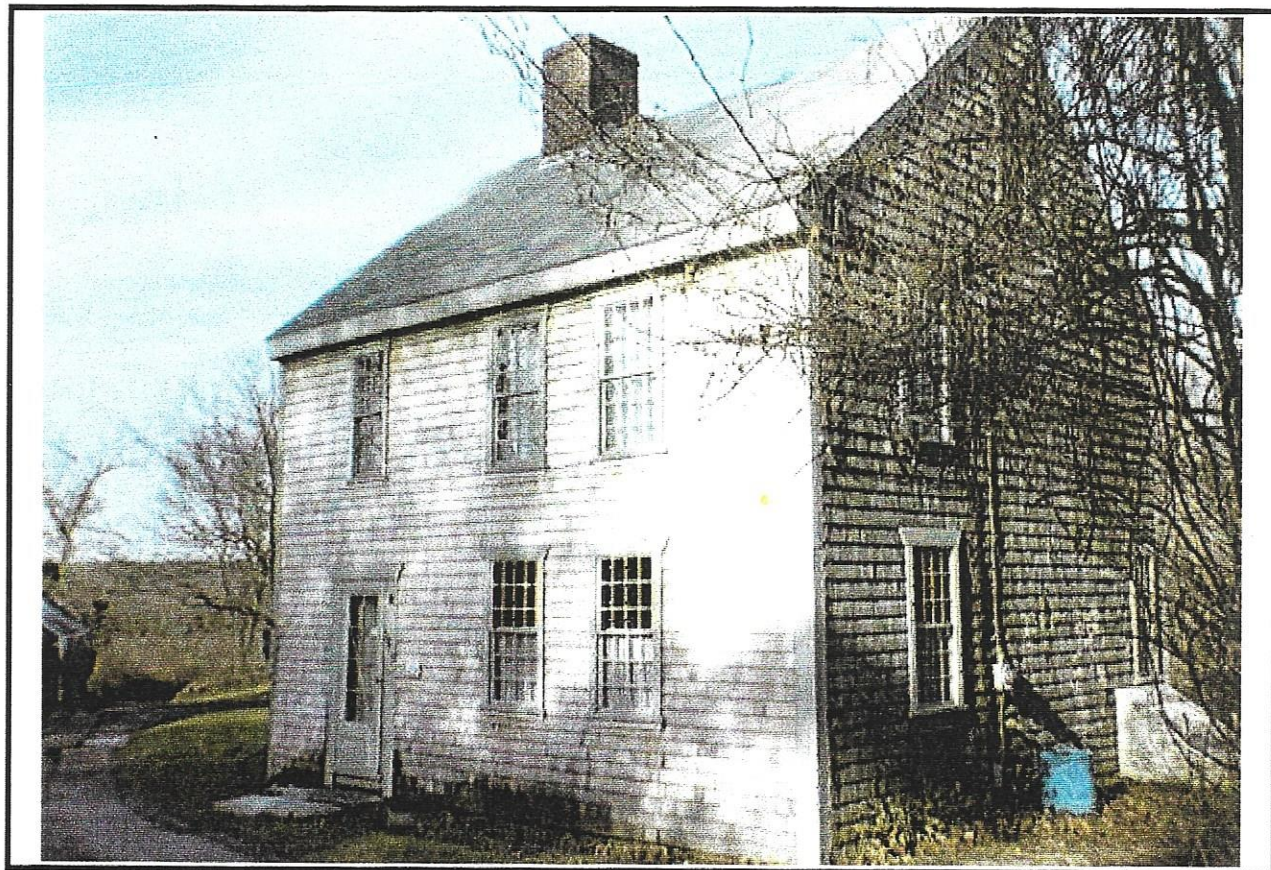


Hull



The Tuckers  
of Old Dartmouth  
by  
Kathleen Fair

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February 1998



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

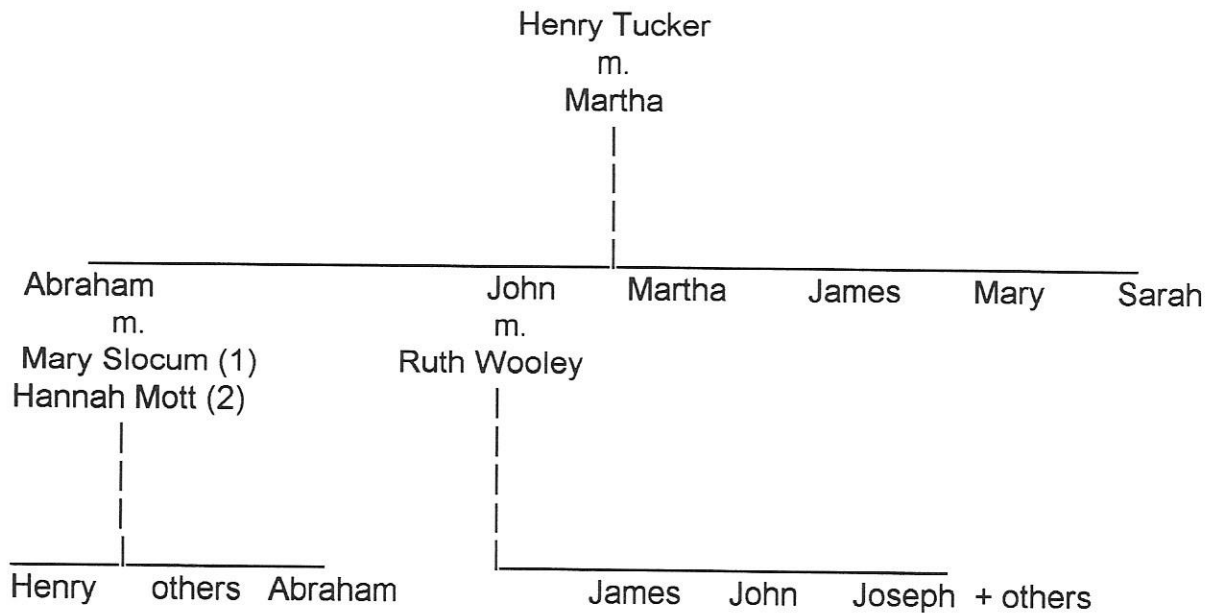
## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

What was once Old Dartmouth is today the city of New Bedford and the towns of Dartmouth, Westport, Acushnet, and Fairhaven. This corner of Massachusetts that borders Rhode Island has a history different from that of the rest of the state. Quaker families such as the Tucker Family gave the area a character that sets it apart from the surrounding communities. Throughout the history of Dartmouth, the Tucker family helped shape the growth and development of the area, and they, in turn, were shaped by that growth. In many ways, the history of the Tucker family is an excellent reflection of the history of Dartmouth.

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree

### Part I



Note: Each family tree begins with the original Henry Tucker. When the tree lists " + others," it generally is referring to daughters or to sons who did not have children. "Others" might also refer to sons who left the Dartmouth area. These family trees are not meant to be inclusive; they are meant to help the reader kept track of which Tuckers are being referred to in that section.



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## *The Founding of Dartmouth*

### *First Generation: Henry Tucker*

In 1652 a group of thirty-six people from the Plymouth Colony purchased the almost 120,000 acres of land (more than 185 square miles), that became known as Old Dartmouth, from Massasoit, the chief Sachem of the Wampanoag tribe. The purchasers paid in a variety of goods including thirty yards of cloth, twenty two pounds of wampum, an iron kettle, shoes and socks. Apparently, these investors bought the land for its speculative value and not for settlement because only three of the purchasers moved to the area. Relatives of nine others, however, built homes in Old Dartmouth. The other twenty four purchasers resold the land for a profit.

The region was divided into thirty-two equal sections. Each purchaser was a shareholder with four people having only half shares. Each had an equal say in running the area and an equal share in any profits. None of them had the surname of Tucker. The Tuckers purchased their first land in Old Dartmouth about 17 years later when Henry Tucker bought one third of a share.

Henry Tucker was probably born in Devonshire, England around 1619. He left England between 1645 and 1650 and settled in the Puritan settlement of Milton in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1651 he married a woman only known in the records as Martha. Although, some records indicate that they were married in a Society of Friends ceremony, it is possible, but unlikely. Most historians believe the first Quakers arrived in Massachusetts in 1656. It does seem likely, however, that the couple were among the first Quakers in the colony.

George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends (the term Quaker was originally a derisive term), began preaching his ideas in England around 1647. He did not intend to break from the Church of England. He, like the Puritans, wanted

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

to change or reform the state or Anglican Church. Both the Puritan faction and the Anglican faction of the Church reacted negatively towards Fox's teachings. Not surprisingly, some of the Society members fled England to come to the 'the new world' in hopes of finding religious freedom. Whether Henry Tucker was a member of the Society of Friends before he came to Milton cannot be determined from available records. Women, attracted by the emphasis on equality, were some of the first members of this religious sect. Therefore, it is possible that Henry's wife Martha introduced him to the teachings of George Fox.

After their marriage, Henry and Martha continued to live in Milton. Their first son, Abraham, was born in 1653; a second son, John, was born in 1656. These two men were to become important citizens of Old Dartmouth. A daughter, Martha, was born in 1659, and Hannah was born in 1662. However, by the 1660's the family's religious leanings were causing them problems. The governments of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Plymouth colony began to actively persecute the members of the Society of Friends. In 1655 the General Court in Plymouth ordered that "...no Quaker be entertained by any person or persons within their government under penalty of five pounds for every such default or be whipped." (W. S. Allen, p. 15)

Puritans were expected to pay taxes to support the local Church. In 1664 the Puritan minister in Milton, Samuel Torrey, seized cord wood from Henry Tucker and sold it for his own profit in Boston because, apparently, Tucker would not or did not pay his taxes. Eventually, Henry Tucker and family moved to Sandwich in the Plymouth colony sometime after 1664. A number of other Quakers were living there including the Howland family, the Gifford family, the Allen family and the Wing family. Sandwich was the site of the first organized Society of Friends Meeting.

