant			
Gay Head	5	4	23	15	barber mariners teamster	farm labor stable work	domestic servant	mill worker whaler (Joseph Belain)	iron foundry	forewoman, sewing company teacher, hospital			
Mashpee	4	9	10	38	day labor rope maker		domestic servant laundress	cook, hotel city labor police, city	day labor stable work teamster	matron, theater			
Other MA Indians	15	14	34	65	barber hack driver factory labor lumberyard teamster	druggist janitor	domestic servant	auto mechanic boatman cotton mill expressman lawyer rope maker waiter, restaurant	barber chauffeur day labor city labor machinist teamster	clerk, textile mill clerk, insurance domestic servant janitress student nurse			
Other Indians	10	7	37	23	barber junk dealer laundry worker law student teamster	day labor mariner waiter	dressmaker housekeeper domestic servant tailoress	barber laundryman workworker, mill	junk dealer	cook, family laundress waitress			
Totals	43	42	137	164									

included small enclaves of kin-related households that lived adjacent to one another in localized neighborhoods in selected wards of the city.³² Earle's 1861 list of New Bedford's Indians provided one starting point for this study, as did data retrieved from five federal censuses between 1880 and 1930. These data were analyzed in two periods of twenty years each, 1880–1900 and 1910–30 (table 4.5).³³

The total number of “Indian” households and persons in each twenty-year period compares favorably with those Earle had reported in 1861 as well as those reconstructed for the 1845–74 period (see tables 3.5 & 3.6).³⁴ Families and persons linked to Gay Head and Mashpee account for between 9 and 23 percent of the total numbers, while the Dartmouth Indian group declined from 24 to 14 percent. Of the forty-four Dartmouth Indians who signed the 1863 petition claiming rights to ancestral lands, only eighteen were recorded in the 1870 and 1880 censuses for New Bedford and surrounding towns. By 1900, only seven of them were listed and by 1910 only three—William F. Jones, Lucy P. Wainer, widow of Thomas, and Mary Tilghman, who was eight years old when she signed in 1863.

Between 1845 and 1874, about 5 percent of the city's Indian population was descended from families or communities other than Wampanoag. Less than fifty years later, that figure had risen to more than 50 percent, so by 1920 more than eighty individuals lived in New Bedford who were not indigenous Wampanoag but claimed Indian ancestry when asked by a federal census taker.³⁵ Some were born in Massachusetts, Connecticut, or Rhode Island while others had migrated from the northern New England, Middle Atlantic, or Southeastern states and had been drawn by the city's needs for both skilled and unskilled labor. Yorick and Rosetta Ames, both Virginia-born persons of color, moved to New Bedford and started a family in the early 1870s, and were listed as mulattos in the 1880 census together with four children; Yorick made a living as a barber. By 1900 their family had grown to nine and were all identified as Indian, presumably because Yorick and Rosetta were of mixed ancestry. The family does not appear in later censuses. Similarly, the John and Caroline Post

32. In some ways the emerging picture of New Bedford's Indians is similar to that of Providence, though the latter city's Native population did build a corporate, urban-based identity in the 1920s that persists today; see Handsman, *Being Indian in Providence*.

33. Though the periods are of equal length, specific data are not available from the 1890 census, so two data sets are compared with three. Much of the data were retrieved using the search engine at www.ancestry.com and entered into Excel spreadsheets.

34. I suspect these numbers are on the conservative side, especially for the period after 1900 when younger Wampanoag men from Mashpee and Gay Head may have migrated to New Bedford in search of better opportunities. Finding them is a methodological challenge as they are seldom identified as Indian, but it could be useful to search New Bedford census records by ancestral family names through the search engine at [ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). An initial search by this means, however, yielded only a few additional Wampanoag persons.

35. In the early twentieth century, census takers were given specific instructions to enumerate Indian peoples in their districts in an effort to ensure a more reliable count; see Margaret M. Jobe, “Native Americans and the U.S. Census: A Brief Historical Survey,” *Journal of Government Information* 30 (2004): 66–80. Sometimes this meant that individuals could self-identify (during conversations?) their ancestry/race as Indian, resulting in more Native peoples being counted especially in urban settings where they often moved in search of employment. See background in *Indian Population in the United States and Alaska, 1910* (Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, 1915). In a recent study of Providence's Indian community, I noted a similar increase in the number of Indians in the early twentieth-century censuses; Handsman, *Being Indian in Providence*.

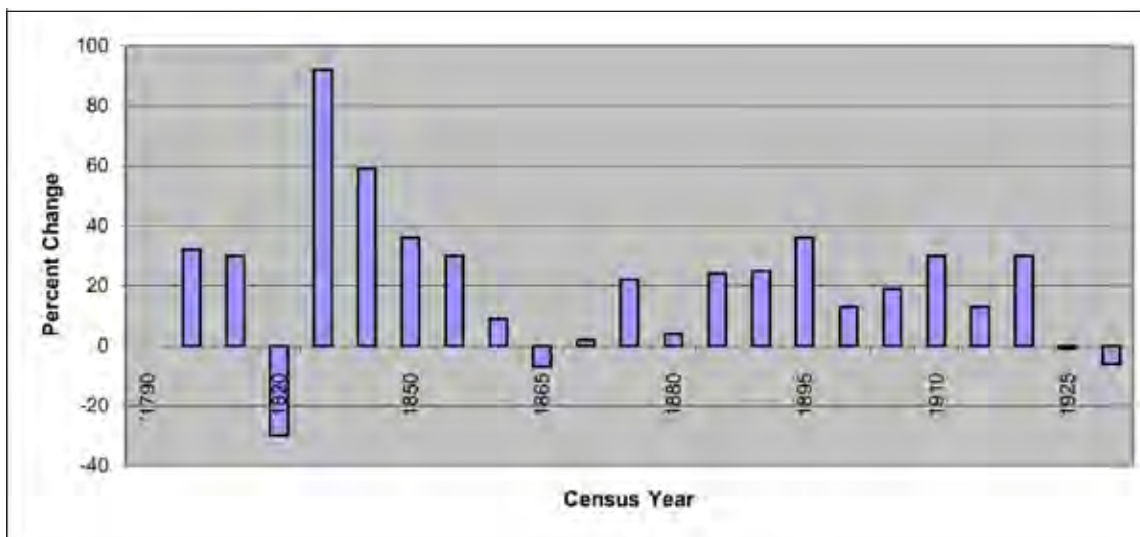


Fig. 4.8. New Bedford population and percent change, 1790–1930. The length of each bar is proportional to the percentage of population growth or loss that occurred over periods of a decade from 1790 through 1850 and five-year intervals between 1855 and 1930 when both state and federal censuses were conducted. The first surge in growth and decline, between 1800 and 1870, represents the effect of the city’s whaling industry.

family grew from three in 1880 to eight persons in 1900. John Post was born in New York and his wife in Massachusetts. In the 1900 census they are listed as Indians, and in 1910 they were identified as mulattos. John and his six children between fifteen and thirty-five years old worked to keep the family afloat as waiters, laundry workers, and servants in private households. By 1930 Caroline Post was widowed and living with two of her children; all were listed as Negro, the preferred term of color and race then.

These “other” Indian families often lived in the same neighborhoods as those from Wampanoag communities. Although their earlier lives had likely been very different, both groups tended to have similar experiences once they settled in New Bedford. Most noticeably, and predictably, the range of this Indian group’s occupations shifted away from the maritime industries that dominated the 1845–74 period (see table 3.6). In the later sample only two mariners were listed, Levi Cuff (in the 1870 census) and Joseph Belain of Gay Head (in the 1900 and 1920 censuses), as were two rope makers, Isaac Chumack (in 1910 and 1920) and Frederick Gardner from Mashpee (1900). Otherwise Wampanoag and other Indian men were working as day or wage laborers in a variety of semiskilled, service-oriented positions—hack drivers, coachmen, and stable hands; teamsters and junk dealers; and cooks and waiters in hotels and restaurants. Meanwhile their wives, sisters, and older daughters were domestics and cooks in family homes, waitresses, and office clerks.

Other “Indians” provided goods and services to city residents, earning a living as barbers, laundresses, dressmakers, chauffeurs, and auto mechanics. And as New Bedford grew into a true urban place with a complex economy and infrastructure, some went to work for the city as day and wage laborers and as skilled professionals. The 1920 census, for example, lists two Mashpee Indian men, Charles DeGrasse (age fifty) and Isaac Coombs (twenty-nine) as city policemen; in 1910 they had been a hotel

cook and teamster, respectively. Coombs was still a policeman in 1930; DeGrasse had retired to Los Angeles with his wife Ellen. Both men came from long lines of Wampanoag whalers on the Cape and Vineyard but did not arrive in New Bedford until after 1900 when the industry was almost at its end.

From 1900 onward, federal census takers recorded the street addresses of specific households, data that provides a window onto the locations of Indian residences in the early twentieth-century city. Compared to the period of 1845–1874 (see fig. 3.16), most Native people between 1880 and 1920 lived in an area further north and more inland, more removed from the harborside and its aging whaling complex. This area was bounded by Maxfield and Union Streets (north and south) and County and Florence Streets (east and west), a rectangular section in the central part of third and fourth wards (fig. 4.9). Before the 1870s, this was mostly undivided space with few buildings and streets west of Cottage Street, except for New Bedford Cordage Company, whose buildings and ropewalk were west of Ash Street. But by 1870–75, the area was being developed for residential and commercial use with through streets, a grid of rectangular blocks, and complexes of multistoried wood and brick buildings side by side. These changes are already visible in a detail from the 1876 bird's-eye view. Within that area, a smaller space of about one hundred square blocks (fig. 4.10)



Fig. 4.9. New Bedford's Indian "neighborhood," from George H. Walker, *Massachusetts State Atlas* (1891). The green rectangle represents the settlement area of most Native people in New Bedford. The yellow line marks Cottage Street; the reddish-brown lines denote ward boundaries.

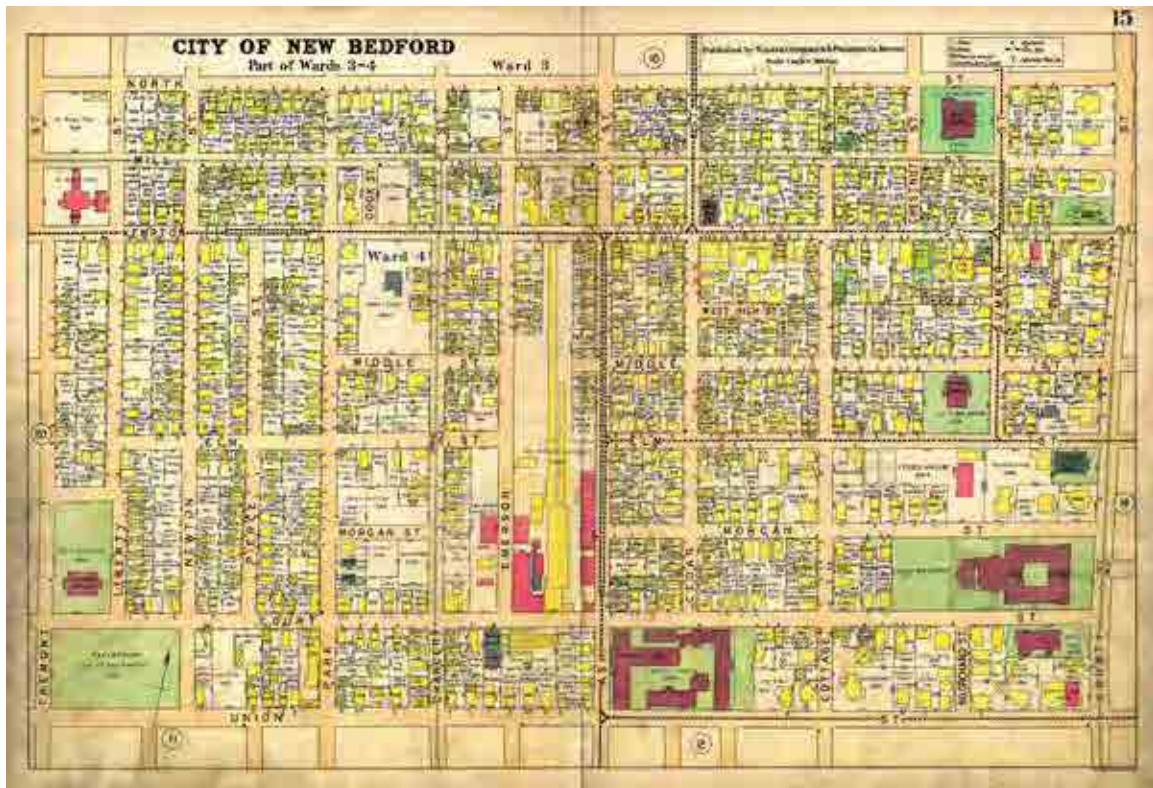


Fig. 4.10. New Bedford's Indian neighborhood, from *Atlas of the City of New Bedford* (1911). Courtesy Historic Mapworks, Westbrook, Maine.

contained 55 percent of all the known addresses linked to households where Indians lived between 1900 and 1920. This area was primarily residential, although the New Bedford Cordage Company still operated between Emerson and Ash Streets, to the west of the north-south streetcar lines. Further north, beyond North Street, was another large, residential area in the third ward where other Indian families lived along Chancery, Cedar, and Spruce streets.

A closer look at the area reveals that Indian residences were mostly dispersed across an area of fifteen square blocks from Court Street north to Mill Street and from Cottage Street west to Ash, along Cedar, Elm, Middle, West High, and Kempton streets (fig. 4.11). Few descendants of the Dartmouth Indians lived in this neighborhood. Instead such Mashpee families as the DeGrasses and Coombses were at 364 Kempton (in 1910) while the Gardners and Hickses resided at 52 Cedar (in 1900). This last household of seven, headed by Nellie Hicks from Mashpee, included her nephew Frederick Gardner, a rope maker; his wife Dorcas and their daughter; Nellie's mother Helen, a seventy-two-year-old laundress; and two other Mashpee women, nineteen-year-old Bertha Combs and Leah Quepish, a seventy-one-year-old laundress. At the southern end of Cedar in 1910, around the corner at 113 Court Street, lived Gay Header Melissa Cuff (age seventy-three) and her daughter Bessie James and a son; presumably this was the house to which Joseph Belain returned from his voyages in the early-to-mid 1910s. By 1920 Cuff had died and James, her two sons, her aunt Austress Webquish (age eighty-six), and Joseph Belain, then seventy-

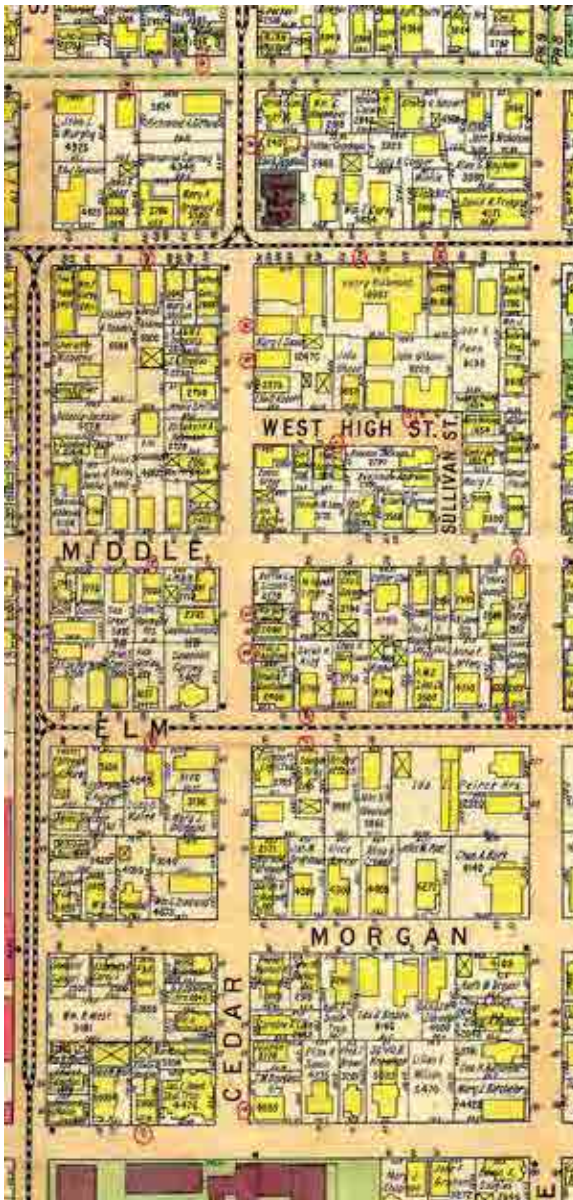


Fig. 4.11. Closer view of New Bedford Indian neighborhood, early 1900s, from *Atlas of the City of New Bedford* (1911). The house numbers circled in red indicate where Indians were living between 1900 and 1920. Courtesy Historic Mapworks, Westbrook, Maine.

one, had moved north about ten blocks to 51 Smith Street in the city's second ward. From there, Joseph Belain went out whaling in March 1920 on the *William A. Graber*, the last documented trip of a Wampanoag Indian whaler. Families of other Native ancestry also lived in this neighborhood, including that of Benjamin A. Address, whose wife and mother-in-law were born in Connecticut; barber Charles and Sarah Fowler identified as Indians in 1900; West Indian George Haddock, a barber, and his wife, an Indian from North Carolina; the Post family; and John W. Offley, another barber, who lived with his family at 181 Mill Street in 1920. Offley identified himself as an Indian on his World War I registration card.

Though African Americans also tended to concentrate in roughly the same area, this was not exclusively a “neighborhood of color” in the early twentieth century. In 1910, for example, the first two blocks at the south end of Cedar were occupied by white families whose members worked as skilled artisans, traveling salesmen, and store clerks. North of Elm Street, however, the twelve black or mulatto families who lived along the next four blocks ending at Mill Street worked as waiters and cooks, domestics, barbers, laundresses, and laborers. Among them were Lucy Wainer, widow of Thomas Wainer (one of the sons of Michael Wainer Jr.), and their two sons, Walter and Paul, who were both teamsters. The family of Dartmouth Indian ancestry lived at 80 Cedar Street for about five years.

Other Dartmouth Indian descendants did not live in the neighborhoods west of County Street and north of Union Street between 1900 and 1920. Instead they continued to reside in the older, historic core of the city east of County and south of Kempton Street. Charles and Sarah Borden lived at 42 Bedford in 1910; the widow Mary Drummonds and her son Benjamin, a caretaker, lived at 46 North Water Street in 1920. Charles Tilghman, a

coachman in 1900, lived at 163 William Street, William Drummonds, a druggist who was another of Mary's sons, lived at 41 William Street.

Outside the city, other families of Dartmouth Indian ancestry lived and worked in Westport and Dartmouth, including Sylvanus E. Wainer, a son of John Wainer, a signer of the 1863 petition, and seventy-two years old in 1900. David F. and Charles S. Wainer, father and son, lived together on Slocum Road in Dartmouth in 1900 very near the ancestral family homestead. Alice Cook, one of Paul Cuffe Jr.'s sisters who testified at Earle's August 1859 public hearing in New Bedford and signed the 1863 petition, lived with her son Benjamin P. Cook (another petition signer) on the family farm in Westport in 1870 and died there in 1880 at the age of eighty-nine. Benjamin remained on the farm with his wife Chloe, though neither were recorded there in 1900 or 1910. Their son Marshall L. Cook, however, was living on Emerson Street in New Bedford in 1900 and on Ash Street in 1910, working as a janitor and then city laborer. By 1920 he was widowed and a patient at the Taunton State Hospital; his son Marshall Jr. was incarcerated in the state prison in Boston, where he worked in its shoe shop. Between 1870 and 1920, none of these Cooks was ever identified as an Indian in a federal census, although Marshall Cook Jr. was listed as a mulatto in 1920, suggesting that he knew something of his mixed ancestry.

In 1930, there were very few descendants of the nineteenth-century Dartmouth Indians residing in New Bedford and surrounding towns, no Cuffes or Tilghmans and only three Wainers, including Lucy S. and Charles S. the children of David F. and Lydia A. Wainer. Lucy was seventy-three years old at lived at 298 Elm Street in the fourth ward, where she had been living in 1920; Charles was seventy-one and farming in Westport after spending time in New Bedford as a plumber in his fifties and early sixties. Both Lucy and Charles Wainer were identified as blacks in 1920 and Negroes in the 1930 census, which suggests that the census taker did not know of their family's mixed ancestry and history. Neither of them identified with their family's mixed ancestry and history.

Memory Keeping and Memory Making in Wampanoag Country

Although New Bedford was home to both Wampanoag families and persons of Native ancestry in the early twentieth century, they did not build an urban-based identity together, nor did they create or participate in any intertribal organizations to promote their interests or educate outsiders. There is no evidence, for example, that New Bedford-based Wampanoag belonged to the Indian Council of New England, based in Providence in the 1920s, or to its descendant organizations including the American Indian Federation (AIF) in the 1930s.³⁶ Instead it seems that the Wampanoags who settled in New Bedford after the end of whaling continued to be tied closely to their

36. A check of the AIF membership rolls (1930s–1950s), provided by Ann McMullen, found only one Gay Head Indian, Lorenzo Jeffers, and no listings for New Bedford. See Handsman, *Being Indian in Providence*; Ann McMullen, "What's Wrong with this Picture? Context, Conversion, Survival, and the Development of Regional Native Cultures and Pan-Indianism in Southeastern New England," in Laurie Weinstein, ed., *Enduring Traditions: The Native Peoples of New England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1994), 123–50; Ann McMullen, "'The Heart Interest': Native Americans at Mount Hope and the King Philip Museum," in Shepard Krech III, ed., *Passionate Hobby: Rudolf Frederick Haffenreffer and the King Philip Museum* (Bristol, RI: Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, 1994), 166–85.

ancestral communities on the Cape and Martha's Vineyard, places where the stories of Maushop and family memories of whaling were being kept alive. In the early 1900s Mary Cleggett Vanderhoop (ca. 1857–1935), a woman of mixed ancestry born in Pennsylvania and married to Gay Header Edwin Vanderhoop in 1883, collected a series of oral histories and Maushop stories, including one told by Thomas Cooper in the 1790s in which the giant transformed his children into killer whales (see fig. 1.4):

Today, in old Ocean, roam these children of the chief [Maushop] at will. Warm-blooded are they, and they nurse their young. In appearance they resemble the whale, being fully as large. They are spotted black and white, though occasionally an all-white one is seen. The sign by which we know they are the true sons and daughters of the great Moshup is this: They eat whales.³⁷

Mary C. Vanderhoop likely heard the Maushop stories from the elders at Gay Head, from such men as Lewis Cook, Charles B. Madison, her husband Edwin Vanderhoop, and his brothers William and John; all of these men were in their fifties and sixties in 1900 and had been whalers, sometimes based in New Bedford, in their youth in the 1860s and 1870s. They shared their experiences as whalers with her and recounted the Gay Headers' contributions to the industry's growth:

When whaling reached its height in New Bedford there was on the ships a great demand for the native islanders. Men like Cooper, Johnson, Belain, Peters, Haskins, Anthony, Jeffers, West, Vanderhoop, and others cheerfully engaged in the pleasing pastime of toying with the leviathans of the deep and taking "Nantucket sleigh rides" on the sea. But they did this for revenue only. Sons followed their sires' footsteps, and—like the famous colony of shad fishermen on the Hudson—for at least three generations, the men of some of the families named have kept at it steadily.³⁸

During the summer of 1904, Mary C. Vanderhoop's Gay Head stories were published in eight Saturday editions of the *New Bedford Evening Standard*.³⁹ Later in the 1930s and 1940s, the Maushop stories and the whaling exploits of the Gay Head Wampanoag were still remembered and celebrated in annual summer pageants held at the cliffs. The scripts for these presentations were written and performed by community members including the children and grandchildren of Mary and Edwin Vanderhoop.⁴⁰

At Mashpee, similar processes of memory keeping and memory making were a valued community tradition in the 1920s and 1930s. Such men as Eben(ezer) Queppish, born about 1860 and briefly a whaler when he was in his twenties, worried that Mashpee youth were forgetting their heritage as the outside world and modern technologies intruded more and more (fig. 4.12).⁴¹ He organized language classes and camps for tribal youth where he taught basket making and survival skills, and he was

37. Vanderhoop quoted in William S. Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620–1984* (Hanover, NH: University of Press of New England, 1986), 199.

38. From "The First Fishermen and Others," part of the series by Mary A. Cleggett Vanderhoop, "The Gay Head Indians: Their History and Traditions," *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 16 July 1904.

39. 25 June–13 August 1904, *New Bedford Evening Standard*.

40. See Levitas, "No Boundary is a Boundary," 386; Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 220–24; and "Ethnohistorical Report," in *Evidence for Proposed Finding against Federal Acknowledgement of the Wampanoag Tribal Council of Gay Head Inc.* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, Office of Federal Acknowledgement, June 1985).



Fig. 4.12. Eben Queppish of Mashpee, 1928, photograph in Frank G. Speck. "Territorial Subdivisions and Boundaries of the Wampanoag, Massachusetts, and Nauset Indians" (1928). Courtesy Research Library Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

active in the creation of the "Wampanoag Nation" in the late 1920s, an organization dedicated to cultural and community preservation and education.⁴² In August 1929 the "Wampanoag Nation" organized its first powwow at Mashpee, a three-day event that continued a long-standing tradition of tribal homecoming while incorporating more formal ceremonies, drumming and dancing, the recitation of Maushop stories, and the honoring

of ancestors and their contributions to New England's whaling industries. Wampanoag families attended from all the ancestral communities and many dressed in their finest regalia, a visible reminder of their cultural identity and a shared expression of their long history as indigenes, the first New England whalers.⁴³

The "Last/ing" of Wampanoag Indian Whalers

On 12 September 1918, more than a year after the United States declared war on Germany, Gay Head men traveled to the Barnstable County Courthouse on the Cape to complete their draft registration cards. Among them were Amos P. Smalley (1877–1961) and three of his nephews, Rodney, Norman, and Alonzo, ages seventeen to twenty and the sons of Amos's older brothers Leander and Jessie. Amos and Rodney identified themselves as fishermen, while Norman and Alonzo were farmers. The Gay Head Indian men of Amos Smalley's generation were among the last of the Wampanoag whalers with connections to New Bedford (table 4.6). Amos's career began in May 1893 when he shipped out as a steward on the New Bedford schooner *Pearl Nelson*, bound

41. Queppish knew lots about the outside world, having been a member of Buffalo Bill Cody's traveling Indian show in his teens. For a while he also lived and worked in Boston at the famous Austin and Stone's Dime Museum on Scollay Square, where he demonstrated Wampanoag and other Native skills. In 1900 he still lived in Boston but was a cook, an occupation that he then followed at local hotels upon his return to Mashpee. Queppish's life can be difficult to follow as federal census takers (or later interpreters at ancestry.com) often changed/misinterpreted the spelling of his name—Quappish in 1870, Quippish in 1880, Eupish in 1900 (Boston's 10th ward), Duelpish in 1920, and Frippish in 1930!

42. Campisi, *Mashpee Indians*, 130–34; Hutchins, *Mashpee*, 135–54. The Wampanoag Nation was similar in its aims and activities to the Indian Council of New England, although its focus was more narrowly defined as the ancestral and living communities of the Wampanoag people.

43. "Indians Will Observe Ancient Rites on Modernized Cape Cod," *New Bedford Standard*, 11 August 1929. This article described Eben Quippish as "a great leader of his tribe and race" who could make a fire without matches, cook equally well in the forest and modern kitchen, and speak the Wampanoag language.

Table 4.6. Amos Smalley's Whaling Career

Vessel	Dates	Age	Position	Lay	Earnings after Final Accounting
<i>Pearl Nelson</i>	5/1893–9/1896	15/17	Steward	1/75	\$14.00
<i>Platina</i>	6/1898–5/1901	21	Steward/ Boatsteerer	1/100	\$213.00
<i>Platina</i>	7/1901–9/1903	24	Boatsteerer	1/62	\$8.00*
<i>Sunbeam</i>	8/1904–7/1906	27	Boatsteerer	1/70	\$132.00
<i>Platina</i>	10/1908– 8/1910	30	4th mate	1/50	\$10.00**

* Did not complete entire voyage; deserted in Faial, September 1902.

** Smalley's bills included \$299 in advances (cash and supplies) paid to his wife while he was at sea.

for the Atlantic whaling grounds; he followed in the footsteps of his father Samuel, who sailed on at least two whaling voyages as a cook between 1859 and 1869, and his older brother Samuel F. Smalley, a prolific whaler with ten voyages to his credit between 1887 and 1909 from both New Bedford and San Francisco.⁴⁴

Later in his life,

Amos remembered his first whaling experience. "Life aboard was pretty rough," he said. "There were twenty-four of us in the fo'c'sle, stowed in little bunks one above the other. Cockroaches were everywhere. You had to hold your teeth tight when you drank a cup of water in the dark so as not to swallow a mouthful of them."⁴⁵

Despite these conditions and his paltry earnings of fourteen dollars—his expenses on the voyage totaled more than two hundred dollars—Amos Smalley went on three more whaling voyages from New Bedford, two on the *Platina* (1898–1903, 1908–10) and the well-known 1904 voyage of the *Sunbeam*, the one local artist Clifford Ashley documented in photographs, charcoal drawings, and writings.⁴⁶ Typical of early twentieth-century whaling vessels based in New Bedford, the *Sunbeam's* crew of thirty included twelve United States citizens (four of whom were naturalized), seventeen Portuguese nationals, and four British citizens from the West Indies (one from St. Vincent), Nova Scotia, and St. Helena. On that voyage Smalley, then twenty-seven years old, was a boatsteerer. The captain later described him as a "good man who should be made 3rd mate," and he signed on at a lay of 1/70, which translated to earnings of \$132.00 after his accounts were settled.⁴⁷

In 1906, after the *Sunbeam* returned, Smalley married Lydia A. Mingo from Christiantown, whaler Samuel's daughter, and the couple lived in Gay Head from at least 1910 to at least 1930. Smalley's last documented voyage was as fourth mate

44. Samuel Smalley, the father, was of mixed ancestry and born in New York (or Delaware), a seaman who married Julia Ann Bassett of Gay Head in January 1860; see Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, and Pease, *Report of the Commissioner*. By 1880, they were parents to three daughters and four sons, including Amos, then three years old.

45. Amos Smalley and Max Eastman, "I Killed 'Moby Dick,'" *Reader's Digest* 70, 422, June 1957, 173.

46. See Elton W. Hall, *Sperm Whaling from New Bedford: Clifford W. Ashley's Photographs of Bark Sunbeam in 1904* (New Bedford: The Whaling Museum and the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1982); Clifford Ashley, "The Blubber-Hunters," parts I and II, *Harper's Magazine* 112, April 1906, 670–82, and May 1906, 832–44; Clifford Ashley, *The Yankee Whaler* (1926; reprint, Garden City, NY: Halycon House, 1942).

on the 1908–10 voyage of the *Platina*. While he was at sea, the New Bedford shipping firm J. and W. R. Wing sent his wife cash advances and supplies totaling almost three hundred dollars, costs that reduced Amos’s “take-home earnings” to about ten dollars. Before 1918 Smalley turned to fishing to make a living, a pursuit he followed for the next few decades. By the late 1940s he was in his sixties and working as a caretaker for Max Eastman, a well-known writer and social activist who had purchased one thousand acres of Gay Head land in the 1930s and built a mansion. Smalley looked after the estate year-round and stayed in touch through letters while Eastman was away on business or living elsewhere during the winter.⁴⁸

Their relationship was close—Eastman referred to Amos as his “best friend on the island”—and it’s clear that Amos often told him stories about his whaling experiences, including what happened the summer of 1902 on the *Platina* in the whaling grounds south of the Azores. On that voyage Smalley served as a boatsteerer for the chief mate, Andrew West, who called him “Old Tommyhawk.” In September 1956, Eastman sought the help of an editor at *Reader’s Digest* to tell Amos’s story in the monthly magazine. The article appeared in June 1957, one year after Amos and Lydia attended the world premiere of the movie *Moby-Dick* in New Bedford at the invitation of director John Huston and Gregory Peck, who played Captain Ahab (figs. 4.13 & 4.14).⁴⁹ For *Reader’s Digest* Smalley recounted his own white whale:

I remembered the stories I had heard as a boy. Only this wasn’t just a whale with white spots. He was an all-white whale! I also remembered Captain McKenzie and his big boots and the things he said when you failed to do your job. It was my job to harpoon the whale, white or black, and I braced myself to do it. Now came what was almost a stammer from Andrew West: “Give it to him, Old Tommyhawk!” I got my iron into him all right, or thought I did. I leaned forward listening for the sound of the bomb exploding. I had never missed before when I had a good dart. Finally I heard the muffled “pung, pung” far down inside.

The struck whale sounded, and the crew waited anxiously to see how and where it would surface. Amos, for one, couldn’t swim a stroke.

He was 90 feet long, three times the length of our boat, and he was *un-natural*. In my mind’s eye I saw him lashing up the whole ocean with us in it, when suddenly the line sagged and West cried, “Haul in your slack.”

We hauled in the line, keyed up for the battle ahead. But the whale came up

47. The crew and ship’s accounts for the 1904–1906 *Sunbeam* voyage are documented on microfilm roll 91 as part of the Whaling Business Records collection of the J. and W. R. Wing firm, New Bedford Free Public Library. Ashley, *Yankee Whaler*, 9, 19, 21, mentions Amos Smalley several times in his writings of the *Sunbeam* voyage: describing him as a “full-blooded Gay Head Indian,” as a harpooner of a porpoise that provided the first fresh meat of the voyage, working in the try-works, and in a dangerous encounter with a sperm whale he had just harpooned.

48. See Levitas, “No Boundary is a Boundary,” 366–68. Four letters from Amos Smalley to Max Eastman written between 1949 and 1956 are preserved in the archival collection of the Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, including one written 1 December 1956 in which Amos described the celebration of Lydia’s and his fiftieth wedding anniversary: “we are on our way,” he reported, “for a few more years.”

49. Smalley and Eastman, “I Killed ‘Moby-Dick.’” See 9 September 9 letter by Max Eastman, archival collection of the Lilly Library, and “Film of ‘Moby Dick’ in World Premiere,” *New York Times*, 28 June 1956.



Figs. 4.13 & 4.14. Amos Smalley, about the time of his first whaling voyage, in 1893, and Smalley at the age of eighty when his story was published in the June 1957 issue of *Reader's Digest*. Early photograph courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum; 1957 photograph courtesy *Reader's Digest*, copyright ©1957, reprinted with permission of Trusted Media Brands, Inc., Copyright©2021.

slowly and quietly. He came up nib-end first, and just hung there, like a giant bobber. . . . Then suddenly his whole head broke water, the line jerked so it took all of us to hold it, and the air was filled with a heavy roar as thick red blood gushed from his spout-hole.

Amos Smalley didn't know about *Moby-Dick* until some thirty-five years after the 1902 *Platina* voyage, when a professor of history visited.

From him I heard the story that whalers used to tell some 50 years before my time of a white sperm whale that raged around the Pacific and was more ferocious than anything ever met on land or sea. Then

last summer John Huston and Gregory Peck invited me to the opening of their movie *Moby Dick* and introduced me as the man who killed him. I don't know as it was *Moby Dick* I killed. I do know, though, that whales sometimes move from ocean to ocean. I also remember Captain McKenzie's saying when he examined the worn-down teeth of my white whale: "He's at least a hundred years old and maybe two."

Amos Smalley had probably told his story of the white whale many times before it appeared in *Reader's Digest* and after, until his death in Gay Head on 7 March 1961, when he was eighty-four years old. Certainly he shared it within the community at Gay Head and with other Native peoples. By the early 1980s, Amos's life and encounter with the white whale had become part of the corpus of Maushop stories still told in Wampanoag communities today. In 1981 Nosapocket, an Indian resident of Mashpee, told the anthropologist William Simmons her Maushop tale:

He [Maushop] used to come to the Cape, and Mashpee was one of the village sites for the Wampanoags. But he used to swim here and fetch wood for the Aquinnah Wampanoags, the Gay Head [people]. And it turns out that it was our feeling as well as the Creator's that he was spoiling those people by doing many of their labors [so] that they themselves became more lazy. . . . [He] pampered them like little children.

Therefore the Creator informed Maushop that he was to be changed into another type of medicine being, a white whale. And so he was given time to say goodbye to the Aquinnah people as well as us, the Mashpee people, and we went to see him at the Gay Head cliffs to say farewell. And his companion, a very huge toad, was overtook with sorrow, seeing his friend was going to leave him and never be with him any more. And in his grief and sorrow the Creator saw that it wasn't good, and so changed him into a stone. So to this day, 1981, there is a stone on the Gay Head cliffs that resembles a huge frog, a reminder to us to not be sorrowful about our Creator's decisions, that they are the very best for all living things.

To complete the whole story, Maushop was later through the centuries referred

to and called Moby Dick. I met a fellow named Amos Smalley when I was younger, and he told me that he was the one that killed the Moby Dick. He was a very old gentleman when I met him. . . . He was an Aquinnah Wampanoag, Gay Head. He was one of the very people that Maushop loved so dearly and pampered as if they were his very own children. And it's not surprising to me or any other Wampanoags that it being an Aquinnah Wampanoag that would change his state of being again. And it could only have been a Wampanoag, in my mind, that could have killed a Moby Dick, sought after by so many whalers.⁵⁰

Somehow it makes sense that the ancient Maushop stories establishing links between Wampanoag people and whales should, in a more contemporary telling, spiral outwards to include one of the last Wampanoag whalers and his experiences with the great white whale of *Moby-Dick*, which was, it turns out, actually Maushop transformed. There is nothing in Melville's tale that hints of this Wampanoag tradition; there couldn't be, as the white whale still lived then and his last hunter had not yet been born.

Yet in the final scene of *Moby-Dick*, it is Tashtego, the Gay Head whaler, who nails Ahab's flag to the mainmast of the sinking *Pequod*, seemingly a veiled homage written by Melville to remind us of the centrality of Wampanoag men in the industry, then at its peak.⁵¹ Though they never dominated the labor force numerically in southern New England, they were the first whalers who helped build the early industry, the ones who remained and contributed as it grew, and the only native-born New Englanders who persisted as whalers as the industry slowly declined after the Civil War. The Wampanoag whalers lasted almost to the very end—and their communities are still here in part because whaling was a key survival strategy and cultural tradition since the days when Maushop walked and gifted his people with whales.

On the Study of Wampanoag Indian Whaling Traditions

The first American whalemens were not white, but red.

—Elmo Hohman, *The American Whaleman* (1928)

Both before and after Elmo Hohman's classic 1928 study, several generations of whaling historians recognized the seminal importance and early presence of Indians in the whaling industry (fig. 4.15). Once that acknowledgement had been made, however, the stories told about them quickly came to an end even as the industry's continued. Most scholars, even today, believed that Native whalers dramatically declined in number in the 1700s and were, therefore, an insignificant pathway for in-depth studies of whaling in New England, especially after the 1820s.

Here that assumption, and the received research model, have been set aside. A community and family-based approach has resulted in the construction of an initial database of three hundred Wampanoag and other Indian whalers whose experiences and careers in the New Bedford industry are represented by almost 750 entries

50. Quoted in Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 232.

51. Yukiko Oshima, "The Red Flag of the Pequod/Pequot: Native American Presence in *Moby-Dick*," in Sanford E. Marovitz and A. C. Christodovlov, eds., *Melville "Among the Nations"* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2001), 254–66.



Fig. 4.15 *Birth of the Whaling Industry*, oil on canvas by William Allen Wall, 1853. In Wall's painting the central group of figures includes an Indian trading with mariners; others represent the cultural diversity of New Bedford in the mid- to late eighteenth century. Wall did not explicitly represent here the connections between the early whaling industry and Indians or African Americans. Courtesy Trustees of the New Bedford Free Public Library, gift of Samuel Rodman Morgan, 1897.

spanning the period between the early 1800s and 1925. Although this database needs to be expanded, it is a significant entry point for studies of the whaling tradition in Wampanoag Indian communities and for understanding how those communities changed and persisted into the twenty-first century.

Hidden within the reality of the “lasting of Wampanoag whalers” is a complex history of communities and families surviving, of traditions being taught and passed on, and of monies made and households making do as the industry changed in New Bedford and other places. This history is also a story of what happens when alternative research models and methods are developed and used, approaches that lead to new insights and understandings. A new generation of whaling historians, and of historians and anthropologists looking at whaling, provided four core ideas that were then enriched, challenged, or transformed as this study went on.⁵²

1. *The long history of Wampanoag Indian whaling took place within an ancient world of social and cultural landscapes.*

That ancient world was the stage on which the long, enduring relationship between Maushop and his Wampanoag peoples was first worked out. It established connections between Indians and whales that became the basis for drift and shoreside whaling first and then the initial development of an offshore industry earlier in the eighteenth century. This history happened more than once in southern New England—on Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard, and the Cape, and again along the coastlines of southeastern Massachusetts and Connecticut, Rhode Island, and eastern Long Island—all places where both whales and Indians were integral parts of a long-term, cultural ecology. So as the colonial presence grew and became more permanent across the region, a foundation of knowledgeable labor was already in place, a resource of indigenes that became a crucial ingredient in the industry’s growth.

The Wampanoag’s social world, comprised of a series of ancestral homelands and interlocking, place-based communities, underlies the historic development of the key whaling center in southern New England focused on the primary ports of Nantucket and New Bedford, and the nearby coastlines and harbors along Buzzards Bay, the Cape (Nantucket Sound), and Martha’s Vineyard (fig. 4.16). Everywhere here were Wampanoag communities and the social relationships that bound them

together, as well as cultural traditions of whaling—customs and practices about work, resource use, gift giving, and learning—all things that continued *and* changed as whaling became less and less Native and more and more a profit-based industry financed, managed, and owned by others.

Still, when one looks at Wampanoag Indian whalers and their communities, it is the continuities across some five generations (from the Revolutionary War period onward) that stand out first—the

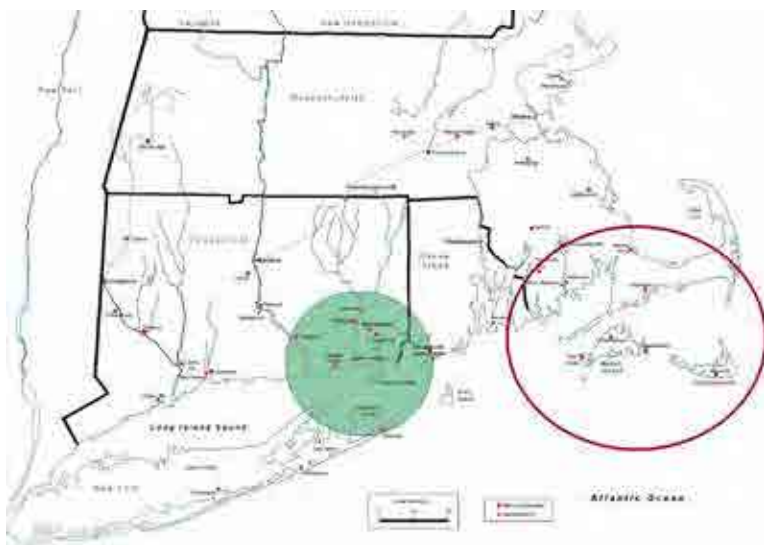


Fig. 4.16. Indian communities and whaling centers in southern New England. The red circle encompasses the Wampanoag-oriented sphere; the shaded circle delimits the whaling world of the Narragansett, Mohegan, Pequot, Shinnecock, and Montauk. Courtesy Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center.

52. See Russel Lawrence Barsh, “Colored’ Seamen in the New England Whaling Industry: An Afro-Indian Consortium,” in James F. Brooks, ed., *Confounding the Color Line: The Indian-Black Experience in North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 76–107; Bolster, *Black Jacks*; Little, *Indian Contribution*; Mancini, “Beyond Reservation”; Mandell, *Tribe, Race, History*; and Vickers, “Nantucket Whalemens.”

patterns of age-based participation, cohort whaling, and mentoring; the skills and reputations that were about individuals and families; and the ways in which earnings contributed to cycles of household formation and survival while enabling young Indian men to gain worldly experiences that would become invaluable as they became community leaders and activists. Clearly the patterns here delineated for Wampanoag whalers need to be both verified and enriched through further studies of both Wampanoag and other Indian worlds in southern New England.

2. *The history of Wampanoag Indian whaling needs to be a profoundly historical enterprise.*

This statement might seem self-evident. But recent studies of New England Indian whalers and their communities tend to treat the 150-year history of the industry as if it were a single, homogenous period with few internal changes that significantly affected Native and other participants.⁵³ In New Bedford, the industry grew, prospered, stagnated, and then declined so that each new generation of whaling crews faced different kinds of challenges and conditions that, in turn, affected their maritime experiences and careers. By tracing Wampanoag whalers within families from one generation to the next, these linkages become more visible and sometimes can lead to alternative interpretations. For example, it is almost a truism in whaling studies to acknowledge that Indians were the first whalers and an important presence as the industry grew. But then, supposedly, their numbers diminished, along with those of African Americans, especially after the 1840s–1850s.⁵⁴ To date there have been few quantitative studies undertaken to test this assertion, in part because such studies require a labor-intensive, systematic methodology for data collection—in short, a database organized and built through the gathering of surnames, given names, and community affiliations from crew lists.

Here that approach resulted in an initial Wampanoag whaler database of more than seven hundred entries over more than a century (1815–1925) that when analyzed appears to confirm the conventional numbers story, but there are some notable caveats. Although the numbers of Wampanoag whalers did decline after the 1840s, it is still difficult to ascertain by what factor as voyages became longer and crew sizes larger. To meet the labor demands of the rapidly growing, competitive industry, more unskilled whalers were recruited, so the percentage of Indian whalers involved in the industry necessarily would have diminished. But we still don't know what the trends looked like in other, smaller ports, such places as Provincetown, Salem, Edgartown, and Nantucket where whaling firms may have continued to operate in as they had in the past. Further studies are required to confirm or contradict these findings in both New Bedford and elsewhere.

But it is also obvious that each Wampanoag community continued to be represented in the New Bedford industry from the mid-nineteenth century onward. Their presence persisted into the twentieth century (see tables 4.1 & 4.4) so that

53. See Barsh, “Colored’ Seamen,” and Mancini, “Beyond Reservation.” Even Ric Burns’s American Experience documentary, “Into the Deep: America, Whaling, and the World,” 2010, suffers from this problem, as wonderful as the film’s narrative approach is.

54. Barsh, “Colored’ Seamen,” 94–97; Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 215–32.

Wampanoag communities including Gay Head and Mashpee continued to send some of their men to sea, men whose earnings then contributed to the survival of households and family lines. Again it would be useful and insightful to expand this New Bedford-based study comparatively to other Indian worlds and histories, including those of the Narragansett and Montauk, with a focus on the ports of Providence, Stonington, New London, and Sag Harbor.

3. *As a group, whalers of color may not have had common or similar experiences despite being assigned a shared, race-based identity.*

It is also a truism in the newest maritime history to point out that Indians were often grouped together with other “whalers of color,” those of African-American or mixed Native-African-American ancestry, under misleading, race-based labels derived primarily from whalers’ complexions. This tendency was common in New Bedford, although in the early years of the industry Wampanoag whalers were often identified as Indian or Native, especially those who came from the well-known communities of Gay Head and Mashpee.

After the 1840s, most Indian whalers were described, if at all, as black, mulatto, colored, or dark in New Bedford crew lists, which implied that they could not be distinguished phenotypically from other whalers of color. There is some reality to this overlapping as intermarriage had resulted in more shared phenotypic features and so led some scholars to suggest that Indians and others of color created social networks or consortiums or “communities” in which they cooperated to achieve specific economic goals and combat prejudice on land and at sea.⁵⁵

But this study and others before it reveal that Wampanoag communities and their whalers were precisely and consistently Indian even as they intermarried.⁵⁶ Principles were articulated and put into action, the goal of which was to extend a community’s benefits to outsiders and their descendants while controlling their access to land and other rights—for example, voting at tribal meetings. Furthermore it’s clear that as time went on the position of some individuals in Wampanoag families of “mixed ancestry” changed: whalers or other men who married into Gay Head or Mashpee were seen and controlled as outsiders, but their children and grandchildren had the same rights and standing as their Wampanoag mothers as long as they lived within or remained connected to that community. For example, William A. Vanderhoop of Dutch Surinam, who married Gayheader Beulah Salsbury in the late 1830s, would have been treated as a “foreigner” with restricted rights. Yet their three sons of mixed ancestry (William A. Jr., Edwin D., and John P., who all whaled in the 1860s) were fully recognized Gay Head men no different from most of their peers.

The lines that divided such Wampanoag communities as Gay Head and Mashpee were not drawn along boundaries of skin color or other outward features. Instead they were about the ancestry and origins of specific individuals who came from beyond Indian country—sometimes brought there by their work as mariners—and thus were called “foreigners.” Their status and standing never changed, no matter

55. Barsh, “Colored Seamen;” Mancini, “Beyond Reservation.”

56. See in particular Earle, *Indians of the Commonwealth*, and Mandell, “Shifting Boundaries.”

how long they lived and worked amongst their relations, a matter of cultural fact that left some feeling dispossessed and disenfranchised. During the February 1869 Mashpee hearing on citizenship and tribal termination several such outsiders spoke, including Samuel M. Godfrey, a mariner of color born in the Netherland Antilles (Curaçao) who married a Mashpee woman in the early 1840s.

“I have been trying to make Marshpee shine with any other town,” he stated, “just as hard as I could, with my rights and my wrongs, my ups and my downs, and I have been perfect and imperfect, but I have never been a citizen [here].” As a noncitizen of Mashpee, Godfrey declared, he had only a few, circumscribed rights:

Now I feel [I should have] the same privilege in Marshpee; [but] the laws of Marshpee are so that I am lashed, if I don’t go just as an Indian wants me to go. I have lost my wife, and there is a law [tradition] here that my children can come home and turn me out of the property I have accumulated. My wife had but a few acres of land, but I have made improvements on it, and now they give me to understand, “You may make all the improvements you may choose; when your children come home they can drive you [off] because you are a stranger and they are Indians.”

But, if it be that the entailments [customary law] remain, I shall stay here; I am bound to die here, unless I am drowned at sea. I shall live with the Indians; I shall hang to them, but I should like to be a citizen among men.⁵⁷

Godfrey was then in his early fifties with four sons—Leander, James, Alonzo, and Samuel M. Jr.—three of whom became mariners in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1880, Samuel M. Godfrey Sr. was sixty-three and still living in Mashpee with his second wife and youngest son Samuel Jr., a seaman. The family name remained at Mashpee in 1900.⁵⁸

Whalers of color were also differentiated at sea, or at least that’s what the initial data suggest, especially, and significantly, during the 1845–74 phase, a time when many New Bedford crews were less diverse (see table 3.3) and when far fewer African-Americans found work in skilled whaling positions. Even though their numbers also declined at least on New Bedford-based vessels, Wampanoag and other Indians were still hired for their skills and experience and served as boatsteerers and advanced to various mate positions (see fig. 3.3), a pattern that distinguished them from other Native-born whalers of color and that continued into the twentieth century. Although more in-depth research is needed in New Bedford and other whaling ports, it now seems likely that James B. Congdon’s 1863 assessment of the “color line” in New Bedford whaling was quite accurate. Congdon had written master mariner Edmund Gardner about the status of “coloured seamen” on vessels he had commanded and combined that with his own memories:

At the period of which Captain Gardner has written, our colored men were black, Africans. It was more than half a century ago. My recollections go back to about that period. A mulatto was then rarely seen among us. My impression is clear that then a free negro was considered first rate material for a whaleman. Not infrequently the

57 Samuel Godfrey’s voice is from the “Hearing before the Committee on Indians at Marshpee,” Massachusetts House Report No. 502 (1869), 19–21.

58. Godfrey’s family background has been abstracted from the 1860, 1870, and 1880 federal census records for the District or Town of Mashpee. None of the Mashpee Godfreys have shown up yet on New Bedford crew lists even though they are identified as mariners or seamen in Earle’s 1861 report (Samuel Sr.) and federal census records. In 1880 Samuel Godfrey Sr. is called a “Captain,” which implies that his maritime record was long and included stints as a senior mate and perhaps captain.

Indian was preferred to either black or white.

I would remark that the proportion of colored men in the whaling business is not as great now as formerly. . . . The proportion gradually diminished until in a majority of cases the cooks and stewards only were colored. For the most part this is now the case, but it is, without doubt, almost wholly owing to the prejudice of the whites.⁵⁹

4. *Ancestral place and community are key concepts in exploring the lives and experiences of Indian whalers.*

Some of the entries in the Indian whaler database represent men of Indian ancestry who were the descendants of intermarriages between indigenous Natives and other persons of color but who were not of or connected with an ancestral community in the 1800s. Here, the distinction between whalers of Native ancestry/descent and whalers of Wampanoag Indian communities is crucial to the exploration of the connections between mariners' experiences in the industry and their lives back home.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it's clear there were small, scattered settlements and individual "households of color" in such Bristol and Plymouth County towns as Dartmouth, Taunton, Rehoboth, Bridgewater, Middleboro, and Rochester.⁶⁰ The individuals who lived there were sometimes of mixed ancestry, Indian and African-American primarily, and made a living as farmers or farm laborers or by working in the intercoastal and international shipping trades. These experiences became key as the whaling industry grew up in New Bedford after the 1770s and provided employment for native-born men of mixed ancestry and color who were experienced mariners.

Some Bristol County whalers of mixed ancestry do not seem to have identified ever as Native, including James Quonwell and Joseph Quonwell II, even though they both were descended in part from local Indians. In contrast were such men as Ephraim Prince, John Elisha, and Isaac Hunter, all whalers of color often referred to as Indian or Native on crew lists, or alternatively as colored or black. But these men cannot be linked to any visible Wampanoag community; instead their lives and families seem to be framed by other social networks still largely untraced, a fact that might explain why they apparently disappeared from the whaling industry in the 1840s and 1850s when opportunities for "colored seamen" declined in New Bedford.

59. Congdon's comments are contained in a letter and memo, "The Colored Population of New Bedford," 19 September 1863, written in response to a printed questionnaire from the American Freedman's Inquiry Commission of New York, James Bunker Congdon Papers, Special Collections, NBFPL. Nantucket-born Edmund Gardner went whaling out of New Bedford and Nantucket between 1807 and about 1824 and served as captain or first mate on seven known voyages including the *Maria* in 1828, whose crew of fifteen included two Negroes from New Bedford, four mulattos, two Indians, and three other dark-complexioned mariners. The crews on other Gardner voyages, on the *Winslow* (1810) and *Balaena* (1818, 1821), were not as diverse. Data abstracted from online crew lists, NBFPL. To evaluate James Congdon's memories more completely, samples of New Bedford crew lists at five-year intervals need to be generated, their date entered, and crew diversity analyzed from 1815 through 1875. This approach would also shed light on the assertion in Farr, "Multi-Racial Crews," 166, that native-born blacks were still an integral part of whaling crews after 1850.

60. Benton, *Early Census Making*; Mandell, *Behind the Frontier*.

Here race-based prejudice seems to have been extended to and affected mariners whose ancestries and appearances overlapped with those of African-Americans.

Perhaps the most visible group of mariners of mixed ancestry were the men who can be linked to the so-called Dartmouth Indians whom Earle enumerated in his 1861 report. This group comprised a network of intermarried families of color, many of whom were of mixed Indian-black ancestry, including the Cuffes and Wainers of Westport. That family group included successful mariners and whalers. But there is little evidence that the members of this descendant group acted like an Indian community—even when they signed the January 1863 petition seeking the return of ancestral lands and burial places. Within a generation of that petition, far fewer “Dartmouth Indians” continued to live in greater New Bedford; only seven are identifiable in the 1900 censuses. Their descendants must have been somewhat more numerous, but there are no indications the group ever came together again to claim their ancestors’ homelands. Likely they continued to interact and intermarry with other people of color in the region and in New Bedford itself while being aware of their Indian ancestry. To be sure, the Dartmouth Indians of the 1800s had some real and true memories, and they had been taught to remember their heritage. Some among them visibly claimed their Indian identity or intermarried with Wampanoag Indians. But they were not a long-standing, indigenous community with a surviving, corporate land base such as Mashpee, Gay Head, Christiantown, or Chapaquiddick. Each of these was a real, enduring place with histories of survival and resistance, change and accommodation in which Wampanoag Indian whalers participated as both actors and leaders.

The New Bedford whaling industry was an important source of income in these communities. It helped to sustain existing households and provide a foundation for new ones. Still, the actual impact of earnings needs to be explored in more depth within specific Wampanoag communities and individual household cycles. It is not yet clear, for example, how the ebb and flow of earnings was affected by downturns in the industry, nor do we really understand whether the nineteenth-century industry kept some Indians locked in cycles of debt peonage as happened to their ancestors in the days of shoreside whaling.

What is more apparent, however, is that Wampanoag men participated in the life and histories of their ancestral communities while they were whaling, and especially after they retired as mariners—debating issues, attending tribal meetings, signing petitions, and serving in a variety of “governmental roles” necessary to maintain each community and its resources. To see these connections requires another methodological stance—studying the various and abundant records of the overseer system, of passed and unpassed legislation, and community petitions sent to Boston and elsewhere, an archive often ignored by whaling historians in Indian country.

That Wampanoag men stayed informed and involved while “at sea” says much about community bonds, while their experiences in the outside world provided ideas and skills that sometimes became crucial in their efforts to remain Indians. During the Mashpee Rebellion, for example, the community’s petition argued that its members alone should have control over its trees, as they could use those resources as an entry point into the whaling and shipping trades. They also insisted that at least some in the tribe were becoming more capable of being leaders and planners without overseers because of what they learned as mariners.

By early 1869, during the debates over tribal termination in Mashpee, the arguments had become more complicated. Matthias Amos, then fifty-five years old and making a living as a farmer after being a whaler in his youth, spoke at length. “You can’t expect much eloquence from me,” he began. “When I was a boy, there were no schools in this place. I went to sea very young, and for that reason, I have come up uneducated. I hope you will excuse what blundering remarks I may make.” He went on, however, to argue in a dense and literate way that the Mashpee Indians have been deprived of their “Indian privileges” while also being disenfranchised from making their own decisions. While he wanted recognition of Mashpee as a separate Indian town(ship), he also wanted to be a free and independent man, the equal of any other, Native or not. In this hope he referred to his whaling experiences. “When I go abroad, there is a handle put to my name, and I can put on a stiff collar, and walk the ship’s deck beside the master,” Amos said. “I have done it, but here I am nothing, below everybody, the lowest they have.” Solomon Attaquin, the whaler and hotel keeper, made the same point after reviewing Mashpee’s long history of guardianship and rebellion:

Now, which is the best; to remain as we now do, standing on the brink, or jumping off into the general law? I say it is time for us to shove off. . . . If it don’t come now—and these gentlemen are all willing to have it come, but say we are not quite ready for it—have you got to wait another thirty years longer? I shall be gone, and all the rest that have spoken here, and we shall not see the day that we shall be free men—men that have all the rights and privileges of citizens of the Commonwealth and the United States. I want to see the day before my head is covered up.⁶¹

For Matthias Amos and Solomon Attaquin, being whalers had empowered their sense of self as well as their vision of a dual identity as Indians *and* citizens (fig. 4.17). They did not speak for everyone in Mashpee that day, and, in fact, at the end of the hearing the majority of those in attendance voted against removing restrictions concerning land sales to outsiders (twenty-six votes against to fourteen for) while being split evenly, eighteen votes each, for and against the question of citizenship. Clearly there were Mashpee men who disagreed with Matthias Amos and Solomon Attaquin, so there was no single, uniform position informed by whalers’ experiences. Instead those experiences had given different individuals different perspectives on community issues and the standing to argue with others.

Beyond making a living, the experiences of being whalers in the changing worlds of a New England and global mercantile economy contributed to the survival (and survivance) of Wampanoag Indian communities in other ways.⁶² It was whaling specifically, and mercantilism in general, that helped some Wampanoag develop leadership qualities, rhetorical skills, and the confidence to stand up and argue for their rights by challenging misunderstandings while using their growing abilities to engage in civic and legal debate. The experiences of whaling created several generations of activists who then enabled the long, continuing history of Wampanoag peoples. An ancient tradition, thousands of years old, thus became a pathway for their entrance into the early modern world.

61. The testimony of Matthias Amos and Solomon Attaquin appears in “Hearing before the Committee on Indians at Marshpee,” Massachusetts House Report No. 502 (1869), 10–15, 29–34.

62. See Handsman, “Race and Survivance.”

Mashpee Aug 27 1859

To Hon^{ble} John M. Earle

In compliance to a duty assigned to us at your Meeting at Mashpee, as a Committee we make the following report of our deliberations,

- 1st Vote, to recommend to your Hon^{ors} to intercede for us to have a fair passed giving to us the right to disseminate our territory.
- 2^d Vote, to recommend to your Hon^{ors} to intercede for us for an addition to our school funds, of ^{five} ~~three~~ ^{dollars} ~~cents~~ ^{per} ~~annum~~ ^{annum}.
- 3^d Vote, to recommend to your Hon^{ors} to intercede for us for the right to send a delegate to the legislature.

All of which we respectfully submit to your W^{ise} consideration of the welfare of your Committee, and their associates;

Solomon Attaquin } Committee
 Peter S. Foller }
 Moses Pocknet }
 Sampson & Alvis }
 E. J. Jewell }

Fig. 4.17. Solomon Attaquin and other Mashpee Indians to John Milton Earle, August 1859, asking Earle to “intercede for us for the right to send a delegate to the legislature.” Attaquin and Moses Pocknet went whaling out of New Bedford in their youth; Peter Foller was a Mashpee mariner in Earle’s list, as were Charles and Ezekiel Alvis, the grown sons of Sampson Alvis. Courtesy John Milton Earle Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

This process was well underway by 1860 and was a source of wonderment for John Milton Earle during his encounters with Wampanoag Indians in “unexpected places.”⁶³ Much of what Earle learned during his research was new and unexpected to him and, through his report, to New Englanders of the time. Nowadays Earle’s insights are still astonishing yet hardly unexpected: there is nothing surprising or revelatory in the fact that Wampanoag Indians went whaling. What is “unexpected,” however, is how persistent whaling traditions were in Wampanoag communities, and how frequently and successfully Wampanoag Indians engaged in the early modern

63. Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

world because of their skills and experiences as mariners. It is difficult to think of other domains, like whaling and shipping, that could have provided southern New England indigenes with similar economic and civic opportunities.⁶⁴

Even after whaling declined and disappeared, Wampanoag communities persisted because of their ability to be Indians and act as citizens of Massachusetts and the world. If Wampanoag people had never been given the gifts of whales and then whaling, their community histories might have proceeded along very different pathways, ones that would not necessarily have led to their survival and persistence into the twenty-first century. This was Maushop's greatest gift, his living legacy to the Wampanoag people of today.

An Afterword

More than ten years have passed since the research and initial writing for this was completed, and since then important research documenting the experiences and contributions of Native whalers has been undertaken and published. This new work enriches our understandings of the connections between offshore whaling and the survivance of indigenous communities in southern New England and coastal New York.

By survivance I mean the complexly layered histories of creative interactions, resistant accommodations, losses and newnesses that are integral to understanding how Native peoples lived and worked and survived in, and against, an ever-changing, early modern world.⁶⁵ To participate in offshore whaling was, for many Wampanoag and other Native men, a survivance strategy: it was work that enabled household survival and experiences and deepened abilities to act in the larger world of tribal politics. In my report, survivance stories underlie the early chapters about John Milton Earle's study and report; the deeper explorations of how Wampanoag whalers contributed to the economic and political survival of their communities at Christiantown, Chappaquiddick, Aquinnah (Gayhead), and Mashpee; and the later histories of the lasting of these places and peoples as offshore whaling waned.

Considerable research has been undertaken on Native American whalers and whaling by tribal historians at Mashpee and Aquinnah and by non-Native scholars working in museum and academic settings. Jason Mancini continued his studies of Native whaling out of New London and Stonington as part of a larger effort to understand familial and community survivance in eastern Connecticut.⁶⁶ I explored further the archaeological histories of Wampanoag whaling in a conference paper and also discussed the 1825 whaling voyage of the *Good Return* in "When Mashpee

64. Elsewhere in Indian country, it might have been lumbering and forestry, or specialized agriculture, or even fishing that helped create such pathways for community survival and engagement in the early modern world.

65. James Clifford, *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); Russell G. Handsman, "Survivance Strategies and the Materialities of Mashantucket Pequot Labor in the Later Eighteenth Century," *Historical Archaeology* 52, 1 (2018): 51–69.

66. Jason Mancini, "Beyond Reservation: Indian Survivance in Southern New England and Eastern Long Island, 1731–1861" (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 2009).

Indians Went Whaling Together,” a note prepared for a blog published by the National Archives.⁶⁷

Towards the eastern end of Long Island, Allison Manfra McGovern worked on Montaukett whaling, while Emily Button Kambic documented Native American and African whaling out of Sag Harbor.⁶⁸ All of these studies enriched the historical record of indigenous whaling across the region and deepened our understandings of how Native whalers contributed to the survivance of their households and communities in reservation and off-reservation settings. Offshore whaling was not the only strategy for Native survivance, but its importance was substantial and long-lasting.

More than five years before I began studying Wampanoag whaling in New Bedford in the summer of 2008, Nancy Shoemaker, of the Department of History at the University of Connecticut, was already hard at work creating an extensive database of Native American whalers, their global voyages, and their community biographies. Her primary data source was Record Group 36, Records of the U.S. Custom Service at the National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region, in Waltham, Massachusetts, but her studies took her to regional archives and collection throughout the Northeast.

She has written extensively about her research, as early as 2008, and her recent publications are richly documented and deeply insightful interpretations of the work experiences and community lives of indigenous whalers.⁶⁹ My study of New Bedford-based, Native whaling is specific and local. Shoemaker’s work is comparative, global, and definitive. For both of us, Elmo Hohman’s words about the Indianness of first whalers was only a beginning.

67. Russell G. Handsman, “Some Middle-Range Theory for Archaeological Studies of Wampanoag Indian Whaling” (Paper, Annual Meeting of the Conference on New England Archaeology Annual Meeting, Amherst, MA, 2011); Handsman, “When Mashpee Indians Went Whaling Together,” Research note, *I Found it in the National Archive*, National Archives Blog, [usnatarchivesfoundit-blog.tumblr.com](https://www.usnatarchivesfoundit-blog.tumblr.com).

68. Allison Manfra McGovern, “Disrupting the Narrative: Labor and Survivance for the Montaukett of Eastern Long Island” (Ph.D. diss., Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, 2015); Emily Button, “A Family Affair: Whaling as a Native American Household Strategy on Eastern Long Island, New York,” *Northeast Historical Archaeology* 43 (2014): 110–29; Emily Button Kambic, “Navigating Differences: The Archaeology of Identities in an American Whaling Port” (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2015).

69. Nancy Shoemaker, “Mr. Tashtego: Native American Whalers in Antebellum New England,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 33 (2013): 109–32; Shoemaker, *Living with Whales: Documents and Oral Histories of Native New England Whaling History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014); Shoemaker, *Native American Whalers and the World: Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

PART TWO
AFRICAN AMERICAN, WEST INDIAN,
AND ST. HELENIAN WHALEMEN
AND WHALING TRADESPEOPLE
IN NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS,
1825–1925

Kathryn Grover

CHAPTER 5

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN NEW BEDFORD WHALING TO 1865

In June 1845, while the Nantucket whaling vessel on which he served was moored off the Azorean island of Corvo, Frederick A. Lawton of New Bedford wrote home to his father Cuffe, an African American laborer and farmer who then lived on that section of Bedford Street just below the city's far-famed County Street mansion district (fig. 5.1). "I can say that I never entered upon a more agreeable voyage then I now are on & hope that we will make a good voyage & return safe home again," Lawton, then about thirty years old, wrote. "I like all of the Officers & thay like me & we have a good ship & good Whaleing men. . . . I hope that we will make a quick voyage."

Some two months later Cuffe Lawton received a letter from the esteemed black whaling captain Absalom Boston, then at home on Nantucket. Boston reported having a letter from Frederick written in July while "off of Fayall all well & harty on board & a fine ship under foot & no Mistak." He added that Frederick had "consigt to my care 2 basketts with flours Arterfishell to be remitted to you to be given to Miss Mary Antone with his best respects." Antone, who lived near the Lawtons, was the daughter of a Cape Verdean man and an Afro-Indian woman whose family had deep roots in southeastern Massachusetts; she became Frederick Lawton's wife in 1848, and by 1849 the couple had bought a house on what was then the southwestern outskirts of the city.¹

Little is definitely known about the African American Lawtons. They came to New Bedford from Portsmouth, Rhode Island, in the mid-1820s, and while Cuffe was probably born free his father, also Cuffe, was probably once enslaved to one of several white Lawton families in Rhode Island, where slavery was still legal at the time of Cuffe Lawton's birth about 1790. When he came to New Bedford Lawton, like countless other African American men whom censuses and directories term "laborers," worked off and on at the many unskilled and semiskilled tasks the whaling industry offered: in 1836 the whaling merchant Charles Waln Morgan paid him for "sawing old wood" from the whaling ship *Frances Henrietta*. Still, Cuffe Lawton had enough capital to buy a house in 1835, and parts of his family remained in it and its surrounding neighborhood for generations.²

1. Frederick A. Lawton, "off Western Islands," to Cuffe Lawton, 25 June 1845; Absalom Boston, Nantucket, MA, to Cuffe Lawton, 28 August 1845, MSS B96.8-4, Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum Library (hereafter cited as ODHS).

2. The author has compiled the biographical background on the Lawtons and other people of color cited in this manuscript from federal and state censuses, city directories, assessor's records, local and antislavery newspapers, city overseer of the poor records, whaling protection papers, crew lists, and other sources; biographical files are in the author's collection. All biographical information in this text is taken from these files and will not be cited individually. On Lawton and the *Frances Henrietta* see Charles W. Morgan Papers, collection 27, volume 24, Waste Book 21 December 1842 — 30 November 1850, George W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT.

Of Cuffe Lawton's three sons, two of them, Francis and Frederick, spent part of their working lives aboard whaling vessels. Frederick Lawton first went whaling in 1830, when he was fifteen years old, on board the Pacific-bound ship *Charles*. If he had not been before he had become, by 1845, a religious man. He was well, Lawton reported to his father in that year, and recognized it as a "good blessing" that he hoped also prevailed in his family. It was only through the "healp of God" that he was alive and able to write home, and he hoped his faith would spread to his shipmates in the course of time. "We have not got any professers on board," he wrote, "but I hope that we will before we return if we should be spared."

Lawton must have viewed trust in God as in some measure a practical necessity: on the day he wrote his father he had seen the wreckage of the whaling vessel *Charles and Henry*, which had only set sail from Nantucket three weeks earlier, and while he surely knew that the ruin of whaling vessels at sea was not common, it could happen to any vessel at any time. The New Bedford whaling ship *Charles*, on which he had begun his whaling career, was lost on its 1855 voyage, a tragedy that must have made

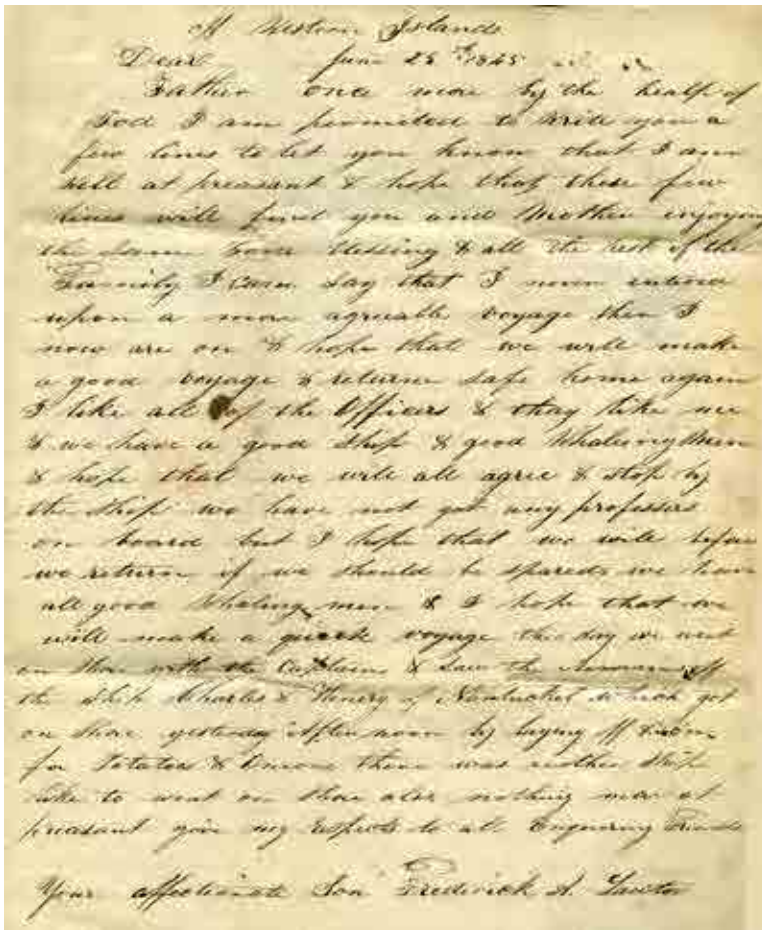


Fig. 5.1. Frederick A. Lawton, "off Western Islands," to Cuffe Lawton, 25 June 1845. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/ New Bedford Whaling Museum Library.

him thankful not to have continued in its service. But in 1862, while on the schooner *Dolphin*, Frederick Lawton was lost at sea. His death was not recorded in the *New-Bedford Mercury*, the city's only newspaper at that time, and because he died at sea it was not recorded in vital statistics. Only his cenotaph at New Bedford's Rural Cemetery reveals his fate (fig. 5.2).

Through at least eight voyages, most of them from the port of New Bedford, Frederick Lawton had been able to advance in the whaling industry. By 1849 he was second mate of the bark *Superior*, he held the same position on the Fairhaven bark *Martha 2d* on its 1856 voyage, in 1861 he was first mate of the schooner *James*, and in 1862 he was first



Fig. 5.2. Cenotaph for Frederick Lawton, Rural Cemetery, New Bedford.

mate on his final voyage aboard the *Dolphin*. He, like Absalom Boston, was among those African Americans who achieved an officer's or master's rank in whaling. But these men were the exception, not the rule. Over the course of the nineteenth century and into the early years of the twentieth, black whalers rarely advanced beyond able seamen, and over time racial discrimination and the discovery of foreign labor sources greatly reduced their presence on the ships. When New Bedford whaling reached

the height of its prosperity, in 1853–54, the proportion of African American men on whalers had already begun its steady decline. And well before the last decades of the nineteenth century, when foreign-born mariners came to predominate, African Americans had virtually disappeared from whaling crews.

Because of the whaling industry and its global reach, New Bedford offers resources to the historian unavailable in other places. Beginning in 1796 the United States Congress required all vessel crew to carry a Seamen's Protection Certificate to prevent their impressment by foreign navies. Seven years later the government mandated that all owners of American vessels bound for foreign waters deposit a list of crew at the district custom house. Individual whaling vessel owners and agents kept detailed accounts of vessels, their fitting and repair, and their voyages; of crew and their disposition; of lays and shares and income. And for the owners a captain or mate kept a log for each voyage that recorded weather, vessel location and sailing direction, whales sighted, taken, and lost, ports of call, and myriad other details affecting a cruise's progress and outcome.

If whaling from New Bedford had lasted only a decade, these records would yet add rich and intricate detail to the study of the people who signed on as crew of a whaling vessel voyage or whose shoreside work made that voyage possible. Yet nearly a thousand vessels registered in New Bedford and neighboring ports left this custom district between the late 1750s and 1925, many of them on multiple voyages. The type and quality of documentation of these whaling cruises varies widely. Crew lists, for example, do not exist for all New Bedford whaling vessels before 1840, and incoming crew lists scarcely exist at all before 1917. Thus while we know with some certainty who left this port on a whaling voyage, we can only know from agents' and owners' vessel accounts or, sometimes, from logbooks or journals who was recruited during a voyage and may have returned with the ship.

Moreover, crew lists do not always include all of the information they were technically required to. An indeterminate, but significant, number of crew lists do not list complexion, hair color, and eye color. Typically, an African American would have been shown as “bwb” (black skin, wooly hair, black eyes) or “mwb” (mulatto, wooly hair, and black eyes), but many lists simply fail to show these descriptors. Often, too, a crew member’s place of origin is left blank. Another, more subjective idiosyncrasy is apparent on crew lists: someone identified as an Indian on the crew list for one voyage, often by the use of “c” to indicate “copper” skin color, may be identified as simply “dark” on another or mulatto on a third. Federal and state census schedules show a similar tendency. A person listed as black in 1850 may be classed as mulatto in 1855; an enumerator in 1855 might have perceived any given person as mulatto, but a different enumerator might have seen that person as white in 1860. I have classed men and women as of African descent only if the balance of enumerations shows them as black or mulatto, not dark or copper; even if a person is of mixed African and Indian ancestry, I have not included them in my analysis unless most evidence indicates that they thought of themselves as of African descent—by, for example, joining an African American church or taking an active part in the antislavery movement.

Despite their flaws, taken together the crew lists and protection certificates (or “protection papers,” as they are more often called) form an extraordinary foundation for the investigation of whaling and the people who populated the industry, including largely English-speaking men and women of African descent who sometimes escaped or simply missed the notice of census and directory enumerators, assessors, journalists, and local historians. This study of African Americans, West Indians, and St. Helenians in the New Bedford whaling industry has used these crew lists and protection papers with vessel and crew accounts, federal and state censuses, village and city directories, tax and probate records, newspaper accounts, monographs on whaling, correspondence, and numerous other sources to piece together the story of the participation of these men and women of color and, if they settled here, their lives in New Bedford.

Before this study was inaugurated I had compiled this data for African Americans in New Bedford between roughly 1790 and 1860 as the foundation of my book *The Fugitive’s Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (2001). For this ethnohistory I isolated those antebellum people of color who worked as whaling crew or tradespeople from that data base and then compiled the same information on only those families of African descent who were in some way involved in whaling between 1860 and 1925. With these names in mind, or at least close at hand, I was then able to approach the vast amount of data on New Bedford whaling more systematically. In the instances of some few voyages multiple types of accounts existed: vessel accounts for the 1912–13 voyage of the brig *Daisy* existed at the New Bedford Whaling Museum’s library, as did Robert Cushman Murphy’s book *Logbook for Grace*, which recounted his own experiences in that crew. Similarly, crew accounts for the 1903 voyage of bark *Josephine* exist, as do the letters of Marian Smith, whose husband Horace had command of the vessel at that time. Oral histories with members of West Indian and St. Helenian whaling families enriched the documentary record with cultural detail otherwise inaccessible. No descendants of African American whalers are known to live still in New Bedford, which is scarcely surprising in view of the fact that their involvement in the industry had virtually ended by 1875.

Before the Civil War, when their participation in the industry was most marked, African Americans were present in relatively greater numbers in the many trades that supported the whaling industry than they were on crews. They were blacksmiths, coopers, caulkers, shipwrights; some were outfitters, agents, and owners of shares of vessels. African American men and women alike were boardinghouse keepers. Still, even as shoreside wages increasingly dwarfed what men could earn at sea, many African American tradespeople, like many whaling men, balanced precariously on the poverty line. Even Lewis Temple, whose toggle harpoon revolutionized the whaling industry (fig. 5.3), had scarcely anything to show for his accomplishment: because he had not patented his invention he did not profit from the sale of the many thousands of toggle irons produced for the ships. And when he died in 1854 his estate amounted to \$459.75, including his blacksmith tools; Temple's widow Mary received only \$281 after the estate was settled. In 1854 Temple's appraisers added another \$2000 that the city of New Bedford had agreed to pay in recognition of its liability for his death, "occasioned by a fall" from a plank straddling a waterfront sewer. But three years passed before the city actually released these funds to the Temple family.³

In a city with a high degree of transience provoked by the constant comings and goings of hundreds of whaling vessels, many African Americans were in New Bedford only fleetingly, working as laborers or shipping out on only one whaling voyage before disappearing from local records altogether. The great majority of the settled population worked in unskilled and service trades, overwhelmingly as laborers and domestic servants. Still, however shallow it was, penetration of the skilled trades and upper echelons of New Bedford whaling crews did permit a measure of stability, even advance, among those African Americans who were able or permitted to persist in the industry. The fact that the city's population of color grew over the first six decades of the nineteenth century suggests some level of broad-based security. But over time, and especially after 1860, whaling was increasingly less responsible for it.

Prelude to the 1820s

Before New Bedford eclipsed Nantucket as the epicenter of American whaling in the early 1820s, African Americans were an established presence in crews. Their numbers are believed to have been small initially, but they began to increase after an epidemic in 1763 decimated Nantucket's Indian population, which theretofore had formed the lion's share of most crews. That scarcity, coupled with an island population too small in the overall to man an increasing number of ships, compelled island merchants to hire mainland agents to recruit off-island African American and other willing laborers by the 1770s. Between 1769 and 1776, 70 to 84 percent of the crew on whaling vessels owned by William Rotch Sr. were not Nantucketers. According to some scholars, the numbers of black crew began to grow noticeably after the Revolution. Men of African descent and what were termed "Indian half breeds"—"mustee" men of African and Indian descent—were an estimated 8 percent of Nantucket whaling crews

3. Lewis Temple, 1854, Bristol County Register of Probate, Taunton, MA; on the city's response to Temple's accident see *New Bedford Republican Standard*, 26 January 1854, 3:3; 9 February 1854, 3:4; 23 February 1854, 3:4; 9 March 1854, 3:2; and 30 March 1854, 3:3. The date of the award is stated in Temple's probate records. Probate, protection paper, and most crew list data for African Americans were supplied to me by Charles Watson of Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI.



Fig. 5.3. Temple toggle iron, Lewis Temple, about 1851. This iron, once mounted on a replacement shaft, is one of few known to have been made by Temple and, according to New Bedford Whaling Museum, “the only one by his hand certifiably associated with a particular vessel or particular voyage.” The iron came to the museum with cordage attached, now preserved separately. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

in the late 1760s but 25 to 37 percent of crews in 1820.⁴ An account written in 1807 claimed that nearly half of the crews on some Nantucket whaling vessels in the late 1700s and early 1800s were of African descent; nine of the crew of twenty-one on large vessels were typically black at that time, while on smaller vessels seven of sixteen were.⁵

Because crew lists do not exist for all New Bedford whaling vessels before 1840, and because incoming crew lists scarcely exist at all before 1917, it is impossible to estimate accurately the proportion of blacks on crews in these years. Identifying them is additionally complicated by the use of the term “dark” in the

complexion column on crew lists. Though in some undetermined number of instances a “dark” man is known to have been of African descent, in most cases men classified as “dark” were not. By most accounts, both contemporary and scholars’ modern-day analyses, the presence of men of African descent in these early crews was significant (fig. 5.4).⁶ Based on an analysis of extant crew lists, historian Margaret Creighton has estimated that 28 percent of New Bedford whalers were men of color in 1818, no doubt predominantly African Americans; a count of African Americans on existing crew lists for 1815 showed them to be 20.3 percent of total crew. Even at 20 percent, the proportion of black whalers among New Bedford crews was nearly four times higher than the proportion of blacks in the local population. And the share of crews occupied by whalers of African descent was never higher until the late 1870s, when they were far more likely to be Cape Verdean and other foreign-born mariners than African American.⁷

4. Daniel Vickers, “Nantucket Whalers in the Deep-Sea Fishery: The Changing Anatomy of an Early American Labor Force,” *Journal of American History*, 72, 2 (September 1985): 287–89; Edward Byers, *The Nation of Nantucket: Society and Politics in an Early American Commercial Center, 1660–1820* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 159, 169; Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry* (New York/London/Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928), 50–51.

5. Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England* (1942; reprint, New York: Atheneum, 1971), 117, citing *Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser., 3:29.

6. See, for example, Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 50–51; Byers, *Nation of Nantucket*, 169, 245; and W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1997).



Fig. 5.4. Advertisement for black crew for the whaling sloop Nancy, New Bedford *Medley*, 26 May 1797. Courtesy New Bedford Free Public Library.

On some crews African Americans were a substantial presence. In 1804 the brig *Hero* of Westport (part of the New Bedford custom district) had eight African American men among its crew of fourteen; the *Hero's* captain was white, but the mate and two steersmen, the highest ranking crew after the captain, were African American or Afro-Indian.⁸ In 1815 there were seven black men in the fifteen-man crew of the ship *Diana* and seven in the crew of sixteen aboard the ship *Maria*. When the ship *Alliance* left for whaling on the Brazil Banks in August 1820 eleven of its crew of twenty-

one were men of color. According to his son-in-law Captain Edward Gardner, whaling merchant Gideon Randall once shipped twenty men of African descent in a crew of thirty. Martha Putney has stated that on nine voyages between 1818 and 1833 the ship *Charles*—on which Frederick Lawton first sailed—carried an average of five men of African descent on each cruise.⁹ In five voyages between 1820 and June 1825 the ship *Ann Alexander* routinely carried substantial numbers of black mariners among its crew of twenty-one men. On the 1820 cruise six were African American; in 1821 seven were, four of whom had sailed on the vessel the year before; in 1822 three of the six black crew had sailed on the 1821 voyage. In 1823 eight of the crew were black, in 1824 six were, and in 1825 nine were. In those years the Quaker merchant George Howland, later an active abolitionist, owned the vessel, but whether his Quakerism or his political sentiments influenced his hiring practices is not known.

Just as their presence as a proportion of total crew is hard to pinpoint exactly before 1825, it is difficult to determine the geographic origins of early African American crewmen. In the first six decades of whaling from the city, from roughly 1760 to 1820, it seems likely that the regional population supplied the greater number of men, including African American men, to whaling crews. In 1887, when he was eighty-six years old, whaling master Isaiah West remembered “when he picked his

7. Margaret S. Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830–1870* (New York and Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1995), table II.2, 214.

8. Shipping Paper for the *Hero*, MSS 80, SG 1, ser 1, ss 12, folder 8, ODHS.

9. Martha S. Putney, *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalemens Prior to the Civil War* (New York and Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987), 17. Putney's data may be questioned on the grounds that she included men classed as “dark” in her calculations of mariners of color; crew lists coupled with biographical data indicate that these men were very often not of African descent.

crew within a radius of 60 miles of New Bedford.”¹⁰ Surviving crew lists from 1815 show about 18 percent of all African Americans on New Bedford whaling voyages claimed to have been born within that radius; in 1825 46.5 percent were, and the proportion was probably highly variable from year to year. Within that circle lived a substantial population of people of African descent. In 1820 6,740 free people of color lived in Massachusetts, about a quarter of them in Boston and surrounding Suffolk County, nearly 12 percent in New Bedford and Bristol County, and another 13 percent on Cape Cod, the islands of Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard, and Plymouth County. Another 3,554 free and enslaved people of color lived in Rhode Island. Numerous pre-1825 voyages for which crew lists exist included men from nearby rural towns—Dartmouth, Westport, and Tiverton (later part of Rhode Island) in particular.

From an early point four families of color with deep roots in the region and interconnected by marriage were notable in the industry. The best known is the family of Paul Cuffe (1759-1817). The son of a Wampanoag Indian woman and an African enslaved and later freed in this country, Cuffe began his career at the age of fourteen on a whaling vessel. Cuffe biographer Rosalind Cobb Wiggins speculated that the West Indies-bound vessel may have been owned by the Rotch family, then the nation’s premier whaling merchant group, who were Nantucketers at that time.¹¹ By the end of the decade Cuffe began to build schooners that he used principally in trade along the Atlantic coast from Nova Scotia to the West Indies. By 1806 he owned one brig, three schooners, and several smaller vessels, and he had expanded his trading sphere to Europe and Africa.¹² His children and relations all followed the sea, many of them alternating between whaling and coasting. Paul Cuffe Jr., born in 1792, made at least five whaling voyages and more than thirty trading voyages between 1808 and 1838.¹³ Cuffe’s other son William, born about 1799, was on at least three whaling voyages. In 1837 he captained the *Rising States*, a vessel owned and manned entirely by African Americans (fig. 5.5); on this, its second voyage, it was damaged by a December gale that killed four of the crew, including Cuffe. The vessel was condemned at Cape Verde that month.

Paul Cuffe’s children married into the Afro-Indian Wainer family and the African American Cook and Phelps families, which were involved extensively with

10. James Templeman Brown, “The Whalemens, Vessels and Boats, Apparatus, and Methods of the Whale Fishery,” in George Brown Goode, *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States*, section 5, vol. 2 (Washington: GPO, 1887), 220. West was master of at least nine voyages on six vessels between 1832 and 1851; see Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1878; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989).

11. Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, ed., *Captain Paul Cuffe’s Logs and Letters, 1808–1817: A Black Quaker’s “Voice from within the Veil”* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1996), 48. George Salvador, *Paul Cuffe, The Black Yankee, 1759–1817* (New Bedford, MA: Reynolds-DeWalt Printing, 1969), 12, states that Cuffe first went whaling at the age of sixteen on a vessel bound for the Gulf of Mexico and cites Henry Noble Sherwood, “Paul Cuffe,” *Journal of Negro History* 8, 2 (April 1923): 156, which provides no documentation for the statement. Sherwood stated that Cuffe’s second whaling voyage was to the West Indies. Only Wiggins offered a year—1773, the year Cuffe Slocum died—as the date of his first whaling voyage.

