

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

NHL

STATE:	Massachusetts
COUNTY:	Bristol
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

Paul Cuffe's Farm

AND/OR HISTORIC:

## 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

1504 Drift Road

CITY OR TOWN:

Westport

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

COUNTY:

Bristol

CODE

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Philip Lozinski

STREET AND NUMBER:

1504 Drift Road

CITY OR TOWN:

Westport

STATE:

Massachusetts 02790

CODE

STATE:

Massachusetts

COUNTY:

Bristol

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

11 Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Taunton

STATE

CODE

Massachusetts

STATE:

Massachusetts

COUNTY:

Bristol

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE

CODE

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

24

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered			<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The home is located in what is called a rural residential area on the west bank of the East Branch Westport River. The house is a large two story, wood shingled, rectangular frame structure with an A-frame roof. Although the house has been altered somewhat, many of its original properties can still be seen in its interior. Examples are the mantel-less fireplaces in several rooms, original doors, vertical siding (interior wall structure), and wide-planked floors.

The private road leading to the house is quite long and narrow with dense foliage on either side. The house is in a clearing at the end of the road which expands at the rear of the house onto a large, nearly flat lawn overlooking the beach and docks. Because of the thick growth in all directions around the house it is difficult to determine in which direction the farm was laid out.

Portions of Paul Cuffe's docks, where he built and launched his ships, have been maintained by the owners of the property through the years. These docks, though weather damaged, remain and are identifiable at the edge of the property.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## S. SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Aboriginal  
 Prehistoric  
 Historic  
 Agriculture  
 Architecture  
 Art  
 Commerce  
 Communications  
 Conservation

- Education  
 Engineering  
 Industry  
 Invention  
 Landscape  
 Literature  
 Military  
 Music

- Political  
 Religion/Philosophy  
 Science  
 Sculpture  
 Social/Humanitarian  
 Theater  
 Transportation

- Urban Planning  
 Other (Specify)

Afro-American History

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Westport Monthly Meeting of Friends is an excellent site for the recognition of Paul Cuffe, one of the most prominent black men of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Paul Cuffe is of historical importance as an effective counter balance to the hostile stereotypes of blacks included both in the literature of James Fenimore Cooper, of Herman Melville and in the widely circulated story papers and cheap pamphlet literature from the 1840s. The impact of these stories has not, as yet, disappeared.

In some ways, the life of Paul Cuffe, as revealed through his surprisingly rich Journal and Correspondence, is a classical example of rags-to riches in his era (1759-1817). He was a largely self-educated son of a former slave father and an Indian mother. Paul began life under impecunious conditions on a marginal farm. He went to sea, as did many of the ambitious youth of his time, and became a prosperous ship owner, sea captain and merchant capitalist. In his advance from steerage to quarter deck, Cuffe amassed a considerable fortune, from whaling, from transporting whale oil and whale bone to Europe, from coastal shipping as well as ship building and from retail store keeping in New Bedford. An inventory of his estate, which incidentally was not settled until ten years after his death in 1827, reported real and personal property to the amount of \$14,022.57. Unpaid debts and his expenditures on the two voyages to Sierra Leone, however, had reduced his actual worth in real property to only \$2,758.

Paul Cuffe became a member of the Society of Friends in 1808 at the age of 49, although his parents, it is said, had attended Quaker meetings many years before. As a member of the Society of Friends Cuffe established close personal and business ties with his Quaker Associates as personified by William Rotch, Jr. His way of life as a Quaker enabled him to reconcile his business initiative with religious zeal. This happy marriage contributed to a Cuffe dynasty of his relatives who continued his interest in the counting and meeting houses for a generation after Paul Cuffe's death. The success of the dynasty culminated in the whaling ventures of the black-owned brig Rising States.

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See preceding form, "Paul Cuffe Memorial and Grave Site," Wesport, Mass.

## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES													
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			O R	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE								
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds						
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"		71	°	04	'	06	°	41	°	32	'	57	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"							°						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"							°						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"							°						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 6.5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

## 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Marcia M. Greenlee, Historical Projects Director

ORGANIZATION

Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation

DATE

December 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:

1420 N Street, N. W., Suite 101

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington, D. C. 20005

STATE

CODE

## 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

## NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE <b>Massachusetts</b>		
COUNTY <b>Bristol</b>		
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd.)

Cuffe was also involved in projects for black settlement and trade with Sierra Leone. His efforts in this direction won him an international reputation and acquaintance with President Madison, Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin and Dr. Benjamin Rush. In England, members of the Clapham Sect, including Zachary MaCaulay, Granville Sharp and William Wilberforce, interceded with the Privy Council to gain a special trading license for Sierra Leone. In his own country, Paul Cuffe was a man with sufficient prestige to bring a petition for special trading privileges to Africa to a favorable vote in the Senate.

Of all the possible sites identified with the life and times of Paul Cuffe, the 160 year old Friends Meeting House in Westport, Massachusetts has the largest number of close associations with this illustrious member of the Society of Friends. He was active in affairs of the Friends and, according to his accounts, advanced \$574.25 in materials toward the total cost of \$1198.08 for a new meeting house -- the present structure -- in 1813. This meeting house was intimately involved in the African venture; the members had appointed two committees to consult with Paul Cuffe on the project. From them he received special certificates which brought him special consideration in foreign places. (In 1961, as reported in the New Bedford-Standard Times of November 6, ceremonies were held on the site to celebrate the anniversary of the first voyage to Sierra Leone.) At his death, Cuffe was buried in the cemetery beside the meeting house, although at some distance from the center of the grounds.

If greatness is attributable to those possessed of a keen historical perspective and to being ahead of the times, and willing to take the consequences, Paul Cuffe was great. He was in the vanguard of the movement for black settlement in Africa. He was, as well, a pioneer in the struggle for minority rights in Massachusetts. The three petitions submitted by him, his brother John and other blacks, progressively to the state, county and local government, sought relief from the payment of taxes because Negroes and Indians were not allowed to vote; the petitions were rejected but the rights were granted eventually by court decision in 1783. Paul Cuffe's contributions to building a new Friends Meeting House and the construction of a school on his farm have been hailed as instances of civic responsibility and individual foresight. Paul Cuffe would more than qualify as one of Carlyle's heroes of history. "They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modelers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain."

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (cont'd.)

Ship Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Boston: National Archives Project. 1940.

(PARTIAL LISTING)