Martha and Henry Tucker's son James (born 1666) and daughter Mary (born 1668) were most likely born on the Cape. However, the family then left the Cape



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

and settled briefly in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Rhode Island was a very attractive place to settle since it was the first colony to give religious freedom to all faiths and denominations. The stay in Rhode Island may not have been a long one since in 1669 Henry Tucker purchased 1/3 of one of the original shareholder's section of Old Dartmouth for 15 pounds. Peter Brown, one of the shareholders, sold his land to Matthew Allen of Sandwich: Matthew Allen sold a third of that land to Henry Tucker. Most of the Tucker share was located in the area between what is today Old Westport Road, Allen Street, Slocum Road and Hathaway Road. This land is to the west of the Acushnet River.

Three groups of people formed the original settlers of Old Dartmouth: Puritans from the Plymouth Colony, members of the Society of Friends from the area of Sandwich on the Cape, and Friends from the Portsmouth area of Rhode Island. The Tuckers had ties to two of those three groups. Giles Slocum, a Quaker from Rhode Island, purchased his share of Old Dartmouth in 1659, but did not settle in the region until later. In 1664 when the town was organized and incorporated, there were 10 families in the region. Most were living east of the Acushnet River. The Quakers who began to buy land at this time tended to purchase land on the west side of the Acushnet River.

Local legend talks of a day when Henry Tucker was walking along an Indian trail that lead from Plymouth to Newport. (Parts of this trail are now incorporated into Hathaway Road and Old Westport Road as well as the lane known as King's Highway running though the Gidley [Tucker] Farm property.) Along this trail he found a spring and decided that this would be a good place to build his home. Henry erected a one-room home at that spot that was to become the center of the Tucker land holdings. By 1671 the Tucker family was living in the area, or at least Henry was, for Henry was appointed one of five surveyors in Old Dartmouth. It is possible that Martha remained in Rhode Island for a while after Henry became a

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

resident of Dartmouth.

As a town surveyor, Henry Tucker helped to lay out the town and to deal with boundaries that seemed to be a major concern for the community as it was beginning to organize itself. He certainly did not participate in the militia that was organized in 1673, but he probably took part in the first Town Meeting that was held May 22, 1674. At that time the participants in the Town Meeting decided that future Town Meetings would begin at 10:00 in the morning and that latecomers should be fined 3 pence an hour. Absentees were to be fined 1 shilling 6 pence. The town clerk got to keep one half of the fine for his work.

In 1674 Henry and Martha's last child, Sarah, was born, and Henry continued to accumulate land in the Old Dartmouth area. Eventually he owned Pasque Island as well as land in Padanaram and land along Hawthorn Street to what is now Buttonwood Park, in addition to the original grant centered along what is now Tucker Road. In 1675 with the outbreak of King Philip's War and the attack on Dartmouth, it is possible that the Tucker family lost its home.

During the Indian attack at the end of July 1675, residents of Old Dartmouth congregated in several local homes (called garrisons) for protection. John Russell's Garrison, that was located at the head of Apponegansett harbor, withstood a day long siege. If the Tuckers went to one of the garrisons, it is most likely that this was the place they stayed. However, Jesse Tucker points out in a letter in 1883 that Henry's eldest daughter Martha died in September of 1675 in Newport. He speculated that the women of the Tucker family went to Newport for safety. Since it was impossible for all of the residents of Old Dartmouth to crowd into the three garrison homes, it is probable that some residents moved out of the area.

Whether the Tucker women and children spent time in Newport during King Philip's war or not, there was an attack on the community. The amount of damage actually caused by the Indian attack in late July and August 1675 is difficult to



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ascertain. Only four residents of Old Dartmouth died, but the town claimed that most homes were destroyed. As a result of this claim, it got a three year exemption from paying taxes to Plymouth. Then the rebuilding process began.

For Henry Tucker, rebuilding meant more than just rebuilding a house. It also meant expanding his holdings. In 1684 Henry and George Babcock were given permission from Town Meeting to build the first of a number of mills at Smith Mills. Henry received 800 acres for building the grist mill and another 200 acres in 1692. This mill was the first of five mills at Smith Mills, and all notices of town meetings were to be posted at this spot. As more and more roads were laid out in the town, Henry Tucker continued to act as one of the town surveyors.

By 1693 Henry Tucker gave the land and the mill at Smith Mills to his eldest son, Abraham, and in 1693 Henry made his will. This will was probated after his death on April 12, 1694. In it, Henry gave his wife Martha the sum of 12 pounds a year, one feather bed and her clothing. His daughter, Sarah, who was unmarried and had no portion, was to get three score pounds (60 pounds). At some point, Sarah moved to Sandwich on the Cape for that is where she died. Abraham's son, Henry, was to get one-half of his grandfather's lands when he turned 21 or at Martha's death, whichever was latest. Abraham's four daughters by Mary Slocum were to get 10 pounds each when they reached the age of sixteen. If any of the girls died before the age of sixteen, her sisters were to split the extra 10 pounds equally. Henry's son-in-law Nathaniel Slocum, husband of Hannah, was to get 20 pounds in money or the equivalent in goods. Samuel Perry, husband of Mary Tucker, was to get 20 pounds in money which had to be paid within 6 months. The Rhode Island Meeting was to get the sum of 5 pounds (the Dartmouth Meeting had not yet been organized). The rest of Henry Tucker's estate was to go to his "beloved " son John who also served as executor of the will. Henry's eldest son, Abraham was only to get 30 pounds in money or cattle. Also, according to Henry's

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descendent, Jesse Tucker, he left two Bibles. At a time when books were rare, having two Bibles was exceptional. One of those Bibles was still in Jesse Tucker's possession in 1883.

## **Establishing a Town**

### ***Second Generation: Abraham***

Henry Tucker's death came at a time when the nature of Old Dartmouth was changing. The first settlement of this once frontier community had been successful, and the area was beginning to struggle with other issues. The most pressing issue was the relationship between religion and government. Now that Old Dartmouth was more organized, the government of the Plymouth Colony expected local residents to conform to religious policy. Members of the Society of Friends such as John and Abraham Tucker were organizing Dartmouth Monthly Meeting and found it difficult to comply with taxes for support of a Puritan minister and with compulsory military service. This second generation of Tuckers in Dartmouth were prominent figures in the struggle between religious freedom and government regulation.

Abraham Tucker, the eldest son of Henry and Martha Tucker, was born in 1653 and so was in his late teens at the time his father bought the land in Old Dartmouth and settled there. While Abraham appears to some to be less prominent than his younger brother, he and his children play an important role in the history of Dartmouth. Since he married twice and had a total of twelve children, he had a number of descendants who could influence the town's development.

Abraham Tucker married Mary Slocum on 30 October 1679. She was the daughter of Giles Slocum, one of the Quakers from Rhode Island who settled in Old



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Dartmouth. The main Slocum land was to the east of the Tucker land, and Slocum Road gets its name from the family. At the time of their marriage, Mary was recorded as living in Rhode Island. It may have been that Giles Slocum and others left families in the more settled Portsmouth as they built homes in the more rural and frontier-like Old Dartmouth. Abraham's and Mary's first child, Henry, was born in 1680. Mary was born in 1682. Twin girls, Martha and Patience, were born in 1686, and the last child, Abigail, was born in 1688. Mary died sometime after her last child was born.

On November 26, 1690, Abraham married Hanna Mott. Hanna was Mary Slocum's niece. Hanna (who could not write her name--on a land transfer in 1712, she just made her mark) had 7 children between 1691 and 1704; six were girls, and one was a son named Abraham.

Abraham Tucker in the 1690's, before his father's death, did get control of the grist mill and surrounding land from his father. George Babcock's son sold Abraham his interest in the mill, and so for a while Abraham was the sole owner of that property. It is possible that along with the mill, Abraham got some or all of the 1000 acres that went with the mill. Most historians agree that Abraham owned land to the east of what is now Tucker Road, while John inherited the land on the west side of the road. Abraham also owned land in the area of Padanaram. A 1711 survey of Old Dartmouth by Benjamin Crane indicated that Abraham and John Tucker jointly owned a stretch of land on the northwest side of the neck between Clarks Cove and the Acushnet River. That land today would be west of Brock Avenue and begin about Woodlawn Street and include part of Hazelwood Park. Abraham's son Henry owned an area of land on the east side of Brock Avenue that was further south than his father's and uncle's property.

Each of the original shareholders in Old Dartmouth had a section of land near the shoreline in addition to land away from the coast. Abraham owned land

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

that was bordered on the west by Apponegansett Harbor, on the north by what is today Memorial Drive, and on the east by Rockland Street known as the "Neck" Road and extending almost to Prospect Street on the south. He also owned that that bordered the western side of Clark's Cove. The northern boundary of that land was the present day Rogers Street; the western boundary was Dartmouth Street. This land extended through most of the area known today as Sol-e-mar. Yet, Abraham Tucker never lived on this land. It was developed and sold by his heirs. Thus, Abraham was a substantial landowner in Dartmouth. He probably had been given some of the land by Henry in the 1670's or 1680's, and he undoubtedly purchased more for himself. The records are unclear. He did at one time buy four acres of meadowland south of Gulf Road. He paid the sum of 8 pounds for this parcel. Deed records indicate that he bought close to 200 acres in Dartmouth between 1686 and 1714.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, Abraham sold some of his land to his brother John. In 1712 he sold John about 20 acres of saltmarsh on the east side of Apponegansett Harbor. The price was 30 pounds. Two years later he sold John, who was recorded as husbandman on the deed, an additional acre for 20 shillings (one pound)

As well as being a substantial landowner in Old Dartmouth (and, according to H. H. H. Crapo Smith, the owner of the first pair of boots in the area), Abraham Tucker was an important member of the local Society of Friends. Until the 1690's there was no Dartmouth Monthly Meeting. Quaker meetings were held in homes of local residents and formal meetings were held in Rhode Island. Records of Dartmouth members of the Society of Friends before 1700 are held by the Rhode Island Monthly Meeting. In 1698 local Quakers decided to build their own meeting house. Abraham Tucker was one of the group of men who pledged money and support for the building of this Meeting House. Abraham and his younger brother

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

John each gave 10 pounds. Only Peleg Slocum, Abraham's brother-in-law who donated the land for the Meeting House, gave more.