12. Salvador, *Paul Cuffe*, 15.

13. *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Paul Cuffe, a Pequot Indian: During Thirty Years Spent at Sea, and in Travelling in Foreign Lands* (Vernon, [CT]: Printed by Horace N. Bill, 1839).

LIST OF PERSONS,
Comprising the Crew of the Brig Rising States of New Bedford wharfed in Boston, William Cuffe, Command for the South Atlantic Ocean & Boston on a Whaling Voyage.

NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF RESIDENCE	BY WHAT COURSE OBTAINED HIS QUALIFICATION	DESCRIPTION OF THEIR PERSONS			
				AGE	HEIGHT	COMPLEXION	HAIR
William Cuffe	New Bedford	New Bedford	American School	40	5 1	Black	Black
George Bailey	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	30	5 1	Black	Black
James Hamilton	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	37	5 0 2	Black	Black
Thomas Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	28	5 5 5	Black	Black
Henry P. Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	28	5 5 1	Black	Black
Richard Howard	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	21	5 6	Black	Black
Shadrach Howard	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	23	5 3	Black	Black
John Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	44	5 7 1/2	Black	Black
Joseph Phelps	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	19	5 3 1/2	Black	Black
Abraham Bailey	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	17	4 13	Black	Black
Abraham Bailey	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	18	5 1 1/2	Black	Black
John Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	19	5 8 1/2	Black	Black
John Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	16	5 3 1/2	Black	Black
James Hamilton	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	21	5 3 1/2	Black	Black
William Cuffe	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	25	5 6	Black	Black
John Johnson	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	18	5 2	Black	Black
James Hamilton	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	22	5 4	Black	Black
George Bailey	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	19	5 4	Black	Black
Abraham Bailey	New Bedford	New Bedford	do do	17	5 5	Black	Black

William Cuffe

I, William Cuffe, do solemnly, sincerely, and truly swear that the above List contains the names of the Crew of the *Brig Rising States* together with the place of their birth and residence, so far as I can ascertain the same.

Given under my hand and seal of Office this 15th day of July 1837.

Before me,
 Samuel Williams
 Captain

William Cuffe

Fig. 5.5. Crew list for brig *Rising States*, 15 July 1837. The crew was a mix of local, regional, southern, and Cape Verdean men. Among them was Shadrach Howard, nephew of Captain William Cuffe, who learned sailmaking from Philadelphia black activist James Forten and fought for racial equality in both New Bedford and California, where he had moved by 1856. George and Abraham Bailey were the sons of Dartmouth farmer Quaco Bailey. James Hamilton had served on at least nine whaling voyages before this one; he was one of the four men who died in the gale that wrecked the vessel off Cape Verde later that year. Virginian Lisbon Johnson served on at least two other whaling voyages before marrying a Wampanoag woman from the Mashpee community on Cape Cod and relocating there. Courtesy National Archives and Records Administration.

whaling over several generations. Michael Wainer (1748–1815), the brother-in-law and business partner of Paul Cuffe Sr., was in the coastwise trade, but three of his sons worked on whaling and trading vessels; in all twelve Wainers were involved in whaling to some extent up to the Civil War. Alvan Phelps, who married Cuffe’s daughter Mary and died at sea in 1831, commanded Cuffe’s brig *Traveller* on a whaling voyage in 1822. “The officers and crew of the brig *Traveller*, says the N. Bedford paper, which sailed from this port yesterday, on a whaling voyage, are all of them blacks, with the exception of the cook, who is a white man,” the *Nantucket Inquirer* noted shortly after the vessel sailed; among the crew was Phelps’s son John. Beginning in 1838 another son, Miffin, perhaps named for the British abolitionist, made at least three whaling voyages; a third son, Paul Cuffe Phelps (1817–51), worked as a blacksmith.

Of all Cuffe’s kin, his son-in-law Pardon Cook achieved the highest rank in the whaling industry. The families were doubly entwined: Cook married Paul Cuffe’s daughter Alice, and his sister Mary married Cuffe’s son Paul. Cook’s father Benjamin worked on merchant vessels and was killed when he fell into the lower hold of one off the coast of Virginia in 1815.¹⁴ Pardon Cook served as the second mate on the 1816 trading voyage of Cuffe’s *Traveller*, as second mate on the whaling ship *Industry* of Nantucket in 1819, and as first mate on the same vessel’s 1821 voyage. By 1839 he had advanced to captain of the

Westport whaling brig *Elizabeth* and sailed in the same capacity on the *Elizabeth's* 1840 and 1841 cruises. Cook's command of the brig *Juno* of Westport in 1843 was his last; he died in October 1849. With a handful of other African American men Pardon Cook also held ownership shares in two vessels, the *Elizabeth* on its 1841 voyage and the *General Taylor* in 1848. Putney has noted that while he served as master on the three *Elizabeth* cruises no sickness, injury, death, desertion, or discharge plagued his crew, a decided rarity in the whaling industry.¹⁵ Two of Pardon Cook's siblings also were connected to whaling: his youngest sister Hannah married Absalom Boston, and his sister Charlotte married Thomas Smith, who had come to New Bedford from North Carolina by 1829 and worked on at least two whaling vessels before leaving the city for California in 1856.

As Smith's example suggests, African American men from other regions also shipped on antebellum New Bedford whaling vessels. Men claiming New York and Pennsylvania birthplaces served in numerous crews both before and after 1825; between 1820 and 1824 crews on the ship *Ann Alexander* usually included from two to four men who claimed to have been born in Massachusetts and often more men from New York State. And an indeterminable number of early whalers of color were from slaveholding states, where whaling vessels had touched since the 1740s, and it is likely that men claiming Pennsylvania birthplaces in particular may actually have been southerners (table 5.1).¹⁶ On the *Ann Alexander* between 1820 and 1825 only the 1822 voyage did not include crew born in the American South.

In the early decades of New Bedford whaling some of these men may certainly have joined the crews of whaling vessels in the South. In those years some vessels cruised the Atlantic Ocean for whales in summer and then returned home to discharge cargo and refit for trading voyages to southern ports in winter. In the 1790s New Bedford newspapers reported regular vessel clearances for North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia ports from late October through December and returns generally from mid-February through late April. Given the fact that African Americans were plentiful along the waterfronts of southern ports—historian Ira Berlin has asserted that “probably nothing arrived or left these cities without some black handling it”—it seems likely that some may have shipped on whaling vessels on their return trips.¹⁷ And given the always troublesome rate of desertion in the industry, it seems equally likely that captains would have needed to recruit crew in these ports.

After about 1800 the hunt for whales took vessels further afield. As a consequence vessels were built larger for longer voyages, wintering in southern harbors ceased, and

14. Paul Cuffe to Thomas Wainer, July 1815; Cuffe to Gardner Wainer, 17 July 1815, quoted in Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, ed., *Cuffe's Logs and Letters*, 365–66.

15. Putney, *Black Sailors*, 54.

16. Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2007), 94.

17. Ira Berlin, “Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America,” *American Historical Review* 85. 1 (February 1930): 62. On the presence of blacks in southern maritime trades, see also Philip D. Morgan, “Colonial South Carolina Runaways: Their Significance for Slave Culture,” *Slavery and Abolition* 6 (December 1985), and David S. Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

Table 5.1. New Bedford whalemens of color by place of origin, 1833–1860

Crew of color	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858
FREE STATES	10	5	13	10	44	44	38	72	131	133	140	172	128	126	147	112	68	104	204	109	109	146	119	105	96	29
New Bedford & vicinity	2	3	4	3	10	8	11	13	15	18	10	22	10	11	12	9	7	11	15	10	10	15	10	7	10	5
Other MA	4	2	2	0	10	9	8	15	29	24	31	40	22	35	36	22	17	22	39	25	19	34	22	24	23	11
Other New England	0	0	0	1	10	7	5	9	29	20	29	5	26	20	21	17	16	17	31	21	24	26	21	22	17	1
NY, NJ, PA	4	0	7	6	14	20	14	35	58	71	70	85	70	60	78	64	28	54	119	53	56	71	66	52	46	12
% FREE STATES	90.9	71.4	81.2	83.3	74.6	71.0	61.3	67.3	76.2	63.6	68.0	79.3	64.3	60.3	65.9	66.3	67.5	70.3	65.3	65.3	65.3	69.5	76.3	64.0	72.7	63.0
SLAVE STATES	1	0	0	1	8	12	15	14	22	47	34	50	34	45	48	37	23	27	48	21	31	30	23	28	12	3
Border	0	0	0	0	7	7	11	13	19	39	26	43	26	38	42	29	20	25	42	20	27	26	21	21	12	3
Other	1	0	0	1	1	5	4	1	3	8	8	7	8	7	6	8	3	2	5	1	4	4	1	7	0	0
% SLAVE STATES	9.1	0.0	0.0	8.3	13.5	19.3	24.2	13.1	12.8	22.5	16.5	23.0	17.1	21.5	21.5	21.9	22.5	17.5	16.2	12.5	16.7	14.3	14.7	17.1	9.1	6.5
FOREIGN	0	0	0	0	2	3	6	7	13	18	21	32	26	55	8	11	3	14	30	29	35	26	10	27	18	12
Sandwich Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	15	12	20	16	10	6	9	0	8	22	11	25	20	7	20	13	7
Cape Verde	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	6	0	1	1	1	3	10	0	0	2	0	4	4	1	1	0	1	1	1
Other	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	8	2	8	11	7	15	2	2	1	6	4	14	9	5	3	6	4	4
% FOREIGN	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	4.8	9.7	6.7	7.5	8.6	10.2	14.7	13.1	16.7	3.6	6.5	2.9	9.1	10.3	17.4	18.8	12.4	6.4	16.5	13.6	26.1
AMBIGUOUS OR UNKNOWN	0	2	3	1	5	3	3	4	6	11	11	15	11	3	20	9	8	9	9	8	11	8	4	4	6	2
TOTAL	11	7	16	12	59	62	62	107	172	209	206	217	199	209	223	169	102	154	290	167	186	210	156	164	132	46

Notes: New Bedford & vicinity=New Bedford, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Westport
 Border slave states: Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, District of Columbia, Kentucky
 Other slave states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana
 Source: Charles Watson, comp., men of color on crew lists in Seamen's Register, New Bedford Port Society (manuscript, n.d.)

schooners and sloops came to monopolize the coastwise trade. There is little doubt that most black southerners with maritime skills came to New Bedford aboard these smaller trading vessels; all other means of transport were far more time-consuming and therefore expensive, and a skilled man of color could ship as crew and pay his passage in that way.¹⁸ Shipping manifests from 1808 forward and newspaper maritime columns shed some light on traffic between the town and the South: of twenty-three manifests in January 1815, eleven were for vessels headed to and coming from southern ports. Even that high proportion might have been higher, because manifests and newspapers often cited only a vessel's most recent port of call. Several New Bedford families prominent in both whaling and trading had extensive commercial connections to the South; branches of some of these families ran commission houses in the region's port cities. Quaker merchant William Rotch Jr. did business regularly with merchants in Alexandria, Petersburg, Winchester, and Lynchburg, Virginia; in New Bern and New Garden, North Carolina (a southern outpost of former Nantucket Quakers); and in Charleston and Savannah. From the 1790s Rotch often sent men to procure ship stores such as red cedar, live oak, turpentine, and pitch in southern states, and he sold Baltimore flour in his New Bedford store. In 1799 master Thomas Wainer sailed the schooner *Ranger* to Snow Hill, Maryland, for corn and barrel staves and returned to New Bedford with two fugitives from slavery.¹⁹

African Americans in Whaling's Capital, 1825–1861

By 1825 New Bedford had gained ascendancy in American whaling. Nantucket could not sustain its predominance principally for two reasons: its shallow harbor could not accommodate the increasingly larger and heavier ships and barks, and its isolation from the mainland made it difficult to provision vessels and recruit crew. By that time many of the island's leading whaling merchants had relocated to New Bedford, including the Rotches, Rodmans, Coffins, Luces, and Gardners. And the industry was on the cusp of a change wrought by its rapid and robust growth. As owners began to build larger vessels to store the catch during longer cruises, smaller vessels virtually disappeared from the industry. Scarcely any sloops or schooners whaled from New Bedford from 1823 until the last decades of whaling, and the bigger ships and barks needed crews of from twenty-one to thirty-two men. In addition, the numbers of vessels multiplied. Forty-one ships and barks left New Bedford on whaling voyages in 1825; six years later that number had more than doubled, to ninety-five. Except for the extraordinary year of 1851, when 174 vessels from the New Bedford customs district went whaling, never again did the size of the fleet grow so dramatically. And not until late nineteenth-century textile boom did the city's population increase so quickly. After a population loss in the difficult 1810s, when the War of 1812 and its aftermath severely curtailed American whaling, the number of people living in the city nearly doubled between 1820 and 1830 (table 5.2).

18. Narratives written by and about fugitive slaves indicate that many also used coastwise schooners to travel to New Bedford and other northern ports, either with the knowledge and assistance of crew and/or captains or as stowaways.

19. Kathryn Grover, "The Antebellum Coasting Trade and the Transfer of African Americans from South to North: A Case Study of New Bedford, Massachusetts" (Lecture, Mystic Seaport Museum, 16 September 2000); Wainer's action was reported in a runaway advertisement placed by one slaveholder in the New Bedford *Medley*, 26 April 1799.

Table 5.2. New Bedford Population, Total and Nonwhite, 1790–1930

Year	Total population	Total nonwhite	Percent nonwhite	Percent change total population	Percent change nonwhite population
1790	3,313	38	1.1		
1800	4,361	149	3.4	+31.6	+292.1
1810	5,651	189	3.3	+29.6	+26.8
1820	3,947	203	5.1	-30.1	+7.4
1830	7,592	384	5.0	+92.3	+89.2
1840	12,087	715	5.9	+59.2	+86.2
1850	16,443	1,008	6.1	+36.0	+41.0
1855	20,389	1,527	7.5	+24.0	+51.5
1860	22,300	1,518	6.8	+9.4	-0.8
1870	21,320	1,290	6.0	-4.4	-15.0
1875	25,895	1,618	6.2	+21.4	+25.4
1880	26,845	1,288	4.8	+3.4	-20.4
1885	33,393	1,562	4.7	+24.4	+21.3
1890	40,733	1,699	4.2	+22.0	+8.8
1900	62,442	1,685*	2.6	+53.3	-0.8
1910	96,652	2,885	3.0	+54.8	+71.2
1920	121,217	4,998	2.3	+25.4	+73.2
1930	112,597	3,631	3.2	-7.1	-27.3

Notes: *of total, 1,084 is of "native parentage."
 Source: Federal and state censuses.

As vessels grew larger and voyages more numerous the composition of whaling crews also changed. Coupled with the greater need for seamen, the burgeoning textile and shoe industries of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which offered steadier, less risky work and competitive wages, began to draw off potential recruits and diminish the supply of local willing labor. By 1840, according to one analysis, artisans, mechanics (the period term for factory labor), and merchant seamen in the Northeast earned more per year on

average than any whaling crew member below the rank of second mate. In three years between 1840 and 1856 skilled seamen earned more than the artisans and mechanics of the Northeast, but in all other years they earned less. The wage divide was more pronounced among whalers in lower ranks: the gap was on the whole narrow for coopers, who earned somewhat less than 90 percent of what shoreside artisans made, and progressively wider for boatsteerers (60 percent of shoreside skilled wages) and for carpenters, cooks, and stewards—the last two being the positions African American men were most likely to occupy. These last three ranks earned less than half what shoreside tradespeople earned, and unskilled seamen fared worst of all.²⁰

Competition for labor forced whaling merchants to reach beyond the Northeast for crew. Economist Elmo Hohman asserted that 1830 was the point of transition from a relatively homogeneous workforce from coastal New England, “with an admixture of Gay Head Indians and a small representative of negroes,” to a

20. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter. *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1816–1906* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 180–85, table 5.8.

heterogeneous group of people from all over the globe. The proportion of foreign-born men of color among all crewmen of color was highly variable, but over the long term it tended to increase: foreign-born whalers made up less than 10 percent of all crew of African descent up to 1843, from nearly 5 to nearly 15 percent up to 1844, almost 20 percent in 1852 and 1853, and more than 31 percent on the eve of the Civil War (table 5.3).²¹

Exactly how many African Americans served on whaling vessels between 1825 and the Civil War is difficult to determine. In a multipart series, “Coloured Seamen—Their Character and Condition,” for the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in 1846, William Peter Powell, an African American boardinghouse keeper in New Bedford and, after 1839, New York City, stated that New Bedford whaling vessels at that time had 1,008 men of color on their crews, a figure that works out to exactly four times the number of vessels then in the fleet. He estimated that another 1,144 black whalers were then on whaling vessels sailing from Westport, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Mattapoisett, Marion, Wareham, Falmouth, and New London, Connecticut. “Some ships manning five boats, very often have from ten to twelve coloured men,” Powell wrote; “. . . Very few ships carry less than six coloured men, while many have more.”²² Actual crew lists for 1846 do not corroborate Powell’s claims. In that year only sixteen of ninety-eight total voyages leaving New Bedford, or 16 percent, carried more than two non-foreign black crew, and, even if South Sea Islanders and Cape Verdeans are included in the totals, only four of ninety-eight vessels leaving port that year carried six or more whalers of color (table 5.4). Dividing the number of African American whalers shipping out in 1846 by the number of New Bedford voyages in that year yields an average of slightly more than two men per vessel which, though it does not embrace all New Bedford vessels at sea, is probably closer to the mark for all vessels (those embarking in 1846 or at sea during that year) from the New Bedford district. It is, however, possible that these figures underestimate the number of men of color, because taken together 1846 crew lists fail to include any racial indicator—usually a “b” or an “m” in the complexion column for black or mulatto and a “w” in the hair column for woolly—for more than 20 percent of all crew shipping on whaling vessels leaving the port of New Bedford that year. That some portion of these men were black cannot be verified.²³

Overall, the number of voyages including more than two non-foreign black crew—meaning that African Americans filled jobs other than cook and steward—peaked two years earlier, in 1844, at almost 25 percent, while the number of

21. These statistics are based on my analysis of a compilation of men of color on New Bedford crew lists compiled by Charles Watson, Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI, from New Bedford Port Society crew lists. Professor Watson donated photocopied sets of this data to the author.

22. William P. Powell, “Coloured Seamen--Their Character and Condition. No. II,” *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 24 September 1846, 66:1.

23. Thanks to Robert Maker of New Bedford for making a tally of 1846 crew lists. Port Society crew lists for 1846 list 117 vessel departures, but of those 117 fifteen were not whaling vessels according to the compilation in Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*. Another four vessels had two crew lists, which suggests that the vessel’s first departure was somehow aborted; thus the figures compiled for crew in this analysis exclude the first crew list for these four. With those instances excluded, a total of 2703 crew left on whaling vessels from the port in that year, and for those 598, or 22.1 percent, crew list compilers provided no indication of race. Because crew lists could not be found for three vessels listed as departing in 1846 in Starbuck, these figures are not exact.

Table 5.3. New Bedford Whalemens of Color by Place or Region of Birth, 1815–1918

Year	North		South		Foreign		West Indian/ St. Helenian	Other		Total
1815	23	85.2	2	7.4	2	7.4	0/0			27
1825	82	81.2	10	9.9	9	8.9	3/1			101
1833	10	90.9	1	9.1						11
1834	5	71.4						2	28.6	7
1835	13	81.2						3	18.7	16
1836	10	83.3	1	8.2				1	8.3	12
1837	44	74.6	8	13.5	2	3.4		5	8.5	59
1838	44	71.0	13	19.3	3	4.8		3	4.8	62
1839	38	61.3	15	24.2	6	9.7	1 / 0	3	4.8	62
1840	72	72.7	14	14.1	7	7.1		6	6.1	99
1841	131	78.0	22	13.1	8	4.8	2 / 0	6	3.6	168
1842	133	68.5	47	24.4	2	1.0		11	5.7	194
1843	140	66.3	32	15.2	28	13.3	1 / 0	11	5.2	211
1844	172	79.3	50	23.0	32	14.7	1 / 0	15	6.9	217
1845	128	70.7	31	17.2	10	5.5	0 / 1	11	6.1	180
1846	126	60.3	45	21.5	35	16.7		3	1.4	209
1847	147	65.9	48	21.5	8	3.6		20	9.0	223
1848	112	66.3	37	21.9	11	6.5		9	5.3	169
1849	68	66.7	23	22.5	3	2.9		8	7.8	102
1850	104	67.5	27	15.6	14	9.1		9	5.8	154
1851	204	70.3	47	16.2	30	10.3		9	3.1	290
1852	109	74.1	21	14.3	29	19.7		8	5.4	147
1853	109	58.0	29	17.5	35	18.6		11	5.8	188
1854	146	69.5	26	14.3	26	12.4		8	3.8	210
1855	119	76.3	23	14.7	10	6.4		4	2.6	156
1856	105	64.0	28	17.1	27	16.5		4	2.4	164
1857	95	72.0	12	9.1	18	13.6		6	4.5	132
1858	29	63.0	3	6.5	12	26.1		2	4.3	46
1859	30	54.5	7	12.7	15	27.3		2	3.6	55
1860	20	52.6	4	10.5	12	31.6		2	5.3	38
1868	20	32.8	7	11.5	34	55.7	19 / 11			61
1885	2	3.4	7	11.9	55	84.7	30 / 25			59
1898					45	100.0	2 / 14			45
1908			1	1.7	58	98.3	26 / 32			59
1918					36	100.0	35 / 1			36

Note: "Other" designates men of color whose places of birth are either unlisted, illegible, or too generally stated (e.g., "Springfield" with no indication of state).

Source: 1833–1860: Charles Watson, comp., men of color on crew lists in Seamen's Register, New Bedford Port Society (manuscript, n.d.), and author's compilation from crew lists for all other years.

Table 5.4. Men of Color on New Bedford Whaling Crews, 1815–1918, excluding Cape Verdeans

Year	Total voyages	# voyages with black crew	Percent	# voyages with >2 black crew	Percent	Total black crew
1815	9	6	66.7	5	55.5	133
1825	34	32	94.1	17	50.0	101
1833	98	12	12.2	1	1.0	11
1834	64	6	9.4	0	0.0	7
1835	92	3	3.3	0	0.0	16
1836	96	8	8.3	0	0.0	12
1837	96	15	15.6	2	2.1	59
1838	111	26	23.4	6	5.4	62
1839	108	80	27.8	7	6.5	62
1840	107	48	44.8	4	3.7	99
1841	112	83	74.1	9	8.0	168
1842	100	96	96.0	14	14.0	194
1843	100	91	91.0	14	14.0	211
1844	122	109	89.3	30	24.6	217
1845	114	83	72.8	17	14.9	180
1846	98	95	96.9	16	16.3	209
1847	102	92	90.2	23	22.5	223
1848	98	86	87.7	17	17.3	169
1849	82	59	71.9	9	11.0	102
1850	112	81	72.3	14	12.5	154
1851	174	133	76.4	27	15.5	290
1852	104	75	72.1	13	12.5	147
1853	134	94	70.1	7	5.2	188
1854	131	99	75.5	15	11.4	210
1855	125	86	68.8	8	6.4	156
1856	118	81	68.6	8	6.8	164
1857	125	73	58.4	6	4.8	132
1858	95	27	28.4	0	0.0	46
1859	89	36	40.4	0	0.0	55
1860	90	26	28.9	0	0.0	38
1868	66	29	43.9	5	7.6	60
1885	30	16	53.3	6	20.0	—
1897	11	10	90.9	5	45.4	40
1898	12	10	83.3	8	66.7	—
1908	13	13	100.0	9	69.2	—
1918	8	5	62.5	3	37.5	—

Source: Total voyages are derived from Starbuck, *History of the American Whaling Fishery*; crewmen of color from Charles Watson, comp., men of color on crew lists in Seamen's Register, New Bedford Port Society (manuscript, n.d.)

antebellum whaling voyages whose crews included at least one African American peaked at 97 percent in the year Powell wrote. These increases coincide not only with decided growth in the whaling industry but also with the rise of the organized antislavery movement. New Bedford's reputation as a center of African American political activity and as a safe place for fugitives from slavery was broadly acknowledged. In addition to the large number of people of color in the population (see table 5.2), that notoriety must have been a powerful draw. Crew who acknowledged a birthplace in a southern state also increased unevenly to about 1849 and then began to decline just as unevenly. Before 1837 they were never more than 10 percent of all black crew, but between 1842 and 1849 slightly more than one of every five black crewmen claimed to have been born in a slaveholding state. From that time to 1860 they were variously from 17.5 to 6.5 percent of black crew (see tables 5.1 & 5.4). None of these figures can of course embrace the number of men who had been born in the South but claimed a northern birthplace, a subterfuge commonly used by fugitives from slavery.

It is impossible to determine how many African American men were free and how many enslaved when they joined the crews of whaling vessels, but both had ample provocation to leave the South. Free African Americans left to escape racism, discrimination, and laws that responded to actual or feared revolt among enslaved people; increasingly their rights of travel and assembly were curtailed. African American vessel pilot Henry "Captain Jack" Jackson of Norfolk, Virginia, the father of New Bedford Baptist minister and abolitionist William Jackson, left the South for Philadelphia soon after Nat Turner's 1831 rebellion. Moreover, as historian Jeffrey Bolster has pointed out, men of African descent on southern vessels typically made significantly less than white boatmen on these vessels, and men with skills in the maritime trades certainly expected better compensation in the North.²⁴ The brothers Fountain and John Ellis, both born free in Dorchester County, Maryland, in the 1820s, probably moved to New Bedford on the strength of the belief that opportunity was greater in the North generally and work plentiful in New Bedford specifically; Fountain worked as a stevedore on the wharves, while his brother was always classed a laborer, a blanket term that may and probably did include unskilled work in support of the whaling industry.²⁵

Though their presence is far more difficult to trace, fugitives from southern slavery escaped to New Bedford because the resident African American population was large, the great number of transient mariners of color made disappearing into the throng possible, jobs both related and unrelated to whaling were abundant, and the town was arguably exceptional in the degree to which it supported abolitionism. Hard as it is to identify all the fugitives who settled however briefly in New Bedford—contemporary estimates placed their number at from three to seven hundred at midcentury—it is harder still to trace those who served in the crews of whaling vessels. Only a handful has so far been identified.

Two of the known fugitive whalers, John Thompson and John S. Jacobs, wrote accounts of their bondage, escape, and lives in the North that include descriptions

24. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 161.

25. The Ellises' free status is documented in Baltimore County, MD, Court Manumissions, 23 February and 28 July 1845.

of their whaling experience (fig. 5.6). Thompson's is by far the more detailed, both about his manner of entering the whaling service and his life at sea. Born about 1812 on a Maryland plantation, Thompson escaped about 1842 on foot to Columbia, Pennsylvania, by then a well-known fugitive stopping place. When he learned that his enslaver had sent agents to the area to return him to slavery, Thompson thought it might be "best for me to go to sea" and went to New York City in search of a berth.

When I reached New York, in consequence of my inexperience I could get no berth on shipboard, as they only wanted to employ able seamen, so I was advised to go to New Bedford, where green hands were more wanted, and where, I was told, I could go free of expense.

Accordingly, next morning, in care of an agent, I started on board a vessel bound for that port. When I arrived there, I was told I could only go before the mast as a raw hand, as a great responsibility rested upon the cook, or steward, of a whaling vessel,

Table 5.5. New Bedford People of African Descent, Excluding Cape Verdeans, by Occupational Category, 1836–1856

Occupational Category	1836 directory		1845 directory		1850 census		1855 census		1856 directory	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
UNSKILLED	62	71.2	165	63.9	162	68.6	250	70.2	142	54.4
Mariners	31	35.6	70	27.1	62	26.2	76	21.3	39	14.9
SEMISKILLED/SERVICE	4	4.6	43	16.6	41	17.3	40	11.2	54	20.7
Transport services	4	4.6	2	0.8	3	1.3	1	0.3	5	1.9
Public services	-	-	4	1.5	1	0.4	3	0.8	3	1.1
PETTY PROPRIETOR/MANAGER	8	9.2	21	8.1	5	2.1	5	1.4	23	8.8
SKILLED TRADES	8	9.2	23	8.9	22	9.3	38	10.6	30	11.5
Maritime skilled	5	5.7	8	3.1	11	4.7	21	5.9	12	4.6
CLERICAL/SALES	-	-	-	-	1	0.4	1	0.3	2	0.8
PROPRIETOR/MANAGER	4	4.6	2	0.8	4	1.7	17	4.8	2	0.8
PROFESSIONAL	1	1.1	4	1.5	2	0.8	7	1.9	8	3.0
TOTAL	87		258		237		357		261	

Notes: The occupations included in each category follow:

Unskilled: laborer, mariner, stevedore, fisherman

Semiskilled/service: waiter, porter, cook, barber, steward, gardener, washing, watchman, jobbing wagon, painter/whitewasher, domestic service

Transport service: teamer, hostler, coachman, drayman, cartman

Public service: city crier, lamplighter, newspaper carrier

Petty proprietor/manager: bathhouse operator, boardinghouse keeper, restaurateur, grocery/fruit store, clothing store/dresser, picture framer, shipkeeper, shopkeeper

Skilled trades: tailor, dressmaker, hatter, boot/shoe maker, confectioner, baker, cabinetmaker, wheelwright, saddle/harnessmaker, housewright, carpenter, mason, butcher

Maritime skilled: shipwright, ship carpenter, blacksmith, caulker, cooper, ropemaker, sailmaker

Clerical/sales: clerk

Proprietor/manager: trader, farmer, soapmaker, printer

Professional: minister, engineer, dentist, teacher, doctor

bound upon a long voyage, one of which places I preferred and solicited.

I soon saw there was no chance for me with that master, so I went to the office of Mr. Gideon Allen, who was fitting out a ship for sea, and wanted both cook and steward. I approached him with much boldness, and asked if he would like to employ a good steward, to which he replied in the affirmative, asking me at the same time if I was one.

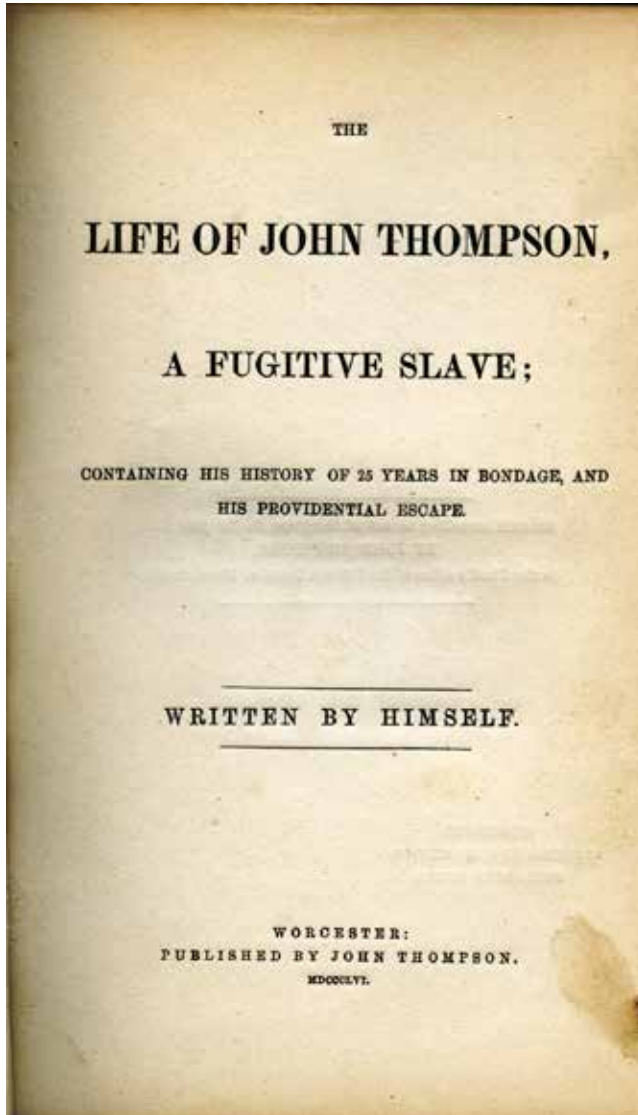


Fig. 5.6. Title page, *The Life of John Thompson, a Fugitive Slave* (1856). Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum Library.

I told him I thought I was. So, without much parleying we agreed upon the price, when he took me down to the vessel, gave to my charge the keys of the cabin, and I went to work as well as I knew how.

Thompson had thus joined the crew of the bark *Milwood*, which left New Bedford for Indian Ocean whaling on 25 June 1842. Thompson had once worked as a hotel cook, but that he had never performed a steward's duties soon became apparent to the *Milwood's* captain, Aaron C. Luce. When Luce confronted him, Thompson offered the obvious reason for having gone to sea under false pretense. "I am a fugitive slave from Maryland, and have a family in Philadelphia," he told Luce, "but fearing to remain there any longer, I thought I would go on a whaling voyage, as being the place where I stood least chance of being arrested by slave hunters." Luce, Thompson wrote, seemed touched by the story and thereafter, "when no one was present," taught Thompson "to make pastry and sea messes," though he was not the cook. Upon the vessel's return to New Bedford in June 1844, Thompson received his wages, and another fifteen dollars from Luce and the first mate, and returned to Philadelphia.²⁶

26. *The Life of John Thompson, a Fugitive Slave, Containing His History of 25 Years in Bondage, and His Providential Escape, Written by Himself* (Worcester: John Thompson, 1856); see in particular 107–10 of online transcription, Documenting the American South website, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/thompson>.

Roughly two years later a letter from Sydney Howard Gay of the fugitive-assisting New York Vigilance Committee to John W. Browne, the secretary of the Boston Vigilance Committee (1846–47), indicated the appeal of a whaling voyage as a virtually foolproof method of escape from slavery:

This will be handed you by a fugitive, Joseph Johnson, who came in here on the . . . 'Kathline' a day or two since. His master was captain of a schr. bound from Newbern N.C. to the W.I. & wrecked on the passage. All hands were taken off by the Kathline. This man ran away on his arrival here. He has frequently been in N.Y. & we are afraid to keep him here, as it is probable his master has left a power of Atty. behind him, & at any rate he is very likely known to some of the N. C. trackers in this port. Therefore I send him to you as the best disposition to make of him. He only wants a berth aboard ship. Perhaps you could not do better than send him to N. Bedford, & let him get a berth on board a whaler.²⁷

Whether Joseph Johnson shipped aboard a New Bedford whaling voyage cannot be precisely determined. A man of that name, twenty-three years old and shown as “mulatto wooly” but with no place of origin, was shown in the crew of the ship *Liverpool* when it left New Bedford in early October 1847, fully ten months after Gay’s letter was written. Johnson could have shipped earlier under an alias—it was not uncommon among certain whalers, white or black, to adopt one if they were in flight from slavery, the law, or some other sort of troublesome circumstance. But not all fugitive whalers did, as John Thompson’s and other examples show. In 1854, after the *Boston Post* reported negatively on the escape of a fugitive its editors identified only as “Weston,” the *New Bedford Standard* exulted in the fact that the man had left New Bedford on a three-year whaling cruise. “The *Post* may put this in its pipe and smoke it,” the *Standard* declared. A protection paper identifies the man as George Weston and his birthplace as Northampton County, Virginia. He is shown as such on the crew list of the Sandwich brig *Ocean*, which left port on 2 May and did not return until April 1856. Unlike John Thompson, Weston remained in whaling for a time; he was shown on crew lists for both the *Hecla* and the *Edward* in 1856 (though which he shipped on is not known) and on the bark *Wave* in 1860.²⁸

Even as few fugitives can be documented on whaling vessels, John Thompson’s reasons for joining a crew must have been broadly shared. Men who claimed to have been born in the South, whether free or fugitive, were in any event a not-inconsiderable portion among African Americans in most crews, just as southern-born African Americans made up an unusually large proportion of New Bedford’s population. By 1850, when the federal census for the first time listed residents’ birthplaces, 302 of the 1008 people of color in New Bedford claimed slave-state birthplaces. The proportion of people of color to the total population was almost double what pertained in New York and Boston. At midcentury people of color were 6.1 percent of New Bedford’s population, a larger proportion than existed in any other northern city at the time.²⁹ In antebellum whaling crews, mariners who gave

27. Sydney Howard Gay to John W. Browne, 15 December 1846, Sydney Howard Gay Papers, Butler Library, Columbia University.

28. See “The Slave Hunters on the Rack Again,” *Republican Standard*, 27 April 1854, 2:4, and “Weston, the Slave,” *Republican Standard*, 11 May 1854, 2:4. Judging by Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, Weston could have shipped out on either the *Hecla* or the *Edward*. The *Ocean* returned to port on 25 April 1856. The *Hecla* left on 3 June and the *Edward* on 3 July 1856. Both vessels returned—the *Hecla* on 2 June 1859 and the *Edward* on 24 April 1860 — before the *Wave* left port on 24 July 1860.

a southern birthplace on their seamen's protection papers and crew lists rose from 8.3 percent of all black mariners (excluding Cape Verdeans) in 1836 to a high of 23.0 percent of black whalers in 1844 (see table 5.1).

Another factor that may have been significant in the increase in African American whalers specifically may have been the passage of Negro Seamen's Acts in most southern states, beginning in 1822. These laws were motivated by the widespread belief that black mariners fomented unrest among the enslaved population in southern ports of call. Any seaman of color who set foot in a port in any state with such an act in place was liable to be jailed, fined and, possibly, sold into slavery. In just two months of 1822, 154 mariners were jailed in Charleston, South Carolina, the first state to pass such legislation; of these 118 had been on northern vessels.³⁰ The federal Fugitive Slave Act of September 1850, which mandated states' cooperation in the arrest of fugitives, magnified the effect of the earlier legislation by making it possible to seize any African American in any place on suspicion of having escaped enslavement. Thomas Scott Johnson nearly fell victim to these laws. Johnson, a New Bedford native whose father Jacob had lived in the city since the early 1800s, was taken to be sold into slavery from the British ship *Commerce* after it wrecked near Alexandria, Virginia, in late June 1851. Elisha Card, the *Commerce's* master, made Johnson's situation known to his relatives in New Bedford and posted a bond for the jailed mariner until a document attesting his free status could be prepared and sent. By the first of July New Bedford Mayor Abraham Hathaway Howland and some of the city's "most respectable citizens" signed Johnson's free papers, and by 14 July he was released from jail.³¹ It was widely known at the time that the Negro Seamen's Acts were inconsistently and often loosely enforced, but such cases as Johnson's and well-publicized incarcerations in many southern ports may have turned African American mariners to whaling vessels.

By the 1830s whaling had earned a reputation as a hard, dirty, dangerous, poorly compensated, and highly risky occupation, and it is no doubt true that one whaling voyage was enough to dissuade most men from making another. "Few foremast hands shipped out on a whaleship for a second time," Eric Jay Dolin has stated, "and those who did were usually in debt to the owner, mildly masochistic, unable to find any more satisfying line of work, or all of the above."³² There were, however, African American men who made multiple whaling voyages—Putney has stated that 20 percent of all black whalers shipping from New Bedford between 1803 and 1860

29. New Bedford gained black population between 1850 and 1855, when the Fugitive Slave Act caused population losses in other northern cities. In 1860 New Bedford's total population was 22,300 and its nonwhite population 1518, making it 6.8 percent of the total population. Boston was 1.3 percent nonwhite (2262 nonwhites of a total 177,841 residents), New York 1.5 percent nonwhite (12,574 nonwhites out of 813,669 people), and Philadelphia 3.9 percent nonwhite (22,185 nonwhites of a total 565,529 people).

30. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 196.

31. "Beauties of the Slave System/Attempt to Kidnap a Free Citizen of Massachusetts!" *Republican Standard*, 3 July 1851, 2:3; "Virginia Enslaving a Shipwrecked Massachusetts Freeman!—The Case of Johnson," *Republican Standard*, 31 July 1851, 1:1; Samuel J. May, *The Fugitive Slave Law and Its Victims*, rev. ed. (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1861), 18.

32. Dolin, *Leviathan*, 272.

made more than one voyage—and who clearly did not fall into the categories Dolin has cited.³³

Among those steady African American whalers were members of two lesser-known families, the Quanwells and Baileys. James Quanwell, born in Dartmouth about 1801 and perhaps the son of Joseph Quanwell (or Quanawin, born about 1768 in the same town), was on at least seven whaling voyages between 1815 and 1827; Joseph Quanwell 2, born about 1799 and perhaps James's brother, served on six whaling crews between 1815 and 1841. Three other Quanwells were also whalers. Similarly, George, Abraham F., and Humphrey Bailey, all sons of Quaco and Rebecca Bailey, worked on whaling vessels at one time or another.³⁴ Humphrey, born about 1801, went whaling on ship *Ann Alexander* in 1831 and on ship *Barclay* in 1824 and 1827, and Abraham was a crew member on three voyages. George, born about 1805, served on twelve voyages between 1827 and 1846—George and Abraham served together on the *Rising States*' ill-fated 1837 voyage—and was third mate on at least four of them; he died at sea in 1847. The Bailey involvement continued into the next generation: Humphrey's son George F. Bailey joined a crew at the age of fourteen in 1846 and by the late 1860s was employed by the New Bedford ship bread baker S. Watson and Son.

Other men of African descent were almost constantly at sea on whaling vessels (fig. 5.7). Between 1843 and 1860 Abram Anthony, born about 1822 in New Bedford, went on eight whaling voyages, sometimes as cook and other times as steward. During those years he was never home for more than five months at a time; more commonly he stayed on shore just one or two months before shipping out again. Anthony married in mid-September 1850 but went to sea again less than two months later. When he was in town he lived at the "sailor's boardinghouse" that James C. Carter ran at 166 South Water Street.³⁵ Bolster has cited the case of Ebenezer Hunter, born in nearby Tiverton about 1800, who out of eighteen years as a mariner was ashore for only twenty-three months even though, like Bailey, he was a married man.³⁶ Lloyd Bell, born enslaved in the District of Columbia about 1805, was purchased and freed by his father George in 1829 and at some point afterward probably went to Baltimore, where a man of that name lived in a sailor's home in 1850. By the mid-1850s he was in New Bedford. In 1859 his wife Ellen came before the city's overseers of the poor and reported that they were "from [the] South" and that her husband had "gone off two years, never in New Bedford more than a month at one time. . . . Loyd is in Bark A Houghton, whaling, from Fall River."³⁷

Many other examples exist of African American men making multiple whaling voyages. Robert Eliot, born about 1773 probably in Norfolk, Virginia, went on at

33. Putney, *Black Sailors*, 45.

34. The given name Quaco derives from the West African day name Quaco or Kwaco; the name Cuffe comes from Kofi, the name for Friday. See J. L. Dillard, *Black Names*, vol. 13 of *Contributions to the Sociology of Language*, ed. Joshua L. Fishman (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1976), 91.

35. Carter and his wife Fosteen Smith are identified on Anthony's marriage certificate as his parents. Fosteen Smith may have been married before, as her son William H. Smith was cited in James Carter's will.

36. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 163.

37. New Bedford Overseers of the Poor Records, vol. 2, entry for 10 February 1859, New Bedford Free Public Library (hereafter cited as overseers records).



Fig. 5.7. Painted by the anonymous “whaleman artist” in the 1830s, this view from an unidentified whaling voyage shows a stroke oarsman of African descent about to be thrown from his whaleboat; a black harpooner stands in the boat at left. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

least three voyages from New Bedford. He was the cook on the 1839 voyage of the *Abigail*, but at the end of the cruise vessel owner Charles W. Morgan noted in his vessel accounts that Eliot was then “too old”; he would have been about sixty-six years old at that time. Eliot died in New Bedford in 1848. James D. Scott, probably born in Cumberland County, Virginia, appears to have first gone whaling on the New Bedford ship *George and Susan* in May 1817, one of eleven whaling voyages he made. He was a cook on the *Selma* in 1841 when it was destroyed by fire less than two months after leaving New Bedford. Scott survived and then went whaling again, probably twice more, before he died in May 1849.³⁸ There is no evidence that Eliot or Scott were impoverished, and it is difficult to believe that Scott in particular was so consistently in debt to his various vessels that he would be compelled to ship as often as he did. It seems as likely that such men had developed skills in their whaling work, were comfortable at sea, or both.

Boardinghouse keeper William P. Powell, a consistent advocate of racial equality,

38. Putney, *Black Sailors*, 46.

took a positive view of the possibility of advancement on a whaling crew in the series he wrote for the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in 1846. “There is not that nice distinction made in whaling as there is in the naval and merchant services,” he stated; “a coloured man is only known and looked upon as a MAN, and is promoted in rank according to his ability and skill to perform the same duties as the white man; his opportunities for accumulating pecuniary means—investing the earnings in whaling capital, is equally the same. Hence the necessity, and in fact it is to the INTEREST of the whaling merchants, to keep constantly in their employ a large proportion of colored men.” He cited the thirst among black whalers for mental cultivation as one mode of advancing through the ranks:

The forecastles are turned into schoolrooms. There you will see the *cook*, the *steward*, and two or three of the crew, under the tuition of their several teachers, busily engaged in their primary lessons; and others studying *navigation*, and taking *Lunars*, under the instruction of the captain or mates. By close application during the voyage, an unlettered man may acquire the art of reading, writing and arithmetic. Now this is the case with a large majority of coloured men in the whaling service, that when having acquired a thorough knowledge of the art and skill of capturing whales, together with navigation and seamanship, it qualifies them to fill the officers or boatsteerers, third, second, and first mates, and sometimes captains of whaling vessels.³⁹

Whether Powell reliably spoke for the majority of “unlettered men” among African American whalers is impossible to know, but there are documented instances of their learning to read during idle moments at sea. James Smith, one of the “Negro oarsmen” on the 1791 voyage of the New Bedford whaleship *Rebecca*, bought a spelling book from the vessel’s slop chest. Upon arriving in New Bedford in May or June of 1839 the fugitive John S. Jacobs chose to go to sea not only to raise money to buy the freedom of his sister Harriet but also to make himself literate.

For the first week or so I could not realize the great transformation from a chattel slave to a man; it seemed to me like a dream; but I soon began to feel my responsibility, and the necessity of mental improvement. The first thing, therefore, that I strove to do was to raise myself above the level of the beast, where slavery had left me, and fit myself for the society of man. I first tried this in New Bedford by working in the day and going to school at night. Sometimes my business would be such that I could not attend evening schools; so I thought the better plan would be to get such books as I should want, and go a voyage to sea. I accordingly shipped on board the “Frances Henrietta,” of New Bedford.⁴⁰

Still, however literacy may have improved the lives of African American whalers, the opportunity for advancement in rank on board a whaleship was slight for the great majority of them. Some whites laid the problem at the feet of the mariners themselves. Whaling merchant Matthew Howland, who was an outspoken abolitionist, nevertheless expressed such a notion. In a letter to a prospective white whaler he asserted that the rise from greenhand to mate was “rapid since a large proportion of the foremast hands are ignorant blacks and men of mixed blood who have no ambition to rise.”⁴¹ But African Americans saw it differently. One speaker at

39. Powell, “Coloured Seamen.”

40. [John S. Jacobs], “A True Tale of Slavery,” *The Leisure Hour* (London), February 1861, 85–87; 14 February 1861, 108–10; 21 February 1861, 125–27; and 28 February 1861, 139–41. Online transcription on Documenting the American South website, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/jjacobs/jjacobs.html>.

the 1837 annual convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society declared, “There are two men now at sea, who are fully qualified for masters of vessels, and first rate whale men, but are obliged to serve as common sailors because of their color only.”⁴² Many men had in fact come to New Bedford with maritime skills before ever shipping on a whaling voyage. That might particularly have been the case with southern-born men. Given the chronic shortage of white labor in the South as well as in the Caribbean, enslaved people often developed skills valuable to the maritime economy both at sea and on shore. Men of African descent were often vessel pilots.⁴³

There was some degree of occupational advance among African American men aboard whaling vessels, though in the overall it was small compared to the number of men never able to advance beyond ordinary seaman, cook, or steward. Along with such men as Frederick Lawton, William Cuffe, and Pardon Cook were Thomas Smith, who had married Cook’s daughter Charlotte in 1831. Born in New Bern, North Carolina, about 1810, Smith was in New Bedford by 1829, when he took out a protection paper, and by 1838 he was both a mate and boatsteerer on the ship *Charles Frederick*; on that vessel’s 1842 voyage, nearly three years long, Smith was mate and earned almost \$1600.⁴⁴ On the 1851–55 cruise of the whaleship *Canton II*, John Besselleu served first as a boatsteerer and then as third mate. Another example is Thomas Fletcher, born about 1834 in the District of Columbia, who first shipped when he was fifteen years old on the 1849 voyage of the ship *Benjamin Tucker*. On that crew he started at the bottom, as a boy, with a slim lay of 1/255. As a member of the 1851 crew of the *Canton II* with Besselleu, Fletcher earned only \$36.62 in four years at sea, but the vessel’s master noted in his voyage accounts that the young man would make a “first rate” boatsteerer. He thereupon shipped in that capacity at a 1/55 lay on the *Canton II*’s next voyage, where in addition to his regular earnings he made \$71.25 in six bounties for raising whales. The *Canton*’s captain Samuel E. Cooke noted, “Thomas Fletcher is a valuable man capable & faithful in the performance of all his Duties by night or day, ship or shore.” Fletcher bought almost nothing from the ship’s slop chest on the voyage—cloth, three palm-leaf hats, one “turkey red handkerchief,” soap, tobacco, and a “fancy calico shirt”—but had two cash advances, both at 25 percent interest. His final settlement is not stated in vessel accounts, but it must have satisfied him in some measure: he shipped again on the 1858 voyage of the *Canton*, this time as third mate at a 1/55 lay.⁴⁵

In addition, there is evidence that the earnings of some black whalers were sufficient to enable a better economic position on shore. Bolster has noted that of thirty-one black mariner householders in New Bedford in 1838 five owned real estate, suggesting not only a certain permanence but the ability to accumulate enough capital to buy a house or to buy land and build one.⁴⁶ Charles Broacher (sometimes Brochur

41. Quoted in Everett S. Allen, *Children of the Light: The Rise and Fall of New Bedford’s Whaling and the Death of the Arctic Fleet* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), 126.

42. James Farr, “A Slow Boat to Nowhere: The Multi-Racial Crews of the American Whaling Industry,” *Journal of Negro History* 68, 2 (Spring 1983): 166.

43. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 132, 136.

44. Putney, *Black Sailors*, 83.

45. Voyage Accounts, *Canton 1855–59*, Whaling Manuscripts, New Bedford Free Public Library (hereafter cited as NBFPL).

46. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 164.

or Brochar), who claimed to have been born in New Bedford probably in the late 1780s, was a cooper on board the ship *Maria* in 1815 and appears to have remained a shipboard cooper until he died on board the ship *William Hamilton* in November 1840. In his death notice, the *New-Bedford Mercury* termed him “a respectable colored man,” and his estate included three houses on one New Bedford lot collectively valued at three thousand dollars in addition to a personal estate of \$543.44. Edward Barber, born at Isle of Wight, Virginia, about 1810–11, joined the crew of one whaling voyage in 1854 and then stayed ashore, working as a domestic and laborer; at the time of his death in 1889 he owned a house valued at \$2500. Henry Steward, probably born enslaved about 1812 in Queen Anne County, Maryland, went on at least three whaling voyages between 1842 and 1846 and was a fruit dealer by 1860; when he died he left a personal estate of \$295 and a house and lot assessed at \$1600. Wike Reynolds, born about 1800 probably in North Carolina, sailed on two whaling voyages in 1838 and 1840 and then became a grocer in the waterfront district; by the time of his death he had a personal estate of \$293.90 and \$5500 worth of real estate in three lots and houses.

On the whole, though, many African American whalemens who settled in New Bedford struggled to maintain economic stability. Though little if any difference existed in the lays of men in the same position, black men had fewer opportunities to advance to officers’ positions and thus were on the whole probably more deeply mired in poverty. Levi C. L. Debety, born in Cecil County, Maryland, in 1822, took out his first seaman’s protection paper in New Bedford when he was fourteen. In 1840 he joined the crew of the ship *Rodman* as a greenhand. After three years at sea, Debety earned just \$244.43, and the owners paid him an additional \$7 to help unload the ship. But his slop chest purchases, cash advances, and the insurance he was compelled to take out before sailing were greater than what his lay provided, and he ended the voyage \$114.19 in debt to the ship. His father Lucas, a chimney sweep, died shortly after Debety returned from the voyage, and so Levi must then have been responsible for supporting his mother’s household. James E. Henrys, who was born in Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1828, was the son of a “Dutchman” from Albany and of Lucinda Tiffany, the daughter of Cyrus Tiffany, earlier enslaved in Taunton. Henrys was on four whaling voyages between 1845 and 1859 and listed in directories and censuses as a seaman through at least 1870, but he was repeatedly in need of assistance from the city’s overseers of the poor. In January 1860 he told the overseers that he had found a job “in the Billiard Saloon corner of 3d st & Market square, says they sell liquor there, as well as in the lower part of the building. Has 1.50 a week. wants food.” At the end of that year, when Henrys again applied for poor relief, the overseers proposed to send him to the city almshouse, an invitation he declined. Twenty-six years later he died of Bright’s disease at the almshouse nonetheless.⁴⁷

Black whalemens with families sometimes, willingly or unwillingly, left them in a tenuous position. Some men deserted and never returned to the city, others went far afield to attempt to earn more money, and others simply could not earn enough through whaling to support themselves or a family adequately. Albert Williams, born in New Bedford about 1820, whaled on at least six vessels between 1841 and 1871, but in 1864 his wife was so poor that she was sent to the almshouse. Four years earlier

47. Overseers Records, 10 and 12 January and 23 March 1859, 12 January and 6 December 1860.

Anna J. Martin applied for relief while her husband Robert served as steward on the whaling bark *Harvest*. He had been at sea for a year. Anna Martin told the overseers that “her husband wanted to have a draw bill, but she would not take it because she wanted to have all the money when he got home.” Yet she meanwhile found herself unable to support herself and her infant son, and the overseers offered, as they had James E. Henrys, to send her to the almshouse. Whether she accepted is not recorded, and there is no definitive record of her death in Massachusetts.⁴⁸

Ellen Brown’s case is a particularly distressing example, for not only her husband but her three sons, whom she might have expected to support her household in her husband’s absence, were whalemens. Because Brown reported three different northern birthplaces in different censuses but told the overseers that she was born in the South, she was very likely a fugitive from slavery. Brown was probably born in Maryland or Delaware about 1810 and had married in Philadelphia before coming to New Bedford in the late 1830s. In January 1859 she told the overseers that her husband had deserted from a whaling vessel in Australia two years earlier and that she had only her eleven-year-old daughter at home. Her son William, then twenty years old, was in the whaling bark *Keoka*; Charles, then nineteen, had been gone eighteen months on the ship *Congress*; and Timothy, her youngest, was in the bark *Hope*. She lived at that time at “Mormon Hall” on Howland Street, a somewhat notorious boardinghouse in the “Marsh,” a swampy area bordering the river. Brown came again for relief in March 1860 and a third time in 1864. She then reported that her son William was sick and living with her at a different waterfront address. William died of dropsy soon afterward; he was twenty-six years old.

Black and white whalemens alike stood at the light end of an earnings scale heavily weighted toward owners, agents, and captains, on the premise that their capital investment placed them at greater risk overall should any given voyage be a losing one. Typically, two-thirds of the profit of a whaling voyage redounded to those with ownership shares in a vessel, while one-third was distributed among the crew.⁴⁹ The 1833 voyage of the ship *Rodman* netted \$49,111.30 in oil and bone sales; whaling merchants Charles W. Morgan and Samuel Rodman each owned one-quarter of the vessel on this voyage and earned \$9,129.32. Captain Henry Lewis, at a 1/19 lay, received \$2,584.81, while African American crewman Silas Firman earned \$435.88—1/125, his lay as a steward, of \$1,028 and 1/100 of \$800 as a boatsteerer during the latter part of the voyage. In this instance the *Rodman*’s owners earned 74 percent of the net profit. The August 1839 voyage of the ship *Frances Henrietta* returned to New Bedford in mid-February 1843 with whale, sperm, and blackfish oil, whalebone, and “scaldings” worth \$47,007.67.⁵⁰ Of this total \$33,754.80 was distributed among the six

48. Overseers Records, 15 March 1864, 10 December 1860.

49. Davis et al., *In Search of Leviathan*, 153, 157, determined this proportion from an examination of 34,753 labor contracts between owners/agents and crew members between 1 January 1840–31 December 1858 and 1 January to 31 December 1866 (75 percent of all voyages from the port of New Bedford in these years). Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 223, put the ratio of owner/agent to crew share at 70:30.

50. Michael Dyer, New Bedford Whaling Museum maritime curator, to author, 8 April 2009: “Scaldings” consist of the most valuable part of a sperm whale, principally spermaceti: a) head-matter spermaceti, b) junk, c) hump spermaceti, all flash heated together in the try pots to drive off moisture before being put into cask and labeled “head, or head-matter”. . . . Log book keepers use ‘boiling’ when trying out the body and ‘scalding’ when trying out the head, hump and junk.”

vessel owners, at either one-quarter share (\$8,438.70) or one-eighth share (\$4,219.35). The sum of \$13,252.87 was paid out to the crew, with Captain William H. Reynard, at 1/16 lay, receiving \$2,899.25; thus the crew's overall share was about 28 percent, somewhat lower than average. The whaleman with the highest lay on this voyage, 1/95, received \$488.29, and the lowest earnings—from as little as \$8.40 to \$45.12—went to seven men recruited at foreign ports who were on the vessel for short times. In relative terms John S. Jacobs, who was steward on this voyage at a lay of 1/130, fared well (fig. 5.8). His net income for three years, six months, and sixteen days at sea was \$356.83 as well as ten dollars for unloading the ship and a share of the catch, a common mode of payment in the industry which the seaman could either attempt to sell on his own or consign. Jacobs's share was two casks of sperm oil and a cask of the sperm whale head matter, together valued at \$203.73.⁵¹

Successful New Bedford whaling agents earned enough money to place them among the wealthiest Americans of their time, but their view of risk was not shared by the crews they hired. “You wealthy and respectable citizens of New Bedford who have acquired their wealth by the whaleing business and are still endeavoring too augment their wealth by building and fitting more ships are but little aware how much abuse and hardships is suffered by those men who constitute the crews of their ships,” one midcentury whaleman proclaimed.⁵² Regardless of race all whalers were at considerable risk themselves—of injury or death at sea, shipwreck, piracy, fatal illness, and sometimes abusive discipline from mates and masters. Men pursuing their prey in whaleboats were in particular danger. Late in 1828 and in the first days of 1829 one boat's crew from the ship *Courier*—a second mate and five black whalers—were killed after “they had made fast to a whale, and it is supposed were drawn under water,” the *Mercury* reported. “The boat was found two days after, with a hole in her bottom, and the line made fast, but no person to be seen.” In 1843 Ebenezer Hunter was drowned when a whaleboat line being quickly run out by a whale in flight caught him up and pulled him out of the boat.⁵³ Lewis Fleetwood was another casualty. He had come to New Bedford with his new wife Maria in May 1839, four days after having been freed in the District of Columbia. Fleetwood first worked ashore, as a porter, and then became a waiter on the steamer *Massachusetts*. Why he should have left what was probably steadier and, therefore, better-compensated work for whaling is unknown, but in 1853 he joined the crew of the *William Penn* as a steward. Two years later, the *Republican Standard* reported, Fleetwood “was on the top-gallant forecandle, was swept off and is supposed to have been lost” when the vessel wrecked in late September 1855.⁵⁴ Maria Fleetwood married again, this time a shoreside worker (fig. 5.9): her second husband John A. Ferguson, born in the South, was a hotel waiter and by 1856 worked in George T. Baker's New Bedford candleworks.

One graphic account of the death of an African American whaler was

51. Morgan Papers, Collection 27, vol. 24, Waste Book, 21 December 1842–30 November 1850.

52. Christopher Slocum on the *Obed Mitchell* quoted in Dolin, *Leviathan*, 273.

53. “Port of New-Bedford,” *Mercury*, 9 January 1829, 3:3; *Mercury*, 3 November 1843, 3:6.

54. *Republican Standard*, 18 October 1855, 1:4. Neither Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, nor *American Offshore Whaling Voyages* (<https://whalinghistory.org/?s=william+penn>) list the *William Penn* as a New Bedford vessel and do not show a vessel of that name to have sailed from any American whaling port between 1852 and 1855.

recorded by Eliza Azelia Griswold Williams on board the ship *Florida*, which her husband Thomas commanded. On board the vessel when it left New Bedford in early September 1858 was an African American boatsteerer whom she referred to only as “Tim”; the voyage’s crew list identified the man as Timothy Reed, born about 1825 in New London, Connecticut. On 9 August 1859, Williams wrote, her husband came below deck to tell her of Reed’s fate:

Tim was gone. It happened in this way. They hauled up to the Whale, after making fast to him, to kill him with the lance, and he came up under the boat, tipping it to one side until it filled half full of water. It righted again, but three of the men out of fear jumped into the water and then immediately turned and caught hold of the boat, capsizing her. The other boat was near and picked up the Men, but poor Tim got foul of the line and went down with the Whale. A short time after, they saw the Whale and got him, and they found poor Tim fast in the line, it being wound two or three times around his arms and once around his body. They buried him in the deep. He was bruised a good deal by being dragged on the bottom. It is a dreadful thing—and to think that it happened aboard our Ship! He was the best boatsteerer they had and they all say there is no better to be found. He has taken more Whales for us than any other Man aboard of the Ship, and never missed one. But it is not his services alone that I think of; it was such an awful death to die. He was a colored Man. He was a very pleasant Man. I never went on deck and met him but what he had a smile on his face.⁵⁵

Recapitulation			
John S. Jacobs	3	Casks	\$407
James G. Smith	41	"	611
Wm. H. Brown	34	"	601
Wm. H. Brown	69	"	1010
Geo. W. Brown	114	"	1810
Total	221	Casks	\$3439
James G. Smith	5	"	75
Wm. H. Brown	4	"	60
Geo. W. Brown	26	"	410
Wm. H. Brown	5	"	75
Geo. W. Brown	23	"	345
Wm. H. Brown	41	"	611
Geo. W. Brown	114	"	1810
Wm. H. Brown	3	"	45
Total	221	Casks	\$3439

Fig. 5.8. “Recapitulation” of ship *Frances Henrietta’s* distribution of sperm oil casks, showing the five owners of the vessel as well as John S. Jacobs, who received three casks valued at about \$407; Courtesy Mystic Seaport Museum, G. W. Blunt White Library, Charles W. Morgan Collection 27, vol. 26.

Though evidence is not abundant, African American whalers at least sometimes bore the additional risk of racial hostility on the part of white captains, mates, and crew. Bolster has noted that cooks and stewards, who were overwhelmingly of African descent, “inhabited an ambiguous social sphere belonging neither to the officers nor to the men. Ensuring that no supplies were squandered forced them to act on behalf of stingy owners and subjected them to captains’ wrath. . . . Cooks’ ability to bestow delicacies could inspire favoritism among forecabin hands, but stewards—the cabin servants—were often regarded as the captains’ flunkies.”⁵⁶ Additionally, the fact that cooks and stewards typically

55. Quoted in Harold Williams, ed., *One Whaling Family* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), 83–84.

56. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 222.



Fig. 5.9. Maria Fleetwood, her daughter Ann, and probably her son Benjamin, daguerreotype, about 1850. Lewis Fleetwood might have had this photograph of his family made before he went to sea on the *William Penn* in 1853. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

shipped at higher lays than ordinary seamen must have rankled some white whalers. In 1849 the U.S. District Court in New York awarded an African American whaler on a Sag Harbor vessel \$525 for “ill treatment” on the part of the ship’s master and first mate. “It was proved that the plaintiff was kept in irons in the run of the ship 23 days, and whipped 100 lashes on the bare back. No cause was shown for these severities,” a New Bedford newspaper reported, which suggests the possibility that racism was at work.⁵⁷ On 22 May 1866 James Brown, a man of African descent native to Colombia (then

New Grenada) and cook on the whaling bark *Atlantic*, stabbed and killed a man who “called him a nigger.” Brown and crew members who had witnessed the murder were put on board the New Bedford whaleship *Osceola* to return to port, and Brown was indicted by a Boston grand jury in early October that year. His fate is unknown.⁵⁸

Still, as William P. Powell had declared, whaling was one of few opportunities open to African Americans that promised some semblance of democratic and equitable treatment. In an analysis of thirty-five southern New England whaling vessels sailing between 1837 and 1853, Bolster found one’s rank rather than race determined a whaler’s share of a voyage’s income. “Equal remuneration aboard ship reinforced blacks’ claims of equality,” Bolster asserted. In 1846 Powell, who ran a “sailor’s temperance boardinghouse” in New Bedford from about 1836 to 1839 and then founded the Coloured Sailors’ Home in New York City, said of whaling, “There is no barrier, no dividing line, no complexional distinction, to hedge up the cabin gangway or the quarter-deck, to prevent the intrepid, enterprising, and skillful coloured sailor from filling the same station as the white sailor, but all are alike eligible, and stand upon a common level.” The crew Pardon Cook commanded on the July 1839 voyage of the *Elizabeth* represented almost a complete reversal: he and the first mate were African American, the second mate was white, and there were

57. New Bedford *Weekly Mercury*, 12 January 1849, 2:6.

58. “New Bedford Seaman Killed,” *Republican Standard*, 26 July 1866, 2:4; “Indicted,” *ibid.*, 4 October 1866, 2:4.

nine white crew, including the cook, the steward, and one boatsteerer. A few weeks after the vessel returned in June 1840, the *Colored American* published an account of a meeting with the African American first mate on the voyage entitled “Things as They Should Be”:

When they were fitting out, and about to sail, commanded as the brig was by two colored men, and nearly all of the crew white, it was predicted they would have disorder on board, if not mutiny, and that they never could succeed. But they have since been down on to the coast of Brazil, as far South as latitude 19—cruised 10 months, obtained 220 bls. of sperm oil—had good government and order, and have returned home all happy, have made a good voyage, and given great satisfaction to the owners, who are now fitting out the vessel again, for the same captain and mate, who are soon to sail upon the second voyage.

We say, this was as it should be, because the owner of the brig was a white man, and because the officers and crew were made up in part of white men, and in part of colored, the captain himself a colored man, and because the whole was fitted out without distinction of color, and upon the broad principle that man is man. Not that the owner is an abolitionist for we know not as he is, or had any design to act upon that principle, but that he regarded the captain and mate as competent and worthy as any other men.⁵⁹

Though most scholars who have studied the matter have found race of no significance in determining earnings, Lee Craig and Robert M. Fearn determined that before the Civil War “certain ethnic groups were crowded into specific occupations. In particular, blacks and Portuguese held a disproportionate share of service jobs.” Craig and Fearn noted that these cook and steward positions were “outside of the occupational ladder”; in other words, cooks and stewards generally did not become mates and masters. In their analysis, men of color were 26 percent more likely to be cooks and stewards than white whalers and from 6 to 12 percent less likely to hold all other jobs on board, including those of greenhand and boy.⁶⁰

By midcentury, African American men were still present in most whaling crews (fig. 5.10), and the fact that “colored seamen” were part of the procession at the 1858 West Indian Emancipation celebration in New Bedford suggests some element of pride, if not political organization, among them. But the chances of finding African American men in positions other than cook and steward had diminished. From an analysis of Providence, New York, and Philadelphia merchant vessel crews Bolster found that after 1840 African Americans were increasingly apt to be found in these two service jobs “alone amid an all-white crew.” The same trend is noticeable in New Bedford, though it appears to have become manifest somewhat later. Between 1842 and 1852, as the prosperity of New Bedford whaling was climbing, between 14 and 24 percent of all crews included more than two African Americans, which indicates that they filled shipboard positions in addition to cook and steward. But in 1853, the second most profitable year of its existence—the total value of its product was \$10.76 million that year, the high coming in 1854 at \$10.80 million—only 70 percent of New Bedford whaling crews included black mariners and only 5.2 percent of those crews

59. “Things as They Should Be,” *Colored American*, 4 July 1840, 2:2. Thanks to Don Warrin for providing me with a photocopy of this article.

60. Lee A. Craig and Robert M. Fearn, “Wage Discrimination and Occupational Crowding in a Competitive Industry: Evidence from the American Whaling Industry,” *Journal of Economic History* 53, 1 (March 1993): 131, 134.

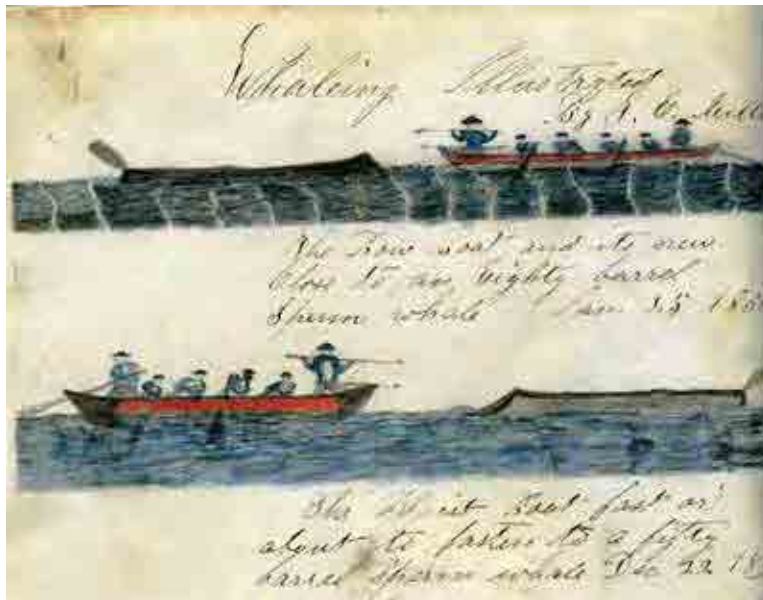


Fig. 5.10. "Waste boat about to fasten to a sperm whale," illustration by George Edgar Mills in the logbook for the 1855–56 voyage of the ship *Leonidas*. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

included more than two. Between 1858 and 1860 no New Bedford crews included more than two African American whalers and only from 28 to 40 percent included African Americans at all.

This change may have occurred at least partly because of the Panic of 1857. The financial cataclysm forced unemployment upward, which probably induced whites in unskilled and semiskilled occupations to work for wages lower than they normally would have accepted. Approximately 2,400 jobs were available on New Bedford whaling

vessels in 1858, and it seems likely that white men displaced both foreign-born and African American seamen. Probably more significant, however, was the growth of a society increasingly stratified by race. "My impression is clear that . . . a free negro was considered first rate material for a whaler," James Bunker Congdon wrote in 1863, but he added that their presence on whaling crews was at that time "not as great now as formerly. . . . The proportion gradually diminished until in a majority of cases the cooks and stewards only were colored. . . . This is the case now for the most part . . . but it is, without doubt, almost wholly owing to the prejudice of the whites. Colored men have held every position on board of our whale ships; but the reason why they are not there as seamen often, and very rarely there as officers is the same that must be given for their exclusion from every other position of authority or fellowship."⁶¹ "Unfortunately for blacks aboard ships," Bolster has argued, "the new emphasis on racial segregation ashore at mid-century eroded the protective bulwarks of nautical custom and diminished blacks in an occupation long important to them." Before about 1840, whaling agents and captains had recruited crews directly or, if agents sent whalers from other places, had a face-to-face interview with potential crew before hiring them. After that point, recruiting agents known as "crimps" began to assume increasing control over hiring. According to Bolster, "Reliance on crimps not only signaled rising class stratification in northern seaports, but changed the way race worked at hiring time."⁶²

61. James Bunker Congdon to American Freeman's Inquiry Commission, Special Commission to Inquire into the Condition of the Colored Population of New Bedford, 1863, NBFPL.

62. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 218, 222–23.

Other analysts suggest that the gradually diminishing presence of African Americans in whaling crews was their choice, not that of hiring agents. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter have argued that as the gap between shoreside and whalers' earnings widened, agents seeking the low-wage labor essential to maximizing vessel owners' profits "turned more and more to unskilled Americans and to both skilled and unskilled foreigners. Even black sailors—whose onshore opportunities must have been severely constrained—seem to have deserted the whaling fleet. At least it appears that the proportion of native blacks in the typical crew declined."⁶³ African American whalers, they assert, knew too much about whaling to remain part of the "tractable" workforce owners typically sought in order to reduce the possibility of desertion and mutiny. "The shipping-agent preferred to deal with men ignorant of the actual conditions of the industry," they have observed, "because they were more easily imposed upon, and also because they were more dependable in observing their contracts."⁶⁴ Such men included "Kanakas," or Hawaiian and other South Pacific Islanders. Native Hawaiians were a strong presence in the fleet until the owners of island sugar cane plantations, equally interested in securing low-wage workers, compelled the government to require whaling owners and agents to post bonds in order to recruit islanders. Combined with other charges put in place over time, the cost per recruit reached six hundred dollars, an expense most owners were unwilling to incur.⁶⁵

By 1860 the number of Hawaiians on whaling vessels began to decline,⁶⁶ and to take their places owners continued to rely on other foreign-born men. One whaling master told vessel owners in an 1854 letter that he had been compelled to ship seven native New Zealanders because white men refused "to talk of shipping on a lay short of an eighteenth of one hundredth." Agents also turned to native-born men in desperate circumstances, a practice of relatively long standing: in 1833 and 1837 Charles Morgan indentured two men then at the "House of Refuge" to serve as apprentices on whaling vessels (both of whom deserted); for the July 1839 voyage of the *Abigail* and again for the August 1840 voyage of the *Rodman* he paid to have three men, at least one of them African American, released from jail to serve on the vessels' crews. In 1839 Morgan paid a local man \$1.62 to watch one recruit "to prevent his running away" before sailing.⁶⁷ When the unemployed shoemaker Jacob Hazen went whaling in 1837 he wrote of his crew, "My companions, consisting of about twenty men, were decidedly, to my mind, the roughest looking set of fellows that I had ever fallen in with." Half of them were drunkards, he wrote, and most "looked as if they had seen nothing larger than a fip-penny-bit for the last six months."⁶⁸

63. Davis et al., *In Search of Leviathan*, 186.

64. *Ibid.*, 193.

65. *Ibid.*, 359.

66. See Marla L. Miller and Laura A. Miller, *A Generous Sea: Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and the Jewish Community in New Bedford Whaling & Whaling Heritage*, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park Special Ethnographic Report (Boston: Northeast Region Ethnography Program, National Park Service, 2016), 23.

67. Morgan Papers, box 1, folder 3.

68. Jacob D. Hazen, *Five Years before the Mast; or, Life in the Forecastle Aboard of a Whaler and Man-of-War* (Philadelphia: Willis P. Hazard, 1854), 22–23.

Hazen deserted in Brazil. As whaling profits declined the search intensified for men who were ignorant of the conditions aboard whaling vessels, running from the law, desperately poor, or had few opportunities in their native places.

Life on Shore, 1825–1861

As the number of vessels and crew members grew after 1825, New Bedford began to change. From a face-to-face village it became a place brimming with transients waiting to ship out and returning from whaling voyages—a shift, as Hohman characterized it in the late 1920s, from “provincialism to cosmopolitanism.”⁶⁹ To accommodate these whalers a range of boardinghouses, eating places, bars, and brothels sprang up on the streets closest to the waterfront (fig. 5.11). New Bedford whaling merchants who had once lived cheek by jowl with wharves, candleworks, ropeworks, tradesmen’s shops, and the working population in this dense waterfront district began to inch uphill until they reached its crest, County Street and its westerly margins. Increasingly wealth, commercial heft, and political power isolated itself from the rest of the city in this mansion-filled neighborhood.

Local historian Zephaniah Pease stated that by the mid-1820s there were “two New Bedfords . . . one a fair and dignified village on the hilltop, where were patrician mansions, with opulent gardens, the homes of the whaling merchants and captains. The other was made up of squalid sections where the sailors and those who preyed upon them, the saloons, where delirium and death were sold, the boarding houses, the dance halls and houses where female harpies reigned and vice and violence were rampant.”⁷⁰ Former New Bedford resident Jeremiah Winslow wrote in 1838, “The once quiet Village has become the residence of many strangers of doubtful character; the wise and the prudent no longer possess that salutary influence which induced others to act for the public good; the scum of society for a time has had control.”⁷¹ About the same time abolitionist Debora Weston, then teaching in New Bedford, noted in a letter to her sister Caroline that there were then fifty “grog shops” in the town.⁷²

Pease identified the “squalid sections” as the waterfront south of the Fairhaven Bridge, including “the Marsh” at Howland Street; “Hard-Dig,” west of the town proper on the north side of Kempton Street (in the 1820s part of Dartmouth); and “Dog Corner,” at the intersection of Allen and County Street, on the declivity south of the mansion district. Because the town was yet small it lacked the police power to enforce order, and respectable people rarely ventured into these areas. “The brawlers were left to fight out their affairs,” Pease wrote.⁷³ One such brawl was the 1856 riot at the “Marsh,” the section of Howland Street running from the Acushnet River to South

69. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 48.

70. Zephaniah W. Pease, ed., *The Diary of Samuel Rodman: A New Bedford Chronicle of Thirty-Seven Years, 1821-1859* (New Bedford, MA: Reynolds Printing Co., 1927), 37.

71. Jeremiah Winslow, Havre, to “Ma Chere Elizabeth” [his daughter], 26 March 1838, Rotch Family Papers, 1824–1839, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

72. Debora Weston to Caroline Weston, 5 October 1836, Weston Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library.

73. Pease, ed., *Diary of Samuel Rodman*, 38.

Second Street. Local historian Leonard Bolles Ellis wrote about the area as if it were effectively off-limits for anyone who did not live or work there:

In years gone by, and especially at the time of the riot, the eastern section was a noted resort for drunken sailors and evil-disposed persons. Nor was this confined to Howland Street, for South Water and other intersecting streets partook of the generally bad reputation. They abounded in dance halls, saloons, gambling dens, and brothels. When our ships came in from their long voyages, these abodes of iniquity were in high carnival, fights and brawls were of frequent occurrence, and it was dangerous to pass through this section after nightfall. It was no uncommon occurrence for persons to be knocked down and robbed in this vicinity.⁷⁴



Fig. 5.11. Boardinghouses ranged along Bethel Street, now Johnnycake Hill, across from the Seaman's Bethel and the Mariners' Home; now the site of most of them is occupied by the New Bedford Whaling Museum, built in 1915. The boardinghouse at the northeast corner of Bethel and Union Streets was the former home of wealthy whaling merchant Isaac Howland Jr. and was believed to have been the oldest house in the city about 1900. By 1870 Levi and Jerusha Widdoes ran a lunchroom on the ground floor and a boardinghouse on the top floor; during the war the first floor served as a Navy recruiting office. In 1920 the Cape Verdean ropemaker Amelia Viera housed two ropeworkers, a longshoreman, two dockworkers, and eight others in this boardinghouse. All thirteen of Viera's boarders were black, nine were Cape Verdean, two were Brazilian, and one was African American—nineteen-year-old Esther Wanser, born in the District of Columbia and working as a waitress. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Perhaps motivated by a growing racial protectionism among the white working class, the city may have held particular danger for African American mariners, transients, and those who catered to them. Racism appears to have figured into the complex hostility that triggered the two “Ark riots” of 1826 and 1829, both tacit critiques of the failure of the local political elite to control the growth of intemperance, vice, licentiousness, and a population of strangers along the waterfront and in certain other sections of town perceived to be troublesome. The Ark was a waterfront rooming house built about 1822 on top of the hull of an abandoned whaler; by 1826 it had become, Ellis wrote, “a brothel of the worst character,” and contemporary accounts imply that the place was inhabited largely by

74. Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of the Fire Department of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1772–1890* (New Bedford: printed for the author by E. Anthony & Sons, 1890), 142–43.

people of color (fig. 5.12). The suspicion that a white man had been murdered “at some small house of character kept by people of color” in Hard-Dig, the area well west of the waterfront, sparked the formation of a mob that, for some reason, vented its anger by burning the Ark down. By 1829 Asa Smith, a white man who owned the first Ark, built a similar structure from another abandoned whaling vessel near the site of the earlier structure. It was run by a man of color named Titus Peck, who had come to New Bedford from Bristol, Rhode Island, by 1820. Ellis called Peck a “bully and desperado . . . his power was so great that it was said that the Selectmen dared not interfere.” Again, an incident in Hard-Dig—an attack on a white man on the part, the man claimed, of men of color—sparked another unauthorized mob to burn the place. And in October 1830, according to whaling merchant Samuel Rodman, a “lawless mob” had set fire to two houses, apparently in Hard-Dig, “occupied with colored people of poor character.”⁷⁵

Generally, though, by all accounts the waterfront’s effect on those who inhabited it was color blind. In the 1840s the city’s Night Watch was no more apt to discipline or arrest African Americans; the frequent fighting, after-hours noise, and drunkenness was as common to whites as to people of color. Disturbances at notorious waterfront gathering places—the Subterranean, the Arcade, the Howard House, Mormon Hall, and the Long House on Howland Street—involved equally waterfront denizens of both races. And when the city listed infractions over the second quarter of 1848—138 cases of drunkenness, forty people arrested for assault and battery, thirty-three for larceny, and some fifty-two other offenses—it made no distinction among them according to color.⁷⁶ Nor did municipal officials differentiate ownership by race when they noted in 1852 that the city then was home to seventy-eight “liquor shops” and fifty-six “houses of ill-repute.”⁷⁷

People who described the waterfront in those years wrote as though anyone inhabiting the district was fair prey, the chief criteria for exploitation being poverty and ignorance of the practices common to such seaports as New Bedford. Elmo Hohman described the means by which whalers were victimized:

The organization through which men were secured for the whaling crews and through which they were catered to whenever they returned to port consisted of three major elements, or groups of persons: viz., the shipping-agents, the boarding-house keepers, and the combined outfitters and infitters. These groups maintained connections, in turn, with an array of allies, satellites, and hirelings which included the keepers of grog-ships and brothels, pimps, prostitutes, runners, and nondescript hangers-on. . . . Principals and subordinates alike were known collectively to the seamen by the unlovely but suggestive term, “landsharks.”⁷⁸

75. “Burning of the ‘Ark,’” *Evening Standard*, 5 April 1856, 3:1; Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason and Co., 1892), 245-51; Ellis, *History of the Fire Department*, 25-33; *Mercury*, 9 August 1850, 4:1; “Fire!” *Mercury*, 11 August 1826, 3:2; “Riots,” *Mercury*, 18 August 1826, 3:2; “Riot and Fire,” *Mercury*, 22 October 1830, 2:3; Pease, ed., *Diary of Samuel Rodman*, entries for 18 July and 4-5 August 1826, 23 August and 22 September 1829, 16 and 23 October 1830.

76. New Bedford City Watch Reports, 1 June 1848-24 March 1850, NBFPL; “Municipal,” *Mercury*, 17 January 1848, 3:3.

77. “Municipal,” *Republican Standard*, 28 April 1852, 1:2.

78. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 89.

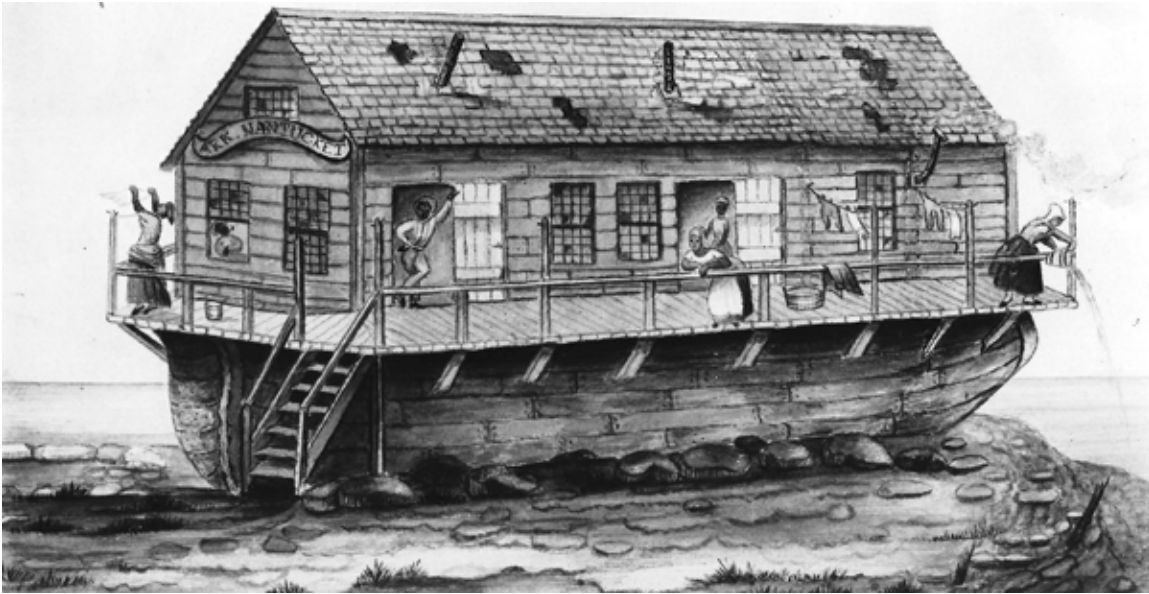


Fig. 5.12. *The Ark*, undated watercolor by William Swift (1834–1911). Little is known about Swift's sources for this retrospective view, but his depiction of at least three people of African descent among the dwelling's occupants at least indicates that he perceived race as a salient feature of the riots. Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Writing about the 1830s, journalist and New Bedford native Charles T. Congdon recalled, “Most of our public houses were for the sailors, and I can remember when the most respectable of these kept bars at which Jack might alleviate his thirst; this was apparently great, so long as his money lasted, and afterward, when he sometimes drank up in advance the earnings of his next voyage.” In 1855 William B. Whitecar, about to ship on the bark *Pacific*, commented on the generally orderly appearance of the city but for “one street . . . an exception to the rule, it being occupied by houses of ill-fame, where many a dollar, earned by exposure to the storm on a long voyage, has been filched from the hardy mariner by the harpies who occupy its tenements; and after what I had already read and heard of the puritanical exactness of our New England brethren, I confess that I was astonished that such a sink was permitted by the citizens of the Bay State to remain in existence for the unsophisticated seaman to be entrapped by.”⁷⁹ One mariner identified the outfitters as particular villains. “Some men are engaged in the business who would scorn to do a mean action,” he stated, “but, generally, the outfitters of New Bedford are, politely speaking, gentlemen robbers.”⁸⁰ Mariner William Fish Williams was especially critical:

The good people ashore who were so disturbed by the brutal treatment of sailors never seemed to realize that the greater part of this brutality lay almost entirely in their neglect of the conditions existing along the waterfront of the seaports of the

79. Charles T. Congdon, *Reminiscences of a Journalist* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1880), 14–15; William B. Whitecar Jr., *Four Years Aboard the Whaleship* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1860), 17–18.

80. *Life and Adventures in the South Pacific by a Roving Printer* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1861), 18, 20.

world. The unfortunate devil who through adversity or accident fell into the clutches of the proprietors of the boarding-houses and saloons of those regions had to be a brute to survive.⁸¹

Away from the waterfront districts, however, were the stable neighborhoods of New Bedford's permanent, "respectable" residents. In two of these were particular concentrations of African Americans—the area just southeast of the mansion district where Cuffe Lawton and his family lived, around the intersection of South Sixth and Bedford Streets, and the West End, which had been an African American neighborhood since the late eighteenth century (fig. 5.13). Before 1836, when New Bedford published its first directory, it is difficult to determine the concentration of people of African descent in either neighborhood, but after that point these two enclaves may be recognized clearly. The 1836 directory identifies residents of color with a "c" after their names, and because it lists street numbers that occur at many intersections it is possible to plot African American residence with reasonable precision. Lawton's neighborhood was roughly bounded on the north by a short extension of Seventh Street just north of Bedford Street, on the south by South Street, on the east by South Water Street, and on the west by the first block of Allen Street, itself just west of "Dog Corner." African American settlement was most dense on the westernmost ends of Bedford and Wing Streets, the intersection of South Sixth Street with both streets, and the Seventh Street extension. The neighborhood contained African American laborers, mariners, widows, as well as African American trader Archibald Clark and blacksmith Lewis Temple. Among the mariners were Samuel Fuller, born about 1807, who served on the crew of the Fairhaven ship *Albion* (whose crew of twenty-five included six men of color) and was listed as a mariner through 1838; his wife Abby (possibly by then his widow; no death record exists for either of them in Bristol County) was one of seven New Bedford people of color who attended the 1840 annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery in New York City. George Bailey lived at the rear of 29 Allen Street with William Coombs, whose son and namesake was a mariner and born in this house. In the front of 29 Allen was John Briggs, who worked on the docks with Frederick Douglass in 1838. Briggs was a staunch abolitionist, and his daughter Martha, who became a prominent educator among African Americans, later ran an evening school for fugitives at this house. At least two mariners boarded at 29 Allen Street in 1841. Abraham McCoy, born about 1785 in St. Mary's County, Maryland, was in New Bedford from at least 1833 to 1840. John Remington, born about 1808 in Rhode Island, served on at least three whaling crews between 1836 and 1845; he returned from the voyage of the *Washington*, on which he was steward, in late May 1847, and eleven months later he died of "ship fever" in New Bedford. Upon his death the overseers provided a robe for his burial and gave his wife a quarter-cord of wood.