The original meeting house, which was on the site of the current Apponegansett Meeting House, was to be thirty-five feet long and thirty feet wide. This was close to twice the size of the Town Hall that had been constructed in the Smith Mills area in 1686. The Quaker Meeting House was completed in 1699. Despite its size, an addition was needed by 1712, and Abraham Tucker met with carpenters about that addition. However, Abraham was seemingly not as active in the affairs of the Meeting as his brother John who served as Clerk of the Meeting for many years.

Abraham died in 1725 at age 72 or 73, leaving an estate worth 837 pounds, 12 shillings, and 5 pence, according to family records. His younger son Abraham, aged 27, was the executor of his will rather than his oldest son Henry, then 44. Abraham Jr. got his father's homestead and house, while Henry got Abraham's share of Pasque Island and other lands in town.

Abraham seemed to have lived a quiet, productive life as the husband of two women (Hanna died in 1730) and father of eleven surviving children. While his two sons lived in Dartmouth, many of Abraham's daughters seemed to marry men from other areas. Patience married a man named Wooley and moved to Shrewsbury, New Jersey, where John Tucker was living. Martha married a man from Portsmouth, Rhode Island; Abigail married Joseph Chase of Swansea. Elizabeth married James Barker who was originally from Rhode Island. Content married Benjamin Wing of Dartmouth, and Ruth was the third wife of Nicholas Davis of Rochester. They moved to New York. Hannah married James Green of Warwick, Rhode Island. Edward Tucker in the late nineteenth century wrote that he found records of 48 known grandchildren of Abraham and estimated that there easily could be 10,000 descendants of Abraham living in 1896. In addition to being

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

survived by his children and grandchildren, Abraham Tucker was survived by his brother, John.

## ***Second Generation: John***

John Tucker, who inherited half of his father Henry's land, played a much more prominent role in the Society of Friends' affairs than did his brother. He also had a longer life than his brother. John Tucker lived to the age of 95.

Born on June 28, 1656, John married Ruth Wooley in February 1688. Ruth was originally from Newport, but records show that at the time of her marriage she was living in Shrewsbury, New Jersey. Apparently several families from the Rhode Island area migrated to Shrewsbury. John's sister Hannah Tucker married Nathaniel Slocum (probably the brother of Abraham's first wife) and died in 1702 in Shrewsbury, New Jersey. Just when John went to New Jersey and when John and his family came back is not clear from the available records. Some records say that they returned before Henry Tucker died in 1693; others say that they were living in New Jersey at the time of his death.

John Tucker was living in Shrewsbury in 1680 because on 4 January he and Mary Potter announced their intention to marry in front of the Society of Friends Meeting. Shortly thereafter, Mary decided not to marry him, and despite being visited by a number of women from the Meeting, she never gave a satisfactory explanation of her refusal to marry John. She was judged, condemned and expelled by the Society of Friends, and went on to marry someone else. Albeit 'unlucky in love,' John Tucker stayed in Shrewsbury and began purchasing land. In 1684 he bought 500 acres for what the deed says was a "valuable sum of money." After his marriage to Ruth Wooley in 1688 and before he returned to Dartmouth, he bought additional land in the Shrewsbury area. This time it was 560 acres at a price of 120



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pounds.

It is certain that by late 1693 John Tucker, his wife Ruth and three children, Ruth, Hannah and James, were living in Old Dartmouth. John Junior was born there in 1695 and Joseph was born about a year later. The family originally lived in the home built by Henry Tucker, but after the children were grown, John completed a two and a half story house which was in front of, and perhaps attached to, the original home. As soon as the family arrived in Old Dartmouth, they began holding Quaker meetings in their home. Along with his brother Abraham, John pledged 10 pounds for the building of the Dartmouth Meeting House in 1698.

In 1699, just about the time the Meeting House was completed, Thomas Story visited the area. Story was a well known Quaker associate of William Penn and eventually became important in various activities in Philadelphia. In the late seventeenth century he traveled throughout New England meeting with and talking to various members of the Society of Friends. He reported in his journal that he stopped at the house of John Tucker before going to the new Meeting House. He also noted that Mr. Tucker had almost lost his voice that day because of a cold.

John Tucker took an active role in Meeting and served as the first Clerk of the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting-- a position that he held for almost 52 years. He kept the records. In 1703 he was one of several members who was chosen to "inspect into the lives and conversations of Friends" (Crapo-Smith p. 23). The issues of taxation and military service, however, posed serious problems for John Tucker and other Quakers in the town.

In 1708 Deliverance Smith, who was a Selectman in Dartmouth, refused to collect the 60 pounds in tax money called the "Queen's Tax." This tax was to be used to pay for a minister for the town. In addition to helping other members of the Society of Friends run Smith's farm and look after his family, John Tucker was appointed to go to Boston to meet with the General Court and get Smith's release.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

He returned to say that Deliverance Smith was to be released only when the tax was paid.

This argument over a tax-supported minister was not new. Most of the time, local residents just ignored the messages to pay the tax. In 1724 the colonial government of Massachusetts took and sold a horse and a heifer from John Tucker's property on the Elizabeth Islands because he refused to contribute to the building of a church in Chilmark. The horse was valued at 10 pounds and the heifer at 2 pounds 10 shillings. At one point Nathaniel Howland, a Quaker, offered to serve as Old Dartmouth's minister for free; an offer ignored by Boston. In 1724 Old Dartmouth refused to pay 100 pounds to support a minister, but voted to spend up to 700 pounds to resist paying.

In 1709 John Tucker and five other Quakers in Old Dartmouth refused to serve in a militia, which was being formed to fight in Canada. When given the option to pay to be released from service, they also refused. The six men ended up in front of the Governor of the Colony who sent them home without having to serve or to pay. In 1711 John Tucker saw his son spend a month in prison in Boston because the young man refused to serve in the state militia.

These conflicts which resulted from the strong convictions of Quakers such as John Tucker eventually lead the town of Old Dartmouth to consider seceding from Massachusetts in 1742. A vote was taken to see if the area should become part of Rhode Island. This was favored by the Quakers who lived west of the Acushnet River in what is today Westport, Dartmouth and New Bedford, but the vote was strongly opposed by the non Quakers who lived in what is now Fairhaven.

One other issue on which Quakers disagreed with many of their neighbors was the issue of slavery. In 1716 when slavery was an accepted fact of life in the colonies, Dartmouth Monthly Meeting began to question the ownership of slaves. Whether John or his brother Abraham ever owned a slave is not known. Their

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sister Mary Tucker, born 1668, inherited two slaves named Abraham and Domine who were worth 130 pounds when her husband Samuel Perry died in 1713. Several months later, Mary Tucker Perry died and gave each of her sons one of the slaves. John Tucker's son Joseph did own at least one slave, for Edward Tucker talked about an area of Tucker Land off of Chace Road where the a freed Tucker slave lived out his life. Yet, by the time the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting made an effort to convince all members to free their slaves in 1772, no Tuckers in the town owned slaves.

John Tucker died 21 July 1651. At the time of his death Dartmouth Monthly Meeting records refer to him as an "ancient and noted friend." He had outlived his son John who died in 1730. John Jr. had been appointed in 1723 to assist his father as the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting but only served for 7 years. Another son, James, had moved to New Jersey and was living there with his family. It was John Tucker's son Joseph who inherited the property and house built by his father.

James Tucker, who had been born in Shrewsbury, New Jersey in 1691 married Leah Wilbur in 1717. They moved to John Tucker's land in Shrewsbury where they built a house in 1719. When his father died, James inherited the land in New Jersey as well as 105 pounds from his father's estate. John also left him the "feather bed in the southeastern corner of the new chamber," one bolster, 2 pillows, one quilt, one coverlet, 3 blankets, 3 sheets along with the bedstead, curtains, valance, curtain rods, bolster cover and 2 pillow cases. James was to have one chest and choice of two pewter platters, 6 plates, and 6 silver spoons to be given to his children. In March of 1753, after learning of his father's death, James wrote to his brother Joseph in Dartmouth giving him instructions on how to get the inheritance to him in New Jersey. He wrote that "a sloop a going from hence into your harbor ponagansett and so now brother thou may with little trouble put all money and the other things that is given me according to father's will on board the

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said sloop." James also asks for a copy of the will, for "Indeed I cannot well think how or which way father came to be so deceived in his judgment to given thee two thirds of his real and personal estate and to me one third." In a postscript, James revealed how difficult it was to hear about family when he wrote "my kind love and respect with my wife to mother if she is living." (Tucker Collection (ODHS).

Ruth Wooley Tucker was still living but was described in her husband's will as being unable to care for herself. The responsibility of looking after her was given to Joseph who inherited his father's share of Pasque Island, the lands, meadows, cedar swamps in Dartmouth and the rest of his father's "goods and chattel" except for the legacy to James and a legacy to a Joanna Mott, daughter of Jacob Mott of Portsmouth. John gave her more than 13 pounds in recognition of her service as she had been brought up with him. Joseph, along with his cousins Henry and Abraham, became one of the shapers of eighteenth century Dartmouth.