All of the widows listed as householders in this neighborhood were in some way tied to the whaling industry. Polly Riley's son John had gone to sea at least once, in 1832. Catherine Cook, the widow of Benjamin and mother of Pardon, lived on Wing Street through at least 1850; by that year her daughter Charlotte and Charlotte's mariner husband Thomas Smith lived there with her. Polly Dyer was the wife of James, who had been in the crew of the *Maria* in 1815 and later kept a boardinghouse, and her son James P. had taken at least two whaling voyages and then became a

81. Harold Williams, ed., *One Whaling Family* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964, 83–84), 267.

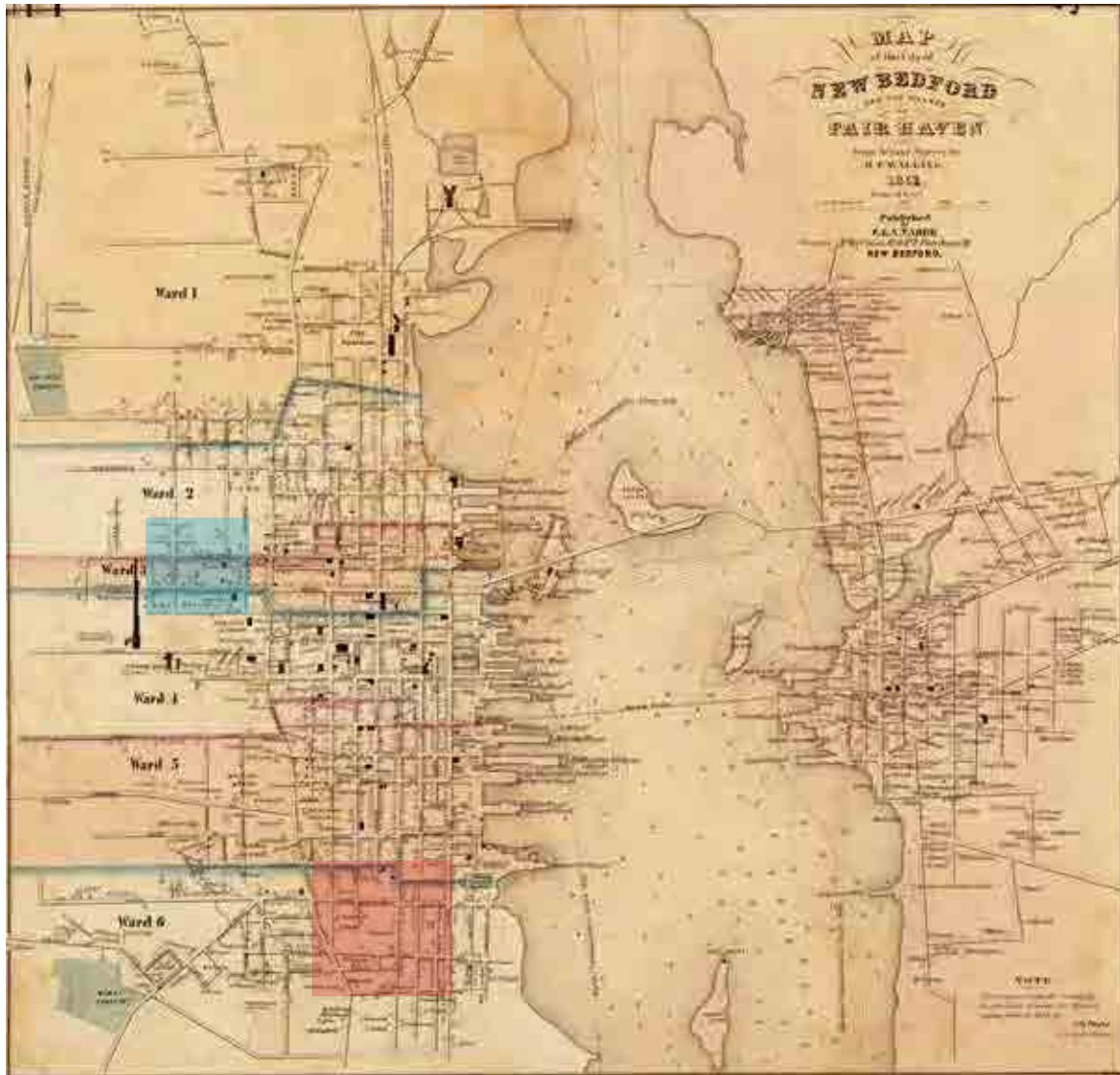


Fig. 5.13. "Map of the City of New Bedford and the Village of Fairhaven, from Actual Survey by H. F. Walling," 1851. The areas shaded blue and red were areas where longer-term residents of African descent lived. Courtesy Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

soapmaker on South Water Street, near his mother's Howland Street home. Both there and later on South Water Street Polly Dyer boarded mariners through at least 1851; she died in 1853. Rebecca Bailey lived at 29 Allen Street with her son George in 1836, and by 1839 her mariner son Abraham also lived there. Rebecca Bailey died in April 1850.

The older West End, like other early African American enclaves in the Northeast, had originally been called "New Guinea"; it is so designated on the map Major John André prepared in 1778 after the British raid on the village in September that year (fig. 5.14). In 1826 the African Christian Church, the first black church in New Bedford, was built on Middle Street between Summer Street and what would



Fig. 5.14. This 1778 map of New Bedford, prepared by Major John André after the British raid on the village in September, shows an area called "New Guinea"—now the West End—north of the center of town, marked "Bedford." The term was a common label for neighborhoods of people of African descent. Courtesy Clements Library, University of Michigan.

later be Cedar Street. By 1836 a largely African American neighborhood had developed around the church and on the same block of Elm Street, the next street south. On the single block where the church stood city directories and other records show fifty-five men in whaling or whaling trades up to the Civil War, forty-two of them at sea in whaling vessels; two widows of former mariners were also in this block. Some were relatively long-term residents. Benjamin Ross, born about 1795 in either Africa or Santo Domingo, was in New Bedford by 1830 and in 1834 bought the lot on which his 212 Middle Street house stood from black boardinghouse keeper William Vincent. He remained at this address until his death in 1859. Ross had been aboard the whaling vessel *Huntress* in 1840 and also worked on a lightship and on coasting vessels. He died at the almshouse, even as his wife continued to live at 212 Middle. The city paid for his coffin and his burial. Two of his sons, George Washington and

William T. Ross, both born in New York in the early 1820s, whaled in the 1840s, but what became of them and their mother is not known; none were still living in New Bedford by the time of the Civil War. Robert Quinn, born in Maryland about 1810, was a whaleman in New Bedford by 1836. By 1849 he owned his house and lot at 221 Middle Street, but by 1856 he had gone to California, as had many other enterprising

men of both races; he left his wife Sarah behind.

At least twelve of the whalers on this West End block were boarding in the houses of other African Americans, and local sources surely undercounted the numbers who were probably living briefly in the neighborhood between the times that compilers of directories, censuses, and tax lists visited, to say nothing of the people enumerators overlooked or simply missed. Albert Smith, born in Baltimore, went whaling at least four times between 1840 and 1850 and in 1845 lived at 208 Middle Street with the mariner John Hamilton, but he was never listed in a prewar census of the city. Across the street at 207 Middle lived the mariners Francis and William Smith, of unknown relation, in 1838; Francis was on three voyages between 1836 and 1846 and William on one; neither are ever listed in censuses, suggesting that they were at sea or were not, or were not regarded as, householders. In the 1840s another Maryland mariner, Charles T. Lee, lived at this address. He had been in New Bedford since about 1831, when the boardinghouse keeper James C. Carter witnessed his seaman's protection paper, and by 1849 he owned 207 Middle. But he too was never listed in a New Bedford census.

This single block of Middle Street was also home to African American men in skilled and unskilled trades—at least two shipkeepers, three blacksmiths, two sailmakers, two shipwrights, two caulkers, and one candlemaker. The two sailmakers both lived at 212 Middle Street in 1845 — Alexander Robert, about whom nothing more is yet known, and Charles Anthony, born probably in Philadelphia by 1810. From at least 1856 until 1880 Anthony worked for Simpson Hart, proprietor of the city's preeminent sail loft. One of the shipkeepers was William Ferguson, a fugitive from Virginia slavery who, with his wife, had hid aboard a coal schooner bound for Boston and came to New Bedford in the spring of 1847. Ferguson worked first as a laborer. By 1856 he had purchased a home at 11 (later 67) Cedar where he and his family remained until his death in 1911. In 1863 Ferguson shipped as the cook on a merchant vessel bound for San Francisco but returned by 1867, when he became a shipkeeper for the outfitting firm and whaling agency J. and W. R. Wing. He held that position for twenty-five years. Ferguson was also appointed city messenger in 1874, making him the first African American municipal official in the city, ran a variety store from his home in the 1890s and first decade of the 1900s, and had been made a "special policeman" by 1909.

A significant number of African American merchants and tradespeople also lived in the commercial core of New Bedford. Some were in trades largely unrelated to whaling—for example, the cabinetmaker William Mingo, the barbers Anthony Jourdain and William Berry, the restaurateur Thomas T. Robinson, and the trader and caterer Nathan Johnson—but the majority involved themselves in the industry in one way or another. Most prominent was Richard Johnson, the second husband of Paul Cuffe's daughter Ruth. Born in Philadelphia in 1776, Johnson spent his earliest years on coasting vessels. By 1800 he had moved to Boston, where he owned a house in the heart of the African American neighborhood on the north slope of Beacon Hill, but by 1804 he moved to New Bedford and became a trader, mostly in groceries. Johnson's store was on South Water Street, and over time he bought many properties in this neighborhood and elsewhere. In 1836 he was sole owner of the *Rising States*. In 1835 Johnson owned a sixteenth share in the whaling vessel *Francis*, and by 1842 he owned an eighth share of the same vessel. In 1850 his real and personal property

was valued at \$22,200, the highest of any African American in the city. When he died three years later his estate was assessed at \$31,637 and included a sixteenth share in the ship *Washington*.

Richard Johnson knew James Forten, the esteemed African American sailmaker in Philadelphia, and he sent his son Ezra Rothschild Johnson and his stepson Shadrach Howard to apprentice with Forten, probably in the early 1830s.⁸² In March 1835 Ezra Johnson advertised in the *New-Bedford Mercury* that he had taken “a Loft at the foot of Union street, where he intends carrying on the Sail Making business in all its various branches.”⁸³ How long he remained a sailmaker is unclear; the New Bedford watchmaker Ezra Kelly told the *Liberator* that Johnson had a “mechanical genius” from boyhood but became a merchant because he could not earn enough from his trade for his own and his family’s support.⁸⁴ Johnson himself was mum about whether he was crowded out by competition or discrimination. By 1840 Ezra Johnson and his brother, Richard Cummings Johnson, had begun to work in their father’s business, which may already have expanded into outfitting by that time: between 1838 and 1841 Richard Sr. and Ezra had witnessed between them twenty-four seamen’s protection papers, which suggests that they were supplying crew to whaling agents. In 1840 the brothers advertised in the *Colored American* for “five or six first-rate Tailoresses to whom good wages and steady employment will be given,”⁸⁵ no doubt making clothing for whalers. By 1846 the Johnson brothers’ outfitting and grocery business was significant enough to warrant a field visit from R. G. Dun and Company, founded in 1841 to establish the “credit-worthiness” of American businesses. The Dun reporters, who usually investigated a firm twice a year, consistently stated that the Johnsons were “very respectable colored men,” that the business was “pfly [perfectly] safe” and “snug,” that the brothers were “pfy gd [perfectly good] for all they will buy.” Dun field reports noted that the Johnson brothers were no longer in business by July 1859.⁸⁶ Ezra Johnson then became a “natural physician,” advertising a cure for rheumatism in the *New Bedford Republican Standard* in 1860.

Like many African American boardinghouse keepers, the Johnsons were politically active. In 1831 Richard Johnson Sr. and boardinghouse keeper William Vincent were the first New Bedford subscription agents for William Lloyd Garrison’s new abolitionist newspaper, the *Liberator*, and in 1840 the sons took over their father’s agency of the New York-based *Colored American*. Richard Johnson faithfully participated in national, state, and local antislavery society meetings and annual free colored people’s conventions. He served as treasurer of the New Bedford Union Society, formed by people of color and the first antislavery society in town; he fought the proposed colonization of free blacks in Africa; and he worked with other local African American activists to establish a strategy for achieving abolition. Of the sons

82. Julie Winch, *A Gentleman of Color: The Life of James Forten* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 88.

83. *Mercury*, 20 March 1835, 3:1.

84. *Liberator*, 1 February 1856.

85. “Colored Tailoresses Wanted,” *Colored American*, 9 May 1840, 3:4.

86. R. G. Dun & Co. Field Reports on R. C. and E. R. Johnson agency, R. G. Dun & Co Collection, Massachusetts, 17:457; used with permission of Dun and Bradstreet Co and Baker Library, Harvard University.

Ezra was by far the more active in African American causes. Among many other actions he spoke often at antislavery society meetings, argued with Horace Mann about Mann's race theories, and condemned Ellis Gray Loring for ruling that the fugitive Anthony Burns be returned to enslavement in 1854. In the mid-1850s, a visit to Canada to investigate the circumstances of people of African descent, particularly fugitive communities, moved him to write to the *Republican Standard*, "Those who suppose that all colored persons are contented, know but little of the silent indignation, the deep and settled disgust with which they contemplate their present social condition." And he was as vocal as his father in opposing the colonization movement, whose only aim, he believed, "was clearly to get free colored men out of the country, leaving behind them 4,000,000 of their race bound still more securely in their chains."⁸⁷

Ezra Johnson's stepbrother Shadrach Howard was the son of Ruth Cuffe by her first marriage to Alexander Howard. He was born about 1817 in New Bedford and in his early adulthood went whaling at least three times, once on the *Rising States* in 1837, but by the early 1840s he was working as a sailmaker. By 1856 Howard had moved to San Francisco, where he continued in his trade; the *Pacific Appeal* reported that he also invented "a patent sewing machine, for sewing hose, sails, bags, &c" and by 1860 was manufacturing hydraulic hose. Like his stepfather and stepbrothers, Howard too was active in African American causes, both in New Bedford and San Francisco. He took part in the first colored peoples' conventions in California and, with twelve others (four of them New Bedford natives), served on a special committee working toward winning the franchise for African Americans in that state.⁸⁸ Howard died in 1873; his cenotaph in New Bedford's Rural Cemetery states that he died "on his journey from California to his native home in 1873 via Colon" in Panama. Howard is buried at Colon.

Also probably deeply involved in the whaling industry were the clothes dressers Thomas A. Williams and David Lewis, whose shops were next to each other at 9 and 11 First Street. Little is known about Lewis, but Thomas A. Williams, born in Virginia about 1780, had been in New Bedford for decades by the time the first city directory was published. According to his grandson Benjamin Drummond, he had come to the city in 1781. He was definitely in New Bedford by 1816, when he married, and by 1829 he advertised his business, washing and mending clothes, in the local newspaper. In 1840 an E. Solomon vouched for Williams's work on the grounds that Solomon, from London, had taught Williams "his manner of cleaning and renovating."⁸⁹ Williams lived at 11 First Street until his death in 1845 and boarded at least four African American whalers between 1836 and 1841. He too may have been an outfitter. The ledgers of William R. Rotch and Company record two payments to him in 1828, one of them "cash to pay Levi," which suggests either a cash advance for a whaler about to sail or a settlement after a voyage.⁹⁰

87. On Ezra Johnson see *Liberator* 8 February 1839, 22 October 1852, 16 June 1854, 5 January 1855, and 1 February 1856; *Impartial Citizen* 14 March 1849; *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, 22 October 1852; *Mercury*, 15 February 1850; and *Republican Standard*, 17 July 1856 and 26 April 1860.

88. *Pacific Appeal*, 21 June 1862; Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (1919; reprint, New York: G. K. Hall and Co., 1998), 60, 63.

89. *Mercury*, 3 April 1829 (advertisement placed in January), 2 October 1840, 3:3.

90. William R. Rotch and Co. ledgers, vol. 2, Rotch Papers, Old Dartmouth Historical Society.

Other African American mariners and tradespeople lived just beyond the commercial core. The tailor and mariner John C. Crouch and the mariner John Harrison lived to the south. On the north side, south of Campbell Street, were numerous mariners, the cooper Thomas Williamson, the blacksmith Sylvanus Allen, and the soap manufacturer Norris Anderson. Allen, born in nearby Rochester about 1825, was a blacksmith from his early twenties through at least 1880 and at one time worked for Dean and Driggs, a leading manufacturer of the Temple toggle iron. Where Anderson came from is not known, but he was in New Bedford by 1825. He died before 1839, at which time his land, his soap works, and his house were valued at \$3,700.

A notable number of African Americans from the South were skilled tradesmen, a fact attributable to their key roles in the economy of that region. As historian Gerald Mullin has pointed out, because the South had few towns, where skilled tradespeople would have congregated, the plantations were compelled to amass all needed trades within their bounds. On these plantations skilled slaves often had “small workshops.” On Virginia’s Rosewell plantation, in addition to field hands, children, and elderly people, there were at least four enslaved tradesmen—among them a cooper, a blacksmith, and a carpenter. Many enslaved artisans were hired out to smaller plantations and moved with relative freedom between the plantation and the region’s coastal cities because white people with their skills were in such short supply. And Mullin has argued that these enslaved people were among the most apt to escape to the North: in his analysis of 1500 runaway advertisements in three Virginia cities between 1736 and 1801, 32 percent of 1138 fugitives were described as skilled. Of these 359 skilled fugitives, nearly half were tradesmen, including coopers, ship carpenters, blacksmiths, and ropemakers.⁹¹ Rural Maryland enslavers commonly hired enslaved tradesmen out, especially to the Fells Point shipyard in Baltimore. In 1800, Christopher Phillips has noted, “nearly half of the thirty-five shipbuilders owned slaves, the largest proportion of whom were working-age males employed in the yards,” among them, in the mid-1830s, Frederick Douglass.⁹²

Lewis Temple, born in Richmond, Virginia, about 1784, was one of these skilled southern-born men. Whether he came to New Bedford as a free man or a fugitive has not yet been determined. He had moved to New Bedford by 1829, when he married, and by 1836 he was working in a shop on Coffin’s Wharf, at the foot of Walnut Street. According to historian Eric Jay Dolin, the mechanics of the toggle iron was centuries old, and at some point after 1835 New Bedford whalers returned to port with “Eskimo spears with toggling heads.” A number of blacksmiths attempted to copy these harpoons, but Temple manufactured the most effective one, and it became the “industry standard.”⁹³ His son and namesake worked as a blacksmith for some years and became a barber after the Civil War. Both Lewis Temple Jr. (fig. 5.15) and the blacksmith Sylvanus Allen worked for Dean and Driggs. Also from Richmond, Littleton Charity was a free man when he came to New Bedford in 1846; he worked as

91. Gerald W. Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia*. (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 3, 7, 9–11, 40, 94.

92. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom’s Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790–1860* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 17.

93. Dolin, *Leviathan*, 250.

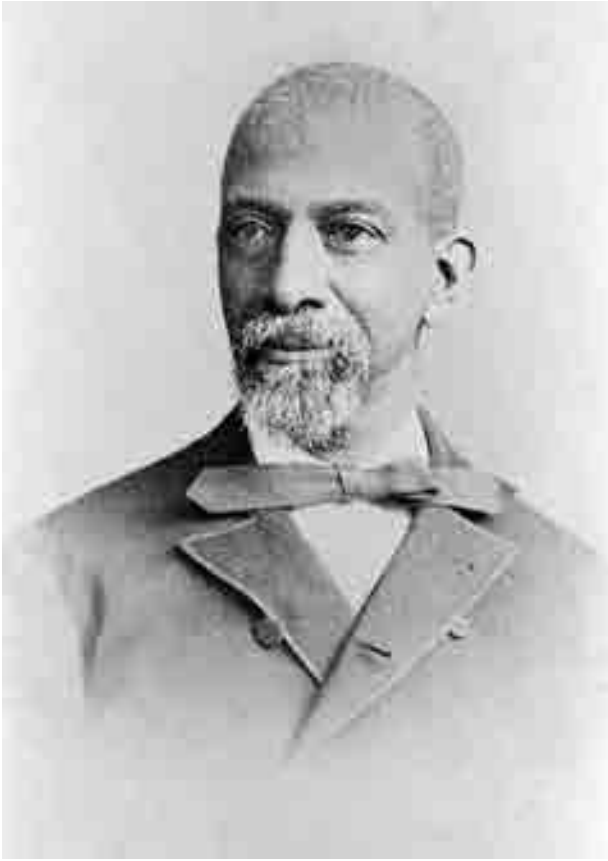


Fig. 5.15. Lewis Temple Jr. Courtesy New Bedford Historical Society.

a blacksmith in the city until 1853, when he moved to Ohio.

Almost all of the African American caulkers in New Bedford before the Civil War were born in the South, and at least four were fugitives from enslavement. The best known is Frederick Douglass, originally Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey (fig. 5.16). Born in 1818 on a plantation in Talbot County, Maryland, in March 1826 Douglass was sent to live with Hugh Auld, a relative of his enslaver Edward Lloyd, in Baltimore; Auld had trained as a shipbuilder and worked then at the city's shipbuilding district, Fells Point. Douglass received his first training as a caulker at Auld's shipyard. At some point Auld hired Douglass out to the shipbuilder William Gardiner, for whom he again worked as a caulker, and it was because of his trade that African American fugitive assistant David Ruggles advised Douglass, after his escape, to leave New York for New Bedford. Ruggles told him, "Many ships are there fitted out for the whaling business, and you

may there find work at your trade, and make a good living." Douglass arrived in New Bedford in September 1838, where the African American caterer and political activist Nathan Johnson gave him the name by which he was thereafter known.

Douglass took a variety of whaling-industry jobs after coming to New Bedford. He worked first with Nathan Johnson cutting wood for whaling vessels, which was, he said, "considered a good job." Afterward he got work "stowing a sloop with a load of oil for the New York market." Douglass next sought work as a caulker. He went to the merchant Rodney French, later one of the city's most outspoken abolitionists, who was preparing a whaling vessel to go to sea and had a great deal of coopering and caulking work. "He promptly told me to go to work," Douglass wrote, "but going on the float-stage for the purpose, I was informed that every white man would leave the ship if I struck a blow upon her." So he went to work for Joseph Ricketson, one of the two men who had met his packet from New York at Newport to convey him on to New Bedford by stage. Ricketson owned a candleworks and oil refinery, and there Douglass worked moving casks of oil about the place. While New Bedford's caulkers had closed him out, the all-white work force at the candleworks did not; as an unskilled laborer at the candleworks, he presented no threat of undercutting the



Fig. 5.16. Frederick Douglass, unidentified photographer, 1842–43. This photograph of Douglass, taken just at the end of his years in New Bedford, is the earliest known. Courtesy Gregory French.

wages of skilled workers, as he must have to the caulkers.

Douglass worked at the Ricketson works, he wrote, “as long as there was anything for me to do,” at which point he again worked on the wharves for the Quaker George Howland. He helped repair and outfit Howland’s ships *Java* and *Golconda* with the African Americans John Briggs, Abraham Rodman, and Solomon Peneton, who with Nathan Johnson collectively seem to have planted the seeds of political activism in Douglass.⁹⁴ Rodman, from Rhode Island, was probably Native American and in the 1840s went on at least one whaling voyage; Briggs, from nearby Tiverton, had been brought up in Howland’s household. Peneton (or Pennington) was probably from Baltimore or Maryland’s Eastern Shore. In New Bedford by 1832, he was first a mariner; by the second half of the 1840s he was working for the Howland family. Peneton may have been a fugitive—he variously claimed not to know where he was born and to have been born in both Massachusetts and Maryland. In the 1850s he began a business selling

groceries and provisions, the latter probably for ships. Peneton later became a leader among African Americans in California.⁹⁵

George Teamoh, Charles Armstead, and David Robinson also were caulkers and fugitives from slavery. Teamoh, born in Norfolk, Virginia, in 1818, had worked in his early twenties as a caulker and ship carpenter at the Gosport Navy Shipyard in Portsmouth, across the James River from Norfolk. After his wife and children were sold and taken away from Portsmouth, a member of the family that enslaved him helped him escape. In August 1853 Teamoh left as a cook on a merchant vessel bound for Bremen. At the end of the return voyage he jumped ship and came to New Bedford in early December that year. A man he had known in Norfolk under a different name took Teamoh to the boardinghouse of African American William Bush, who

94. Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1856), 209, 328, 358–363; Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, Written by Himself* (1893), 654–59, in *Frederick Douglass: Autobiographies* (New York: Library of America, 1994).

95. On Peneton’s political activity in New Bedford and California, see *Liberator*, 25 May 1840, 27 March 1846, 11 August 1848, 16 June and 28 July 1854, 14 March 1856, and 9 July 1858; *Pacific Appeal*, 6 November 1862; and Beasley, *Black Trailblazers*, 60, 63, 179.

according to Teamoh's and other later accounts harbored a number of fugitives. With Bush Teamoh worked that winter at, among other jobs, "lading, or unlading vessels" and "rolling staves," and in the spring he got work with the caulking contractor Stowell Brothers. There he worked for three dollars a day, a "usual wage" for New Bedford caulkers but nearly twice what he had earned at the Gosport shipyard. Teamoh worked there until winter, whereupon he went to Providence to work as a butler, returned in the spring but could not get work again with Stowell Brothers, and then moved to Boston, where he had kin.⁹⁶

African American fugitive assistant William Still of Philadelphia recounted the stories of fugitives Charles Armstead and David Robinson, who both worked as caulkers in New Bedford as well. Armstead appears to have come to the area from Portsmouth, Virginia, in the schooner *Ellen Barnes* of Wareham in the early spring of 1854. He escaped with his brother, and at some point their sister Ann and father Samuel joined them. The brothers had made an earlier escape attempt with another sister, Clarissa, who went into hiding for more than a month and then, dressed in men's clothes, stowed away on a steamboat headed for Philadelphia. The family lived together in New Bedford in 1855. Charles Armstead appears to have worked steadily as a caulker through at least 1880 and died in New Bedford in 1897.⁹⁷ David Robinson, called Daniel Wiggins while enslaved, escaped from Norfolk a month or so earlier than the Armstead brothers did. He was, Still wrote, a "corker by trade" who had been promised his freedom but learned, when his enslaver was near death, that no provision had been made to that effect. He left a free wife and three children in Norfolk and wrote Still in March 1854 to report that he had arrived in New Bedford and to thank him for his assistance. His family appears to have followed him to New Bedford shortly afterward. Robinson worked as a caulker from 1855 to at least 1880 and died in 1883. At his death he left his house on Swamp Street (later West High Street, in the heart of the West End), a share of a house on Martha's Vineyard, and four dollars' worth of caulking tools. His sons John, a tinsmith, and Willis, a mariner, remained in the Swamp Street house.⁹⁸

Most of New Bedford's African American ship carpenters were also southerners, with a few notable exceptions. The most esteemed among them was John Mashow, who was born in Georgetown, South Carolina, about 1805 and came to neighboring Dartmouth at about the age of ten to apprentice in the shipyard of Laban Thacher. When he was twenty Mashow started his own business in Thacher's shipyard. Between 1831 and 1860, according to an 1860 testimonial, Mashow (in partnership with Alonzo Mathews from 1847 to 1859) "drafted and modeled nearly one Hundred Vessels, and of that number, superintended the construction of nearly sixty of various classes, many of them being our first class merchant and whaling marine, and justly prized for their superior speed, sea-going qualities, and thorough workmanship."

96. F. N. Boney, Richard L. Hume, and Rafia Zafar, *God Made Man, Man Made the Slave: The Autobiography of George Teamoh* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990).

97. William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (1871; reprint: Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co., 1971), 44-46.

98. Still, *Underground Railroad*, 228-29. The stories Clarissa Armstead and Robinson told him upon reaching Philadelphia are also chronicled in Still's journals at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Between 1851 and 1859 alone the company built fifteen whaling vessels. The 1860 testimonial to Mashow was signed by twenty-eight New Bedford whaling merchants, and it described him as “a thorough, practical, master-ship-builder, and as a most worthy and respected citizen. . . . As a Draughtsman, skillful naval architect, and excellent builder, he has no superior in this section of the state.”⁹⁹ In his later years Mashow lived and worked in New Bedford. In 1868 he earned \$1,181 for his work on the bark *Globe*; in 1874 he earned from thirty to forty cents an hour at the same work. He lived until 1893, but his wife, two of his sons, a daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren all died within five weeks of each other in late 1872, five of smallpox and one of consumption.

City directories and censuses document other tradesmen, including six men who were employed at candleworks and oil refineries, five coopers, and three ropemakers. The city’s largest (and for many years only) ropeworks, New Bedford Cordage Company, was founded in 1842 and throughout its existence occupied a large tract in the West End that bordered the African American neighborhood. Early cordage records are scant, but employment accounts seem to show only two men of color there between 1848 and 1860. Before the Civil War ropemaking may have been a trade essentially closed to African Americans; by the turn of the century, however, when the cordage works had begun to struggle, men and women of color were commonly employed there. Before the war Enoch G. Bell was one of only three African American men identified as ropemakers. Bell was born enslaved in the District of Columbia about 1815, but his father George, whose freedom had earlier been purchased by his free wife, purchased Enoch, freed him in 1829, and for some reason officially recorded it twice, in 1829 and again in 1835.¹⁰⁰ Enoch Bell moved to New Bedford about 1845 and was a ropemaker from 1849 to 1860. By 1870, however, he and his family had returned to Washington, perhaps because opportunity to work at his trade had dwindled or vanished in New Bedford as the whaling industry had begun its descent and competition for jobs in skilled trades probably intensified.

From the 1830s a notable number of African American men worked as soapmakers, which, while not directly supporting the whaling industry, made use of its byproducts. Bleaching and refining whale oil developed a substance known as “foots” that were used in manufacturing whale oil soap.¹⁰¹ Norris Anderson and James P. Dyer owned their own works. Dyer, born in Massachusetts about 1819, served on two whaling crews and began to manufacture soap in 1845. He left for California during the Gold Rush, and by 1851 he had founded one of the first soap factories in San Francisco, where he manufactured “Queen Lily” soap. Dyer sold the company to the Swain family (probably from Nantucket or New Bedford) but continued to work there until 1859, when he opened his own New England Soap Factory.¹⁰² Henry O. Remington, born in Jamestown, Rhode Island, and probably the

99. John Mashow Papers, 1860–1886, MSS 56, SER M, SS 10, folder 2, ODHS; on Mashow see also Sidney Kaplan, *American Studies in Black and White: Selected Essays, 1949–1989* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 234–35, and L. A. Littlefield, “Traditions of Padanaram,” *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches 2* (1903): 10–11.

100. District of Columbia Register of Free Negroes, No. 743, 31 December 1829, No. 1250, 12 June 1835; Alexandria Public Library.

101. Michael Dyer, e-mail to author, 25 February 2008.

son of enslaved people, moved to New Bedford in the mid-1830s and worked in the soap and candle factory of Zenas Whittemore until he died in 1860. Anderson, Dyer, and Remington were all politically active; Remington frequently attended and spoke before state, county, and local conventions of people of color, and he was the principal funder of the memorial at the Rural Cemetery grave of Daniel Drayton, whose attempted removal of seventy-seven enslaved people from the District of Columbia in the schooner *Pearl* in 1848 and subsequent imprisonment made him an antislavery martyr. Drayton committed suicide in a New Bedford hotel in June 1857.¹⁰³

A number of semiskilled and unskilled African Americans worked in the industry as well. An undetermined number of men identified as laborers—31 in 1836 and 172 in 1855—probably worked as Frederick Douglass did, loading and unloading vessels, rolling casks along the wharves and to the various candle and oil works, cutting wood to fuel the tryworks on board whaling vessels. Directories and censuses identify some few men as stevedores, who load and unload ships. Fountain Ellis was one; another was Samuel Drummonds Jr., whose father came to New Bedford from New Jersey by the early 1850s. The younger Drummonds went whaling in 1851 and 1853 and was shoreside working as a stevedore in 1855; six years later he enlisted in the Union Navy. Perhaps the most persistently employed as a stevedore was Amos Harrol, who was born about 1830 in Suffolk, Virginia, and was in New Bedford by 1851. In 1860 he was a stevedore and is shown doing the same work in 1870 and 1880. By 1900 Harrol was working as a longshoreman, another term for stevedore. By 1908, when he was in his seventies, he appears to have retired from dock work and was running a boardinghouse on South Water Street. Two years later he died at Taunton State Hospital.

Shipkeepers watched and took care of a vessel while it was on land; six African American men were employed in this capacity before the Civil War. Like blacksmiths, all had been born in slave states. Archibald Clark, born about 1775 in the Prince George's County, Maryland, was a shipkeeper at the time of his death in 1862. He was almost certainly a fugitive; his father was James Pumphrey, a white slaveholder in the District of Columbia, and his mother was Tamar (or Mary Tamar), probably enslaved by Pumphrey. There is no record of Clark having been freed. Archibald Lloyd Clark and John C. Clark, probably his sons, were mariners in New Bedford; the second Archibald may have been the first Clark in town, by 1827. In 1829 Mary Clark, a sister of Archibald Sr. and a fugitive from the District of Columbia, was living in New Bedford when she married Lewis Temple in that year. By 1831 Archibald Clark Sr. himself had come to New Bedford, and by 1847 another sister, Lucinda Clark Bush, had arrived with her husband William from Washington. James Pumphrey manumitted Lucy Clark in 1827, and at her death she listed Pumphrey and Tamar as her parents. This chain migration, though not completely documented, suggests the manner in which many southern-born families are likely to have come to the city.

Keeping a boardinghouse was another occupational specialty among African Americans, which suggests that most if not all boardinghouses operated by whites

102. Rudolph M. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1977), 98.

103. See my account of Drayton's life, death, and funeral in *The Fugitive's Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 189–92, 257–59.

were closed to black mariners. In the mid-1830s two, those of William P. Powell and John Adams, were north of Union Street; another three—those of James C. Carter, Charlotte Dunbar, and James and Polly Dyer—were to the south. The location of William Vincent's boardinghouse is not clear; he died before the first city directory was published. Carter, who witnessed some forty protection papers for black whalers between July 1826 and October 1837, ran a boardinghouse at three locations from at least 1836; from 1841 to 1856 his house was at 166 South Water Street. William Bush opened a boardinghouse when he came to New Bedford in 1847, and by 1860 his son-in-law William Castle operated another.

Vincent's house may have been the earliest of this group. In 1830 eighteen men between the ages of ten and fifty-five were living in his household, only three of whom could have been his sons. He was in town by 1826, when he began to witness the seamen's protection papers of black mariners. Vincent served as witness to sixteen through November 1834. Only one of these mariners claimed a southern birthplace while six were from Philadelphia, probably where Vincent himself was from; his eldest son and namesake was born in Philadelphia in 1812. He was the first New Bedford agent for the *Liberator*, in 1831, the year it was founded, and is so listed on the masthead of its nineteenth issue. Vincent's political sentiments can be discerned from this fact, and he shared this political sentiment with a fair share of the town's other African American boardinghouse keepers.

William Peter Powell was more outspoken in his advocacy of African Americans, in particular African American mariners. He was born in 1806 in New York, probably in slavery; he once stated that his father was a slave "for life" and at another time stated that he was freed at the time of the general emancipation in New York State in 1827. His mother, he said, was Elizabeth Barjona, who served as a cook to General George Washington during the Revolution. In his teenage years Powell apprenticed to a shipsmith. In 1827 he went to sea for five years, once on an unidentified New Bedford whaling vessel. By mid-November 1832 Powell was in New Bedford, and about a month later he married Mercy Haskins, a Native American from Plymouth. He may have begun running a boardinghouse by that time, for he began to witness protection papers that November. Records show him to have served as witness to sixteen issued to African American mariners before he left New Bedford in the fall of 1839. Powell is listed as a blacksmith in the 1836 directory, and by 1838 he was also running a "seamen's temperance boarding house" at 94 North Water Street. In that year he boarded twenty-six African American seamen, including four members of the crew of the *Rising States*. Five of his boarders claimed slave-state birthplaces. The 1838 directory lists some of his boarders as simply "at sea," while twenty-one were listed as crew on fifteen different whaling vessels. Powell no doubt helped these men find crews, as many boardinghouse keepers routinely did.

At the invitation of the American Seamen's Friend Society, Powell left New Bedford in 1839 to found the Coloured Sailors' Home in New York City. He promised potential boarders both "their choice of ships and the highest wages." Both there and in New Bedford he was a vocal advocate of racial equality. In Boston in 1831 Powell worked with William Lloyd Garrison to establish the New England Anti-Slavery Society and two years later helped found the American Anti-Slavery Society. He was a member of the African American New Bedford Union Society, was often a delegate to national colored people's conventions, wrote for the *Liberator* and the *National*

Anti-Slavery Standard, and worked and spoke locally for the abolitionist cause. In New York Powell and his wife helped found the Manhattan Anti-Slavery Society in 1840, and in 1862 he and a group of boarders formed the American Seamen's Protective Association, which by April 1863 had a membership of fifty-five black mariners, cooks, and stewards. A portrait of Boston Massacre martyr Crispus Attucks hung in Powell's boardinghouse dining room. The Coloured Seamen's Home endured until 1850, when Powell and his family moved to Liverpool; he reopened it in 1860, and the home endured until 1873 despite having been attacked and plundered during the 1863 New York City draft riots.¹⁰⁴

Both of Powell's boardinghouses for African American mariners banned the use of alcohol, but no other black boardinghouse in New Bedford was so advertised. Two of them were, in the eyes of at least some New Bedford people, downright troublesome. One was run by John Adams, who had been born about 1794 in New York City. Adams had come to New Bedford by 1829 and may have been boarding mariners that early. In 1836 his boardinghouse was north of the city center, but by 1838 he had moved to 6 Spring Street, just south of the commercial core. By 1841 he was not far away, at 11 First Street (the address of Thomas Williams's clothes dressing shop and home), where he also ran a shop of an undetermined sort. In 1838, the city directory indicates, thirty-seven African American mariners boarded with Adams and were then at sea on at least thirteen whaling vessels. Among them were seven New Englanders, five men born in the South, four from Philadelphia, eight from New York, and two from New Jersey, which probably mirrors the demographic profile of most black whalers in the town. The city watch was called more than once to Adams's First Street house over the thirty-one months for which its records exist. In October 1843 constables had arrested an African American man named Robert Stevens for "making a violent assault with an ax" on Adams. The keeper had ordered Stevens to leave his boardinghouse, and when Stevens refused Adams threw all of his belongings into the street. The newspaper noted that Adams was "severely injured" but offered no further report about him. In July and August 1848 the city watch had gone to the boardinghouse because of unspecified "disturbances" there and on one occasion closed the place down. Adams died in an unidentified accident in October of the same year.¹⁰⁵

The other problematic boardinghouse was the one run by James Dyer, and its story highlights the poor conditions in which an untold number of foreign-born and otherwise naïve whalers were compelled to live when on shore. In 1835 Dyer boarded a number of South Sea Islanders, but before he could secure berths for all of them cholera emerged at his house. When James Bunker Congdon and other members of the town's board of health arrived at Dyer's South Water Street boardinghouse to inspect it, they found nineteen "Canackers" living in the cellar and in four small first-floor rooms. The *Mercury* noted that the men "had been kept on the most unwholesome food and treated in the most shameful manner," which, combined with

104. See Charles L. Sachs, "A Good and Convenient House," *Seaport*, Fall-Winter 1995, 24-29; Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 184-86; G. W. Forbes, "Biographical Sketches of Eminent Negroes" (Mimeograph copy, n.d.), Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library; "Colored Sailors' Home," *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 6 May 1841; "Colored Sailors' Home," *ibid.*, 24 February 1842.

105. *Mercury*, 20 October 1843, 1:3; New Bedford City Watch Reports, 1 June 1848-24 March 1850.

overcrowding and “the filthy, unwholesome state in which the place was kept,” was believed to have given rise to the disease. Dyer was infuriated when Congdon made his investigation public and beat Congdon in the street with a cowhide. Arrested and brought to trial, Dyer could not pay the three-hundred-dollar bail and remained in jail until he was sentenced. The *Mercury* quoted a New York newspaper editor’s observation about the case: “The Negro who cow-hided the New Bedford Selectman has been tried, convicted, and sentenced to pay \$30 and costs.—‘Our colored brethren’ seem to be in clover in New Bedford. One of them, doing a good business, can afford to flog a white man once a week, or nearly so, for the sake of amusement.” In December, however, Dyer was sentenced to four years in state prison.¹⁰⁶

When Dyer was released he apparently did not return to New Bedford, and his wife Mary, often called Polly, kept the boardinghouse at 151 South Water Street. Morgan’s financial records list three payments to her in 1837 and 1838 for boarding black whalers, including Pacific islanders, due to ship out on his ships *Emily Morgan* and *Hector*. In 1842 she married a Hawaiian who had been given the name John Swain, and she continued to board mariners at the same house until at least 1851. In July that year W. S. G. How, son of Seamen’s Bethel chaplain Moses How, wrote in his diary, “This morning a Kanaka died at Mrs. Swain’s boarding house. I saw that a coffin was provided, and also a sheet. He was buried from the Bethel at 3 o’clock this P.M.” Vital records show an unnamed “Kanacker” having died at 151 South Water Street on 2 June, of “lung fever,” or pneumonia.¹⁰⁷

The several boardinghouses operated by William Bush were also south of Union Street. Bush, the brother-in-law of Archibald Clark and the uncle of the famed African American Baptist minister Leonard Grimes of Boston, came to New Bedford by December 1849. He and his sister Louisa, who also settled in New Bedford, were born free in the District of Columbia. Bush and Grimes are said to have collaborated in Underground Railroad work in and around Washington, Grimes having been imprisoned for it. Bush’s wife Lucinda is said to have assisted the white mariner Daniel Drayton in shepherding enslaved Washingtonians to his rented schooner *Pearl*. When Drayton came to New Bedford in 1857 the newspaper noted that the last person he saw before his suicide was “an old friend,” William Bush.

Within six months of Drayton’s various trials after the *Pearl* episode, the Bushes came to New Bedford, where their fugitive assistance apparently continued unabated. According to Bush’s granddaughter Anna Jourdain Reed, the couple sheltered fugitives at the Third Street (Acushnet Avenue) home of Archibald Clark, where they first lived, and later at a “more capacious dwelling” either on Coffin or South Water Street. The fugitive George Teamoh wrote, “Mr. Bush kept a very respectable boarding house principally for the accommodation of mariners from off whaling voyages. . . . Quite a large number of fugitives for a time stayed at his house and received the same hospitalities as did his regular boarders, notwithstanding

106. *Mercury*, 12 June 1835, 1:1, 2:1; 19 June 1835, 2:3; and 25 December 1835, 1:5.

107. “Excerpts from the Diary of W. S. G. How,” in *Diary of Rev. Moses How*, “No. 59 In Series of Sketches of New Bedford’s Early History” (*Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches*), entry for 3 June 1851. There are two vital records in 1851 of “Kanackers” dying at the 151 South Water Street boardinghouse, one, “Jim Crow (Kanacker)” of Roratonga, who died of consumption on 20 May 1851, and another, simply labeled as Kanacker, on 2 June of lung fever.

the former were not able to pay their way.”¹⁰⁸ By the time the first of Bush’s boardinghouses opened in the early 1850s, city directories had ceased to list transient sailors, and it is therefore impossible to determine anything about his boarders other than Teamoh.

Between 1836 and 1856 the percentage of New Bedford’s African American population who were mariners declined markedly and consistently, from 35.6 percent of the black working population to 14.9 percent (table 5.5). The number of laborers fluctuated over those two decades from slightly more than seven of every ten black workers to slightly more than half. As the proportion of mariners and laborers fell, the shares of people working in semiskilled jobs, in the skilled trades, and in professions grew. The proportion of African American men and women in skilled trades in New Bedford was 9.3 percent in 1850, which exceeds what prevailed among African Americans in Boston, Providence, and New York; within that group half were in maritime skilled trades. With the exception of 1845, African Americans working in skilled maritime trades in New Bedford held fairly steady, at between 4.5 and 5.9 percent of the total working population. Compared to other northern cities, New Bedford appears to have been slightly more open to African Americans in the maritime trades, but by far the greatest proportion—fully 75 percent—of employed men and women were in unskilled and semiskilled or service work by 1856. Though the numbers overall are not large, they at least suggest that some steady opportunity existed for men with shoreside maritime skills.

108. Boney et al., *God Made Man*, 110.

CHAPTER 6

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND WEST INDIANS IN THE POSTWAR WHALING INDUSTRY

In 1861, just before the Civil War began, 1,518 of New Bedford's 22,300 people were of African descent (see table 5.2). Before the war, black population growth in the city tended to outpace white: while the number of persons identified as white in the local census more than tripled between 1800 and 1855, the number of persons identified as black or mulatto increased more than nine times over those years. After the war, however, the growth in local black population lagged behind that of the city's population as a whole; thus the African American share of the local population steadily declined. In 1855 7.5 percent of all New Bedford residents were of African descent; by 1900 only 2.6 percent were. At midcentury New Bedford's African American population was a little more than half that of Boston, a city ten times its size. But between 1860 and 1880 the picture changed. After increasing healthily in all but one decade between 1790 and 1860, the number of African Americans in the city of New Bedford dropped a remarkable 15 percent between 1860 and 1870, from 1,518 to 1,290. Even as some 153 African Americans in New Bedford living in 1870 were not there before the war—and of those newcomers 87, or nearly 57 percent, were from the South—the number of inmigrants did not come close to counterbalancing a significant outmigration out of the city. In Massachusetts as a whole, the southern-born black population grew by 34.5 percent between 1870 and 1880, most of that growth occurring in Boston, but in New Bedford the number of people of African descent remained virtually constant between 1855 (1527 persons) and 1885 (1562 persons).

Unlike the twentieth-century Great Migration, the movement of people of African descent from the South to the North between the Civil War and 1900 did not greatly alter the demography of either region. Fewer than 150,000 of the nearly eight million African Americans born in the South lived outside that region in 1870, and slightly less than 200,000 did by 1880.¹ One study has noted that African Americans who did move North tended to go to the larger cities of Boston and New York; in both places labor agents and contractors sought hotel cooks and maids and construction labor. In 1875 and 1880, New Bedford was second only to Boston in the number of resident African Americans, but by 1885 the black population of Cambridge was larger than New Bedford's. And the gap between the two widened by 1900: as against 1,685 people of color in New Bedford, 3,888 lived in Cambridge. Between 1880 and 1900 the black population of Cambridge grew by 158 percent and of Boston by 97 percent. In New Bedford the population of African descent grew only 9.3 percent over those two decades.² Census figures conceal a key fact within this small increase. Of

1. Daniel M. Johnson and Rex R. Campbell, *Black Migration in America: A Social Demographic History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981), 58.

2. "Social and Industrial Condition of the Negro in Massachusetts," part 3 of *Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of Statistics of Labor, March 1904*, Public Document No. 15 (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1904), 236.

the 1,685 people of color in New Bedford in 1900, more than a third—601 persons—were foreign-born. Thus 1,084 persons of color were probably African American—that is, of “native parentage”—a figure nearly 500 fewer than had lived in the city on the eve of the Civil War and more than 200 fewer than lived there in 1880, when few Cape Verdeans had yet settled in the city (see table 5.2).³ Black population increases after 1880 almost certainly reflect much more profoundly increases in Cape Verdean than in African American population.⁴

What migration did occur from South to North began during the Civil War with refugees, or “contraband,” in camps in the District of Columbia and Virginia, an untold number of whom were brought into New York and Boston by boat. In Boston in particular, beginning in 1864 the Freedmen’s Bureau sought to lessen “the press of population” in tidewater Virginia by bringing African Americans to the city, where both black and white northerners established employment bureaus to receive applications for domestic and sometimes farm labor and place these southerners throughout New England. Historian Elizabeth Pleck has pointed out that records are not comprehensive, but at least one hundred persons came North in this way. Some places in New England, including Worcester, saw an influx of several hundred African Americans from the beginning of the war to 1870.⁵ Growth in the southern-born African American population in New Bedford whaling was, by comparison, slight.

Even between 1860 and 1870, when whale oil prices reached their peak, the whaling industry’s decline was apparent. The number of annual voyages from New Bedford fell by more than half, from ninety to forty-one. The value of the sperm oil and whale oil also declined by more than half. Even the value of whalebone—the product that largely made whaling’s survival into the 1920s possible—dropped by nearly 62 percent. In New Bedford whaling alone, the price sperm oil could command peaked in 1851-55 at \$45.45 per barrel and then dropped steadily until the industry ceased. Whale oil prices, despite their wartime high, also were falling by the end of the decade, though less steadily. Whalebone had always had uses—in whips, umbrella ribs, corset stays, fishing rods, and other such products that needed to be at once flexible and sturdy—but when women’s fashion began to move toward longer, narrower profiles beginning in the 1870s the demand for bone mushroomed. Corsets became increasingly long from that point until the mid-1910s to shape the hourglass figure women sought to display. At the height of whaling from New Bedford

3. “Social and Industrial Conditions,” 236–37.

4. In the absence of census data indicating Cape Verdean origin in these years, Marilyn Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity: Cape Verdean American Immigrants, 1860–1965* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 37, used packet ship records to arrive at estimates of Cape Verdean immigration. These records showed an average of twenty-eight people entering the port of New Bedford from Cape Verde each year between 1860 and 1887, an average of 204.4 persons each year between 1889 and 1899, and an average 896 per year between 1900 and 1921, the “years of mass migration.”

5. Carter G. Woodson, *A Century of Negro Migration* (Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1918), 104–5; Johnson and Campbell, *Black Migration in America*, 46, 59 table 5.2; Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty: Boston, 1865–1900* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 25–27; Janette Thomas Greenwood, “Southern Black Migration and Community Building in the Era of the Civil War: Worcester County as a Case Study” (lecture, Center for the Study of New England History, Massachusetts Historical Society, May 2000), 3.

whalebone had sold for 37 cents a pound; in the five years from 1891 to 1895 it sold for \$5.15 a pound, and in 1904, at the height of its value, it sold for \$5.80 as a consequence of this vastly popular style.⁶

The decline of New Bedford whaling was virtually symbolized in the voluntary contribution of twenty-eight New Bedford and Fairhaven whaling vessels to the Stone Fleet, vessels filled with ballast and sunk in Charleston harbor to block the entry of Confederate-allied supply vessels. All of the New Bedford vessels were past their prime and due to be retired; one of them, the *Margaret Scott*, had been converted to a slaver and seized by the federal government. Another thirty-three whaling vessels from the port of New Bedford were destroyed during the war by the Confederate ships *Alabama*, *Shenandoah*, *Florida*, and *Sumter*. This loss was compounded by the trapping and destruction of whaling vessels in Arctic ice, in 1876 and again in 1879. Usually whaling ceased in the farthest reaches of the Arctic Ocean before ice set in, but in these two years vessels stayed longer in a desperate effort to fill their ships. In 1906 Clifford Ashley wrote, “That which could not be effected by the capture of thirty-four vessels by the *Shenandoah*, the sinking of thirty-nine in the Stone Fleet of Charleston Harbor, the abandonment in two seasons of fifty-four in the Arctic, and other catastrophes equally destructive if less spectacular, has been accomplished by petroleum. Whaling to-day may be reckoned a dead industry—not that it is extinct, but because it can never recover.”⁷

These and other events combined to slice the New Bedford whaling fleet by more than 56 percent in twenty years, from 220 vessels in 1861 to 96 in 1881. In 1880 one trade review noted that New Bedford whaling vessels had been retired in increasing numbers over the past several years, with twenty-eight “now at our wharves . . . and prospect of more being taken out of service.”⁸ By 1885 only thirty voyages left New Bedford harbor; by 1898 only a dozen did. And what voyages were undertaken were very often made in smaller vessels—which required smaller crews—as whales once again populated the Atlantic whaling grounds. Large vessels, increasingly aged and difficult to insure in any event, were not needed for these short Atlantic trips.⁹ Not a single schooner sailed from New Bedford for whales at the

6. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, Appendix J, 660–61, and Appendix I, 700–701; Davis et al., *In Search of Leviathan*, tables 1.2 and 9.11; see Dolin, *Leviathan*, 356–57, and, on corsets, Katherine C. Grier, *Culture and Comfort: People, Parlors, and Upholstery, 1850–1930* (Rochester, NY: Strong Museum, 1988), 110–16.

7. Clifford W. Ashley, “The Blubber-Hunters,” *Harper’s Monthly*, April 1906, 670–82, and May 1906, 832–44, reprinted in Elton W. Hall, *Sperm Whaling from New Bedford: Clifford W. Ashley’s Photographs of Bark Sunbeam in 1904* (New Bedford, MA: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1982), 1. According to Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, Tom Chaffin, *Sea of Grey: The Around-the-World Odyssey of the Confederate Raider Shenandoah* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 373–76, and Dolin, *Leviathan*, 332, Ashley’s figure for the *Shenandoah*’s destruction is incorrect. The *Shenandoah* destroyed twenty-one whaling vessels from the port of New Bedford and four from other ports, including Mattapoisett; according to Starbuck, the *Alabama* destroyed eight from the New Bedford fleet, the *Florida* burned three, and the *Sumter* burned one. Starbuck lists one vessel, the *Hector*, as a prize of the *Shenandoah*, a vessel not shown in Chaffin, while Chaffin lists the *Covington*, a vessel Starbuck does not list for any port.

8. Trade review for 1880 quoted in Clark, “Whale Fishery,” 2:161.

9. On the physical decline of the fleet and insuring it, see Dolin, *Leviathan*, 354–55.

peak of the industry; though the proportion fluctuated from year to year, in 1898 six schooners and four barks sailed from New Bedford, all for Atlantic whaling. Between 1856 and 1860 fully 57 percent of New Bedford vessels whaled in the Pacific and only 5.5 percent in the Atlantic. Between 1896 and 1900 eight of every ten voyages were Atlantic cruises.¹⁰ Based on his belief that Atlantic whaling could still be profitable, whaling agent William Wing began to send vessels there by the mid-1890s. When he died late in 1908, the J. & W. R. Wing firm (fig. 6.1) owned seven whaling vessels that were all cruising the North and South Atlantic, and in that year more than half of the oil and whalebone imported into the United States had been harvested by the firm's fleet. Between 1890 and 1908, historian Martin Butler has stated, the Wing firm made a profit of 24 percent on all of the voyages on ships it owned, but the last seven voyages its vessels made between 1909 and 1916 were, on average, losing ones.¹¹

In other respects what the city's emerging economy offered was increasingly uninviting to African Americans. By the 1890s New Bedford's primary focus was cotton textiles, an industry that by and large offered only janitorial jobs to people of color. As Pleck has noted, Jim Crow practices spread over the North on the strength of "scientific racism," the theory propounded by Louis Agassiz and other scholars that the Caucasian race was intellectually and morally superior to the Negroid. James Templeman Brown stated the view clearly in his 1880 survey of American whaling. "The harpooners of the fleet have degenerated with the fishery," he wrote. "In the palmy days of whaling the flower of New England's sons won the right to dart the harpoon by that spirit of fearlessness and gallantry which characterized the early American patriot; but now almost every harpooner that sails from New Bedford is representative of an inferior race."¹²

The primary consequence of scientific racism was to make already bad economic circumstances worse. "In northern cities a century ago," Pleck has argued, "racial discrimination was, above all else, a question of barriers in jobs, rather than in housing and elsewhere."¹³ Management's actions exacerbated what bad feelings may have existed between white and black workers after the war. When Boston caulkers balked at shipowners' request that they work nine instead of their customary eight hours a day in 1866, Pleck noted, the owners recruited French Canadians and African American caulkers from Portsmouth, Virginia, to break the strike. Southern African Americans were routinely brought in to break strikes among iron, steel, and coal workers in the 1870s and 1880s.¹⁴ Pleck has pointed out that Boston African Americans, nearly all of them in low-paying service work, would probably have taken industrial jobs at lower wages than whites would accept and thus would have helped achieved management's goal of reducing labor costs to a minimum. Nonetheless

10. Davis et al., *In Search of Leviathan*, table 2.4; Reginald B. Hegarty, comp., *Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports: A Continuation of Alexander Starbuck's "History of the American Whale Fishery" 1876-1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1959), 33.

11. Joseph Martin Butler, "J. & W. R. Wing of New Bedford: A Study of the Impact of a Declining Industry upon an American Whaling Agency" (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1973), 108.

12. Brown, "Whalemen, Vessels and Boats," 223.

13. Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty*, xvi, 29-30.

14. *Ibid.*, 24-25; Johnson and Campbell, *Black Migration in America*, 66.

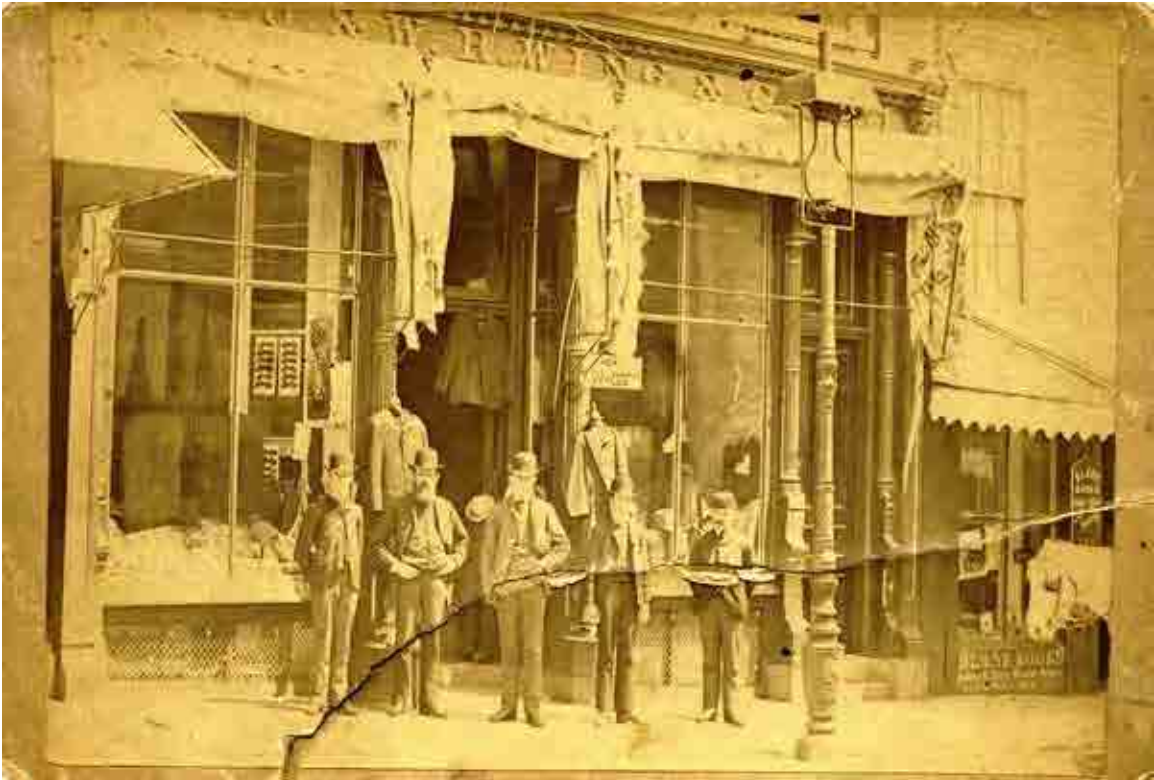


Fig. 6.1. Men in front of J. & W. R. Wing Co. building, date unknown. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

they were not hired. Racism, Pleck has argued, can have been the only reason for capitalists not to act in their own economic interests.¹⁵

Whether racism, other opportunity, or awareness of whaling's worst aspects account for it, African American men all but disappeared from the whaling industry by 1900. Only six of the 315 men who enlisted in the Union Navy at New Bedford worked as mariners in the city after the Civil War, and crew lists make plain that many antebellum African American whalers simply did not return to the city to live or to ship out again in the postwar period. In 1858 African Americans were 4.3 percent of all crews. By 1875, that share had dropped to 1.5 percent; no African American men were on the whaling vessels that left New Bedford in 1900. The 1855 state census lists 102 African American seamen and whaling tradespeople in New Bedford. The 1870 federal census for New Bedford lists only seventy-nine amid a local population about 25 percent larger than in 1855. Of those seventy-nine people, fifty-two (66 percent) had lived in New Bedford before the war, and of the twenty-seven newcomers fifteen were from the South.

Only four southern-born African American whaling people in 1870 were in skilled trades—two blacksmiths, a caulker, and a tinsmith—which may have resulted from an overall decline in relevant skills. Bolster has noted that “exclusionary practice” had made maritime skill less common among African Americans by

15. Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty*, 24–25.

the time of the Civil War and increasingly so afterward. He cited one study that determined the percentage of black men enlisting in the Navy who identified themselves as mariners declined from 13.1 percent to 5.9 percent between 1870 and 1890, while the proportion of self-described cooks and waiters rose from 28.9 to 49.3 percent over those twenty years.¹⁶ Thus racial exclusion reached deeper into the maritime trades than it had before the war. Between 1870 and the rest of the century other skilled tradespeople settled in New Bedford, but their numbers were always small.

A few northern-born war veterans remained in whaling after 1865. One was John H. Williams, born about 1846 in New Bedford. His father John A. Williams was from Philadelphia and may have gone whaling from New Bedford in 1838 on the ship *General Pike*, though he spent most of his life in the merchant marine. Williams told the overseers of the poor in 1859 that he “went coasting from here to Boston, & Philadelphia, about 2 years, then worked ashore stevadoring &c 5 or 6 years, then went to Boston & sailed in the merchant service from Boston to Mobile & from Mobile to Liverpool, then went about 2 years from Liverpool to New Orleans, back & forth from one port to the other carrying cotton, then returned to New Bedford last July 2d & lived here since.” His son John H. Williams enlisted as a first-class boy in the Navy when he was eighteen and became a mariner in New Bedford after his discharge. By the late 1880s he became a policeman, and by the time of his death in 1896 he was working as a musician. Walter S. Tilghman, whose father was also from Philadelphia and a New Bedford mariner from 1870 to about 1890, enlisted at the age of eighteen as an ordinary seaman and was a seaman after the war. Tilghman was listed as a steward at his death in New Bedford in 1882.

Two of the southern-born whalemens of color who had served in the Union Navy became relatively long-term New Bedford residents. George Burrows, born in Camden, Delaware, about 1830, settled in New Bedford by the time he married in 1859, though he is shown on crew lists in 1852 and 1853; if he were indeed on these two crews he must have deserted the 1852 voyage of the *Massasoit*, a Mattapoissett vessel commanded by the Indian Amos Haskins, at least four months before the ship returned in July 1853. Burrows enlisted in the Navy as a seaman when he was thirty-one years old, in 1861. After the war he was second mate and boatsteerer on the schooner *Amelia* in 1877, and he died in New Bedford ten years later. Zachariah Caldwell was born about 1837 in Norfolk or Portsmouth, Virginia, and is one of the few black mariners who came to New Bedford in the 1860s. He married Sarah Carney of Portsmouth, Virginia, the daughter of fugitive William Carney Sr., in 1865. He was a seaman in 1870 and a “cook on vessel” in 1880. He had become a fisherman by the first decade of the 1900s and died in New Bedford in 1918.

Collating the 1870–71 New Bedford directory and the 1870 federal census makes it possible to determine that, of roughly 277 householders of African descent in the West End and on the waterfront, twenty-six whalemens and whaling tradespeople lived in the West End and six on the waterfront. Both Caldwell and Burroughs lived in the heart of the West End, Caldwell at 5 West High Street (a short lane running from the even shorter Sullivan Street to Cedar Street) and Burroughs at the corner of Elm and Cedar Streets. Across the street from Caldwell were the fugitive caulker

16. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 223.

David Robinson and his sons John and Willis. After about 1875 the elder Robinson must have died, and his widow and son Willis continued to live at 8 West High. Willis Robinson was a mariner through at least 1892. Like Burroughs, Miles Carter had been in New Bedford before the war, having come from Virginia in 1854. He lived and owned a house on Elm Street and worked as a caulker; directories list him as such through 1883 (he died two years later). Another caulker, William Kimball, lived on Elm Street as well; he had come from Portsmouth, Virginia, to the city before January 1860 and died in New Bedford in 1902. John Gainville, a blacksmith born in North Carolina who was in New Bedford by 1870, worked at that trade through at least 1908; his family remained in New Bedford through at least the 1930s.

By 1870, ship bread baker George F. Bailey had left his family home on Allen Street and moved to the corner of Middle and Emerson Streets in the West End. Like Caldwell, the ship carpenter John Oliver came to New Bedford in the 1860s. He married in New Bedford in 1862 and was a longtime resident of Kempton Street in the West End. Oliver worked in ship carpentry through at least 1914 and briefly operated a small boardinghouse from his home; he died in December 1915. By the 1870s the whaleman Albert Williams had moved from Cuffe Lawton's south central neighborhood to the West End. A New Bedford native whose father had come to New Bedford in the 1810s from New York, Williams served on at least seven whaling crews between 1844 and 1867. His last voyage may have been on the *Arnolda* in 1867, when he was forty-three years old. He died by 1873, but apparently not in New Bedford. The brothers Fountain and John Ellis remained in New Bedford for the rest of their lives and lived next door to each other on Park Street. Of the eighty-one people of color living in the fourth ward, where about a half of the African American West End lay, twenty-three owned their homes. Among the eighty-one were thirteen whaling people, seven of whom were homeowners. Thus a substantial degree of stability existed among African American whaling people in the West End.

In addition to uncounted transient mariners, several African American whalemens and tradespeople lived on or near the waterfront. The mariner Samuel I. Tillman lived on South Water Street from about 1870, when he came from Philadelphia, until he died in 1891. John Mashow, then in his late sixties, was living on South Second Street and working as a ship carpenter on Eddy's Wharf, a little more than a block from his house. John C. Lee, who had come to New Bedford from Maryland before the war, worked at Zenas Whittemore's soapworks and lived on First Street. Thompson Hill, who came to New Bedford from Philadelphia in 1858, was a blacksmith and worked in the trade to about 1900. His older brother George was working as a ship bread baker in 1858 when his right hand, according to poor relief records, was "caught in the roller at Smith & Webster's bakery on North Second street, on Saturday, and was so badly injured that the amputation of three of his fingers and a large portion of his hand was necessary." After the accident George Hill continued to work as a baker for a time, though he worked briefly as a saloon keeper as well; by 1892 he was a fruit dealer. Both Hills lived near the waterfront. And William Castle, who married William Bush's daughter Julia in the District of Columbia before settling in New Bedford in the mid-1850s, lived on lower School Street. Castle was working as a clerk for the merchant tailor and shipping firm of Taber, Read and Company by 1856 and, though still with that company, opened a boardinghouse in 1860. He might have established the boardinghouse specifically to house sailors of

color for the Taber, Read firm. In 1860 he and his wife boarded fourteen people, most of them of African descent; only one of the four seamen boarding there was of African descent. Castle is the only African American boardinghouse keeper listed in the 1871 census, another indication of the growing scarcity of African American whalers.

By the mid-1890s, no more than four African Americans can be identified among the crew of New Bedford whaling vessels. Sidney Miller, born in Richmond, Virginia, about 1880 and in the April 1903 crew of the bark *Canton*, cannot be located. One of these four was virtually a career whaler. George Reddick, born about 1866 in Norfolk, Virginia, joined the crew of the schooner *Pearl Nelson* in October 1896. He clearly deserted. In May 1897, more than two years before that vessel returned to New Bedford, Reddick was shipped by the American consul from Antigua as a crew member on the *S. S. Caribee*. On his shipping papers Reddick stated he was destined for a “protracted sojourn” in New Bedford, but he never lived in the city for long. A month after the *Caribee* returned from Antigua Reddick shipped on the New Bedford whaling schooner *Era*. Through 1905 he went whaling four more times and was never ashore for more than ten weeks at a time. When he returned from his 1904 voyage on the *John R. Manta*, then registered in Provincetown but recruiting its crew in New Bedford, Reddick disappeared from New Bedford records.

The only one among these few whalers to stay in New Bedford was Benjamin E. Irons, born about 1883 in Philadelphia. Irons was on the bark *Bertha*’s September 1907 cruise, but it was his only whaling voyage (fig. 6.2). He had come to New Bedford with his parents by 1893 and before joining the *Bertha*’s crew was working at Atlas Tack Company in Fairhaven, one of a handful of area companies that seemed inclined to hire people of color. By the time he stepped on board the *Bertha* Irons was a complete anomaly: in the crew of twenty-seven men, sixteen were Cape Verdean and five West Indian.

West Indians in New Bedford Whaling

According to Eric Jay Dolin, whaling in the Caribbean began as early as 1688 when a New York vessel captain planned to take a crew of twelve whalers “upon a fishing design about the Bohames Islands, And Cap florida, for sperma Coeti whales,” but nearly another century passed before New Bedford whaling vessels began to hunt in these waters.¹⁷ Hohman and others have noted that New England whalers first visited the Caribbean Sea in 1765, and Michael Dyer has found the sloop *Keziah* touching at Grand Cayman in 1789.¹⁸ Whalers found both sperm and humpback whales in the Caribbean Sea. The humpback migrated there from the Arctic and Antarctic to calve, because this species of whale is born with a thin blubber layer and cannot thrive in the colder oceans. From January to April the humpback was found along the coast, channels, and bays of the Windward Islands, the easternmost group of the Lesser Antilles, itself the easternmost cluster of West Indies islands. The Windward

17. Dolin, *Leviathan*, 74; Michael P. Dyer, “American Whaling in the West Indies, 1789–1910, with a Few Particulars about the Island of Barbados” (Lecture, “New England and the Caribbean,” Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife Conference, Deerfield, MA, 14 June 2008), 1. Dyer’s paper was of enormous help in the preparation of this essay.

18. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 28; Dyer, “American Whaling in the West Indies,” 19.



Fig. 6.2. Unidentified crew on bark *Bertha*, hanging the lip of a sperm whale on deck. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/ New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Islands include Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada, all part of the United Kingdom until 1958. New Bedford whaling vessels also frequented the Leeward Islands, the northernmost group of the Lesser Antilles, especially St. Eustatius in the so-called “Dutch Antilles,” which is still a dependency of the Netherlands (fig. 6.3).¹⁹

From an early point New Bedford vessels were both whaling and trading in the West Indies. In 1816 Paul Cuffe asked the New Bedford whaling merchant William Rotch Jr., his

colleague and friend, “whether it may answer me any encouragement of profit to fit the brig traveller to the west indies this winter. . . . I have thought whether I could not put few fish into the traveller & send her into North Carolina and load with lumber & send her to St Domingo.” Cuffe told Rotch he had written as well to the New York merchants Hicks Jenkins and Company asking them “what prospect there were at New York for a West Indies voyage.”²⁰ About 1812 Paul Cuffe Jr., who spent almost his entire life at sea on coasters and whaling vessels, left Westport with ballast and sailed to Edenton, North Carolina, where the vessel took on shingles and herring and set off for Santo Domingo and Haiti to procure coffee and sugar, all of which were sold in New York. Between 1819 and about 1825 Cuffe made eighteen trading voyages to the West Indies as well as a whaling voyage to Cuba during which he bought molasses, coffee, and sugar and another to St. Thomas during which he bought molasses that he sold in Boston.²¹ New Bedford grocers regularly advertised West Indies sugar, coffee, teas and spices, chocolate, indigo, flax, the “best Windward Island molasses,” and potatoes from Martinique.²² Some early West Indian residents of New Bedford may have come aboard either type of vessel: John Byron, a laborer born about 1779

19. Bonham C. Richardson. *Caribbean Migrants: Environment and Human Survival on St. Kitts and Nevis* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 4; John Edward Adams, “Historical Geography of Whaling in Bequia Island, West Indies,” *Caribbean Studies* 11, 3 (October 1971):56. Dominica is sometimes considered part of the Leeward Islands.

20. Paul Cuffe, Westport, MA, to William Rotch Jr., 11 mo 28 (28 November) 1816, Cuffe Letterbook, 4 mo 1816–3 mo 1817, Cuffe Papers, NBFPL.

21. *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Paul Cuffe*.

22. Grover, “Antebellum Coasting Trade.”



Fig. 6.3. W. Barker, "A Chart of the West Indies from the late Marine Journals and Surveys," published by Mathew Carey, 1800. An initial after the island name indicates its possession by England, France, Spain, Holland (Du), Denmark, or Spain and France together. Courtesy Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

in Martinique, told the overseers of the poor that he came to New Bedford in 1797. Nancy Davis is said to have come from Kingston, Jamaica, in the late eighteenth century; she was certainly in the town by 1828, when her first husband, James Boyer, died. She remarried Archibald Clark Sr. in 1831 and died in New Bedford in 1859. The boardinghouse keeper James C. Carter, whose death record states his birthplace as Bermuda, was in New Bedford by 1821.

The Windwards are the first group of islands meeting the surface or "trade" winds coming over the Atlantic from the east; as Dyer has pointed out, they and the Lesser Antilles generally formed a "geographical overlap" where vessels with different cruising grounds came together. From an early point whaling vessels developed what Dyer terms a "pattern of cruising that included the Azores and its surrounding 'Western Grounds' and the Cape Verde Islands as well as the Coast of Brazil, Bermuda,

the 'Charleston Grounds' and the 'Hatteras Grounds,' regions bordered on the west by the southeastern coast of the U.S.A. and to the south by the Bahamas."²³ This pattern continued to the end of whaling; in 1912, as the brig *Daisy* whaled between Dominica and Martinique, latter-day whaling captain Benjamin D. Cleveland told the ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy that blackfish, or pilot whales, "have been hunted for a century by the New England whalers." Indeed, as Dyer has pointed out, the whaling grounds of the West Indies and just north of the Bahamas "were the only grounds utilized throughout the entire history of American pelagic whaling."

Then as later the industry's principal prey in West Indian waters were sperm, humpback, and pilot whales. Though whaling vessels hunted over much of the Caribbean, the geographer John Edward Adams has stated that the most frequented whaling ground was from the south Windward Islands to the north coast of South America, around the islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada,

23. Dyer, "American Whaling in the West Indies," 2, 14.

Barbados, Tobago, and Trinidad.²⁴ In 1835 Paul Cuffe Jr. was in the crew of the New Bedford whaling brig *Delight*, which took blackfish off Santo Domingo and sperm whales near Jamaica; the vessel then whaled in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Azores. Dyer has cited the 1838 voyage of the Fall River whaling brig *Ann Maria*, which reached the Cape Verde Islands in late February, whaled there for several weeks, and then crossed to the Caribbean. By the middle of March the brig had sailed by Martinique to Prince Rupert's Bay in Dominica, where four other whaling vessels lay at anchor.²⁵ In a September 1859 letter to vessel owner Alexander Cory of Westport, Captain Weston Tripp on the brig *Kate Cory* wrote while the brig was near the Azores, "I shall recruit at the Western Islands [Azores] and then cruise along to the south and be at St. Thomas about the first of March. . . . I've seen two or three that refitted at the West Indies last spring, they say that provisions come cheap." Tripp himself refitted the *Kate Cory* at St. Eustatius.²⁶

Dyer has noted that whaling vessels touched frequently at "Atlantic-facing ports" on Barbados, Dominica, St. Thomas, and St. Eustatius to offer liberty for the crew, to provision, and to deposit oil for other vessels to carry home. Benjamin Cleveland stated that whaling vessels commonly rendezvoused at Portsmouth, Dominica, in the spring of the year. When the *Ann Maria* touched at Prince Rupert's Bay, its primary interest was in procuring vegetables, and in the years before the Civil War whaling captains were more apt to provision and undertake vessel repairs in the West Indies than to fill out crew.

Only a handful of West Indians can be identified in whaling and whaling trades before 1860. Jamaican Malinda Phillips was in the crew of the *Bartholomew Gosnold* in 1836 and returned to New Bedford with the ship. George Hanaley, born in Barbados about 1805, was shown as a seaman in the 1855 state census. The seaman Martin Ellis, born about 1815, and George Stephens, born about 1838, were both shown as West Indian-born mariners in 1860, Stephens living at William Castle's boardinghouse. William Gilbert was in the ship *Averick* in 1840 and a mariner in New Bedford through about 1850. And according to his daughter Priscilla Williams, John Lewey, a well-known black resident of the city, was West Indian. He was probably the John Lewey on William Rotch Jr.'s ship *Barclay* in 1820 and several later voyages and the same John Lewey who worked at George Howland's candleworks by 1838; he died in New Bedford in 1847. According to the overseers of the poor Moses Shepherd, born in Virginia, "came from Martinique to this place" about 1822. Shepherd was a steward and a mariner and was in the crew of the whaling ship *Brighton* in 1836; whether he came from that island on a coasting or whaling voyage is not known.

The presence of West Indians in New Bedford was certainly inhibited by the fact that slavery existed on the British-held islands until 1838, on the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique until 1848, and on the Dutch-owned island of St. Eustatius until 1863.²⁷ After emancipation many people of African descent remained, as tenanters, in the thrall of the large sugar plantations they had worked as enslaved

24. Adams, "Historical Geography," 55.

25. Dyer, "American Whaling in the West Indies," 4.

26. *Ibid.*, 3, 3 n. 2.

27. Richardson, *Caribbean Migrants*, 18.

people, but some few others worked at sea or in maritime trades. During slavery, folklorist Horace Beck has observed, enslavers allowed “only their most trusted slaves” to work as pilots or sailors because they might desert or die at sea. Bolster has noted that enslaved West Indian mariners sometimes commanded crews of free black sailors.²⁸ Olaudah Equiano, whose 1789 autobiographical narrative is one of the first published works by an African, was sold to a merchant in Montserrat and worked as a cargo handler and lighterman; in the 1760s he sailed, sometimes as captain, to ports throughout the West Indies and the southeast seaboard of the United States. According to historian Bonham Richardson, “fishermen may have formed a kind of slave elite” on the smaller West Indies islands because they had developed skills in boat handling and navigation, were permitted to travel between the islands, and had a chance to escape enslavement. Moreover a boatman’s “physical prowess” and courage in the face of constant danger generated broad admiration among other islanders. There is no data on how many enslaved West Indians were permitted to hire their time as crew on American whaling vessels, but it seems likely to have been few given the many opportunities to escape.²⁹

Another factor that might have influenced the slight presence of West Indians on antebellum New Bedford whaling crews was the existence of a native whaling industry, particularly on Bermuda, Barbados, and Bequia, a small island south of St. Vincent. Shore whaling, undertaken in small boats in nearby bays and reefs, had been pursued on Bermuda from the late seventeenth century; by the mid-1730s some eight boats were taking between eight and eleven whales annually. The growth of the American whaling industry hurt the Bermudian venture by reducing the retail price of oil and contributing to the increasing scarcity of humpbacks. During the American Revolution, with American whaling virtually stopped, an American whom historians cite only as Pinkham came to Bermuda to teach whalers how to process blubber. In 1785, alarmed at the possibility of competition, the government of Massachusetts banned the export of whaling equipment to Bermuda. After the war the Bermudian government, run by a British loyalist from Massachusetts, began to develop a small deep-sea whaling fleet of five vessels which collectively made ten voyages (three or four with Nantucket masters) between 1786 and 1794. Pelagic whaling from Bermuda was not successful, but shore whaling continued on a small scale until 1941.

“Yankee” whalers also influenced the development of shore whaling on Barbados and Bequia. The earliest record of shore whaling on Barbados dates to 1813, but by 1868 both erstwhile crew on American whalers, some of them deserters, and Barbadians who had served on whaling vessels had established a shore whaling station. Between 1868 and 1916 three such stations existed whose crews landed an estimated 380 humpbacks yielding 202 barrels of oil annually.³⁰ Whaling from Bequia, the only West Indian island from which whaling is still undertaken (fig. 6.4), began with William Thomas Wallace (1840–1917), the son of a Scots naval officer who became a plantation manager first on St. Vincent and then on Bequia. According to Nathalie Ward, in 1857 the younger Wallace first went whaling as a shantyman, and

28. Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 132, 136.

29. Horace P. Beck, “Blows’: The Whaling Complex in Bequia,” *Folklife Annual 1986*, eds. Alan Jabbour and James Hardin (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1987), 46, 50; Richardson, *Caribbean Migrants*, 16.



Fig. 6.4. Walking stick made from a tree branch by S. Kydd on Bequia, about 1987. The foreshaft and handle of the stick is a full-round carving of a humpback whale; on the shaft Kydd carved a sperm whale, two sharks, and a turtle in relief. The Kydd family were shore whalers on Bequia and pelagic whalers from New Bedford for generations. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

over the next ten years he served in the crews of both Nantucket and New Bedford whaling vessels.³¹ Horace Beck has stated that Wallace “spent time” in New Bedford learning how whaleboats were made. In August 1867 in Chelsea, Massachusetts, Wallace married Provincetown native Estella Frances Curren, and about 1870 he returned to his native Bequia with his wife and, it is said, two New Bedford-built whaleboats; another source states that Wallace returned “with an armful of harpoons.” In 1875 Wallace opened a whaling station on Friendship Bay (fig. 6.5). For a time he partnered with Joseph Ollivierre (or Olliverre), a man of French descent who owned Paget Farm Estate on Bequia. In 1886 Ollivierre established his own whaling station on the nearby island of Petit Nevis and later on Semple Cay, another small island off Bequia.³² Both staffed their whaling stations with men of African descent; according to Frederick Fenger, who visited Wallace in 1912, he held his employees “in scorn” and called them “jumbie crabs.”³³

From 1867 to 1870 St. Vincent and its neighboring dependent islands shipped 6702 barrels and casks of whale oil valued at 28,000 pounds sterling, and at that time whale oil was the fourth most important export by value, exceeded only by sugar, rum, and arrowroot starch. Between 1880

30. Abstract of J. E. Creswell and A. Romero, “Deplete Locally, Impact Globally: The Environmental History of Shore Whaling in Barbados, WI,” *Open Conservation Biology Journal* 4 (2010): 19–27, <https://benthamopen.com/ABSTRACT/TOCONSBJ-4-19>; Joel Cresswell, “The Exploitative History and Present Status of Marine Mammals in Barbados, W. I.,” Macalester Environmental Review Website, posted 28 May 2002, <http://www.macalester.edu/environmentalstudies/macenvreview/marinemammalsbarbados.htm>. See also A. Howard Clark, “The Whale Fishery,” part 15 of Goode, *Fisheries and Fishery Industries*, section 5, 2:161.

31. New Bedford crew lists do not list a man of this name or any variation of it except a William Wallace, a greenhand whose place of birth or residence is not noted, on ship *Erie* in 1853.

32. Horace Beck, “A Tribute to Athneal Ollivierre,” *Caribbean Compass*, August 2000, <http://www.caribbeancompass.com/atn.htm>; Nathalie F. R. Ward, “The Whalers of Bequia,” *Oceanus* 30, 4 (Winter 1987–88): 89–93.



Fig. 6.5. View from the southwest of Friendship Bay, Bequia, 1994, photograph by Robert H. Ellis. Petit Nevis is shown in the foreground; Semple Cay is the smallest island at right. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

and 1920 six of the nine shore whaling stations in the Grenadines were on Bequia, together taking some fifteen humpback whales each year. Adams has noted that the Grenadines exported an average of twenty-five thousand gallons (roughly 790 barrels) of oil yearly between 1893 and 1903, which yielded enough income to support the small industry. By the 1910s there were six stations in the Grenadines together employing about one hundred men, which, according to Adams, was about 20 percent of the male workforce on these islands.³⁴

Adams has noted that not until the late 1860s did American whaling vessels make more than “periodic” stops in the Grenadines, and as their visits became more frequent shore whaling stations on the islands began to lose men to them:

Many enlisted aboard American whalers that stopped at Kingstown, St. Vincent, once every one or two years to take on supplies and to pick up seamen. In this way,

33. Frederic A. Fenger, *Alone in the Caribbean: Being the Yarn of a Cruise in the Lesser Antilles in the Sailing Canoe “Yakaboo”* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1917), 106.

34. Adams, “Historical Geography,” 58, 62; John E. Adams, “Last of the Caribbean Whalemens,” *Natural History*, November 1994, 69; Sebastian Junger, “The Whale Hunters,” *Outside*, October 1995, *Outside Online* website, http://outside.away.com/outside/magazine/1095/10f_whal.html.

Grenadine whalers were assured of a passage to the United States and better employment opportunities. A few remained in the United States on a permanent basis but most returned to the Grenadines after working in the United States for several years.³⁵

Infrequent settlement was probably the rule throughout the remaining years of New Bedford whaling, but it was far more notable before 1900 than after. By 1870 only five people of African descent claimed West Indian birthplaces in the census, and of those five only two appear to have been involved in the whaling industry. One was Frederick Joseph, born about 1845 in Dominica. In 1865 Joseph married Mary E. Fairweather, whose African American family had come to New Bedford from Rhode Island in the 1830s. Joseph was a mariner in 1870 and shown the next year as a shipkeeper. Charles C. Parker, born about 1832 in Jamaica, had married a native New Yorker and was a New Bedford seaman in 1870. Both disappeared from records after the early 1870s. Surely there were others who did not remain in New Bedford long enough to be included in a directory or census. One was George Williams, whose story was recorded by the overseers of the poor on 15 July 1865: "George Williams col'd age 17 ½ born in Jamaica arrived this morning 14th in whaling bark Osceola shipped in her at Panama 7 months ago has both feet frozen is entirely destitute and asks to be sent to hospital." The overseers paid for Williams's ticket to the state almshouse in Taunton.

The great majority of the forty-five West Indian whalers of African descent shown on 1875 crew lists appear to have been as transient as George Williams. Only six men with the same surname and from the same island on these 1875 lists appear in crew lists from the 1890s forward. Moreover, of the men whose birthplaces are shown as a specific West Indian island (as opposed to simply "West Indies" or in some cases "WI") most came from islands other than those most often listed in later crew lists.³⁶ Of the forty-five whalers only three each were from St. Eustatius and St. Vincent, the most heavily represented birthplaces in the later lists. Overall, black West Indians composed only 2.6 percent of all New Bedford whalers sailing in that year, but they may have represented about 22 percent of all whalers of color.³⁷

Of these West Indian whalers, only two were relatively long-term New Bedford residents. One was Michael Mars, born about 1844, who served as steward on the 1875 crew of the bark *Hope On*. Mars was from St. Eustatius and had also been a member of the 1866 crew of the *Minerva Smyth*. He died in the hospital in New Bedford in 1879, about ten months after returning from the *Hope On* voyage. At least five other St. Eustatians with his family name were also New Bedford whalers. Lincoln Mars, born about 1855, was a greenhand in the crew of the bark *Sea Queen* of Westport in

35. Adams, "Historical Geography," 62.

36. Often "WI" in crew lists signifies "Western Islands," or the Azores, but in some few cases a man known to be West Indian by other records will be shown with a "WI" for place of origin.

37. Isolating black West Indians is complicated by several factors, chief among which is the use of "WI" as a birthplace indicator. Similarly, an island called St. Vincent exists in both the West Indies and the Cape Verde Islands. In addition, the term "dark" as a descriptor of complexion in some few cases designates a person of color, though it most often designates someone of swarthy complexion; many Azoreans are shown as dark on crew lists. Finally, some, but very few, West Indians have Spanish surnames, reflecting the Spanish heritage of some of the islands. I have included only those whom other sources clearly indicate to be West Indian and those dark people with English given names and surnames and/or a clear West Indian birthplace.

1875; it may have been his first whaling cruise, and he served on at least three more voyages through 1900. John Mars, born about 1886, served on three crews between 1903 and 1910. Three others, all born in St. Eustatius, served on only one crew and could be found in no other listing. One more member of the family with maritime but not whaling experience was Tasker O. Mars, born in 1914 in New Bedford. Probably the son of Tasker Mars and Ethel Coblins, he grew up in the household of his stepfather Lawrence Kydd at 6 Chestnut Street in New Bedford, which his parents owned; there is no record of Tasker Mars Sr. in New Bedford. By 1930 the Lawrence Kydds had moved to Perth Amboy, New Jersey, where many other New Bedford West Indians moved or had family. Tasker Mars Jr. returned to 6 Chestnut Street after serving in World War II and died in New York City in 1986.

As New Bedford whaling increasingly returned to the Atlantic beginning in the 1880s, the number of West Indian men recruited in the islands for whaling crews naturally also rose, and the number who settled in the city began to climb as well. Barbadian James Arthur Drayton, who also served on an 1875 crew, may be considered the pioneer of West Indian settlement in New Bedford. Born in 1855, he was in New Bedford by December 1874, when he married Ada Blackburn, a New Bedford native whose parents had come to the city from the District of Columbia. In July 1875, Drayton shipped out on the whaling bark *Ohio* as a seaman. Through seven voyages between 1875 and 1890 he advanced through the ranks: he was boatsteerer on the *Belvedere* in 1885, third mate on the *Thrasher* in 1888, and first mate on the *Narwhal* in 1889. Though Drayton was at sea much of the time in these years, the city directory of 1883 shows him as a carpenter living on Cannon Street in the waterfront district. By that time his mother, born Jane Ann Newton, had come from Barbados and was living with him; she remained in his household until she died in 1900. Drayton lived until 1918 on the waterfront, from 1902 at 199 South Water Street, and was a laborer for most of his life. By 1910 he was boarding West Indian mariners at this house, three of whom were whalers. Dessay Ollivierre married in New Bedford and had family in the city but, like Lawrence Kydd, moved to Perth Amboy by 1910. Drayton's son-in-law Charles Hazell also lived at 199 South Water Street with his wife and two sons. Hazell was in New Bedford from the late 1890s, when he served on his first crew, and married Annie Drayton in 1902. After that point he was almost constantly at sea. Hazell was in ten whaling crews from 1904 to 1919, when the *Ellen A. Swift*, on which he was boatsteerer, disappeared in the Atlantic (figs. 6.6 & 6.7).³⁸ The third West Indian whaler living with James Drayton was Alexander Nanton, born on St. Vincent about 1865. Nanton was in six whaling crews between 1897 and 1910, three of them on board the bark *Canton*. He always boarded: in 1920 he lived on South Second Street with the Barbadian Andrew C. Henley and worked on a government lightship, and by the late 1930s he was at 6 Johnny Cake Hill. Directories no longer list Nanton after 1940.

38. "Fear Whaler Ellen A. Swift Foundered in Recent Storm," *Fall River Daily Evening News*, 21 March 1919, 11. Both the *Swift* and the schooner *Pedro Varella* left New Bedford in late January and early February that year and were a month "overdue" at St. Kitts when this article appeared. "The fact that both must have been caught in the terrific storms which swept the coast shortly after their departure and with barely enough men to handle them, is considered additional proof that they must have been overwhelmed." "Fear for Safety of Two Schooners," *Boston Globe*, 21 March 1919, 7, noted that both schooners were en route to St. Kitts to recruit crews.



Fig. 6.6. Crew trying out blackfish blubber on the *Ellen A. Swift*, docked at Merrill's Wharf in New Bedford. Photograph by Albert Cook Church. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Two other West Indians, one white and the other of African descent, became captains in the New Bedford whaling fleet.³⁹ William B. McCoy, born about 1852 on Grand Cayman Island, appears to have embarked on his first New Bedford voyage in 1878 on the bark *Lydia*. Like Alex Nanton, he was frequently at sea between that year and 1897. He shipped on the brig *Francis A. Barstow* in 1881, 1883, 1886, and 1897 (the last as captain) and on the schooner *E. B. Conwell* in 1889, 1890, and 1893, the last again as master. In 1883 McCoy married Jennie Cose, born in Cape Verde, in New Bedford and was often on shore for a year at a time, but he is not shown in any New Bedford census or city directory. He must have died by 1903, when his wife remarried, but there is no record of his death in Massachusetts. McCoy's son and namesake, born in Grand Cayman in the mid-1870s, served on five crews between 1893 and 1906

39. Clarence J. Silvia, born on St. Eustatius, was also a whaling master, serving as captain of the Edgartown brig *Eunice H. Adams* on its 1893-94 voyage. Silvia's father, however, was from the Azores, and the identity of his mother, even whether she was West Indian, is not apparently known. See Pat Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas: Profiles of Azorean Master Mariners* (St. Petersburg, FL: Valkyrie Press, 1978), 124, 129, 131, and thanks to Don Warrin for making me aware of Silvia.



Fig. 6.7. *The Ellen A. Swift* "off for Hatteras," 1917, photograph by William H. Tripp. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

and was a member of the *Barstow* crew in 1897, when his father was captain. William McCoy Jr. also did not settle in the city.

Both McCoys served on crews under James F. Avery (fig. 6.8), a white West Indian who was master of seven vessels and part-owner and agent for seven, including three he commanded. Born September 1849 on St. Eustatius, Avery was the son of Daniel James Every, a "Dutch planter" who owned an estate on the island. In 1864, the Azorean Henry Clay (born Acquilla Rodrigues), later a New Bedford whaling master and agent, came to St. Eustatius on a whaling vessel and met and married James Every's sister Alice. The Clays and Every went to New Bedford about 1868, where the family changed its name to Avery, and James Avery is said to have spent his earliest years in this country at Provincetown, which had been sending whaling schooners to the West Indies since the 1820s. Avery's first New Bedford whaling voyage was in May 1872 on the Fairhaven brig *George J. Jones*; his second was in 1875 on the schooner *Golden City*, which Clay owned and commanded. Beginning on the schooner *Petrel* in November 1876, Avery sailed as master on fourteen voyages by 1898. By 1900 Avery and his family were living at 97 South Street in the waterfront district, and they



Fig. 6.8. Captain James F. Avery. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

remained at that address until about 1924, when the family moved across the river to Fairhaven.

Avery's 1898 command of the bark *Bertha* was apparently his last whaling voyage. He then became a whaling agent, for a time in partnership with Clay. After his 1897 voyage on the *E. B. Conwell* Avery acquired the vessel and put other men in command of it; he also owned shares in five vessels—the schooners *Bertha D. Nickerson*, *T. Towner*, *Margarett*, and *Golden City* and the bark *Bertha*—and served for a time as agent for the ill-fated bark whaling bark *Wanderer*. Avery showed no particular tendency to hire West Indian men for the crews he commanded. On the *E. B. Conwell* in 1890 nine of the sixteen crew members were West Indian, but on more of his cruises Cape Verdean whalers made up the majority. One obituary noted, "Captain Avery never returned home without a full cargo, and for this reason and also for his justice and humanity in the handling of his men he could always command a good crew. Those who sailed under him always expressed a wish to go again with him, a sure indication of his high esteem among his fellows." There were West Indian men other than the McCoys who sailed multiple times under Avery. John Dick,

born in either Dominica or Martinique, was on six whaling crews between 1881 and 1890, four of them commanded by Avery. Albert Leslie, from St. Eustatius, went on four whaling voyages between 1906 and 1922, the first three on vessels for which Avery was then agent. The World War I draft registration cards for seven West Indian whalers, four of them born in St. Eustatius, state that each was then a "seaman for James Avery" (fig. 6.9).⁴⁰

The population of West Indians in New Bedford remained low until the late 1890s. By that time, the decades-long decline of the islands' sugar economy was

40. Five of these men were from St. Eustatius and two from St. Vincent. The Eustatians were William H. Landsmark (seven voyages, 1907–19), William Mentar (two voyages, 1907 and 1909), William Matthew Senhouse (one voyage, 1919), Valdemar Smith (seven voyages, 1917–23), and George Alexander Wyatt (six voyages, 1919–22); William Ollivierre (eight voyages, 1915–22) and James Alexander George (five voyages, 1907–19) were from St. Vincent.



Fig. 6.9. World War I draft registration card for James Alexander George, born 1878 in St. Vincent. George is shown as working for Captain James F. Avery. George shipped as boatheader on Avery's schooner *Margarett* in 1918 and as second officer on the same vessel on its next cruise. His first known New Bedford whaling voyage was in 1907 on the *Ellen A. Swift*; he signed on for the Swift's 1908 voyage as well and by 1910 was a New Bedford dockworker. Courtesy Ancestry.com.

complete. Sugar cane cultivation had peaked well before the Civil War, but plantation owners continued to own most of the land on West Indies islands. Landowning was thus kept to a minimum among West Indians of African descent—the majority population of most of the islands—and thus inhibited independent economic effort; they became, in the words of one historian, an “agricultural proletariat.” Sugar cane plantations had cleared the islands of trees and increased soil erosion, both of which made the islands more vulnerable during hurricanes and droughts. Roughly between 1835 and 1885 the dwindling resource base compelled many West Indians to migrate to other islands for work and sometimes to attempt to buy land. From the 1880s until 1914, a much larger migration left their native islands to escape the combined effect of land scarcity, aridity, and erosion brought about by sugar monoculture and the virtual absence of an industrial economy. On Martinique and St. Vincent these problems were greatly exacerbated in 1902 by volcanic eruptions; the eruption of Mount Pelée on Martinique and Soufrière on St. Vincent decimated the islands and killed thousands of people.⁴¹ In his logbook William Kydd, a native of Bequia whose family still lives in New Bedford, kept a New York *Evening Post* clipping apparently dating from 1908 which reported that a volcano on St. Vincent other than Soufrière had induced “a panic for fear of a repetition of the Mont Pelée eruption of six years ago, which destroyed Martinique.”⁴²

The combined effect of these circumstances clearly stimulated outmigration and certainly may have induced West Indian men to ship on whaling vessels. In March 1913 Marian Smith, whose husband Horace was then master of the schooner *A. M. Nicholson*, wrote to her friend Annie from near the island of St. Christopher about the number of people on St. Vincent eager to board the vessel. “We have our crew of Bequay men,” she reported. “Look like good men. Proof of pudding is in the eating—not that we intend to eat them. Have no cabin boy as yet. Expect to get one at St. Eustatius. Could have had numerous ones at St. Vincent.” Smith was also approached by women on the island. “Could have brought home a small army of girls of all shades,” she wrote. “However, I refrained. I rather regret ‘Mercy Morgan,’ but Beryl Elaine Paul although very persistent was not so much to my mind.” Earlier that month she had written Annie that Beryl Paul was fourteen years old and “very black.” “She wished to go to

41. A. Hyatt Verrill, *The Book of the West Indies* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1917), 121; Violet Showers Johnson, *The Other Black Bostonians: West Indians in Boston, 1900–1950* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 14.

42. “Rain of Ashes Tells of Volcanic Eruption,” New York *Evening Post*, 13 October [1908], William Kydd logbook, private collection.

America with us, will sleep anywhere and has just remarked, 'See how useful I am—clean the brasses and everything.' She has on two or three queer little braids, a boys' [sic] cap and some small part of a dress. She also has something akin to drawers. Will you take her if I bring her?" Presumably Annie would take Paul as a domestic servant; Smith even asked Annie later if she would like "one or two or even three."⁴³

Beginning in the 1880s the largest migration of West Indians was to Panama, where an estimated 130,000 islanders worked on the Panama Canal. Fully one-quarter of the population of Barbados traveled to Panama for canal and domestic work in these years. In the same period workers moved as well to, among other places, Cuba and the Dominican Republic to harvest sugar cane, Central America to work on railroads and banana plantations, and the United States.⁴⁴ Travel to Boston and New York City in particular was greatly aided by United Fruit Company vessels, which historian Violet Showers Johnson has termed "undoubtedly the biggest connector of the Caribbean islands to the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada." Nearly eighty West Indians a year came to Boston by 1920.⁴⁵

The West Indian migration to New Bedford was unique in several respects. It was initiated and largely effected by whaling vessels, which in turn stimulated the migration of kin and friends from the islands by steamship. On the whole it appears to have started earlier than the migrations to New York and Boston. In addition, in New York and Philadelphia the initial migration from the islands contained more women than men; the reverse was true in New Bedford. In addition to provisioning in West Indies ports, Dyer has pointed out that the port of Bridgetown on Barbados "serviced many of the business needs of the whaling vessels that used the port including consular services, ship chandlery and brokerage services" as well as clock and watch repair; commission houses "brokered the boarding of sailors ashore, the transshipping of oil, the sale of wood, coal, and bulk foodstuffs such as flour and sugar as well as lightering and cartage." In 1873 the island government also removed the "tonnage fees" formerly levied on vessels shipping oil home from Bridgetown.⁴⁶ And by the late nineteenth century the islands became key sources of crew. Dyer has cited the observation of one 1870s whaleman on Barbados who stated that mariners who deserted or were discharged there could "name their voyage" because so many vessels touching at that port needed crew.⁴⁷

As profits diminished and vessels were plagued by what an 1879 trade review termed "wholesale desertion," whaling vessels sometimes left New Bedford and other ports with skeleton crews based on the certainty that crews could be filled out in the

43. Marion Smith to Annie, 2 and 9 March 1913, Marion Smith Collection (Annie Allen loan) LB82-7, ODHS.

44. Richardson, *Caribbean Migrants*, 7–8, 17–18, 21; George Gmelch, *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 20–21, 41.

45. Irma Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community, 1900–1930* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 11–17; Johnson, *The Other Black Bostonians*, 7, 22. Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations*, 13, stated that the migration of West Indians to Panama during the time the United States controlled the canal construction project, 1904 to 1914, "predated their immigration to the United States."

46. Dyer, "American Whaling in the West Indies," 6, 18.

47. Dyer, "American Whaling in the West Indies," 8.

West Indies. In June 1877 James H. Hammond, captain of the bark *Wave*, wrote to the vessel's owner from Bermuda, "I left St. Eustatia a week ago today and have had light winds all the way. I made a long stay in the West Indies, much longer than I wanted to but I could not help it as I had so much trouble with the men. We lost seven men at Dominica. I could not catch them and could not ship but three men there so I had to go to St. Eustatia to ship a crew. . . . I shipped a steward at Barbados that was recommended to me highly by the American Consul and to get him I had to give him \$24.00 advance and when we got to Dominica he run away so that will be the last that I shall advance to anyone."⁴⁸

The story of the 1901 voyage of the bark *Platina* (fig. 6.10) illustrates well the problems with desertion and attests the increasing presence of West Indian on whaling crews. The bark left New Bedford in mid-July with thirty men. Over the two-year course of its voyage thirty-six men deserted and eight were discharged. Of the original crew only six returned with the vessel; of the six recruited at Barbados in April 1901 none returned; and of the eleven men shipped at Faial in April 1902 five returned to New Bedford on the bark. Four of these last eleven deserted in Barbados, another at Dominica, and the sixth at St. Eustatius. Overall Thomas MacKenzie, the *Platina's* master on this voyage, shipped twelve West Indians, the six at Barbados in 1901 and another six at St. Eustatius in May 1903. Among those last six was the thirteen-year-old George Wallace, a native of Dominica who served on six whaling crews through 1923. Wallace signed onto the *Platina* as a cabin boy at a 1/200 lay. When he was recruited he spent \$4.70 on slop chest goods—a pair of denim pants, a pair of brogans, five yards of denim, and thread. When Wallace left the ship in New Bedford four months later, in September 1903, his settlement was \$27.05, which he signed for with a mark.⁴⁹ He left on his second voyage, on the bark *Josephine*, within days. In a letter to her friend Annie from the *Josephine*, her husband Horace's command on that voyage, Marian Smith made special note of Wallace in a manner bespeaking the peculiar patronizing northern racism of her time. "The steerage boy is the funniest thing in life," she said. "West Indian darkey, all through. I wish you could see him with his upper lip rolled up. The steward winds him up and sets him agoing and away he goes. He is learning to write his name—'George Wallace.' When he is not business he is dancing. Sometimes I see him twirling around like a top."⁵⁰

In 1903 the schooner *Golden City* experienced problems with deserters similar to what the *Josephine* encountered that same year. The vessel left New Bedford on 15 October and reached Cape Verde by 21 November. After whaling in those waters for five weeks or so, the *Golden City* crossed back over the Atlantic to Dominica, which it reached on 13 January 1902. There the vessel took on fresh water and did some trading before sailing on to St. Eustatius. On that island the *Golden City* acquired yams and potatoes and lost two men. Another three men swam to shore from the ship on the following day, but two were arrested and brought back to the schooner. At Hamilton, Bermuda, in May another ten men deserted, including the two men who had deserted and been arrested at St. Eustatius. Two of this group of deserters were

48. Dyer, "American Whaling in the West Indies," 19, 15.

49. Crew book, slop accounts, and general records, bark *Platina*, 1901–3, reel 90, Whaling Manuscripts, NBFPL.

50. Marion Smith to Annie, 12 October 1903, Marion Smith Collection.



Fig. 6.10. Barks *Josephine* (right) and *Platina* (left) in New Bedford. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

arrested on shore and placed in shackles on board. At Faial in September three West Indian men deserted and ten were discharged. The *Golden City* went on to Cape Verde and then to the port of Roseau at Dominica, where it stayed for a month to repair. To compensate for the loss of the men Captain John T. Gonsalves shipped eight men at Bermuda in June 1902 and four men at Faial in September. The schooner then went to St. Eustatius and shipped two men in March 1903, returned to Dominica, returned again to St. Eustatius, and then embarked on its home voyage. It reached New Bedford on 23 August 1903 with 860 barrels of sperm oil, a poor showing for twenty-two months at sea, though the oil transhipped from Dominica may not be included in

that figure.⁵¹ In its 1907–8 cruise the schooner *John R. Manta* stopped at St. Eustatius to paint the whaleboats and otherwise tend to the vessel, take on potatoes and “lyms,” and recruit nine men, including the boatsteerer Moses Grovell, well known among his contemporaries as a highly skilled harpooner.⁵² All told Grovell took six voyages on New Bedford whaling vessels between 1899 and 1922, and by the mid-1910s he had settled in the city.

The ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy joined the crew of the *Daisy* for its 1912 cruise and left a detailed account of the crew in a series of letters written to his wife and collected in book form in 1947 (fig. 6.11). When the brig left New Bedford it included three Caucasians (including Cushman and the captain Benjamin D. Cleveland), two West Indians, and twenty-nine Cape Verdeans. Nine men deserted at Dominica and several were recruited there; later in the year an unspecified number of men deserted at Roseau on Dominica, and in July 1902, it appears from Murphy’s account, Cleveland recruited another thirty men both there and on Barbados. Some of the deserters had by then shipped on other vessels, but five had been jailed at Roseau. Cleveland was compelled to reship the men to save the United States government the cost of shipping them home. He rounded up more recruits “from a group of minor offences languishing in the Roseau jail,” Murphy wrote. “The boys were glad to leave their cells for a forecandle, the officials were delighted to get rid of them for a year at least, and the Old Man still needed to round out a full crew for the sanguinary work ahead.”⁵³

One of the recruits taken on in Dominica in 1906 was a man Murphy referred to only as Conrad who was probably the St. Eustatian James Conrad Wyatt. Wyatt would have been seventeen at the time. Murphy described him as a “coal-black youth of tender years”:

An elder brother brought him off and put him under my especial charge. He had already made up his mind that I was either owner, captain, or first mate of the *Daisy*. “He’s a good Latin scholar, he is,” said the brother. However that may be, Conrad speaks extraordinarily good English. He also wears a silver crucifix around his neck, and makes the sign of the cross whenever he sees lightning.⁵⁴

If Conrad was James Conrad Wyatt, the brother who brought him to the *Daisy* could have been Charles or Clarence, both of whom had been on earlier New Bedford whaling voyages. Wyatt also had a younger brother, George Alexander, who came to the city by September 1918 and was on six whaling crews between that year and 1922. Murphy noted considerable improvement in Wyatt’s confidence and skill as the voyage progressed.

Conrad, who once trembled on the ratlines and who was nearly scared into the next world the first time he came into close quarters with a whale (he fainted), is now one of the most fearless and competent men of our crew in the sea elephant hunting. When he joined us in the West Indies, he was not only the youngest of all

51. Log for schooner *Golden City*, 1901–3, Log 89, ODHS.

52. Log for the *John R. Manta*, 1907–8, Ship Log 279, Reel 31, page 91, ODHS.

53. Robert Cushman Murphy, *Logbook for Grace: Whaling Brig Daisy, 1912–1913* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 6, 16–17.

54. Murphy, *Logbook for Grace*, 6.

our boys, but was also one who seemed to have enjoyed an unusually sheltered home life and much more schooling than any of his fellows. He was by no means a tough guttersnipe, who had had the conditions of life's hard knocks. But he always wanted to do his duty and he soon recovered both from his terror of a whaleboat battle and from his fear of going aloft. During the latter part of our southward voyage, there was no better member of the watch to slide out on the highest yardarms for taking in sail, even in the middle of the night, with the puffs nearly shaking him out of his clothes. Conrad has grown husky too, so that he pulls a strong oar and wields a deadly lance. He does a man's work and uses his head, which is one of the best in the forecabin. He can always be relied upon to finish a job, and Mr. da Lomba says that he will make a first-class boatsteerer for "next voyage." I haven't yet sounded him out on his future plans, but I suspect that he is more likely to become a teacher in Dominica.⁵⁵

Instead, Conrad Wyatt became a bread baker in New Bedford. He was working for Snell and Simpson, then the preeminent ship's bread baker in the city, when he registered for the draft in 1917. In 1919 he was the cook on both the outgoing and incoming voyages of the schooner *William A. Graber* and afterward resumed his trade until about 1930, when the city directory lists him as a waiter.

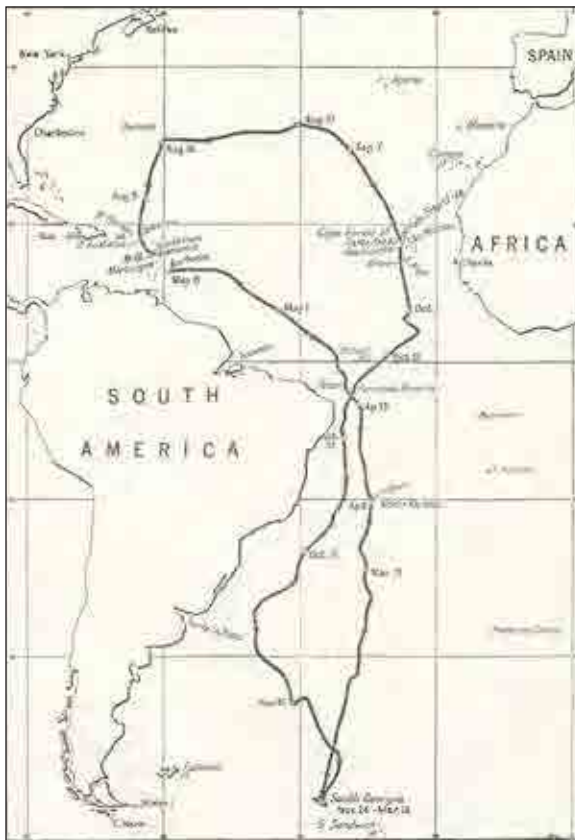


Fig. 6.11. The 1912–13 voyage of the brig *Daisy*, from Robert Cushman Murphy, *Logbook for Grace* (1947).

One of the two West Indians who had sailed in the *Daisy* from New Bedford was Henry Charles Spratt (or, as Murphy had it, Spratt), who was born about 1882 in St. Eustatius. Spratt's first New Bedford whaling voyage was probably on the *Golden City* under James Avery in May 1896, and he had also sailed from the city on whaling crews in 1903, 1904, and 1905. Late in July 1912, as Murphy recounted, Spratt ran afoul of the short-tempered Cleveland.

The Old Man discovered a box full of crusts and half loaves and, to the tune of randy, sulphurous, and prolonged expletives, has bounced the steward for wasting flour. He will pay him off and ship him back, third class, from Roseau to New Bedford.

The steward, named Henry Charles Spratt, is a black Dutchman, hailing from the tight little Antillean mountain of St. Eustatius. You will remember him as the peg-leg who hopped in lively fashion around the deck

55. Murphy, *Logbook for Grace*, 186–87.

on a turned timber pin, which, I suspect, had come down through the generations from Long John Silver himself. While the Old Man was roaring a litany that would put to shame a Cuban stevedore, the steward tried vainly to wedge in an explanation that he had been saving the box of crusts for a bread pudding. Under ordinary circumstances, Spratt is not to be easily out-talked because he can use fluently at least six languages, namely, English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Papiamentu!⁵⁶

On 29 July 1912, the day after this encounter, Cleveland discharged Spratt and chose a former cabin boy, then among the forecabin crew, to be steward. Two days later the alien passenger manifest for the *Guiana*, sailing from Dominica, includes Spratt's name, his permanent residence as New Bedford, and, incorrectly, that he was a seaman discharged at New Bedford; the manifest also indicated that Spratt was "going to reship," which he did in October as steward on the brig *Viola*. What became of him after that departure is not known, though George and William B. Spratt, who were probably his brothers, both lived in New Bedford. If they did not arrive in the city at the same time, they came with years of each other. All are shown at the 119 South Water Street boardinghouse run by Margaret Mann in 1899 and 1900.

The proportion of West Indian whalemens to all whalemens of African descent (excepting Cape Verdeans) varied, sometimes widely, from year to year, but between 1868 and 1918 it increased rapidly (see table 5.3). In 1868 West Indians were 31 percent of all such crew, but by 1918 they were 97 percent. By the latter year all whalemens of color were foreign-born. Aside from Cape Verdeans, who formed the majority of most crews from the late 1890s—some ninety were in 1898 crews—West Indians were the next largest group. The proportion of West Indians from any given island also varied widely from year to year, but overall the proportion of St. Eustatians and St. Vincentians grew, each from about 8 percent of all West Indian crew in 1885. By 1918 37.1 percent of all West Indian crew were from St. Eustatius, 31.4 percent from Dominica, and 5.7 from St. Vincent; ten years earlier 30.8 were St. Eustatians, 26.9 percent St. Vincentians, and 11.5 percent Dominicans.⁵⁷

There is some evidence as well of social distance between Cape Verdean and West Indian whalemens. Murphy recounted the story of a West Indian man he identified only as Roderick, who, though he had never whaled before, "seems to have learnt somewhere an unlimited store of songs and chanteys. . . . This evening, in the second dogwatch, he was coaching Conrad, Feddy, Elise, John Paul, and other Dominican boys in a new one. The Portuguese sailors don't fall in with them, but stick rather to three or four well-known New Bedford songs."⁵⁸ Antonio Lopes, considered to be the last surviving whalman in New Bedford when he was interviewed in 1999, probably spoke for other Cape Verdean whalemens in his statements about West Indian crewmates. Lopes came from Cape Verde to New Bedford on the whaling schooner *Claudia* in 1922.

56. *Ibid.*, 27–28.

57. In 1908 and 1918 West Indian whalemens were also from St. Kitts and Barbados; early whalemens listed as birthplaces St. Lucia, Jamaica, Grand Cayman, Bermuda, Martinique, Antigua, Grenada, Curacao, St. Thomas, St. John, and Guadeloupe.

58. Murphy, *Log Book for Grace*, 255.

The ship I came in, was two from West Indies. One was a tough guy. Was two of them, but I didn't know them. There's two of them. But they speak English. They're from someplace called Dominique, West Indies. . . . But they are lazy. The time to row the boat, the mate used to get mad because they are very poor to pull the oars. . . . Mostly in Eustatia, he get five of them. But they are lazy. They are lazy. . . . Lot of them come [to New Bedford], stay in the West End.⁵⁹

The only West Indian Lopes excepted from this judgment was Moses Grovell, one of the boatsteerers on this voyage of the *Claudia* and the same man who had signed onto the 1907–8 voyage of the *John R. Manta* at St. Eustatius, where he had been born in May 1880.

Moses, this guy here. He's from West Indies. He teach me how to wheel the ship. . . . Also, Moses teach me the compass, the compass of the boat, how to keep boat, boat to go just so. They gotta get just so. I did the compass. Moses teach me. . . . I know Moses harpooned 29 whales that time. Moses harpooned 29 whales. He lost one . . . the other one, when he harpooned the whale here, break. So Moses took this part; the whale go with the other part. . . . So when the whale go, it goes with the harpoon in his back, because the part break here. So Moses said the whale gonna die because the harpoon is in his back.⁶⁰

Whether conditions were any worse aboard these latter-day whalers than they had earlier been cannot be determined, but evidence is abundant that they certainly had not improved. As crew accounts amply document, the clothing whalerman procured on shore before the voyage was inadequate. Murphy referred to the crew on the *Daisy* in 1912 as “tattered” only six days into the voyage from Dominica to Cape Verde, which at least suggests that they did not go on board with an outfit; on 5 August Captain Cleveland had the slop-chest casks brought on deck and distributed oil skins, boots, and other clothing as well as blankets, coats, and thread and needles to the crew. Cleveland had apparently not been candid with the crew about the route the vessel would take in pursuit of whales, and when it reached the frigid waters of the South Atlantic, Murphy noted, the Cape Verdeans and West Indians on board “shivered.” He believed their condition “has something to do with clothing as well as with conditioning, because the undergarments from the *Daisy*'s slop chest are somewhat shoddy.” Murphy hedged, however, on the Cleveland's complicity in the charges levied for slop chest goods:

I do not mean to imply that there is anything extortionate in these charges. There are, however, certain inconsistencies in the cost of the same kind of item, and I have had occasion to conclude that the charge against a sailor depends not altogether on the original wholesale cost of the article, but also somewhat upon the Old Man's mood when the entry is made. He has told me that the law allows the owners to make 12 per cent profit on the slop chest, and I am confident that they try not to cheat themselves.⁶¹

Sickness also plagued the whalermen on the *Daisy* as it did on other vessels. In February 1913, the brig was near Antarctica when a storm overtook the men then

59. Antonio Laurencio Lopes, oarsman, interview with Laura Orleans and Dorothy Lopes, 26 January 1999, New Bedford, NEBE. The incoming crew list for this voyage shows eleven West Indians in the crew.

60. Lopes interview.

61. Murphy, *Log Book for Grace*, 202, 270.

in the whaleboats. One boat's crew was forced to swim ashore, and among them, a Dominican named William Elwin, took sick and "disappeared into the black hole of the forecabin," Murphy wrote. He suggested that Elwin might have been saved by a doctor at Prince Olaf Harbor "if any effort had been made," but Elwin ultimately died on deck, where he had only hours earlier asked to be brought to lie in the sunlight. "This evening when it is all too late, Mr. Almeida has given me an idea of the hell that poor Elwin had gone through in the dark, evil-smelling, and often wet forecabin," Murphy wrote afterward. "I am learning at least that there were some on board who cared, and did their poor and ignorant best for a fellow voyager." Cleveland asked Murphy how Elwin's death should be entered in the logbook. "The words in my mind were 'neglect' and 'abuse,' but all I would allow myself to say was 'exposure.' That didn't go very well, either, and we finally compromised on rheumatic fever."⁶²

The conditions on board these vessels often moved crew members to, and sometimes over, the brink of violence. The fact that the *Daisy's* slop chest contained sheath knives with their points ground or broken off so that they would be used as tools and not as weapons indicates how near the possibility of revolt was perceived to be. The five men who had deserted the *Daisy* at Portsmouth in Dominica after only a week at sea protested to the American consul there that "they had been served only dry bread and salt meat; that they 'had suffered untold agonies from the captain's cruelties,' and that the mate had informed them that they would be shot and cast overboard when we were once well out to sea."⁶³ The food elicited protest on board as well.

The West Indians today complained about their food. The Old Man listened to what they had to say, then went forward and tasted everything. He pronounced each dish excellent except the bread, which was soggy, and this he promised to have improved. Several of the fellows were inclined to be saucy, so the skipper sent aft for a pair of handcuffs.

The green West Indians won't eat baked beans, and do not like soup or stew. Feddy Lundy cried out to the Lord to provide for him, saying he was "in a way to starve." He also told us that "mother was a proper cook," and that "she even own a cook book, she do." Captain Cleveland assured him he would be sent back to his mother damn quick when we returned to Roseau.

Elise St. Rose, reared on Dominican fruit, fish, and cassava, was even more outspoken. He recalled his rights as a freeborn British subject, albeit a black one, and just before diving down the forecabin scuttle, he shouted at the Old Man, "I shall tell my king of you!"⁶⁴

Poor shipboard conditions, intimidation, and harsh discipline could provoke uprising. Despite his obituary's statement of the uniformly placid conditions on board the vessels he commanded, Avery faced an attempted takeover of the *E. B. Conwell* on its 1890 cruise. In the West Indies "the crew started to mutiny," the log for this voyage stated; "put one in irons the rest of them had their knives ready and I gave orders to load the guns and they quieted down." William Lydney Kydd, one of the mates and logkeeper on the *William A. Grozier* in 1908, recorded another such incident on 14 June:

62. Ibid., 263–65.

63. Ibid., 16–17.

64. Ibid., 10.

At 7 a.m. Antone Cobral seaman came to the galley for his breakfast, with a heavy club to strike the cook Thomas McLean the Captain ask him for the club and he drew off to strike him with it. The mates started to put him in Irons and all the crew forward to show fight with clubs they had stowed away; and said if any men from aft came forward, they would strike them to kill. So the Capt turned back for home steering North. On account of mutiny.⁶⁵

As ever, latter-day whalemens faced the distinct possibility of simply being lost at sea, a possibility that may have been greater for them given the increasingly aged condition of the vessels left in or converted for the fleet. In 1904 the Provincetown schooner *Carrie D. Knowles* disappeared on a South Atlantic whaling voyage. Its crew of fourteen included twelve West Indians, the son of a West Indian, and a man who did not know his place of birth. The vessel's captain, Collin D. Stevenson, was a native of St. Vincent and had been the vessel's master on its previous ten voyages. Seven other St. Vincent men were on the *Knowles* for that voyage, three were from St. Eustatius, and one from Dominica. One of the men lost at sea was Henry Steadman Wallace, whose father, William T. "Old Bill" Wallace, had been a New Bedford whaleman and had founded the Bequian whaling enterprise. At least two of the crew had earlier sailed from New Bedford, sometimes on Provincetown whaling schooners that had come to the city to fill out their crews. The mate was Henry M. Martins from St. Eustatius, who had been on New Bedford whaling voyages in 1897 and 1899. St. Vincent native Robert C. Robson had been on three whaling cruises from the city.⁶⁶ In 1919 the schooner *Pedro Varela* left New Bedford never to return; its steward was the Dominican Bertie George, who had been on eight voyages to and from the city since 1901 and was assistant steward or steward on five of them.

Also in 1919 no one survived the loss of the schooner *Ellen A. Swift* at sea. Two West Indian men sailed from New Bedford on the vessel, including Charles W. Hazel, who had married James Drayton's daughter Annie in 1902. Hazel had been on ten previous whaling voyages from New Bedford, including one on the *Ellen A. Swift* in 1918 when it was overtaken and stopped by a German U-boat on the Hatteras whaling grounds. The New Bedford *Standard-Times*, unaware that Hazell was from St. Eustatius and that his wife was of Barbadian and Virginian descent, reported, "First mate Charles W. Hazell had married a Dutch girl, and he could speak the language. Perhaps that helped; perhaps the Germans were merely liberal. In any event, after considerable talk, during which the U-boat commander came aboard the *Swift*, the New Bedford whaler was ordered to return to New Bedford."⁶⁷ In 1919, as it had the year before, the *Swift* had come from Provincetown to New Bedford to recruit crew, and Hazel's son Henry told the newspaper that the vessel was in poor repair.

65. William L. Kydd, "Journal of a Whaling Voyage of the schr Wm A. Grozier in the North Atlantic 1908," private collection.

66. A James L. Hazzel from St. Eustatius was also in the crew; no age is given on the crew list for him. A James Lee Hazel was also in New Bedford crews from 1898 to 1908. The Hazel on the *Knowles* could have been on the vessel's two earliest New Bedford voyages (1898 and 1901) and a relative of the same name on the two later ones, in 1904 and 1908; the heights and ages differ somewhat from crew list to crew list.

67. "Misfortunes of Jinx Schooner Recalled by Submarine Stories," *Standard-Times*, 22 October 1939, 32.

Henry was 13 years old; he walked, holding his father's hand, down to Merrill's wharf where the *Swift* waited to sail. She had put back three times in attempts to make this voyage, for leaks, for blows and Heaven knows what—and to sailors, nothing but bad luck can come to a voyage three times thwarted. At least one of her crew refused to sail in February, 1919.

But Charles Hazell was liked by all the crew; he was a good officer, and he wasn't superstitious. He sailed in the *Ellen Swift*, with a skeleton crew, bound for the Cape Verdes to pick up a green crew. It was February, 1919; she has never been heard of since.⁶⁸

There are other indications that these last New Bedford whaling vessels were in poor shape. According to historian Joan Druett, the bark *Greyhound* returned to New Bedford in April 1919 "eaten to a shell by shipworms"; the captain had managed to get her home by tying the hull together with fluke chains.⁶⁹

Some whalemens in these years seemed to end with relatively decent settlements at the end of their voyages, but most were probably increasingly less willing to endure the risks of whaling in view of their often meager returns. On what was apparently his first voyage, on the bark *Sunbeam* in 1897, Bermudian Edward Outerbridge earned only thirteen dollars for seventeen months at sea. In 1903 Arthur Outerbridge, perhaps a brother, joined the crew of the *Golden City* at Bermuda in late May, after ten crew members had deserted there, and himself deserted at Faial four months later. In November the American consul put him and twelve other "destitute American seamen" aboard the *Rosa Maria* to be returned to New Bedford, where their passages were to be paid—perhaps, in his case, by James Avery, who was the vessel's agent. On the same voyage John A. Bosfield of Nassau, who served as cook and steward, earned \$135.55, more than any other crew member on board. But he had been at sea for seventeen months, so his average monthly income was \$9.68. Charles Hazell, the first mate on the 1912 voyage of the *A. E. Whyland*, netted \$265.05 after a cash advance and a 12.5 percent interest charge were deducted, for twenty-five months at sea. Thus he earned \$10.62 per month, which, even taking into account his free room and board, was an extremely poor return for a first mate. One *Whyland* crew member received only three dollars at the end of the voyage, and several owed money to the ship.⁷⁰ On the 1902 voyage of the *Leonora* even the owners lost money, and eight men returned in debt. Charles Dossett of St. Eustatius, who shipped as boatsteerer during the cruise, deserted at Dominica in debt to the ship for \$39.50. Dossett returned by some other vessel to New Bedford and went on at least one more whaling voyage. *Leonora* Kydd Whyte, whose Bequian father William Kydd made all five of his voyages in the *William A. Grozier*, was critical of the returns men like her father received from whaling:

I have a feeling against those who sent them out there . . . I mean everything that they had they had to buy, whether it's boots or underwear and all this, now they'd take the cost of socks or underwear and then they'd sell to the captain and then he in turn would sell to the workers, and they all made a profit on it, and yet when the workers

68. "Misfortunes of Jink Schooner." Hazell's wife lived only three years past her husband's death. Henry, their only child, remained in New Bedford for the rest of his life and worked as an elevator operator and truck driver.

69. Joan Druett, *Petticoat Whalers: Whaling Wives at Sea, 1820-1920* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), 84.

70. Cleveland Papers, vol. 6, ODHS.

came back, you know, the men that were sitting down there in the big houses, you know, big fireplaces, they're just raking in the money and they didn't have to pay income tax back then, and it was nothing but gravy, and yet they gave these workers that risked their lives so little.⁷¹

Some men, including William Kydd, made at least enough money on their voyages to send some home to their island families; after having made \$74 on his first whaling voyage, Kydd stated in a 1968 interview, "The first thing I did with it, I got back on shore and I get the pay, I sent home, I forget now how much I did send. I sent for the old lady and for her and the old man and I got to keep a bit myself."⁷² Indeed, earning money in the United States to improve the lives of those they left behind is a common motivation among immigrants generally. The difference between what they could earn in their native places and what they could earn in this country was so great that West Indians and others would take even low-wage jobs that few native-born people were willing to do. Once in the late 1910s or early 1920s William Kydd appears in effect to have settled one of his brother Lawrence's voyages. Lawrence Kydd earned \$297 on the cruise and sent \$30 to Bequia, \$20 to his mother and \$10 to a son from his first marriage (fig. 6.12).⁷³ The need to send money home probably motivated West Indian men to make multiple whaling voyages from New Bedford. A notable number of them did so, and they may also have been moved to whale so often by a persistent absence of opportunity on their native islands. Moreover, their navigation and boat-handling skills placed them in a particular niche and probably made them highly attractive to whaling captains. Clifford Ashley, who was part of the 1904 voyage of the New Bedford bark *Sunbeam*, stated that the vessel had often carried men of color on earlier voyages, "nearly all islanders, brought up from childhood with oars in their hands," men "eminently suited to the purpose; for boatmen, not seamen, are required in the whale-fishery."⁷⁴

William Kydd's story speaks to many dimensions of the West Indian experience in New Bedford whaling. Like the Ollivierre family, Kydd was descended from a white Bequian plantation owner, Peter Kydd, a Scot engineer and officer in the British army. According to William Kydd, Peter Kydd had been sent to St. Vincent toward the end of the eighteenth century to teach islanders how to cultivate and process sugar cane. He was later sent to Bequia to manage the estate of several white planters and then to the Bequia plantation known as Paget Farm. Peter Kydd is believed to have married a member of the indigenous Carib tribe, though marriage was not uncommon between whites and blacks given the profoundly greater concentration of people of African descent: in 1829, when the sugar plantation economy was at its height of prosperity, at least 1,200 of the 1,400 residents of Bequia were black.⁷⁵ Kydd's grandson Samuel, William Kydd's father, married Leonora Jane Derrick, a descendant of a British army engineer who came to St. Vincent in 1784 and built Fort Charlotte, overlooking

71. Leonora Kydd Whyte and Yvonne Whyte Drayton, interview with author, New Bedford MA, 13 August 2008. All subsequent quotations from both Whyte and Drayton are from this interview.

72. William L. Kydd, interview with William Kydd Jr., Catherine Kydd, and Vivian Kydd, New Bedford, 1968. All subsequent quotations of Kydd are from this interview unless otherwise noted.

73. Receipt from Lawrence Kydd to William Kydd, 3 September 1925, private collection.

74. Ashley, "The Blubber-Hunters,"6.

75. Bequia History website, <http://www.bequatourism.com/history.htm>.

Lawrence Kydd

Voyage #	297.00
Advance	50.00
Sent to mother	20.00
Sent to son	10.00
Paid for Board	40.00
Cash Received	80.00
Cash borrow	200.00
	15.00
	215.00
Balance	82.00

Rid

Fig. 6.12. Probably because he was not in New Bedford when the settlement for his last whaling voyage was made, Lawrence Kydd appears to have asked his brother William to receive his payment, pay off his debts, and send money to their mother and Lawrence's son in St. Vincent. William Kydd provided an accounting and turned over eighty-two dollars to Lawrence in September 1925. Private collection.

but they are just sharks, they want your money and charge you so much to board and when you're done they put you out. He said, "Now I'll tell you what I'll do. . . . You and George [Wallace], if you want I'll tie up the vessel in Fairhaven and know that you can stay there for the winter, you won't have to pay no board." He said there was a lot of food there, a lot of flour. We had opened a barrel a couple of days ago. "You all have it. You can use it. And you have potatoes. And all the things you can use. You have sugar and milk and everything there. All you have to do if you want some fresh meat, go and buy fresh meat and anything you want."

Kydd got a job scraping, washing, and drying cod in New Bedford or Fairhaven and then went out with Dunham on the *Grozier* again. "That's the time he gave me a chance to go boatsteerer," Kydd recalled. "He told me, he say, 'Now Kydd, now

Kingstown. Derrick received a land grant from King George III on what is called Derrick Hill in Bequia; William Kydd sent money home in part to pay the taxes on that part of the tract that had come to his family.

"My father, he was a seaman, he used to go to sea, get fish and the whaling and like that," William Kydd stated in an interview with two of his children in 1968. "And he had a little garden, we called it. It wasn't a farm, that they plant every June you see. And plant corn, peas and potatoes, cassava and all them things, but they were just for them to use, they never sell anything. They couldn't make enough to sell." Kydd developed maritime skills in his boyhood and appears to have come to the United States on the schooner *William A. Grozier* on its 1902 voyage, which reached Provincetown on 24 August that year. He was then twenty-three years old. He shipped on the *Grozier* again in 1903, 1904, and 1905, apparently from New Bedford. After one of these early voyages the *Grozier's* captain, George L. Dunham, helped him find a place to stay.

The old man, he said, he told me, he said, "Kydd, you're new to the states and no one come from whaling until you have a lot of money. So many sharks are going to get you into a boarding house." Said there's a lot of boardinghouse there and they try to get you in,

take the boatsteerer. If you miss the whale, you know I'm gonna break you, put you forward.' I say, 'I know that.' I say, 'I know that, Captain. You need not tell me.' But I didn't miss any. I only put my irons where they strike them." Kydd recalled having struck fifteen whales on that voyage and related his near-death experience with one of them:

The only accident I had, we were going on some whales, we were chasing them and we get so near to this whale, there was one big whale ahead and a small one behind him. And we were behind this small whale. So I said to the second mate who was steering, I said, "Keep her off, Mr. Lopes." He said, "No, Kydd." "I want that big whale," I said. He said, "No. Strike the small one, because if you pass the small one to get the big one, the small one will kick and drive the other one away." So I hold my hand and said, "Well, I'll kill him!" And I struck him with the iron and when I struck him with the iron he hit the boat and I went overboard. And so the fellow behind says, "Slack line! Man overboard!" So then the mate throw the line off, with the other hand slack the line, and I came up and they pulled me in the boat. But I wasn't in yet so I just jump overboard. . . . So after we got this little whale, the mate came down, he struck and then I cut the line off of this little one and I strike the big one. So we did get the big one after all.⁷⁶

In 1906 Kydd signed on as captain of the Lehigh Valley Railroad coal barge *Beaver*, which ran between Perth Amboy, New Jersey, Newport, Rhode Island, New Bedford, and other nearby ports. During that voyage Kydd noted in his journal on 21 November 1906 that his brother James "went to New Bedford to see Jane"; Jane was their sister, and she and James had come to the United States together in early October. Jane had married Newton Ollivierre, then living in New Bedford at 310 Middle Street, the home of Robert H. Coblins, a mariner and laborer from St. Eustatius who had lived in New Bedford since the mid-1880s; his daughter Ethel later married Lawrence Kydd, another sibling. William Kydd himself was in New Bedford three times during the *Beaver's* voyage, at one point spending a week in the city.

It may have been during his week in New Bedford that Kydd met his future wife Annis Clara L. King. She was the daughter of Isaiah J. King, who was born about 1848 in the District of Columbia and had come to New Bedford about 1855 with his parents Isaiah and Elizabeth. In 1873 Isaiah King Jr. married Sarah H. Brown, whose father was the caulker John H. D. Brown. Brown had come to New Bedford from Baltimore about 1845. In 1902 Clara King's sister Emma had married Charles Henry Drayton, the son of James Arthur Drayton; in fact, none of the three King daughters married African Americans. Kydd described meeting Clara King:

We came here to New Bedford [on the barge] and we were laying here. . . . We arrived down to Drayton, you know Jim Drayton. . . . When Jane came here, my sister Jane, she stayed with Drayton. So we all, I came here on the barge and then we all went out in the stream, so we all went out there, had like a picnic at night. . . . Drayton's father, this Cliff Drayton's father was going with my wife's sister, see, her name was Emma. So we all knew each other. So this other Drayton asked him out to the barge so we went out there one night like a picnic and that's when I met Clara.

In May 1906 Kydd sailed on the *Grozier* again, returned with the vessel in July, and in August 1908 he and Clara King married and moved to Perth Amboy. But Clara missed

76. Lopes was probably Cape Verdean John M. Lopes, born about 1860 and a resident of Harwich; he served with Kydd on both the 1903 and 1904 voyages of the *Grozier*.

New Bedford, and the couple soon returned to her home city. Kydd's last whaling voyage was on the *Grozier* in 1910, shortly after his first child, Vivian, was born.

I used to come back and forth, you know, come home. Then after a while I give up the barge and I went whaling, one voyage. . . . I can't remember the date or the year. But anyhow she was born then. So I was out there one week, I sat down on the watch and I say, then I say, "Suppose"—couldn't make up me mind, you know—"Suppose I go out and that child is dead." And my God, I felt so sorry I had me a regular cry. I said never again will I come whaling. I come back and never go out again. When I come back home, Dunham he wanted me to go with him, just before he, it was right before he was lost [on the *Ellen A. Swift* in 1919]. He tell me, he said, "Kydd, if you want to go to whaling again, I want to give you mate," he said, "but the mate is come down after tomorrow and I can't change. I'd take you as me mate." So I tell him, "That's all right." But that time I was out of a job. I was only out two or three weeks, then I get a job. Though I never go whaling again.

William Kydd got work ashore at the New Bedford Foundry and Machine Company on South Water Street and then in construction on two cotton mills. In 1916 he became the janitor at the New Bedford *Standard-Times*, a position he held for thirty years. But his interviews intimate that Kydd looked back positively on his whaling days. Herbert Ollivierre's father George Ferdinand Ollivierre, called "Albert," first went whaling from St. Vincent when he was fourteen years old and often told his children stories about his life at sea.

My father, he told us that he was third mate, and of course he could read stars and he could write. Now when they were kids they had to go to school, and the nuns [taught them]—that was a British island, that was British territory, and you couldn't say nothing about the Union Jack, or you could be in real deep trouble in a hurry—so they wrote, and they could read stars and all that kind of stuff. So he wound up being able to steer the boat, and he wound up third mate. . . . I don't know if you ever talked to anybody that actually went whaling, but listening to him—my mother used to get mad with him talking to us, because she would say, "Those kids need an education; never mind your foolishness. You'll get them kids all messed up."

My father said there's a few times that he lived because a hand reached down in the water and pulled him up. And he said, "The Hand of God," and my mother'd say, "Shut up with that foolishness." But it was somebody from one of the other boats come over because they saw the boat get smashed, and the hand of God reached out. But that was all part of whaling, I guess. I mean I don't think I'd have rushed out there myself. . . . But yeah, he said he left the islands when he was fourteen and never went back.⁷⁷

Nor did William Kydd, though some of his brothers and other Kydd relations did (fig. 6.13). Little record is left of Lyman and Timothy Kydd, whalers who may have been his cousins. Alfred and Cyrus Kydd, who also might have been cousins, were boatsteerers; Morris Sederholm signed both of them onto the crew of the schooner *Margarett* in 1922. They too do not seem ever to have lived in the city. William's younger brother Ernest Ferdinand Kydd, born about 1893, was in New Bedford long enough to register for the draft and to work at Fairhaven's Atlas Tack Company. His older brother Lawrence Leopold Kydd was a boatsteerer on six whaling voyages out of New Bedford between 1915 and 1917. During the war he lived at 6 Chestnut Street and also worked

77. Herbert Ollivierre, interview with author, New Bedford, 23 March 2009. All subsequent quotations of Ollivierre are from this interview.

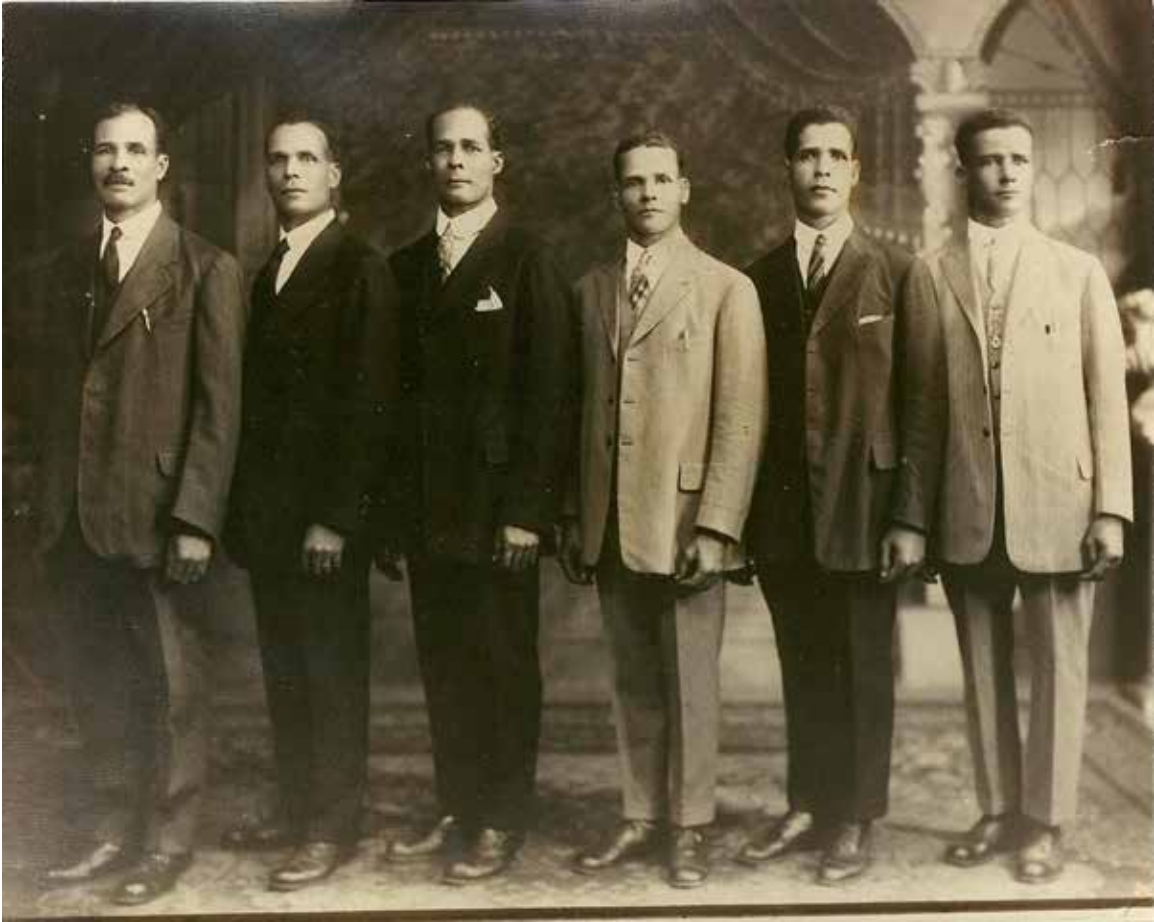


Fig. 6.13. The Kydd brothers, undated photograph. From left William, James, Lawrence, Henry, Ernest, and Randolph. Of the six, only Randolph did not emigrate to the United States. Private collection.

at Atlas Tack. In 1925, by which time Lawrence had married Ethel Coblins, the couple lived with her parents at 310 Middle Street. But within five years Lawrence and Ernest moved to Perth Amboy, where both had lived in the late 1910s. William's other brothers James and Randolph also lived there, though Randolph only for a time; he was the only one of the Kydd brothers who did not settle in the United States. "Some of the brothers went to New York, the New York area," Leonora Kydd White recalled. "They lived—one was in Perth Amboy New Jersey, and they shipped out of Perth Amboy when they stopped whaling, and they boarded ships that ran down the coast. Maybe did other things." Marion Embrose Henderson, born in New Bedford in 1922 and a virtual lifelong resident of the West End, named other West Indian families who moved entirely or partly to New York City, including the Timmers and Groebes.⁷⁸

Parts of other New Bedford West Indian families—the Hazels, the Gumbs, the Ollivierres, and the Hodgeses—also lived in Perth Amboy, and relatives and friends from that city and from Brooklyn, where another large group of West Indians lived,

78. Marion Embrose Henderson, interview with author, 28 January 2009.

kept in touch. Yvonne Drayton, one of William Kydd's grandchildren, remembers their visits, as well as some of Kydd's whaling friends. Nathaniel Dewer was a boatsteerer on eight New Bedford voyages and in the crew with Kydd on two voyages of the *Grozier*. "I just vaguely remember him and Cy Kydd coming to Ash Street, that would have been in the forties, early forties, coming from New York," Drayton said. "They were still going on boats of some kind. I don't know—they used to come and Mr. Barbour used to come to my grandfather's house, and it would be them and sometimes Uncle Larrie and sometimes Uncle James. But they were all New York based. A lot of them lived in Brooklyn."⁷⁹ Herbert Ollivierre remembered not seeing a great deal of his father when he was a boy, for he, like many other West Indian men, did other maritime work after whaling.

He was gone an awful lot, because when he left whaling, he went back—as he said he was a man of the sea. He believed he was a man of the sea. . . . He injured his back on board one of the barges. A barrel got free and he thought he could wrestle it in a storm. Lucky he didn't get killed. But he really wrenched his back out and was laid up for a few months. But he couldn't sit still so he wound up getting a watchman's job at the ropeworks. Had to do something. . . . He was just walking through the mill at night, talking to everybody and anybody he met, telling them stories about the hand of God, I guess.

William Kydd was far from the only West Indian with siblings living in New Bedford. Robert P., John W., Frank V., and Peter John Houtman, the children of Valincourt and Rosanna Auker (sometimes shown as Anchor) Houtman, were born in St. Eustatius in the 1870s and 1880s and were all in New Bedford by 1910. John was probably the first, having emigrated in 1886; in November 1898 he shipped on the whaling schooner *Adelia Chase*, and in 1905 he married an African American woman from Providence. Frank Houtman emigrated in 1893 and was living at Margaret Mann's South Water Street boardinghouse on South Water Street by 1900. He was listed as a mariner, but he was probably in the merchant marine; his name does not appear on post-1893 crew lists. By 1900 Robert was living with John on Cedar Street and working as a ropemaker. In 1907 Peter John emigrated about 1904, married in Fall River, and by 1910 was living in New Bedford and working as a janitor; by 1930 he had moved to Pasadena, California. And in 1910 Sarah C. Houtman married the Philadelphian Benjamin E. Irons in New Bedford.

In 1900 only forty-four West Indians were recorded as New Bedford residents, but the number increased to 233 first- and second-generation islanders in 1905 and to 1,250 by 1915. West Indian men who joined the crews of New Bedford whalers and then chose to settle in the city appear to have triggered the community's initial growth; their presence and the availability of wage labor drew family and friends afterward. Some West Indian women came alone to New Bedford: Clara Griffith came from her native Barbados to the United States on the *S. S. Cearnese*. She paid her own passage and went from Ellis Island to live with her sister Lydia Pollard in New Bedford; later she married Alexander Clark, a native of St. Eustatius.

On the whole, however, there were twice as many West Indian-born men as women in New Bedford in 1905, no doubt due largely to whaling. That imbalance

79. Mr. Barbour was probably Alfred Barbour from St. Vincent, who was in New Bedford by 1900 and working as a mariner.

accounts in part for the high rate of intermarriage between West Indians and African Americans. The three daughters of Ella Carter all married West Indian men. Two of the three daughters of Isaiah King also did. And James Arthur Drayton and two of his sons, James Arthur Jr. and Charles, married African American women. The sex ratio between second-generation West Indian men and women—those born in the United States but whose parents were born in the West Indies—was nearly equal in 1905, suggesting that family formation was well advanced even at this early date. Indeed, nearly two-thirds of the population of West Indian descent in that year were second-generation West Indians. There was also, to a lesser degree, some intermarriage between West Indians and Cape Verdeans. Rosetta King, the third daughter of Isaiah King, married Cesar Senna, born in Brava about 1880. Leonora Kydd Whyte stated, “My grandmother and her son-in-law Cesar, his name was Senna, and my grandmother said she wouldn’t have any grandchild named Senna, so she changed their name to Spencer. I guess among his own people he was still Senna.”

The number of first-generation West Indian men who were single or who came alone and lived in New Bedford however briefly opened up opportunities to earn income by boarding them. At this time where a seaman might stay might have been determined in much the same way James Templeman Brown described it in 1887:

The boarding-house keepers “drum up” customers in different ways. Some of them write letters to their friends or relatives in their native islands, requesting them to notify the whalers who ship on American vessels that touch at their ports for supplies and men that board and lodging can be obtained upon their arrival at such and such a number on a certain street in New Bedford. As soon as a whale-ship is reported, the boarding-house keepers and outfitters charter a small vessel and board the whaler, usually after she gets in to the harbor. In some cases, I am told, the foreigners arriving in this country for the first time, have letters from parties in their native islands addressed to the New Bedford boarding-house keepers. In this case, the immigrants gladly avail themselves of their opportunities; but if they have no letters, they become the prey of the “sharks.”⁸⁰

A notable number of West Indian men boarded in the West End with other West Indians. Moses Grovell always boarded with West Indian families there: in 1918 he lived in the 310 Ash Street home of George R. Groebe, a St. Eustatian who was in the United States by about 1908 when he married a woman from the same island in Fall River. How many people George Groebe boarded overall is unclear, but his household as listed in the 1920 census included him, his wife, his four children, a nephew, and three boarders, all from his native island. The three men all worked as spinners at New Bedford Cordage Company and had all come from St. Eustatius the year before on three different whaling vessels. The Haddocks family also boarded West Indian men on Cedar Street in the West End. Richard A. Haddocks, born in 1873 on St. Eustatius, came to New Bedford on a whaling vessel in 1896. He sailed on at least one other voyage before taking a job at New Bedford Gas Company. Haddocks married Clara Carter, who was born in Maryland in 1876 and appears to have come to New Bedford with her mother Ella. Ella Carter owned 50 (later 66) Cedar Street, and by 1910 there were three boarders in the house (fig. 6.14). By 1920 there were eight, seven of them employed at the ropeworks. Five were from Dominica, one from Trinidad, one from Montserrat, and one from Barbados.

80. Brown, “Whalemen, Vessels, and Boats,” 221.



Fig. 6.14. The Richard and Clara Haddocks house, 66 Cedar Street, New Bedford. Courtesy New Bedford Historical Society.

Sarah Houtman Irons ran a boardinghouse on 10 West High Street that also housed many West Indian men. The house belonged to her mother-in-law Caroline Irons, who may have boarded people there at an earlier time. The Irons family—Caroline, her husband William H., and three of their children, ten-year-old Benjamin, six-year-old Helen, and Sebina—appear to have moved from Philadelphia to Martha's Vineyard, where the two girls were born, and then to New Bedford by 1893. By 1900 William Irons had died, and by 1910 Caroline and Benjamin were living at 10 West High Street. By that time he had married Sarah Houtman, and his sister Helen married St. Eustatian Samuel Burgland. By 1917 either Caroline or Sarah Irons was running a boardinghouse at this address. Incoming whaling crew lists from 1917 show a number of West Indies who gave the Irons boardinghouse as their destination, including nine of the fifteen members of the crew of the schooner *Margarett* in 1917. By 1920 there were eleven boarders at 10 West High Street, ten of them from St. Eustatius and one from Antigua. All had emigrated between 1901 and 1919. Four were ropemakers, one a longshoreman, and six were working in cotton mills at unspecified jobs. Charlotte Winborne also briefly operated a boardinghouse in the West End, at 326 Ash Street. Though not herself West Indian, her daughter Louise married Sarah Irons's brother Frank Houtman in 1907. Born about 1852, Winborne, her husband Henry, and their six children moved to New Bedford from Hertford, North Carolina, about 1890. By the time of her husband's death in 1906, Charlotte Winborne was living at 326 Ash and had begun boarding West Indian men. In 1917 she boarded six of the fifteen men in the crew of the *A. M. Nicholson*, five of them from Dominica.

West Indian and other men of African descent also boarded on the waterfront in at least three houses, more often than not with keepers who were not West Indian. An exception was Andrew C. Henley, a native of Barbados who lived in a South Water Street boardinghouse with his wife and son in 1900 and ran his own house at 18 South Second in 1920. Boarding with Henley's family of eight were Alexander Nanton, a longtime whaleman from St. Vincent, as well as two men of color from St. Helena. Two other boardinghouses in the waterfront district were run by African American widows; whether they may be classified as "sharks" is impossible to know. Abbie Gant, born about 1878 in the District of Columbia, had settled in New Bedford about 1914 and ran a restaurant on South Water Street in that year. By 1920 she began boarding men at 199 South Water Street, where James Arthur Drayton had lived from about 1902 to about 1917. In 1920 Gant boarded fifteen men at that address, twelve of them from the British West Indies who had emigrated the year before. Thirteen of these men were deckhands on whaling vessels, but none of them remained in New Bedford. Gant also boarded a Cape Verdean whaleman and two African Americans who worked as longshoremen.

In 1900 at 119 South Water Street, and later at other locations, Margaret Mann operated a boardinghouse (fig. 6.15). The frame house at 119 South Water Street was one of the oldest in the city, having been built in 1767 for the whaling merchant John Howland. Mann, born about 1836 in Virginia, had lived in Baltimore in 1870 with her husband William, an oyster shucker. By 1887 she had come alone to New Bedford and worked as a midwife, an occupation she continued to pursue after opening her boardinghouse. In 1900 fifteen men boarded at 119 South Water, including seven West Indians (incorrectly identified as Portuguese); twelve of the fifteen were working as sailors. Five years later Mann was forced to leave the house (fig. 6.16). Local historian Henry B. Worth described a photograph taken of her and two unidentified children at the time of her eviction:

For many years before its removal, the John Howland house was occupied by colored people. When the property was purchased by the Fall River Cotton Brokers, they ordered the tenant Mrs. Mann to vacate. She refused and they proceeded to demolish the house. They took out the windows and doors and had begun to tear down the chimney when she decided that it was time to move. This picture represents the last of her household effects while she was waiting for a vehicle to transfer them to another part of the city.⁸¹

By 1908 Margaret Mann was living at 47 First Street, still in the waterfront area, and by 1910 she had moved to a house close by at 9 Madison Street. In that year she boarded five men of African descent, two of them West Indian and three African American. In 1918 she was rooming in the West End household of Martha James, a seventy-two-year-old widow also born in Virginia. In 1930 Mann, who then claimed to be more than one hundred years old, was a tenant at the New Bedford Home for the Aged, a West End institution founded in 1908 by Elizabeth Carter Brooks, a Virginia native and longtime New Bedford resident who had been president of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs from 1908 to 1912.

81. Nicholas Whitman, *A Window Back: Photography in a Whaling Port* (New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 1994), 119.



Fig. 6.15. The John Howland house, South Water Street, New Bedford. Built about 1767, the house had been housing boarders for decades by the time Margaret Mann lived there around 1900. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

West Indians Shoreside

Shoreside work for West Indian whalers who settled in New Bedford varied little from what had traditionally been available to African American men. Violet Johnson has noted that 40 percent of West Indian immigrants to Boston between 1910 and 1950 were skilled workers, but they nonetheless could secure work only in service—janitors, doormen, porters, waiters, and messengers—and as laborers, especially on the docks unloading sugar and banana boats, often those owned by the United Fruit Company. West Indian women were strictly confined to service work, as domestics, cooks, and nannies.⁸² A substantially identical range of narrow opportunity confronted West Indians in New York City.⁸³

There were West Indian men in the skilled whaling trades, but with whaling in rapid decline by the time of their immigration they were few. After whaling had ended and the C. E. Beckman Company sail loft had begun to make awnings and yacht sails,

82. Johnson, *Other Black Bostonians*, 25–31.

83. Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations*, 46–53.



Fig. 6.16. Margaret Mann at the time of her eviction, 1905. Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

workers were hired by the day. Beckman employee Mario Souza recalled, “During the 30s, early 30s, men from the West Indies would come here early in the morning asking for a job and then he’d go pick ‘em out, you, you, you. You can go work for the day and work in the sails.”⁸⁴ Of forty West Indian men living in New Bedford who registered for the draft during World War I, eight were whalemens (seven of them working for James Avery), six worked for New Bedford Cordage Company, five worked for the Center Street junk dealer and whaling agent John McCullough, four worked for the Snell and Simpson bakery, and three worked at Atlas Tack Company.⁸⁵ In the 1920s the overwhelming majority of West Indian men and women in the workforce were employed at one time or another, and sometimes for years, by New Bedford Cordage

84. Mario Souza, interview with Laura Orleans, in Laura Orleans, “Places of Whaling Ethnography Project: Final Report” (New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, 25 February 2002).

85. Of the remaining fourteen men, one was employed on a coasting vessel, one by a steamship company, one by New Bedford Gas Company, and four were in industrial work in city cotton mills or Morse Twist Drill. There was also a gardener, a minister, a building laborer, and three unemployed men, one of them in jail.

Company, as were many Cape Verdeans; there were smaller concentrations at Atlas Tack Company and New Bedford Gas and Edison Light Company. Herbert Ollivierre described his recollection of the tasks West Indian men performed at the gasworks:

A lot of them did trimming down there. Trimming is when the barges came in with coal, they unloaded the coal, and then coal could be taken out with a scoop, and then there's coal around the edges and the side; well, after the scoop takes out what it can then it sits on the bottom, and then they need strong backs and arms to go and shovel it in, and that's called trimming. And they used to do trimming. My Uncle Jim George was one of them. . . . I can vaguely remember him, big hands, big man, fairly quiet, very deep voice.

James Alexander or "Jim" George was a native of St. Vincent and may have come to New Bedford aboard the schooner *Ellen A. Swift*. He took two whaling voyages in that vessel in 1907 and 1908, and by 1910 he was working on the New Bedford docks. In 1912 George went whaling again, on the *Valkyrie*, and he is shown on the *Margarett's* incoming crew lists in 1918 and 1919. By 1920 he was back on the docks working as a checker, but in 1921 he got a job at New Bedford Gas, where he worked at least until 1932.

New Bedford Cordage Company was the city's foremost ropeworks and the preeminent supplier of line to the whaling industry for decades. In the nineteenth century its workforce appears to have been very largely Caucasian, but by the turn of the century many if not most of its employees were of Portuguese descent. By that time the company's financial situation was precarious. The mill was not running at its full capacity in April 1902 when first women and then men ropeworkers went on strike for a 10 percent increase in their wages. Men then received \$4.50 to \$6.50 a week; the women sought \$5.00 per week. The ropeworks strike lasted eight days and did not succeed.⁸⁶ As was the case with whaling, cordage factory owners might have turned to newer immigrants—among them West Indians and Cape Verdeans—shortly afterward on the grounds that they would work for the prevailing wage and would be less contentious; Marion Henderson recalled few African Americans having been employed at the ropeworks. Cordage company records are absent for this period, and an exhaustive survey of censuses and city directories would be necessary to establish that transition.

Though perhaps no more so than any of the city's many textile mills, work at the cordage company could be difficult and hazardous. "What I recall most was the vibration of the floor when they were reeling rope and the terrible noise," Robert Sala, whose Italian immigrant father Chesro worked at New Bedford Cordage from 1936 to 1959, recalled. "There was also the aroma of hemp, and later, sisal mixed with that of oil. . . . The jobs could be dangerous and every man carried a large sharp knife. In the reeling department one could get his foot [or] leg caught up in the running rope and only a swift slice would keep him from going into the machine."⁸⁷ In 1904, according to one account, the company's plant was "undercapitalized" and was shut

86. On the cordage company strike see "The Strike at the Cordage Works," *Evening Standard*, 9 April 1902, 8:2; "Cordage Factory Matters," *ibid.*, 10 April 1902, 7:3; "Cordage Factory," *ibid.*, 11 April 1902, 4:3; "The Cordage Factory Strike," *ibid.*, 12 April 1902, 1:4; "Cordage Works Strike," *ibid.*, 15 April 1902, 1:4; "Backbone of Strike Broken" *ibid.*, 17 April 1902, 2:2.

87. Orleans, "Places of Whaling."

down while its directors initiated a stock offering. Enough stock was sold to pay three-quarters of the ropeworks's debt, but the company was nonetheless sold in August 1905 to the New York rope and twine manufacturer Travers Brothers Company. That company failed two years later, and a group composed largely of New Bedford people bought most of its assets. In July 1909 a massive fire destroyed much of the ropeworks complex. According to the *Evening Standard*, the main building at the plant caught fire "from the picker room at the factory where a blaze started in a mass of hemp being shreaded by the huge machines, spread with lightning rapidity through the oil soaked walls to the main building which is now a total loss." The report continued, "The origin of the fire is believed to have been spontaneous combustion, especially if there was grit in the hemp which was being fed the picking machines."⁸⁸ The works was rebuilt and was doing well during the war years, but by the 1920s production was cut nearly in half, the work force shrunk, and many full-time employees were compelled to take part-time work.⁸⁹

Whether West Indians then or now harbored grievances about the ropeworks is difficult to determine. "A job's a job," Leonora Kydd Whyte stated. "You don't think of it as good or bad. You're just glad you've got one." That must have been particularly true in the 1920s, when the prosperity of the local textile industry, and thus of the city generally, began to plummet. By 1930 unemployment in New Bedford stood at 10 percent, double the national average, and some two-thirds of its mills had collapsed. By 1937 unemployment in the city was 33 percent, still twice as high as in the nation as a whole.⁹⁰ Even though West Indians and other people of color were not likely to get skilled textile jobs, the state of the economy must have been daunting enough.

Even as the incomes of people of color were generally damped down by persistent discrimination, through at least the first half of the 1900s the West End remained a remarkably stable neighborhood of homeowners and long-term renters. The historic core of African American settlement—the rectangle formed by Elm Street on the south, Ash Street on the west, Kempton Street on the north, and Summer Street on the east—continued to be populated largely by African Americans, West Indians, and some Cape Verdeans, the last of whom were sometimes brought to the neighborhood by marriage. Marion Henderson moved to Elm from Chancery Street in 1934 and described the neighborhood she knew in the mid- to late 1930s. "When I lived on Chancery Street the neighbors across the street were white, the neighbors next door and around the corner on Kempton Street. The house on the side near Mill Street changed a lot; white people lived there too. White and black moved in and out. Then when we moved over on Elm Street, it was all black. Ash Street, Cedar Street, Middle, and Elm were all black. Now Elm Street on one side was all black, then you go up above [it] was integrated."

Over time the block of Ash Street between Kempton and Middle housed an increasing number of West Indians. In 1907 Peter John Houtman lived on this block,

88. "\$250,000 Blaze," *Evening Standard*, 23 July 1909, 1:3–4.

89. Martin Walter, Jr., "Memoir of the New Bedford Cordage Co." (Typescript, 1968), New Bedford Cordage Company Records, MSS 1, Series G, Box 15, Volume 1, ODHS.

90. Seymour L. Wolfbein, *The Decline of a Cotton Textile City: A Study of New Bedford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 29, 30, 34, 39, 60, 101.

and Charles H. Drayton lived in his father-in-law's house at 67 Ash. By 1920 they were joined there by the families of George Groebe, William Kydd, Robert Houtman, Eustace Minot (a Jamaican-born cook on an unspecified vessel), and the widow of Charles Dossett of St. Eustatius, who had been on four whaling crews from New Bedford between 1900 and 1907. By 1930 the family of James Alexander George had also moved to this Ash Street block. Horatio Edinborough, a native of St. Kitts who had been on one whaling voyage in 1898, lived at 82 Cedar Street and opened a barber shop on Union Street. On his block of Cedar Street between Elm and Kempton in 1924, eighteen of the twenty-six householders were of African descent, and four of those were West Indian, one from St. Kitts; by 1930 another St. Kitts native moved to this block. On Elm Street between Summer and Ash Streets twenty-four of forty-six householders were of African descent, seven of those twenty-four West Indian; they clustered in particular around the African Methodist Church. On Middle between Summer and Ash twenty-four of sixty-two householders were African American or West Indian; between Sullivan and Cedar only one household may not have been of color. In 1924 West Indians Joseph Leplace, Robert Houtman, Clarence Busby, and John Merkman lived at 308, 309, 310, and 312 Middle respectively; all of them were from St. Eustatius, three had come to New Bedford on whaling vessels, and they were all, at one time or another in these years, ropeworks employees.

Among West Indians who settled, there appears generally to have been little inclination to return to their native islands. When Williston and Henry Houtman were boys, in the 1910s, their mother Maria Solomon Houtman took them back to the Dutch West Indies, where they began school, but they soon returned to New Bedford. Randolph Kydd, William Kydd's youngest brother, returned to Bequia and remained in the West Indies; his parents and his sisters Lydia and Vivian never came to the United States. William Kydd and his wife returned to visit Bequia twice, the first time by boat. "It took them ten days to sail to Bequia, and when he went in the middle, late 40s he flew down and when he flew back he flew into New York," Yvonne Drayton recalled. "And he was fascinated because he brought flying fish wrapped in old-style tinfoil and it was still warm when he got to New York. And he thought that was—this was a man who, it would take weeks for any of the voyages that he made but to have this flying fish still warm was just beyond belief." Kydd's brother Ernest, however, would not return to his native island. "He lived to be a hundred and three, and he would not go back to Bequia but he would go back to Anguilla, where his wife came from," Drayton said. "Every year he'd vote, and then he'd leave after he voted; he'd come back the next spring." Her mother Leonora added, "He used to leave when the wind hit him in the back of his neck. Every time. Wind hit the back of his neck in July."

Even as they regarded the United States as their permanent home, in the earliest decades of their settlement in New Bedford West Indians held on to some aspects of the heritage of their home islands. Yvonne Drayton remembered a sense of distinction, however subtle, between British and Dutch West Indians.

When I was young the British Empire was still somewhat intact, on its last legs, but the perception of the British people—and they were still British citizens at that time—versus French or Dutch citizens, had, probably in the eyes of a lot of the community, more status, if you will. And that just was. . . . They were all West Indians, versus the rest of the world, but there were social situations where the

Dutch West Indians were the Dutch West Indians and the British West Indians were the British West Indians, and you were different people. Part of it may have had something to do with the spoken language, because British West Indians spoke with more British-sounding accents . . . and I assume that in some of the French and Dutch islands they spoke with some kind of a patois or dialect that accented the way they spoke differently.

Others remember what they termed a “brogue” among the older West Indians. The predominant “tongue” in the Dutch Antilles is, as Robert Cushman Murphy noted, Papiamentu, a dialect combining elements of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and the native Arawak language. “My father used, when he was kidding, he could speak the brogue,” Gloria Hill recalled of her father Henry Houtman, who had spent time as a boy on his parents’ native St. Eustatius. “He didn’t speak it regularly, but if he wanted to, you know, joke around or wanted to let us know what it sounded like he would speak in the brogue. . . . He said that they did speak a Creole with the Dutch when he was young, but he must have lost it all. But he would speak in the language, just for kidding.” Herbert Ollivierre stated that his father’s accent was “light, but not as bad as some of them. Oh God, in the old days, it was, every other man in the West End had an accent. They were either British West Indian, French West Indian, or Dutch West Indian. And I mean, this was a hell of a neighborhood.” Gloria Hill remembered Herman Burgland, a St. Eustatian who came to New Bedford from St. Kitts on the whaling schooner *Margarett* in 1918 and later worked at the cordage company. “I remember, I was working, I was a grown woman, early twenties, and I used to walk to work. I worked downtown, I lived up on Ash Street. And he said, what’d he say, ‘That’s a pretty West Indian gal.’ He spoke the brogue, all the time.” And Marion Henderson remembered Helena George, a native of St. Eustatius who emigrated about 1904 and whose husband James was a whaleman and dock worker.

Her son James went to school with me and he used to raise Cain. His mother was a little short lady and would come with her West Indian accent and yell at the teacher. So we always used to get James to do something wrong so his mother would come. Whenever he did something wrong his mother would come up. They were in the hall but we could hear her. We used to love to see her come to the school.

Beyond language British and Dutch West Indians retained a sense of distinctiveness in other ways, one of the most obvious being cuisine. Marion Henderson remembered eating plantains and pineapple pie at the houses of her West Indian friends. Yvonne Drayton said, “I can remember eating different stuff in the Burglands’ house and maybe the Haddocks’ house than I would ever eat at home. I think that there . . . were styles of eating that were handed down by whatever ethnic group controlled the islands the people came from, and that’s just the way it was. Not so much dishes as styles of cooking. I would say the food we ate was somewhat more bland than the food that the Dutch West Indians in particular ate.”

Leonora Kydd Whyte could recall only one dish her father made that was distinctly not American. “I remember a dish that my father used to cook, and that was called souse, and it was pigs’ feet and they’d put them down in a great big vat, I call it, with vinegar and lemon and a lime and all kind of hot peppers and onion and everything and put it, they’d call it putting it down, and it’d stay there for weeks

and weeks, you know, the longer it stayed the better it tasted,” she said. “It wasn’t my kind of dish.” Souse, at least as William Kydd made it, is distinctly Caribbean and is sometimes called head cheese or “brawn.” Some recipes use the head of a pig or calf and other edible parts of the animal, including the tongue and heart. These parts are simmered until the meat falls from the bones, and the meat is then strained from the bones, returned to its gelatinous broth, seasoned, and chilled until it had set and could be sliced. Herbert Ollivierre also recalled the universal appeal of seafood among West Indians.

I know one thing. They all loved fish. All of them loved fish. My father could eat fish three times a day and probably a snack before he goes to bed. And he has told stories about when they were together, they would pile the bones in front of one of the guys to make him look like he was a pig, not sharing. But they would polish the bones. They could polish bones. I mean, they’d have the whole fish, and when they got done there was bones. . . They did stuff like that as an enjoyment.

Other customs were retained: the British West Indians in New Bedford had a cricket club that competed against clubs from other cities, and the Dutch West Indians may have established a chapter of the Orange Aid Society, a benevolent association based in New York City. Every year Dutch West Indians in New Bedford traveled by bus to Harlem to attend the Orange Ball, which marks the 1909 birth of Netherlands Queen Juliana (reign 1948–80). Orange Balls are held in the Netherlands and in many other parts of the world with Dutch populations. Gloria Hill remembers attending the ball as a teenager in the 1950s:

In New York, they have what they call an Orange Aid Society, don’t ask me what it meant or whatever it was. But they have a dance every year and for years busses went up, a bus went up—these were all Dutch West Indians, now—and they’d go up to Harlem, it was. I went once with my parents. . . . I remember going up there and staying with the Leslies. . . . When we went to the Orange Aid Ball, I felt very strange because they sang the national anthem for the Netherlands, you know.⁹¹

Some West Enders remember a residual political distinctiveness as well. Herbert Ollivierre remembers that West Indians irrespective of the island of origin “all argued together. They always argued about which was the better, whether the Queen or the King; that foolishness went on and on and on. I don’t believe it ever ended.”

Dutch West Indians also formed a church in New Bedford known as St. Ambrose African Orthodox Church (fig. 6.17). The church grew out of a mission established in the city in 1927—only two years before the African Orthodox Church was formed—by the Rev. Arthur Stanley Trotman, who had been pastor at churches in Boston and Cambridge. The national church had been founded by George Alexander McGuire, a native of Antigua who had become an associate of Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association in New York. The church was Episcopalian or “old Catholic” and, according to one historian, “highly race conscious,” its primary devotees being Americans of West Indian descent. Clara Haddocks, an African American who had married the Dutch West Indian Richard Haddocks, was an early congregant and “the guiding spirit of St. Ambrose,” according to the local newspaper. St. Ambrose was first housed at the Community Hall at 318 Middle Street and was

91. Leslie was Hill’s “Uncle Bertie,” or Albert Leslie, born in St. Eustatius about 1885, who went on four whaling voyages to and from New Bedford between 1906 and 1922. Leslie lived with the Robert Houtman family and married Leona Seals of New Bedford.



Fig. 6.17. St. Ambrose African Orthodox Church, Kempton Street, 22 July 1960. A section of the church's west wall caved in when a building next door, condemned and then being removed, collapsed, twisted, and struck the church. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

at two other sites before it took up its permanent location in a former store at 416 Kempton Street in November 1943; at that time the church had twenty-five members. It closed during urban renewal in the 1970s.⁹²

Despite the existence of St. Ambrose, Dutch West Indians appear to have been just as apt to attend other historically African American churches and, if of Roman Catholic heritage, Catholic churches in the city. Both Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church and Douglass Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church had West Indian congregants. Gloria Hill said of New Bedford's West Indians in general, "They weren't that cohesive. And they all didn't go to the same church. . . . They went to their wives' church. Most of them didn't marry West Indians. My father didn't go to church, but my mother's family was in the church." Herbert Ollivierre, whose mother was born in Delaware, went to the Zion Church. Hill attended Bethel AME, as did Leonora Kydd Whyte and a number of other West Indian families; it may be that the William Kydds joined Bethel because his wife's family, the Kings, were members.

92. See Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations*, 63–64, and Robert J. Barcelos, "St. Ambrose Church Traces Her Heritage to Apostles," *Standard-Times*, 10 January 1965, 12.

CHAPTER 7

ST. HELENIANS IN NEW BEDFORD WHALING

Even as West Indians in most years made up a minor proportion of latter-day whaling crews and of New Bedford's settled population, men from the South Atlantic island of St. Helena—one of the remotest islands on earth, some thousand miles due west of the south coast of Angola—comprised an even smaller share of both. Like West Indians, though, they were sometimes an overwhelming presence on crews, overshadowing even Cape Verdeans. In addition, their presence in both crews and the city is wholly attributable to the presence of whaling vessels in these places.

A British possession since 1683, St. Helena (fig. 7.1) developed ties to New Bedford whaling in the late eighteenth century, later than commercial ties were established between the city and the West Indies. Vessels from the New Bedford custom district were whaling on the coast of South Africa from 1792, when the ship *Eliza* went to Woolwich Bay. Vessels from Gloucester, Cape Cod, Boston, and Nantucket had whaled there, at the Cape of Good Hope, and elsewhere along the coast from the 1760s.¹ St. Helena was uninhabited when Europeans first came upon it, and it was populated with the sole aim of provisioning oceangoing vessels. Discovered by the Portuguese in 1502, the island lies between Cape Verde and the Cape of Good Hope “in the track of the almost constant south-east trade wind,” historian Philip Gosse has noted; the bay at what is now Jamestown, the island's capital on its northeast side, was protected by massive cliffs and made a far safer harbor than the anchorage at Cape Town. For the Portuguese, Gosse stated, St. Helena “was the very place which was needed as a calling-station for replenishment of their ships sailing home from the East.”²

By the mid-1500s, Portuguese mariners had planted fruits and vegetables and left livestock on the island, and, to assure that as much produce and meat was at hand for visiting Portuguese vessels, the government kept only enough people on the island to manage its agriculture. As late as 1670 only sixty-six persons, eighteen of them of African descent, lived on St. Helena. Both Portuguese and British ships began to leave sick crew members on St. Helena by the end of the 1500s, the beginning of another longstanding use for the island. Remote as it was—St. Helena is seventeen hundred miles from both Cape Town and the coast of Brazil—the island was also a popular place of banishment. After his defeat at Waterloo in 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte was kept on St. Helena until he died in 1821; he was the first of many to live there in exile.

Not only was St. Helena on a direct route to South African and Indian Ocean whaling grounds, but the waters around the island and its neighbors Ascension and Tristan da Cunha were themselves well populated with sperm, right, and humpback whales. The Carroll Grounds between St. Helena and the coast of Africa remained a

1. Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 182-89. Citing Obed Macy, *History of Nantucket* (1835), Starbuck noted that Nantucket whalers first whaled off the coast of Guinea in 1763; in 1773 fourteen American vessels were whaling off the coast of Africa, “and probably there were as many more of whom no report was made” (56, 56n.).

2. Philip Gosse, *St. Helena, 1502-1938* (London: Cassell and Co., 1938), 3.

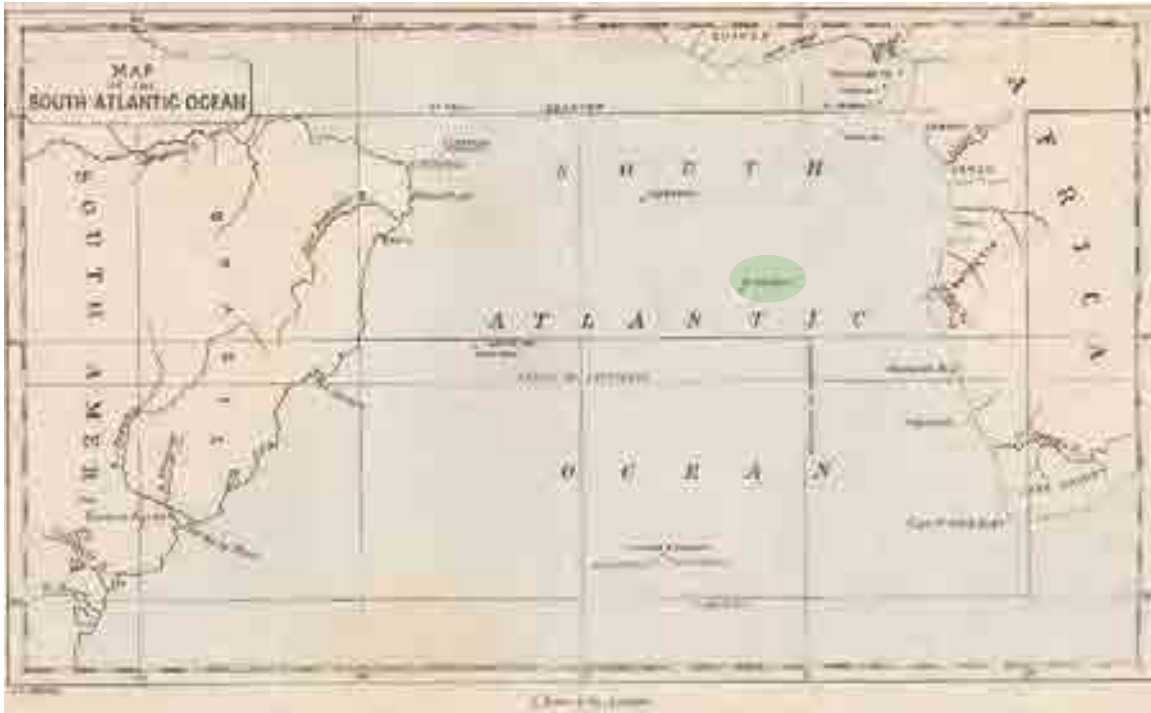


Fig. 7.1. "Map of the South Atlantic Ocean," L. Reeve & Co., London, in John Charles Mellis, *St. Helena: A Physical, Historical, and Topographical Description of the Island* (1875). St. Helena is shaded in green.

principal sperm whale ground until the late nineteenth century. Island historian T. H. Brooke noted in 1824, "Whales are frequently seen, and have, in a few instances, been killed by South-Sea whalers in the Roads."³ St. Helenians, especially those with commercial interests at heart, noted the abundance of whales offshore throughout the nineteenth century and twice, in 1833 and 1875, attempted to launch their own fishery, both times unsuccessfully.⁴ What prosperity St. Helena could realize came chiefly from the business of European and American vessels calling at Jamestown. "It is common . . . for the vessels employed, in the whale-fishery to touch at the island for refreshment and health," Brooke noted, "and of late, when all other ports in these latitudes have been closed against them, the number of these visitors has, of course, much increased." New Bedford whaling vessels were almost certainly visiting the island by the time Brook wrote. In 1829 358 ships from across the globe anchored in the bay at Jamestown, only two of them American; one of the two was the New Bedford whaler *America*.⁵

The island's viability as a provisioning station was attested from an early point. In 1815 one Englishman who had lived on St. Helena for eight months noted that "clear and wholesome springs issue from the sides of almost every hill, and the valleys

3. T. H. Brooke, *History of the Island of St. Helena* (London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1824), 26.