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## *Dartmouth in the Eighteenth Century*

### *The Third and Fourth Generation of Tuckers*

Henry, Abraham Jr., and Joseph Tucker were all born in the seventeenth century. However, they and their children reflect the concerns and changes that occurred in Dartmouth in the eighteenth century. In the early 1700's the town was still developing as a farming community and struggling with issues such as the relationship between church and state. Massachusetts was still trying to enforce religious conformity on the citizens of Old Dartmouth. By the end of the century, Old Dartmouth had split into three towns-- Dartmouth, Westport and New Bedford. New Bedford began to develop into a whaling center, and commercial interests in the area were growing. While there were still many Quakers in the region, other groups were beginning to populate the region. Some people were leaving or being told to leave the Society of Friends.

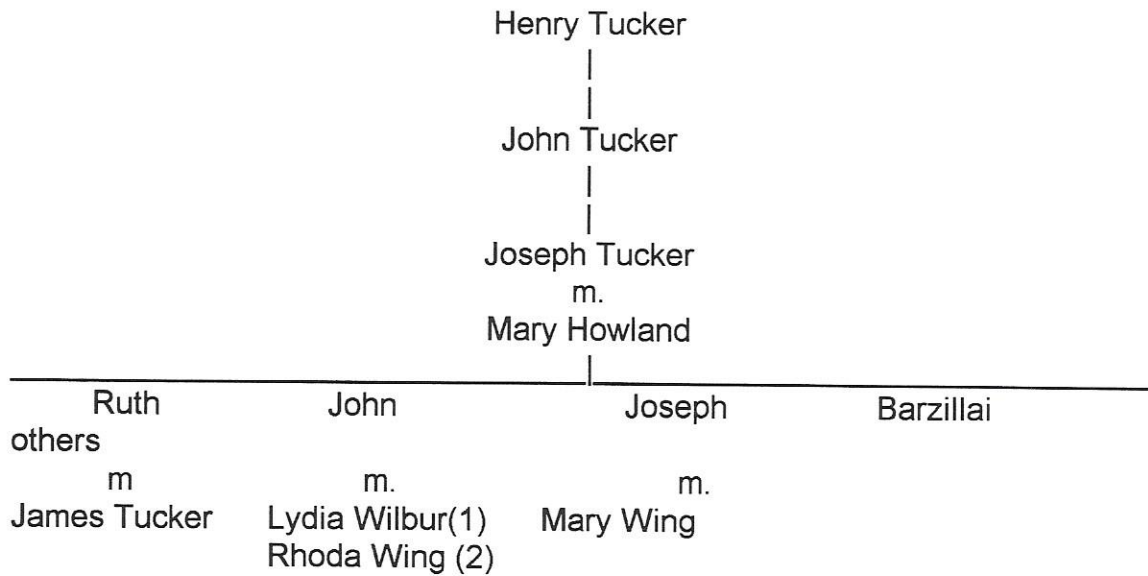
### *Descendants of John*

Joseph Tucker, the youngest son of John Tucker, lived a relatively quiet life. He married Mary Howland, daughter of Nicholas Howland of Dartmouth, in 1720. They had nine children, three boys and 6 girls. The eldest daughter, Ruth, probably named for her grandmother, was born in 1721, and in 1747 she married James Tucker, son of her father's cousin, Abraham Tucker. Martha, born 1734, married Timothy Gifford in 1755. Edith married Edward Wing of Sandwich in 1766 when she was 19 years old. Her daughter Mehitable, according to family legend, married a man known as Dr. Tucker, but this was thought to be an alias. This supposed Doctor left her after spending her inheritance, but Mehitable eventually remarried and settled near Sandwich.

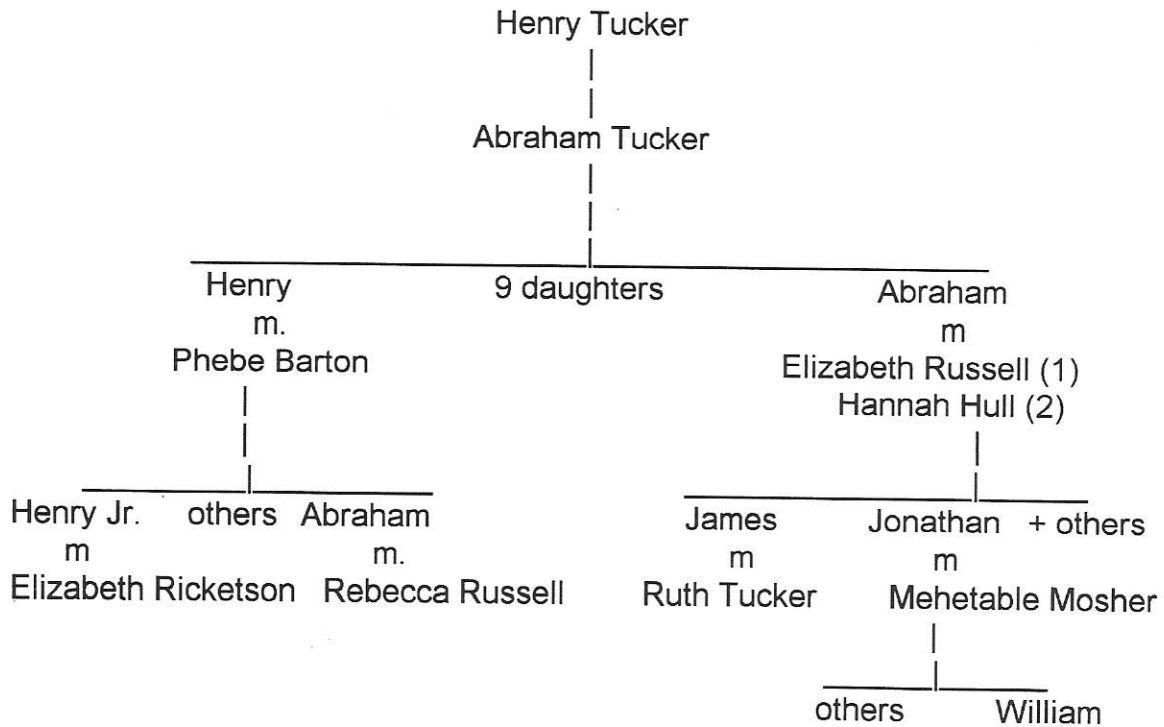
# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree

### Part II



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## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Joseph continued to follow Society of Friends traditions, but in 1754, when Newtown Meeting House was built north of Smith Mills, he began to attend that Meeting rather than Apponegansett. In 1760 when a number of local Quakers were refusing military services (in the French and Indian War) and were imprisoned in Taunton for that refusal, Joseph Tucker along with Job Russell got them released. Local Quakers raised money to relieve the suffering of people in Boston due to a fire. Upon receiving the money, the government in Boston released the imprisoned protesters in exchange for the money.

Joseph does not seem to play the same type of role his father did in the Society of Friends, however, and was not as prominent in the town. However, he was elected Moderator of Town Meeting in 1739, and in the same year he was reimbursed by the town for helping Sarah Russell. For that aid, he received one pound ten shillings from the town treasury. Joseph also served the town as fence viewer. This position (which still exists in the twentieth century) was very important to citizens in the eighteenth century. Old Dartmouth's fence viewers checked boundary disputes and made sure that fences were kept in good order so that livestock could not escape and destroy neighboring fields.

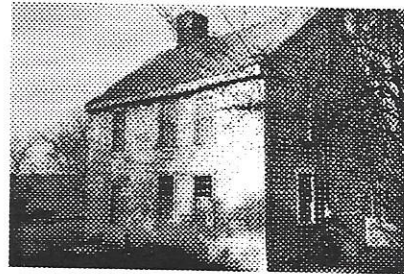
Joseph's sons, John, Joseph Jr. and Barzillai were more colorful and prominent citizens of Old Dartmouth than their father. When Joseph died in 1790 he left his son John all his land on the "west side of the road" (Tucker Road); Joseph Jr. got all the land his father bought from the Russell family, while Barzillai got the land on the east side of Tucker Road. Each of his five daughters got 76 pounds. Hannah and Mary, referred to as spinsters, were to make their home with their unmarried brother, Barzillai. Both women died in 1799.

John Tucker, born in 1731, also began attending Newtown Meeting around 1754. Eventually, he served as an Elder and was active in Dartmouth

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Monthly Meeting. John married twice. His first wife was Lydia Wilbur of Rhode Island, a descendent of a Samuel Wilbur who got into trouble in the early years of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for following the teachings of Anne Hutchinson. Her family moved to Rhode Island for religious freedom. Lydia's father, Samuel Wilbur, was also related by marriage to William Bradford of Plymouth.

John and Lydia had two children, Ruth and Esther, before Lydia's death. In October of 1769, John married Rhoda Wing of Dartmouth and had four children with her: John, born 1771, Lydia, born 1774, James, born 1777, and Benjamin, born 1782. John and his family lived in the farmhouse built by his grandfather John on Tucker Road.



John had some involvement in town government generally serving as the Surveyor of Highways in the Dartmouth region of Old Dartmouth. His great grandfather, the original Henry Tucker, had held this position as did several other relatives. In fact, in 1775 John and his younger brother Joseph Tucker Jr. were both appointed Surveyors of the Highways. The holders of this position apparently were responsible for laying out of area roads and seeing that they were maintained. John did not seem to hold any other town offices, however.

Continuing the family tradition, John did some buying and selling of land. There were some transfers of land such as one in July 1791 when John and his brother Barzillai divided a strip of land that ran between the "highway" (Tucker Road) and the Pasquemanset [sic]. He and his heirs owned and controlled the homestead farm of the original Henry Tucker; his descendants still own that farm today.

As John aged, he lost his hair. Family members remember him as being



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

short and very bald with only a little hair in a rim above and behind his ears. Inside the house, he used to wear a white cap to keep his head warm. In 1791, his eldest son, John Jr., aged 20, died suddenly. One family member in the nineteenth century said that it was because young John was bathing in the river one day in the summer. He died the following night. Another said that he died from hemorrhaging of the lungs while haying and adds that one daughter of John Sr. had already died of consumption.

John Tucker made his will in 1810 and died in 1820 without changing it. His wife Rhoda got the use of a clock, which after her death would go to their son Benjamin. She got the use of a silver tankard, which would then go to their son James, and she got the use of silver spoons, which were to go to her grandchildren. Rhoda also got the family Bible and \$30 a year. His daughters, Esther Tripp and Ruth Barker, by Lydia Wilbur, were each to get \$200. Six grandchildren were to get \$25 each. Grandchildren born after 1810 received nothing. All of his land, including his share of Pasque Island (also known as Tucker Island), was shared by his two surviving sons, James and Benjamin.

John Tucker's younger brother Joseph Jr. was born in 1740. He also began to attend Newtown Meeting house in the 1750's and also served as an Elder in the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting. Joseph married Mary Wing from Sandwich before 1764. They had three children: Edward was born in 1765, Mary born in 1769, and Anna born in 1772.

Joseph had at least three slaves that he may have inherited from his father, Joseph. The slaves were known as Jeremiah, Elisha and Cuffee. Like many other Tuckers at this time, Joseph continued to purchase land in Dartmouth. In 1770 he bought a parcel of salt marsh and meadow, slightly more than one acre, near Allen's Pond. However, he lived on family property in a

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

house south of State Road and east of Tucker Road. This was near a house that his father built earlier in the century and that has since been destroyed.

The most colorful of the three children of Joseph Tucker, Sr. was Barzillai, who was born in 1743. Barzillai, especially as a young man, was more prominent in the Society of Friends than his brothers. John, in fact, is never mentioned in Minutes of Monthly Meetings. Barzillai was remembered for having a quick mind and a gift of "gab" and for being a man of more than ordinary education and abilities.

In 1773 Barzillai was chosen as a Town Constable. This position was a type of law enforcement official. He was excused from that duty presumably because of his religious beliefs. However, in 1776 he was again chosen Constable and refused to serve. This time he was fined, and the amount of the fine was given to the person who served in his place. It is not clear from Town Meeting records just how people were selected to serve as Constable. It is possible that names were chosen by lottery. A member of the Society of Friends would not feel comfortable with this somewhat military type of position and thus, would tend to refuse to serve. At times Town Meeting excused a person from taking the office with no penalty; however, sometimes the person was fined. Barzillai was an example of both situations.

His branch of the Tucker family was not affected much by the American Revolution. The brothers were too old to fight and their sons too young. However, during the war the three brothers, John, Joseph and Barzillai were shearing sheep on Pasque Island. (Apparently the Tuckers used Pasque island as a pasture for sheep rather than for a place to live.) While they were in the process of shearing the sheep, a British warship landed on the island to confiscate "free" food. Barzillai engaged the British in conversation as his brothers continued to shear the sheep. For the Tuckers the wool was important

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

and was a more valuable commodity than the sheep. Eventually, the British did take some of the shorn sheep, but Barzillai got the British to pay him for some of the "stolen" property.

More than his brothers, Barzillai was involved in land transfers in the area. In 1812 he even bought three acres of land with a house on it from a distant cousin for the sum of \$320. He sold his share of land in Cedar Swamp to his brother John for ten pounds sixteen shillings in that same year. He had purchased this land in 1776 from Jacob Chace. (At this time in American history, both systems of coinage were used interchangeably in the Dartmouth area.) Despite the fact that Barzillai never married, he supported the local school in the Smith Mills area and was a one-sixteenth owner of the schoolhouse and school lot. Family legend says that he was the victim of an unhappy love affair, having been in the words of Jesse Tucker "bewitched" by a Mary Olney of Providence, Rhode Island.

Barzillai lived in the area south of State Road and east of Tucker Road, and from 1790 to 1799 he shared that house with his two unmarried sisters, according to the wishes in his father's will. The 1790 Census listed Barzillai as the head of a household of four, including his two sisters. In 1800, census records show that he was the head of a household shared with another male who was between the ages of 25 and 45 and a female over the age of 45.

As he grew older, Barzillai lost his hair, as did his two brothers. However, he also grew "peculiar." He began to do and say unusual things in Meeting. Family records gloss over his "oddities," but there is one reference to his digging holes looking for money. While this behavior does not begin to show up until Barzillai gets older, it did concern his family. His brothers and sisters in the early 1800's, realizing that he was not capable of making a valid will, agreed that they would divide his estate equally among them. Thus, they would be dividing

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

his estate into five equal portions. However, Barzillai outlived all of his siblings, and when he died, there were thirteen heirs, not five. Before they could settle whether there should be five portions or thirteen, one of the thirteen died, which then meant there were nineteen heirs.

In 1832 Barzillai died a relatively wealthy man without leaving a will. His estate was appraised at \$34,885 of which \$34,612 was in real estate. While he had little personal property of value, his land holdings were extensive. One interesting piece of personal property was a clock which had been made in England by William Tomlinson who joined the clockmaker's guild in 1699 and became a master in 1733. Tomlinson was known as a master time keeper. It is believed that this clock originally belonged to Joseph, father of Barzillai. After Barzillai died in 1832, the clock passed into the hands of his niece who had married Prince Allen. An auction in the 1870's eventually brought the clock back to the Tucker family, and it was still owned by a Tucker descendent in the 1920's.

While the heirs might have divided up the personal property without a problem, they appointed Thomas Almy as executor of the estate and ordered him to sell the land for as much as possible. Barzillai's homestead farm was sold to the Ryder family for about \$17,000. A heavily wooded lot off of Kempton Street also sold for \$17,000. Cord wood had sold the previous winter for \$10 to \$12 per cord. The wood was cut and sold and the land was divided into house lots that sold for as much as \$300.

A third parcel of land owned by Barzillai known as Sepontic was surveyed by H. H. Crapo and divided into thirty two lots which ranged in size from 2 to 21 acres. This area was along the Paskemansett south of Russells Mills village. Various people, including William Rotch, paid between several hundred and several thousand dollars for lots of land in this development. Barzillai's heirs got



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

more than \$12,000 from these sales.

Barzillai was the last of the fourth generation descendants of the first Henry Tucker, but he was not the only unusual person in that generation. Descendants of Abraham Tucker were also making a name for themselves in Dartmouth.

## *Descendants of Abraham*

Henry Tucker, grandson of the original Henry and eldest son of Abraham Tucker, was born in Old Dartmouth in 1680. According to his grandfather's will, he inherited half of the estate; the other half was to go to his uncle John. In 1704 he married Phebe Barton of Warwick, Rhode Island, and they built a house on the east side of Tucker Road somewhat north of Henry Sr.'s homestead. According to Benjamin Crane's 1711 survey of Old Dartmouth, this homestead included a house and more than 193 acres. Henry also controlled another 260 acres of land between his homestead and his father's homestead to the south. His father, Abraham, was living in a home which was located on the north side of Allen Street. Crane refers to the whole area where John, Abraham, and Henry Tucker lived in 1711 as Purronoput.

When Henry Tucker married Phebe Barton, her dowry was seven cows. She was not from a Society of Friends family, and her father was known to be a critic of Quakers. Her sister married a man named Jabez Green and became the grandmother of American Revolutionary War hero General Nathaniel Green.

According to H. H. Crapo Smith, this second Henry Tucker living in Old Dartmouth was known as "double row Henry" because he wore two rows of brass buttons on his jacket. Jesse Tucker said in the nineteenth century that the name "double row Henry" came from his having a double row of teeth.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Not until after his father, Abraham, died in 1725 did Henry and his uncle actually divide their inheritance. Henry got the land on the east side of the highway (Tucker Road) while John got the land on the east and to the south. Henry also owned a substantial portion of the Padanaram area inherited from his father. He owned land that stretched from Apponegansett Bay eastward to Rockland Street, roughly between Prospect and Bush Street today. He also owned land on Clark's Neck, the land between the Acushnet River and Clark's Cove. Much of the land in Padanaram was sold by Henry Tucker and his wife Phebe to William and John Ricketson. The Ricketson family ended up being one of the largest landowners in Padanaram. In 1745 Henry sold to Holder Slocum 44 acres of land on the east side of the Apponegansett Bay which included a house, other buildings and fences, along with 4 acres of salt meadow on the west side, for the sum of 300 pounds.

Many of Henry's land sales stayed in the family. To his uncle John in 1726, Henry sold some 20 acres, "more or less with allowances for barren land," on Clark's Neck for the price of 40 pounds. The deed indicated that he inherited the land from his grandfather, and it was part of Henry Sr.'s original 800 acre division as described in Crane's survey. A year later in 1727, Henry sold Joseph Tucker, John's son, three acres of salt meadow known as Boggy Meadow for 45 pounds.

The exact location of many of these sites is difficult to ascertain. In 1741 Henry and his wife Phebe sold 41 acres and a building for 180 pounds. The boundaries in the deed include a maple tree, a heap of stones, a pine bush, a dead pine stump and a "sedar" tree. The deed also mentioned that the property bordered the town house. This locates the property in the Smith Mills area for the first town house or building used for town meeting in the Smith Mills region. Therefore, Henry owned land in Smith Mills, Padanaram, and along Tucker

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Road. One other deed indicated that he owned land along Faunce Corner Road. Thus, he controlled large amounts of land in Old Dartmouth.

More than some of his other relatives, Henry Tucker was active in town government. In 1723 he was one of two Quakers who looked for another Quaker to serve as a school master. He was the Moderator of Town Meeting in 1728 when the town voted to let hogs run wild and when major discussions were being held about the position of School Master in the town. Old Dartmouth felt that each village or area should have a school master who was paid from local tax revenues. The major point of discussion, however, was over reimbursing residents for the boarding (food and lodging) of the school masters. Many of the discussions at Town Meeting revolved around whether town coffers should pay for the "diet" of the teachers or just the families who had children in the Schools should pay for the feeding of the school teachers. Henry's uncle John Tucker was a leader of the side who felt that people without children in the schools should not pay for food for schoolmasters.