4. Gosse, *St. Helena*, 300, 330–31.

5. Trevor W. Hearl, *The Southern Whale Fishery at St. Helena* (Cheltenham, Eng: published for The St. Helena Link, 1992), 15, Appendix A, ODHS.

abound with yams, potatoes, and water-cresses, which are grateful to mariners.”⁶ Five years later the Nantucket whaling vessel *Eliza* came into Sandy Bay, on the southwest side of the island diagonally across from Jamestown. Thomas Eustace wrote that on St. Helena he and other crew members found “thousands of acres covered with a deep and rich soil,” hills and valleys “interspersed with meadows, spotted with grazing cattle, gardens, plantations, and the houses of planters.” To Eustace the island, with its forbidding seaside cliffs, was “a picture of beauty, majesty, and terror” (fig. 7.2).⁷ The American whaleman Ben-Ezra Stiles Ely also found the island at once terrifying and sublime. “A more gloomy, desolate spot, although grand and picturesque, I never saw,” he wrote in 1844.⁸



Fig. 7.2. “St. Helena from the Anchorage, from an Old Print,” in E. L. Jackson, *St. Helena: The Historic Island from Its Discovery to the Present Date* (London, 1903).

In 1833, one contemporary British account notes, 475 vessels, 300 of them British and 93 American, touched at St. Helena; the 82 others were French, Dutch, Portuguese, German, Swiss, and Danish. Twelve of the British vessels were whaling.⁹ To provision these ships called for a massive expansion in the island’s plantation economy and in turn for a much larger population base. Between 1670 and 1723 St. Helena’s population rose from 66 to 1128 persons, most of that growth occurring through increased importation of Africans for enslaved labor. The population of African descent increased three times as fast as the white population did over that rough half-century; where there were eighteen African-born people on the island in 1670, there were 628 in 1723.¹⁰ From 1723 to the current day people of African descent have far outnumbered Caucasians on St. Helena.

The first people of African descent on the island were escapees from a vessel who swam to the island in 1557 and formed the root of the

6. George Hutchings Bellasis, *Views of St. Helena* (London: John Tyler, 1815), ODHS.

7. *The Adventures of Thomas Eustace by a Clergyman* (London: R. Gray and J. Hatchard and Son, 1820), 32–33.

8. Ben-Ezra Stiles Ely, “*There She Blows*”: *A Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, in the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans*, ed. Curtis Dahl (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press for the Marine Historical Association., 1971), 104.

9. R. Montgomery Martin, *History of the British Possessions in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans* (London: Whittaker and Co., 1837), 209–10.

first, but apparently short-lived, black population there. However many people lived on St. Helena by the turn of the seventeenth century, they had died or left the island by 1645, when the Dutch briefly took control of the again uninhabited outpost. By midcentury the British East India Company had seized St. Helena, and from that time until 1792 Africans were brought to the island as enslaved plantation workers.¹¹ In 1806 the company brought 650 Cantonese to the island as indentured (or possibly enslaved) workers, and later Javanese were imported for farm work and domestic service. In 1868 St. Helena Governor Charles Elliot stated, “There can be no position on the face of the earth where it would be more difficult to discriminate between the various strains of blood of which the body of the population is composed than here in St. Helena.” Later acting governor R. L. Antrobus stated in 1889, “The inhabitants of St. Helena are mostly coloured, and, as might be expected, of very mixed origin, Europeans, Africans, and East Indians having all contributed to the population.”¹² This complex ethnicity probably accounts for the tendency of New Bedford census takers to identify St. Helenians of known African descent as white.

By 1817, shortly before the island became a regular port on the South Atlantic cruises of New Bedford whaling vessels, there were 4299 St. Helenians, 2040 of them of African descent and 1540 of those 2040 people enslaved.¹³ The next year a gradual manumission law, freeing all children of enslaved people born after Christmas Day, was effected, and in 1832 the East India Company freed the remaining enslaved population of 614 people. An indefinite number of Africans supplemented this population beginning in 1839, when Queen Victoria ordered a naval squadron to capture ships engaged in the slave trade between West Africa and the Americas, deposit their African people at St. Helena, and try vessel owners in a newly established vice-admiralty court on the island. According to Gosse, the British Navy brought “large numbers” of these captured vessels to Rupert’s Bay, just north of Jamestown, and kept those taken by the slavers in the “Liberated African Depot” in Rupert’s Valley.¹⁴ Many of the Africans brought to St. Helena were sick and starving, and the depot aimed to restore them to health before sending them to the West Indies and British Guiana, where labor was scarce. In 1861, while preparing his history of the island, John Charles Melliss went aboard one of the condemned slavers anchored in Rupert’s Bay. Melliss had to tread gingerly to avoid stepping on the “dead, dying, and starved bodies” lying thickly on the deck. “Their arms and legs were worn down to about the size of a walking-stick,” he wrote. “Many died as they passed from the ship to the boat, and, indeed, the work of unloading had to be proceeded with so quickly that there was no time to separate the dead from the living.”¹⁵

10. Gosse, *St. Helena*, 79–81, 259.

11. Gosse, *St. Helena*, 11, 17–23, 37–38, 42, 44–50; Alexander Hugo Schulenberg, “A Brief History of St. Helena: Settlers and Slaves,” <http://www.archeion.talktalk.net/sthelenasettlersslaves.htm>.

12. Elliot quoted in Schulenberg, “Settlers and Slaves”; *A Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, vol. 3, West Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894).

13. Schulenberg, “Settlers and Slaves.”

14. Gosse, *St. Helena*, 310–12.

15. John Charles Melliss, *St. Helena: A Physical, Historical, and Topographical Description of the Island* (London: L. Reeve and Co., 1875), 30–31.

Other contemporary accounts exist of the volume of traffic into the depot and the condition of the Africans on board the slavers. In July 1848 the logkeeper on the New Bedford whaling bark *Exchange* wrote that the vessel had that afternoon “spoke Brazillian slave brigg having 500 slaves on board. Bound in to St Helena, as prize to a British Man of War.”¹⁶ Ten years later, William B. Whitecar of the New Bedford whaling bark *Pacific* noted that many of the large number of condemned vessels in James Bay were slavers the British squadron had captured. Whitecar wrote about the Africans among settled St. Helenians:

The inhabitants were of all colors, from black to white, each moving in its particular sphere. The blacks are slaves, captured by British cruisers, and sent here to labor and pay the expenses of their capture. Some months since, a cargo of six hundred of these Africans was landed in Rupert’s Valley; they were awarded by the Government a twelvemonths’ stay at St. Helena; at the expiration of the year they were to be sent to the British West Indies possessions to be disposed of as apprentices. The other inhabitants of St. Helena are bitterly opposed to the introduction of these creatures into their quiet island, stating that they are indolent and insolent to an extreme degree, and are firmly persuaded that the island is a part of Africa and belongs to them. The inhabitants have petitioned the queen for their removal, but she has declined complying with their request.¹⁷

How many Africans died before they reached St. Helena is not known, but an estimated ten thousand were taken from slavers to the Rupert’s Valley depot and additional ones created at Lemon Valley and High Knoll Fort.¹⁸ The relative few who were not consigned to work in British territories either returned to West Africa or stayed on the island as farm laborers, domestic servants, shop help, or public workers.¹⁹ No historian appears even to have estimated roughly the number who stayed and supplemented the free black population, and only intensive genealogical research can establish whether the St. Helenians who came to New Bedford descended from “liberated Africans” or from the population living on the island before the depots were established. The depots were closed in 1874. Mary Jane Stickney, who came to St. Helena on the schooner *Lottie Beard* six years later, visited “the place where the jail was” in Rupert’s Valley; it was then, she wrote, “a mass of ruins caused by fire.”²⁰

Beginning in the 1850s island governors began to put in place a variety of inducements to promote the island among whaling captains and agents. The first of these measures arose from a May 1853 petition from two Sag Harbor whaling masters begging relief from the duties levied for landing and storing oil casks and whalebone. These fees were a “great injury to the interests of the owners of Whale Ships touching at this Port,” the captains claimed, and they further suggested that once they and

16. Log of bark *Exchange*, 4 May 1847, entry for 25 July 1848, Log 11, ODHS.

17. William B. Whitecar Jr., *Four Years Aboard the Whaleship* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1860), 373–74.

18. David L. Sullivan, *Quincentenary: A Story of St. Helena, 1502-2002* (Penzance: Patten Press, 2003), 62–63.

19. Sullivan, *Quincentenary*, 62–63; Daniel Schreier, *St. Helenian English: Origins, Evolution, and Variation* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins North America, 2008), 91–92.

20. Diary Kept On Voyage *Lottie Beard*, Captain Perry, by Mary J. Stickney, Almon L. Stickney Papers, MSS 95, Box 1, Subgroup 2, series A, vol 1, ODHS.

other vessels relayed information of these charges to other vessels they met at sea, many American whalers would stop using the port at Jamestown to transship their oil home and to acquire “the productions of the island and other articles.” The threat was perceived as sufficiently real to induce the governor of St. Helena to cut the duties in half four months later. “In order to give as much publicity as possible for the information of Owners and Masters of American Whale Ships,” the commercial agent of the American consul on the island issued a broadside announcing the decision. The consul’s agent also pointed out to whaling merchants that “within but a short distance of this Island there is an excellent ground for taking Sperm Whales, and if the ships knew that they would be permitted to tranship their Oil in the harbor (under the eyes of the Customs) free from the landing wharfage abovementioned, we are of the opinion that many more vessels would frequent this Port.”²¹

The island government adopted other measures to encourage the whaling industry’s use of its port. The New Bedford *Republican Standard* reported in June 1854 that the number of vessels whaling at St. Helena was larger compared to “several years past” not only because the Indian Ocean fishery was then highly profitable but also because St. Helena’s governor had cut in half the charges on empty oil casks “to enable ships to transfer them, so that on sending home they may refit for a longer cruise.”²² The island also established a fleet of “tank boats” to bring water to vessels in the harbor, thus obviating the need for crew to unload and load water casks on shore.²³ By 1856 the government had established a “Time Ball Office” in Jamestown “for the benefit of shipping”; ships corrected their chronometers against the ball, which dropped twice a day.²⁴ And in 1860 a dry dock was constructed at St. Helena so that disabled vessels could be hauled out and repaired.²⁵

Finally, in 1864 the island government abolished all navigation dues except a fee of ten decimes per ton that all vessels were required to pay to support the St. Helena hospital, which was free for “sick seamen of all nations.”²⁶ The *Republican Standard* reported on the hospital in 1856 as though it were a new venture, but it had clearly existed earlier. One broadside listing port regulations at St. Helena stated that through the year ending 30 November 1853 210 mariners had been admitted “gratis at hospital . . . and provided for without expense to the Ship.” The 1853 notice laid out the procedures by which sick crew were to be left on the island. No boat other than the “Health Boat” was permitted to run alongside or board any ship coming into the harbor. After examining the crew health boat personnel then permitted the ship to fly either a white flag, which signaled that it had been “admitted to intercourse,” or a yellow flag to indicate that the vessel had been placed under quarantine. Any vessel

21. Documents and BroadSides, St. Helena 1853–55, VFM 1462, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum. See also “Wharfage Charges on Oil and Whale Bone Remitted,” *Republican Standard*, 29 December 1853, 2:2.

22. “Whaling Fleet at St. Helena,” *Republican Standard*, 22 June 1854, 2:3.

23. “Solomon & Moss’s List of Arrivals at, and Departures from St. Helena” 25, 8, Documents and BroadSides, St. Helena 1853-55, VFM 1462, George W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.

24. *Republican Standard*, 21 February 1856, 3:2.

25. *Republican Standard*, 31 May 1860, 2:3.

26. “St. Helena,” *Republican Standard*, 17 January 1864, 4:5.

under quarantine was to moor west of the harbor at Jamestown, and the entire crew had either to remain on board or to proceed “to such place as the Governor chooses” until whatever sickness found on board had passed.²⁷ In September 1910 the bark *Charles W. Morgan* was quarantined and paid twenty-two dollars for a doctor’s fee and vaccinations for its thirty-four-man crew.²⁸ Eight years earlier, on the 1902 cruise of the brig *Leonora* seven of the crew of thirty-two, which included three St. Helenians, died of beriberi, a thiamin deficiency resulting in many cases from a scarcity of fresh food. Ten others had symptoms of the disease in varying severity and in July 1903 were landed at St. Helena to be taken to the hospital.²⁹ The expenses to the brig that arose from this incident included a doctor’s fee, carriage hire and “ambulance bearers” to take the sick men to the hospital, a “hospital account,” and a fee to undertakers to bury crew member Manuel Gomes.³⁰

St. Helenians had other ideas about how commerce with whaling vessels might be enhanced still further. One correspondent at Jamestown reported in the *New York Journal of Commerce* in 1862 that the Westport brig *Leonidas* and the New Bedford bark *Sea Breeze* were then loading their sperm oil onto a British schooner that would carry it back to New Bedford. The writer suggested that developing a regular packet for transshipping oil back to the United States would be a profitable venture.

It would be a great convenience to whalers if they could depend on meeting a vessel here at stated times to convey their oil home, and it is surprising to me that some enterprising firm does not start some small craft in the trade. Such vessels could easily bring out general cargoes for sale to the inhabitants of the island, and to the numerous merchant vessels calling here from India and China, and besides which might obtain freights of provisions for whalers cruising in this ocean, and thus save their owners much expense in consequence of having to refit at this or other ports. A very large quantity of sperm oil is annually taken in sight of this island, and freights of oil might always be made for two or three vessels a year.³¹

In 1883, some eight years after the second unsuccessful effort to establish a native whaling industry, island promoter Benjamin Grant asserted that St. Helena offered not only “a fine field to Speculators in curing Fish for home consumption and export” but a home base for a whale fishery, “and a Company formed for the purpose would be sure to reap a good reward.” He added,

I may also allude to the Whale Fishery, which could be pursued to advantage, within a few hundred miles of the Island, and the port could be made a rendezvous for the ships employed in the business. It is a well known fact that the American whale ships do a very large and profitable business *not very far* from St. Helena, almost always

27. “Island St. Helena, Port Regulations,” [1853], Documents and Broadsides, St. Helena 1853–55, VFM 1462, George W. Blunt White Library; see also *Republican Standard*, 21 February 1856, 3:2.

28. Receipts and Bills of Exchange, *Charles W. Morgan*, June–October 1910, VFM 1821, MSM.

29. W. J. J. Arnold, “The Etiology of Beri-Beri,” *British Medical Journal*, 7 February 1914, 299–300, described an encounter with a whaling vessel in July 1903, almost certainly the *Leonora*. Arnold, the colonial surgeon on St. Helena, stated that seven men had died “suddenly while they were at work on deck,” eleven were “in varying stages of beri-beri,” and another “was in the last phase of heart failure” and died the next day at the hospital.

30. Vessel Accounts, brig *Leonora*, 1902–6, 2007.68, vols. 1–5, 7, ODHS.

31. “Transshipping Oil at St. Helena,” *Republican Standard*, 2 October 1862, 4:3.

transship their “takings” in Jamestown harbour, and recruit their crews twice a year on our healthy shore. We venture to predict that a Whaling Company, having its head-quarters at St. Helena, under local management and having its fleet manned by the young men of our Island (who have in numberless instances proved themselves to be adepts in this Fishery), would be of general benefit and a pecuniary success. It is to be hoped someone will come forward and set the matter fairly agoing, whether it be in the business of Fish Curing or Whale Fishing, or both.³²

Neither of these proposals was evidently realized, however, and the island relied instead on its historical advantages as a place for refitting, provisioning, recreation, recruiting, and depositing sick sailors (fig. 7.3). Statistics on the number of vessels anchoring in Jamestown harbor vary. According to historian Trevor Hearl, between 1 December 1854 and 30 November 1855 twenty-four whaling vessels called at St. Helena, eleven of them from the New Bedford custom district.³³ For roughly the same year, however, the *Republican Standard* reported fifty-four American whaling vessels having “touched” at the island.³⁴ Not even a review of every known log from a New Bedford district whaler could determine what proportion of the fleet stopped at the island in any given year.

The experience of the New Bedford bark *Globe* on its 1855 cruise probably typifies the visits of many whaling vessels at St. Helena. The *Globe* anchored in Jamestown Bay on 16 April 1856. Over the next two days the crew was put to work “gitting off water,” and the day after that the starboard watch went ashore on liberty. Between 19 and 24 April a watch from the *Globe* was on shore every day. The ship then loaded a barrel of onions and 40 “heads of cabage,” recruited four men to fill out the crew, and left to whale along the African coast on 30 April. Almost exactly a year later, on 17 April 1857, the *Globe* returned to St. Helena, went from there to hunt sperm whale in nearby grounds, and then came back to the island a third time on 11 May.³⁵ The crew of the 1855 voyage of the New Bedford bark *Pacific* looked upon St. Helena as “the wished-for port” because they customarily found letters from home there. When the bark touched at the island in February 1858, Whitecar wrote, crew members who received no mail grew depressed—they had by that time been at sea for two years and seven months—and went ashore “ready to engage in any dissipation.” One boat’s crew told him that Jamestown was a “sailor’s paradise . . . because there is neither lack of women nor wine.”³⁶

Like the *Globe*, the bark *Leonidas* stopped to provision twice at St. Helena on its 1869 Atlantic cruise. In October 1870 the vessel paid \$43.13 for a wide array of stores—twelve “fowls,” chocolate, cabbage, pickles, and onions; an awl, boat nails, block hooks, and gimblets; medicine, knives, and needles; boat hire and “police fees,” perhaps to retrieve a deserting crew member or to subdue a rowdy one. Between late March and late April 1871 the vessel stayed in port and spent nearly three

32. Benjamin Grant, *A Few Notes on St. Helena, and Descriptive Guide* (St. Helena: Guardian Office, 1883), 28.

33. Hearl, *Exploring the Southern Whale Fishery*, Appendix A, “Whalers at St. Helena: 1829 and 1855.”

34. “Whalers at St. Helena,” *Republican Standard*, 6 March 1856, 2:1.

35. Log of Bark *Globe*, 1855-57, Log 80, Mystic Seaport Museum.

36. Whitecar, *Four Years Aboard the Whaleship*, 369, 373.

The image shows a handwritten ledger titled "1858 Thomas Fletcher & Ship Canton". The entries are organized by year and date, with columns for descriptions of transactions and monetary amounts. The entries include:

- 1858:
 - Jan 25th Cash \$450 - 20 per cent interest
 - Feb 1st Cash \$20 - do
 - Feb 15th 1/2 gal of black soap - 25 cts
 - Feb 22nd 6 lbs of do - 10 cts
 - Mar 1st 8 lbs of do - 10 cts
 - Mar 15th 2 gal of yellow - 25 cts
 - Apr 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Apr 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - May 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - May 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Jun 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Jun 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Jul 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Jul 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Aug 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Aug 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Sep 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Sep 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Oct 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Oct 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Nov 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Nov 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Dec 1st 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
 - Dec 15th 1/2 gal of do - 10 cts
- 1859:
 - Jan 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - Jan 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Feb 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Feb 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Mar 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - Mar 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Apr 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Apr 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - May 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - May 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Jun 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Jun 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Jul 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - Jul 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Aug 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Aug 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Sep 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - Sep 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Oct 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Oct 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Nov 1st Cash at the bank \$400
 - Nov 15th 30 lbs of white soap - 10 cts
 - Dec 1st 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts
 - Dec 15th 10 lbs of yellow - 25 cts

At the bottom of the page, there is a summary section titled "For Thomas Fletcher the following items":

- 1858 Oct 1st Interest \$1.25
- 1858 Nov 1st do 1.25
- 1858 Dec 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Jan 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Feb 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Mar 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Apr 1st do 1.25
- 1859 May 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Jun 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Jul 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Aug 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Sep 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Oct 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Nov 1st do 1.25
- 1859 Dec 1st do 1.25
- Total \$21.25

Fig. 7.3. Crew account for African American mariner Thomas Fletcher for the 1855 voyage of the ship *Canton*, which touched at St. Helena in late July 1858 on its return to New Bedford. Fletcher, one of the vessel's boatsteerers at a lay of 1/55, received a cash advance of five dollars interest at the island—one of six he received on the cruise, all at 25 percent interest. New Bedford Free Public Library. Whaling Manuscripts, *Canton* 1855–59.

season,” Captain Andrew R. Heyer wrote to his sister Hannah on 28 February that year. “. . . Everything at St. Helena is very expensive, and we cant afford to buy much with sperm oil at 75 cts per gallon.” On the same day he wrote his brother Isaiah about his second wife Myra, who had accompanied him on the cruise. “She is very well indeed only trouble with her is to get something good to eat for we are about out of

hundred dollars on hired help to repair the vessel and fabricate casks; on clothing and other goods to replenish the slop and medicine chests; on irons, oars, and molasses from the New Bedford bark *Ohio*, also in port; on fish, vegetables, barreled beef, beans, pepper, and spices; on cedar boards and beeswax; and, again, on police fees. The *Leonidas* then set out to whale again and did not return to New Bedford until June 1874, having been at sea just four months shy of five years.³⁷ When the *Cicero* was at St. Helena in late April 1880, the vessel paid a “market bill” of \$91.50, \$2.50 in fees for “arrest of one man” and \$2.50 in a “police bribe.”³⁸

The bark *Wanderer* had a more difficult time in St. Helena in 1880, having caught few whales to that point and confronting both low sperm oil prices and high charges for goods. “We have not been very fortunate thus far on this

37. Account Book, bark *Leonidas*, 1870, Almon L. Stickney Papers, MSS 95, Box 1, Subgroup 1, Series A, Vol. 1, ODHS.

38. Accounts of bark *Cicero*, 1870, Stickney Papers, Subgroup 1, Series B, Vol. 1, ODHS.

small stores, and no Potatoes, have not seen one for over three months,” Heyer stated. “They were so expensive at St. Helena that I could not afford to buy any.”³⁹

The *Wanderer* had left New Bedford on 4 June 1878, and by late September 1879 Myra Weeks Heyer was living on the island, her husband having left her there while he went back to sea. She was staying with a Mrs. Knipe, who appears to have housed numerous whaling captains. In a letter to her sister that month, Heyer noted that Mrs. Knipe’s sister had died of consumption “and a dreadful looking creature she was for I went to see her last Eve.” Myra appears to have gone to sea on one of the bark’s many ventures into the waters around St. Helena, but at the end of November 1880 she was again living on the island. Slightly more than two months later she died of consumption at the age of thirty, on 4 February 1881. On 7 March Andrew Heyer returned to the island to find that his wife had died, and he remained on St. Helena with his infant daughter through at least September 1881. During that time he lived four miles from Jamestown with the masters of two other whaling vessels, the *Pioneer* and the *Morning Star*, because living in the town was too expensive and he was in debt to those who had cared for his wife and handled her burial. He wrote Isaiah, “\$1200 wont pay my bills at his port since I left Poor Myra here the 30th of Nov last. The dear Girl was gone & they charged me what they liked and I could not say one word but paid all bills presented.” On 23 May 1882 the *Wanderer* returned to New Bedford under a new captain. Andrew Heyer died in 1898 in New York City, and in 1900 his nineteen-year-old daughter Myra was living with her mother’s brother, William Weeks, in New Bedford.

In 1880, the wife of whaling master Almon Stickney also stayed with Mrs. Knipe. Mary J. Stickney came to St. Helena aboard the schooner *Lottie Beard* to meet her husband, then captain of the *Cicero*. On 12 March, the day the schooner arrived at the island, she and the captain went ashore to Solomon Moss and Company, which may have been a settlement house, and met several people there—Mrs. Knipe (“Land Lady”), two sea captains and their wives, and another captain’s wife who had just had a child. Stickney spent her days at the Knipe boardinghouse talking with the wife of the American consul and the house’s guests, listening to the piano, taking walks around the island, shopping, going to the theater and church; one night in April she was one of 185 people who attended a ball at the consulate organized by whaling captains. Another New Bedford whaling captain brought her letters, either from home or from her husband at sea or both, as well as copies of the *New Bedford Republican Standard*. By 22 April her husband had reached St. Helena, and Mary Jane Stickney went to sea with him on the *Cicero*.⁴⁰

St. Helenians in Whaling Crews

Despite the fact that so many whaling vessels touched at St. Helena, the number of natives of that island who shipped on them before the late 1880s was small compared to the number of other crew members of African descent. Before 1833 there may only a handful, and only one—Henry Harris, a twenty-seven-year-old native of St. Helena,

39. Letters, Andrew R. Heyer, 1879–81, 2006.13, ODHS.

40. Diary Kept on Voyage of *Lottie Beard* by Mary J. Stickney, Almon L. Stickney Papers, MSS 95, subgroup 2, series A, vol. 1, ODHS.

who was on the 1825 voyage crew of the ship *Midas*—has been identified to have shipped from New Bedford before that year. Only three have so far been documented between 1833 and 1860—Charles L. Magnett, who left New Bedford on the ship *Roman* in July 1838, Henry Coffin on the ship *Hercules* in 1845, and John Andrews on the bark *San Francisco* in 1859. However, because no incoming crew lists exist for this period, it seems likely that whaling vessels recruited men on St. Helena who either did not return to New Bedford with the ship or who never took another whaling voyage from the port. Most may have taken only partial cruises—that is, shipping from St. Helena and leaving the crew either at another or at their home port. The accounts of the *Wanderer* and *Leonidas* suggest that some share of the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean fleets stopped at St. Helena twice during a single whaling cruise. The *Roman* returned to New Bedford in July 1840, perhaps without Charles L. Magnett. One family historian has determined that Magnett and his brother Benjamin shipped on an unidentified whaling voyage and left the vessel in Oahu. Charles stayed on that island. Benjamin Magnett is said to have gone on to Hong Kong, but by 1859, when his son James was born and his brother Charles's will was written, he was again living on St. Helena.

After the Civil War the number of St. Helenians on New Bedford whaling vessels began to increase. Eleven men from St. Helena—including George Knipe—were among the 1377 men who went whaling on New Bedford vessels in 1868; they composed 17.5 percent of the English-speaking men of African descent on these voyages. Judging largely by surnames of known St. Helenians, eleven of the men who served on the crew of the bark *Leonidas* at one time or another during its 1869 cruise were probably from the island, including John Seal, Henry and Thomas Yon, and Benjamin and Matthew Benjamin. The greater presence of island men on New Bedford crews may have been induced in some measure by the extended economic depression (triggered by, among other things, the closing of the Liberated African Depots) the island suffered between 1870 and 1875. During those five years more than two thousand people moved to the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, where labor was scarce.⁴¹ On the *Cicero's* 1879 voyage nine of the ten men who joined the crew in April 1880 were probably native to the island. By the early 1880s, as Benjamin Grant had noted, whaling vessels signed crew on at St. Helena twice a year. In those years the bark *Mattapoisett* actually recruited on the island five times. Over the course of the voyage, three men were discharged at St. Helena, eight deserted there, and thirty-nine men, including a third mate, shipped on the crew from Jamestown; probably twenty-nine of the thirty-nine were St. Helenian.⁴²

By 1885 the number of St. Helena men on New Bedford whaling crews increased notably and through about 1908 remained significantly higher than in earlier years. Crew lists document that from 1885 to the end of whaling the majority of black crew members were foreign-born—principally Cape Verdean, West Indian, or St. Helenian. Of the thirty crew on the 1885 voyage of the bark *Mermaid* nineteen were born in St. Helena; of the sixty-four non-Cape Verdean crew of African descent who shipped on New Bedford whalers that year, twenty-five were St. Helenian. Between 1897 and

41. Schulenberg, "Settlers and Slaves."

42. Voyage and Crew Accounts, bark *Mattapoisett*, 1882-84, Stickney Papers, MSS 95, Box 1, Subgroup 1, Series C, Vol. 1, ODHS,

1912 206 names of men born in St. Helena appear on whaling crews shipping from New Bedford, during which time they were 5.6 percent of all crew members.⁴³ Some vessels carried relatively large numbers of men from the island: on the 1906 crew of the *Charles W. Morgan* and the 1907 crew of the bark *Josephine*, eight each of the thirty-eight crew members on these voyages were St. Helenians. Nine of the twenty-nine crew on the 1908 voyage of the bark *Platina* were born on the island. Indeed, in 1908 as a whole thirty-two of the fifty-nine non-Cape Verdean black crew were St. Helenian. They composed 9.1 percent of all crew on New Bedford whalers that year, the highest share they ever occupied.

Settling, or Not, in New Bedford

Of roughly fifty men born in St. Helena who made multiple whaling voyages to and from New Bedford, most did not settle in the city. John Andrews served on nine crews between 1897 and 1914, and Walter Simon, Thomas Williams, and Charles Johnson each served on eight crews over roughly the same years. But none appear in any New Bedford directory, census, or draft registration list. Henry J. Peters, in five crews over two decades, also did not stay. He earned more than \$1400 as second mate on the bark *Sunbeam*, on which he shipped in midcruise in 1892, and more than \$2500 after having joined the crew at Faial (in 1896) on that vessel's 1895 cruise. Peters's last documented voyage was on the *Leonora* in 1902, when he was fifty years old. As was true of other immigrant groups, it seems likely that he was a sojourner, working for short periods in the United States in order to earn the income that would improve the lives of himself and his family in their native place.

Some of the relatively few who did settle in the region had made multiple voyages before they chose to live, however briefly, in New Bedford or, more likely, Fairhaven. For others, one whaling voyage, from the island to New Bedford, was clearly enough: working as crew on such a vessel was merely an inexpensive way to emigrate. Probably the first St. Helenians to settle in New Bedford were members of the Knipe family, who were not of African descent. The first among them was Frederick K. (or A.) Knipe, born about 1834, who was in the city by 1849 and who shipped out either on a trading or whaling vessel from New Bedford at the end of that year. About a year later his parents were in New Bedford in search of him, as a December 1850 newspaper notice documents:

Information Wanted: Of a lad by the name of Frederick Knipe, about 16 years of age — a native of St. Helena. He is short, stout, with dark eyes, brown hair, and a round full face. His parents have arrived in New Bedford, and reside at No. 69 Mill street; they will be very thankful for any information where to find him. His last residence was at Mr. John Smith's boarding house, South Second Street. He left there about December, 1849.⁴⁴

Knipes' parents were John B. Knipe, born in 1782, and Martha, born in 1799. They came directly from St. Helena to the city aboard the whaling bark *Cornelia* with, possibly, a daughter, Bethiah J. S. C. Knipe, nineteen years old, and reached the city

43. From 1913 to the end of whaling from New Bedford in 1925, outgoing crew lists no longer show birthplace or race.

44. *New Bedford Daily Evening Standard*, 6 December 1850, 3:1.

on 18 July 1850.⁴⁵ Frederick had probably shipped out again after his late 1840s voyage, for a protection paper exists for him from March 1852; he was probably the Frederick A. Knipe on bark *Kathleen's* 1852 voyage. Knipe returned to the city by 1855, when the state census lists him and his brother John B. in his parents' household. The 1856 city directory for that year shows him as a mariner living with his parents in a house near the waterfront, and he shipped that same year as fourth mate on bark *Nye*. In 1860 John and Martha Knipe are shown in New Bedford's fifth ward with their daughter, now shown as Bethia Hillard, and her four-year-old son, John H. W. By 1869 another Knipe, Charles Orlando, was living at the Knipe house with his wife Mary A. Seale, also from St. Helena; they married on the island in December 1867.⁴⁶

John B. Knipe died in New Bedford in 1865 and his wife Martha in 1864, and she was sufficiently well known to warrant an obituary. The article noted that she had come to the city "about 14 years ago" and had been a midwife in both St. Helena and New Bedford; over the course of her life Martha Knipe had "attended upwards of 5,000 cases, of which 1,800 were since her arrival in this country."⁴⁷ By 1861 Frederick Knipe, then a stevedore, had married Abbie F. Peckham of Newport, and in the 1870 census he is shown as a farmer; by 1873 he was a shipkeeper, probably for the New Bedford whaling firm J. & W. R. Wing. Their son Frederick T. Knipe, born in 1867, was in the crew of bark *Kathleen* in 1887. New Bedford crew lists document three St. Helena men with the surname Knipe came to New Bedford and left the city on whaling vessels—George, born about 1840, on bark *Morning Star* in 1868; Thomas, born about 1853, on bark *Greyhound* (1872) and schooner *Admiral Blake* (1874); and John, the son of John B. and Martha Knipe, born about 1837, on bark *Charles W. Morgan* in 1875. An 1899 naturalization record exists for a later Frederick Alexander Knipe, born on St. Helena in 1872, who came to New Bedford in July 1885 and was then a seaman.

Thomas Knipe was one of the nineteen St. Helena natives who shipped from New Bedford on the bark *Mermaid* in September 1885, and of those nineteen men five, including Knipe, can be found on other whaling crew lists or may have had families in New Bedford or Fairhaven. Morris Murray, seventeen years old when he shipped on the bark, took part in seven New Bedford whaling voyages overall between that year and 1909 but never settled in the area. Crew lists show that Edward Fowler's cruise on the *Mermaid* was his only whaling voyage, but he married in New Bedford three years earlier. He was then a boilermaker, and he is shown working at the same trade in the 1900 New Bedford census. Frederick Isaacs, then nineteen, was probably the father of James F. Isaacs (or Isaack), who shipped from New Bedford on the bark *Bertha* in 1901, married an African American woman born in Norfolk, Virginia, four years later, and moved to Philadelphia by the Second World War. George Benjamin may have been related to Robert Benjamin, who was living in New Bedford by 1902 and married Ida B. Lewis of Richmond, Virginia, on the same day that Isaack married. Robert Benjamin was a merchant

45. Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Bedford, MA, 1902–1942, T944, RG085, Rolls 1–8. National Archives, Washington, D.C., online at Ancestry.com.

46. Seale family database, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~rpeld/index.htm>.

47. "Death of a Useful Woman," *Republican Standard*, 14 July 1864, 2:3. The 1856 directory describes her as a doctress and midwife.

seaman, a presser at a local oil works, and a stevedore; he was still living in New Bedford in 1942.

Perhaps the earliest St. Helenian family of African descent in New Bedford was Morris Bennett's. Born about 1837, Bennett was a mariner in 1860 when he married Maria McCorrie of Fall River, a descendant of famed Westport Afro Indian Paul Cuffe, in New Bedford. Local history has it that Bennett named his daughter Juan F., born in 1864, for the Juan Fernandez Islands (where Daniel Defoe sited the shipwreck of Robinson Crusoe) which he had seen while serving on an unidentified vessel. What became of Morris is not known, but his wife lived in New Bedford through at least 1871. In 1891 Juan Bennett married Andrew Fleetwood Drummond, whose family had been in New Bedford since midcentury. Juan F. Drummond graduated Women's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1888 and was the first woman of African descent in Massachusetts to receive a certificate of registration in medicine.⁴⁸

In the 1870s two other St. Helenian men settled in New Bedford, both with connections to the whaling industry. By 1870 the mariner George H. Wheeler was living on South Front Street near Howland Street, and he remained in the city until at least through 1910. In 1869 he married Julia Amelia Young, whose parents Russell and Venus Fuller Young had been in New Bedford from at least 1860; Russell Young was born in New York and his wife in New Bern, North Carolina.⁴⁹ After his wife died in 1900 Wheeler may have shipped on at least one whaling voyage, though crew lists do not indicate as much: he identified himself as a whaler in the 1910 census, when he was living in the North Water Street boardinghouse of African American Louise Arrick.

By 1875 St. Helena native Benjamin Charles Magnett had settled in New Bedford (fig. 7.4). His father, Benjamin, and his uncle Charles were probably on whaling voyages in the late 1830s. Though his name is not found in crew list indexes, the younger Benjamin Magnett's obituary stated that "he made two voyages whaling, and after settling down on shore was employed at the candle factory of Thayer & Judd, where he worked for nine years." The 1875 city directory lists Magnett as a mason, so it is possible that he had actually settled in New Bedford before that year. In 1880 his household included only himself and his first wife, Edgartown native Olivia D. Matthews (1852–86). Magnett's second wife, whom he married in 1887, was New Bedford native Emma Boykin Pierce, whose mother had come to New Bedford from Virginia. The couple had at least eight children, one of them, Helena, named for Magnett's home. By the early 1880s his brother James H. Magnett, born about 1859 on St. Helena, was living with him; according to a later passport application, James had come to the United States in 1878, but there is no indication that he came on a whaling vessel. The Magnett brothers lived in New Bedford for the rest of their lives.⁵⁰

48. Obituary for Juan F. Drummond, *Evening Standard*, 5 November 1926.

49. Venus Young may have been a fugitive from slavery, for she claimed to census takers and the overseers of the poor that she had been born in Massachusetts and Vermont while her death record lists New Bern. Her given name also suggests slave origin; classical names often indicate one ascribed by a slaveowner. George H. Wheeler, born at St. Helena about 1842, was in the crew of the bark *President* in 1865, bark *George and Mary* in 1877, schooner *Emma Jane* in 1881, bark *Lagoda* in 1882, schooner *Tropic Bird* in 1884, schooner *Golden City* for two cruises in 1886 and 1888, and schooner *Charles W. Morse* in 1891. Some records list him as from the island of Mahi, Mahe, or Mahia, in the Seychelles archipelago in the Indian Ocean; the 1870 census gives his birthplace as St. Helena.



Fig. 7.4. Benjamin Charles Magnett (1843–1910) as a young man. Private collection.

Another relatively early St. Helenian settler was Thomas D. Rickerby (or Rickaby), who served on the crew of the bark *President* from New Bedford in 1876. Unlike the Magnetts, Rickerby continued to whale. He married in New Bedford in 1881, but between 1886 and 1901 he served on the crew of six more whaling voyages. Rickerby died in New Bedford in 1903. By 1904 his widow Gabriella Moore Rickerby, whose parents had come to the city from the South by 1855, had begun to take boarders at her North Second Street home; the accounts of the ship *Platina* show that its owners J. and W. R. Wing paid “Mrs. Rickerby” ten dollars for the board of Bermudian crew member Edward Outerbridge (fig. 7.5), and in 1910 the St. Helenian whaleman Samuel Obey boarded with her.⁵¹

These men were among the handful of St. Helenians who chose to settle in New Bedford. According to the 1850 census,

only one resident of New Bedford had been born in St. Helena. In 1860 only one of eight St. Helenians living in the city was of African descent. Ten years later there were thirteen, only one of them a seaman and only five (including George Wheeler) of color amid a black population of roughly 1290 persons. In 1880 only two of the fourteen St. Helenians shown as resident were black, Magnett being one, and only one of the fourteen was a mariner. By 1900 twenty-two natives of St. Helena are shown in the census for New Bedford, three of them of color. Only one, Bruce Campbell (shown as white), worked in the whaling industry, as a bookkeeper for an outfitting firm. Before 1900 there appears to have been a small immigration of single women, at least some of whom very likely came as passengers on whaling vessels with an eye toward working in the United States. At least one St. Helenian family settled in New Bedford in these early years of island emigration. In 1866 James Thompson, then twenty-seven years old, came to the United States with his wife Mary and daughters Susan May

50. See “Sudden Death: Benjamin C. Magnett had been Resident of This City 40 Years,” unidentified newspaper clipping, n. d [April 1910], and “Gets Lodge Jewel: J. H. Magnett to Leave on Four Months’ Trip to South Africa,” *Evening Standard*, 3 April 1924. Thanks to Charlene Clark Salley, great-granddaughter of Benjamin Magnett, for providing me with copies of these articles.

51. J. & W. R. Wing Seamen’s Ledgers, 1898–1906, Reel 103, Whaling Manuscripts, New Bedford Free Public Library.

Entry	Amount	Balance
Edward Outerbridge	15.00	
Suit clothes	3.50	
Three 3/4 boxes 56	2.00	
Robin's 4 boxes	3/5	
Cash	1.25	
Mrs. Rickaby	1.50	
11/2 bush	2.75	
1/2 bush	65	
7 bush	1.00	
1 bush	1.25	
1/2 bush	3.35	
5 bush	1.50	
1/2 bush	14.00	
1/2 bush		32.60
1/2 bush		46.60

Fig. 7.5. The J. and W. R. Wing account for Edward Outerbridge, a boatsteerer on the 1904-5 voyage of bark *Platina*, includes a ten-dollar payment to Mrs. Rickaby, no doubt for Outerbridge's New Bedford room and board while waiting for the vessel to sail. Outerbridge made ten whaling voyages from New Bedford between 1897 and 1907. J. & W. R. Wing Seamen's Ledger, 1898–1906, New Bedford Free Public Library Whaling Manuscripts.

and Lizzie, born in St. Helena in 1852 and 1857 respectively. In November 1877 Susan married Emanuel Sullavou, a Richmond, Virginia, native whose family had come to New Bedford by 1856. Sullavou was the second African American graduate of Harvard College and became a well-known local attorney. None of his family appears ever to have been involved in the whaling industry.⁵²

After 1900, St. Helenian settlement in New Bedford became slightly more pronounced, though still negligible given the overall scale of

immigration to the city at that time. At least twenty men of color came on whaling vessels. Alexander Samuels served on fourteen voyages between 1897 and 1918 and was an oil works laborer in 1920; he lived at the time with the family of Emma Stevens, whose husband George was a native of St. Helena. Richard George served on at least eleven voyages from 1886 to 1914, probably always as a steward, and in 1920 he lived in the South Second Street boardinghouse of Barbadian Andrew Henley. George Williams, who shipped on nine New Bedford voyages between 1898 and 1920, became a shipyard rigger in New Bedford; in 1922 he sailed as third mate on one more cruise, on the schooner *William A. Graber*, and then returned to rigging. St. Helenians Robert Yon, Henry O'Neil, and Albert George were also riggers after whaling. Eleanor Easton, the daughter of Albert George, recalls Yon, O'Neil, his brother John (who whaled on four New Bedford cruises and afterward became a fisherman), and James Caesar as close friends of her father, yet neither Yon nor Caesar are shown in any census or directory up to 1940. Other St. Helenian settlers also worked in maritime trades—on coasting vessels, on lightships, in the oil works, and as stevedores. Some few left maritime work behind. Like James H. Magnett, John Sylvester became a janitor after having served on six New Bedford whaling crews between 1896 and 1905. In 1920 he lived with the family of James Moore, whose wife Bertha was from St.

52. Lena Sullavou, the daughter of Susan and Emanuel, married an African American man, as her mother had. John R. Barreau was born on Nantucket; his father Gabriel F. Barreau was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and his mother, Charlotte T. Bunker, was a Nantucket native.

Helena; the Moores and the Emma Stevens family then shared 96 Cedar Street.

Like Benjamin Magnett and Edward Fowler, a number of St. Helenian men worked on only one or two whaling voyages before settling in New Bedford after 1900. Thomas Herne is documented to have been in the crew of the *Platina* on its 1908 voyage, and after 1910 he married Massachusetts native Edna Jones. By 1920 he was employed at the ice works and by 1930 as a seaman on a coal boat. Robert C. Munroe shipped on the Westport bark *Sea Fox*, which left for the Indian Ocean grounds in April 1871 and returned in September 1875. In New Bedford in July 1876 he married Anna Cooper, whose parents were natives of Portsmouth, Virginia. More than twenty years later, in 1899, Munroe went on a second whaling cruise and then worked as a laborer in the city. After his first wife died in 1910, he married Martha Filcome of New Bedford, whose father Richardson was a mariner from Baltimore who came to New Bedford by 1850. By 1920 Munroe worked for the city street department and in a cotton mill, and he died in New Bedford in January 1925.

In 1911 Albert George, Edward Johnson, and the brothers John and Henry Timm came together from St. Helena aboard a whaling vessel and never shipped on another such voyage. Though none are listed in city directories or censuses before 1920, Henry Timm, George, and Johnson registered for the draft in 1917-18: Johnson and Timm were both farmworkers then, and George was an unemployed sailor. At that time the three men all boarded in New Bedford, George with Maryland-born African American Fannie Washington at 25 South Second Street.⁵³ In 1930 former St. Helenian whalemens Ernest George and Harry and James O'Neil boarded at the same address, then a boardinghouse run by Lottie Pierce.⁵⁴ In 1922 John Timm sent for his widowed mother, Ellen Benjamin Timm (born 1867-68), his sisters Christina (born 1902) and Louisa (born 1906), a cousin Walter (born 1922), and Christina's son Thomas Peters Timm, born in 1920; Henry later took the name Thomas George. The five came to Ellis Island on the *Laconia* from Liverpool on 3 July that year.⁵⁵ Four years later Albert George became Christina Timm's second husband, and by 1930 Edward Johnson had married Louisa Timm.

Eleanor Easton, Albert George's daughter, has stated that her father left St. Helena "because he didn't like his father. . . . my grandfather, Charlie, had a farm, a large one, and my father and all his brothers had to work very hard on the farm." When George tried to go to school instead, his father came after him on horseback and carried him home. For some time in the early 1920s George worked as a "woodsman" on a farm, and by 1930 he was a shellfisherman. Easton noted that her father "gravitated to the water" and worked a second job as a caulker and a rigger until he secured full-time work in these trades.

53. This address is often shown as 25 Spring, but city directories record no such number on that street; Spring Street crosses South Second Street at number 25 South Second.

54. Lottie Pierce may have been the "Maudie" Eleanor Easton recalled. "I know that many of the St. Helena boys, when they first came, they used to rent rooms from a woman named Maudie. Now don't ask me what Maudie's last name was, but she was Maudie. And she was friendly with my father and my mother." Easton recalled that her boardinghouse was near the New Bedford waterfront, at 25 South Second Street. Lorraine Khazan and Eleanor Easton, interview with Kathryn Grover, 28 June 2009, New Bedford.

55. Khazan and Easton interview; Ellis Island website, <http://www.ellisland.org/search/>.

That's what he did until he retired. I used to go down to the pier to pick my father up, and I'd look up and there he would be, way up in the mast, and then he'd come down, just come down like a little boy, and he'd jump from one boat to the other boat to the other boat. And I'd say, "Dad, don't ask me to come for you," I said, "because suppose you fell in between." And he said, "I'd never fall in."⁵⁶

George, the Timm brothers, and Edward Johnson were four of twenty-nine St. Helenians shown in the 1920 New Bedford and Fairhaven censuses. While people of African descent from the island were not often found in earlier resident listings, by 1920 ten were black. Nine of those ten were men, and nine of the ten had some connection to whaling or maritime trades. None of the white St. Helenians in New Bedford and Fairhaven in 1920 had ties to the whaling industry.

Though the sex ratio of St. Helenians in 1920 was nearly one to one, only one of them is shown in the census as a woman of color. Susan Thompson Sullavou excepted, the scarcity of St. Helenian black women is no doubt largely accountable for the frequency with which St. Helenian men married women not native to the island. Of fourteen known marriages, only Albert George and Edward Johnson married St. Helenian women. Robert Benjamin and James F. Isaack married African American women born in the South; Thomas Herne, Thomas Rickerby, George Williams, and Robert C. Munroe married women born in Massachusetts whose parents were southern-born; Edward Fowler, Henry Piplow, and John A. Timm married women born in Massachusetts and Rhode Island whose parents' places of birth is not known. The brothers Benjamin and James H. Magnett married women of mixed African ancestry: the father of each was born in Cape Verde, while their mothers were African American. Charlene Clark Salley's heritage is thoroughly mixed. The parents of her father, Hugh Stanley Clark, were Dutch West Indian and Barbadian; her mother, Elizabeth Roberta Gracia, had a Cape Verdean father and Massachusetts-born mother. Salley's maternal grandfather, Benjamin Magnett, was St. Helenian; her maternal grandmother was Emma Pierce, whose father was Cape Verdean and whose mother was born in Norfolk, Virginia.⁵⁷

Albert George's household on Bridge Street in Fairhaven appears to have been a center of social life for St. Helenian black immigrants. Eleanor Easton recalls men such as the O'Neil brothers playing cards at the house as well as her parents' parties:

One of the things about St. Helenians, not my dad, is that they drank. Just drank. Anything. But my mother and dad, when I was very small, when I was about nine years old, or younger, they used to have parties, and Robby Yon and my father—sometimes he would dance—but mainly Robby Yon, and I don't know who else, they taught me how to do the St. Helena Two Step. And I used to dance with my uncle Henry [Timm]. I was his partner. I can do the two-step now to any kind of music, if I could dance.

Eleanor Easton remembers in particular several dishes she regards as St. Helenian in origin, a fact signifying how immigrant groups tend to retain culinary traditions longer than they do many other customs of their native places. Traditional St. Helenian cuisine include fishcakes, black puddings, pumpkin puddings, pumpkin fritters, and several dishes that reflect the influence of Javanese and Asian

56. Khazan and Easton interview.

57. Clark Salley interview.

immigration to the island, including curries and pilau, a rice dish cooked in broth that often contains meat, fish, or vegetables. “My father loved it,” Easton said. “I’ll tell you what it is—a fish head, a certain kind of fish but with a big head, and my mother would cook that with rice and curry and maybe onion, and my father would love it, just love that. They called it plo.” She and her niece Lorraine Khazan recall that Easton’s mother Christina George regularly made chicken curry, and Easton herself once made fried “St. Helena fish cakes.”

You have to buy fresh tuna, then you have to have a certain amount of potatoes and let them stand, not in the water but just let them stand. And then you have a . . . bunch of parsley. Now when you have—this is why I don’t do it—when you have the fish you take a spoon and you scrape the fish until you have all this fine fish, then you put the potatoes together with the fish, and, well, I just put the parsley in—that’s not the way you do it—I put the parsley in and put it all together and you make these lovely fish balls. They’re round, but they flatten them.

The George family typically had plum pudding at Christmas, a tradition that shows the British influence on St. Helenian cuisine. Her mother always put a quarter or a half-dollar in the pudding, and whoever found it in their slice kept the coin.

CHAPTER 8

WEST INDIANS, ST. HELENIANS, AND THE END OF WHALING

As the price of whale and sperm oil plummeted in the early 1900s, it became increasingly difficult to ship anyone of any ethnicity from New Bedford. In 1918 Morris Sederholm began working in his father-in-law's firm Horvitz Whaling Outfitters, one of the last viable outfitting firms in the city, and recalled the situation as it stood at that time.

What we used to do, we used to sail out of New Bedford with a skeleton crew, just the mate and the officers, steward and cook. Then they'd either go to Cape Verde Islands or the West Indies and they'd sign on a crew there of raw material. The only way those fellows could have of getting to the United States was on a whaler. There were no steamers that went to those ports. They had no money to buy passage to go anywheres else to take a steamer. The only way they could come to the United States was on a whaler. So those were the fellows who acted as seamen. . . . They used to go out in boats and catch a whale or two during the year or something like that, so they knew quite a bit. So in that way we used to get crews cheap and on the other hand they used to come to, get here to the United States. And the immigration laws were lax then much more so than they are today so when they used to come here . . . I used to take them all up to the immigration office and have them all registered and pay three dollars a head to permit them to land in the United States, with the provision that they were to ship out again on the next available ship. But of course a lot of them, once they got here, they disappeared.¹

Crews were so hard to come in New Bedford that Sederholm often paid an agent ten dollars a head to recruit men in Boston, some of them in jail, and send them by train to New Bedford. Sederholm met them at the train station and immediately put them on board a small boat owned by a man named Billy West, which took them out to the whaling vessel anchored in the stream (that part of New Bedford harbor between Palmer's Island and Fairhaven). One group of these recruits, Sederholm recalled, balked at shipping with a crew composed mostly of men of color:

One time I had a bunch of these guys come down from Boston. They were all bums you know—drunks, bums. So I drove down to Pier Three. And all the fishermen gathered around, “You guys know where you're going? You guys know what you're in for?”. . . . So when I put them aboard the Billy West boat, I put them aboard the whaler—I think it was *A. M. Nicholson* at that time. When they got aboard they saw colored or blacks that were on board. We had what we called a checkerboard crew—whites and blacks mixed. So they weren't going to go. I went ashore and I got a hold of Bill Carter who used to do the rigging for all the whalers. I brought him out to the ship. I gave him a rifle and a handgun. And I told [him], “If any of these guys ever come to ask where land is, shoot them. If you have to kill them, kill them, but don't let them go ashore.” Then they were going to go ashore. They didn't want to do no whaling. So Billy Carter told them, “If you guys make one move to go ashore,

1. Morris Sederholm, interview with Reginald Hegarty and James Healey, 1962, NBFPL.

I'll shoot you." So he kept them aboard. So the next morning she went to sea with that crew.²

Newspaper accounts attest the accuracy of Sederholm's statements. In mid-March 1921 the New Bedford *Standard* reported that the bark *Wanderer* and schooner *Margarett* had both gone to sea that morning and that the schooner *John R. Manta* would leave the next day. All three vessels left with a crew too small for a whaling voyage. "The Manta was forced to put to sea shorthanded," the *Standard* stated, "and will make the West Indies her first stop in order to recruit a crew sufficient to man the vessel"; both the *Wanderer* and the *Margarett* had an identical plan.³ Amid the skeleton crews aboard when they left New Bedford, two of the fifteen men on the *Manta*, only one of thirteen on the *Margarett*, and none of the *Wanderer's* crew of sixteen were West Indian. For a whaling vessel leaving New Bedford recruiting in the West Indies was the most logical expedient, but even then, in those years, few West Indians appear to have been responsive to the call.

Moreover, transience seemed to characterize those few West Indians who did ship on whaling vessels in whaling's last years; the tendency to settle was slighter than it had been. In September 1923, when the ill-fated bark *Wanderer* returned from Cape Verde with 1500 barrels of sperm oil, three of the crew of fifteen men were British West Indian. Longtime Dominican whaler George Wallace had joined the *Wanderer's* crew as steward. Dennis Edwards, probably also from Dominica, was a boatsteerer who had been on two earlier cruises; Alfred Spooner, the cook, was born in Dominica and had been on the *Wanderer* when the bark left New Bedford in late August 1922. He seems to have come to New Bedford in 1917 as a greenhand on the *A. M. Nicholson*, when he was twenty years old; when he reached the city he boarded with Charlotte Winborne. In 1918, when Spooner registered for the draft, he was working at the cordage company and boarding with the Haddockses at 68 Cedar Street. He served as an army private in the war and then somewhere joined the incoming crew of the *Cameo* in 1919. Still living with the Haddocks family, Spooner was back at the ropeworks in 1920 and then took his last whaling voyage on the *Wanderer*. But he left New Bedford before 1930 and moved to New York City, where he worked as a longshoreman. Neither Wallace or Edwards ever lived in New Bedford. And no West Indian men were on the crew of incoming or outgoing New Bedford whaling vessels after the *Wanderer's* 1922 voyage.

In the early years of the twentieth century, St. Helenian entrepreneurs held out hope that the island's attraction to whaling vessels would revive. In 1902, when the New Bedford bark *Morning Star* called at St. Helena, its cargo included nine hundred barrels of sperm oil. "With such success," island historian E. L. Jackson wrote, "it is hoped the whaling fleet will again visit these waters."⁴ Jackson's statement is puzzling;

2. Carter was probably William J. Carter, a rigger whose father was born in Guam (and listed in the census as black); he worked at the base of Union Street and lived nearby at 242 Acushnet Avenue. Billy or William West cannot be identified definitively; Sederholm once identified him as the Pier 3 wharfinger. Morris and Molly Sederholm, interview with Bill Wollison and Beverly Goldstein, New Bedford, 18 March 1982, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library, North Dartmouth. In an earlier interview Sederholm identified the captain of the *A. M. Nicholson* at the time as Gonsalves, or John T. Gonsalves; this may have been one of the two 1917 voyages of the vessel, whose crews each included two West Indians.

3. "Whalers Clear for Grounds," New Bedford *Standard*, 15 March 1921.

between 1897 and 1902 forty-four of fifty-one whaling voyages from New Bedford were bound for the Atlantic, and from 1908 to the end of whaling all but two of 144 voyages from the port whaled in Atlantic grounds. Jackson's statement intimates that St. Helena's appeal as a whaling stopover had diminished greatly. As a consequence, on the whole, the presence of St. Helenians also declined. The *Morning Star* had two St. Helenians among the crew that shipped from New Bedford—Morris John, whose name appears only on this crew list through the end of whaling, and John Sylvester, who had been on two previous cruises and joined the crew of two other vessels after the *Morning Star* voyage and then settled in New Bedford. In 1901, when the bark left port, St. Helenian men were 6.3 percent of the total number of men who signed on for New Bedford whaling cruises that year. That share marked a decline from 1899 and 1900, when crews were 10.5 and 9.1 percent St. Helenian respectively. Between 1901 and 1912, the share St. Helenians made up of New Bedford crews exceeded that of 1901 only twice. And by all indications, the number of St. Helena men on New Bedford crews dropped sharply after 1912. By 1918 only one of the thirty-six crew of color not from Cape Verde was from St. Helena, and between 1917 and October 1923 only four St. Helenians are shown on incoming crew lists.⁵ An island economy boosted by the First World War might have accounted at least in part for the decline.⁶

It is safe to conclude that by 1923, if not much earlier, African American, West Indian, and St. Helenian men reckoned that any job on land was better than whaling. And, however limited the prospects shoreside work might have offered, they were certainly brighter than what whaling held. By 1900 the belief that the industry would soon disappear was probably universal; even successful voyages were viewed, in the words of the *Boston Globe*, as nothing more “than the occasional flare from the dying embers in a fireplace.”⁷ The First World War gave New Bedford whaling, like New Bedford textiles, a heartening if temporary boost. Spermaceti was the lubricant of choice for battleship engines, and the federal government even inaugurated a campaign to deal with food shortages by advising Americans to eat whale meat. “During the war,” Morris Sederholm said, “we were getting a dollar and a half a gallon for sperm oil. And then around 1922 there was no more demand for sperm oil and the price went down to around 40 cents a gallon and it didn't pay to go out whaling. The supplies cost more, outfitting cost more. The price of sending a ship to sea doubled and the price of oil dropped about 200 percent.”⁸ “The low price received for sperm oil for the past few years had made this recompense to the crews very

4. E. L. Jackson, *St. Helena: The Historic Island from Its Discovery to the Present Date* (London: Ward Lock and Co., 1903), 109. Jackson stated that the vessel touched at St. Helena in June 1901, but Reginald Hegarty's record of New Bedford voyages states that the *Morning Star* left New Bedford on 10 October 1901.

5. Lists of foreign-born persons coming to the United States as crew do not exist for the last two years of New Bedford whaling.

6. According to Gosse, *St. Helena*, 346, the British government built military facilities and enlarged a wharf on St. Helena during the war, thus boosting employment; in addition, the price of flax, one of the island's few notable industries, rose rapidly. A larger flax crop was planted and another mill built at the time, making three “working day and night.”

7. Quoted in Dolin, *Leviathan*, 361.

8. Sederholm interview, 1962.

small,” local whaling historian William Henry Tripp wrote of the 1925 voyage of the *John R. Manta*; “consequently it had become more and more difficult to persuade good whalemens to make voyages.”⁹

The *John R. Manta*'s 1925 cruise was the last whaling voyage in New Bedford to return with oil. Tripp noted that a shipping agent he did not identify shipped eight Boston men by telling them “they were to join a vessel at New Bedford that was going to the West Indies, and had promised them that they would each make seven hundred dollars on the trip. . . . These foremast-hands soon learned that they would receive little or nothing at the end of the four months voyage. They were very angry, but resistance was useless. Dire threats were made against the shipping agent should they ever meet him again.”¹⁰ Judging by the similarity of this account to those Sederholm told, the agent was Sederholm or someone else from Horvitz Whaling Outfitters. It was probably this cruise Sederholm described when he told the whalemens who returned that he would let them know once he sold the oil what their settlement would be. Sederholm said that, because of the crew's open hostility toward him both before and after the cruise, he hired a bodyguard to be present when he paid the men off. “They each got their five dollars,” he said. “That's all their pay was. It was five dollars for six months whaling. I knew the first place he'd go to was a rum shop, a saloon. By the time they got drunk they'd forget all about me.”¹¹

Two St. Helenian men were in that *Manta* crew in 1925. Tripp noted that the third mate was the “St. Helena Englishman” Daniel Crowie, who had been whaling for two decades; the steward was William Simon, who also cooked and functioned as the shipkeeper when the boats were off in pursuit of whales (figs. 8.1 & 8.2).¹² Incoming and outgoing crew lists show Simon, born about 1898, on three voyages between 1920 and 1925; he and Crowie served together on the schooner *Margarett* in 1924. Crowie, born about 1878–80, served on five New Bedford whaling voyages beginning in 1908. But neither man ever lived permanently in the city.

As whaling was increasingly less likely to attract men and turn a profit, the rapacious character of the industry emerged in stark relief. “The captain robbed the crew, the agent robbed the captain and the owners robbed the agent,” Sederholm said. “That was whaling. . . . There was no romance in whaling when it came right down to it; it was a dirty business.”¹³ No matter how desperate their shoreside circumstances might be, it seems likely that few, if any, English-speaking men of African descent would have continued whaling even if the industry had managed to survive after 1925. For Albert George, his daughter Eleanor noted, one voyage was enough:

He said he'd never go . . . on another whaling [voyage], never go back to St. Helena either. Many years ago the *Charles W. Morgan* was over in Mystic and . . . they needed to have some caulking done, and some rigging, and they asked my father if he would come and do it. He told them no. And we said, “Daddy, why don't you go?” “I don't

9. William Henry Tripp, *There Goes Flukes: The Story of New Bedford's Last Whaler* (New Bedford, MA: Reynolds Printing, 1938), 172.

10. Tripp, *There Goes Flukes*, 176.

11. Sederholm interview, 1982.

12. Tripp, *There Goes Flukes*, 175–76, 201.

13. *Ibid.*



Fig. 8.1. Crew of the *John R. Manta*, “all dressed up in shore ‘togs’” for a trip ashore, 1923. At far left is Daniel Crowie, second mate; second from right is the steward, William Simon. Photographer William H. Tripp listed the others: “Mr. Lopes, first mate; Wilcox, the cabin-boy; Jim Monahan; Dwyer; Bradshaw, the cook; Buckley; Dean; Duarte; Wangborg; Mendes; Harvey; Power; Butler; Simons, the steward; and Cleveland, one of our boat-steerers.” Courtesy Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

want anything to do with whaling,” he said. “The only people who made any money were the captains and the owners.” And he said, “It was a miserable life.” And he said you were out there for two years or three years, and he said you came back with nothing. So he said, “Don’t talk to me about whaling. There’s nothing romantic about it.”

But for some of the men who had been at sea there was still at least a little romance in whaling. In 1920 James Avery and others of the last surviving active and inactive captains formed the Whalemens’ Club, which met in a back room of the Horvitz Whaling Outfitters store at the corner of Union and Second Street; some called it “Portagee Corner” because of the predominance of Portuguese captains in the latter days of whaling. From the start the club held clambakes. In 1921 they had their meal aboard the *Wanderer*, of which Avery was then agent. The bark had just returned from a whaling voyage and was tied up at the city’s Pier Three, and the clambake was lit by car headlights trained on the deck. At Horvitz’s building, the newspaper stated, the old whalemens had transformed their space “into a comfortable ‘ship’s cabin’ where they could trade stories and generally reminisce.¹⁴ They even entertained members of the press, who, ignorant of the reality of the industry, were taken with the drama of whaling years past. Sederholm recalled one visit of this sort:

We used to have newspaper men come down, newspaper men from Boston. They’d come down to get stories. I remember one time old Jim Avery told a story [to] one of these fellows came down, a writer. He says when he was a boy in the West Indies a



Fig. 8.2. Daniel Crowie using a cutting spade in "separating the head of 20 barrel whale." A blubber hook is seen in the whale's spout hole. Tripp wrote, "Note the teeth are barely through the gums." Photograph by William H. Tripp. Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum.

fellow had a whale farm. And he says every morning he'd open the gates and let the whales go out to sea and every night they'd come back he'd close the gates and they'd milk 'em, sell whale milk. And this fellow wrote the story in the Boston paper.¹⁵

Even some crew remembered whaling fondly; as time went on the danger, dirt, abuse, and low pay they lived with receded in their minds, and only the excitement remained. Herbert Ollivierre remembered that West Indian men used to gather near the corner of Cedar and Kempton Street, in front of the barber shop run by the West Indian Aubrey Bennett, and tell stories. His father Albert often held court there.

He stayed with my youngest brother in Boston for a while,

then he came down and stayed with the older sister. And he'd go down to the corner in the evening and sit and tell stories of the sea, the hand of God, and those guys, they'd sit around and listen to him, keep him going. My sister, she'd wake up and he wouldn't be in the house, be 1:30, 2, she'd say, "Oh my God," get dressed and go out looking. And he'd be out on the corner, and she'd say, "Puppa!" And he'd say, "Oh my God I gotta go." And he'd get up and say "See ya tomorrow," and he'd be back tomorrow. Because he had an audience. Talk about the Union Jack.

After he retired from his *Standard-Times* job, in 1946, William Kydd began to make models based on what he recalled about the *William A. Grozier* (fig. 8.3). They were a half-inch to a foot in scale. Kydd used only hand tools and a template he drew on cardboard. Feeling that his first model was too small, he spent six hundred hours building a second one. Kydd did not carve the schooner from a single block of wood but instead bent his planks and assembled the hull as if he were building a full-scale vessel. He outfitted its whaleboats with harpoons, oars, and line, cut and sewed a full suit of sails, made a working anchor windlass, and furnished the forecastle and officers' cabins. "Remarkably," the newspaper noted, "he had no plans, no photos—just the memories of his whaling days."¹⁶ Those memories remained strong even into his ninety-first year. "If they had whaling now and I was able," he said then, "I'd go down with them right now."

14. "Whalemen's Club is Six Years Old," *Fairhaven Star*, 18 June 1926, William H. Tripp Scrapbooks, ODHS.

15. Sederholm interview, 1962.

16. "One of Last Remaining Whalemen Here Builds Models of Schooners He Sailed," *Standard-Times*, 21 December 1952.



Fig. 8.3. William L. Kydd with his grandson Jeffrey Whyte and two of the whaling schooner models he built, as shown in the New Bedford *Standard-Times*, 21 December 1952. Both were based on his memory of the *William A. Grozier*, on which he served for five voyages between 1903 and 1910.

PART THREE
AZOREAN AND CAPE VERDEAN
WHALEMEN AND WHALING
TRADESPEOPLE IN NEW BEDFORD

Donald Warrin

CHAPTER 9

AZOREANS AND CAPE VERDEANS IN NEW BEDFORD WHALING, 1825–1865

Introduction

Exploring the presence in New Bedford’s whaling industry of people from the former Portuguese archipelagos of the Azores and Cape Verde hinges on numerous primary documents. The principal sources have been documents archived at the New Bedford Whaling Museum and the city's Free Public Library—whaling logs and journals, crew lists, and business records. Archived as well in these two repositories are oral histories and interviews related to the local and regional whaling industry. City directories and the United States and Massachusetts state censuses were an important source of data on the shoreside activities of these populations. Numerous books, articles, and dissertations were also invaluable sources of information.

Still, the primary sources present challenges, the most difficult among them distinguishing Azoreans and Cape Verdeans from each other. From 1825 to 1925 both of these groups were subjects of Portugal and were commonly so identified. United States citizens commonly labeled “Portuguese” all natives of the Portuguese Atlantic islands, and Continental Portugal itself. Depending upon the enumerator, nineteenth-century censuses identified place of birth as either Portugal or one of numerous other terms. People born in the Azores were often identified as from the “Western Islands,” while Cape Verdean place of birth was sometimes given as “Cabo de Verde” or “C.D. Islands”; in numerous instances the name of the island is given instead of the archipelago. Censuses do, generally if not always, identify race, but the fact that the 1850 census, the first to identify every individual by name, was not available to researchers until 1922 made it much more difficult for earlier researchers to study these Portuguese immigrants as separate groups. One scholar in 1923 chose to study Portuguese immigrants in Fall River instead of New Bedford because few Cape Verdeans had settled in the former city, and “Bravans”—another common term for Cape Verdeans—“cannot be distinguished in written records” from other Portuguese.¹

In addition, the prevalence of such typical surnames as Antone, Gonsalves, Silva, and others hinders the effort to distinguish between these groups; they were common among both Azoreans and Cape Verdeans. The problem is compounded by the tendency to Anglicize Portuguese surnames, because they were hard for English speakers to pronounce. The first names of Joseph, Antone, Francisco, or Manuel are sometimes clues to Portuguese descent, though not specifically to Cape Verdean or Azorean origin; so too are formulaic changes that led to surnames such as Perry and Sylvia, common among both Azorean Americans and Cape Verdean Americans. At times crew list compilers simply ignored the more difficult surname and used first

1. Donald R. Taft, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*, Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law 107, 1 (New York: Columbia University, 1923), 122.

names instead. And instances exist of men given the surname of their home island—including Manuel Bravo, on the 1840 voyage of Fairhaven bark *Arab* (one of three men from “Bravo” in the crew), and Manual Fayal on the 1839 voyage of the New Bedford ship *Mary*—as sometimes occurred with such other foreign-born whalers as Pacific islanders.² Whaling crew lists also did not systematically register a crew member’s country of origin, an omission possibly triggered by the 1817 federal law mandating that, under threat of custom collector’s fine, all of the officers and at least two-thirds of the crew on any United States vessel be United States citizens.³

Finally, both Azoreans and Cape Verdeans, as well as other foreign-born whalers, sometimes adopted the surname of their whaling vessel’s master. Such was evidently the case of Joseph Folger, the first Azorean to command a New Bedford whaling vessel.⁴ On another voyage Folger served as mate with Henry Starbuck, a seventeen-year-old native of the island of São Jorge, Azores.⁵ Frank Howland, who served on the 1826–27 voyage of the New Bedford ship *Hydaspe*, was from the island of São Jorge; Charles Coggeshall, on bark *Lydia* of New Bedford from 1880 to 1884, was from the island of Corvo.⁶ Emanuel Taber, according to New Bedford poor relief records, was born in Cape Verde and “came here 25 years ago, has been 4 voyages from here whaling, the part of the time in the merchant service. Went last voyage to California, in ship Sarah Parker of Nantucket. Fell from aloft on that voyage. Not able to do anything since, wants aid.”⁷

One of the common reasons for this surname adoption was the propensity of American whaling captains to stop by the islands, especially Faial in the Azores, to pick up a young lad, perhaps not even in his teens, to serve as cabin boy. John E. Luce, who arrived in New Bedford in 1834 at the age of twelve on the ship *Chili*, had been serving as cabin boy to Captain Lot E. Luce. As was not uncommon at the time, once ashore the young man went to live with the captain and his family on Martha’s Vineyard and there adopted the surname of his benefactor.⁸

This study uses “Portuguese” to refer to people most likely to have been from the Azores or Cape Verde, though the term embraces some who were possibly from continental Portugal or Madeira. “Portuguese Atlantic Islanders” refers to those

2. Marla R. Miller and Laura A. Miller, *A Generous Sea: Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and the Jewish Community in New Bedford Whaling & Whaling Heritage*, Special Ethnographic Report New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (Boston: Northeast Region Ethnography Program, National Park Service, 2016), 47, 57–58, 173.

3. Section 6 of Chap. 31, “An Act Concerning the Navigation of the United States,” 14th Cong., 2d sess. approved 1 March 1817, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/14th-congress/session-2/c14s2ch31.pdf>.

4. Folger had signed to as third mate on the 1824 voyage of the New Bedford ship *Timoleon* but assumed command when its master Charles Starbuck died in 1825. *New Bedford Weekly Mercury*, 3 June 1825.

5. Seamen’s Register, Old Dartmouth Historical Society (hereafter cited as ODHS).

6. *Ibid.*

7. New Bedford Overseers of the Poor Records, vol. 2, 17 December 1859, New Bedford Free Public Library (hereafter cited as NBFPL).

8. Pat Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas: Profiles of Azorean Master Mariners* (St. Petersburg, FL: Valkyrie Press, 1978), 85; Joseph Sequeira Vera, “Capt. John E. Luce (1822–1909)” (manuscript, n.d.), author’s collection.

persons most likely to have been born in the Azores or Cape Verde and less likely to have been born in Madeira. When nativity is known, the terms Azorean, Cape Verdean, Continental, and Madeiran are used.

The Home Archipelagos

Ever since the era of seafaring exploration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the world—rather than the nation-state—has been the spatial unit for the Portuguese,⁹ and the history of Portugal and its people has been one of migration. Located on the western edge of the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal's roots as a nation can be traced to Henry of Burgundy, who arrived in the region in 1095. Two years later he was known as the Count of Portugal, ruling over a limited territory between the Minho River and the Muslim border to the south. In 1139 Portugal became a kingdom under the rule of Henry's son, Afonso Henriques. As one of the first nation-states of Europe it began, under a series of rulers, an expansion southward into Moorish territory that culminated a century later in essentially the boundaries that define the nation of today.

Portugal's drive to expand its influence was motivated in part by religion but principally by commercial interests. In 1415 the Portuguese first captured Ceuta in northern Morocco and then established fortified trading posts down the west coast of Africa. By 1488 a Portuguese fleet commanded by Bartolomeu Dias had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and thus realized the long-held dream of discovering a sea route to India. For this reason, and possibly because Portuguese vessels returning from the southern Atlantic and following the prevailing currents were already aware of the South American landmass, King John II of Portugal showed little interest in Columbus's entreaties to furnish a fleet of discovery to sail west in the search for the riches of the Indies.

Because the royal government tightly controlled both exploration and commerce, news of discoveries was often not immediately disseminated. There is evidence that Portuguese fleets, most probably under the command of Genoese masters, had touched upon both Madeira and the Azores during the latter part of the fourteenth century. But the dates of the discovery of these archipelagoes have traditionally been 1417 for Madeira, 1427 for the Azores, and 1456 for the Cape Verde Islands. Colonization followed relatively soon after discovery.

To Madeira and its sister island, Porto Santo, came mainland Portuguese and some Flemish. The Azores, nine in number and known in the age of sail as the "Western Islands," were settled more or less in the order of their discovery, from the late 1430s on (fig. 9.1). There the Flemish element was even more pronounced. This archipelago is divided into three groups, São Miguel and Santa Maria forming the easternmost, Flores and Corvo the most western, and the remaining five islands—Faial, Pico, São Jorge, Terceira, and Graciosa—the central group. The most western of the islands—Pico, Faial, São Jorge, Flores, and Corvo—were most often in contact

9. Bela Feldman-Bianco, "Multiple Layers of Time and Space: The Construction of Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism among Portuguese Immigrants," in Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 645, 1 (July 1992): 145–76.

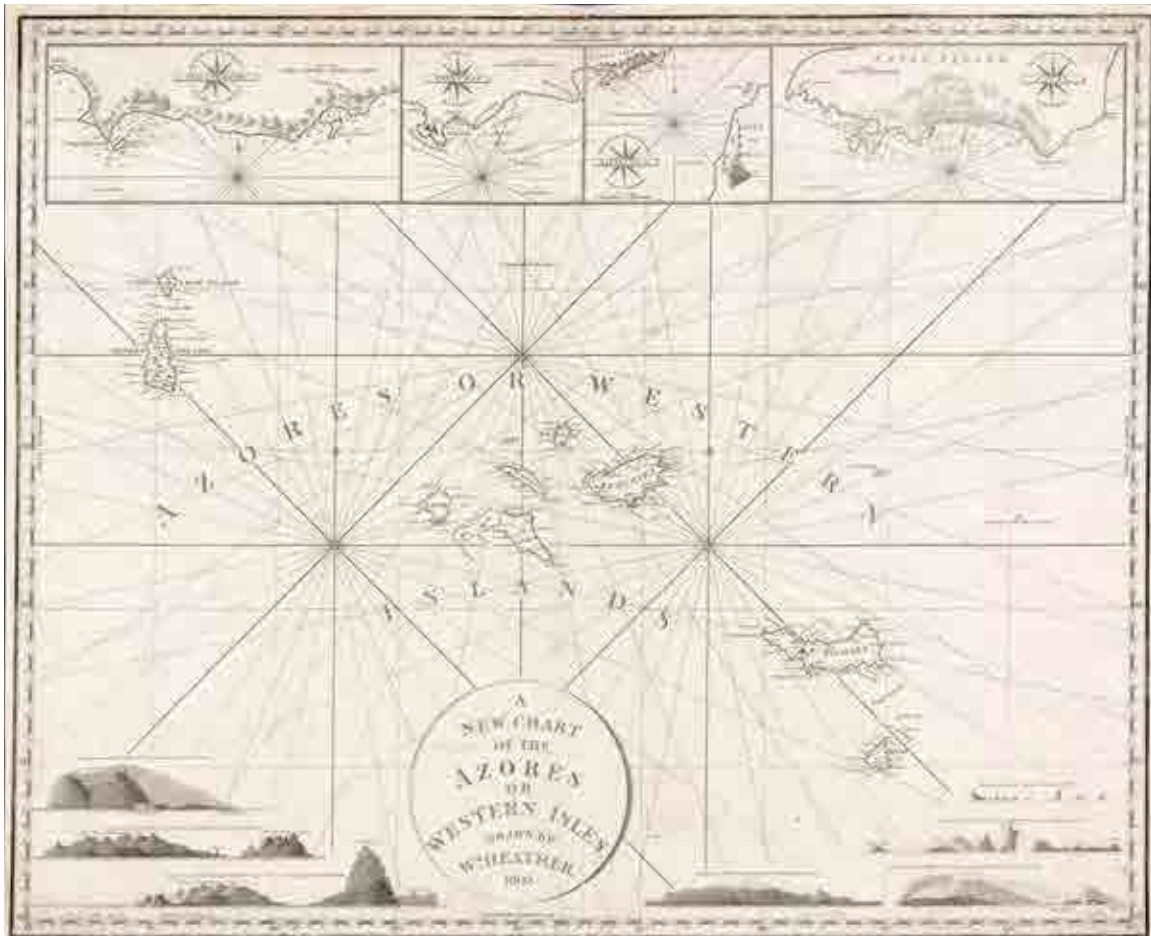


Fig. 9.1. William Heather, “A New Chart of the Azores or Western Isles,” 1803. Courtesy Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

with American whalers (fig. 9.2). These latter islands in particular were settled mainly by agriculturists who generally worked small plots of land at a subsistence level. While there were evidently a few persons brought enslaved to these islands prior to the nineteenth century, the Azorean economy never became dependent upon the slave trade, nor did this minor presence affect the somatic features of these islanders.

Islands, in the days of sail, had a significance far greater than they do today. As T. Bentley Duncan noted, “Small islands situated in the midst of seas and oceans, remote from the continental land masses, often possess a high importance in communications, navigation, and strategy—an importance out of all relation to their size and resources.”¹⁰ The Azores were especially significant, both for commercial and whaling vessels. Vessels sailing home from the South Atlantic followed trade winds that carried them in an arc to the west, and thus they approached the Azores from the southwest. There they would make port, both to reprovision after their long

10. T. Bentley Duncan, *Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 1.

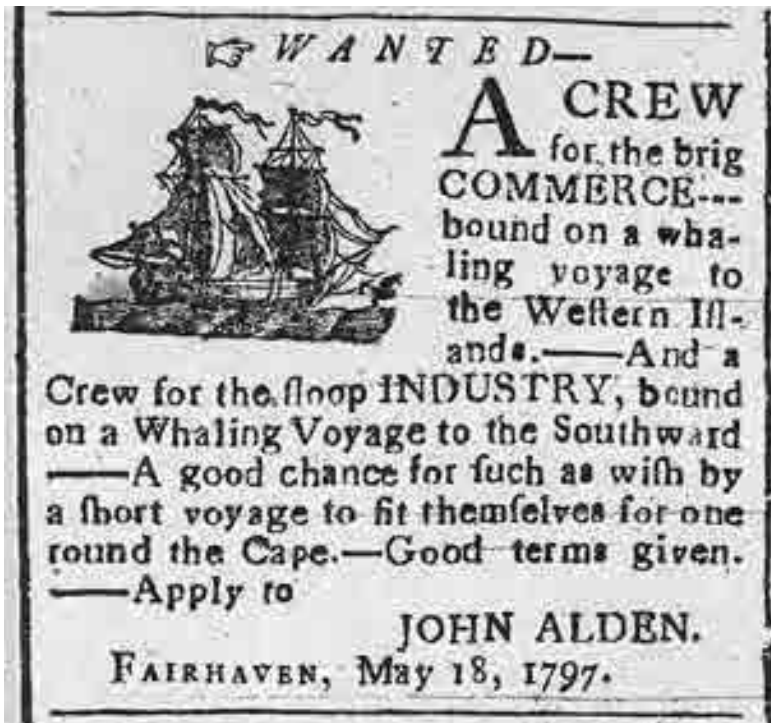


Fig. 9.2. Whaling from New Bedford to the Azores was well established by the time John Alden placed this advertisement for crew to the “Western Islands.” *New Bedford Medley*, 19 May 1797.

voyages and to secure armed escorts as they made their way through pirate-infested waters on their way to Lisbon or other European destinations. Spanish galleons returning from the Americas laden with gold often stopped in these islands as well. In fact, Christopher Columbus, on his return from his monumental first voyage to the Americas, called briefly at the island of Santa Maria before continuing on to Spain. “The Azores are ideally situated on the southern edge of the Gulf Stream, about 10 degrees north of the latitude from where the steady northeast trade winds, so relied upon

by mariners, begin to blow,” historian Michael Dyer has noted. “American trans-Atlantic whalers crossed the flow of the Gulf Stream . . . using the prevailing westerly winds to cruise as far to the eastward as they could before turning south to where the trade winds began to blow. Just about at the point where it was time to turn south, the Azores came into view.”¹¹

American merchant vessels visited both archipelagos by the mid-eighteenth century, but conflict between the French and British restrained colonial American whaling vessels from cruising these waters until about 1765. By then they had already been cruising along the west coast of Africa and thus quite possibly reached Cape Verde before the Azores.

The Azores were valued primarily, from the earliest days, for their agricultural products. They provided wheat to the mainland, woad (a dye, also known as pastel) to the English textile industry, oranges, and wine; wine from the island of Pico was commonly found on the tables of the American colonial elite. In the early nineteenth century a series of infestations began to devastate these crops, upon which much of the local economy was based. Oidium and phylloxera attacked the vines; the citrus crops succumbed to invasive insects; and potato rot—as it had in Ireland—destroyed

11. Michael P. Dyer, “‘Expressly Placed to Facilitate Navigation’: North Atlantic Islands, Their Advantages and Impacts, 1769–1924,” *Boletim do Núcleo Cultural da Horta* 18 (March 2020): 221–40.

this basic food source. Moreover, lying near the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the islands have been subject over the years to devastating earthquakes.

Still, the Azores remained important places for whaling captains and crew either to buy or barter for provisions. When James Webb reached the Azores in October 1845 in the ship *Dartmouth* of New Bedford, he wrote home that the voyage had taken twenty-one days, and while the vessel lay at anchor at Praia on the island of Terceira the crew had a day's liberty. "I was glad to get on shore once more the people seemed very kind and tried all they could to entertain us they gave us greate quanterteys of fruit grapes figs appels pairs peaches and so [on]."¹² The mate of the bark *Exchange* noted in June 1847 while the vessel was lying at the island of Flores, "exchanged bbl [barrel] of oil for 3,000 onions, 200 eggs & 4 dozen cabbages."¹³

In 1850 Walter Brooks wrote to his brother from on board the New Bedford ship *Gladiator*, "We stopt at the western isls and laid in A Stock of fresh provisions there was only one boat the captens boat went ashores but the natives com to the ship with boat loads of apples and grapes figs lemons chese the best chees I ever eat I tell you there was trading close and knives for fruit some of the sailors traded helf of there close away fore fruit we could get A bushel of fruit for an old jack knife."¹⁴ The keeper of the log of the bark *George and Mary* of Westport, Massachusetts, noted that when the vessel arrived at the village of Fajã Grande on Flores in September 1852, "At 7 A M board away the starbord boat and the captain went on shore at a smal vilage on the Is of Florus caled Fejohn at 11 A M a boat came of to the ship with frute to sel an staid aboard about an our and we got some appels grapes figs musmelons and eggs fore tobacco and old cloes."¹⁵ On the New Bedford bark *Wave* in 1856 William D. Buel wrote in his journal that though the crew did not go ashore at Faial he could see that "the country around is adorned with vineyards and groves of orange trees and other tropical fruits."¹⁶

James Webb stated that when the *Dartmouth* left the Azores in 1845 "we went to the Cape Devirde Islands and lay 4 days we then put to sea and bent our corse towards Cape Horn." Cape Verde offered some, but not all, of the advantages the Azores presented to visiting vessels. The archipelago is divided into two groups, the Barlavento (Windward, including Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal, Boa Vista, and several islets) and Sotavento (Leeward, including Brava, Fogo, Santiago, and Maio) (fig. 9.3). For centuries the islands served as refuges for political and religious exiles, from Jews fleeing the Inquisition to prisoners of the

12. James Webb, aboard ship *Dartmouth*, letter to his mother, 4 October 1845, MSS 56, ODHS.

13. Bark *Exchange*, Reynolds, New Bedford, 26 June 1847, Log 11, ODHS.

14. Walter Brooks, aboard ship *Gladiator*, to brother, 18 September 1850, MSS 56, ODHS.

15. Bark *George and Mary*, Manchester, Westport, 7 & 8 September 1852, Log 604, Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, New Bedford Whaling Museum (hereafter cited as KWM).

16. Journal of William D. Buel, Sep 1856, bark *Wave*, Hill, New Bedford, 1856–60, Log 667, Providence Public Library (hereafter cited as PPL). There were strict controls in the islands on the importation of tobacco and some other goods and severe consequences for attempting to skirt them. James F. Munger, *Two Years in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans and China* (1852; reprint, University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1967), 11, noted that the carpenter on the ship *St. George* of New Bedford, while in port at Horta on Faial, the "was caught in the attempt to smuggle a few heads of tobacco, and fined twelve dollars." In 1827 the Portuguese government seized the ship *Galatea* of New Bedford for smuggling.



Fig. 9.3. William Heather, “A New Chart of the Cape Verd Islands, from the Latest Authorities,” 1805. The Windward Islands (Ilhas do Barvalento) are to the north, the Leeward (Ilhas do Sotavento) to the south. Courtesy Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

Salazar regime of the twentieth century. And the archipelago served for a long time as an entrepôt for the Portuguese slave trade. The economy of Cape Verde was dependent from the beginning on people carried from the African continent and enslaved to work the sugar and cotton plantations established by the Portuguese. In addition to the white political elite from mainland Portugal, the main European element were the so-called *degredados*, criminals who were sent to Cape Verde rather than incarcerated on the continent.¹⁷ The product of sexual contact between African females and the few whites in these islands resulted in the great variation in racial features among Cape Verdeans. Within

the Portuguese empire a definite hierarchy—based to some extent on “whiteness,” as well as on distance from the mainland—existed. In both the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires anyone born in one of the colonies—even of mainland parents—was ipso facto considered to be inferior. From the imperial point of view continentals stood at the top of the hierarchy, Azoreans and Madeirans somewhat below, Cape Verdeans below these other islanders, and natives of the African colonies at the base.

In addition to enslavement, cycles of drought and famine were also a significant burden for Cape Verdeans. The climate of the archipelago, lying off the coasts of Mauritania and Senegal, is heavily influenced by that of the Sahara desert. Thus, life was always precarious; and the extended droughts, exacerbated by the ill-conceived attempts to create extensive agriculture, periodically decimated the local populations.

17. Marilyn Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity: Cape Verdean American Immigrants, 1860-1965* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 3, has noted that the early population of Cape Verde included at least 27 West African ethnic groups, Portuguese, some emigrants from Spain and Italy, and Jews as well as *degredados*.