This was not the only time Henry served as Moderator. He was elected to this position many times. In 1731 he was appointed as one of the Highway Surveyors in the town. In 1747 a Henry Tucker was excused from serving as one of the Town Constables. Whether this is the same Henry or not is uncertain for it might be his 34 year old son. A Henry Gidley was chosen to replace Henry Tucker. In 1750 "Capt." Henry Tucker refused to serve as Town Constable. John Russell of Mishaum was the replacement. Again, it is unclear which Henry Tucker refused: Henry the father or Henry the son.

Henry Tucker and his wife Phebe had six children. That their eldest son, known as Henry Jr., married Elizabeth Ricketson may have been one of the reasons why his father sold so much land in Padanaram to the Ricketson family. Henry Jr. and Elizabeth had one son and five daughters, and within another

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

generation the Tucker name died out in this branch of the family. Henry's and Phebe's son Benjamin, born 1716, married Lucianna Howland in Newport in August of 1739. They had only daughters. The third son of Henry and Phebe, born in 1718 was to be the founder of an important branch of the Tucker Family in Dartmouth.

Henry's younger brother was named Abraham after their father. (This branch of the Tucker family becomes confusing to follow since many men are named either Henry or Abraham.) Abraham Tucker, son of Abraham, was born in May 1697. He was the only son of his father's second marriage and was seventeen years younger than his older brother, Henry. Abraham lived until 1776, and, like his father, he married twice.

Abraham's first wife was Elizabeth Russell. They were married in March 1721 and had two children before her death in October 1724. A daughter Rebecca was born in 1722, while a son James was born on September 23, 1724. Elizabeth Russell Tucker died 16 days after her son was born. As an adult James married Ruth Tucker, his cousin and the daughter of Joseph Tucker.

Abraham's second marriage took place on February 4, 1728. He married Hanna Hull, a descendent of Mary Dyer, a Quaker martyr. Mary Dyer was hanged by the citizens in Boston because she was a Quaker. Hanna and Abraham together had 12 children, although several did not reach adulthood. Their third child, John, was born in March 1731 but died in June, and in November 1732 another son was born and also named John. A son, Samuel, died within several months of being born, as did a daughter Elizabeth. Of the fourteen children fathered by Abraham Tucker, five died in infancy. Yet Abraham, himself, lived to be seventy-nine.



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

After the death of his first wife, Abraham built a house which was located on the north side of Allen Street between Tucker Road and Slocum Road. Later, his son James built an addition that doubled the size of the house. Eventually, the original part of the house was torn down. James and Ruth Tucker had only one surviving child, Abigail, who was born in 1751. She married Holder Slocum and inherited through her father the eastern half of Abraham Tucker's land. Holder Slocum's ownership, according to tradition, is responsible for the road to the east of Tucker Road being named Slocum Road.

Like other family members, James Tucker was a participant in town affairs. He served as Surveyor of Highways, an office many Tuckers held over the years. He also was appointed fence viewer in 1774 and 1779. In 1770 he was selected to serve as Town Constable, refused to serve and was fined as a result. Yet, while James Tucker was a responsible member of the Tucker Family, his younger brother Jonathan became a problem after Abraham's death.

Abraham continued the family tradition of being active in the Society of Friends. He was an Elder in the Society and served as Treasurer of the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting. When he died in 1776, he was a respected member of the Society of Friends.

In Abraham's will, he gives his "loving son James" the eastern half of the homestead including the building and the orchard, as well as his silver shoe buckles and cane. To his widow, Hannah, who lived until 1787, he left the use of the great room and the chamber overhead and 20 pounds a year in money. Her son, Jonathan, was to provide her every year with the following items: 15 bushels of Indian Corn, 100 weight of Flour, 20 pounds good brown sugar, 10 gallons molasses, 200 pounds good beef, 200 pounds good pork, 20 pounds flax, 20 pounds sheep wool, 20 pounds tallow, one bushel salt and 10 cords of wood, as well as the use of 2 cows and a saddle horse and one-half of all

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

household goods. Hanna also had the right to get fruit from the orchard. (Tucker family papers) Jonathan, Abraham's youngest son, was the sole executor of the will and the inheritor of the rest of his father's property.

In addition to caring for his mother, Jonathan was to care for his two surviving spinster sisters, Joanna and Rebecca. His sister, Rebecca, from his father's first marriage, had married Francis Allen in 1742 and moved away from home. Abraham and Hanna named a daughter born in 1743, Sarah; she married Lithun Wood on December 3, 1761 and died in July 1771. Abraham and Hanna had two more daughters, one born in 1745 named Rebecca (the second Rebecca in the family) and Joanna, born in 1749. These two never married, and as adults they were to be taken care of by their younger brother Jonathan who was born in 1751 when his father was 54 years old.

In June of 1771 Jonathan married Mehetebel Mosher and seemed, at the time of his father's death in 1776, to be a responsible citizen. However, later family members commented that he was a poor manager, unstable and expensive in habits. (Tucker family papers) Jonathan, in fact, was disowned in Dartmouth Monthly Meeting apparently for intoxication. During the Revolutionary War the Meeting was also concerned that Jonathan was dealing with Prize goods. This probably meant smuggled goods or goods taken from captured British ships. By the time his mother made her will in 1785, she went to the Monthly Meeting and asked for a group of members to help oversee her will since she did not trust her son to do the job.

In March of 1784 Jonathan sold 17 acres of land with the adjoining salt meadows and beaches to his two spinster sisters. This land was located along the west side of Clark's Cove, south of Rogers Street. It included the current Jones Beach area and Hidden Bay. In April 1775 he sold for more than 200 pounds another 125 acres of land in the Padanaram area that he had inherited

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

from his father. Finally in June 1785, he sold off the homestead farm (the one in which his mother was to have use of the great room and the chamber overhead) to Joshua Howland for more than 400 pounds and, he then moved in with his two sisters.

In May 1784 Jonathan was confined to jail for not paying his taxes. Records do not say why he did not pay his taxes. It is unclear if the non payment was due to principles or carelessness. One of the issues on the agenda for May's Town Meeting was Jonathan. While he was in jail for not paying taxes, the taxes were still not being paid. A suggestion was made that a group of citizens should see about releasing Jonathan from jail and confiscating enough of his property to cover the taxes. Town Meeting said that this would not set a good precedent and turned down the proposal. In October 1796 Jonathan Tucker was still confined to prison for not paying taxes. He asked Town Meeting to release him from prison and at a meeting on October 9, 1786, the citizens voted not to free him. The taxes must have eventually been paid, perhaps by a family member, for Jonathan at some point got out of jail.

Jonathan Tucker was listed in the 1790 census as head of a household of seven. This included four adult women (women over the age of 16) and two males under the age of 16. In 1800 his household again consisted of seven. This time there was one male under the age of 5 (David), one between 5 and 15 (William) and one male over 45 (Jonathan himself) Females included one child under 5, one between 5 and 15 (Rebecca?), and a female between the ages of 15 and 25 (Mehetebel?). There is no female over the age of 25 listed on the census. The next column which is for "all other free persons not taxed," has one person marked. This leaves a mystery about Mehetebel. Had she left Jonathan? Or did the census taker make a mistake and mark the wrong column. She outlived her husband, for Jonathan Tucker died in December of 1828 and

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

she died in August 1840.

Born in 1817, Jesse Tucker claimed in a letter to Dr. Edward Tucker that he remembered Mehetebel Mosher Tucker as a nice, motherly old woman. She did not sign the deeds that sold off the family property, but, while living with Jonathan might not have been easy, they had nine children between 1772 and 1795. One daughter, Mehetebel, died before the age of two. The five surviving daughters, Elizabeth, Sarah, Hannah, another Mehetebel and Rebecca were remembered by Jesse as being "worthy." Elizabeth married George Almy of New Bedford in 1793; Sarah married Osman Wood of Dartmouth; Hannah married Isaac Almy. Mehetebel married Job Eddy, and Rebeckah married Abraham Wing of Sandwich.

Jonathan's and Mehetebel's eldest son, Abraham, was disowned by the Monthly Meeting for marrying Mary Ann Sisson of Rhode Island. She was not a member of the Society of Friends and had no intention of joining. He died in 1798 not long after the marriage. They had no children. The youngest son, David, born in 1795, went to sea and was also disowned by Monthly Meeting for his "extravagant use of spirituous liquors" (Tucker family papers). He was disowned in 1823 at the age of 28 and died in 1834. It was the middle son William who might fit the term worthy and who became an example of the changes undergone by the Tucker family and the area in the nineteenth century.



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## *A Changing Community*

### *The Fifth and Sixth Generation*

#### Children of Abraham

In the 1760's Joseph Russell, who had been born on his family's homestead along Apponegansett Bay, bought land along the Acushnet River. He began to sell off this land to men interested in maritime crafts such as ship's caulkers, blacksmiths, and ship builders. Records show that a Benjamin Tucker bought land and was going to build boats. Whether this Tucker is related to the Tucker family of Dartmouth is uncertain. If he is a relation, then he is Benjamin Tucker, son of Abraham Tucker and Rebeckah Russell.

Benjamin Tucker was born in 1741, and at the age of 22, he married Silvia Ricketson. They had three children between 1764 and 1772. Those children were Abraham, Patience, and Phebe H. Tucker. Phebe was to marry a Tucker cousin. Silvia died, perhaps after Phebe's birth in 1772, and Benjamin eventually married again. His second marriage was to Sarah Barney in March 1778. With Sarah, he had three sons and a daughter; Henry, Griffin, Benjamin Jr., and Sarah.

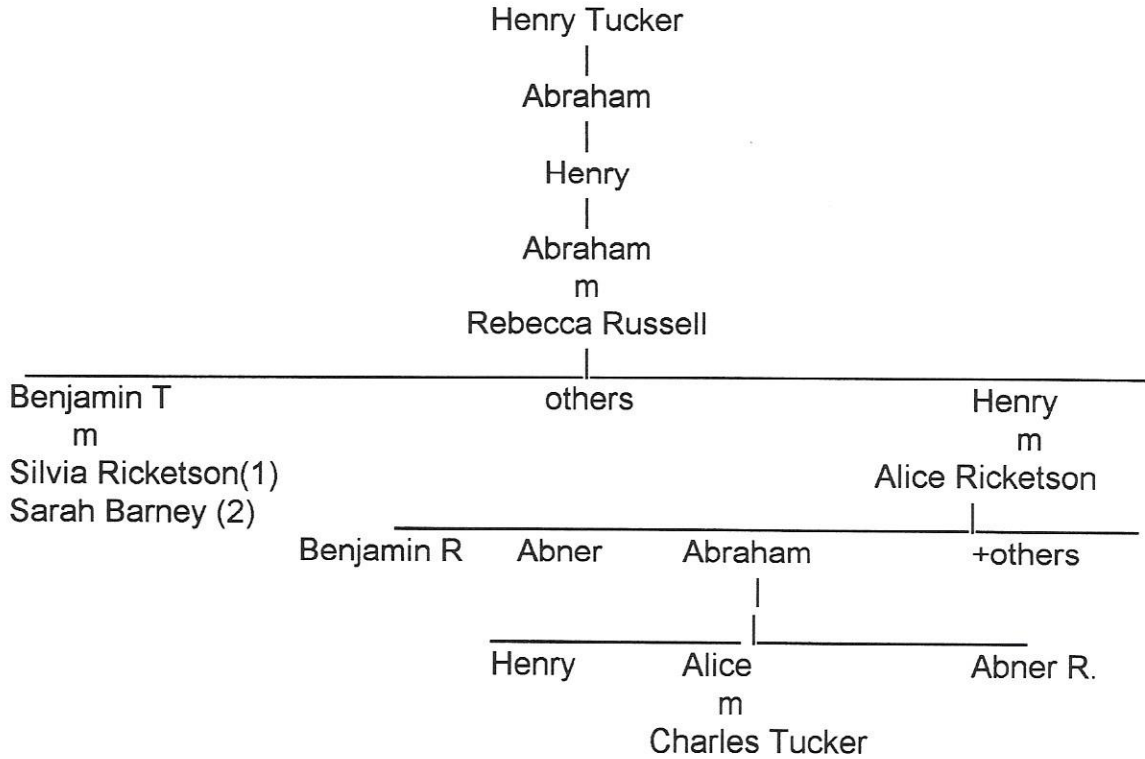
Somewhat active in the community, Benjamin was selected by Old Dartmouth Town Meeting to hold various positions. In 1770 he was selected as a Field Driver. In 1770, along with James Tucker, he served as fence viewer for the Dartmouth region of Old Dartmouth. He also held the job of Surveyor of Roads in 1783.

In 1775 Benjamin Tucker and his younger brother Henry sold all the land on the west side of the road from John Tucker's to the Old Meeting House,

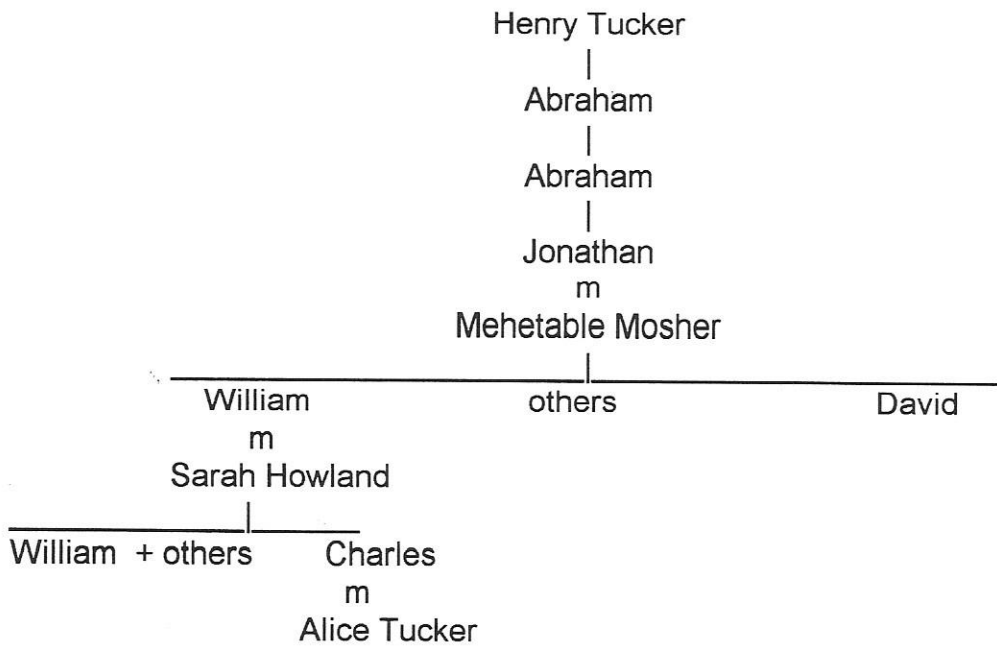
# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree

### Part III



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## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

which had been given to them by their grandfather Henry (known as double row Henry) to John Tucker. This sale seems to indicate that Benjamin was not interested in farming and so perhaps proves that he was more interested in building boats in Bedford Village. However, in another deed, Benjamin bought twenty-two acres of land from his younger brother, Henry. That land was on the east side of Tucker Road and the deed refers to Benjamin as a "yeoman" which was the usual term for farmer. However, Benjamin was definitely overshadowed in Dartmouth by his younger brother, Henry.

Henry, known as Henry Jr. or Henry 2nd, made a very advantageous marriage. Born in 1754, he married Alice Ricketson in 1780 when he was 26 years old. Through that marriage, he gained a great deal of land south of Gulf Road between the Apponegansett Harbor and Bakerville Road. The couple were married by Samuel West, a local minister, perhaps indicating that Henry had broken with the Society of Friends.

Henry Jr., known as "merchant Henry," owned a store in Russells Mills. In fact from 1784 to 1812, he had a liquor license from the Town of Dartmouth. This would not have been a business approved by the Society of Friends.

Henry also sold off land that he got from his grandfather, Henry. In addition to selling land to his brother, he sold land to Barzillai Tucker located near Barzillai's land known as Sepontic. Henry seemed to concentrate on being a businessman and on managing the land that he got through his marriage into the Ricketson family. Tucker family members in the nineteenth century felt that Henry got rich through this marriage. He definitely was perceived as being a prosperous member of the family.

Henry and Alice Ricketson Tucker had six children. Benjamin R. Tucker was born in 1781. A second son, Abner, was born in 1785. Abraham was born in

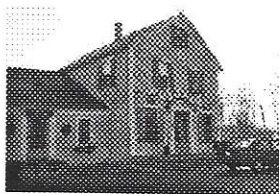
# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

1787, Peleg in 1790, Henry in 1792, and a daughter Alice was born in 1797.

Benjamin R. followed his father into business and was referred to in various documents as a merchant of Dartmouth. He married a Nancy Slocum Olds in 1813. She was a widow of a Dr. Olds. When Benjamin R. died in 1828, he was buried at Apponegansett Meeting House Burial Ground and has the second oldest stone in the cemetery. This flat stone is in the northeast corner of the burial ground. It seemed as if Benjamin stayed a member of the Society of Friends, even if some of his family members did not.



Benjamin also had a liquor license in the town of Dartmouth. In 1809 he and his brothers were running a store at Akin's Wharf, the area in Padanaram north of the bridge along Water Street. However, he sold his share to his brothers in that year, and he began to run the store at Russells Mills. Town records show that Benjamin had a liquor license between the years 1809 and 1813 and the years 1816 and 1822. His store in Russells Mills was probably a



general store in which he sold alcohol along with other goods. Henry Worth's papers indicate that Benjamin R. Tucker might have run an inn at one point at Russells Mills and sold alcohol there. There is no evidence that Benjamin and his wife Nancy had any children. Benjamin owned and lived on the property, presently called Davoll's Store

His brother Abner also was a merchant, but he died in 1809. At a time when the New Bedford Mercury generally just reported when a person had died in the past week, young Abner got an obituary of several sentences. He died on Sunday, November 5, 1809. The paper said that he was 22, but other records would indicate that he was more likely 23 or 24. The paper mentioned his



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

"mercantile correctness" and said that everyone was saddened by the loss.

(New Bedford Mercury, November 10, 1809)

Abner and Benjamin's younger brother Henry was remembered in the Tucker family letters as being enterprising and hard working. He was always referred in documents as being a 'merchant.' He died unmarried at the age of 50 in 1842. His estate was valued at \$29,000. He too seems to be involved in various businesses in town. At one point he owned part of a magnesia works or salt works in the Padanaram area. He may have gotten this through his Ricketson family connections, for he did eventually sell part of the works to another Ricketson relative in 1826, perhaps keeping the business within the family. Many of his business ventures were carried out in partnership with his brother Abraham.

Salt works were built in a number of locations in Dartmouth including Ricketson's Point, Salter's Point, and the west side of Smith Neck Road. Salt works used the principle of evaporation to get valuable salts from sea water. A number of types of salt works existed in the town throughout the nineteenth century. Padanaram, before the nineteenth century, was known as Akin's Wharf after the ship building family who developed a business there during the mid eighteenth century. The Revolutionary War and the attack on Dartmouth in 1778 damaged the Akin's business badly, and the family ceased being prominent. By 1800 two brothers, David and Laban Thatcher, were buying a great deal of property in the area of the village. David had a liquor license and was co-owner of a wharf. He even built a windmill to grind grain (located at the corner of School and Middle Streets). David helped to set up a local school and served in the state legislature. He undoubtedly knew both Henry and Abraham Tucker.