During a drought in 1810 the *New Bedford Mercury* reported that the inhabitants of the island of Maio “were totally destitute of any thing to subsist on; all the mules in the place had died; and the people in such an emaciated state as to be incapable of any manual labor. There was plenty of salt, but it could not be procured.”¹⁸ “The trees and all kinds of vegetation are withering and passing away,” the *Mercury* reported in October 1832, in the midst of the 1831–33 drought. Most of the animals had died, and “the inhabitants earnestly requested Captain Rider [of the schooner *Fredonia* of Salem, Massachusetts] to lay their condition before the American people, as they do not expect assistance from Portugal, or any other European Nation.”¹⁹

New Bedford whaling vessels, in contact with Cape Verde since the 1790s, were especially helpful in carrying provisions to the starving inhabitants, although what they carried could hardly have stemmed the significant number of deaths. In August 1833 the *Mercury* announced that “seven cargoes of provisions had been received there from the United States for the suffering inhabitants, and one cargo of corn from Africa.”²⁰ In all, thirteen vessels from the United States laden with goods to mitigate the effects of the drought arrived in the archipelago, but during this period some thirty thousand inhabitants succumbed to the effects of the drought. By early 1834, however, the *Mercury* reported that “crops are once again in abundance.”²¹

In 1850 a prolonged drought began that endured through 1866 and created the famine of 1863–66, in which more than thirty thousand people died.²² Enslaved Cape Verdeans were forced to emigrate to the Portuguese tropical islands of São Tomé and Príncipe, there to labor on plantations, a practice that continued almost up to independence in 1975.²³ Working conditions on the islands themselves changed little for Cape Verdean even after they were freed in 1869. Their status evolved first to servile laborers, a step removed from slavery, and then to individuals with a “moral and legal obligation to work”—that is, to become contract laborers.²⁴

For vessels touching there, however, the Cape Verde islands were important way stations. As in the Azores, outgoing vessels from Europe and later the United States could reprovision at Cape Verde, though droughts made them less reliable a source. In particular at Boa Vista, Maio, and Sal, merchant and other vessels stocked up on salt, a valuable commodity at the time in the preservation of meat and fish.²⁵ In good years, according to an observer in 1844, the island of Brava produced for export some fifteen

18. *New Bedford Weekly Mercury*, 23 November 1810.

19. *New Bedford Daily Mercury*, 10 October 1832. Metropolitan Portugal (Lisbon and Oporto) was engaged at the time in an extended civil war.

20. *New Bedford Daily Mercury*, 23 August 1833.

21. Luís de Albuquerque and Maria Emilia Madeira Santos, *História Geral de Cabo Verde* (Lisbon, 1991): 1:13; *New Bedford Daily Mercury*, 28 March 1834.

22. Albuquerque and Santos, eds., *História Geral de Cabo Verde*, I:13.

23. Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 43, stated that inhabitants of the island of São Tiago, the most populous in the Cape Verde archipelago, were most apt to be conscripted to work these coffee and cocoa plantations.

24. António Carreira, *The People of the Cape Verde Islands: Exploitation and Emigration* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1982), 102–11; A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal desde os Tempos Mais Antigos até ao Governo do Sr. Pinheiro de Azevedo* (Lisbon: Palas Editores, 1977), 2:138–39.

to twenty thousand bushels of maize, as well as beans, potatoes, and other vegetables, “furnished annually to more than fifty ships, mostly whalers, that come for water and refreshments to our ports, along with many birds and pigs (of these it possesses a special breed whose meat is especially flavorful), that it sells to the other islands.”²⁶ On one day in 1847 the captain of the whaling bark *Exchange* bought at Brava “14 small pigs, 8 fowl, 20 or 30 pumpkins” and the next day “6 small hogs, 25 pumpkins, a few green oranges & a little green corn.” James F. Munger, a greenhand aboard the New Bedford whaling ship *St. George* in 1850, wrote in his journal that while the vessel lay in the harbor at Praia on the Cape Verdean island of Santiago “we purchased here a large quantity of oranges, bananas and cocoa nuts. The former are of very fine flavor, and very cheap at this group of islands. They are retailed at two and three for a cent, and come much cheaper in large quantities. We had them in profusion for a fortnight.”²⁷ Yet in a bad year, as the log of the Sag Harbor bark *Union II* noted while at Fogo, the whalers “could not trade eny for the natives have not enough for themselves to eat. got one Pig one Goat two Chickens and three men.”²⁸

Both islands were also important transshipping points and remained so throughout the span of New Bedford whaling. In 1835 one vessel owner advised Tristram P. Swain, master of the New Bedford ship *Isaac Howland*, to visit both archipelagos for whales, provisions, and to offload oil to be shipped home on other vessels:

You will proceed to sea first good time and of course will shape your course for the Western islands to lay in a Stock of Potatoes, etc.—we hope you may be so fortunate as to take some sperm oil about those Islands or the Cape de Verds in which case we should advise your shipping it home if an opportunity presents as it will give you more room on board and the Interest saved on the oil will pay the

25. Briton Cooper Busch, “Cape Verdeans in the American Whaling and Sealing Industry, 1850-1900,” *American Neptune* 45, 2 (Spring 1985): 104–5, notes that as early as the 1600s sealing vessels traders paid Cape Verdeans to dig, pack, and load salt and scarcely if ever paid for the commodity itself. Sealers need salt to preserve skins, and merchant vessels sold salt Cape Verde salt in the West Indies, New England, and Newfoundland. One journal keeper on the schooner *Mary Jane* in 1833 noted the salt pits on “Sal & Bonavista” where “the poor slaves are pining for freedom, and seize every opportunity of escape, on board of the shipping which are continually arriving at these islands. To guard against this loss of property the strictest precautions are adopted by the planters; who do not allow the inhabitants the use [of] boats of any discription”; see Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 105.

26. The original volume figure for the maize was 400 “moios.” José Joaquim Lopes de Lima, *Das Ilhas de Cabo Verde e Suas Dependencias*, vol. 1 of *Ensaio sobre a Estatística das Possessões Portuguesas na África Ocidental e Oriental na China e na Oceana Ultramar* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1844–46), 40–41 and 110. Translated by the author.

27. James F. Munger, *Two Years in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans and China* (Fairfield, VA: Ye Galleon Press, 1987).

28. Bark *Union II*, Rogers, Sag Harbor, 23 September 1864, Log, Rogers Memorial Library, Southampton, NY (hereafter cited as RML); Bark *Exchange*, Reynolds, New Bedford, 26 June 1847, ODHS Log 11. When the whaling ship *Lucy Ann* of Wilmington, DE, arrived at the Cape Verde island of Santiago in January 1842, the log keeper and others went ashore with “tobacco, side combs, & handkerchiefs to trade for fruit” and found coconuts, cabbages, dates, bananas, watermelons, grapes, figs, and especially oranges in abundance. “The appearance of the soil is as if it never felt rain but the plantations looked flourishing. we saw plenty of Orange groves Pine Apple bushes vineyards Sugar cane plantations etc.” The next day, back aboard ship and ready to sail, “all hands [were] in the downs at leaving St Jago So soon. some swearing they could live there all the days of their lives & a spell longer.” John F. Martin, journal, ship *Lucy Ann*, King, Wilmington, DE, 15–16 January 1842, Log 434, KWM.

expenses of shipping it home—it can sometimes be left at Fayal with the counsel to be shipped when an opportunity presents—Sometimes there is an opportunity at the Cape de Verds to put it on board Some vessel bound to Boston—or some other port in New England.²⁹

Azoreans and Cape Verdeans in Whaling Crews, 1825–1865

During most of the years of the American whaling industry the Azores and Cape Verde were the first foreign ports New Bedford whalers reached (figs. 9.4 & 9.5). Portuguese Atlantic islanders may have served in small numbers on American whaling vessels from the time they began to call in these archipelagos, but the crew lists and seamen's protection papers that would document this participation are scant before 1820. In 1808 Azoreans Emanuel Joseph, of Pico, and Joseph Rose, of Flores, were already living in Massachusetts when they joined the crews of the ships *Maria* and *Sally* respectively, both bound for the Pacific; in 1811 at least a few Cape Verdeans were in the crews of Nantucket whaling vessels. Even as late as 1839 documentation was often vague: the crew list compiled that year for the New Bedford ship *Huntress* listed twenty-six men by name and ended with “& 4 Portuguese & one Negro Henry Anthony of New Bern NC.”

Nonetheless, acquiring crew was another major aim of New Bedford whaling masters at these ports of call; the captain of the *Exchange* noted in 1847 that along with provisions he bought at Brava he had acquired “2 more men, one as bs [boatsteerer], all natives.” Estimates of their numbers range widely, and complicating any estimate is the fact that many early New Bedford crew lists record men whose surnames are clearly Portuguese but were shown as living in New Bedford. One 1967 dissertation reckoned that from three hundred to six hundred Azoreans served on American whaling vessels by the time of the Civil War; Azoreans would thus have comprised 3 percent of total crew members in those years.³⁰ Historian Marilyn Halter has roughly estimated that from 1820 to 1860 anywhere from five hundred to one thousand Cape Verdeans came to New Bedford on whaling vessels.³¹

Azoreans, according to Briton Busch, were the first Atlantic islanders to join whaling crews. Those who did so were most apt to have been born on the westernmost islands—Pico, Faial, São Jorge, Flores, and Corvo—with São Jorge supplying the greatest number of crewmen in the 1820s. Only one Azorean island, Santa Maria, provided no men for whaling crews. In the same decade men from eight of the ten Cape Verde islands—Brava, Maio, Fogo, Santiago, Santo Antão, São Nicolau, São Vicente, Boa Vista—joined whaling crews, with by far the most coming from São Nicolau, followed by Brava.³² Given conditions in both archipelagos, it is easy to see why their residents were so eager to sign on to a whaling voyage. Cape Verdeans had

29. Isaac Howland Jr. and Co., Letter Book, 9 April 1835–19 October 1838, Carlton B. Morse Whaling Collection, MSS 79.22, ser. 1, box 6, f. 2, John Hay Library, Brown University (hereafter cited as JHL).

30. Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” Table 2. Busch surveyed from 16 to 26 vessels each year over in these even years between 1862 and 1882. These vessel departures were between 33 (in 1866) and 80 percent (in 1874) of total voyages from New Bedford from 1862 to 1876 using figures in Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*.

31. Carl Norman Haywood, “American Whalers and Africa” (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1967), 144, cited in Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 106; Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 45.



Fig. 9.4. The port of Horta, Faial, Azores, about 1880. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

the further incentive to escape slavery.³³ In addition to crop disease, earthquakes, drought, famine, and unpaid or poorly paid labor, the desire to avoid conscription into the Portuguese military was also a significant push to join a whaling crew.³⁴ Portuguese authorities were reluctant to lose young men who were subject to universal military service but found it difficult to halt the practice; much of the recruiting of new crew members was conducted surreptitiously.

Both archipelagos offered men experienced in whaling or fishing. In 1844 Lopes de Lima noted of Cape Verdeans, “The inhabitants of the maritime villages, and particularly those of Brava and São Nicolau, are much given to the maritime life, and they make excellent sailors.”³⁵ Shore whaling commenced on a minor scale in the Azores beginning in the 1830s, on the island of Faial, and then developed rapidly

32. Seamen’s Register, ODHS. Historians suggest that Brava supplied the most Cape Verdean men to whaling crews in later decades. Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 108, noted that in the last half of the 1800s men from Brava were most apt to sign on to whaling crews, but men from Fogo and Santiago also became whalers; “the term ‘Bravas’ was commonly used in whaling for all Cape Verdeans, whatever their actual home island.” Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 43, has stated, “Virtually all of the pioneering emigrants to the United States came from the island of Brava, the direct result of the connections made in the nineteenth century through the whaling industry.”

33. To this author’s knowledge there has never been a study to show what percentage of Cape Verdeans serving on board American whaling vessels may have been enslaved when they joined crews.

34. In 1843 William Eldridge, serving on the schooner *Emeline*, wrote that the wish to avoid military service “accounts for the great number of Portuguese now afloat in Whaling ships.” Quoted in Haywood, “American Whalers and Africa,” 144, and cited in Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 106.



Fig. 9.5. Schooners at Fajã d'Água, Brava, Cape Verde. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

during the 1850s, and it was experience with American whaling that encouraged its development. While the principal whaling stations were located on Faial and Pico, Flores and the other islands were involved at one time or another as well. According to whaling historian Robert Clark, from the 1920s to the 1940s as much as 10 percent of the world's sperm oil catch came from shore whaling in the Azores.³⁶ Shore whaling in Cape Verde also has a long history, but the earliest is little documented.³⁷ Inhabitants of Brava were whaling from the shore from the late eighteenth century, but not until the late nineteenth century did shore whaling begin from São Nicolau (1874) and from Sal (1883) and Maio about the same time. But pelagic whaling around the islands so reduced the whale population in the region that shore whaling ceased by the time of the First World War.³⁸

35. Lopes de Lima, *Das Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 40–41 and 110.

36. Robert Clarke, *Open Boat Whaling in the Azores: The History and Present Methods of a Relic Industry* (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 284 and 296. Roderick Corvello (1894–1989) recalled shore whaling on his native island of Flores when he was a boy. Men set out in whaleboats and, after striking a whale, towed it back to shore where it was processed in trypots set on the beach, as they had been in the earliest days of New Bedford whaling. Roderick Corvello, interview with Margaret Schuler, *Spinner: People and Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts*. 2 (1982): 103–4.

37. For the possibility of early seventeenth-century shore whaling at Cape Verde see Myriam Ellis, *A Baleia no Brasil Colonial* (São Paulo, Brazil: Melhoramentos, 1969), 25.

38. Cornelis J. Hazevoet and Frederick W. Wenzel, “Whales and Dolphins (Mammalia, Cetacea) of the Cape Verde Islands, with Special Reference to the Humpback Whale *Megaptera Novaeangliae* Borowski, 1781,” *Contributions to Zoology* 69 (2000): 198.

Fishing was a far less important industry in the nineteenth-century Azores; only about 2 percent of the islands' work force engaged in it.³⁹ This was true as well in Cape Verde, where, according to one historical account, "for most people the sea was not an avenue but a barrier. Fishing was the occupation of but a few, even these dared not to go too far in their tiny boats."⁴⁰ Cape Verde historian George E. Brooks has contended that "for centuries Portuguese colonial officials leagued with plantation owners to prohibit Cabo Verdeans from owning fishing craft and other vessels to prevent the escape of slaves, mutinous soldiers, exiled criminals, and political deportees. . . . Denied use of boats [that is, deep-sea vessels], Cabo Verdeans were restricted to shore fishing along the few coves, reefs, and shoal waters."⁴¹

Many Portuguese Atlantic Islanders left on whaling vessels at quite a tender age, as crew lists and numerous first- and second-hand accounts attest. In 1832, when he was nine years old, Joseph D. Silva ran away from his native island of Faial in order to serve as cabin boy on the New Bedford whaling ship *Brandt*.⁴² William B. Whitecar, who served aboard the bark *Pacific* of New Bedford from 1858 to 1859, described succinctly the situation of the young Azoreans with whom he had served:

Great numbers of young men are carried off from these islands annually, by American whaleships, the government demanding of each young man, born in the islands, a certain amount of military duty in Europe. To emancipate themselves from this irksome service they join whalers. . . . When these people first come aboard the ship they are indifferently dressed, and invariably barefooted; when those we shipped were supplied with an outfit of sea clothes, they were greatly astonished and delighted. They are a very economical people, and by dint of washing for others, patching, at which in a short time they become adept, and other little jobs, they soon become possessed of a large amount of clothing, which they hoard up and gloat over as a miser would his gold. They are shipped for little or nothing as regards remuneration, scarcely anything being said about a lay on either side; but the captain, if generous, will always make them a liberal allowance on the ship's arriving at New Bedford. They are generally strong and able-bodied, and make good working-hands to pull and haul, but, except in rare instances, do not rise in position above steering a boat; although there are several ships at present sailing out of New Bedford whose masters are Portuguese by birth, yet in each instance, I am informed by good authority, they were taken from the islands at a very early age, and sent to school in America between voyages.⁴³

39. Alvin R. Graves, *The Portuguese Californians: Immigrants in Agriculture* (San Jose, CA: Portuguese Heritage Publications of California, 2004), 11. Some sources have suggested that young men were signed on to whaling vessels at those islands because they were fishermen, but data does not support that assertion.

40. Raymond A. Almeida, Dierdre Meintel, and Michael K. H. Platzer, *Cape Verdeans in America: Our Story*, (Boston: Tchuba, 1978), 43.

41. George E. Brooks, "Cabo Verde: Gulag of the South Atlantic: Racism, Fishing Prohibitions, and Famines," *History in Africa* 33 (2006): 101, 107. See also Albuquerque and Santos, *História Geral de Cabo Verde*, 1:225.

42. Silva later became master of the bark *Milwood* during its voyage to the Indian Ocean (1854–57), of bark *George* on its 1857 and 1862 voyages, and was master of at least eight whaling cruises from New Bedford after the Civil War.

43. William B. Whitecar, Jr., *Four Years aboard the Whaleship* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1860), 40–41.

The tendency to join crews at an early age prevailed among Cape Verdeans as well. John Theophilo Gonsalves, born about 1856 on Brava, shipped as a cabin boy on the bark *Roman* in 1868; Hendrick Morse, born in Cape Verde but living in New Bedford probably by the mid-1860s, stowed away on bark *Lydia* on its 1874–77 voyage. Because one shipped from the islands and the other boarded secretly, neither appear on New Bedford crew lists for these voyages.⁴⁴

The existence of most whaling crew lists from 1830 forward makes it possible to document at least some early whalers from the Portuguese islands. Crew lists, city directories, and censuses document twenty-five Cape Verdean men serving on whaling crews between 1832 and 1842.⁴⁵ In 1832 two Cape Verdeans, Jose Manuel of Brava and Antone Da Silva of Santo Antão shipped on whaling vessels from New Bedford, and Da Silva had kin in the town. A note under his name on the crew list for ship *Hector* reads, “Ann Silva is his sister Lewis Barrel a brother in law he wishes that what he leaves in the savings bank to go to these persons.” The *Rising States*, a whaling brig owned by African Americans in and around New Bedford, carried several Portuguese seamen in its 1837 and 1838 crews, typically composed entirely of men of African descent. Manuel DaSilva and Francis Decoster, described as “dark” with woolly hair, were part of the *Rising States*’ 1837 crew and were probably Cape Verdean but could have been Azorean; African Americans in the crew were all listed as “black.” The 1838 New Bedford directory lists Manuel Antone, probably from the Cape Verdean island of São Tiago, as in the crew of the *Rising States*, though he is not on the 1837 crew list.⁴⁶ In October 1838 John Antone signed on to the crew of the *Ceres*, which was condemned at Isle de France in April 1839; when Henry Howland Crapo compiled his list of tax delinquents for the town in 1838, he wrote that John Antone “c.” (colored), boarded at 150 Purchase Street and that “John Wood thinks he is in the bark Favorite”; the 1841 city directory listed Antone as boarding at 150 Purchase Street but then “at sea.”

From 1820 to 1865, the number of Azorean and Cape Verdean whalers climbed steadily. In 1845 Portuguese seamen were 6.7 percent of whaling crews sailing from the New Bedford customs district, but these numbers do not include those who may have been subsequently signed on at the Portuguese islands. When the bark *Exchange* left New Bedford in May 1847 it carried eighteen men, including the captain; typically such a vessel carried at least twenty men and as many as thirty. Among the crew were a Portuguese boatsteerer and two seamen. Soon a green hand was added at Flores Island. Then, while at Brava, three American-born whalers deserted, whereupon six Cape Verdeans (a boatsteerer, a seaman, and four greenhands) were added. These men “had Partly agreed to go in the Ship,” the keeper of the log noted, which suggests that a degree of force was involved. One of

44. Daniel M. Rodrigues (grandson of Gonsalves), interview with Laura Orleans, 13 August 1999, New Bedford [interview subject misstated as John T Rodrigues], Teddy Morse Ramos (grandson of Morse), interview with Laura Orleans, 30 October 2000, New Bedford, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (hereafter cited as NEBE).

45. These 25 were either listed on crew lists as from Cape Verde or shown as black or mulatto in censuses from 1850 and also shown in the 1836, 1838, or 1841 New Bedford directories as on board a whaling vessel.

46. The *Rising States* was damaged in a gale that killed four of its crew, including Captain William Cuffe, and was condemned at Cape Verde in December 1837.

them was signed on at a lay of 1/400, an extremely low rate of compensation.⁴⁷ In September 1852, the day after Westport bark *George and Mary* began trading for provisions at Flores, two of the men who had gone ashore did not return, and two locals had to be shipped in their place.⁴⁸

Portuguese participation essentially doubled each decade between 1825 and the war (table 9.1). Because crews cited the island origins of only a few of these whalers, it is not possible to identify them by archipelago at midcentury. By 1862, according to Busch, 7.5 percent of whaling crew members shipping from New Bedford were Portuguese from the Azores, Cape Verde, and living in New Bedford or in an unstated place; by 1864 16.4 percent were. In 1864, 6.8 percent were Azorean, 1.7 percent Cape Verdean, and 8.0 percent living in New Bedford or someplace other than the islands. Azoreans were 41.3 percent of these 109 crewmen of Portuguese origin, 10.1 percent were Cape Verdean, and 48.6 percent were already living in New Bedford or another place outside the archipelagos.⁴⁹ In 1865, when 25.9 percent of New Bedford crews were of Portuguese descent, 62 percent were Azorean and 22 percent were Cape Verdean; six came from Lisbon and three from Madeira. The origins of twenty-three were not identified.⁵⁰ By the end of the Civil War more than a quarter of all New Bedford whalers were of Portuguese descent.

The likelihood of desertion was so great that whaling captains were careful to limit crewmen's access to land when in port. A man aboard one of the New Bedford whaling vessels lying at Brava in 1851 commented later:

The bay itself was full of life and activity; nineteen vessels were sailing back and forth while taking on fresh supplies. On board of the *Enterprise* [whaleship of New Bedford] was a brother of our cooper whom he had not met for seven years. Unfortunately he was unable to communicate with him, although he recognized him with the spy-glass.⁵¹

In 1859 Manuel Silveira Andrade helped row the captain to shore while the New Bedford bark *Pacific* was anchored at the port of Horta, Faial—the youth's hometown. As Andrade noted in his journal,

Flores, August 11th [1859]. We sailed off and on until the next day. Then we squared away to Fayal at 4:00 o'clock p.m. under a full sailed strong N.W., and we made a good progress, got in Fayal bay in 22 hours, to be in the light sails, and laid there off wondering the night; one boat was dispatched ashore at 2 o'clock, and came aboard right off; I was in her, but I could not obtain permission to go ashore on my own native land! Without doubt I've been very sorry for it, but I couldn't help myself! I only could get a previlige to have the spy glass on my

47. Seamen's Register and Whalers' Shipping Papers, NBFPL; bark *Exchange*, Reynolds, New Bedford, Log 11, New Bedford Whaling Museum (hereafter cited as NBWM). Even more egregious was the 1/500 lay given to an Azorean greenhand when he signed on the ship *Governor Troup* at the islands in 1844 (Whalers' Shipping Paper, mic 182, NBFPL.)

48. Bark *George and Mary*, Manchester, Westport, 7 & 8 September 1852, Log 604, KWM.

49. Busch, "Cape Verdeans," Table 2.

50. Data recorded from the Seamen's Register, ODHS.

51. Taylor, *Life on a Whaler*, 30.

Table 9.1. Portuguese Crewmen Serving on Whaling Vessels Sailing from New Bedford

Year	No. Voyages	Portuguese Crew	Total Crew	Percent Portuguese	Portuguese Masters
1820	44	5	—	—	—
1825	41	23	—	—	—
1830	81	76	—	—	1
1834	64	93	—	—	—
1845	166	209	3122	6.7	—
1855	132	467	3615	12.9	1
1865	88	688	2658	25.9	—
1875	58	462	1617	28.6	2
1900	9	80	160	50	4
1910	10	143	225	63.6	4
1920	9	113	138	81.9	6

Note: The port of departure for these vessels was New Bedford, but many vessels were registered to nearby Buzzards Bay ports as well as several from other New England places.

hand for a moment, to look upon my own dwelling and some others in my neighbourhood! How pretty they looked to me!!⁵²

Azoreans and Cape Verdeans aboard whalers out of New Bedford and other ports were not infrequently treated as second-class citizens in the whaling industry, despite the commonly held view of the whaling vessel as a relatively egalitarian workplace. One notes frequently the anonymity into

which they, and other islanders, fell. The *Whaleman’s Shipping List* reported in May 1855 that in December 1854 “while lying off and on at Rorotonga” the ship *India* of New Bedford “sent two boats ashore after refreshments. First boat made it back. The second had left the shore, pulled out through the reef and set her sail, and that was the last seen of her. The ship was about four miles to leeward. . . . The boat’s crew consisted of seven men, Charles F Little of New Bedford, 5 Portuguese, and a native of Rorotonga.”⁵³ Racist incidents certainly took place. The keeper of the log aboard the bark *Zone* of Fairhaven wrote while the vessel was lying off the island of Fogo in the fall of 1855, “We have got plenty of music on deck now for there is nothing else to be heard but a pig squealing, or a goat bleating; and if that is not enough to satisfy, go forward and you can hear a half dozen of ‘Dagos’ jabbering Portuguese. Maybe that will cause you to express a wish to get to the masthead or somewhere else, where you cannot hear.” The same logkeeper had noted the day before, “In an hour came off with 10 hogs, 4 goats, a dozen chickens and a bunch of bananas—capt. Came back again at 10 p.m., bringing three new Portuguese, to be added to the rest of the ‘live stock!’”⁵⁴ John Thompson, a fugitive from slavery in the South, recalled an incident of bigotry while serving in the crew of New Bedford bark *Milwood* in the Indian Ocean in the early 1840s:

We remained in Madagascar three weeks to repair the ship, which was damaged at sea. While lying in port four of the crew escaped, and were concealed on shore

52. Manuel Silveira Andrade, “The True Remarks of a Whaling Voyage from North Atlantic to North Pacific Ocean around Cape Horn in 1859 on Board of the Bark Pacific (396 tons) of New Bedford, Capt. Jacob A. Howland,” MSS, JAF. (This journal, written originally in Portuguese, was later translated by Andrade into English. The original is not extant.)

53. *Whalemen’s Shipping List*, 8 May 1855.

by the natives; who afterwards came and betrayed them to the captain for a price. The mate, with a boat's crew of Portuguese, was sent for them, with whom they not only refused to return, but severely cut and bruised them. Afterwards the captain, with the captains of five other vessels, then lying in port, went for them, conducted by the natives, who knew their place of concealment, in a native hut.

When he discovered them, the captain calmly told them he wished them to return with him to their duty on board the vessel, to which they readily gave their assent, saying they would have gone before had he sent Americans for them, but that they would not willingly submit to be fettered by Portuguese.⁵⁵

Mates, Masters, and Owners, 1825–1865

For most Portuguese Atlantic Island whalers, to rise above the rank of boatsteerer was difficult. To become a mate or master required good command of spoken and written English and navigational skills, and in general terms the Portuguese undervalued the need for education among the largely rural populations of both archipelagos. Teachers were few, and many parents preferred that older children join the labor force and contribute their income to the household.⁵⁶ Still, some few Azoreans did advance in antebellum whaling. By 1825 the New Bedford whaling fleet gained its first Portuguese whaling master when Nantucket whaling captain Charles Starbuck died on the 1824–25 voyage of New Bedford ship *Timoleon*. Joseph Folger, from the island of Pico in the Azores and at the time a resident of Nantucket, first sailed on the *Timoleon* as fourth mate from 1822 to 1823 under Captain Starbuck, then again the following year on its next voyage under the same master. Though he shipped on the same vessel in June 1824 as third mate, he had evidently taken over as mate by the time Starbuck died while the ship was whaling off the coast of Brazil in June 1825. Folger returned the *Timoleon* to New Bedford in June 1825 and later served as mate on several other whaling voyages out of New Bedford.⁵⁷ Joseph Thomas, born on the Azorean island of Terceira about 1804, began his whaling career at least by 1823 in the crew of the ship *Milwood* of New Bedford. In 1838, after sailing a number of times out of Boston and New Bedford, he took command of the ship *Liverpool* for a two-year voyage to the South Atlantic. He was then thirty-three years old. After a short respite he again took out the New Bedford ship *Liverpool*, this time to the Indian Ocean (1840–42). His last command was aboard the New Bedford ship *St. George* in 1843–45, a very profitable eighteen-month voyage to the Northwest coast of the United States.⁵⁸

54. Bark *Zone*, Fish, Fairhaven, 17 and 18 Oct 1855, Log 278, KWM.

55. John Thompson, *The Life of John Thompson, A Fugitive Slave* (1856; reprint, Chapel Hill: Academic Affairs Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2000), 124.

56. See Augusto Casimiro, *Portugal Crioulo* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1940), 21.

57. Seamen's Register, ODHS; *New Bedford Weekly Mercury*, 1 July 1825.

58. Seamen's Register, ODHS; Starbuck conflates this last and a subsequent voyage under a different master (*History*, 398–99). See Judith N. Lund, et al., "American Offshore Whaling Voyages: A Database," National Maritime Digital Library, <http://www.nmdl.org/projects/whindex.cfm>. Consulted 27 February 2010. An 1832 naturalization record exists for a Joseph Thomas, born in Terceira on 18 April 1807, who came to New Bedford on 1 April 1822; he is probably the same man who claimed to be 19 years old when he shipped on the *Milwood* in 1823 and 20 when he shipped on the same vessel in 1824.

Other Azorean men were masters of whaling vessels before the Civil War. Frederick Joseph, born in Faial in 1817, took the bark *Peri* on a two-and-one-half-year cruise to the Indian Ocean in 1843. Joseph Dias Jr., probably a Portuguese American from Martha's Vineyard, commanded the ship *St. George* on a voyage to the North Pacific (1853–57) and was one of a number of Portuguese masters sailing from New Bedford in that decade.⁵⁹ Thomas E. Fordham, born in Faial in 1828, was master of the ship *Milo* on its 1859–63 voyage and commanded several other vessels over the succeeding decades.

Before as after the war, advancement for Cape Verdeans was even less likely. Halter has noted that despite being quickly recognized as skilled and disciplined whalers, Cape Verdean crew “were routinely allotted the lowest rates in the division of profits and were frequently subject to harsh treatment in the mariners’ hierarchy because of discrimination based on race and ethnicity.”⁶⁰ Severino D. Pierce, born in Brava in 1817, was the first Cape Verdean to command an American whaling vessel and may have been the only Cape Verdean to do so before the Civil War. Pierce came to New Bedford in late May 1832 and served as first mate on the ship *America* in 1851 and ship *Magnolia* in 1854; he then took the *Magnolia* to the North Pacific for a four-year cruise in 1858. The *Magnolia*’s crew of thirty-one included four boatsteerers and one seaman who were Portuguese; the rest were apparently white and born in the United States. On his 1837 naturalization application Pierce called himself “a free white person”; Bravans were sometimes called “white” Cape Verdeans.⁶¹

Azorean interest in the ownership of whaling vessels in the New Bedford area began by the 1850s.⁶² Antone Joseph was a pioneer, taking on the first of many minor shares with his purchase of a one-sixteenth interest in the bark *R. L. Barstow* of Mattapoisett in 1851. Over the next two decades he owned small shares in dozens of New Bedford whalers. As was the case with non-Portuguese whaling masters, these men were often encouraged to own a share in the New Bedford vessels they commanded. Some of these early investors in their own commands included Joseph Dias Jr. (ship *St. George*, 1853), Joseph D. Silva (bark *George*, 1857), and John E. Simmons (ship *Cleone*, 1858). Another assiduous part-owner was Joseph Vera, whose first share was in the schooner *Glacier* in 1864; born about 1827 in Pico, his 1894 death record described his occupation as “stockholder in whaleships.”⁶³ Severino D. Pierce, who owned a 2/32 share of the *Magnolia* in 1858, may have been the only Cape Verdean immigrant to have owned part of a whaling vessel before

59. Both Dias and his father claimed to have been born in Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard, but the surname suggests Portuguese origin. Charles H. Dias of 6 Walnut Street in New Bedford worked as a sailmaker in 1848.

60. Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 5.

61. Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 108, states that Bravans’ skin color tended to be lighter than other Cape Verdeans “and in some respects stood in relationship to the Cape Verdes as Fayal did to the Azores, that is, as something of an elite.” Pierce was master of the schooner *Thrifer* out of Boston in 1870 on the Whaling History American Offshore Whaling Voyages database but is not so listed in Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*. At the age of fifty he served in the crew, but not as master, of the Fairhaven bark *Washington Freeman* in 1868. Pierce died at Sailor's Snug Harbor on Staten Island in June 1888. The crew list for the *Magnolia* appears in “Crew Lists of Vessels Sailed,” *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript*, 3 August 1858, 2.

62. For complete details of ownership see Appendix D.

the Civil War, though the role of Cape Verdeans in vessel ownership at that time is scarcely documented.

Shoreside Work and Life before the Civil War

New Bedford was not the first place in New England in which immigrants from Portugal established themselves. In addition to such Portuguese Jews as Aaron Lopez fleeing the inquisition (1536–1821), several Portuguese had settled in Rhode Island, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard before the Revolutionary War, and many became at least tangentially involved in the whaling industry. One of the earliest Portuguese to settle in the New Bedford area was Christopher Joseph, who by 1790 was living in Oxford Village near Fairhaven. In the coastal trade with his sloop *Clarissa*, Joseph sailed to such places as Newport, Stonington, New London, and Hartford.⁶⁴ John Swazey, who died in 1796 while on board the New Bedford brig *Polly*, and Joseph Francis, who perished on the sloop *Thetis* (evidently not a whaling vessel) in 1809, were other early Portuguese whalers, though their place of origin is not known, and they may never have settled in the area.⁶⁵

Some Portuguese Atlantic islanders in this country became indentured servants, forced to work for a master until they reached their majority (fig. 9.6).⁶⁶ Joseph Antone, born on the island of São Nicolau, Cape Verde, about 1797, was indentured to Jeremiah Mayhew at the age of fourteen “to do farming work, gardening & housework, and to go to sea” until his twenty-first year. The contract made strict stipulations as to his morals: “At cards, dice, or any other unlawful game he shall not play; fornications he shall not commit, nor matrimony contract, during the said term; taverns, alehouses, or places of gaming, he shall not haunt, or frequent.” Besides the standard promise to provide room, board, clothing, “and other necessaries fit and convenient for such a servant,” Mayhew promised “to teach and instruct the said servant or cause him to be taught and instructed to read, write, and cipher as far as the rule of three”—that is, the basics of algebra.⁶⁷ How Antone reached New Bedford is not known, though it seems likely that he came aboard a whaling vessel; if so, he never went on a second voyage. In 1821 Antone married Sally Auker, a Wampanoag of the nearby Dartmouth tribe. He then spent many years working in George Howland's candleworks and was a founding member of New Bedford's African Christian Church, the first African American church in the city.⁶⁸

63. Works Projects Administration, comp., *Ship Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts, Compiled from Original Documents Stored in the New Bedford Custom House*, (Boston: National Archives Project, 1940), 2:34–35, 40, 69–70, 106, 111–12, 119, 159, 181 (hereinafter cited as *Ship Registers*). Vera owned 1/16 of schooner *Glacier* (1866–71), 1/16 of bark *Cornelia* (1868–71), 2/32 of bark *Mars* (1869) and 2/16 in 1878, 4/56 of Fairhaven bark *William and Henry* (1870), 1/16 of bark *Stamboul* (1874–88), 2/32 of bark *Midas* (1875), all of schooner *Lottie Cook* in 1880 and 7/8 of it in 1885, and 8/32 of schooner *Charles W. Morse* from 1878 to 1891 and 10/32 in 1891.

64. *New Bedford Medley*, 4 Oct 1793; U.S. Census, Bristol Co., Mass., 1790.

65. *Vital Records of New Bedford* 3:66 and 163.

66. Besides the example of Antone shown here, a Manuel Toma was reported as having run away from his master in New Bedford in the year 1836 (*New Bedford Morning Mercury*, 8 Dec 1836). To this writer's knowledge there has been no systematic study done on this topic.

67. Joseph Antone Indenture, 27 Feb 1813, Tripp Coll., Mystic Seaport Museum (hereafter cited as MSM).

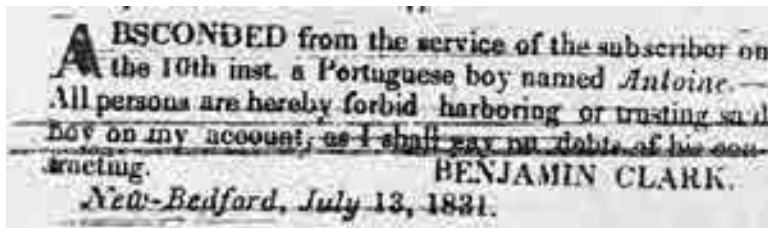


Fig. 9.6. Advertisement about a Portuguese-born servant, *New Bedford Daily Mercury*, 13 July 1831.

Documentation of settlement is scant, however, before the late 1840s. Not more than ten Portuguese-born people were listed in New Bedford's first city directory of 1836, but at least sixty, seven of them Cape Verdean, were listed in the 1849

directory. The 1850 census credited seven non-black Portuguese and two Cape Verdeans with real property. Former apprentice Joseph Antone of of São Nicolau paid taxes in New Bedford by 1830 and owned his home at 96 Charles Street, well north and west of the earliest center of Portuguese settlement, probably by 1836. He died there in 1869. Of the eight non-black Portuguese property owners, three were mariners, including Antonio J. Flores of Faial, who married Germana Silvia in May of 1850 and had six hundred dollars' worth of real property. Augustus King, listed as from Portugal, was a laborer with four hundred dollars in real property lived at 210 South Water Street. His wife was a native of the United States; indeed, of thirty-eight non-black Portuguese immigrant men in New Bedford who were married, eighteen married women born in the United States, fourteen married Portuguese immigrant women, four married other foreign-born women, and two married African American women. Of nine Cape Verdean immigrant New Bedford men who were married in 1850, eight had married African American women; the tendency of Cape Verdeans not to mix with African Americans that many sources attest later in the nineteenth and into the twentieth century did not pertain before the war. These figures suggest the overwhelmingly male character of the early movement to New Bedford of both groups of Portuguese islanders, as well as the earlier onset of the Azorean immigration.

Even in these early years a notable pattern of residential concentration emerged among Azorean and other non-Cape Verdean Portuguese people in New Bedford (fig. 9.7). Most lived on South Water Street from about Coffin Street south to South Street, at that time the fringe of the city's settled area. The northern part of South Water Street had been partly a Yankee residential enclave, but as industry and commerce filled the waterfront area the city's Anglo elite moved to the west and their eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century mansions became part of the housing stock available to new immigrants.⁶⁹ At 136 South Water an Azorean laborer also named Joseph Perry lived with his wife Lydia, a Rhode Island native, and daughter; mariners Antone A. and Francis H. Perry lived at 134 South Water Street, and mariner Antone

68. Kathryn Grover, *The Fugitive's Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 52.

69. Fred W. Palmer (photographer) and Henry B. Worth (writer), "Photographs of Houses and Public Buildings in New Bedford, Fairhaven, Acushnet, Dartmouth, and Westport" (1907), New Bedford Whaling Museum, documents some of these dwellings, including the 1767 John Howland house on the west side of South Water Street near School Street; the 1769 Edward Hudson house on the west side of South Water between Madison and Walnut Streets, and the first home (1806) of whaling merchant James Arnold at 221 South Water Street, at the southwest corner of South Water and Madison Streets.

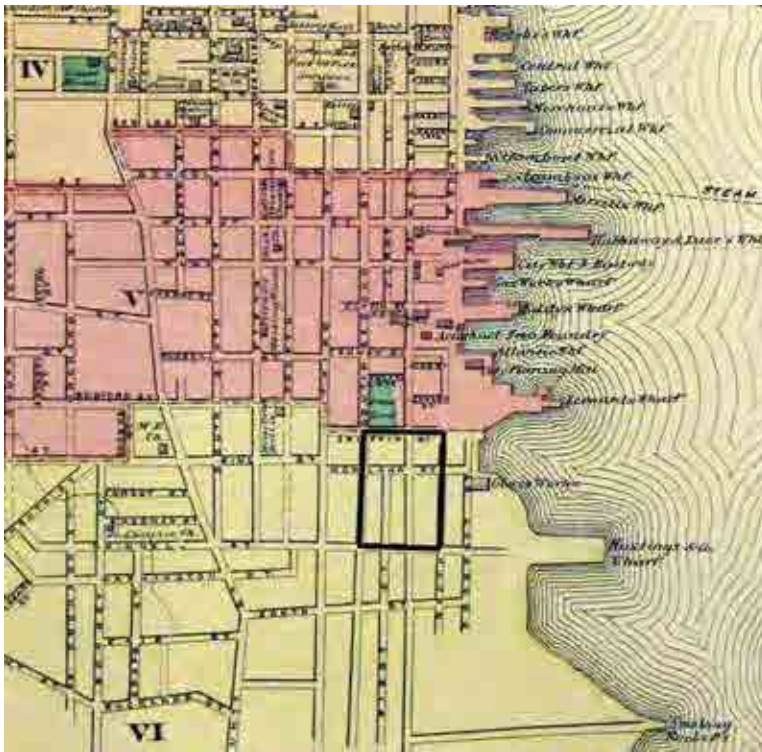


Fig. 9.7. Portuguese immigrant neighborhoods in wards 5 and 6, detail of Henry Francis Walling, *Map of Bristol County, Massachusetts* (1851). The ward boundary between Ward 5 (at top, in pink) and Ward 6 (bottom) at Griffin Street was, in the recollection of some twentieth-century Cape Verdeans, the southern terminus of their South Central neighborhood. Third Street, now Acushnet Avenue, was the effective western boundary for both. Courtesy Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

Semas boarded at 138 South Water Street. Azorean laborer Manuel Enos owned \$475 in real property in 1850 and lived at 162 South Water, at the corner of Howland Street, with his wife, also Azorean, their two young children, and a boardinghouse operated by Joseph Farrar, probably also Azorean; here lived another Joseph Perry, a mariner from the Azores, with his Irish immigrant wife Julia and one-year-old son Henry. At 172 South Water Street was Joseph Sylvia's boardinghouse, where the laborer Joseph Cardose and mariner Manuel Francis lived in 1849.

While the bulk of New Bedford's African Americans lived in the West End, South Water Street was still home to a notable number living among Azoreans and

Cape Verdeans. Cape Verdean laborer and mariner Domingo Barrows lived at 91 South Water Street (the longtime home of his African American wife's first husband), across from mariner Manuel Antone; African Americans James C. and Fostine Carter lived at 166 South Water, between two Azorean-run boardinghouses, and African Americans George W. and Dianne Thurber lived at 25 Howland Street, just around the corner. Outside this area, single Azorean and Cape Verdean households existed on First, Second, and Third Streets, those next west of South Water Street, on east-west Russell and Wing Streets, and on South Orange Street, a short lane running north from South Street east of South Water Street. Beginning in the 1802s the waterfront area south of Union Street, New Bedford's main street running west from the waterfront, opened to newer residents, many of them foreign-born, as Yankee families moved west and uphill.

By the 1850s the Portuguese residential enclave was well established, and before the Civil War it was largely Azorean. During that decade more than 80 percent of the Portuguese real estate transactions (133 of 161) involved properties in an area

bounded by Coffin Street on the north, South Second Street on the west, Grinnell Street on the south, and the waterfront on the east. Its commercial center was mainly along South Water Streets between Howland and Grinnell Streets. Already, as Daniel Ricketson pointed out in his 1858 *History of New Bedford*, the neighborhood had become known as “Fayal” or “Little Fayal,” a designation that lasted into the beginning of the next century. South Water Street itself was known among Azoreans as “Rua do Faial”; later, Cape Verdeans called it “Rua de Agua.”⁷⁰

The majority of Portuguese people who settled in the city still followed the maritime trade. Judging partly by surname and partly by collating with the 1850 census, fifty-three men shown as white in the census and born in the Azores, Portugal, or Madeira were listed in the 1849 New Bedford directory; twenty-nine were mariners. The 1850 census lists ninety-two non-black Portuguese-born people living in New Bedford, sixty-three of them employed; of those sixty-three, forty-one were mariners. Sixteen New Bedford residents native to Cape Verde, fifteen of them male, were New Bedford residents in 1850; ten of the men were mariners.

Both Azoreans and Cape Verdeans entered early into the shoreside trades whaling required and supported, and Azoreans, more numerous in the city at the time, were better represented in them before the war. Of the known and presumed Azoreans and other “white” Portuguese listed in the 1849 New Bedford directory, seven were laborers, six ran boardinghouses, four were shopkeepers, and one was a rigger. Of the sixty-three employed non-black Portuguese men in the 1850 census, eight were laborers, four were traders, two were riggers, and only three were then listed as boardinghouse keepers.

In 1850 Azorean Antone Mudge (1814–93) was a mariner, but by 1852 he was a cooper, and like other Portuguese islanders he alternated periods of work ashore with service aboard ship. In 1849, according to the city directory, he was in the whaling ship *India*, while his wife Salome lived at 6 Russell Street.⁷¹ Between 1845 and 1860 at least nine other men of Portuguese descent were coopers in New Bedford, at least three of them Azorean. Thomas A. Luce, born on the island of Flores in 1827, was first listed in New Bedford directories in 1849, when he was an apprentice of housewright and lumber dealer David R. Pierce. When he applied for citizenship in 1851 he described himself as a mariner, but by 1852, the year he married Falmouth native Hannah B. Luce, he was a cooper living on Smith Street, near the city’s West End. Anthony V. DeCosta (1826–98) was a cooper and shipkeeper on the whaling ship *Saratoga* in 1856 and married Hannah Maker of New Bedford in the same year; he remained a cooper until the late 1880s, for most of the time at New Bedford Copper Works. Manuel Sylvia was a mariner in 1852 and a cooper by 1856; he was still a cooper in 1880.⁷² One Azorean man was working as a rigger between 1850 and 1860.

70. Daniel Ricketson, *The History of New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts* (New Bedford: by the author, 1858), 55; Christina Connelly, “Neighborhood Anecdotes,” *Portuguese Spinner: An American Story*, ed. Marsha L. McCabe and Joseph D. Thomas (New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 1998), 162.

71. Mudge was from the island of São Jorge and was a mariner in 1849–50, a cooper from 1852 to 1860, a mariner in the 1860s, and a fisherman in the 1870s and 1880s. He served in the crew of the ship *Good Return II* in 1844 and ship *Nauticon* in 1853.

72. Other Portuguese-born coopers whose origins have not been determined include John Francis, 193 Purchase Street (1845), Franklin Miles, 16 Griffin Street (1859), Francis Quail, address unknown (1860), and Joseph Sylvia, address unknown (1860).

Born on Faial about 1823, Thomas Francis married Almira S. James of Nantucket by 1850 and was a mariner boarding with his wife in New Bedford that year. By 1855 he had become a rigger and lived in the “next to last” house on South First Street in 1856 and later at 251 and 254 South Water Street.⁷³

The rapidly increasing size of the transient population of whalers and other mariners demanded boardinghouses. The 1836 city directory lists forty of them in the city, and more likely operated on a smaller and less formal scale. The great majority (thirty-one) were operated by Anglo Americans, three by African Americans, one by Joseph Antone at 94 North Water Street, and four by men whose ethnic background cannot be determined. Antone was almost certainly Portuguese and may have been Cape Verdean. By 1837 94 North Water was operated by African American blacksmith and abolitionist William P. Powell, and thereafter virtually all of its boarders were men of African descent. By 1849 fewer boardinghouses were listed in the directory (thirty-six), most of them still run by Anglo Americans, but Azoreans operated six of them, which certainly reflects the increasing presence of Azoreans in whaling crews.⁷⁴ In 1849 Antone Dene ran a boardinghouse at 118 Third Street, Manuel Francis at 98 South Second, Manuel Farrar at 138 South Water Street, and, just south of Howland Street on the waterfront side of South Water Street, Joseph Farrar at 162, Francis Joseph at 170, and Joseph Sylvia next door at 172 South Water. Directories surely record only a fraction of the Azoreans and possibly others who lived in these houses before and after voyages. In the 1850s seven Portuguese-run boardinghouses operated on Griffin, Howland, Wing, and South Water Streets; in the 1860s censuses and directories identified two Portuguese-run boardinghouses, one on South Water.⁷⁵

Like Portuguese immigrants to the United States and elsewhere, some Portuguese-born men in antebellum New Bedford opened small shops selling groceries or clothing, and more than one boardinghouse keeper also became retailers or outfitters selling clothing and gear to whalers. Probably the first Portuguese in this trade were Madeirans Joseph King and John H. Pedro, who in 1845 operated the dry goods and clothing firm Pedro and King. Azorean Joseph Bernardo Howland (1824–91), born in Flores or Faial, was living in New Bedford by 1850, when he married New Bedford native Rosilla Davis, and by 1852 he ran a boardinghouse near

73. Thomas Francis may have been in a crew of the ship *Messenger* in 1838 and ship *William Thompson* in 1839; he boarded in both years at 6 Spring Street, the large mariner’s boardinghouse operated by African American John Adams. He is listed as of Faial in the 1850 census but of Portugal in all other listings. Other Portuguese-born riggers whose place of origin are unknown were Francis Antone (1855) and John Millson.

74. In 1836, according to Starbuck, *American Whale Fishery*, 66 New Bedford-registered vessels (47 ships, 12 barks, and 7 brigs) left on whaling voyages; in 1849 63 such vessels (44 ships and 19 barks) left the port. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter, *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1816–1906* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), notes that on average ships carried 29 crew members and barks 26, which if anything suggests that the number of men signing onto voyages held steady or slightly declined during these years.

75. These 1850s boardinghouse proprietors were Azorean Joseph B. Howland at 5 Griffin Street (1852), Joseph Enos at 11 Howland Street (1856), Antone Joseph at 28 Wing Street (1859), and Azoreans Joseph Vera, Joseph Lewis, Joseph Frazier, and George Anderson at 113, 141, 162, and 179 South Water Street variously between 1852 and 1859. Manuel Nora is listed as keeping a boardinghouse in the 1860 census, and the 1865 directory lists the boardinghouse of Antone Thomas at 111 South Water Street.

the waterfront at 5 Griffin Street. By 1855 he had become a fruit dealer, and by 1865 he operated a clothing shop on Union Street. Howland ended his career as a grocery clerk on South Water Street. Joseph Enos, born in Pico in 1822, began his American career as a mariner, by 1856 operated a boardinghouse at 11 Howland Street, and by 1860 was a storekeeper with one thousand dollars in real estate. Joseph Frazier, from Pico, also began his career as a sailor but by 1852 operated the boardinghouse at 162 South Water that Joseph Farrar (possibly the same person) had operated in 1849.⁷⁶ In 1855 Frazier was operating an outfitting store in New Bedford and took on Azorean Antone L. Sylvia (sometimes Silvia) as his clerk. *Representative Men and Old Families of Southeastern Massachusetts* described Sylvia's early career in detail:

Born June 7, 1840, on St. George, Azores Islands, young Sylvia there lived and worked on his father's farm until he was fifteen years of age. His older brother, Joseph Sylvia, who had visited the United States on a whaleship, on his return home had rehearsed the advantages to be gained here, and Antone was determined to seek his fortune in the new country. With two dollars in his pocket, the gift of his brother, he left his native land with that same brother, as a passenger on the schooner "Silver Cloud," of New London, bound for Boston, where he landed, coming directly to New Bedford and reaching here on Aug. 7, 1855. It is worthy of mention that the schooner in which he made the passage was fitted the next year at New London as a whaler, went to the Desolation islands and was there capsized with all on board.

On arriving in New Bedford, Mr. Sylvia went directly to the home of the late Joseph Frasier, who kept an outfitting establishment in those days at the corner of Howland and South Water streets. The whaling industry was in its prime and young Sylvia found plenty to do as a clerk for Mr. Frasier. He was quick to learn and it was not long before Mr. Frasier saw in him the making of a successful business man. He remained with him until March 24, 1860, when his employer died, and upon his death Mr. Sylvia, not yet twenty years of age, purchased the business in company with the late Frank T. Perry, and continued it under the firm name of Sylvia & Perry.

In the fall of 1861 Mr. Sylvia returned to his old home to visit his aged mother and remained at the Western islands five months. His father had died two years after his arrival here in 1855, and his return to St. George was for the purpose of inducing his mother to make her home with him here in New Bedford, but she could not be prevailed upon to leave her island home, and when he came away he left her well provided for in her declining years.

On his return to New Bedford, in the spring of 1862, Mr. Sylvia bought out his partner's interest in the firm and from that time until he retired he carried on a very extensive business in the outfitting line in that section of the city.⁷⁷

Probably only seven men listed in the 1849 directory were Cape Verdean, one a blacksmith and the rest mariners and laborers. The number of Cape Verdean immigrants being exceptionally small before the war, their representation in trades

76. Azorean boardinghouse keeper Antone Joseph at 28 Wing Street ran an outfitting shop at 30 Wing Street. Antone Thomas at 111 South Water Street was an outfitter at 109 South Water Street in 1852. Other outfitters of Portuguese descent were Francis Perry at 89 South Water Street (1856), Joseph Vera at 113 Water Street (1865), Thomas Joseph at 145 South Water Street, and John L. Michel, listed in the 1860 census.

was correspondingly slight. Blacksmith Miguel A. Fortes (1815–1900) of the Cape Verdean island of São Nicolau lived at 36 South Water Street in 1852, the year he married Mary Bush, one of the daughters of African American merchant and boardinghouse keeper William Bush. He may have worked with African American blacksmith Lewis Temple, whose 42 Bedford Street home before the war became Fortes' home afterward. Temple's wife Mary Clark Temple was his aunt by marriage.⁷⁸ Lewis Martin (ca 1810–66), also from São Nicolau, worked as a rigger in 1855. An otherwise obscure Jenne Cough, born in Cape Verde in 1821, was a shipkeeper in New Bedford in 1850, and in the same year Bravan Francis Alves operated a fruit stand.⁷⁹ Cape Verdean Manuel Manixe was living in New Bedford by 1850 and operated a boarding house at 12 Russell Street from 1852 probably until he died in 1863; his probate records document that he owned the house. Like a notable number of other early Cape Verdeans, Manixe was sometimes identified as white and from Portugal or the Western Islands, but his wife was African American, and his brother Vincent, a mariner at the time of Manuel's death, was born on the Cape Verde island of Santo Antão.

Regardless of origin, greenhands in New Bedford were subject to exploitation from nearly everyone in the shoreside community—boardinghouse keepers, outfitters, tavern owners, vessel agents, and “crimps,” the last being men who by various means trapped men into service on a whaling vessel—as they waited for their vessels to leave port and when they returned. The New Bedford Port Society for the Moral Improvement of Seamen was formed in 1830 to attempt to mitigate these negative features of the whaler's life, and Moses How, chaplain of the society's Seamen's Bethel from 1844 to 1859, described numerous instances of his advocacy of seamen who felt they had been cheated out of their just income. He also recounted some positive effects of the Bethel's presence. “A Portuguese who has lately returned from sea & been converted on board Bark Bell of Fairhaven, spoke and prayed [at the Bethel],” How wrote in 1857. “He appears to be a very excellent man. He is a native of Pika [Pico], and wants to go home and tell the people what the Lord has done for his soul, and try to do good among children by learning them to read their Bible.”⁸⁰

In 1859 seventy-three whaling vessels registered in New Bedford sailed from the port, by then just past its zenith. The decade ended on another portentous note for the industry. In August 1859, a great fire broke out along Water Street, destroying many of the support facilities of the whaling fleet, along with Wilcox's wharf and

77. *Representative Men and Old Families of Southeastern Massachusetts* (Chicago: J. H. Beers and Co., 1912), 3: 1609–10. Frazier died in 1860, and his widow Catharine, an Irish immigrant, married Sylvia, who ran a clothing store at 159 South Water from at least 1875 to 1883 and is listed as a boardinghouse keeper in the 1880 census. The dissolution of his partnership with Francis T. Perry is reported in “Copartnership Notice,” *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 2 August 1862, 3.

78. A Magale Antone is listed in the 1845 city directory as a blacksmith working for Lewis Temple and a Miguel Antone as a blacksmith at Commercial Wharf, where Miguel (sometimes shown as Magale) A. Fortes was a blacksmith in 1852; they might have been the same man.

79. Alves was listed in the 1850 census as a native of Faial, but the 1855 census gives his birthplace as Cape Verde, and his 1879 death record states he was born on Brava in Cape Verde. He married Penelope Turner, an African American woman from Virginia, by 1850 and lived most of his life in the West End, which was largely an African American neighborhood.

80. Moses How, “Private Journal,” 22 August 1857, NBFPL.

eight thousand barrels of oil.⁸¹ Of more universal impact was the drilling, only a few days later, of the first commercial oil well at Titusville, Pennsylvania. And soon the Union would split apart, a schism that carried ominous implications for the maritime industry.

81. *New York Times*, 26 Aug 1859; Ellis, *History of New Bedford*, 311–14.

CHAPTER 10

PORTUGUESE ISLANDERS IN POSTWAR WHALING, 1865–1895

By 1865 the effects of the Civil War had caused a drastic decline in the American whaling fleet from which it never really recovered. Whaleship owners had been quite willing to sell thirty-eight of their vessels to the federal government for the so-called Stone Fleet, which was sunk in the harbor at Charleston, South Carolina, in a rather unsuccessful attempt to blockade Southern shipping. During the war Confederate privateers, both in the Atlantic and Pacific, had inflicted heavy damage on the virtually unprotected whaling vessels. And after peace had resumed, the public was reluctant to turn once again to the relatively expensive whale oils, when kerosene could be purchased for a third to a quarter of the price.

Moreover, those with capital to invest saw much greater opportunities and safer returns in manufacturing. Thus commenced the great era of the cotton mills of New Bedford. Though begun on a modest scale before the war, by 1890 nine cotton mills were operating in New Bedford, and after 1890 their numbers rose rapidly. Between 1870 and 1900 the percentage of cotton-mill operatives among employed males in New Bedford grew from eleven to thirty-two percent.¹ Within this time the total value of whaling products offloaded in New Bedford declined radically, according to Massachusetts censuses. In 1885 New Bedford whalers had brought in 231,148 pounds of baleen, valued at \$459,908; 854,952 gallons of common whale oil (\$202,943); 829,964 gallons of sperm oil (\$464,264); and 307 lbs. of ambergris (\$28,748), for a total value of \$1,155,863. Ten years later, with a considerably reduced fleet, the emphasis in American whaling now on the West Coast, and more diversified but less abundant product (including sea elephants and fur seals), the total estimated value of whaling's product had dropped to \$294,037—32,400 pounds of baleen (\$123,400); 115,365 gallons of whale oil (\$33,430); 290,631 gallons of sperm oil (\$125,727); 40 pounds of ambergris (\$4,000); 22,475 gallons of sea-elephant oil (\$6525); and 191 sealskins (\$955).²

Still, declining as it was, New Bedford remained in firm control of the American whaling industry after the war. In 1875, other than a handful of sailings out of New London, most of them essentially sealing voyages, and a dozen or so out of Provincetown, virtually every whaling vessel was now fitting out and sailing from New Bedford. Of the men who went whaling from New Bedford in 1875 29 percent were Portuguese, a slight increase over the 25.9 percent in crew members in 1865. Of all Portuguese whalers in 1875 44 percent were Azoreans and 54 percent Cape Verdeans, with the remaining 2 percent were from Lisbon and Madeira. These ratios differed dramatically from those that had prevailed ten years earlier, when 62 percent of

1. Massachusetts State Census, 1875 and 1885; U.S. Census, Bristol Co., Mass., 1880. Rose Rodrigues explains this growth in "Occupational Mobility of Portuguese Males in New Bedford, Massachusetts: 1870 to 1900" (Ph.D. diss., New School for Social Research, 1990).

2. Massachusetts State Census, 1885, 1884, and 1895, 19.

Portuguese crew were Azorean and 22 percent Cape Verdean.³ The difference reflects not only the later onset of Cape Verdean emigration but also the relative lack of opportunity for people of African descent in other parts of the economy. In a sample of New Bedford whaling vessels sailing in even years between 1862 and 1882, Briton Busch found 214 Azoreans (3.2 percent of total crew members) and 174 Cape Verdeans (2.6 percent of total crew); over those two decades the number of Azoreans in whaling crews was highest in 1866—67 of 492 total crews on 18 vessels surveyed, or 13.6 percent—while the number of Cape Verdeans peaked a decade later, at 29 of 623 crew members on 23 vessels, or 4.7 percent.⁴

The percentage of Portuguese on any given whaling cruise might be considerably higher if additions to the crew made during the voyage, not only in the Azores and Cape Verde but in virtually any port where American whalers might call—Talcahuano, Chile; Tumbes, Peru; Honolulu or Lahaina in Hawaii; even Hobart, Tasmania—had been systematically recorded. Additionally, the common use of aliases or Anglicized names in crew lists probably conceals many others of Portuguese origin. “Several of the members of the crew sailed under aliases,” the account book for the 1863–67 voyage of the bark *Arnolda* noted. The name of Abraham Place on the crew list, for example, is followed on his article of release for payment by the words “alias Antone Pena,” and that of Henry Carr by “alias Manuel Veara.”⁵

It was illegal to sign males older than fourteen in the Azores or Cape Verde to whaling crews, so they were commonly obtained through an agent who would then arrange for a boat to pick them up at some remote point. In 1880 a government official on Brava reported that “the majority of the whaleships do not anchor in our ports but remain under sail along the coast, taking on those they need; and not even the police are a guarantee as agents of authority in these matters, because it has happened that they have been the first to embark, leaving their swords on the beach as a testimonial.”⁶ Not infrequently the decision to embark was likely spontaneous, without the usual farewells. In 1939 Joseph Antone, born on the Cape Verdean island of Santo Antão in 1876, described how he came to join the crew of the Provincetown whaling schooner *Agate* when, at the age of fifteen, he was sent one day on an errand by his father:

At that time, travel was done on a mule or horseback and I knew my trip would take a whole day and night. As I was descending a mountain, my gaze fell upon the ocean. There was a square-rigged vessel passing by with all her sails set, bound south’ard. Somehow, as I gazed at that schooner, a feeling welled within me, and before I knew what was happening, I felt myself yearning for life at sea. Knowing that I was building castles in the air, I thought it best to continue my journey. . . .

The following morning I dressed slowly, even though it was a cold November morning. As I gazed out of the window, I noticed a small sailing vessel had entered

3. Seamen’s Register, ODHS. This includes one vessel each from Fairhaven and Westport. Additionally, one whaleship registered in Edgartown and three in Boston sailed from New Bedford, but they are not included in the statistics.

4. Busch, “Cape Verdeans,” 108.

5. Ship *Arnolda*, Hawes, New Bedford, J. B. Wood & Co. Records, MSS 75, ser. A., subser. 1, vol. 1, ODHS.

6. “Report of 2 September 1880 (205) of the Administrator of the District of Brava,” in Carreira, *Migrações*, 253. Translated by the author.

the harbor, and I made up my mind not to return to my father's house. I engaged myself on this little vessel to cross the channel to St. Vincent, Cape Verde.⁷

Once he arrived at São Vicente's Port Grandee, Antone signed on to the crew of the *Agate*, which had sailed from New Bedford in mid-October 1891 with a "skeleton crew" to recruit whalers in Cape Verde. He and six others joined the crew there. The *Agate* caught several whales before it reached the island of St. Helena in September 1892, where the crew found "a big fleet of American whalers lying at anchor in the harbor." Antone recalled eight of them, all from New Bedford, by name, as well as the schooner *Lottie Beard*, in port to carry back to New Bedford oil left by whaling vessels on the islands. At St. Helena he joined another crew, returned to that island in March 1893, and shipped out on the New Bedford bark *Greyhound* in the same month at a 1/150 lay. In April 1894, again on St. Helena, Antone signed on at a 1/160 lay on the bark *Morning Star*, which deposited him in New Bedford in late June 1894. Antone told an interviewer in 1939,

That ended my slavery on American whalers. That's what it was—slavery. How do you think those those ship owners built their fine mansions on the hill? We seamen worked and slaved for nothing while the owners got rich. My lay on that voyage was 160, which meant that my share on the voyage was at the rate of one barrel in every 160 barrels. If I needed anything when we were at sea I had to buy it from the ship's slop chest. They charged ten dollars for a pair of overalls, and two dollars for just one pound of tobacco.

It was because of such conditions that whalers had to come to the islands to get a crew. The American seamen wouldn't ship on them because of the conditions, and the young fellows found they could make out better in the mills.⁸

As Yankee capital moved toward textile manufacture and grand old ports such as Nantucket were in demise in the 1870s, Portuguese people saw opportunity in the whaling industry. After the war they had become increasingly involved in all its aspects. Of the 268 sailings out of New Bedford under the command of Azorean or Cape Verdean masters, all but sixteen took place from 1870 forward. The beginning of this period was especially important for the port of New Bedford, before the majority of whaling interests began to shift to the port of San Francisco with its focus on the western Arctic.

In this period a vessel might sail with a crew made up preponderantly of Atlantic islanders. When the bark *Cicero* of New Bedford sailed in May 1870, eighteen of its twenty-three crew members were Azoreans and three were Cape Verdeans. The schooner *George J. Jones* of Fairhaven went out the following month with a crew of twenty-one, eight of them Azoreans and five Cape Verdeans, including the captain. Both vessels were commanded by Portuguese islanders, the *Cicero* by Azorean Henry Clay and the *George J. Jones* by Jasper Manuel Ears of São Nicolau, Cape Verde. And

7. Nellie Coombs, "Captain Joe Antone, Cape Verdean Seaman," *Spinner* 4:125–28. Coombs submitted his first interview of Antone on 6 August 1939 "as he dictated it to me from notes of his own," she wrote. "He's trying to write the story of his life sometime before he dies."

8. Antone continued to go to sea on fishing vessels, for the United States Revenue Service, in the Navy, and in the merchant service. Having studied ocean navigation during his service, Antone became qualified to operate both sailing and steam vessels. That same year he took command of the schooner *Preston* of Boston, the first of several coastal vessels under his command. By 1925 he acquired the old whaling schooner *Margarett* and sailed it as a packet to Cape Verde. He remained at sea until 1933.

while it was natural for Azorean and Cape Verdean captains to select countrymen as members of their crew, non-Portuguese whaling masters also carried crews that were heavily Portuguese. When the 254-ton bark *Cherokee* sailed for the Indian Ocean in September of 1865 under Henry Eldridge it carried six Azoreans and eight Cape Verdeans—all seamen except for the Cape Verdean cooper. In the same year the ship *General Scott* of Fairhaven, under William Washburn, had fifteen Azorean seamen, and on the New Bedford bark *Robert Morrison* under master Captain Charles P. Worth, the second and third mates, three of four boatsteerers, and between ten and twelve seamen were from Portugal.⁹ Often during this period a vessel carried a diverse mix of islanders. When the bark *Wave* sailed out of New Bedford in 1879, among the crew were five Azoreans, four Cape Verdeans, three Pacific Islanders, and one man each from the West Indies and the Atlantic island of St. Helena.¹⁰

Beginning in 1882 the center of American whaling began to shift from New Bedford to San Francisco as whaling vessels increasingly frequented the western Arctic, where they often wintered over. Many, although still registered in New Bedford, did not return to the Atlantic but refitted in San Francisco and sometimes Hawaii. Yet these vessels also had sizable proportions of crew members of Portuguese origin. The New Bedford-registered bark *Abraham Barker*, at the time also sailing out of San Francisco, left that port in November 1887 with fourteen Portuguese crewmen, all residents of San Francisco. The same number of Portuguese, again all residents of San Francisco and equally divided between Azoreans and Cape Verdeans, sailed from San Francisco in 1893 aboard the steam bark *Jesse H. Freeman*.¹¹ Vessels that continued to sail out of New Bedford commonly remained in the Atlantic or at times ventured into Hudson Bay, with a few sailing as far as the Kerguelen Islands in the South Indian Ocean in search of sea elephants.

Speaking any language other than English beyond the confines of the forecandle had been strictly forbidden on whaling vessels for decades, but with the increasing numbers of Portuguese crew the proscription may have been harder to enforce. In 1868 on the New Bedford bark *Pacific* the logkeeper noted that as one of the mates “was coming from aloft he heard a man by the name of — — talking Portuguese which was against the rules of the Ship on decks. Mr davis asked him what he was talking that way for. He replied that was his lingo and he said I be damed if I wont talk it for all any body. So after Dinner call him aft and put him in irons. At dark put him and the other one in the run.” After two days of confinement the men became compliant, and the keeper remarked, “after Supper let the two men out of irons. They promised to do their duty and not talk Portugese on decks.”¹² By the turn of the century, however, as Portuguese islanders were more apt to hold various

9. Seamen’s Register, ODHS. Because place of origin was not stated on the crew list for this voyage of the *Robert Morrison*, the number of Portuguese crew was determined by names.

10. Ibid.

11. Bark *Abraham Barker*, Tobey, New Bedford, 1887–88; steam bark *Jesse H. Freeman*, Fraser, San Francisco, 1893–93, Crew lists and Whalemens’s Shipping Papers, National Archives, San Bruno, CA.

12. Bark *Pacific*, Allen, New Bedford, 25 and 27 Mar 1868, Log 677A, ODHS. The term “put in irons” at the time meant to apply handcuffs. The expression derived from the ancient use of “bilboes,” which consisted of an iron bar and shackles that slid along it with a lock at the end to confine unruly crew members.

levels of command on board, the prohibition against speaking Portuguese on deck tended to give way to its general usage aboard many a vessel. When a reporter for the *Boston Globe* spoke with John T. Edwards, then master of the New Bedford schooner *Cameo* (1912–15), Edwards told him that “Portuguese was the working language on the *Cameo*.”¹³

Postwar Whaling Masters, Mates, and Owners

In the first decade after the war, five Azoreans—Joseph D. Silva, John P. Praro, Henry Clay, and Joseph F. Francis—and two Cape Verdeans—Jasper M. Ears and Anthony P. Benton—were whaling masters on thirteen voyages of whaling vessels from New Bedford. These thirteen voyages were managed by seven agents, some of whom appeared partial to Portuguese Atlantic islander captains. The firm Gideon Allen and Son had hired Joseph D. Silva to command the bark *George* in 1857, and after the war it bought the Boston bark *Edward Everett* to refit it “for the whaling business, to be commanded by Capt. Joseph D. Silva.”¹⁴ Silva was master of the same bark on its 1873 voyage. In 1876 Gideon Allen and Son hired Anthony P. Benton to command the schooner *Pedro Varela*. Irish immigrant junk dealer John McCullough (1821–93) owned shares in eight whaling vessels and also hired Azoreans and Cape Verdean masters: Jasper M. Ears was master of bark *Peru* in 1875; Joseph D. Silva served as master of the schooner *Charles W. Morse* and the brig *Varnum H. Hill* on its 1878, 1880, and 1883 voyages. On the *Morse’s* 1881 and 1883 voyages Antone Rose of Pico served as master with McCullough as agent.

Over the last quarter of the 1800s the number of Portuguese masters and vessel owners slowly grew. Between 1865 and 1895 at least thirteen Azoreans and three Cape Verdeans served as master on some sixty-three voyages out of New Bedford. As before the war, many Azorean masters began their whaling careers began as cabin boys. Joseph Thompson (1830–1906) of Faial joined his first crew when he was eleven years old as cabin boy on the New Bedford bark *Garland*. The *Garland’s* captain, Albert Scranton, took a liking to Thompson and, once back home, brought him to New Bedford to live with him and his wife Susan, who began to tutor him. Scranton died in 1859, and his widow married Thompson in 1860. They were a very religious couple, members the Second Advent Church in Fairhaven, and Thompson was proud of the fact that while aboard ship he never drank alcohol and read only the Bible. Nevertheless he was enough of a pragmatist not to hesitate to lower for whales on the Lord’s Day.¹⁵ Thompson’s career as whaling master spanned thirty years, from the 1874–75 voyage of brig *Rosa Baker* of Boston to the 1902–4 trip of schooner *Eleanor B. Conwell* of New Bedford. He was master of the schooner *Mary E. Simmons* in 1881 when John McCullough was agent (though not an owner) of the vessel. Two of Thompson’s commands suffered especial misfortunes. In June of 1883 the bark *Minerva II* was lost on the coast of Mozambique, and a few years later the *Sea Queen* was condemned in the Seychelles, but not before Thompson recovered 1370 barrels

13. *Boston Sunday Globe*, 29 August 1915.

14. *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 26 April 1867, 3.

15. U.S. Census, Bristol County, Mass., 1860; *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 5 August 1905.

of sperm oil and 335 barrels of whale-oil from the vessel.¹⁶ Manuel Estacio Costa (1849–1914) sailed from Faial when he was thirteen, in 1862, and became master of the schooner *Eleanor B. Conwell* in 1879; he served as the schooner's captain on its next two cruises, in 1880 and 1883, and was master of the bark *George and Mary* on its 1888 and 1892 voyages.¹⁷

The postwar period saw the entry into the industry of several Azorean family groups. The Mandlys of Graciosa and Flores were one. Henry Mandly (1848–1944) came as a fourteen-year-old cabin boy on the New Bedford whaling ship *Bartholomew Gosnold*, which left New Bedford in mid-September 1862 bound for the Indian Ocean. The vessel was at sea for more than three years, and by the mid-1870s Mandly was living in Provincetown, where he married in 1875 and assumed his first command, of the schooner *Quickstep*, in 1876.¹⁸ He moved with his family to New Bedford between 1883 and 1889, and between 1879 and 1903 he was master on ten voyages of the schooner *Mary E. Simmons*. His brother Antonio J. Mandly (1844–1929) shipped as a cabin boy on the packet *Kate Williams* when he was eleven years old. His first command was the New Bedford schooner *Franklin* in 1883 and again in 1885; on this second voyage he claimed credit with a Provincetown schooner for bringing to port a lump of ambergris then valued at fourteen thousand dollars. He was master on the schooner *Golden City* on three voyages between 1888 and 1891 and then of the schooner *Charles H. Hodgdon* in 1894. By 1891 he too had settled in New Bedford. For both—and for Henry Mandly's son Henry Jr., who was four years old when he accompanied his father on the *Mary E. Simmons* in 1883—the greater part of their whaling experience took place after 1900.

Members of the Edwards family from Flores also got their start in whaling in this postwar era but were most involved in the industry's last two decades. Joseph T. Edwards (1856–1913) was the first of the family to migrate to New Bedford. He left Flores aboard the New Bedford bark *A. R. Tucker* in 1872 and served in the crew of at least four more whaling voyages before assuming his first command on the bark *President II* out of New Bedford in 1887; he was that vessel's master again on its 1890 voyage. In 1892 one of Edwards's nephews, Antone T. (1882–1936) left Flores at the age of ten aboard the *President II*, which his uncle then commanded.¹⁹ Antone Edwards's parents and two brothers John T. (1884–1957) and Joseph F. (1885–1933) came to New Bedford in 1895, and all three brothers were prominent in the industry after that point.

Four Cape Verdeans became whaling masters after the war, though one did not sail as a master on a New Bedford vessel until 1898. Jasper Manuel Ears, born about

16. Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels*, 16. Thompson's family name was Abreu; see Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas*, 145.

17. Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas*, 17.

18. Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas*, 89–90. "Half a Century at Sea: Captain Henry Mandly Once Shipped a Crew of Filipinos, All of Whom Later Became Officers Aboard Whaling Vessels," *New Bedford Sunday Standard*, 18 Feb 1917, 20, states that Mandly left the *Gosnold* while it was refitting in San Francisco, sought gold for several years and then came to New Bedford in 1867, when he shipped as steward on the only voyage the Fairhaven ship *Star Castle*, but his name does not appear on the Whaling Crew List Database for this voyage.

19. Undated newspaper article, ca. 1919, Scrapbook T3:12, ODHS.

1821 on São Nicolau, was a mariner living in Fairhaven by 1850 and served as second and third mate on five vessels through the end of the Civil War. His first command—and possibly the second Cape Verdean command, after Severino D. Pierce, in New Bedford whaling—was the schooner *George J. Jones* in 1870. In 1875 he was master of bark *Peru*. One of the best known was Anthony P. Benton, born on the island of Maio between 1835 and 1842. Benton’s naturalization records state that he came to New Bedford in August 1857. He was first mate on the New Bedford whaling brig *Eunice H. Adams* in 1874, and between that voyage and 1896 he served usually as master and sometimes as boatheader on eight voyages; he was, in other words, almost continuously at sea during those years, which probably accounts for his absence from censuses and city directories before 1885. While master of the bark *Wave*, whaling in Hudson Bay in 1885, the vessel became trapped in ice, eight of the crew contracted scurvy, and the voyage caught only one whale. When the steering gear broke on the *Tamerlane* in 1888 Benton was forced to land at the Falklands, at which point the first, second, and third mates abandoned the vessel, seven men later came down with scurvy in the Pribilofs, and Benton noted unhappily that the crew “could not whale it if we saw the chance.”²⁰ Despite his misfortunes at sea, Benton acquired shares in at least three vessels on voyages he commanded—1/16 of the schooner *Pedro Varela* in 1876, 2/32 of bark *Peru* in 1878, and 7/32 of bark *Tamerlane* in 1888. In 1895 he bought a Boston merchant schooner *Grace H. Benson* and planned, according to one newspaper account, to sail the vessel between New Bedford, Cape Verde, St. Helena, and the west coast of Africa; in 1895 he carried five Bravans then living in Boston back to Cape Verde on this vessel. Benton’s last command was in 1896, on the bark *President II*; after that he disappeared from New Bedford and whaling vessel records.²¹

Born in 1861 also on Maio and possibly Anthony P. Benton’s brother, Joseph P. Benton first appears on New Bedford crew lists in 1878 as Jose Pedro Bento, on the bark *Peru*. He served also on bark *Ohio* on its 1881 voyage and was master of the schooner *Clara L. Sparks* in 1891. Unlike most logkeepers, Benton was loquacious in the log he kept aboard the *Clara L. Sparks*. Benton tended to record the most minute details on board each day, particularly those related to the comportment of the crew. On 22 March 1892 he recorded in great detail the trouble he was having with the steward:

First part of this day commenced with strong trades. Schooner steered West course, weather cloudy and rough sea, she pitched deep and rolled moderately. At 12 P.M. I was standing on [at] the table getting dinner—beans was so hard, seems as everybody refused to eat them. I called the Steward and asked him the reason why he did not cook the beans better, the answer he gave me was that the beans was on a[t] 7 o’clock, if they were no[t] cooked properly, it was not his fault.

20. Bark *Tamerlane*, Benton, New Bedford, 9 May and 6 October 1888, Log 39, ODHS; Seamen’s Register, ODHS.

21. Benton lived at 24 Bedford Street in 1885 and at 184 County Street from at least 1887 to 1890; he married Taunton native Harriet T. Pickney Martin in New Bedford in 1873. On bark *Ohio* in 1881, the vessel’s logkeeper wrote several months into the voyage, “I think that we Have gut Forward the meanest Set of men that Ever sailed from New Bedford, as Ever will again Thay is some of them in Hot water all the time. We Have English Dutch Irish Germans and Pourtugeas French. And a number of outhter different Nations.” In January 1884 forecandle hand Ignacia Gomes, who apparently joined the vessel during the cruise, stabbed an officer after refusing his order to learn to steer the vessel. Benton placed Gomes in irons in the vessel’s hold for two weeks and then “gave him talking and send him forward.” See Bark *Ohio*, Benton, New Bedford, 26 March 1882, 18 December 1883–10 January 1884, Log Wh 107 1881L, PPL.

Very soon, I did not say any more, he went on deck, when he came down, I was standing in my room, when he broke out again and says, Captain you seems to blame me for everything. So I told him I did not want any talk with him, for I had not spoke to him, then he says, you seems to treat me hard. I asked him in what points, and what evedence had he for saying that, he says, none. So I told him, Steward, if I only want to find a fault I would find enough of them, it aint more than one hour ago, since I hauled out one of your shirt sleeves in the pantry where you clean your dishes with it. It was in the presence of my officers, for I showed it to them.

Your pantry is dirty and I have questioned you all the time to keep the pantry clean, furthermore your bread is sour and no one can eat it. It is not more than two days since I made you clean out your bread pan. Since we came out from New Bedford, that pan has never been on deck. So I told him, I have not mentioned that to you nor growled to you about it. He spoke up and sayed, Captain you can do with me as you please, put me in irons if you want. So I told him I have seen no cause to do that yet, unless you disobey my orders or insult me, or mutitision [mutiny], then I shall put you in irons and keep you there as long as you deserve it.

When I told him about his making the bread, you think you are so good, Steward, but you cannot make good bread, my second mate will show you how to make good bread. So the steward told me, Captain, when you came out from home you did not have no yeast powders, so I could not make bread, and I will give you a present of 75 dollars if you can find anyone that can make good bread without yeast powders. So I told him, you had best keep your 75 dollars, for I do not want none of it, so he soon stopped when I ordered him. All I wish from you is for you to keep your things clean and yur duty done properly, which he promised faithfully to do it if I would never find fault with his duty again.²²

Joseph Benton's last voyage was as mate on the 1899 voyage of bark *A. R. Tucker* under Captain Martin Van Buren Millard. Not long after the vessel sailed, in June 1899, Millard became ill, and it fell to Benton to treat him as best he could. He noted continually in the log the care he gave the captain. On July 10, he wrote, he gave Millard "a doce of spirit-Of Nitre and 20 drops of Lowdnam [laudenam]." Recognizing that the captain was dying, Benton tried to get him to write a last note to his family, but to no avail: "he Sais bento thise is my last—So I Sais Captain why not you write you farmily few lines he sais yes I like to write my wife but I cand now."²³ Millard soon died, and Benton took over the command of the *A. R. Tucker*. But his luck was destined to be no better than Millard's. On 15 June 1901 he noted in the log, "At 4 whalles of[f] 2 points of weather bow." The next entries, in Portuguese, explained how three boats were sent after the whales, both the captain and mate fastening from different boats. But the lines became entangled, and the order was given to cut. "But it didn't turn out well," new log keeper and replacement captain Joseph Avilla noted laconically, for "the Captain was taken away and we had to lose the five whales that we had killed because it was very late and we arrived aboard around eight o'clock at night and thus ended the day with such bad luck." And thus ended, as well, the whaling career of Joseph P. Benton.²⁴

22. Schooner *Clara L. Sparks*, Benton, New Bedford, 22 March 1892, Log 73, ODHS.

23. Bark *A. R. Tucker*, Millard, New Bedford, 15 and 18 Jul 1899, Log 456A, NBFPL. Joseph normally referred to himself as "Bento," but officially he was usually "Benton." For the sake of consistency the latter surname is employed here.

24. "Mas não foi bem neum P que o Capitão fose embora e tivermos que perder as 5 baleias que tinhamos mortas P que ser mutto tarde e chegarmos abordo pelas 8 horas da noite e a sim se fecho o dia com tanta má sorte." Bark *A. R. Tucker*, Log, 15 Jun 1901. Translated by the author.

John Theophilo Gonsalves, born on Brava in 1854, left his native place as a cabin boy on the New London whaling bark *Roman*, probably on its 1869 voyage, and like Anthony Benton was so often at sea that he was not listed in censuses or directories before 1918 (fig. 10.1).²⁵ Only after about 1900 did he begin to use his middle initial, and before that date crew lists document (principally through height and age) at least two men of this name, both Bravans, sailing on vessels from New Bedford almost every year between 1870 and 1881. For many years he not only whaled but also served on coastal vessels and was active in the Cape Verde packet trade in the early 1880s as master of the schooner *Little Lizzie* (ca. 1883) and the *Onward* (ca. 1885).²⁶ Gonsalves began an exceptionally long career as a whaling master when he sailed out of Provincetown as captain of the 1890-91 voyage of the schooner *Rising Sun*, which he again commanded in its 1892-93 voyage. As is the case with many Portuguese-born mariners in this postwar period, his years of greatest activity were after 1900.

Portuguese interest in the ownership of whaling vessels increased substantially after the Civil War.²⁷ Between 1865 and 1895 at least twenty Azoreans and five Cape Verdeans owned shares in whaling vessels. Of more than 190 shares owned by Azoreans over these decades, four men—Antone L. Sylvia (seventy-two shares), Joseph Vera (thirty), Thomas Luce (twenty-seven), and Henry Clay (fifteen) owned three-quarters; the other sixteen Azoreans owned shares in fewer than ten voyages each. In 1879 Henry Mandly began with 1/16 of the *Mary E. Simmons*, which he served as master, and owned half of the vessel from 1889 to 1903. John E. Luce (1817-1909), from Faial, came to New Bedford on the ship *Chili* in 1834 and served as second mate on ship *Virginia* in 1847 and first mate on bark *Atlantic* in 1851. He was not listed in city directories until 1859, perhaps because he was so often at sea, and was not listed in the 1860 New Bedford census. He lived at 164 Grinnell Street in 1859, owned it by 1870, and was living there when he died. Luce was mate under master Captain John P. Praro Jr. on the sole voyage of the Fairhaven bark *Crowninshield* in 1869–73 and owned 1/16 of the vessel. In 1877 he was master of the New Bedford schooner *Fannie Byrnes*, in which he had a 6/16 interest. The 1900 census lists him as a “retired sea captain.”²⁸

Two of the most prominent Azorean vessel owners were Henry Clay and Antone L. Sylvia. In 1867 Clay (1836–1901), who had come to New Bedford from Flores in the Azores in 1854, purchased a one-fourth interest in the brig *Star Castle* and served as its master on a disastrous voyage ending with its being condemned at Nassau. Clay then served as master of bark *Cicero*, and in 1875 he bought the Boston schooner *Golden City* and refitted it for whaling; he was both the agent and the captain on the vessel’s 1875 voyage. The fifteen who signed onto the *Golden City*’s crew included ten Azoreans, three Cape Verdeans, one Barbadian, and a man from Fairhaven

25. The *Roman* sailed every year from New London between 1866 and 1874. Daniel M. Rodrigues, grandson of John T. Gonsalves, states that Gonsalves was “sent to sea” when he was eleven as a cabin boy on bark *Roman* under “Captain Williams”; John L. Williams was master of the *Roman* on its 1869, 1870, and 1871 voyages. See <https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/crew-lists-new-london/>. If Rodrigues’ statement and the date of birth Gonsalves gave on his 1924 passport application are correct, he would have been no younger than fourteen when he left Brava.

26. Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 179.

27. For a complete list of owners see Appendix D.

28. *Ship Registers*, 3: 42, 58, 114.

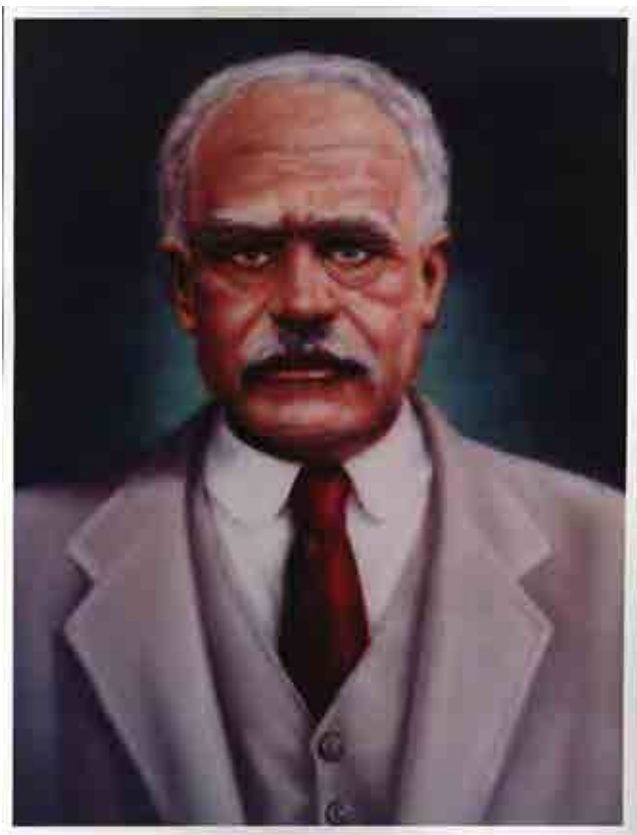


Fig. 10.1. Captain John Theophilo Gonsalves. Courtesy Daniel M. Rodrigues.

who was probably of Portuguese descent. Clay commanded the same vessel on its 1877 voyage, his last as master though he owned the *Golden City* until 1902 and owned part or all of thirteen other whaling barks, brigs, and schooners.²⁹

In 1858 Antone L. Sylvia, then clerking for Azorean outfitter Joseph Frazier, acquired a 1/16 share in the Marion whaling brig *Herald*, and by 1867, after he had acquired the late Frazier's business, he owned 8/64 share in brig *Tekoa*, 1/32 of brig *Star Castle* (the first, and ill-fated, vessel in which Henry Clay served as master) and 1/16 of the Fairhaven schooner *U.D.* Two years later he bought 1/32 of bark *Selah* and ¼ of the bark *Crowninshield*. Over the course of his career, through 1924, Sylvia owned shares in forty-one other whaling schooners, brigs, barks, and ships, and, according to one biographical account his clothing business at 159 South Water Street grew over twenty-

eight years “from a small clothing store to one of the leading concerns in the city in the whaling industry. At one time Mr. Sylvia furnished supplies for no less than eighteen vessels, in all of which he was part owner.”³⁰

Joseph Vera also branched out from whaling to boarding seamen and retail sales to vessel ownership. Born on Pico in the Azores about 1820, Vera earned \$3761 as

29. With this brother-in-law and partner James F. Avery, Clay also owned the barks *Tropic Bird* and *Bertha* and the schooners *Franklin*, *Union*, and *Eleanor B. Conwell*, the last of which he owned entirely in 1890. Clay also owned shares of the brig *Star Castle*, the schooners *Pearl Nelson*, *Ellen Rodman*, *Petrel*, and *Union* and barks *Cicero*, *Selah*, *Palmetto*, *Gay Head II*, and *George and Mary*. See Reginald B. Hegarty, comp., *Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports, 1876-1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, 1959), and *Ship Registers 3*: 23, 36, 27, 50, 62, 65, 69, 71, 135, 138, 157, 160, 169, 170.

30. *Ship Registers 3*: 2-4, 6, 8 11-12, 17, 22, 28-29, 31, 34, 36-37, 42-43, 56 62-61, 68, 73-75, 79, 81, 86, 88, 102, 107-8, 114, 120-21, 123, 126, 136-37, 139-41, 155, 157, 159-60, 165, 171, 177; *Representative Men*, 3:106-9. Sylvia was a director of cotton yarn firms Bennett and Columbia Spinning Corporation, co-owner of the A. Robinson and Company cigar factory, a part-owner of the Martha's Vineyard Railroad, and a director of the New Bedford Board of Trade, the Dartmouth and Westport Street Railway Company, and the New Bedford Cotton Waste Company. Sylvia was also a partner in the T. C. Allen and Company cordage firm from about 1907 to about 1918.

second mate on the 1850–53 voyage of the whaling ship *Montreal* and used his earnings to buy 113 South Water Street, at the corner of Morgan Lane. By 1855 he was running a dry goods store at this address and by 1856 a boardinghouse; next door at 111 South Water Street was the larger boardinghouse run by Madeiran Antone Thomas. By 1867 Vera became partners with Joseph Rose in a clothing and tailoring business at 113 South Water Street, and had acquired 48 South Sixth Street as a family home. By 1869 his younger brother Frank Vera (1836–1921; fig. 10.2), who had joined a whaling crew at Horta in the Azores as a young man and afterward lived in California, acquired the 113 South Water Street building, lived there, and ran the boardinghouse (through at least 1875) and clothing store (through at least 1883). Joseph Vera was retired by 1880 when he acquired a full interest in the schooner *Lottie E. Cook*.³¹ In 1877 Joseph Oliveira acquired 3/8 of the schooner *Fannie Byrnes*.

In these years before any sizable Cape Verdean immigration, ownership in whaling vessels was correspondingly less common among them; those who became owners after 1900 were beginning their careers in this period. The relatively obscure Senna family of Brava began to appear in crew lists in the 1880s; Antonio Jose Senna was master of the schooner *Pedro Varela* in 1891 and then disappears from records. Ayres Joside Senna, born in 1857 or 1858, was first mate of the schooner *Francis Allyn* in 1889 and by the late 1890s a vessel master; his son Joseph H. Senna followed him in the trade. When he was master of bark *Peru* in 1875, Jasper M. Ears owned a 2/32 share in the vessel. He held the same share on schooner *Ellen Rodman* when he commanded its 1879 voyage. Ears was married and living on Mill Street in New

Bedford's West End through the early 1880s, after which he too can no longer be found in records of whalers and New Bedford residents.

According to family accounts, Hendrick William Morse (1865–1957) stowed away on New Bedford bark *Lydia* when he was nine years old, in 1874. Born in Porto Praya on the island of Santiago, Morse was the son of U.S. consul to Cape Verde William H. Morse and Cape Verdean Mary F. Morato Fsuares (Soares), who worked at the U.S. embassy during Morse's tenure there. When he was an infant Soares came to Massachusetts with her son to join her husband, but William H. Morse died in Boston within months of their arrival, in October 1866. How the two came to settle in New Bedford is not



Fig. 10.2. Frank Vera, born Francisco Vieira Dias, cabinet card by O'Neil, New Bedford. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

31. Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas*, 150–51.

known, but Soares is said to have reclaimed her maiden name because her husband's family did not accept her.³² Her son hid himself on the *Lydia* when it left New Bedford on 18 June 1874 on its last voyage, and when Hendrick returned he worked in a New Bedford mill. When he was twenty he signed on to the crew of the Stonington schooner *Thomas B. Hunt*, and the next year, in 1887, he bought part of a ship he named *Maria Leil*. Soon after Morse began to serve in the Cape Verde packet trade, and in 1887 he was master of the schooner *W. E. Terry*. In 1889 Morse acquired 1/5 of the New Bedford whaling bark *Sea Fox*. Before 1895 he was master of the Boston bark *Swallow* (1889) and the New Bedford schooner *Lula E. Wilbur* (1894).³³

Shoreside Trades and Settlement, 1865–95

In the 1870s and 80s Azoreans and Cape Verdeans remained heavily involved in maritime-related shoreside activities. Some continued in shoreside maritime trades they had practiced earlier: Cape Verdean Miguel Fortes, for example, was still a blacksmith into the early 1870s. Only two of the prewar Portuguese coopers, Azoreans Manuel Sylvia and Joseph Marshall, were still working in that trade afterwards, but six other Azoreans had entered the trade in the postwar years.³⁴ From at least 1880 through at least 1885 Azorean Charles Fisher, a laborer in the city since at least 1871, worked as a cooper. Frank J. Morris, born on Flores in 1840, was a mariner in New Bedford in 1870 but a cooper for soap manufacturer O. A. Sisson in 1873 and then for oil manufacturer George Delano's Sons from at least the late 1880s through at least 1897. John P. Sylva, who may have been Azorean, worked at Delano's in the early 1880s. John W. Murray (1830–95), born on Faial, began in New Bedford as a boardinghouse keeper in 1870 and was a cooper with his own business by 1880; he employed three men, paid \$500 in wages in 1879, and produced cooperage valued at \$1780. In the 1880s at least two Azorean-born men, John Matthews and Frank Pedro, worked as riggers.

As New Bedford's economy grew after the Civil War mostly in areas unrelated to whaling, new areas of employment opened to Azoreans. New Bedford Cordage Company, founded in 1842 and the major supplier of line and rope to the maritime

32. Born in Boston, William H. Morse had been in Cape Verde since at least July 1849, when he brought dispatches to the U.S. government from the islands. He was the naval store keeper at Porto Praya as well as consul, the latter from at least 1855 probably until his death; his death record identifies him as a U.S. consul. Morse is otherwise obscure. See "From Port Praya, Cape de Verds," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 19 July 1849; *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, 6 October 1849, 3; "Passengers," *Daily Atlas* (Boston), 27 November 1855, 2; and "From Washington," *Springfield Republican*, 6 April 1858, 3. Morse also had a daughter, Martha (Mattie) Washington Morse, in 1858 on Cape Verde, and his 28 September 1866 will left his entire estate to her except for 200 pounds sterling that he bequeathed to Josephine J. Coelho, "the Lady who has charge of my daughter Martha, and residing in my house" at 3 Lovering Place in Boston.

33. *Seamen's Registers*, 3:107, 130, 163, and 173.

34. Marshall, born in Graciosa about 1828, was a cooper in 1855 and listed in both the regular state census and the census of people of color that year. He was not listed in the 1856 directory, but in the 1859 directory inquiries related to him were to be directed to 120 South First Street, where he and his family lived through at least 1875. He was probably at sea and was probably the cooper of that name listed in the crew of the whaling ship *Joseph Meigs*, which left New Bedford in mid-June 1858. Marshall was listed as a cooper in directories from 1867 to 1875 and as a seaman in the 1860, 1870, and 1880 censuses.

industry, employed mostly Anglo American, Irish, and Scots labor up to about 1880, but at least four Azoreans worked there in that year—Joseph King of 116 South Water Street, Manuel Francis (or Francisco) and Sufrino Gonsalves of the island of Pico, and Frederic Silvia—as well as a handful of second-generation Azorean Americans, one of them thirteen-year-old Julia Perry. By the early 1890s John Francis, Manual Marshall, and Antone F. Frates were at the ropeworks.³⁵ Joseph Antone, who lived at 49 Ash Street in 1883 and worked at the nearby cordage factory, was probably Cape Verdean and in these years a rare entry on the ropeworks employee roles; not until after 1900 did Cape Verdeans form a significant segment of its workforce. Eight Portuguese men, all South End residents and probably Azorean, worked as carpenters, perhaps for vessel owners, or ashore, or both—Manuel Francis, Antone Joseph, Joseph King, Frank Perry, Joseph R. Perry, Joseph B. Silva, Manual Silva, and Manuel F. Silva. Some Azorean men and women worked at Potomska and Wamsutta mills, but their presence did not become notable in the local textile industry until after about 1900. Some Azorean women worked as domestic servants, usually doing day’s work rather than living where they worked.

In the 1870s and 1880s virtually no Portuguese people worked in clerical and professional occupations.³⁶ In her study of the occupational mobility of Portuguese and Portuguese-American males in New Bedford between 1870 and 1900, Rosa Rodrigues determined that only one individual was listed as a professional (a clergyman from the Azores) in 1870, but Portuguese people were more likely to be proprietors of grocery stores, dry goods stores, and boardinghouses, as they had been before the war. Sixteen men were storeowners, nine kept boardinghouses, two owned restaurants, and one each owned a bowling alley, a glassworks, and a candleworks.³⁷ Thirty-one were classified as artisans—coopers, shoemakers, cigar makers, tailors, and blacksmiths. In 1870 almost none were mill workers.³⁸ At least by the 1870s as well Azoreans were also engaged in commercial fishing out of New Bedford, in only small numbers at first but in growing numbers in succeeding decades.

In the postwar years the number of boardinghouses in New Bedford rose steadily, from thirty-five in 1867 to ninety-three in 1893. In 1867 four boardinghouses were operated by men of Portuguese descent—Antoine C. Martin (1832–70) of Cape Verde, Antone Thomas (1817–89) of Madeira, and Francis T. Perry (born about 1815) and John Rose (born about 1836) of the Azores; in the early 1860s Perry had briefly been partners with Antone L. Silvia in Joseph Frazier’s outfitting business.³⁹

35. New Bedford Cordage is the only cordage manufacturer listed in the 1873 and 1893 New Bedford business directories.

36. Cf. U.S. Census, Bristol Co., Mass., 1880 and 1900.

37. Rodrigues, “Occupational Mobility of Portuguese Males,” 127 and 129. Rodrigues also has noted the high proportion of married households among the Portuguese immigrants and their descendants. “The Portuguese who resided in New Bedford were family oriented. If they arrived alone wives and children followed within a few years. Of the three hundred and twenty-three households in 1870 only sixteen were headed by single males (i.e., households without wives or children).”

38. Rodrigues includes second-generation Portuguese in her data, which is not broken down by region. Whether Cape Verdeans are included is not stated, although given the limitations of state and federal census data at the time, they may be supposed to have been counted.

In 1869 eight of New Bedford's forty-one boardinghouses (exclusive of the Port Society's Mariner's Home) were on South Water Street, and seven of those eight had Portuguese-born keepers. By 1869 Frank Vera (1839–1921) of Pico in the Azores had taken over John Rose's 113 South Water Street boardinghouse, and by 1871 Martin's widow Harriet T. Jones Martin was running their 116 South Water Street boardinghouse; by 1873 she moved to Griffin Street and ran a boardinghouse there through at least 1875.⁴⁰ The 1883 New Bedford business directory listed forty-seven boardinghouses, ten of them run certainly or probably by people of Portuguese descent, five of them specifically identified as "seamen's" boardinghouses, and three of those five operated by Cape Verdeans. Mrs. Justa Gomes, from Brava, had taken over one of these seamen's houses, Harriet Martin's former boardinghouse at 8 Griffin Street, and ran it until 1889. Another was run by Cape Verdean Joseph Mindo, who had married African American Mary Carney in 1864 and was running a boardinghouse at 81 South Water Street by 1867. By 1873 Mindo (1824–93) had moved his boarding business to 33 Howland Street and kept it until he died. John Fuller, born in Cape Verde about 1828, boarded mariners at 164 South Water Street from about 1870 through 1883.⁴¹ The directory failed to record at least one other Cape Verdean-run boardinghouse kept by Peter J. Nansett at 159, 110, and 104 South Water (1875–85).⁴² The existence of these Cape Verdean boarding establishments suggests not only the beginnings of a migration of single males from the islands to the United States but the fact that their African descent probably made it difficult to board elsewhere in the city.

Only two 1883 boardinghouses were definitely run by Azoreans in 1883. Frank Vera, from Pico in the Azores, continued to operate the boardinghouse at 113 South Water through at least 1875, and Azorean Joseph F. Lima operated one at 89 South Water, the earlier address of Francis Perry's clothing store, from the late 1870s to early 1880s.⁴³ By 1893 the growth in the local textile industry impelled correlative growth in the number of boardinghouses: while there had been forty-seven in New Bedford in 1883, there were almost double that number (ninety-three) ten years later, and no more than seven of them were probably run by people of Portuguese descent.

39. Domingo Carter or Carder, who operated a boardinghouse on South Water Street from the early 1860s to at least 1883, was born on the island of Guam but may have been of Portuguese descent; Joseph R. Dias, who also operated a South Water Street boardinghouse, may have been of second- or third-generation Portuguese descent from Joseph Dias (1782–1859) of Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard.

40. Born in Taunton about 1830, Harriet T. Jones Martin was identified as mulatto in the record of her marriage to Martin. In 1873 she married again, to Cape Verdean mariner Antone Benton, but she is listed in the 1875 directory as Mrs. Harriet T. Martin.

41. Madeiran Antone Thomas at 111 South Water and Guam native Domingo Carter ran the other two. Mary Carney Mindo was the sister of Sgt. William Harvey Carney Jr. of the 54th Massachusetts; their son William H. (1875–84) was probably named for the famed soldier. Fuller and his wife Rosalinda came from Cape Verde by 1869 with their eldest daughter Julia, born in 1859.

42. Isaac Nansett (1838–80) of Brava, probably Peter's brother, ran the 104 South Water Street boardinghouse in 1875 and then moved the business to 12 Cannon Street in the second half of the decade. Additionally, Cape Verdean Joseph Antone ran a boardinghouse in 1880 at 98 South Water Street.

43. Justino A. Ferreira (47 Howland Street), Aniceto de Pinna Pires (133 South Water Street), and John Roderick (182 South Water Street) all operated New Bedford boardinghouses in 1883 and were probably first- or second-generation Portuguese American, but their origins cannot be firmly documented.

As before the war, at least two boardinghouse keepers—Thomas and Azorean Joseph F. Lima—and Frank Vera also operate outfitting stores at the same addresses, sometimes before, sometimes after, and sometimes concurrently.⁴⁴ Lima operated Joseph F. Lima and Company clothing and variety store at 89 South Water before he began his boardinghouse there in 1877. Vera ran 113 South Water as a boardinghouse in from 1869 to 1875 and ran a store there in 1870 and 1883.⁴⁵

The center of Portuguese settlement remained the South End (city wards 5 and 6), where nearly 90 percent (742 of 832 persons) of native Portuguese people lived in 1875, 192 in the fifth ward (roughly between School Street on the north, Griffin Street on the south) and 550 in the sixth, ranging south from Griffin Street.⁴⁶ The division of this South Central neighborhood between a largely Cape Verdean enclave in the northernmost part of the fifth ward and a largely Azorean section to the south, which numerous interviewees have described, may have begun in this period. The first Portuguese religious and ethnic organizations emerged in this postwar period. Before 1871 Portuguese Catholics attended St. Mary's Catholic church, an outgrowth of the first Catholic parish in the city and housed in the former Universalist church at the southeast corner of Fifth and School streets since 1849. New Bedford historian Leonard Bolles Ellis noted that by the end of the 1860s that sanctuary was overcrowded, and "the rapid growth of the Portuguese and the French Canadian colonies soon demanded separate spiritual guides." St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church at the corner of County and Hillman Streets, begun in 1866, was dedicated in 1870, and the Catholic community became divided at this point along ethnic lines. St. Lawrence largely served Irish American congregants, and in 1867 the diocese sent the first priest to minister to Portuguese Catholics. Portuguese Catholics worshipped at the recently vacated St. Mary's church until Rev. Joao Ignácio d'Azevedo Encarnação, who had come to New Bedford from the Azores in 1869, organized St. John the Baptist on land acquired in 1872 at Wing and Fifth streets; the church opened in June 1875 with António de Mattos Freitas, a native of the island of São Jorge, as its first pastor (fig. 10.3). It was the first Portuguese Catholic church in North America.⁴⁷

An early indication of the impending division in the Portuguese community was the establishment in 1885 of the Monte Pio Society, a beneficent organization organized by Antone L. Silvia and others and located for many years at Acushnet Avenue and Howland Street (fig. 10.4). The society's constitution stated that it would "admit as members people of the white race, of Portuguese nationality or descent, in good health and of good character, regardless of sex, of not less than sixteen nor more than fifty years of age."⁴⁸ As Marilyn Halter has observed, "The entire second wave of southern and eastern European migrants were arriving in a period of rabid

44. U.S. Census, Bristol Co., Mass., 1870 and 1880; New Bedford Directories, 1875, 1879, 1883, 1885, and 1889.

45. *Representative Men*, 3:1610.

46. Carroll D. Wright, ed., *Census of Massachusetts: 1875* (Boston: A. J. Wright, 1876–77), 1:314.

47. Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602–1892* (Syracuse NY: D. Mason and Co., 1892), 558, 575–79.

48. Amaral, *They Ploughed the Seas*, 152 n.



Fig. 10.3. St. John the Baptist church, dedicated in 1875. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

nativistic sentiment that rested in part on the fear that white Anglo-Saxon purity would be undermined by the infusion of darker-skinned peoples. Perhaps, part of the process of adaptation and legitimization for the ‘white’ Portuguese in the United States was to learn to become ‘whiter’ than ever in the new society and to do so by purposefully defining themselves in sharp contrast to the ‘black’ or Cape Verdean Portuguese.”⁴⁹

49. Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 16.



Fig. 10.4. Monte Pio Hall, built in 1889, photograph by A. Oliveira, about 1932. Courtesy Oliveira Photograph Collection, New Bedford Free Public Library.

CHAPTER 11

PORTUGUESE ATLANTIC ISLANDERS AND WHALING'S DECLINE, 1896–1925

By the mid-1890s the role of Portuguese Atlantic islanders in New Bedford whaling at all levels began to increase dramatically. In 1895 eight vessels returned to New Bedford from nine whaling voyages (the schooner *Golden City* sailed twice). Azoreans owned, at least partially, six of these eight. Three of these voyages were under the command of Portuguese masters—Cape Verdean Joseph P. Benton on the schooner *Clara L. Sparks* and Azoreans Frank C. Morris on the schooner *Charles W. Morse* and Joseph B. Foster on the schooner *Golden City*.¹ By 1900 the scale of new Bedford whaling was far lower than it had been in 1875. Between 1896 and 1925, 242 whaling voyages left the port of New Bedford. On average, eight voyages left each year, a far cry from the one hundred and more voyages that departed nearly every year in the early 1850s. And where whaling ships and barks ranged the world's seas over years-long voyages earlier, most voyages from 1895 forward scoured the Atlantic in months-long cruises in barks and, increasingly, schooners. New Bedford's historic whaling fleet was increasingly aged, and the schooners were often refitted from other ports where they were part of fishing fleets. In 1900, six of the seven New Bedford whaling cruises were in schooners, and several sailed shorthanded in the expectation of complementing their crew somewhere in the Atlantic.

Still, the value of whale products was not insignificant, and Azoreans and Cape Verdeans became notable investors in the industry's last decades. Of 242 whaling voyages leaving New Bedford in those last three decades, 156, or 64 percent, were commanded by 101 Azoreans and 51 Cape Verdeans. Azoreans and Cape Verdeans owned shares in 68, or 28 percent, of those 242 voyages. Azoreans owned part or all of vessels on 49 voyages, while Cape Verdeans owned shares in 19 (see Appendix D). The career of the whaling bark *Wanderer* illustrates well the transition in ownership. Built at Mattapoisett in 1878 and sailing for part of its life out of San Francisco, its owners and agents were Anglo Americans from 1878 through 1910. In 1913 James F. Avery of St. Eustatius in the Dutch West Indies bought 2/32 of the vessel and served as agent on its voyage that year, and Azorean Antone T. Edwards, its master, owned 4/32. In 1918 Edwards owned the same share, while Avery had acquired another 1/32 interest. In 1921, Antone T. Edwards owned 7/32 of the *Wanderer*, his nephew John T. owned 2/32, and Avery retained 1/32.²

Crews too were predominantly Azorean and Cape Verdean (fig. 11.1); West Indians, Filipinos, and others including Anglo Americans occupied smaller portions of crews. In 1900 50 percent of the members of whaling crews were either Azorean (seven men) or Cape Verdean (seventy-two men); one crew member was from

1. Reginald B. Hegarty, comp., *Returns of Whaling Vessels from American Ports: A Continuation of Alexander Starbuck's "History of the American Whale Fishery," 1876–1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, 1959), 26–31.

2. *Ship Registers*, 3:173–74.



Fig. 11.1. Crew preparing to ship on bark *Greyhound*, 1915–18, photograph by Clifford W. Ashley. On its 1917 and 1918 voyages, under Azorean whaling master Antonio C. Corvello, the *Greyhound's* crews were composed almost entirely of Azoreans and Cape Verdeans. Built in 1851, the vessel was near the end of its life in these years; on its twenty-first voyage, it foundered off the island of Maio in Cape Verde in 1922 and was sold into the Cape Verde packet trade. The bark had its first Portuguese master in 1885, and the greater share of it had been owned by Azoreans since 1887. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Lisbon. Seventy-one of seventy-eight whalers of Portuguese descent were Cape Verdean (fig. 11.2 and table 11.1). By 1910 virtually one-half or more of the crews were Portuguese—and of those, the great majority were Cape Verdean. For 1910 the percentage of total crew who were Portuguese had risen to 64: eight were Azorean, 109 Cape Verdean, two Madeiran, and one man from Lisbon.³ When Manuel E. Costa took the *Bertha D. Nickerson* whaling in the Atlantic in 1906, the crew contained no Azoreans, two Cape Verdeans, nine men from the West Indies, one each from St. Helena and the Phillipines, and Anglo green hands most likely obtained from Boston.⁴ Still, Cape Verdeans remained dominant among crews until the end of traditional American whaling.

3. Seamen's Register, ODHS. Cf. Table 1, p. 35.

Table 11.1. Whaling Vessel Sailings from New Bedford, Selected Schooners, 1900

	Total Crew	Azoreans	Cape Verdeans	Others
<i>Charles H. Hodgdon</i>	21	0	12	9
<i>Ellen A. Swift</i>	18	1	4	13
<i>Era</i>	18	0	2	16
<i>Golden City</i>	15	0	13	2
<i>Joseph A. Manta</i>	16	2	12	2
<i>Kathleen</i>	30	1	11	18
<i>Mary E. Simmons</i>	15	1	2	12
<i>Pearl Nelson</i>	8	1	2	5
<i>William A. Grozier</i>	16	1	13	2
Total	157	7	71	79

Aside from those in command, clearly whaling was now of little interest to resident Azoreans, whose occupational opportunities had greatly expanded as the city's textile economy grew. And even as they made up half of the crews in 1900, whaling was a relatively insignificant attraction for Cape Verdeans living

in New Bedford as well. While resident seamen in 1870 formed over one-half of the Portuguese male work force, they were 33 percent of employed Portuguese men in 1880 and only 5 percent by 1900. Finding greenhands was often left to recruiters in Boston and other places. In 1905 Captain Antone J. Mandly had to hold the *Ellen A. Swift* in port because he had difficulty filling out a crew. A reporter noted at the time the difficulty in recruiting Cape Verdeans who customarily joined whaling crews at this time:

In the spring of the year they are not inclined to ship as crews, preferring to work as laborers and as seamen on coasting vessels. Whaling agents have had no end of trouble this year in shipping crews, so great is the scarcity of men, and when the *Canton* sailed she made up the balance of her complement with seven men who were sent here from Boston. The same is true of the *Bertha*, while the *Wanderer*, which sailed yesterday, shipped 14 who were sent to New Bedford by agents in Boston.⁵

Signing on men from Boston or New York had its own problems. While shanghaiing (the placing of men on board a ship through violence or stupefaction) did occasionally take place, it was nowhere near as prevalent in New Bedford as on the West Coast. In his autobiography whaleman Joseph Gomes described a fellow nicknamed "Shanghai Joe." In 1913 Gomes had shipped as boatsteerer on the *Greyhound* from New Bedford, and as the vessel headed out of the harbor "the last nine men that Shanghai Joe had brought aboard started to crawl up on deck. What a sight! Shanghai Joe had gotten them drunk and kept them that way for a couple of days. One was a young fellow who had just passed the Bar examination. They were

4. Seamen's Register, ODHS. Costa's vessels hunted sperm whales almost exclusively, his last two voyages bringing home 2130 and 3280 barrels of sperm oil respectively from Atlantic cruises. Costa's wife Philomena often accompanied him on his voyages. His last command was the New Bedford schooner *T. Towner* (1908–11).

5. Unidentified newspaper, 29 Apr 1905, Scrapbook 2:289, ODHS; bark *Ellen A. Swift*, Provincetown, 1905--05, Seamen's Register, ODHS.



Fig. 11.2. Ribeira Brava, São Nicolau, Cape Verde, 1904, photograph by Clifford Ashley during his voyage on the New Bedford bark *Sunbeam*. Of the thirty-five men in the crew, twelve were probably Cape Verdean or of Cape Verdean descent. For many decades São Nicolau had supplied crew to New Bedford whalers. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

all from Gloucester, Massachusetts. Shanghai Joe had lived up to his name.”⁶ When the *Greyhound* called at Faial, the young lawyer was carried off ill and seven of the others fled to the hills. After the vessel left Faial these seven intended to report to the American consul, who would have them shipped back to the United States.⁷

In order to avoid desertion captains were at times tempted to stay out and avoid ports, a practice that, of course, could greatly exacerbate problems of morale. When the bark *Morning Star* anchored at Horta, Faial, in 1898, eight men, most of them greenhands, deserted. “Suppose they Swam ashore,” the log keeper noted.⁸ In the following days six more men disappeared. Generally, though,

whaling masters could replace deserters without enormous difficulty: in the middle of the night a few days later a boat came off the island to the bark with seven men to replenish the forecastle. And then it was on to Brava where another seven were

6. Joseph Gomes, *Captain Joe, Whaleman from New Bedford, as Told to Don Sevens* (New York: Vantage Press, 1960), 95. Whether “Shanghai Joe” was the same individual mentioned by former outfitter Morris Sederholm is not known. This Joe seems to have been more involved with providing experienced crewmen for the New Bedford whalers in the latter years.

7. Gomes, *Captain Joe*, 139–40.

8. Bark *Morning Star*, King, New Bedford, 25 October 1898, Log 3388, NBFPL. Swimming ashore had its risks, especially when the vessel was not anchored close to shore. In 1871 the logkeeper of the bark *A. R. Tucker* of New Bedford remarked that, “Monday night five of our men jumped over board to swim on shore lowered a boat & picked up one & one swam back the others (Henry Spring Fred Smith & Andrew Coffin) got clear do not know if they ever reached the shore or not as we did not hear any thing from them but think the chances was against them as we Lay near a mile from the shore and there was a strong tide at the time.” Bark *A. R. Tucker*, Ricketson, New Bedford, 3 Sep 1871, Log 456A-E, ODHS.



Fig. 11.3. Antonio C. Corvello (1879–1920) and his wife Maria C. Gomes Corvello (1887–1970), about 1913. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

shipped.⁹ In 1911, after six months at sea without touching at any port, the greenhands aboard the schooner *Pedro Varela* finally rebelled. Although the officers and boatsteerers were either Azorean or Cape Verdean, the forecandle hands “were a motley gang of Americans, small-time criminals, a self-confessed murderer, a drug addict and peddler, and a burglar.”¹⁰ The crew complained in vain to Azorean Captain Antonio C. Corvello (fig. 11.3) about the cramped quarters of the forecandle and the quality of the food, whereupon Corvello placed them on short rations. At night the crew threw most of the whaling implements overboard and smashed the windlass and the tryworks. Corvello was forced to call at Faial to deposit the “mutineers.” A Navy ship eventually took the greenhands to the United States, where they were tried, convicted, but shortly thereafter released on

the grounds that their action had not technically been a mutiny: no one had refused to take orders, nor attacked anyone, nor even planned to take the ship by force.¹¹

American whaling masters often arranged with someone on shore to take men

9. Some forty years previous the owners of the bark *Elizabeth Swift* of New Bedford had written to its captain, Josiah E. Chase, that “it did not grieve us that your men run at Western Islands where you could get a plenty more but Falcnand [Falkland Islands] has got to be a very bad place on that account.” Swift and Allen to Capt. Josiah E. Chase, bark *Elizabeth Swift*, New Bedford, 5 Dec 1859, MSS 5, Swift and Allen Papers, ODHS; Bark *Morning Star*, 17 Nov and 11 Dec 1898.

10. Dorothy C. Poole, “Antone Fortes, Whaleman,” *Dukes County Intelligencer* 11 (May 1970), 134.

aboard clandestinely at a prearranged location, but islanders could be exploited in the process. Joseph Camara was born on the island of Pico in 1887. In 1904, at the age of seventeen, Camara wanted to escape conscription into the Portuguese army and began a series of abortive attempts to flee on an American whaler. More than a year later, in 1905, he was still unsuccessful and getting desperate, so while the bark *Bertha* lay in the harbor of Horta, Faial, he paid three dollars (a relatively large sum at the time in the Azores) to be taken out one night and placed on board. In advance he had also given over to the man his clothes and a quantity of tobacco for the voyage. But, after waiting through the night, no one appeared. The next morning he went down to the wharf, found an acquaintance of the man to whom he had handed over his money and clothing, and learned that he had apparently been arrested. Fortunately Camara had found a sympathetic ear, for he was soon rowed out to the *Bertha*, where he was hidden from the harbor police until sailing time.¹²

Whaling cruises at whatever moment relied for their success on some experienced hands, and Morris Sederholm (1900–1983), who began working for New Bedford outfitter Samuel Horvitz by 1921, explained how he recruited them for crews:

I had help. There was a fellow around called, a Cape Verde, named Joe Gold. We used to call him “the necessary evil.” He knew where all these fellows were. For instance there were then rooming houses, boardinghouses where these fellows stayed. When a ship came home it was his job to see that he put these fellows in these rooming houses, kept them there and either got them jobs or kept them drunk or something or had a woman with them. So that next spring he knew where to find them. Sometimes he’d keep them out maybe out in Rochester or out down the Cape, down in Wareham or all around places where they couldn’t get away, you know. And when it came time to get these men, he knew where they were. And I’d go to him and I’d say, “Joe, I need a third mate for this and this ship.” Or, “I need a second mate” or “I need a boatsteerer,” and he’d come up with it.¹³

Because whaling lingered on into the twentieth century, some men who worked on later whaling vessels were alive when historians grew interested in the industry’s history. Roderick Corvello, born on Flores in the Azores in 1894, went whaling on the schooner *Pedro Varela* in 1910 when his cousin Antonio Corvello was its master. Corvello’s father had become an American citizen, and Corvello knew that he would lose the American citizenship due him when he turned twenty-one if he did not settle

11. Dorothy C. Poole, “Mutinous But Not Mutiny,” *Dukes County Intelligencer*. In 1917, in the midst of World War I, Corvello survived a true mutiny. Quite possibly there were some shanghaied individuals on board the old bark *Greyhound*, for trouble began only a few days after the vessel left New Bedford. When a pod of whales was sighted three boats were lowered, which left only five men and the captain on the vessel. The two remaining foremast hands then attacked the cook and mess boy while they were at work in the galley, leaving the cook with a serious knife wound. Corvello, at that moment, was intent on following the action of his boats; but fortunately he heard a noise and spied someone carrying a large knife. He at once made for the rigging, where he was able to set the flags informing the boats to return immediately. With the return of the remainder of the crew the mutineers were soon subdued and put in irons. The *Greyhound* continued to whale for three more months before coming into Barbados, where the mutineers reportedly escaped before they could be turned over to authorities. See Poole, “Antone Fortes,” 148–49.

12. Joseph Camara, interview by James Healy and Reginald Hegarty, New Bedford, MA, 5 September 1962, NBFPL.

13. Morris Sederholm, interview by James Healy and Reginald Hegarty, New Bedford, MA, 17 October 1962, ODHS.

in the United States. He also wanted to avoid universal military conscription, which banned eligible young men from leaving the islands. Corvello and his uncle's brother-in-law Joseph Gomes were able to travel to Faial, where they were advised to hide from authorities but were questioned by local authorities.

Joe said he was going to be a priest. . . . The cops knew we were lying. Oh, they knew we were going whaling. There were five or six whaling boats there. But they couldn't arrest us. We weren't doing anything wrong. . . . When we got on the *Pedro Varela*, the cops were there. Oh yeah, they were watching. But I guess money talks over there. The Captain must have paid them off.¹⁴

Joseph Ramos, one of the last New Bedford whalers, was born in Cape Verde in 1889 and left at the age of eighteen to join his father in New Bedford and begin to contribute to the support of his Cape Verde household. That goal was, to Ramos, more important than what he might earn on the voyage, which was, he said, "a form of passport." He signed on to the bark *Wanderer*, apparently on its way back to New Bedford. But when it arrived in port in mid-September 1907, the vessel's captain addressed the likelihood of a short crew for his next voyage by duping Ramos and others of the crew:

The captain pulled a trick on us. He took us to Boston and pretended to be preparing papers for us to be able to stay in the country. We could have stayed in this country. The captain made out that we had to go on another ship to have citizenship. He split us up—five on the *Margarett*, five on the *Nickerson*. After the second trip, we said no to what the captain wanted us to say to immigrations. He got mad! He didn't pay us when we first came here. When we refused to go back out—then he paid us.¹⁵

Three days later Ramos was picking cranberries. "On the *Wanderer*," he recalled, "I made fourteen dollars for one year. Then, on the *Margarett*, with the same crew, I made sixteen dollars for six months. In the cranberry bogs, I made \$130 for six weeks. I paid \$30 for board and came to New Bedford with \$100."¹⁶ Ramos never returned to the sea. He disliked killing whales, especially a mother protecting her calf. "That's when you could feel it," Ramos said. "When we killed the mother, the milk made the ocean white all around us. It was sad. You knew the shark would kill the calf when you got the mother."¹⁷ Life aboard a whaler was also hard:

Whaling was dirty work, a nasty job. There were cockroaches, bed bugs, dirty mattresses and sheets. . . . We had crackers and salted beef with coffee for breakfast. We had bean soup for lunch and supper, We also had breast of whale, sometimes, with a little salt. Sometimes, we fished over the boat's side for food. . . . The water wasn't good either sometimes. But you had to drink it. Sometimes, it had

14. Roderick Corvello, interview by Margaret Schuler, in *Spinner: People and Culture of Southeastern Massachusetts 2* (1988), 103–04.

15. Joseph Ramos, interview with Michael DeCicco, *Spinner: People and Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts 2* (1982): 108–9. Actually, serving on an American vessel counted as residency toward citizenship. The schooner *Margarett*, then in Norwich, CT, left on 24 September 1908; the schooner *Bertha D. Nickerson* left New Bedford on 27 September 1908. Part of Ramos's recollection is confounding, because the *Wanderer* in 1905–7 and the *Nickerson* and *Margarett* in 1908 did not have the same captain or owners.

16. Ramos interview, 108.

17. *Ibid.*, 109.

cockroaches in it and sometimes the oil from the emptied barrels was mixed in the water. But you had to drink it, clean or not. You got to live.¹⁸

Actual or anticipated shortages of crew members brought others to latter-day whaling. Quintin Degrasse, born in 1897 on São Vicente in Cape Verde, recalled in one interview that he signed on to the bark *Alice Knowles*, then in its thirty-fifth year of service, after it arrived at his island in the summer of 1914 in search of nine boys and men to fill out its crew (fig. 11.4). DeGrasse was seventeen and needed his mother's permission to join the crew on this unlucky voyage. Initially quite successful in its hunt for sperm whales, in February 1916 its luck changed. Veteran mate Antonio T. Pina, along with one of his oarsmen, was killed by a whale's flukes; and in 1917 the aged *Alice Knowles* was caught in a violent hurricane.

The guy on look-out up in the mast thought he saw a whale spouting off. Then he said, "It ain't no whale, it's a water spout!" The clouds turned black. The wind picked up and the rain started pouring as we took down the sails. But it did no good because the waves were so high that they smashed the boat. . . . In the last moments, Captain Hegarty grabbed hold of my hand and said, "Tough luck!" I said, "We're all in tough luck."¹⁹

One final violent crash and Degrasse found himself in the water, but he and fellow crew member Jules Duarte were able to cling to part of a smashed whaleboat. For four days they floated in the frigid waters with virtually nothing to eat and growing weaker by the hour. When they were finally discovered and hauled aboard the merchant schooner *Fred W. Thurber*, they were so weak they had to be pried apart. After being dropped off in Brazil, the two eventually were taken to New Bedford where Duarte soon contracted pneumonia and died. Degrasse wanted to return to São Vicente, but his desire to work on the water was extinguished, and he never returned to Cape Verde.

Degrasse tried for a while to sell the story of his experience and suspected that one magazine's rejection of the story was due to "my accent and being black." And one point, Degrasse stated, the producers of a film based on Melville's *Moby Dick* "came around asking if I would play a little part in the movie which required me to jump overboard. He came two or three times, and kept giving me fine cigars, and offered to pay me \$125 per month. I said, 'Look mister, you could pay me a thousand dollars, but I'm not going to jump overboard from any boat.'"²⁰

Manuel Andre Lomba (ca. 1900–1967) came from the island of Brava, and because his father Hendrick had been whaling earlier Lomba brought some knowledge of the industry when he first signed on to a crew. In a 1962 interview he reminisced about his early experiences whaling. As World War I broke out in 1914, the family (perhaps only Manuel and his mother Maria Duarte Lomba) moved to the United States; Lomba was thirteen at the time. His second voyage, in March

18. Ibid, 108. The meat of a baleen or sperm whale was not normally a part of the whaleman's diet. He is probably referring to dolphin or perhaps pilot whales.

19. Quintin Degrasse, interview with Jill Anderson, *Spinner: People and Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts 2* (1982): 99. Degrasse was a laborer living in New Bedford in 1923 but moved with his wife Ida and daughter to New York City by 1930, where he was a billiard hall porter. By 1937 he had returned to New Bedford and began his career at New Bedford Cordage Company.

20. Ibid., 102.



Fig. 11.4. Quintin Degrasse pointing to the embarkation of the ill-fated *Alice Knowles*, about 1917. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

1917, was as preventer boatsteerer (the foremost hand first in line for promotion to boatsteerer should one be needed on a given cruise) on the 1917 voyage of the schooner *Margarett* under Captain Louis Lopes. As whalemens had for generations, Lomba recalled the long periods of inactivity in between whale sightings. “Sometimes you don’t work for weeks,” he noted. “You would just eat, clean the boats, cut wood for the cook, and tell jokes.”

Just as Lomba had experience useful on a whaling vessel, so too did Antonio Lourenco Lopes (1897–2000). Born on São Nicolau in Cape Verde, Lopes joined a whaling crew in the last few years of the industry’s New Bedford existence. He grew up working on his father’s small farm and fishing with him from a rowboat for scup and

turtles; he recalled in one interview catching turtles with a harpoon. One day in 1921 while fishing he saw the New Bedford whaling schooner *William Graber* and went to see its captain.

Over there if you don’t know how to row the boat, they won’t take you. If don’t know how to row, no, they won’t take you. So the next day, I went to see the Captain . . . say, “I want to go to America.” He asked me, first thing he asked me, “You know how to row the boat?” Say, “I know how to row the boat, I know how to row the boat.” The ship way, way in the stream. Captain on the shore. So I say, I ask the man, the Captain, “How much do you pay?” He say, “Never mind, never mind pay. You go to the country where lot of work.” [laughs]

The next day Lopes brought his passport, birth certificate, and “the Bulletin Criminal”—a document certifying that the applicant had not run afoul of the law—and shipped out. The *Graber* whaled off the coast of Brazil and returned to New

Bedford on 13 September 1921. He shipped on the schooner *Claudia* in 1922, and when the vessel returned in August, he said, “there was no whaling.” Indeed, only the *Wanderer* left in 1922 after Lopes returned, and only two vessels left New Bedford to whale in 1923.²¹

Well before these last years the return an ordinary crew member could expect from a whaling voyage was slim, or nothing. In 1910 Cape Verdean master Valentine Roza signed a crew of thirty for the voyage of bark *Morning Star*. Twenty-three were from Cape Verde—fifteen from Maio, six from São Nicolau, one each from Fogo and São Vicente. Four other crew members were from St. Helena, one from Dominica in the West Indies, and one from Guam. The *Morning Star* returned to port in August 1912 with 3,050 barrels of sperm oil, the third highest catch of the fourteen whaling vessels that left New Bedford in 1910. By the end of the cruise thirty-two men were in the crew exclusive of Roza and his three top mates, and a little more than three thousand dollars was split between them. The fourth mate earned \$356 and the cooper \$480, but the others averaged less than \$100; after deducting their shipboard expenses owner J. and W. R. Wing gave several men the minimum payment of five dollars for their twenty-seven months at sea.²²

Masters and owners naturally fared better, and they did well enough to sustain long careers in whaling's latter days. The *Boston Globe* noted in 1910 that the industry faced a “scarcity of experienced masters. . . . A few of the captains of an older day are still available, but those who must be looked to if a larger fleet is to be sent out to take advantage of the profitable market must be the Portuguese and Cape Verde mariners.”²³ The Azorean family groups that had entered the industry before 1900 were now among its most prominent. Antone J. Mandly of Fayal was master of four whaling voyages before 1896 and twenty-two voyages after that date—seven on the schooner *Ellen A. Swift* from Provincetown between 1905 and 1911 and eleven on schooner *John R. Manta* from New Bedford from 1915 to 1925, when it made the last successful whaling voyage from the port. Henry Mandly was captain of the *Mary E. Simmons* on four voyages between 1896 and 1903, of the *Manta* from Provincetown in 1906, of schooner *Pedro Varela* in 1907, and of the *Margarett* in 1917; all told, he was at sea for forty-eight years. His son Henry Mandly Jr. went to sea under his father's command on the *Mary E. Simmons* in 1898, was master of the *Margarett* on four voyages between 1911 and 1915 and of the *William A. Graber* in 1917, 1918, and 1919; his last command was of the whaling schooner *Valkyria* in October 1920.

The Edwards family of Flores in the Azores—Joseph T. (1858–1913) and his nephews Antone T. (1882–1936), John T. (1884–1957), and Joseph F. (1885–1933)—also remained active in whaling until the industry's final days in New Bedford. Joseph T. Edwards came to New Bedford in 1871, went on at least six whaling voyages before 1895 (two as master), and was master of bark *Greyhound* on its 1898 and 1903 voyages and master of the *Manta* in 1907.²⁴ Antone Edwards served in the crew of the bark

21. Manuel A. Lomba, interview by James Healy and Reginald Hegarty, 1 August 1962; Antonio Lopes, interview with Laura Orleans and Dorothy Lopes (daughter), 26 January 1999, NEBE.

22. Seamen's Register, ODHS; J. and W. R. Wing Coll., MS 35, ODHS.

23. “Whaling Fleet Now Fitting at New Bedford,” *Boston Globe*, 10 April 1910, 76.

24. Edwards's second wife Catherine H. Frazier, was the granddaughter of early Azorean outfitter Joseph Frazier.

Greyhound in 1898 and 1903 under his uncle's command and was master of bark *Wanderer* on six of its seven final cruises between 1913 and 1924. Joseph F. Edwards was boatsteerer on the 1913 *Wanderer* voyage and then master of the bark *Charles W. Morgan* in 1918 and 1919, of schooner *Margarett* in 1921 and 1924, and of the *John R. Manta* in 1927, the last whaling voyage to leave the port of New Bedford. John T. Edwards was master of the schooner *Cameo* in 1912 (which returned to port in August 1915 with an impressive 5300 barrels of sperm oil), schooner *Arthur V. S. Woodruff* in 1917, the *Wanderer* in 1919, and the *Margarett* on its 1923–24 voyage. In 1910 Joseph T. Edwards is credited with making the change from using wooden casks to store oil on board ship to steel tanks, having installed them on the schooner *Mystic* (commanded on that voyage by Antone T. Edwards) in 1910.²⁵

The most active of Cape Verdean vessel masters after 1900 remained John T. Gonsalves, whose fifty-year career at sea included at least twenty-five whaling voyages. He became a vessel master in 1890 and from 1901 to 1922 served as master on two voyages of the schooner *Eleanor B. Conwell*, five voyages of the schooner *William A. Graber*, one of schooner *A. M. Nicholson*, and one of bark *Charles W. Morgan*, its final voyage in 1920–21. Gonsalves was listed (as a master mariner) in city directories only between 1918 and 1924 and is scarcely if ever listed in federal censuses, no doubt because he was rarely on land; he wrote on his 1924 passport application that he had lived in both Provincetown and New Bedford but had “been at sea most of the time, on all kinds of sailing ships, mostly whalers.” Also prominent during these years were Ayres Joside Senna (born 1857 or 1858) and his son Joseph Hermogenese Senna (1880–1912), both born in Brava. Ayres Senna was master of five voyages between 1897 and 1904, the last three on the schooner *Adelia Chase*; his son Joseph commanded the *Adelia Chase* on its 1906 voyage, was master of schooner *Carleton Bell* on three voyages and then in 1919 master of schooner *Claudia*; his last voyage was as a mate on the *Yukon*, a packet vessel running between Cape Verde and New Bedford, in 1926. Its master was Bravan Benjamin Costa, who had come from the islands to New Bedford in 1892, lived in Providence for a time, and was master of bark *Greyhound* on its last voyage in 1921.

Theophilus M. Freitas was born on the island of São Nicolau, Cape Verde, in 1878 and arrived in the United States aboard the whaling brig *Rosa Baker* of Boston in 1895.²⁶ He served as replacement master for Captain William C. Hegarty on two voyages of the brig *Sullivan*, first out of Norwich, Connecticut, in 1908–11 and then from Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1912–13. His first voyage was very successful, having returned 4600 barrels of sperm oil. On his second voyage the brig was lost at Faial after dragging its anchor. Freitas had one command of his own, on the schooner *Pedro Varela* out of New Bedford (October 1917–February 1918).²⁷ During the filming of *Down to the Sea in Ships* in 1921, Freitas played the role of harpooner.

25. Steel tanks offered several advantages over casks: the oil did not have to be cooled down before it was stored, and their large-diameter openings made it possible to store blubber inside during a storm to await a more convenient time for trying out. After the *Mystic* carried them in 1910 they were installed on other vessels in the fleet. See “Modern Substitutes for Whale Oil Casks,” unidentified newspaper article, ca. 1915, Scrapbook T-5:50, ODHS.

26. Emergency Passport Application, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, 8 Sep 1906, General Records of the Department of State, RG 59, NAW. The spelling of his surname, in both whaling and other documents, alternates between “Freitas” and “Frates.” The former, original, is used here.

Frank M. Lopes, a native of Brava, was born in 1884 and arrived in the United States in 1901 aboard the packet schooner *Zulmira*. Lopes took out the New Bedford schooner *Pedro Varela* on a successful cruise in 1918, but on his next voyage the following year the well-known schooner was lost with all hands.²⁸ Louis M. Lopes, born on the island of Fogo in 1876, began his career as whaling master in the schooner *A. E. Whyland* out of Providence in 1902, and later, out of New Bedford, commanded the bark *Bertha* (1910) and the schooner *A. E. Whyland* during its 1912–14 and 1915 voyages. Lopes's last two whaling cruises were in the schooner *Margarett* in 1917 and 1918. The first voyage lasted only two weeks and the second only three months, but in 1918 the *Margarett* returned with four hundred barrels of sperm oil. The crew members on his return were mostly British West Indian, the majority having shipped at St. Kitts.²⁹

Cape Verdean John Da Lomba was also well-known in the whaling community. Although he took out the schooner *William A. Graber* on a short voyage in 1920, he sailed for many years as a mate. Known for his size and strength, he must have been an imposing figure. When the brig *Daisy* called at Santo Antão in 1912 to pick him up, an observer on board noted that Da Lomba was “so full of vim that I could see his personality electrify our whaleboat’s crew from the instant he greeted us at the water front.”³⁰ Da Lomba not only whaled in the Atlantic but voyaged to Desolation (Kerguelen) Island in the South Indian Ocean aboard the bark *Charles W. Morgan* (September 1916–October 1917) in the search for elephant seals.

Valentine Roza, from the island of Maio, was one of the better-known whalers of the time despite having served as a whaling master for only a few years. While most of his contemporaries specialized in schooners, he commanded only barks. Roza learned navigation while serving as mate on the bark *Josephine* of New Bedford in 1903–5 under Captain Horace P. Smith. His instructor was the skipper’s wife, Marian, who was assistant navigator on the voyage.³¹ Roza later served as master on two New Bedford barks, the *Canton II* (April 1907–August 1909 and October 1909–November 1910) and the *Morning Star* (May 1910–August 1912 and October 1912–September 1914). While the *Canton II* brought in 2100 barrels of sperm oil and 300 of whale oil on its first voyage, its next ended in disaster when the vessel went ashore on the island of Maio in November 1910. Roza had his family on board at the time, but passengers and crew were all rescued.³² The *Canton II* was the oldest whaling vessel operating out of the port of New Bedford at the time, having been built in Baltimore for the merchant service in 1835 and whaling since 1841.

27. Both Azoreans and Cape Verdeans participated in whaling out of Fall River but in much smaller numbers, and excepting Freitas they seldom, if ever, rose above the rank of boatsteerer. See Crew Lists, Fall River, National Archives, Boston.

28. Frank M. Lopes, U.S. Passport Application, 27 January 1917, RG 59, NAW; Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels*, 45.

29. Schooner *Margarett*, Lopes, New Bedford, Arriving Crew List, 22 July 1918, New Bedford, NBFPL.

30. Murphy, *Logbook for Grace*, 63.

31. Seamen’s Register, ODHS; *Boston Herald*, 18 June 1908.

32. Seamen’s Register, ODHS.

Ownership among Portuguese Atlantic islanders also increased in these last decades. Thomas Luce (1827–1911) of Flores in the Azores, who had begun his career in New Bedford as a cooper before the Civil War, was near the end of his career. In 1896 he was agent and 7/8 owner of the bark *Desdemona* and agent of the schooners *Mary E. Simmons* (he, his son Charles T. Luce, and Henry Mandly owned the vessel) and *Pearl Nelson*, of which he owned 5/8. The three were among the seven vessels that left New Bedford for whaling in that year. Between 1896 and 1903 Luce owned shares ranging from half to full ownership of vessels during fifteen voyages. The 1900 census lists him as a ship owner, and in 1910 he lived at 550 County Street on his own income with his second wife Lydia, a nurse, a domestic servant, and a sister-in-law. For a decade beginning in 1895 he sent Captain George Comer on the schooner *Era* to Hudson Bay, where Comer wintered and spent much of his idle time studying the Inuit people. He lived in Connecticut but stayed with Luce and his family in New Bedford before sailing. “Stayed at the home of Mr Thomas Luce,” he wrote in his journal in 1903, “where I have always been made at home.” Comer noted the next day, “The three voyages before this there have been a party of old men come down with us but this time they feel as though they were too old to come, including our Mr Thomas Luce.”³³

Joseph T. Edwards of Flores also owned shares in vessels, though not quite on the scale of Luce. He owned 2/16 of bark *President II* (1896), from 2/16 to 9/16 of bark *Greyhound* between 1898 and 1913, 4/16 of schooners *Cameo* (1908–15) and *Mystic* (1910–15), and 2/16 of schooner *Pedro Varela* (1910–13). The Mandlys were also vessel owners to a lesser degree; most notable was their investment in the schooner *John R. Manta* in its last years, when Antonio J. Mandly owned 7/16 of it during its 1925 voyage; at the time of its aborted 1927 cruise, Antonio owned 17/64, his wife Laura owned 1/8, and Henry Mandly owned 1/16.

Vessel ownership among Cape Verdeans was less extensive but increased notably after about 1910. Like Thomas Luce, Anthony P. Benton was at the end of his career when he owned half of bark *President* in 1896. Whaling master John da Lomba owned a sixteenth share of the schooners *A. E. Whyland* (1922), *Carleton Bell* (1914), and *William A. Graber* (1917) and an eighth of the *Graber* in 1922. Ayres J. Senna owned the schooner *Adelia Chase* in 1904 and large shares in the *Carleton Bell*, both on his own and with his son Joseph. Master John T. Gonsalves owned a quarter of schooner *A. M. Nicholson* in 1917 and 1918 and an eighth share of the *William A. Graber* in 1922. In 1902 Joseph Gaspar de Conceicao owned all of schooner *Pilgrim*, a onetime Gloucester fishing vessel built in 1884; it foundered off São Nicolau, Cape Verde, in late August 1903 and was a total loss.³⁴

On Shore in the Industry's Last Decades

On the first of his two whaling voyages, Antonio Lopes reached New Bedford in May 1922 and, as was customary, he and most of the rest of the crew remained on board the schooner *William A. Graber* for three days. On the third day immigration officers

33. Ross, *An Arctic Diary*, 41.

34. “Pilgrim a Total Loss,” *Fall River Daily Herald*, 30 September 1903, 1, stated that Antone L. Sylvia was the vessel's owner, but *New Bedford Ship Registers*, 3: 138 cites Gaspar was sole owner.

came on board to give each man a physical and a literacy test. Lopes left the *Graber* with ten dollars in pay for his eight-month voyage, and he went with three other Cape Verdean crew members to the boardinghouse of Joaquim and Josefa Santos at 287 Acushnet Avenue, at the corner of School Street. “That’s where we all went,” Lopes told an interviewer in 1999. “We come from the ship, we are four, come off the ship. Today, today parking lot. Come to the house, you have overall and jumper. Go the house over there right in the corner over there.” Lopes paid seven dollars a week for room and board. In March or April 1922 he signed on to the crew of the schooner *Claudia* under Cape Verdean master Joseph H. Senna, which returned to New Bedford in mid-August of the same year. Lopes remembered that after thirteen dollars was deducted for clothing he bought on the vessel, he earned twenty-five dollars. Senna earned \$1800. “He doesn’t work,” Lopes stated, “but he gets more.” When he came back, “there was no whaling,” Lopes said, so he went to Nantucket to build a ball field and two months later returned to the Santos boardinghouse.³⁵

Joaquim Santos and his wife were born in Cape Verde, and he came to the United States in 1902; his wife and daughter Ann followed in 1905. The Santosos were running a boardinghouse in a rented building in downtown New Bedford’s Market Square by 1910. In 1920, at 287 Acushnet Avenue, the couple had fifteen boarders and two lodgers, all of them Cape Verdean, married to Cape Verdeans, or second-generation Cape Verdeans. Lopes remembered whaling masters coming to Santos’s house often in search of crew. In 1920 Joaquim Santos was a mariner and in 1930 a seaman on a boat line, which suggests that his wife was largely responsible for the boarding business. In 1930 the Santosos boarded eight Cape Verdeans, Lopes among them; he lived there from 1921 to 1931.

After 1890 the great majority of those in shoreside maritime activities, including boardinghouses, were mainly supporting merchant shipping, coastal steamers, and fishing vessels. As Cape Verdeans became an increasing presence in whaling crews after 1900, more boardinghouses opened for them, many not listed in city directories. One examination of the 1920 census found scores of boarding and lodging establishments in New Bedford’s fourth ward, thirteen of them run by Cape Verdeans and six by Azoreans.³⁶ Frank C. Monteiro, born in 1917, stated that his mother Ignacia always had Cape Verdean boarders, though she was never listed in directories as a boardinghouse keeper at either her 71 South First Street or 12 Walnut Street homes. “She had about three or four boarders that would come in,” he stated in a 2009 interview. “Almost every household had boarders because all of these people that came in from the islands, they had no place to go, no place to eat. So they took in boarders. And it helped finance us. My mother had boarders. She had whalers that were boarders, too.”³⁷ Eleanor Pontes, born in 1938, stated that her Cape Verdean grandparents squeezed five boarders into their four-bedroom home with themselves and their eight children in 1920.³⁸

35. Lopes interview.

36. “Places of Whaling” appendix, NEBE.

37. Frank C. Monteiro, interview with Ann Marie Lopes, New Bedford, MA, 14 November 2009, NEBE.

38. Eleanor Pontes, interview with Ann Marie Lopes, New Bedford, MA, 13 November 2009, NEBE.

Maria F. Soares, born on Brava about 1852, ran a three-story boardinghouse she rented at 386 or 406 South Water Street, at the corner of Griffin Street, possibly from the 1880s and certainly by 1900.³⁹ The 1900 census shows her at this address with her son Hendrick, two daughters, and nineteen Cape Verdean boarders. “It was the Whaler’s Lodge,” her great-grandson Teddy Morse Ramos stated in a 2000 interview:

A lot of the seaman lived there, the whalers. And she would take them in, take their gear and lock their gear up in one of the rooms during the winter when whaling was shut down. And then in the spring when the thaw came and these whalers were going out, they would get a draw when they signed on. They would get a draw of course on their salary and come back. And they would have to pay her before they could get their gear to go off. And she handled this pretty good because she was a woman well over six foot. Six foot three tall woman, real strong woman and she had no problems with some of these seamans.⁴⁰

Soares’s son Hendrick William Morse was a master mariner, mostly on merchant vessels, from the early 1890s through about 1910. He then opened a furniture store diagonally across the street from his mother’s boardinghouse, at 399 South Water Street, and lived at 401 South Water (fig. 11.5). Directories and censuses describe him as a furniture dealer, though his grandson recalls the store being stocked with goods for mariners, including sea chests and bags and watch caps, and for vessels. By then the packet trade between New Bedford and Cape Verde was in full swing, and Morse, according to his grandson, saw an opportunity.

He knew the needs of the island, he knew the packet trade; at that time there was a number of ships going back and forth in this business. Whaling had declined and there was this influx of people coming in from the islands, just desiring to come back to America, especially the Cape Verdean people and the Portuguese too, from the Azores. It was just a period of time where they were all just coming to this country and it was quite a booming business, bringing goods over and bringing people here. And so he set this store up. He stocked that store with everything. We had everything in that store. . . . A lot of the seamens that came to this country that had families over there would come into that store and purchase, a lot of money, purchased a lot of goods, and spend a lot of money. And we would package all this stuff.⁴¹

39. Neither Soares nor her son Hendrick are listed in New Bedford directories before 1873.

40. Teddy Morse Ramos, interview by Laura Orleans, New Bedford, 20 October 2000, Places of Whaling Oral History Project, NEBE. Ramos recalled that during his childhood in the 1930s the former Whaler’s Lodge had become housing for “a poorer type class and predominantly Cape Verdeans with a sprinkling of Azoreans.” The building, he said, “was one of the oldest buildings if not the oldest building in that area. . . . The shingles were all dried and everything and sort of reddish dark brown weathered from the years. And the windows were tattered curtains.” He added that the building was known in “the Cape Verdean language of, it would be Portuguese, ‘block de Henri de Maria Liel’ which translates to ‘block of Hendrick son of Maria Liel.’”

41. Teddy Morse Ramos, interview with Laura Orleans, 30 October 2000, NEBE. Born in 1923, Ramos was the son of Hendrick W. Morse’s daughter Rose (1908–67) and her husband Joseph Ramos. He grew up in his grandfather’s 401 South Water Street house and still lived there after Hendrick’s death; his father was a mariner and freight and passenger boat steward. When he was a boy, for the most part after whaling had ceased from New Bedford, he delivered goods to fishing and merchant vessels for his grandfather. “It was something that I loved, make those deliveries down to them boats, see all those boats in that harbor, all the vessels in that harbor and make these deliveries and take these things out all done well, all packaged well and put on board these vessels.”



Fig. 11.5. At the northwest corner of South Water and Griffin Streets was 405 South Water, where Benjamin C. Perreira ran his tailor shop, and 399–401 South Water Street, site of Hendrick Morse's home and furniture shop, before urban renewal, late 1950s. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

Ramos noted that his grandfather went back and forth between New Bedford and Cape Verde “a number of times. “He spoke good English, fluent English, matter of fact he was a notary public,” he said. “He did a lot of things for people getting citizenship papers and translating things of that nature, interpreting for a lot of the people. And they would come to him, all the families if they wanted anything done they would say well, go see Mr. Morse, Captain Morse.”

Ramos also recalled other Cape Verdean businesses operating near the Whaler's Lodge and his grandfather's store. In 1925 Bravan Benjamin C. Perreira (shown in some directories as Benjamin P. Cruz) was a tailor at 405 South Water Street from about 1924 through about 1942 and ran a grocery store in the late 1940s on South Water Street; his clientele, according to Ramos, included seamen. Cape Verdeans ran Fernandes Market (Alfred at 360 South Water and his son John S. at 320 South Water). Joseph A. De Barros was a barber at 177 South Water Street, as were Martin and Theophile Duarte at 387 South Water Street. The baker Peter Cruz, formerly a restaurant cook, was at 410 South Water Street. In addition, as Halter has noted, Cape Verdeans who had earlier been whalers or who had other maritime experience began to work on merchant vessels, usually as cooks, stewards, or firemen, or crew, as well

42. Joseph T. Edwards Business Records Coll., MSS 83, Ser. A, S-s 1, f. 14 and S-s 2, f. 5, ODHS.

as on lighthouse tenders, tugs, and steamships. Shoreside Cape Verdean men often were longshoremen.

As in earlier decades, several Azoreans owned maritime-related businesses. From 1900 through at least 1911 Manuel G. Sousa owned a cooperage at 353 South Second Street. And in 1914 former Azorean whaling master John P. Praro was a shipping agent.⁴² But the dramatic expansion of the textile industry was a much more accessible and attractive opportunity for most. In 1905, historian Thomas McMullin has noted, New Bedford had forty-two mills with a workforce of 14,545; by 1920 New Bedford was the center of American fine cotton goods production, and the industry employed 35,808 people. Portuguese participation grew dramatically. Of the total Portuguese labor force in New Bedford in 1900, 92 percent were engaged in manual occupations, including mill work. In 1900 27.6 percent of the male Portuguese labor force was in the mills. By 1926 half of all New Bedford mill workers were either Cape Verdean or other Portuguese people; still, less than 10 percent of skilled mill jobs were occupied by them.⁴³

By 1909 one-fourth of the total mill workforce was Portuguese, the largest foreign-born group.⁴⁴ By contrast, the percentage of seamen in the male Portuguese work force in seamen fell from 56.3 percent in 1870 to 5.1 percent in 1900, even though the raw numbers of men who were mariners fell from only 165 to 102 men over that time.⁴⁵ Female immigrants from Portugal and its dependencies had also settled in New Bedford in considerable numbers after 1870, and in 1895 there were more Portuguese women (1974) than men (1887) living in the city.⁴⁶ Portuguese women were particularly apt to be employed in the mills. Vincent Vancini (1905–2003), who worked at New Bedford Cordage Company before 1925, recalled the larger number of Azoreans and Cape Verdeans there.

In 1920 whaling was almost over and what happened we got the influx of these people that worked whaling. And they had to do something. And as they got, not fired, they got laid off from the boats. Hell, no boats and they couldn't go out. They had to do something. They had to earn a living. That's why then most of those Cape Verdeans and Azoreans entered the ropeworks and some of the others probably went in the cotton mills.⁴⁷

When New Bedford Cordage Company began to hire Portuguese Atlantic islanders is not precisely known, though the 1880 census shows a handful of Azoreans and fewer Cape Verdeans working there (fig. 11.6). By 1906 or 1907 Francisco Nicolau Tolentino, who had just emigrated from São Nicolau in Cape Verde, got work at the cordage company, stayed there for about two decades, and at some point became a supervisor.

43. Daniel Georgianna with Roberta Hazen Aaronson, *The Strike of '28* (New Bedford: Spinner Publications, 1993), 40. Interviewed as part of the research for this publication, Pete Fauteux stated that the card room in a cotton mill was “the slavery department. . . Mostly Portuguese and Cape Verdean people worked there. They would never hire a colored guy and put him in the spinning room. They would never make a weaver out of him . . . The management kept the colored people in the card room.”

44. Rodrigues, “Occupational Mobility of Portuguese Males,” Table 18, and p. 140. “New Bedford had a higher percentage of its work force in manufacturing than any other city of over 100,000 people in the country.” See McMullin, “Industrialization and Social Change,” 22 and 35.

45. Rodrigues, “Occupational Mobility of Portuguese Males,” 128.

46. Wadlin, ed., *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: 1895*, 2:598.

47. Vincent Vancini, interview by Laura Orleans, Places of Whaling Oral History Project, 27 September 2001, NEBE.



Fig. 11.6 New Bedford Cordage Company, photograph by Joseph S. Martin (active 1907–40). Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Though he was not the first Cape Verdean to be hired there, his supervisory position may have boosted Cape Verdean employment.⁴⁸ In 1910, the census lists him as a spinner at the ropeworks.⁴⁹ By 1923, according to the *Standard-Times*, the majority of ropeworks employees were Portuguese, and so many Cape Verdeans worked at the ropeworks that it was facetiously called “Brava College.”⁵⁰ The cordage company’s products were highly regarded in both the whaling and fishing industries, and the *Standard-Times* noted in 1932 that another product was in demand. “Whether it sounds believable or not,” the newspaper noted, “the constant travelling of Cape Verde Islanders between this port and their homeland has created a sizeable demand for a certain type of ‘trunk’ lashing.”⁵¹

48. See Corinne Monteiro, interview with Laura Orleans, Places of Whaling Oral History Project, 27 October 2000. Monteiro was one of Tolentino’s daughters.

49. Tolentino was one of seven boarders and four lodgers, all described as mulatto, living in the lower Middle Street boardinghouse run by Cape Verde-born cotton mill comber Manuel Livramento in 1910.

50. *Standard-Times*, 17 June 1923; Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 137.

51. *Standard-Times*, 11 September 1932.

Unlike the Irish and Italian immigrants, Portuguese did not tend to use either politics or the Catholic Church for social advancement, nor were they strong adherents of the labor movement. In New Bedford, however, this general rule did not hold, especially among women workers.⁵² On 9 April 1902 the *Evening Standard* reported that women employees had walked out of ropeworks:

When the bell on the Cordage works rang this noon for the help to return to work some 20 women who were at work yesterday did not go into the factory. Instead they hung around the office door, blocking the sidewalk. . . . The strikers had gone to the office earlier in the day and asked if they returned to work if they would receive \$5 per week. . . . They were told they could go to work for the same pay they had been receiving.

A policeman called to the company found “a crowd of 21 women and three or four men, all Portuguese on the sidewalk in front of the factory.”⁵³ When a reporter for the *Mercury* queried one of the Portuguese workers, he explained that “the men are paid from \$4.50 to \$6.50 per week in wages . . . and I tell you the man that gets the \$6.50 has to work pretty hard for it. Most of the men earn only enough to pay decent board with.”⁵⁴ On 11 April, two days after the women struck the factory, the men followed. The next day the workers formed a union to press their demand for a just wage.⁵⁵ In 1902 Herminia Teixeira, born in the Azores in 1867 and working as a dressmaker, wrote a letter to the editor about the cordage company based on her brother Germano’s experience there:

Being sister to one of the operatives, I feel that I must come before the public and make known the cruelty with which they are treated. Since I came to this country 10 years ago I have noticed a continued reduction in wages while the necessities of life have become dearer and dearer. How can an operative support himself and his wife with five dollars a week? Is it just to make them work from half past six in the morning till six at night for so little wages? How can an operative, when sick as is often the case, due to the heavy work and poor nourishment, meet the doctor’s bill? . . . There is no other mill which abuses more its workers. Is it because they are mostly Portuguese? It seems to me that is the reason, and it is that which provokes me, for whenever I hear the Portuguese people spoken of, it is usually with scorn and contempt. . . . If it is for the reason that the majority of them are colored, it is an unpardonable fault. . . . The only fault with the Portuguese has been their submitting to the tyranny which has been exercised over them, and now, driven by suffering and poverty to ask for higher wages (their requests being but moderate) they are not listened to. . . . It is time we would know that we are all members of one family and do by others what would please ourselves were we in their place.⁵⁶

Manuel V. Sylvia, an Azorean American, was a physician practicing at 100 South Sixth Street in 1893. Among working women, most were in the mills or worked

52. The 1928 New Bedford textile strike involved many women as well as Portuguese and Polish workers who had previously had no union presentation. See Daniel Georgianna with Roberta Hazen Aaronson, *The Strike of '28* (New Bedford: Spinner Publications, 1993).

53. *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 9 April 1902. An extra five dollars a week was a 10 percent raise.

54. *New Bedford Mercury*, 10 April 1902.

55. The union’s officers were Joseph Rose, president; John L. Duarte, vice-president; and Manuel Davney, secretary, about whom little if anything can be determined from censuses. On the union see *New Bedford Mercury*, 14 April 1902.

as seamstresses and dressmakers. Leonora Goulart Edwards (1896–2000), born in Horta, Faial, came to the United States in 1916 and learned to be a seamstress at the New Bedford boardinghouse where she met whaling master Joseph F. Edwards. They married in 1920, and she worked as a seamstress for the New Bedford department store Cherry and Webb from 1925 until 1975.⁵⁷

Even as the whaling industry declined, maritime work still existed for Azoreans and Cape Verdeans.⁵⁸ Beginning about 1910 Azoreans began to work as both river and deep-sea fishermen (and occasionally as clammers) and built for themselves a group of about forty small frame buildings both for shelter and for boat and gear storage at the foot of Potomska Street—the so-called Portuguese Navy Yard (fig. 11.7). Manuel E. Sylvia owned and operated a boat shop there as well. Azorean fishermen discouraged or barred Cape Verdeans from working in the fishery, so their participation was slight; they were more likely to work as longshoremen or on merchant vessels. An exception was the Fortes family. Antonio Fortes, born in Brava in 1889, came to New Bedford about 1917, probably with his mother Carlotta and older brother Henrique (1884–1946). Beginning in 1918 he became a fisherman, joined soon after by Henrique and another brother, João. The Fortes brothers owned their own draggers and continued to fish for several decades.⁵⁹ Another brother, Jayme (born 1894), was an accomplished scrimshander and served on the *John R. Manta* out of Provincetown in 1917. He died in 1934 when the *Manta*, then operating as a Cape Verde packet, was lost with all hands.⁶⁰

Cape Verdeans who had amassed capital from the 1890s forward had a new source of income—the packet trade. Packets, vessels that carried both passengers and freight on scheduled runs, operated frequently along the eastern seaboard in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Packet service ran between both the Azores and Cape Verde and New England—Antone J. Mandly first went to sea on a packet running between the Azores and New York about 1874—but while passenger steamships might call at the Azores on their way to America, such was not the case with Cape Verde.⁶¹ Thus the vessels commonly known as “Brava packets,” mostly because they often sailed to and from that island, were instrumental in carrying

56. Letter to the editor, 1902, cited in Orleans, “Places of Whaling,” 41. Herminia Teixeira (1867–1958) was the daughter of Dominos and Leonilda Teixeira and lived on Ash Street with her mother, brother Germano Cesar and Alfred, and sister Maria; they had emigrated in 1893. Hermano Teixeira worked at the ropeworks in 1900 but had become a compositor by 1905.

57. Leonora Carreiro, interview with Laura Orleans, Faces of Whaling Oral History Project.

58. Identifying the origin of individuals from Portugal in the U.S. Census is not without its problems. The 1900 census of Bristol County does not generally specify more than “Portugal.” That of 1920 is more specific as it relates to Atlantic Islanders; but it is not clear whether the term “Portugal” applies only to those from the Continent or is also employed generically.

59. Dolores Fortes Vieira, interview by Donald Warrin, New Bedford, MA, 8 August 2009. In 1942 both João (John) and Antonio were working for their brother Henry at Homer’s Wharf in New Bedford. Antonio is not to be confused with the Antone Fortes of Martha’s Vineyard, who is the subject of an article by Dorothy C. Poole (“Antone Fortes, Whaleman”).

60. Fortes/Fermino Tooth (# 2005.15), engraved with the names of Jayme, Henrique, and Antonio Fortes, and Valantin (*sic*) Fermino (aka Valentine Freeman), ODHS; Stuart M. Frank, “Family Relationships of the Fortes, Fermino, and Freeman Families,” MSS, ODHS. Examples of Jayme Fortes’s scrimshaw are in the NBWM collections.



Fig. 11.7. The “Portuguese Navy Yard,” foot of Potomska Street, undated photograph. Manuel Sylvia’s boat shop is at left. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

natives of Cape Verde to and from their islands and New England. While at the islands Cape Verde packets also made voyages to the African coast with salt to Gambia and passengers to Dakar and returning to the island with wood and rice from Guinea-Bissau.⁶²

Many Cape Verdeans were sojourners who hoped to come to the United States to make enough money to return to their native place and live more comfortably, and until the restrictive American immigration laws of the 1920s the packets made going back and forth possible. At its height, according to historian Michael Platzer, at least ten ships went each year between Cape Verde and southeastern New England, usually

61. “Ambergris Worth \$14,000 A Lucky Find at Sea: Captain A. J. Mandly Turned an Otherwise Bad Voyage Into a Profitable One,” unidentified newspaper, 18 March 1917, Kendall Scrapbook Collection 1:11, NBWM. Antone L. Silvia, with New Bedford merchant Loum Snow, built the bark *Veronica* to run as a packet between New Bedford and the “Western Islands” until it was lost in 1889; he then continued with the *Moses B. Tower* as a packet. See *Representative Men*, 3:1609–10.

62. Almeida et al., *Cape Verdeans in America*, 34. For a comprehensive listing of packet voyages arriving in New Bedford from Cape Verde, see Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 179–86.

to Providence and New Bedford.⁶³ By 1924 Joseph (José) Rosário Andrade, born on São Nicolau in 1894, saved enough money working as a farm in Little Compton, Rhode Island, to acquire the schooner *Brunhilde*, which he used in the packet trade. Andrade had left his native island on the whaling bark *Bertha* in 1912; when he was dropped off there two years later, he had twenty-four dollars in his pocket and used it to purchase passage to New Bedford. Andrade stated in an interview that after World War I it was customary for Cape Verdean men to return by packet to the islands to marry and return by packet with their wives.⁶⁴

Some historians pinpoint the beginning of the Cape Verdean packet trade to 1892, but evidence exists of vessels carrying passengers and freight between the islands and southeastern New England at least from the mid-1880s.⁶⁵ Many packets were aged whaling vessels; others were retired fishing schooners or coastwise merchant vessels. Hendrick Morse, whose furniture and hardware business supplied the packets, owned share in seven vessels in the packet trade. Early in his career, future whaling master John T. Gonsalves entered the packet trade as captain and part-owner of the Nantucket-registered schooner *Onward*. Relatively small at sixty-eight tons and seventy-two feet long, the *Onward* had room for nineteen passengers. It sailed to Cape Verde early in 1885 and returned from Brava that May. As it came into anchorage at New Bedford with passengers and a full load of freight, fifty people were found on board. He was taken to Boston to be arraigned, was indicted by a grand jury, and was found guilty in a federal circuit court trial. He was fined \$650, ordered to pay an additional \$154.15 in court costs, and was sentenced to three months in jail at Fitchburg. “The captain thinks he has to pay rather dear for what he says was a mistake in not knowing the law,” the *Boston Herald* reported.⁶⁶

John Zurich Silva entered the packet trade a decade after he left his native São Nicolau in 1876 as a cabin boy on a whaling vessel (whose captain taught him navigation). His first packet was the schooner *William E. Terry*, and Silva and Joseph da Costa later purchased the Gloucester schooner *Bounding Billow*, which he operated as a packet until its loss in 1894.⁶⁷ In 1916 the *New Bedford Morning Mercury*

63. Michael Platzer, “The Cape Verde Packet Trade: part 1,” *Sea History* 8 (Summer 1977): 19-21. “Last Whaler Will Not Resume,” *New Bedford Standard*, 19 July 1927, stated that a “dozen or 15 vessels” engaged in the packet trade between New Bedford and Cape Verde “a few years ago.” Joseph R. Andrade, interview (index only) with Marilyn Halter, Jack Custodio, and Ann Pinto (daughter), 1983, NEBE.

64. *New Bedford Standard-Times*, 7 Oct 1993. Andrade stated that he came to New Bedford each weekend to deposit his earnings in the New Bedford Institution for Savings. He later spent three years in the lighthouse service. By 1920 he had saved enough to purchase three West End homes, and within four years he was owner of the schooner *Brunhilde*.

65. Platzer, “Cape Verde Packet Trade,” dates the packet trade to Antonio Coelho’s 1892 acquisition of Newport fishing schooner *Nellie May* and its run to Cape Verde and back to Providence in that year.

66. *Ship Registers*, 3:130; *New York Times*, 21 May 1885. “A Sea-Captain in Trouble,” *Fall River Globe*, 20 May 1885, 1. See also “New Bedford,” *Fall River Daily Evening News*, 21 May 1885, 2; “United States Circuit Court,” *Boston Globe*, 30 May 1885, 5; “Court Calendar,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 30 May 1885, 8; “Court Calendar: United States Circuit Court,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 10 June 1885, 8; “Local Miscellany,” *Boston Journal*, 11 June 1885; “Sea Captain Sentenced,” *Boston Herald*, 16 June 1885, 3. “Local Miscellany,” *Boston Journal*, 16 June 1885, 5, put the total fine at \$764.

67. *Ship Registers*, 3:183.

gave a lively account of the difficulties that Silva and his crew encountered during that voyage:

He had taken his passengers from this port to the islands and taken on trade and a few passengers for the west coast of Africa. This was in 1894. He had made one previous trip to the river Mansoa, Portuguese Guinea, and on account of the unfriendliness of the Balanta [from the French, meaning “those who resist”] tribe the Portuguese government had a revenue cutter to convoy the Bounding Billow. On the second trip, the cutter was not available, and the government placed 11 soldiers on the Bounding Billow to protect Captain Silva’s vessel from the Balantas.

On getting into the river, the Bounding Billow was trying to get past the Balanta settlement to some friendly settlements up the Mansoa river, when the vessel grounded.

This was shortly before 9 o'clock in the morning, and the natives immediately they found the schooner was on a sand bar, began hostilities. The natives swarmed down to the shore, and began to cry out in the most horrible manner. They launched canoes, and starting for the stranded craft began to fire their guns and run out to try to take the craft by boarding. Captain Silva had 42 persons on board the Bounding Billow. He had ordered hot water heated when he saw the first signs of hostilities on the part of the natives. This water was used to good effect in the first assault and none of the Balantas were enabled to get on board. The first attack was repulsed, and the natives sought shelter on shore, but kept up a rapid fire on the vessel from 9 o'clock until after six at night. The soldiers who were armed with superior rifles picked the natives off as fast as they showed themselves, killing hundreds while only several on the Bounding Billow were wounded.

It was an exciting day’s work, and the poor passengers on board the Billow were half frightened to death, and when night fell it was decided to abandon the vessel, as the ammunition of the soldiers would last but a short time. The crew thought they might not be able to escape from the horrors of the natives who swarmed along the shore in thousands. So after dark that night, the crew and passengers left the Bounding Billow in five boats, and after a sharp skirmish with the natives, rowed up the river to a settlement of friendly savages a few miles away, where they remained seven days before the arrival of a revenue cutter to pick them up.

In a single day after the Bounding Billow had been abandoned, it was learned afterwards, she was literally torn to pieces, and everything taken from her to the native village.⁶⁸

Silva encouraged both his nephew, John L. Sousa, and son, Arthur S. Silva, to get involved in the packet trade. By the age of eighteen Sousa was already master of one of his uncle’s packet vessels. He continued in the trade for some forty years.⁶⁹ In 1921 Cape Verdean whaling master Benjamin Costa took out the bark *Greyhound*, in service since 1851, for its last whaling voyage. Both the *Greyhound* and Costa then entered the packet trade.⁷⁰ By 1927 the New Bedford schooner *John R. Manta*

68. *New Bedford Morning Mercury*, 10 Jun 1916.

69. Almeida et al., *Cape Verdeans in America*, 34.

70. Schooner *Yukon*, Costa, New Bedford, Arriving Crew List, New Bedford, NBFPL. In 1962 onetime outfitter Morris Sederholm seemed to recall the *Greyhound*’s 1918 voyage under A. C. Corvelho as its last or recalled the captain on its last whaling voyage in 1921 incorrectly: “She opened up while she was out to sea and when she came home, . . . Captain Corvelho . . . had her wrapped around with chains to hold her together. And when he brought her in, you couldn’t repair her anymore so we sold her to the Cape Verde trade, packets.”

became a Cape Verdean packet (fig. 11.8). In 1929 Roy Fernandes Teixeira and Abilio and Antonio Macedo organized the Cape Verde Island and West Africa Trading Corporation in New Bedford and acquired the *Coriolanus*, the largest of the packets and a former merchant vessel that carried jute between Calcutta and Great Britain.⁷¹ The packet trade to and from Cape Verde was not always solely financed by Cape Verdeans: Antone L. Silvia, according to his biography, “was also at one time financially interested in the Cape Verde trade, sending out vessels with merchandise and then returning with passengers.”⁷² Antone Edwards was master of the schooner *Burkeland* in the Cape Verdean packet trade in the early 1930s. Of all packet owners, Henriqué José Mendes remained in the trade the longest. Born on Fogo in 1880, Mendes came to New Bedford from Fogo on the schooner *Serpa Pinto* in May 1898 and was living in Providence by 1907. He was on Fogo but living in Marstons Mill on Cape Cod when he joined in the crew of the New Bedford whaling schooner *A. E. Whyland* in 1909. According to historian Michael Platzer, Mendes had already entered the packet trade by that point; in 1904 he arranged with a cranberry bog owner to bring



Fig. 11.8. The former whaling schooner *John R. Manta* as a Cape Verde packet, at dock in Providence, 1927–34. New Bedford’s last successful whaling voyage was the 1925 cruise of the *John R. Manta* under master and owner Antonio J. Mandly. In June 1927 Mandly sent master Joseph F. Edwards out in the vessel, but it returned to port heavily damaged by gales three weeks later. By the fall Mandly sold the *Manta* to Providence buyers, who entered it into the packet trade. The vessel was lost with all crew and passengers in the Atlantic in the winter of 1934-35. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

71. Roy F. Teixeira was for most of his life a law clerk and a realtor in Boston. Born in 1893 on Fogo, Cape Verde, he came from Brava to New Bedford in April 1910 on the *Charles G. Rice*, possibly a packet. Little is known of Macedo other than that Abilio Macedo was the president of the corporation.

72. *Representative Men*, 3:1609–10..

forty workers from Cape Verde for the harvest that fall. Mendes owned thirty vessels, including the former whaling schooner *William A. Grozier* and, after the Second World War, the fishing schooner *Effie Morrissey*, which he renamed the *Ernestina*, the best-known vessel in the later years of the packet trade.⁷³

The Neighborhoods

By 1915 the Portuguese immigrant population of New Bedford had reached 15,145 (table 11.2). Almost one in three of the Portuguese in Massachusetts resided in the city.⁷⁴ Settlement patterns changed after 1900. Contrary to the typical development of American industrial centers at the time, the city center from Purchase/Fourth Street west remained in the hands of the old-time inhabitants while those engaged in industrial work settled close to mills and factories that had taken up previously vacant land at the north and south ends of town. Before the 1890s Cape Verdeans and Azoreans largely shared the waterfront neighborhood between School Street on the north, the river on the east, and Howland Street on the south, but by that decade Azoreans began to move farther south and west of the original Little Fayal into Ward 6 (figs. 11.9–11.11). Directories and censuses list Azorean households along Potomska and Rivet streets, as far south as Cove Road, and west to Dartmouth Street. A bit later Portuguese people began to move into the North End, with Continentals and Madeirans most apt to settle there near the mills. Cape Verdeans continued to occupy the waterfront neighborhood south of Union Street and, particularly those who had married into African American families, the West End. Azorean former textile worker Joe Figuerido told an interview that there was “a ghetto of Cape Verdean within” the South End “ghetto.”⁷⁵ Frank C. Monteiro, born in New Bedford in 1917, described the boundaries of the South End Cape Verdean neighborhood of his childhood—“from School Street to maybe around [Grinnell]. Maybe another block over. But from School Street, that was the boundary. School Street—that was the end of the business district. We started there.”

I could walk around New Bedford after I got a little older, and nobody went past Purchase Street. I said, “Why?” The only time my mother went past Purchase Street was to go to the State Theater—there was a State Theater there—to see Carmen Miranda. That was her favorite. . . . I was a teenager, finally, when I realized how well those people past Purchase Street and County Street were living. They didn’t eat better than we did or have nice clothes and all that, but they did have a better life. The mothers never had to take in boarders.⁷⁶

Teresa Livramento Almeida, born in 1918, and her sister Florence, born in 1922, were the daughters of Jose Flores Livramento (1888–1991) and grew up on Griffin Street and Acushnet Avenue. In the 1920s, they recalled, the Cape Verdean neighborhood was effectively bounded on the north and south much as Monteiro stated—School to Grinnell Streets—and included South Water, South Second, and parts of Purchase, Pleasant, Walnut, and Madison streets. Julia Pina, born in New Bedford in 1921, had

73. Michael Platzer, “The Cape Verde Packet Trade: Part II,” *Sea History* 9 (Fall 1977): 27–30.

74. Out of a total population of 52,133 (Massachusetts State Census, 1915).

75. Quoted in Georgianna and Aaronson, *Strike of '28*, 26.

76. Frank C. Monteiro, interview with Ann Marie Lopes, 14 November 2009, NEBE.

Table 11.2. Portuguese Immigrant Population of New Bedford, 1855–1915

Year	Total Population	Portuguese	Percent
1855	20,389	196	>1
1875	25,895	832	3.2
1885	33,393	1445	4.3
1895	55,251	3861	7.0
1905	74,362	7352	9.9
1915	109,568	15,145	13.8

much the same sense of the neighborhood's boundaries. Cape Verdeans lived on School Street "right down to Grinnell Street" and on South Second, Walnut, and First Streets. To her, this neighborhood was not the South End. "I didn't have too much down the South End until I met my husband. That's when I used to go down South End. 'Course you go to South End when going to work. 'Cause most of the time we walked."⁷⁷ Teddy Morse Ramos, who was born in 1923 and grew up in his grandfather's house at 401 South Water, stated, "In that area there was nothing but Cape Verdean. It was

known as Rua de Agua." Julia Pina stated of Azoreans, "To tell you the truth, I never seen them. . . . Cape Verdeans all lived among themselves. . . . I don't remember no living around no nhambobs. They had their own place they did."⁷⁸ Most recall, and street directories confirm, that numerous business owned and operated by Jewish immigrants were south of Grinnell Street along with increasing numbers of Azoreans.

Certain Azorean institutions reinforced this sense of separation, among them Monte Pio Hall, which Azoreans built in 1889 at the corner of Acushnet Avenue and Howland Street (just south of Grinnell Street: see fig. 10.4). Monteiro recalled that Monte Pio Luzo American Club (not incorporated until 1932) "was a society filled with nhambobs, all the nhambobs. There was no Cape Verdeans there." But Florence and Teresa Almeida stated that some Cape Verdean functions took place at Monte Pio, which had three floors and could easily accommodate separate events. Monteiro and Pina recalled St. John the Baptist Church, built by Azoreans in 1875, as distinctly unwelcoming. It was "very prejudiced," Pina said; Monteiro stated that his family never attended the church. "Never wanted to, either. They didn't want us there in the beginning. They didn't want us at St. James Church." Monteiro added that St. Lawrence Church, built at the corner of County and Hillman Streets and dedicated in 1870, had a congregation largely of Irish descent. "They didn't want us at the church over here, too. A lot of Creoles joined that church, but all the Creoles that joined that church were light-skinned Creoles."

Coming from a culture with subtle ethnic distinctions based on social standing as well as gradations of skin color, Cape Verdeans coming to the United States found themselves in a culture in which individuals were arbitrarily defined as either "black" or "white." Diedre Meintel Machado has explained the dilemma:

Here the immigrant was expected to fit into one of two categories; black (Negro) or white. Not only bureaucrats but the society at large employed this binary system of

77. Florence and Teresa Almeida, interview with Laura Orleans, 12 October 2000, NEBE. Julia C. Pina, interview with Ann Marie Lopes, 15 November 2009, NEBE. Dorothy Lopes, born in 1938 and the daughter of New Bedford's last whaleman, Antonio Lopes, recalled the neighborhood of her childhood as South First, Front, and Grinnell Streets and Acushnet Avenue. Dorothy Lopes, interview with Don Warrin, 6 May 2009, NEBE.

78. Pina interview. "Nhambob" is a derogatory term used by Cape Verdeans to describe "white" Portuguese; it translates to "yam eater."

racial classification, one of whose corollaries is that an individual with any known African ancestry is to be classified as “Negro” no matter what his appearance. By American terms, the Cape Verdean could appropriately be assigned a social identity that . . . is a ‘stigmatized’ one; that is, an identity comprised of one or more attributes deeply discrediting to the one who holds it. Most importantly, it was an identity stigmatized in Cape Verdean terms as well, one that, if accepted, no matter how grudgingly could be an occasion of shame and self-denigration.

Many Cape Verdeans, when initially confronted with this choice, called themselves “white.” After all, in the Cape Verdes, “white” was as much a social as a racial designation. That is, a respectable person of color would be called “white” in many social contexts. Also, the term “Negro” in Crioulo is an odious racial slur meaning “nigger,” one that no Cape Verdean would willingly accept no matter what his or her color.

The Cape Verdean who called himself “Portuguese” and “white” found that those claims were not accepted by the white Portuguese, whose numbers were always substantially larger than those of Cape Verdeans in New England. Few Portuguese clubs would admit Cape Verdeans; the Portuguese congregations of Catholic churches were so hostile to Cape Verdeans that many of the latter converted to Protestant sects or, as in New Bedford, formed a new Catholic congregation of their own. The white Portuguese considered Cape Verdeans to be Africans, primarily because of color, and secondarily because of language and other cultural differences.⁷⁹

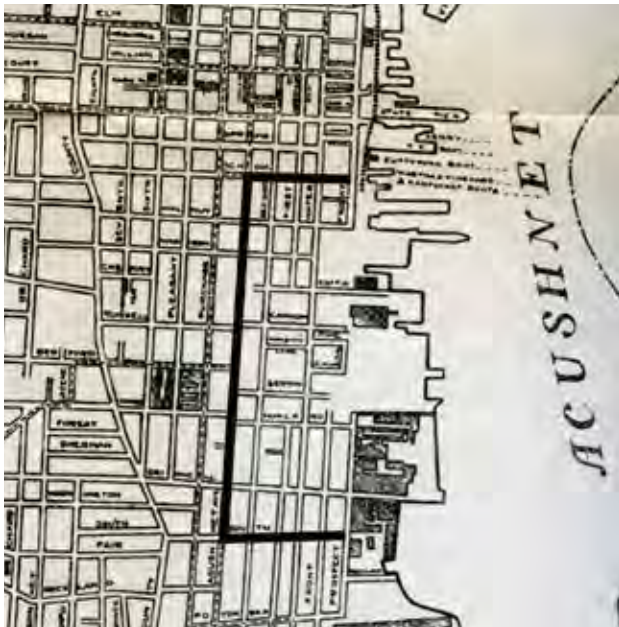


Fig. 11.9. The perceived boundaries of the South Central district, about 1920.

Sidney M. Greenfield has suggested that Cape Verdeans immigrants in New England tended to identify in one of four ways—Cape Verdean-Portuguese, Cape Verdean-Black, Cape Verdean-African, and Cape Verdean-American.⁸⁰ In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Cape Verdeans commonly identified themselves, at least outside the community, as Portuguese, and during the whaling era they were generally known as such aboard ship and upon their arrival in the United States. Greenfield has noted,

The older generations, going back to the first immigrants, when occasionally forced to face up to the problem in their limited interactions with non-Capeverdeans in New England had generally identified

79. Deidre A. Meintel Machado, “Cape Verdean Americans,” in Joan H. Rollins, ed., *Hidden Minorities: The Persistence of Ethnicity in American Life* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1981), 235–36.

80. Sydney Greenfield, “In Search of Social Identity: Strategies of Ethnic Identify Management Amongst Capeverdeans in Southeastern Massachusetts,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 13 (Summer 1976): 10.



Fig. 11.10. Howland Street, New Bedford, looking west between South Water and South Second Streets, probably about 1912. This view shows part of what was then a neighborhood of Azoreans and eastern European and Russian Jewish immigrants; Ahavath Achim synagogue was halfway down on the right. Souza's Café at right at 37 Howland Street was probably operated by liquor dealer Joseph L. Souza. A fish market was next door, and Sylvia's restaurant was further west on the other side of the street. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

themselves as Portuguese, seeking to share the identity established by immigrants from the Azores, Madeira and the Continent who were numerous in the region. To do this they spoke Portuguese rather than Creole in public situations, recognized the Portuguese flag and national anthem, and tried to join and participate in Azorean, Madeiran and Continental Portuguese clubs. They also avoided scrupulously whenever possible social relationships with Americans of color.⁸¹

In addition, emigrants to the United States from the Portuguese mainland and the Azorean and Madeiran archipelagos had long been classified as nonwhites, just as Portuguese immigrants (principally from Madeira, but also from São Miguel in the Azores) to Hawaii had been in the late nineteenth century; there the census classified them in a separate category from “whites.”⁸² Captain Alvin Mandly, grandson of Azorean whaling master Henry Mandly Sr. and the son of Captain Henry Mandly Jr., recognized this tendency. “My father, he wasn't very dark,” he commented. “When you say ‘Azorean,’ ‘Cape Verdean,’ a lot of people think, you know, means you're black. But

81. *Ibid.*, 8.



Fig. 11.11. South Water Street looking north from Grinnell Street toward the Cape Verdean South Central neighborhood, 3 November 1907. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

it isn't so and so like myself, I say I'm part Portuguese and people say, 'You're not!'"⁸³

Apparently due to such perceptions on the part of the host society Azoreans began to distance themselves from the Cape Verdean immigrant community. While many Cape Verdeans continued to think of themselves as Portuguese, the white Anglo and Azorean communities did make a relative distinction. Cape Verdeans were often consigned to more menial labor positions and excluded or at least not welcomed in their clubs and churches.

New Bedford Cape Verdeans, as Machado has noted, began in this period to establish their own organizations. In August 1905 Bishop William Stang of Fall River

82. Scholars have also tended to describe Azoreans as nonwhite. See, for example, Edward Byers, *The Nation of Nantucket: Society and Politics in an Early American Commercial Center, 1660–1820* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 298: "Portuguese from the Azores, Kanakas from the Sandwich Islands, and blacks from the mainland increased the community's population of 'free people of color' from 274 in 1820 to 571 in 1840." See also Briton Cooper Busch, *Whaling Will Never Do for Me*, 42: "Azoreans spoke Portuguese and were light enough in skin color to mix in white society."

83. Alvin Mandly, interview by Laura Orleans, New Bedford, 4 June 1999, Faces of Whaling Oral History Project, NEBE.

placed Father Stanislaw Bernard, of the Belgian order Sacred Hearts Fathers, in charge of “the spiritual care of all Catholics known as Cape Verdeans living in New Bedford.” Cape Verdeans acquired a former “missionary chapel” at 368 South Water Street and founded Our Lady of the Assumption Church, the first Cape Verdean Roman Catholic church in the nation (fig. 11.12).⁸⁴ Its name derives from the day of its purchase, the Feast of Our Lady on 15 August. Only twenty parishioners were present for the dedication of the church in 1905, but Our Lady of the Assumption soon became a focal point for the burgeoning local Cape Verdean community. It remained on South Water Street site until 1956. Its site was always susceptible to flooding, and after the 1954 hurricanes Carol and Edna the congregation began to make plans for a new sanctuary. Our Lady of the Assumption was dedicated on South Sixth Street in 1956. The old South Water Street sanctuary was razed during urban renewal in the late 1960s.⁸⁵

Other institutions designed for the population’s benefit and enrichment soon followed. In 1916 Cape Verdean men created the Gremio Social Caboverdeano



Fig. 11.12. Congregation in front of Our Lady of Assumption Church, South Water Street, undated photograph. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

84. The 1871 New Bedford plate for this area in the Bristol County Atlas show the building at the northeast corner of South Water and Leonard Streets as South Chapel, and the directory for that year describes it as a “missionary chapel” with 150 scholars. The 1911 New Bedford atlas identifies the building only as “Cath. Ch.” Our Lady of the Assumption is not cited in city directories until 1917. Arnold de Rijcke, who had been assistant priest at St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church, was its pastor in 1918. See Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 148.



Fig. 11.13. The Cape Verdean Beneficent Association, 163 Walnut Street, the former William R. Wing mansion, undated photograph by A. Oliveira. Courtesy Oliveira Photograph Collection, New Bedford Free Public Library.

(renamed the Cape Verdean Beneficent Association, or Associação Beneficente Caboverdeana, in 1920), which provided modest death and disability benefits to its members through a one-dollar assessment on each member upon the death of one of their number (fig. 11.13).⁸⁶ In 1917 some thirty Cape Verdeans founded the Cape Verdean Ultramarine Band Club, whose seventeen-member marching band played at funerals, marriages, baptisms, and parades in other places; its hall survives at 185 Acushnet Avenue, at the corner of Bedford Street.⁸⁷ São Vicente native Joaquim A. Santos was among the founders of both the band club and the beneficent association. With his wife Josefa Santos had run boardinghouses in New Bedford since 1910—Antonio Lopes lived at their 287 Acushnet Avenue boardinghouse for ten years—and had lived most of his life in his South Central neighborhood. Santos also managed Hathaway Mill's Portuguese Cricket Club, made up of Cape Verdeans (fig. 11.14).⁸⁸

In 1939–41 Bay Village, twenty-two brick buildings with nearly two hundred units meant for working-class

85. Records of the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, OLOA "Church Records." During one flooding incident it is said that the priest and some of the altar boys had to swim across South Water Street to rescue the church's sacred items. The Spinner photographic archive includes photographs showing members on this rescue mission and other members of the congregation cleaning the church after one of the 1954 hurricanes (STC-D 00505 and 00588).

86. In 1931 membership was opened to women. Papers of the Cape Verde Beneficent Association, Incorporated, Joaquim A. Santos Collection, NBFPL; OLOA Church Records. On the association's purchase of the Wing mansion see "Brave Ocean's Perils in Craft Smaller than Mayflower of Pilgrims," *Boston Herald*, 10 April 1921, 14.

87. Wesley Sykes, "Cape Verdean Ultramarine Band Club Turns 100 on Saturday," *South Coast Today*, 24 August 2017, <https://www.southcoasttoday.com/news/20170824/cape-verdean-ultramarine-band-club-turns-100-on-saturday>. Frank Monteiro stated that the building had once been a granary and that a music professor "from the old country . . . taught the kids, all the kids, how to play." Monteiro interview.

88. Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 157, notes that the cricket club developed chiefly among men from São Vicente, who had learned the game from men who worked at a British coaling station on the island.



Fig. 11.14. The Hathaway Mill Cricket Club with the silver trophies from its 1909 and 1910 championships. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

families, was built between Walnut Street on the north and Grinnell Street on the south and covered the block between South Second Street and Acushnet Avenue. In all 115 buildings were torn down, including Monte Pio Hall, for the housing development. For Julia Pina Bay Village was a marvel, as the house she had grown up in was lit by kerosene lamps and had neither electricity nor hot water, and though Bay Village was a social hub for Cape Verdeans it had obliterated almost all of their historic core of settlement in the city. Nearly thirty years later the core of the South End Azorean neighborhood was taken for urban renewal and the construction of Route 18, the “downtown connector” from Interstate 195, in the mid- to late 1960s (fig. 11.15).

The War, Immigration Law, and the End of Whaling

The years immediately preceding the First World War were highly productive for several of the relatively small number of vessels that sailed from New Bedford. In August 1915, after a voyage of three and a half years, the schooner *Cameo*, under the command of Azorean John T. Edwards, returned with 5300 barrels of sperm oil in 1916. The following year Captain Antone T. Edwards, John T. Edwards's brother, returned in the bark *Wanderer* with 5300 barrels, and the bark *Arthur V. S. Woodruff*, with Joseph Luis and George F. Tilton as masters, brought 5090 barrels of sperm



Fig. 11.15. A former boardinghouse at 57–61 Howland Street before urban renewal, mid-1960s. From about 1910 to at least 1920 Azorean Anthony E. Rose owned the building, ran a grocery store at 57 Howland, as a storefront on the building indicates, and lived in a dwelling built on the back of the lot. Five other Azorean families rented here, and the block was almost entirely composed of Azorean immigrants and their children. By 1932 Manuel B. Mello and ran a grocery store in the building, by then probably a boardinghouse. Ahavath Achim's original synagogue had been just next door to the east. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

oil into port. Such yields were far higher than any other in New Bedford whaling between 1895 and 1925. But World War I and the constant threat of German U-Boat aggression placed a significant dent in both whaling and immigration. During the war immigration fell to nearly one-tenth the one million persons who had immigrated to the United States each year before the war. The looming prospect of vessel and crew loss reduced New Bedford whaling voyages to only six in 1914, eight in 1915, and eleven in 1916.

But in 1917 the American whaling fleet demonstrated the same hubris it had shown during the Civil War by sending out into the Atlantic eleven vessels on seventeen voyages, thirteen of which departed after the American declaration of war

against Germany on 6 April. Generally the New Bedford vessels were fortunate, but everyone on the whaling brig *Viola*, which sailed from New Bedford in September 1917 under Faial native Joseph Luis (1875–1918), who had brought along his wife Laura and daughter Dorothy, were lost with the ship, possibly due to a storm or a U-boat encounter.

In 1918, with the country still at war, twelve whaling vessels departed New Bedford, all of which returned safely and generally with good catches. Seven of these vessels were commanded by Azoreans and two by Cape Verdeans.⁸⁹ Two schooners—the *A. M. Nicholson*, under John T. Gonsalves (see fig. 10.1), and the *Ellen A. Swift*, commanded by George L. Dunham, the only captain in that year's fleet not of Portuguese descent—were both accosted by a German submarine in June 1918. Some years later Gonsalves looked back on the incident:

The submarine glided alongside the *Nicholson* and then shot across my bows. I gave him the American flag but he didn't answer and submerged. I thought he was an American craft, but when he submerged without answering my flag I grew suspicious, and when he went down I went to the south'ard to try to get out of his way. I had not sailed very far when up came the submarine again, and I gave him the American flag again.

This time the submarine gave me back the German flag with another flag beneath it, and ordered us to heave to at once. He gave us a gun across our bows to emphasize the fact that he wanted us to stop, and we were not long in going into the wind, and dropping our boats. We put all our crew, some 25 men into two whaleboats, and according to instructions, pulled alongside the submarine, after pulling alongside our vessel for some time. We didn't take time to let the sails down, thinking that we might get a shot or a torpedo any minute.

The submarine steamed alongside my boats, and her captain sang out: "What is your vessel doing?"

"Catching sperm whales," I replied.

"Catching any other fish?" he asked me, and I told him we were not.

"For God's sake, captain," I said, "don't sink this vessel, I am a poor man and it will ruin me, as I am a big owner in her."

With that, the officer, and I think he was the mate, laughed, and said he would report to the captain. He saluted another officer who proved to be the captain, who hailed me, and said, "Don't you know that it is a poor time to buy vessel property when people are at war?"

"I bought this craft before the war started," I answered.⁹⁰

Gonsalves indeed had recently

purchased a one-quarter share in the vessel, and he also had more than six hundred barrels of valuable sperm oil aboard.⁹¹ Evidently the U-boat commander was not aware of the value of the schooner's cargo. Additionally, when he noted Gonsalves's accent and discovered that he was Portuguese, the commander softened his attitude

89. Luis was referred to at various times by some combination of his Portuguese name, "José Luis" and his American, "Joseph Lewis." "Joseph Luis" seems to have been the most common; Logbook index file 811 A-H, ODHS; Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels*, 44. A cenotaph marking the loss at sea of the Luis (Lewis) family and the crew of the *Viola* was installed at New Bedford's Seamen's Bethel by Laura Luis's sister, Amelia Nansett Trask.

90. *New Bedford Morning Mercury*, 15 March 1928.

91. Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels*, 44.

and began to praise these people as great mariners. At that point, Gonsalves recalled,

The German captain caught sight of the *Ellen A. Swift*, Captain Dunham, whaling a little ways from me and he asked me what the craft was, and what she was doing. I told him it was a whaler, like us, and he waved his hand at me, and said, “You get aboard your vessel, and get home as quick as you can, and tell the other vessel to go in with you, and don’t you let me catch you out this way again.”

Well, you can believe that I didn’t stop to whale it any more. I spoke the *Swift* the next day, and we came home together. After leaving me, the submarine made over towards the *Swift*, and just as she was about to speak that whaler she sighted a big steamer (supposed to have been the Norwegian steamer sank last Wednesday), and leaving the *Swift* she went over and sank the steamer. The *Swift* and the *Nicholson* kept company and came in together.⁹²

Soon after returning to New Bedford Gonsalves sold his share in the *A. M. Nicholson*.⁹³

The year 1919 was the last in which a relatively substantial number of whaling voyages left New Bedford. Of the fourteen sailings that year, seven were commanded by Cape Verdeans and four by Azoreans. It was not a felicitous season, however, as three of the vessels were lost, two of them at sea with no survivors—the schooners *Ellen A. Swift*, George L. Dunham; and the *Pedro Varela*, Frank M. Lopes.⁹⁴

The decline of the industry was coincident not only with the world war but with immigration restrictions that curtailed Portuguese and other immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. For decades whaling vessels had sometimes also carried immigrants, and some passengers from the Azores and Cape Verde worked off the expense of the trip by serving as seamen during a voyage. In addition, some vessel masters categorized passengers as crew. In 1900 Hendrick W. Morse, then captain of bark *Swallow*, was indicted in a Massachusetts court for carrying passengers from the Azores on a vessel not lawfully equipped to carry them.⁹⁵ On 8 June 1903 Cape Verdean master Joseph Gaspar returned from São Vicente in Cape Verde to New Bedford in the whaling schooner *Pilgrim* with a crew of twenty-three, a “cabin list” of thirty-four, and no manifest for either crew or passengers. The *Fall River Daily Evening News* remarked that the crew seemed “remarkably large,” and Gaspar stated that he had needed a crew of that size to whale for sperm and blackfish oil, consigned to vessel agent and owner Antone L. Silvia. Gaspar tried to compose a manifest on the spot, but immigration officials refused to accept it, and as a consequence “the whole invoice of Portuguese were anxiously wondering whether they will be transported back to their native island of St. Vincent before touching foot on American soil.”⁹⁶

92. Ibid.; Daniel M. Rodrigues, interview by Laura Orleans, New Bedford, MA, 13 August 1999, “Faces of Whaling”; Daniel M. Rodrigues, personal communication.

93. *Ship Registers*, 3:2.

94. Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels*, 45.

95. “All Indicted,” *Boston Globe*, 13 December 1900, 1.

96. “Manifest is Lacking,” *Fall River Daily Evening News*, 9 June 1903, 5. By 12 June local Cape Verdeans had vouched for and secured the release of all but seven of the passengers, and the next day a Providence man arrived to claim Anna Maria Soares as his new wife and claimed the two children who had accompanied her as well. See “Local Lines,” *Fall River Globe*, 12 June 1903, 8, and “New Bedford,” *Fall River Daily Herald*, 13 June 1903, 6. On its next voyage in July 1903, the *Pilgrim* was lost near Cape Verde in September of the same year.

Beginning in the midst of the war the United States Congress sought to limit immigration by law. In 1917 an immigration act required that all immigrants older than sixteen “physically capable of reading” pass a reading and writing test unless they sought to escape religious persecution. In 1921 the Emergency Quota Act laid out the first numerical limits on immigrants who could enter the United States based on their national proportion of United States population in 1890, before large-scale emigration of southern and eastern Europeans. The 1924 National Origins Act made these quotas permanent and was not altered until 1965. Aliens arriving in the country as crewmen aboard commercial vessels had to be listed on the ship’s manifest and were not permitted to land unless they intended to reshipe shortly. In August 1924 the whaling schooner *Margarett* under Azorean master Joseph F. Edwards returned to New Bedford with three hundred barrels of oil and twenty people on board, sixteen of whom were aliens. Like other vessels without appropriate manifests, the schooner—“still leaking considerably,” the *Mercury* noted—had to remain quarantined in New Bedford’s outer harbor until the fate of its passengers was determined.⁹⁷ Outfitter Morris Sederholm recalled the efforts to circumvent these restrictions in the early 1920s:

What we used to do, we used to sail out of New Bedford with a skeleton crew, just the mate and the officers, steward and cook. Then they’d either go to Cape Verde Islands or the West Indies and they’d sign on a crew there of raw material. The only way those fellows could have of getting to the United States was on a whaler. There were no steamers that went to those ports. They had no money to buy passage to go anywheres else to take a steamer. The only way they could come to the United States was on a whaler. So those were the fellows who acted as seamen. . . . They used to go out in boats and catch a whale or two during the year or something like that, so they knew quite a bit. So in that way we used to get crews cheap and on the other hand they used to come to, get here to the United States. And the immigration laws were lax then much more so than they are today so when they used to come here . . . I used to take them all up to the immigration office and have them all registered and pay three dollars a head to permit them to land in the United States, with the provision that they were to ship out again on the next available ship. But of course a lot of them once they got here, they disappeared.

One 1926 newspaper article made clear that after whaling, and almost certainly before, packet vessels also attempted to skirt immigration laws in this way:

The failure of the immigration authorities to keep a finger on the aliens coming to this country from the Cape Verde Islands is again a topic of criticism. Since the law was passed scores of ineligibles have taken “French leaves,” if the term can be employed to the Cape Verdean exodus.

Late in June the Portuguese bark *Lima* arrived with nine passengers and a crew of 29 men. The vessel was held for awhile because the owners could not produce the money with which to pay port dues. Finally the charges were paid and the immigration authorities admitted the passengers, but held the entire crew, none of whom were entitled to admission to the country.

On July 19, 15 of the crew deserted the ship. They were captured enroute to Wareham and were sent to Boston for detention until the car was ready to sail. Capt. Duarte said he could keep the other 14 aboard his ship.

97. “Schooner *Margarett* Back From Cruise: Whaler Has 16 Aliens Aboard—Brings Back 300 Barrels Oil,” *Mercury*, 25 August 1924.

Nothing developed until this week, when the howling of a dog annoyed Fairhaven people. There was a suspicion that the dog was lonesome and upon investigation it was found there was nobody aboard the vessel. The owners are liable to a fine of \$14,000 for this affair and about \$10,000 for the previous escape, the fines being \$1000 for each desertion.

The vessel will not sell for anything like this amount. A schooner which sold for \$500 recently was unable to satisfy fines of \$1000 for aliens who had escaped. It is believed that many of these tremendous crews pay passage money on the chance of escaping after arrival at the United States. The crews often outnumber the passengers three to one, and there could be no profit in the business otherwise.⁹⁸

The *New Bedford Standard* noted in July 1927 that six packets, at least three of them former whaling schooners, had arrived in the city that year, and the only one to turn a profit was the *William A. Graber*, nonetheless returning “in bad shape with a bottom of worm eaten planks.” Of the others, the former whaler *A. M. Nicholson* was to return to Cape Verde and was not expected to return with cargo and passengers to New Bedford that year; the *Fannie Belle Atwood* and the *Blossom* were en route to the islands and thought unlikely to return to the United States at all.⁹⁹

Sailing with an insufficient crew plagued many whaling vessels in these years, none more dramatically than the bark *Wanderer*. On 25 August 1924, the bark was towed out into Buzzards Bay and anchored while Antone Edwards, on his seventh voyage as master of the vessel, went ashore with a mate to recruit more men for the crew (fig. 11.16). According to the *New Bedford Mercury* and crew lists, there were twelve in the crew, and Edwards hoped to bring their number “up to the desired complement of 32.” Of the twelve crew members, six were listed on no earlier whaling crew list. By the next day a gale was blowing, and the bark began to drag her anchor. Without a sufficient number of men to manage the vessel in such a condition, the *Wanderer* ended up on the rocks on Sow and Pigs Reef off the island of Cuttyhunk.¹⁰⁰

In 1927 only the schooner *John R. Manta*, under Azorean masters Joseph F. Edwards and the aged Antone J. Mandly, left New Bedford on a whaling voyage. The *New Bedford Mercury* reported,

Whalemen, to sail on lays, are hard to procure these latter days of whaling in the old fashioned way, and thus far Captain Mandly has been enabled to procure but four men who are willing to make the voyage on lays. But he has enough to man the

98. See untitled clipping from unidentified newspaper, Kendall Scrapbooks 1:57 and “Round up 12 Alien Sailors on Shore,” *Boston Herald*, 21 July 1926, 18. The *Herald* noted that immigration inspector John G. Hagberg had “called the captains of the packets in port together and told them they would have to stop bringing ships to this port with overheavy crews.”

99. “Last Whaler Will Not Resume/Voyage Cut Short for Repairs/Owners of Schooner John R. Manta Decide Not to Refit Vessel—Dwindling of Profits Under Immigration Law Believed to Indicate Doom of Packet Trade,” *New Bedford Standard*, 19 July 1927.

100. See “Wanderer,” *New York Herald-Tribune*, reprinted in *Mercury*, 26 August 1924: “The whaling bark *Wanderer*, A. Edwards master and owner, is fitting out at New Bedford for what may be the last of the old style whaling voyages ever to be sailed. The departure of a whale ship has already become, in a harbor whose wharves ten years ago were still soaked in whale oil, one of the rarest of events; and when a year or so from the present the *Wanderer*'s topsails are again sighted coming up Buzzards Bay it will very probably be the closing page of one of the greatest chapters in that kind of American history which is so inadequately written.” According to the *Mercury* of the same day, between two and three hundred people stood at Pier 3 to watch the *Wanderer*—the last square-rigged whaling vessel in port—leave.



Fig. 11.16. Crew of the bark *Wanderer* on sailing day, 25 August 1924, as the vessel is towed from New Bedford harbor, photograph by William H. Tripp. First mate J. A. Gomes is standing fourth from left; Captain Antone Edwards, flanked by guests, is at center in the suit and fedora. According to New Bedford newspapers, there were twelve in the crew when it sailed. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

small craft as far as the Cape Verde islands, where it is possible to procure a crew of Portuguese sailors.

Heretofore a whaler has never sailed from New Bedford without at least enough sailors to man a single whaleboat, and in the olden days it would have been considered sacrilegious to have sighted a whale and not been able to lower for the creature.

But up to yesterday all the sailors Captain Mandly could induce to go on the voyage of the *Manta*, was just the four men, and he will not pay the comparative big seaman's wages demanded. At the islands it is expected that enough men can be procured to man at least two whaleboats which will take 12 men, and there are a few good boatsteerers laying around the small colony of the islands who will no doubt be willing to go to sea once more rather than lay off at the rather dull islands where there is no work.¹⁰¹

101. "Sails Bent on Whaling Schooner J. R. *Manta*: Will Sail for the Cape Verde Islands to Recruit a Crew to Go to Coast of Africa After Blackfish Oil and Sperm Oil—A Four-Man Crew," *Morning Mercury*, 8 June 1927.

The *Mercury* reported that an unnamed “local Portuguese club” had criticized “the habits of the whaling vessels going to the Cape Verde islands and procuring men and bringing them to this country, where the men were often left on their own resources” as well as “the low wages paid to such seamen.” The newspaper noted, however, that immigration law stipulated that all seamen brought from the island had to be returned there by the vessel that carried them to the United States, or the vessel captain had to post bond that those seamen would at some point be provided return passage. But less than a month after it left New Bedford the *Manta* returned, having been battered by Atlantic gales and leaking. In August 1927 Mandly sold the *John R. Manta* to Providence men who planned to run the schooner as a packet; it was lost en route to Brava with all its thirty-two crew members and passengers in 1934.

At least one more whaling voyage was attempted from New Bedford under Cape Verdean master John da Lomba. In 1926 master and part-owner of the *William A. Graber* in 1920 and first mate of the *Graber's* 1922 voyage (fig. 11.17), Lomba and Joseph M. Andrade bought the schooner *Blossom*, built in 1920 and formerly registered in Charleston, South Carolina, and used it in the packet trade. In 1927 New Bedford oil refiner and merchant John W. Peak tried to convince Lomba to put the vessel “back to whaling for a short while” because the scarcity of watch oils had driven up the price of blackfish oil:

The *Blossom* is now a Cape Verde Island packet, and sailed for Brava, C.V.I., with a cargo of general merchandise and three passengers. Capt. Lomba has sailed from this port on many whaling voyages as mate of vessels commanded by the late Capt. Benjamin D. Cleveland. . . . After Capt. Cleveland died Capt. Lomba went on an exploring expedition as sailing master and navigator of the *Blossom* for a western museum. When the schooner returned last year Capt. Lomba purchased her and put her in the packet trade to the islands. While in the islands last winter he made a trading trip to the west coast of South Africa from Brava, and on his way saw a quantity of blackfish. This fact became known to Mr. Peak.

Capt. Lomba has just sailed on the start of his voyage for blackfish and a strange whaling voyage it will be. In the spring of this year the whaling schooner *John R. Manta* started out on what was to be the last whaling voyage from this port. She was going to the Cape Verde Islands to get a crew and then go after sperm whales and blackfish off the coast of South Africa. She came back after being out a few weeks leaking, was sold to the Bravas and is now a Brava packet, and only recently sailed on her first trip across as such.¹⁰²

Before he left New Bedford da Lomba needed to buy new gear and was able to find all he needed except harpoons, the *Boston Herald* noted:

He went, in his extremity to a second hand store at the head of Merrill's wharf and found that the souvenir hunters had cleaned this dealer out of all his whaling irons except one old lance. He went to other places, but couldn't get hold of a single harpoon, and so, he will start one of the strangest whaling voyages ever attempted.

No whaling craft ever went to sea from this port with less than five or six dozen harpoons, for often a whale is lost with that number that have been hurled into him. . . . Capt. Lomba, just before sailing, said he would head the boat himself, and do the harpooning.

102. “3 Harpoons in Whaler Outfit,” *Boston Herald*, 20 November 1927, 15.

How much luck da Lomba initially had on the *Blossom's* whale and blackfish hunt is not known: the vessel was lost, at Bijol, Cape Verde, on 7 February 1930.

Nostalgia

Even before the industry had ceased to operate out of the city, whaling was memorialized in New Bedford. The New Bedford Whaling Museum was founded as part of Old Dartmouth Historical Society in 1903. About the same time former and active whaling captains had begun to meet to share stories around the stove at their Chronometer Club, first at the whaling bomb gun and lance shop of Frank Brown, then at Samuel Horvitz's outfitting store at the corner of Second and Union streets (fig. 11.18). These informal gatherings led to the formation of the New Bedford Whalemens' Club. Chartered in 1921, its goal was to keep alive the spirit of whaling and its traditions. James A. Tilton was its first "captain," and John T. Edwards, whose last voyage was as master of the *John R. Manta* in 1907, was "first mate" and secretary. Edwards was the only Azorean among the club's seven officers, though Azoreans including Joseph F. Edwards were members; Joseph F. Edwards was also a member of Old Dartmouth Historical Society. The club had hoped to secure the bark *Charles W. Morgan*, built in 1841 and a whaling vessel for eighty years, to function as a floating museum in the harbor, but in 1941 the *Morgan* sailed from the South Dartmouth estate of Edward H. R. Green to its final home at Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut. Five years later the Whalemens' Club ceased its meetings. Nicholas R. Vieira Jr. (1898–1985), whose Flores-born father had been master of New Bedford whaling bark *Canton II* on three voyages just after the turn of the century, was among the club's last captains.

The creation of the Whaleman's Statue, dedicated on 20 June 1913 on the lawn in front of New Bedford Free Public Library, illustrates how nostalgia for the glory days



Fig. 11.17. John da Lomba and Old Dartmouth Historical Society curator William H. Tripp grinding spades on the schooner *William A. Graber*, 1922. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

of the industry obscured its reality (fig. 11.19). New Bedford attorney and federal representative William Wallace Crapo (1830–1926), a founding member of Old Dartmouth Historical Society, announced that he wished to create a memorial "in honor of the whalemens whose skill, hardihood, and daring brought fame and fortune to New Bedford and made its name known in every seaport on the globe" and that he had urged sculptor Bela H. Pratt "to design a model of a bronze figure of a boatsteerer throwing a harpoon from the bow of a whaleboat."



Fig. 11.18. New Bedford whaling masters at Horvitz Outfitters Store, about 1921. First row, left to right: Samuel Horvitz (kneeling), Capt. Henry Mandly Sr., Capt. Henry Mandly Jr., Capt. Joseph A. Vieira, Capt. James F. Avery, Capt. George W. Smith. Second row, left to right: Capt. Joseph H. Senna, Capt. Antonio C. Corvello, Capt. James A. Tilton, Capt. Andrew A. Cory, Capt. Antone J. Mandly, Capt. Antone T. Edwards, and two unknown. Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Pratt sought to be exact about the work: he had a whaleboat and a harpoon that both seen service measured, photographed, and drawn and asked outfitters still working in the city how to represent the boatsteerer. “I must have a real boatsteerer, a man who has himself been long familiar with the harpoon,” Pratt is quoted to have said. More than one outfitter, including Augustus G. Moulton of the whaling firm J. and W. R. Wing, recommended a Cape Verdean man, as they had for decades been most apt to occupy that position in a whaleboat. According to the *Evening Standard*, Crapo aimed “to commemorate and typify the New Bedford whaleman, not as a reminiscence, but as a living human being.” But he also wanted “to typify the early Yankee courage that sent New Bedford’s sailors across all the oceans of the world. . . . the type made famous in ‘Moby Dick’ and other stories of the sea.” The *Morning Mercury* stated that men such as Melville’s Queequeg, Daggoo, or Tashtego “are not typical of the glorious host of whalers who made the fame of New Bedford. . . . The whalers of yesteryear, whom the sculptor honors and perpetuates, is the Native born . . . young men athirst for gain and glory in the fishery.”¹⁰³



Fig. 11.19. Dedication of the Whaleman Statue, New Bedford, 20 June 1913. Courtesy Spinner Publications.

Ultimately the sculptor's model was Richard L. McLachlan, a native of New Zealand who lived in New Bedford through the 1910s; according to the memorial's dedication booklet, McLachlan had begun his career at sea in the merchant service and by 1885 was a boatsteerer on vessels probably sailing from San Francisco. He was employed as a boatsteerer and fourth mate by the New Bedford whaling firm J. and W. R. Wing, which also operated in San Francisco, for a decade. McLachlan shipped from New Bedford twice, in 1908 as second mate on the *Alice Knowles* under James A. M. Earle, and in 1911 as first mate on the schooner *Valkyria*, which was his last voyage; he left the ship in Faial.¹⁰⁴ On the raised speakers' platform with Crapo, the sculptor, and New Bedford's other civic and political leaders were two former

103. "The Presentation of the Whaleman Statue to the City of New Bedford by William W. Crapo and the Exercises at the Dedication June Twentieth Nineteen Hundred and Thirteen," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches* 38 (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1913), 11.

104. "Presentation of the Whaleman Statue," 30, 39–41. McLachlan is shown on the crew list for the *Alice Knowles* but not for the *Valkyria*; he may have joined the ship at another port.

whaling captains, Ezra B. Lapham and Thomas H. Jenkins, but not one among the many Portuguese Atlantic islanders and other non-Yankees whose labor, capital, and mastery had kept the industry alive for most of its last four decades, and still were keeping it alive, was represented on that platform.¹⁰⁵

105. "Presentation of the Whaleman Statue," 13–14. New Bedford crew lists and ship registers indicate that Ezra Bates Lapham of Dartmouth (1843–1918) was never a whaling master out of New Bedford but was master of bark *Alice Knowles* when it sailed from San Francisco in the mid-1890s. Dartmouth native Thomas H. Jenkins (1846–1916) went to sea at the age of sixteen on ship *James Arnold* in 1862 and served in ten whaling crews through 1910. He was master of the barks *Sea Fox* (1878), *Gay Head II* (1882), *Bertha* (1887 and 1891), *Kathleen* (1901), and *Wanderer* (1910), his last voyage.

APPENDIX A

DESIGN AND USE OF THE PROJECT DATABASE

Michèle Hayeur Smith and Russell G. Handsman

The study of ethnic communities of whaling, both at sea and on land, requires a research approach that integrates and links biographies focused on whalers, their families, and households to quantitative analyses of patterns and trends. These approaches were facilitated in this study through the design, construction, and use of several databases: one focused on the lives of whalers and those who worked in related shoreside industries, their families, and households in New Bedford; a second consisted of data collected from comprehensive samples of crew lists for New Bedford-based voyages in 1845, 1855, 1865, and 1875 (see tables 1.1 & 1.2); and a third documented the voyages of Indian whalers between 1825 and 1925. Each database was built from textual and numeric information gathered from different archival resources and entered, using a consistent approach to data entry, into Microsoft Access (2003, 2007). This appendix describes the design or structure of the project's databases and explores how these resources contributed to the current study of New Bedford's ethnic whalers.

Database Design and Construction

Databases are collections of information and the procedures used to access and analyze that data. Like any research method, databases need to be carefully designed

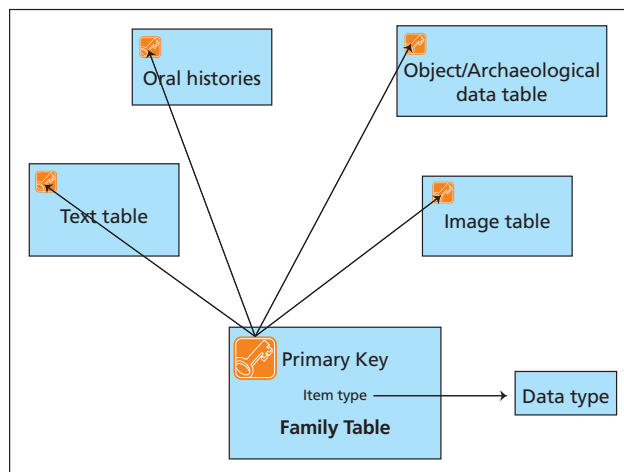


Fig. A.1. Overall design of project database.

to ensure that relevant information is collected and entered into specified fields in order to create a series of records that, in this project, are about selected city residents, a vessel's whaling crew, or a group of ethnic whalers. To create the project's different databases, a series of four tables were designed (table A.1), only two of which, the family table and the text table, were actively used in this study.¹ The family table included a primary key—that is, a sequential number assigned automatically—that uniquely identifies each record in

1. The content of each table, its textual or numeric fields, were modeled after a database approach used by researchers at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center to study communities of color (mixed ancestry) in southeastern Connecticut.

Table A.1. Contents of Person-Family-Household Database

Archive or Data Set	Source	# Entries	Contents
1861 John Milton Earle's 1859–60 lists	Earle's 1861 report	1309	Wampanoag and other Native peoples living in or connected to New Bedford whaling
1850 federal census	Grover work sheets	1002	Primarily people of color, including mariners and their families
1860–1900 federal censuses	Ancestry.comWarrin work sheets	1184	Additional entries on Portuguese whalers, Indians, and blacks in New Bedford
1880 federal census	Ancestry.com	379	Primarily Portuguese whalers and related industries in Districts 106, 110–117
1900 federal census	Ancestry.com	459	Includes Indian, "Blacks" (including 79 of Portuguese ancestry), and 269 other Portuguese in districts 183, 188–207
1920 federal census	Ancestry.com	425	Includes residents from all ethnic groups in districts 108–118, 137–144, 153–163, 217–219, 224, 227, 229, and 231
1860 federal census	Ancestry.com	915	Includes those of Portuguese ancestry (mariners, shore-side) and others living in boardinghouse settings
	TOTALS:	5,673	

each database. Records are linked to individual's names; the same individual can be associated with multiple records in the same database or in different ones.

The text table (and its associated entry form) was the essential space for gathering data and consists of three sets of fields—those describing the primary or secondary sources from which information was collected and entered (n=18, table A.3), those used to record data about the named person and his or her household (n=14 fields, table A.4), and a third set for entering information about specific individuals' whaling voyages (n=18 fields). Put another way, the first set of fields functions bibliographically, identifying the source of the data, while the other fields "capture" and present the actual information. The number of fields (or attributes) completed for each record depends upon the source or document type. For example, a record based upon a federal census might include upwards of twenty entries across different fields, while a crew list might require only twelve and fifteen entries. The numbers of actual entries (and thus keystrokes) can add up. In the project data base devoted to New Bedford residents who worked as whalers or in shoreside industries, the 5,600+ records actually represent a minimum of 112,000 entries while the 11,000+ records in the four crew list databases are populated by more than 130,000 entries. Likely a total of 250,000 field entries were made to create the project's six databases.

2. Earle's report contains a partial census of those living in ancestral communities on the Cape and Martha's Vineyard, in Plymouth and Bristol counties, and in enclaves and elsewhere in New Bedford and its environs. All these data were entered including those for individuals (men and women) who did not make a living as mariners in 1860, although they may have been whalers in their youth.

The Person-Family-Household Database

Given this project's focus on New Bedford's ethnic communities of whaling from 1825 to 1925, it was critical to collect and analyze data on city residents who were involved in whaling or closely related shoreside industries. Among the key resources were federal census records from 1850 onwards, accessible through www.ancestry.com, and the research notes of Kathryn Grover and Don Warrin from their earlier studies of the 1850 and 1860 censuses. In addition, data from John Milton Earle's 1861 study of Massachusetts Indians were entered.² Table A.1 summarizes the current content of the person-family-household database. The 1880, 1900, and 1920 censuses were sampled by searching for individuals and households from appropriate ethnic groups (identifiable from birthplace information) who were making a living as mariners or whalers or by working in a related shoreside industry. A list of relevant occupations used in the search appears in Table A.2.

By March 2009 an "almost final" version of the person-family-household database was available in three parts, each produced by a different research assistant. Those three parts were integrated into a single database which was then "scrubbed" by removing duplicate and incomplete records and by correcting inputting errors. That integrated database was also simplified to make it more user-friendly by reducing the number of fields and reorganizing them into a column of information related to a named individual (eighteen possible attributes) and a second column with data about that person's household (fourteen attributes). Tables A.3 and A.4 describe more fully the fields used in this database. An example of a data entry form for a 1920 whaler, born on St. Vincent in the British West Indies is offered here (table A.2).

The Crew List Databases

Considerable resources were also committed to developing four databases, each comprised of systematic and almost complete samples of crew lists for whaling voyages that left New Bedford and nearby ports in 1845, 1855, 1865, and 1875 (see table 1.2). The same master text table and entry form was used for this work, except that most of the data entry focused on eighteen fields concerned with the specifics of each voyage for each named whaler—information about the vessel, its rigging, home port, and captain; its voyage (departure and return dates); and data on each whaler himself (age, color or race as recorded on the crew list, height, hair and eye color), his position (or station), and his lay (fractional share in the voyage's net proceeds). More than eleven thousand entries were made to create these four databases. Each year's totals vary primarily as a function of the number of outgoing voyages, which declined from 123 to 68 between 1845 and 1875, or by 48 percent (table A.3). Differences in crew size play a minor role; they averaged between twenty-five and twenty-six in most years but reached a peak of thirty mariners (including the captain) in 1865.

Together these databases of crew lists represent the only systematic and

3. The available online Whaling Crew List Database at NBFPL (www.newbedford.mass.gov/Library/Whaling/Whaling) contain records for voyages between 1809 and 1927. The entries there are derived from shipping papers and crew lists and contain information on residence and birthplace, race, and ethnicity. Our project's four databases could be merged into a single, larger file. We kept them separate to make it easier for others to search them.

comprehensive enumeration of New Bedford whaling crews now available for a forty-year period during which the industry reached its historic peak and then began a slow period of decline in the decades during and after the Civil War.³ Having access to these data tables allows researchers to explore several different questions:

- What did the career tracks of individual whalers look like during this period of growth, stagnation, and decline? Relevant data would be retrieved by searching each database by whaler name.
- How diverse were the whaling crews of the mid-nineteenth century, and how did their diversity change in the years after the Civil War? Patterns of diversity can be explored by gathering data on crew birthplaces and residences and by analyzing how individuals' race or ethnicity were recorded on crew lists. Our initial studies suggest that New Bedford crews became more heterogeneous and "cosmopolitan," including men from many different communities and backgrounds, as the industry grew, only to see those trends diminish during and after the 1870s.
- Did a "color line" emerge in New Bedford whaling after the Civil War? What evidence do we have that whalers of color were fewer in number and that some, or many, of them were not able to advance up the career ladder? Is there any evidence that the experiences of African American whalers were different from that of Wampanoag Indians or Cape Verdeans during this period? If a color line was built in the industry's heyday, what happened to it in the early twentieth century?

Table A.2. Occupations of Interest, New Bedford Censuses

Location	Occupations
At sea:	"At sea"
	"Cook in vessel"
	Cooper
	"In ship"
	Mariner
	"Navig ocean"
	Sailor
	Seaman
	Steward
On land:	Blacksmith (harpoons, barrel staves, etc)
	Boardinghouse keeper
	Boat builder
	Candlemaker, @ candleworks
	Caulker
	Cooper
	Dock laborer
	Lodginghouse keeper
	Longshoreman, Stevedore
	Manufacturer/maker of bomb lances and guns
	Mast and spar maker
	Merchant with counting house
	Oil worker, or manufacturer
	Outfitter
	Rigger
	Ropemaker, ropeworks, cordage factory
	Sailmaker
	Ship carpenter
	Ship chandler/chandlery
	Ship joiner
	Ship keeper
	Ship merchants
	Shipwright
	Soap maker/manufacturer
	Saloon, saloon keeper

Table A.3. Fields in the Integrated Project Database, Bibliographic and Personal Data

Field Name	Description
ID	Assigned automatically to each new record
Document Source	Specify whether census record or study
YrIssue	Name of archive (primary) or secondary source such as ancestry.com
Surname	Date of source such as census year
FullName	or date of publication
Age	Last name of individual
Gender	Last name, first name of individual, middle initial
Race	As recorded in document
Work	Male or female
Literacy	As recorded in document
School	As recorded in document
Place of Birth – Town	Occupation as (if) recorded
Place of Birth – State	Documented in some federal census records
Place of Birth – Other	Number of years
Date of Death	As specified
Place of Death	As specified
Father's Birthplace	As specified for foreign-born persons
Mother's Birthplace	If known
	If known
	Specified in some census records
	Specified in some census records

Different scholars have answered these questions in different ways, but few have used systematic samples to do so. These databases will help clarify the study of historic trends and identify directions for future research. Arguably an important priority would be to build comparable databases of New Bedford crew lists for the period between 1876 and 1925. Each of the project's six databases have been archived at the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and will be available there for study and use in the park's headquarters. Additional copies have also been archived at the Research Library at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Mashantucket, Connecticut.

Table A.4. Fields in the Integrated Project Database, Household Information

Field Name	Description
ResState	Name of State
ResTown	Name of Town
Neighborhood	Ward and district numbers if known
Community	Ward and district numbers if known
Property	Ancestral community if known
Spouse	Real estate holdings and other property
Child#	Real estate holdings and other property
ChildAge	Times married
Others	Number of children in household
Male#	Ages of children in household
MaleAge	Numbers of other males and females in household
Female#	Numbers of other males and females in household
FemaleAge	Number of other males in household
Associated Families	Ages of other males in household
	Number of other females in household
	Ages of other females in household
	Surnames of other families in household

APPENDIX B
Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Command of Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbbls	WBbbls	WBone	POB
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Anthony J. Frates	AO	1881	10	1882	9		100	23		Azores
Franklin	nb	schr	77	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1885	10	1887	7		310	230		Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1888	4	1889	7		570			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1889	10	1891	7		700	10		Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1891	11	1894	8		1260	170		Azores
Charles H. Hodgdon	nb	schr	112	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1894	10	1896	7		1015			Azores
Pearl Nelson	nb	schr	123	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1896	10	1899	9		1165	105		Azores
Pearl Nelson	nb	schr	123	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1900	6	1902	8		1250			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1903	10	1904	8		380			Azores
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	142	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1911	11	1912	9		475			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1915	4	1915	7		450			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1916	4	1916	8		600			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1917	2	1917	7					Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1917	4	1917	8		550			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1918	5	1918	7		450			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1919	2	1919	7		530			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1920	3	1920	8		410			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1921	3	1921	8		500			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1922	3	1922	8		300			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1923	2	1923	8		450			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Antone J. Mandly	AO	1925	5	1925	8		300			Azores
Franklin	nb	schr	77	Antone J. Mandly *	AO	1883	10	1885	8		785	210		Azores
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	143	Antone J. Mandly **	AO	1913	2	1915	8		1350			Azores
Petrel	nb	schr	61	Antone Rose	AO	1879	5	1879						Azores
Surprise	nb	schr	54	Antone Rose	AO	1879	11	1880	8		65	85	1000	Azores
Charles W. Morse	nb	schr	112	Antone Rose	AO	1881	10	1883	8		380	90		Azores
Charles W. Morse	nb	schr	112	Antone Rose	AO	1883	10	1886	9		410	195		Azores
Franklin	nb	schr	77	Antone Rose	AO	1888	4	1889	7		530			Azores
Franklin	nb	schr	77	Antone Rose	AO	1889	10	1891	7		760			Azores

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824–1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbIs	WBbIs	WBone	POB
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Antone Rose	AO	1898	11	1899	7		180			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Antone Rose *	AO	1880	6	1881	8		300	6		Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1913	4	1916	9		5300			Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1917	8	1918	6		1150			Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1918	8	1919	9		1550			Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1919	10	1920	10		1800			Azores
Valkyria	nb	schr	104	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1920	3	1920	9					Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1921	3	1922	4		1560			Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1922	8	1923	9		1500			Azores
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	Antone T. Edwards	AO	1924	8	1924	8	L				Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	177	Antone T. Edwards *	AO	1903	5	1907	4		4625			Azores
Mystic	nb	schr	259	Antone T. Edwards **	AO	1910	3	1914	8		3095			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Antonio C. Corvello	AO	1910	4	1912	8		1400			Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	177	Antonio C. Corvello	AO	1913	5	1916	9		2580			Azores
Greyhound	nb	schr	177	Antonio C. Corvello	AO	1917	8	1918	6		750			Azores
Greyhound	nb	schr	179	Antonio C. Corvello	AO	1918	9	1919	8		750			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Antonio C. Corvello *	AO	1907	5	1909	7		1850			Azores
Atlantic	nb	ship	440	Francis J. Sylvia	AO	1859	9	1860						Azores
Governor Troup	nb	ship	430	Francis J. Sylvia *	NW	1844	7	1847	2		120	3400	14000	Azores
Charles W. Morse	nb	schr	112	Frank C. Morris	AO	1887	5	1890	7		835	10		Azores
Charles W. Morse	nb	schr	112	Frank C. Morris	AO	1891	4	1895	5		1110			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Frank C. Morris	AO	1900	5	1901	8		470			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Frank C. Morris	AO	1906	6	1907	1		125	75		Azores
Peri	nb	bark	191	Frederick Joseph (Joseph)	IO	1843	8	1845	12		630			Azores
Star Castle	fa	brig	116	Henry Clay	AO	1867	5	1869		L	1020	150		Azores
Cicero	nb	bark	226	Henry Clay	AO	1870	5	1873	10		975	375	1300	Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	89	Henry Clay	AO	1875	12	1876	9		440	40		Azores
Seine	nb	bark	234	Henry Clay	AO	1876	11	1877			300			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Henry Clay **	AO	1877	6	1878	9		365	40		Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1879	5	1880	10		300	9		Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1880	11	1881	9		370			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1881	10	1883	9		770	95		Azores

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbIs	WBbIs	WBone	POB
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1883	11	1884	8		635			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1885	6	1886	8		960	40		Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1887	4	1888	8		777			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1889	3	1892	6		1580			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1893	4	1894	8		980			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1896	5	1897	9		375			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1897	11	1899	9		975			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1900	5	1902	8		1950			Azores
Mary E. Simmons	nb	schr	105	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1903	5	1904	7		650			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Henry Mandly Sr.	AO	1907	5	1909	7		1850			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Jacintho S. Leal	AO	1887	5	1889	8		260			Azores
Charles W. Morse	nb	schr	112	John D. Silva	AO	1878	5	1879	8		290	60	750	Azores
Mattapoisett	nb	bark	110	John D. Silva	AO	1879	10	1881	10		180	5		Azores
Fannie Byrnes	nb	schr	66	John E. Luce	AO	1877	12	1879	8		208	25		Azores
Cleone	nb	bark	373	John E. Simmons	NP	1855	8	1858	4		367	2563	15384	Azores
Cleone	nb	bark	373	John E. Simmons	NP	1858	10	1862	8			2286	19663	Azores
President II	nb	bark	123	John P. Praro Jr.	AO	1894	4	1896	8		1470			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	John P. Praro Jr.	AO	1898	6	1902	7		3325	30		Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	John P. Praro Jr.	AO	1903	5	1906	7		2790			Azores
Crownshield	fa	bark	257	John P. Praro Sr.	PO	1869	10	1873	8	C	1319	100		Azores
Lydia	nb	bark	329	John P. Praro Sr. *	PO	1874	6	1877	10		1380			Azores
Cameo	nb	schr	243	John T. Edwards	AO	1912	3	1915	8		5300			Azores
Arthur V. S. Woodruff	nb	schr	193	John T. Edwards	AO	1917	11	1919	9		850			Azores
Margarett	nb	schr	138	John T. Edwards *	AO	1920	3	1920	8		380			Azores
Union	nb	schr	66	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1882	1	1883	9		130	170		Azores
Union	nb	schr	66	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1883	10	1883	12	L				Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1885	4	1885	9		150			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1885	10	1887	8		590	25		Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1887	10	1888	10		130	5		Azores
Francis Alllyn	nb	schr	106	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1889	6	1890	8		240			Azores
Star King	nb	schr	64	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1892	6	1894	7		880			Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Joseph B. Foster	AO	1895	7	1895	11	L	120			Azores

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbIs	WBbIs	WBone	POB
Milwood	nb	bark	254	Joseph D. Silva	IO	1854	7	1857	7		120	969	19200	Azores
George	nb	bark	280	Joseph D. Silva	NP	1857	11	1861	11		433	659	5530	Azores
George	nb	ship	280	Joseph D. Silva	PO	1862	6	1864	12		615	5		Azores
Edward Everett	nb	bark	187	Joseph D. Silva	IO	1867	6	1869			1699	20		Azores
George J. Jones	fa	brig	128	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1872	5	1873	4	C	278			Azores
Edward Everett	nb	bark	187	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1873	7	1875	8		890	23		Azores
Sarah	nb	bark	128	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1876	6	1878	9		720			Azores
Varnum Hill	nb	brig	125	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1878	10	1880	7		380			Azores
Varnum H. Hill	nb	brig	154	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1880	9	1882	9		605	80		Azores
Varnum Hill	nb	brig	154	Joseph D. Silva	AO	1883	5	1884	10		130	10		Azores
Charles W. Morgan	nb	bark	314	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1918	7	1919	9		1150			Azores
Charles W. Morgan	nb	bark	314	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1919	10	1920	7		750			Azores
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1921	3	1921	9		600			Azores
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1922	4	1922	8		600			Azores
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1923	3	1924	8		300			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	98	Joseph F. Edwards	AO	1927	6	1927	7	S				Azores
E. B. Phillips	nb	bark	144	Joseph F. Francis	AO	1876	11	1880	7		1365			Azores
E. B. Phillips	nb	bark	155	Joseph F. Francis	AO	1881	5	1884	8		620			Azores
Timoleon	nb	ship	346	Joseph Folger *	BR	1824	7	1825	6		72	1862	8888	Azores
Valkyria	po	schr	139	Joseph Luis (Lewis)	AO	1914	7	1916	9		740			Azores
Viola	po	brig	139	Joseph Luis (Lewis)	AO	1916	9	1917	8		300			Azores
Viola	po	brig	139	Joseph Luis (Lewis)	AO	1917	9	1918	7		1150			Azores
Arthur V. S. Woodruff	nb	schr	193	Joseph Luis (Lewis) *	AO	1912	10	1916	9		5090			Azores
Viola	po	brig	139	Joseph Luis (Lewis) **	AO	1918	9	1918		L				Azores
President II	nb	bark	123	Joseph T. Edwards	AO	1887	10	1890	6		1260			Azores
President II	nb	bark	123	Joseph T. Edwards	AO	1890	7	1893	8		415			Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	177	Joseph T. Edwards **	AO	1898	6	1902	7		3070	30		Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	177	Joseph T. Edwards **	AO	1903	5	1907	4		4625			Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	178	Joseph T. Enos	AO	1885	7	1887	8		1000	390		Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	178	Joseph T. Enos	AO	1887	10	1892	7		1860	550		Azores
Greyhound	nb	bark	178	Joseph T. Enos	AO	1892	10	1897	11		2540	260		Azores
President II	nb	bark	123	Joseph T. Enos	AO	1899	8	1904	5	L				Azores

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbbs	WBbbs	WBone	POB
Liverpool	nb	ship	306	Joseph Thomas	AO	1838	6	1840	4		224	1916		Azores
Liverpool	nb	ship	306	Joseph Thomas	IO	1840	6	1842	5		263	2265		Azores
St. George	nb	ship	408	Joseph Thomas	NW	1843	7	1845	1		35	3188	29932	Azores
Minerva II	nb	bark	337	Joseph Thompson	AO	1877	4	1880	9		2410	45	400	Azores
Minerva II	nb	bark	337	Joseph Thompson	AO	1881	2			L				Azores
Sea Queen	nb	bark	195	Joseph Thompson	AO	1884	4	1888		L	1370	335		Azores
Pearl Nelson	nb	schr	123	Joseph Thompson	AO	1893	5	1896	9		1630			Azores
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Joseph Thompson	AO	1897	11	1898	6		170			Azores
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Joseph Thompson	AO	1899	8	1901	9		290			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Joseph Thompson	AO	1902	5	1904	6		980			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1879	10	1880	9		380	20	200	Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1880	11	1882	10		380	190		Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1884	10	1885	4					Azores
George and Mary	nb	bark	105	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1888	6	1891	8		1150			Azores
George and Mary	nb	bark	105	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1892	5	1894	8		1040			Azores
Charles H. Hodgdon	nb	schr	112	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1898	10	1899	8		240			Azores
A. R. Tucker	nb	bark	145	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1901	10	1903	8		1500			Azores
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	143	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1906	6	1908	7		2130			Azores
T. Towner	nb	schr	197	Manuel E. Costa	AO	1908	8	1911	8		3280			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel E. Costa **	AO	1883	4	1884	8		280			Azores
Java	nb	bark	295	Manuel Enos	IP	1864	8	1869	4		112	1742	18641	Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel F. Gomes	AO	1898	5	1898	8		270			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel F. Gomes	AO	1898	10	1899	9		250			Azores
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	Manuel F. Gomes	AO	1899	10	1901	7		920			Azores
Bertha	nb	bark	177	Manuel F. Gomes	AO	1901	10	1904	8		2670			Azores
Bertha	nb	bark	177	Manuel F. Gomes	AO	1905	4	1907	7		3100			Azores
Cameo	nb	schr	243	Manuel F. Gomes **	AO	1908	4	1911	8		3720			Azores
Charles H. Hodgdon	nb	schr	112	Manuel F. Santos	AO	1900	10	1901	6		230			Azores
Francis Allyn	nb	schr	106	Manuel F. Santos	HB	1901	7	1902	7	B				Azores
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Manuel F. Santos	AO	1904	9	1905	8	C	500			Azores
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	143	Manuel F. Santos	AO	1908	9	1909	7		770			Azores
John R. Manta	nb	schr	147	Manuel F. Santos	AO	1914	4	1914	8		260			Azores

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbbs	WBbbs	WBone	POB
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	85	Manuel F. Santos	AO	1917	5	1917	8					Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Manuel F. Santos *	AO	1903	5	1906	7		2790			Azores
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	143	Manuel F. Santos *	AO	1909	10	1911	8		1740			Azores
Canton II	nb	bark	238	Nicholas R. Vieira	AO	1901	4	1902	9		2100			Azores
Canton II	nb	bark	238	Nicholas R. Vieira	AO	1903	4	1904	8		2350			Azores
Canton II	nb	bark	238	Nicholas R. Vieira	AO	1905	4	1906	8		2750			Azores
Bertha	nb	bark	177	Nicholas R. Vieira	AO	1910	4	1911	8		2000			Azores
Milo	nb	ship	401	Thomas E. Fordham	NP	1859	11	1863	5		263	3346	34500	Azores
Florida	nb	ship	330	Thomas E. Fordham	NP	1864	7	1868	9		241	1688	48680	Azores
Tamerlane	nb	bark	372	Thomas E. Fordham	PO	1869	7	1873	6		754	568	3500	Azores
Lottie E. Cook	nb	schr	82	Thomas E. Fordham	AO	1884	5	1885	8		80			Azores
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Anthony P. Benton	AO	1876	11	1878	9		450			Cape Verde
Peru	nb	bark	221	Anthony P. Benton	AO	1878	11	1881	9		1410			Cape Verde
Ohio	nb	bark	206	Anthony P. Benton	AO	1881	11	1885	4		900	8		Cape Verde
Wave	nb	bark	150	Anthony P. Benton	PO	1885	6	1886	9			150		Cape Verde
Tamerlane	nb	bark	372	Anthony P. Benton	NP	1888	1	1888	10		70	65	1900	Cape Verde
President II	nb	bark	123	Anthony P. Benton	AO	1896	11	1899	5		600	15		Cape Verde
Greyhound	nb	bark	177	Antone Sylvia *	AO	1910	9	1912	8		1140			Cape Verde
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	89	Antonio Jose Senna	AO	1891	8	1894	8		1420			Cape Verde
Arthur V. S. Woodruff	nb	schr	193	August P. Gomes	AO	1919	11	1920	4	L				Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	August P. Gomes	AO	1920	11	1921	9		400			Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	August P. Gomes	AO	1922	4			S				Cape Verde
Golden City	nb	schr	84	Ayres J. Senna	AO	1897	11	1899	9		885	20		Cape Verde
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Ayres J. Senna	AO	1901	10	1902	9		305			Cape Verde
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Ayres J. Senna	AO	1902	11	1904	8		1240			Cape Verde
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Ayres J. Senna	AO	1904	10	1905	9		290			Cape Verde
Greyhound	nb	bark	109	Benjamin Costa	AO	1921	8			S				Cape Verde
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	85	Frank M. Lopes	AO	1918	7							Cape Verde
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	85	Frank M. Lopes ***	AO	1919	2	1919		L				Cape Verde
George J. Jones	fa	schr	196	Jasper M. Ears	AO	1870	6	1871	8		139	135		Cape Verde
Peru	nb	bark	259	Jasper M. Ears	AO	1875	4	1878	8		910			Cape Verde
Ellen Rodman	nb	schr	73	Jasper M. Ears	AO	1879	5	1880	8		205			Cape Verde

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbIs	WBbIs	WBone	POB
Ellen Rodman	nb	schr	73	Jasper M. Ears	AO	1879	5	1880	8		205			Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	John da Lomba	AO	1920	3	1920	9		517			Cape Verde
Golden City	nb	schr	84	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1901	10	1903	8		860			Cape Verde
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1904	8	1905	8		550			Cape Verde
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1906	4	1906	6		150			Cape Verde
Eleanor B. Conwell	nb	schr	91	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1907	6	1907	8		230			Cape Verde
Bertha	nb	schr	177	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1907	9	1909	8		1970			Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1914	4	1914	8		550			Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1915	2	1915	7		250			Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1915	9	1916	4					Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1916	5	1916	7					Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1917	2	1917	6					Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1917	10	1918	6		625			Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1919	10	1920	5		650			Cape Verde
William A. Graber	nb	schr	110	John T. Gonsalves	AO	1922	4	1922	8		650			Cape Verde
A. M. Nicholson	nb	schr	136	John T. Gonsalves *	AO	1918	10	1919	8					Cape Verde
T. Towner	nb	schr	197	John T. Gonsalves **	AO	1911	11	1914	8		2675			Cape Verde
Cameo	nb	schr	243	Jose M. Domingos	AO	1919	2	1919	9		525			Cape Verde
Cameo	nb	schr	243	Jose M. Domingos	AO	1919	10	1920	8		670			Cape Verde
Pilgrim	nb	schr	72	Joseph Gaspar	AO	1902	6	1903	6		30	45		Cape Verde
Pilgrim	nb	schr	72	Joseph Gaspar	AO	1903	7	1903	9	L				Cape Verde
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1906	5	1906	8		310			Cape Verde
Carleton Bell	nb	schr	139	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1906	11	1908	8		1210			Cape Verde
Carleton Bell	nb	schr	139	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1909	5	1911	8		1980			Cape Verde
Carleton Bell	nb	schr	139	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1915	3	1916	9		1650			Cape Verde
Claudia	nb	schr	113	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1919	2	1919	9					Cape Verde
Claudia	nb	schr	118	Joseph H. Senna	AO	1922	3	1922	8		500			Cape Verde
Carleton Bell	nb	schr	139	Joseph H. Senna **	AO	1912	5	1914	8		1695			Cape Verde
Clara L. Sparks	nb	schr	101	Joseph P. Benton	AO	1891	7	1895	8		900	200		Cape Verde
A. R. Tucker	nb	bark	145	Joseph P. Benton * **	AO	1899	6	1901	9		1950			Cape Verde
A. E. Whyland	nb	schr	130	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1912	7	1914	8		2170			Cape Verde
A. E. Whyland	nb	schr	86	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1915	3	1915	9		500			Cape Verde

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbbs	WBbbs	WBone	POB
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1917	3	1917	4					Cape Verde
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1918	4	1918	7		400			Cape Verde
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1918	9	1919	5					Cape Verde
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1919	6	1919	9		400			Cape Verde
Claudia	nb	schr	113	Louis M. Lopes	AO	1919	10	1920	8		601			Cape Verde
Magnolia	nb	ship	396	Severino D. Pierce	NP	1858	7	1862		C	330	2400	31675	Cape Verde
Europa	nb	ship	380	Severino D. Pierce *	NP	1862	7	1867	9		268	1829	25200	Cape Verde
Pedro Varela	nb	schr	85	Theophilus M. Freitas	AO	1917	10	1918	2		320			Cape Verde
Canton II	nb	bark	238	Valentine Roza	AO	1907	4	1909	8		2100	300		Cape Verde
Canton II	nb	bark	238	Valentine Roza	AO	1909	10	1910	11	L				Cape Verde
Morning Star	nb	bark	238	Valentine Roza	AO	1910	5	1912	8		3050			Cape Verde
Morning Star	nb	bark	238	Valentine Roza	AO	1912	10	1914	9	S	2650			Cape Verde
Bertha	nb	schr	177	William F. Joseph	AO	1916	5	1916	9		700			Fairhaven
Valkyria	po	schr	139	William F. Joseph	AO	1917	3	1917	9		500			Fairhaven
Valkyria	po	schr	139	William F. Joseph	AO	1917	11	1918	8		650			Fairhaven
Mystic	nb	schr	259	William F. Joseph *	AO	1910	3	1914	8		3095			Fairhaven
Bertha D. Nickerson	nb	schr	143	William F. Joseph *	AO	1913	2	1915	8		1350			Fairhaven
Wanderer	nb	bark	303	William F. Joseph *	AO	1918	8	1919	9		1550			Fairhaven
Margaret	nb	schr	138	William F. Joseph **	AO	1920	3	1920	8		380			Fairhaven
St. George	nb	ship	408	Joseph Dias Jr.	NP	1853	9	1857	5		78	2158	19350	MV
Lydia	nb	bark	330	Edward M. Frazier	AO	1880	11	1884	8	C	890	335	2000	NB
E. B. Phillips	nb	bark	155	Edward M. Frazier	AO	1884	10	1885		C				NB
A. R. Tucker	nb	bark	145	Joseph Avilla *	AO	1899	6	1901	9		1950			Portugal
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Michael A. Ferreira	AO	1884	6	1886	6		550	10		Portugal
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Michael A. Ferreira	AO	1886	10	1889	5		680			Portugal
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Michael A. Ferreira	AO	1890	6	1893	6		1350			Portugal
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1911	5	1912	9		1280			Provincetown
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1913	2	1914	8		1250			Provincetown
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1915	4	1916	9		1860			Provincetown
Margaret	nb	schr	138	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1917	4	1917	9		650			Provincetown
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1917	5	1917	9		350			Provincetown
William A. Graber	nb	schr	137	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1919	2	1919	9		640			Provincetown

Appendix B: Whaling Voyages from New Bedford and Fairhaven under Azorean and Cape Verdean Masters, 1824-1927

Vessel Name	Pt	Rig	Tons	Master	Bnd	Dep	Mo	Arr	Mo	O	SBbbs	WBbbs	WBone	POB
Valkyria	nb	schr	104	Henry Mandly Jr.	AO	1920	10	1921	5		557			Provincetown
Fannie Byrnes	nb	schr	66	Antonio Sylvia	AO	1879	10	1881	11		280	25		Unknown
Fannie Byrnes	nb	schr	66	Antonio Sylvia	AO	1882	4	1884		C				Unknown
Cameo	nb	schr	243	John P. Freitas *	AO	1908	4	1911	8		3720			Unknown
Comora	nb	ship	699	Jose C. S. Maciel	PO	1859	7	1861	3					Unknown
Claudia	nb	schr	113	Joseph A. Vieira	AO	1918	4	1918	8		320			Unknown
Valkyria	po	schr	139	Joseph A. Vieira	AO	1918	10	1919	2		260			Unknown
Valkyria	po	schr	104	Joseph A. Vieira	AO	1919	?	1919	8					Unknown
Lottie E. Cook	nb	schr	82	Joseph Antone Vieira	AO	1880	10	1882	4		85	125		Unknown
Lottie E. Cook	nb	schr	82	Joseph Antone Vieira	AO	1882	5	1883	4		270	90		Unknown
Lottie E. Cook	nb	schr	82	Joseph Antone Vieira	AO	1883	5	1884	4			100	935	Unknown
Stafford	nb	bark	156	Joseph Antone Vieira	AO	1884	6	1886	6		800	200		Unknown
John and Winthrop	nb	bark	338	Joseph Cruze *	PO	1881	4	1885	7		2750			Unknown
Charles W. Morgan	nb	bark	314	Joseph Roderick *	AO	1908	9	1910	9		1200	120		Unknown
Adelia Chase	nb	schr	85	Lebanio D. Borges	AO	1898	7	1898	10		150			Unknown

Source: Hegarty, Returns of Whaling Vessels; Lund, Whaling Masters and Whaling Voyages; Starbuck, History of the American Whale Fisher; Judith N Lund, etal, "American Offshore Whaling Voyages: A Database" National Maritime Digital Library, <http://www.nmdl.org/projects/whindex.cfm>

Arr/Mo
Year & Month of Arrival

O=Outcome
B=Burned
C=Condemned
L=Lost
S=Sold

Catch:
SBbbs
Barrels of sperm oil
WBbbs
Barrels of whale oil

WBone
Pounds of whalebone (baleen)

Key:
* Replacement master
** Left the vessel, usually because of illness
*** Died during the voyage
**** Killed by a whale

fa=Fairhaven MA
nb=New Bedford MA

Rig
bark=Bark
brig=Brig
schr=Schooner
ship=Ship

Bnd (Bound)
AO=Atlantic Ocean
HB=Hudson Bay
IO=Indian Ocean
PO=Pacific Ocean

Dep/Mo
Year & Month of Departure

APPENDIX C

AZOREAN AND CAPE VERDEAN WHALING MASTERS SAILING FROM NEW BEDFORD

First Name	Surname	Born	Locale	Voyages	Died
Joseph	Avilla *		Portugal	1899-1901	
Joseph P.	Benton ***	1861	Maio, Cape Verde	1891-1901	1901
Anthony P	Benton		Maio, Cape Verde	1876-1899	
Lebanio D.	Borges			1898-1898	
Henry	Clay	1836	Flores, Azores	1867-1878	1901
Antonio C.	Corvello	1879	Flores, Azores	1907-1919	1920
Benjamin	Costa	ca. 1878	Cape Verde	1921	
Manuel Estaus	Costa	1849	Faial, Azores	1879-1911	1914
Joseph	Cruze *			1881-1885	
John	Da Lomba	ca. 1876	Brava, Cape Verde	1920	1960?
Joseph	Dias Jr.	1822	Martha's Vineyard, Mass.	1853-1857	1883
Jose M.	Domingos	1878	Cape Verde	1919-1920	
Jasper Manuel	Ears	ca. 1821	São Nicolau, Cape Verde	1870-1882	
Antone T.	Edwards	1882	Flores, Azores	1903-1924	1936
John T.	Edwards	1884	Flores, Azores	1912-1919	1957
Joseph F.	Edwards	1886	Flores, Azores	1918-1927	1933
Joseph T.	Edwards	1856	Flores, Azores	1887-1908	1913
Joseph T.	Enos	ca. 1846	Azores	1885-1904	
Manuel	Enos	1827	Pico, Azores	1864-1869	1915
Michael A.	Ferreira	1847	Portugal	1884-1893	
Joseph	Folger*	1792	Pico, Azores	1824-1825	
Thomas E.	Fordham	1828	Faial, Azores	1859-1890	1892
Joseph B.	Foster	1838	São Jorge, Azores	1873-1895	1903
Joseph F.	Francis	1841	Pico, Azores	1872-1884	
Anthony J.	Frates **	1844	Azores	1881-1903	1903
Theophilus M.	Freitas	1879	São Nicolau, Cape Verde	1908-1917	
Edward M.	Frazier	1852	New Bedford, Mass.	1880-1885	
John P.	Freitas			1908-1911	
Joseph	Gaspar	1867	Cape Verde	1902-1903	1931
August P.	Gomes	ca. 1884	Cape Verde	1919-1922	
Manuel F.	Gomes	1864	Faial, Azores	1897-1911	1910
John T.	Gonsalves	1858	Brava, Cape Verde	1890-1922	1928
William F.	Joseph	1859	Fairhaven, Mass.	1901-1922	1930
Frederick	Joseph (Jose)	1817	Faial, Azores	1843-1868	1885

Appendix C: Whaling Masters Highlighted

Jacintho S.	Leal	ca. 1857	Faial, Azores	1887-1889	
Frank M.	Lopes ***	1884	Brava, Cape Verde	1917-1918	
Louis M.	Lopes	1877	Brava, Cape Verde	1912-1921	
John E.	Luce	1822	Faial, Azores	1877-1879	1909
Joseph (Jose)	Luis (Lewis) **	1875	Faial, Azores	1907-1918	1918
Jose C. S.	Maciel			1859-1861	
Antone J.	Mandly	1863	Faial, Azores	1883-1925	1929
Henry	Mandly Jr.	1879	Provincetown, Mass.	1911-1921	1953
Henry	Mandly Sr.	1848	Graciosa, Azores	1876-1909	1944
Anthony	Marks		Azores	1844-1848	
Frank C.	Morris	1857	Faial, Azores	1887-1907	1931
Severino D	Pierce ***?	ca. 1817	Brava, Cape Verde	1858-1871	1871
John P.	Praro Jr.	1863	Pico, Azores	1894-1906	1936
John P.	Praro Sr.**	1831	Pico, Azores	1869-1876	1876
Joseph	Roderick *	ca. 1859		1908-1910	
Antone	Rose	1841	Pico, Azores	1879-1899	1923
Valentine	Roza	ca. 1873	Brava, Cape Verde	1907-1914	
Manuel F.	Santos	1869	Corvo, Azores	1900-1917	1919
Antonio Jose	Senna	1859	Brava, Cape Verde	1891-1894	
Ayres J.	Senna	1857	Brava, Cape Verde	1897-1905	
Joseph H.	Senna	1881	Brava, Cape Verde	1906-1922	
John D.	Silva	1828	Faial, Azores	1878-1881	1893
Joseph D.	Silva	1823	Faial, Azores	1854-1887	1901
Antone	Sylvia		Brava, Cape Verde	1910-1912	
John E.	Simmons	1816	Faial, Azores	1855-1862	1908
Antonio	Sylvia			1879-1884	
Francis J.	Sylvia	1810	Pico, Azores	1844-1860	
Joseph	Thomas	ca. 1805	Terceira, Azores	1838-1847	
Joseph	Thompson	1830	Faial, Azores	1874-1904	1906
Joseph A.	Vieira	1891		1918-1919	1951
Antone	Vieira			1880-1886	
Nicholas R.	Vieira	1856	Flores, Azores	1901-1911	1913

* replacement master only

** died at sea

*** killed by a whale

Source: Hegarty, *Returns of Whaling Vessels: Lund, Whaling Masters and Whaling Voyages*, Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, "American Offshore Whaling Voyages: A Database," National Maritime Digital Library, <http://www.nmdl.org/projects/whindex.cfm>.

APPENDIX D

Azorean and Cape Verdean Whaleship Owners

Vol. No.	Vessel	Type	Port	Year	Master	Owner 1	%	Owner 2	%	Owner 3	%	Owner 4	%	Comments
1	1845 Liverpool	ship	NB	1835	Joseph Thomas	Joseph Thomas/NB	partial							
1	1846 Liverpool	ship	NB	1838	Joseph Thomas	Joseph Thomas/NB	partial							
1	1847 Liverpool	ship	NB	1840	Joseph Thomas	Joseph Thomas/NB	partial							
1	1739 Kutusoff	ship	NB	1841	William H. Cox	Joseph Thomas/RI	partial							
1	2788 St. George	ship	NB	1843	Joseph Thomas	Joseph Thomas/NB	partial							
1	1740-41 Kutusoff	ship	NB	1845	William Shackle	Joseph Thomas/RI	partial							
1	2789 St. George	ship	NB	1845	Joseph Thomas	Joseph Thomas/NB	partial							
1	814 Edward I	bark	NB	1846	Edwin A. Luce	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	987 Exchange	bark	NB	1847	Joseph Reynolds	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	887 987 Exchange	bark	NB	1847	Joseph Reynolds	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	1742 Kutusoff	ship	NB	1848	George W. Slocum	Joseph Thomas/RI	partial							
1	888 987 Exchange	bark	NB	1849	Oliver J. Hazard	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	1364, 1367 Hecla	bark	NB	1849	Alden Besse	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	881 Elizabeth	bark	NB	1850	Henry N. Dexter	Antone Joseph/NB	partial							
1	2790 St. George	ship	NB	1850	William T. Hawes	Joseph Thomas/RI	partial							
2	1603 R.L. Barstow	bark	Matt	1851	Joseph R. Taber Jr.	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	500 Edward	bark	NB	1853	Abner Smith	Antone Joseph/NB	1/32							
2	539 Elizabeth	bark	Matt	1853	Asa Hoxie	Antone Joseph/NB	1/32							
2	758 Hecla	bark	NB	1853	Henry F. Gifford	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	1688 St. George	ship	NB	1853	Joseph Dias Jr.	Joseph Thomas/RI	1/16							
2	501 Edward	bark	NB	1855	William B. Stanton	Antone Joseph/NB	1/32							
2	760 Hecla	bark	NB	1855	Orrick Smalley	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	825 Hope	bark	NB	1855	Shubael F. Haxton	Antone Thomas/NB	1/16							
2	1695 R.L. Barstow	bark	Matt	1855	Edward S. Davoll	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	203 Belle	bark	NB	1857	Roswell Brown	Joseph Verano/NB	1/32							
2	1700 St. George	ship	NB	1857	Josiah C. Pease	Joseph Thomas/RI	1/16							
2	322 George	bark	NB	1858	Joseph D. Silva	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	324 Cornelia	ship	NB	1858	John E. Simmons/Dart	John E. Simmons/Dart	1/16							
2	1141 Cornelia	ship	NB	1858	Francis J. Silva	Francis J. Silva/NB	1/16							
2	1741 Arctica	ship	NB	1859	Francis J. Silva	Francis J. Silva/NB	100							
2	396 Cornob	ship	NB	1859	Jose C.S. Maciel	Jose C.S. Maciel/NB	100							
2	836, 827 Hope	bark	Matt	1859	Seth D. McEldane	Antone Thomas/NB	1/16							
2	1607 R.L. Barstow	bark	Matt	1859	Edward S. Davoll	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	117 Anaconda	bark	NB	1860	John H. Pain	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	426 Cornelia	bark	NB	1861	Ephraim Poole	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	206 Belle	bark	NB	1862	Roswell Brown	Joseph Verano/NB	1/32							
2	382 Gleone	ship	NB	1862	Daniel D. Wood	Joseph D. Silva/NB	1/16							
2	676 George	bark	NB	1862	David Dexter	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	1924, 1925 Union	bark	NB	1863	Amos C. Baker	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	1926 Union	bark	NB	1863	Amos C. Baker	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	504 Edward	bark	NB	1864	Charles P. Worth	Antone Joseph/NB	1/32							
2	706 Glacier	ship	NB	1864	George Tabor	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	1808 Sophia Thornton	ship	NB	1864	Mose G. Tucker	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	1927 Union	bark	NB	1864	x	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
2	1193 Mars	bark	NB	1865	George Gray	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	1425 Ocean	ship	NB	1865	Albert D. Barber	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
2	1873 Tekoa	brig	Fair	1865	Joseph D. Benjamin	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/8							
2	1928 Union	bark	NB	1865	Abner Smith	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
3	305 Cornelia	bark	NB	1866	Ephraim Poole	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
3	374 Ellen Rodman	ship	NB	1866	Thomas F. Lambert	Henry Clay/Sair	1/8							
3	521 Glacier	ship	NB	1866	Edwin A. Porter	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
3	731 Laconia	brig	Fair	1866	Charles W. Parker	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
3	753 Hecla	bark	NB	1866	William G. Morton	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/8							
3	124 Arctida	bark	NB	1867	Clark C. Hubbard	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/8	Antone L. Sylvia-Trustee/NB	1/15					
3	341 Edward Everett	bark	NB	1867	Joseph D. Silva	Joseph D. Silva/NB	1/8	Antone L. Sylvia-Trustee/NB	1/32					
3	575 Hecla	bark	NB	1867	Joseph D. Silva	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							Abandoned as unfit for service in 1894
3	1109 Robert Edwards	ship	NB	1867	Stephen Flanders	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16							
3	1200 Star Castle	ship	NB	1867	Thomas F. Pease	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16							
3	1268 U. D.	ship	Fair	1867	Henry Clay	Henry Clay/NB	1/4	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/4					
3	306 Cornelia	bark	NB	1867	Joseph P. Nye	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/16							
3	402 Endeavor	bark	NY	1868	Edward O. Shaverick	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
3	522 Glacier	ship	NB	1868	Henry P. Taber	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16							
3	591 Herald	brig	Marion	1868	Benjamin Clifford	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
3	700 Joseph Maxwell	bark	NB	1868	George Cowie	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16							
3	735 Laconia	bark	NB	1868	John A. Luce	Antone Joseph/NB	1/16							
3	312 Crownshield	bark	NB	1869	John P. Prato Sr.	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/4	Manuel T. Verano/NB	1/32	John P. Prato/NB	1/16			
3	818 Mars	bark	NB	1869	George W. Allen	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							
3	1057 President	bark	NB	1869	Eber C. Almy	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16							
3	1182 Selah	bark	Fair	1869	Gorham B. Howes	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/32							
3	271 Cleo	bark	NB	1870	Henry Clay	Antone L. Sylvia/NB	1/8	Henry Clay/NB	1/16	John Perry/NB	1/16			
3	509 George J. Jones	ship	Fair	1870	Jasper M. Ears	Frank Perry/NB	1/16	Antone Thomas/NB	1/16	Joseph Thomas/NB	1/32			
3	954 Orlando	bark	NB	1870	Horace B. Montross	Joseph Verano/NB	1/16							

Azorean and Cape Verdean Whaleship Owners

3	1350	William and Henry	bar	1870	Daniel B. Greene	John D. Silva/NB	Joseph Vera/NB	1/14	John Percy/NB	1/14			
3	307	Conieta	bar	1871	Leonard B. Ellis	Manuel J. Joseph/NB	7/16						
3	523	Lucia	bar	1871	Edgar W. Crapo	Joseph D. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	736	737	Lucia	bar	1871	Edgar W. Crapo	1/16						
3	412	Eunice H. Adams	bar	1872	Hiram J. Cleveland	Antonio L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	510	George J. Jones	bar	1872	Hiram J. Cleveland	Joseph Thomas/NB	1/16						
3	655	Java II	bar	1872	Joseph H. Fisher	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	674	John Howland	bar	1872	Frederick P. Cole	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16						
3	701	Joseph Maxwell	bar	1872	Stephens Hickmott	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16						
3	343	Edward Everett	bar	1873	Joseph D. Silva	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	413	Eunice H. Adams	bar	1874	William C. Brownell	AJ Semna/NB	1/16						
3	561	Hadley	bar	1874	Hiram J. Cleveland	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	789	Lydia	bar	1874	John P. Praro Sr.	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	819	Mars	bar	1874	George W. Allen	John P. Praro/NB	1/16						
3	1196	Stamboul	bar	1874	Horace B. Montross	Joseph Vera/NB	1/16						
3	161	Benjamin Cummings	bar	1875	Rosewell Brown	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	344	Edward Everett	bar	1875	Rufus W. Gifford	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	879	Midas	bar	1875	Henry Clay	Joseph Vera/NB	1/16						
3	928	Norman	bar	1875	Joshua G. Lapham	Henry Clay/NB	1/16						
3	1072	Peru	bar	1875	Thomas G. Campbell	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	1073	Rainbow	bar	1875	Jasper M. Ears	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	335	E. B. Phillips	bar	1875	Bernard Cogan	Joseph Vera/NB	1/16						
3	414	Eunice H. Adams	bar	1875	Joseph C. Francis	AJ Semna/NB	1/16						
3	350	Ohio	bar	1876	Leonard B. Ellis	AJ Semna/NB	1/16						
3	1000	Pedro Varela	bar	1876	Williams B. Ellis	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	1341	Sarah	bar	1876	Anthony P. Benton	Manuel J. Joseph/NB	7/16						
3	1342	Samuel H. Hill	bar	1876	Joseph D. Silva	Joseph D. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	425	E. B. Phillips	bar	1877	Samuel D. Baxter	John Mathews/NB	3/22						
3	435	Fannie Byrnes	bar	1877	John E. Luce	John E. Luce/NB	3/8						
3	625	John Howland	bar	1877	Charles F. Edwards	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	887	Milnera II	bar	1877	Frederick M. Green	Thomas Luce/NB	1/16						
3	1197	Stamboul	bar	1877	Joseph Thompson	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	262	Charles W. Morse	bar	1877	Leur R. Roers	Joseph Vera/NB	1/16						
3	350	Eleanor B. Conwell	bar	1878	John D. Silva	John Silva/NB	1/16						
3	416	Eunice H. Adams	bar	1878	James F. Avery	Henry Clay/NB	1/2						
3	530	Golden City	bar	1878	William A. Martin	AJ Semna/NB	1/16						
3	790	Lydia	bar	1878	Andrew J. Cory	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/8						
3	820	Mars	bar	1878	Asaph S. Wicks	Joseph Vera/NB	1/8						
3	951	Ohio	bar	1878	Edward J. Smith	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/8						
3	1013	Peru	bar	1878	Anthony P. Benton	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/4						
3	1142	Sarah	bar	1878	Henry M. Peakes	Antone L. Silva/NB	3/22						
3	1224	1225	Surprise	bar	Joseph S. Galett	Frank Rodrigues/NB	1/8						
3	1285	Varnum H. Hill	bar	1878	Joseph D. Silva	John Mathews/NB	1/16						
3	263	Charles W. Morse	bar	1879	Ichabod J. Hazard	Joseph Vera/NB	1/4						
3	436	Fannie Byrnes	bar	1879	Antonio Silva	Joseph Oliveira/NB	3/8						
3	836	Marv E. Simmons	bar	1879	Henry Mandl/Vr	Antone Silva/NB	5/16						
3	857	Mattapoisset	bar	1879	John D. Silva	John D. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	227	A. R. Tucker	bar	1880	Henry M. Gifford	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	547	Adelia Chase	bar	1880	Erastus Church Jr.	Antone L. Silva/NB	3/8						
3	531	Gelbert City	bar	1880	James Avery	Henry Clay/NB	1/2						
3	728	Lottie E. Cook	bar	1880	Joseph Antonio Vieira	Joseph Vera/NB	1/2						
3	1781	Lydia	bar	1880	Edward V. Frazier	Antone L. Silva/NB	5/16						
3	284	Samuel H. Hill	bar	1881	Joseph D. Silva	John Mathews/NB	1/4						
3	336	E. B. Phillips	bar	1881	Joseph C. Francis	AJ Semna/NB	7/16						
3	888	Milnera II	bar	1881	Joseph Thompson	Antone L. Silva/NB	7/64						
3	952	Ohio	bar	1881	Joseph Thompson	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/8						
3	1050	President II	bar	1881	Anthony P. Benton	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	1226	Surprise	bar	1881	Edgar W. Crapo	Joseph F. Lima/NB	5/16						
3	1265	Tropic Bird	bar	1881	James E. Stanton	Henry Clay/NB	1/8						
3	1277	Union	bar	1881	James Avery	Henry Clay/NB	1/2						
3	437	Fannie Byrnes	bar	1882	Antonio Silva	Antone Silva/NB	3/8						
3	639	James Arnold	bar	1882	Jesse T. Sherman	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	231	A. R. Tucker	bar	1883	Charles H. Turner	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						
3	265	Charles W. Morse	bar	1883	Antone Rose	Joseph Vera/NB	1/4						
3	837	Marv E. Simmons	bar	1883	Henry Mandl/Vr	Antone Silva/NB	1/16						
3	1287	Varnum H. Hill	bar	1884	Edward J. Smith	John Mathews/NB	1/16						
3	392	Lydia	bar	1884	Edward J. Smith	AJ Semna/NB	1/4						
3	797	Lydia	bar	1884	Edward J. Smith	Antone L. Silva/NB	7/32						
3	1193	Stafford	bar	1884	Joseph Antonio Vieira	Joseph Antonio Vieira/NB	1/32						
3	1266	Tropic Bird	bar	1884	James F. Avery	Henry Clay/NB	1/16						
3	1288	Varnum H. Hill	bar	1884	Benjamin A. Higgins	John Mathews/NB	1/16						
3	606	Horatio	bar	1885	Theodore S. Morse	Antone L. Silva/NB	1/16						

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