It was David's brother Laban who gave Padanaram its name. A Biblical

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

character named Laban was from Padanaram. The Thatcher brothers set up a novel saltworks which became known as Laban's Folly. The works, located on Elm Street south of Bridge Street, was designed as a type of perpetual motion machine. It didn't work. However, other less flamboyant salt works were very prosperous and were a good investment for the Tuckers and others people who controlled land along the shore in Dartmouth.

Abraham, the eldest son of Henry and Alice Ricketson Tucker, was born in 1787. He married Mary Anne Almy with whom he had three children, Henry A., Alice and Abner R. Tucker. Deeds and other documents refer to Abraham as a merchant. In 1823 Abraham, merchant, bought a dwelling house and barn from a Benjamin Maxfield who was recorded as being a mariner in the deed. In 1829, he sold the property back for \$700.

Apparently Abraham owned a great deal of property in the Gulf Road area and the area of Padanaram including the magnesia works or salt works. He owned land on Ricketson's Neck in Padanaram, land that he had inherited from his Ricketson grandfather. In 1828 he sold a third of an acre of that land for \$150.87. In 1833 he, along with his brother Henry, sold Archelaus Baker and Ensign Baker, both mariners, a lot in what became known as the Bakerville area. This lot included a building (presumably a house) a quarter of an acre of land, but not the cow house or stables, This was a lot that the two had inherited upon their father's death. They also sold two parcels of land in Padanaram in May 1833 that included buildings and a wharf for \$4000. This was land that their father had gotten from the Akin's, and so it was probably located on Water Street in the village.

One parcel of land the brothers sold in the Bakerville area was purchased by Henry H. Crapo and Joseph Crapo. However, Joshua Weeks retained the right to cross this land with his cattle team, but only in the place where the team

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

would do the least damage. The area that became known as Bakerville Road was in the early 1800's owned by the Weeks family and the Crapo family.

Abraham also purchased land. Adjacent to the land he inherited from his father that was south of Gulf Road, Abraham (along with his brother Henry) purchased six parcels of land in 1831 from Peleg Ricketson for \$4000. This included a 55 acre lot on the northwest corner of Gulf Road and Smith Neck Road and an eight acre parcel off of Smith Neck Road.

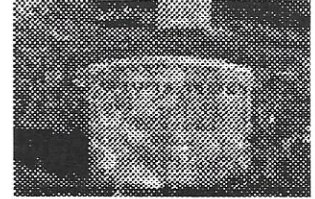
Abraham also was holder of mortgages. He loaned money to people who gave their businesses or lands for security. On April 1, 1830, Gorham Thatcher (another of the Thatchers of Padanaram) borrowed \$163. His collateral was 2 acres of land with nine cranes of salt: all or part of a salt works. The loan was to be repaid by April 1, 1832, but it was not, and so Abraham and Henry became owners of the works. In January 1833, they loaned Otis Russell of New Bedford \$360 for property including a building that he owned in that town. The loan was to be repaid in twelve months. There must have been some type of gentleman's agreement to extend the loan, for it was not until May 1840 when Henry took possession of the property.

By the late 1830's, however, something happened to Abraham. Jesse and Edward Tucker said 50 years later that he grew unsettled in his mind. He began to sell off his land. On June 28, 1838 he sold nineteen parcels of land, including his father's homestead farm on the south side of Gulf Road, to his brother for a sum of \$9000. He sold off his land in Padanaram, several lots in the Cedar Swamp and all his share in land the two brothers had been purchasing. A year later he sold a small lot and building on Russell's Mills Road to George W. Francis. In 1840 he sold 3 acres of land and a building in Russells Mills to his son Abner for \$1. Jesse and Edward commented in their letters that he was of good character as a young man and into middle age, but

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

"suffered depreciation afterwards." (Tucker family papers)

Abraham died in May of 1849. The Monthly Meeting records showed that he was 61 years, 6 months, and one day old when he died. His wife Mary Anne, who was 51 when he died, left Dartmouth in 1851, perhaps to go live with her daughter.



With Abraham, Henry and their brother Benjamin, this branch of the Tucker family began to seek its fortune in commercial enterprises. Some obviously stayed members of the Society of Friends, but in others the ties to the Quaker faith were loosening. These men, however, were not the only Tucker's leaving farming and looking for work elsewhere.

## Jonathan's Family

While Jonathan Tucker may not have been viewed in the early nineteenth century as an upright member of the community, the same cannot be said of his son William. William Tucker, generally known as Captain William, was one of the first Tuckers to turn to the sea to make a living. This was a trend that sons in many other local families were following.

Since the founding of Old Dartmouth, men had looked to supplement their incomes by fishing. Whaling developed into a major industry with the founding of Bedford Village and with the development of onboard try works. Whaling voyages became more efficient and eventually longer. In 1793 the Rebecca was the first ship to return from a whaling voyage to the Pacific. She brought back 750 barrels of sperm oil and 180 barrels of whale oil. By 1800 about 50 whaling vessels from the New Bedford area were sailing to the Pacific in search of sperm and right whales. Yet most of the ships, around 85%, that sailed from local harbors were in the carrying trade rather than whaling



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

In the early years of the nineteenth century shipping increased 50%. Whale products such as the oil and spermaceti candles had to be taken to other ports in the Americas and to Europe. Both the merchant trade and whaling offered young men adventure and opportunity. William Tucker seems to be the first Tucker who went to sea to find these experiences.

William Tucker was born in 1788, two years after his father had been confined in prison for not paying taxes. Exactly when he first went to sea is not certain. Most boys in the early nineteenth century went when they were in their teens, and so it is probable that by 1805, William Tucker had been on several voyages. If William's early sea experience was similar to what he did as an adult, William was involved in merchant trade, not whaling.

In October 1814, at the age of 24, William married Sarah (known as Sally) Howland of Dartmouth. The daughter of Warren and Sarah Slocum Howland, she was just 19 when they married. Seven months after the wedding, William set sail on the ship Mary Paul Howland and was gone for almost 2 years. Their son William Jr. was born in 1815 while his father was at sea. Shipping records say that the Howland left New Bedford in May 1815 and returned in March 1817. In May of 1817 when he was 29 years old, William Tucker became the Captain of the brig William Thatcher; he returned to the area in February 1818. Once again, he left in May, this time as the Captain of the brig Commander Decatur for a nine month trip. He commanded the Decatur again from May 1819 to April 1820. These short trips are definitely merchant shipping--perhaps to Europe, perhaps just along the Atlantic Coast.

As did many other men, William left his sea going career at a relatively young age. He retired in 1825 at the age of 37 and lived the rest of his life on a farm north of Smith Mills in Dartmouth. He was not just a farmer, however;

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

William served the town of Dartmouth in a number of capacities and even served in the State Legislature. He not only served several terms in the State House, but also filled one term as the State Senator from Dartmouth.

There is no 1830 census listing for William Tucker in the Town of Dartmouth, but by 1850 William and his wife Sarah and two of their five children were listed on the census. William's occupation was listed as farmer. His house was located on Faunce Corner road about where the Anne and Hope Plaza is today. The more informative 1850 census has William as a farmer who had real estate and personal property worth \$15,000. Living with Sarah and William was an 18 year old domestic named Ruth Briggs and their grandson Charles T. Smith who was 4 years old. Their oldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Thomas Smith of Buffalo, New York in 1837. Their daughter Abigail, born in 1821, married a distant Tucker cousin, Abner Tucker. William and Sarah's oldest son William Jr. ended up in business in New Bedford.

Ship records indicate that a William Tucker sailed on the Parthian which left New Bedford on August 6, 1829, and returned in June 1830. The young man was listed as being 5 feet 5 1/2 inches with light hair and brown eyes and being from Dartmouth. William would have been 14 at that time, and the sailor was listed as being 17. Ages on the records were not always exact, and so this could be William Jr. If it was, the sea was not the career for him, for by 1836, he was living and working in New Bedford.

By 1835 he was a clerk at 3 George Howland Wharf in New Bedford and boarding at the Mansion House which was at 87 Union Street. In 1839 he was working for Wm. Eddy & Co. but still living at the Mansion House. The New Bedford Directory of 1845 listed him as a merchant boarding at 53 Walnut Street.

William Jr. worked for a number of firms in New Bedford before forming a

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

partnership with Edmund Taber, creating Tucker & Taber, a wholesale dry goods store located at 21 North Water Street in New Bedford. After his marriage and after the business was established in the early 1850's, William Tucker Jr. bought a house of his own at 167 County Street. In New Bedford Directories, William was not just a dry good merchant by the 1860's, but a merchant tailor.

William Jr. married Abby Wood in 1843 and had at least one child, William A Tucker, born in 1851. William Jr. died in 1902 at the age of 87. William A. Tucker died in 1930 at the age of 79. Both were buried in the Elm Street Cemetery as was Captain William Tucker.

Captain William Tucker died at the age of 90 in 1878. For much of his life he was a relatively prosperous man. The 1860 census showed that he had real estate worth \$7000 and personal property worth \$2500. Ruth Briggs, the servant who lived with the family in 1850, was still with William and Sarah in 1860. They also had a young boy named William Jennings, Jr., age 15, living with them. Town census records show that a William Jennings Sr. was a 43 year old laborer in Dartmouth with no real estate or personal property of any value and a great many children. Having his son work for the Captain was probably seen as a good opportunity for the young man.

By 1870 William Tucker's estate was shrinking. Census records indicate that his real estate was worth only \$4,000, and his personal estate was worth \$6000. Sarah, who was 75 in 1870, had personal property worth \$275. William was still counted as a farmer, but no one was living on the farm with them as a servant or laborer. In 1880, William was dead and Sarah was living with daughter Elizabeth (born 1817) and her husband Nathaniel Potter. Sarah Howland Tucker died in December of 1880 and was buried in Elm Street next to her husband.

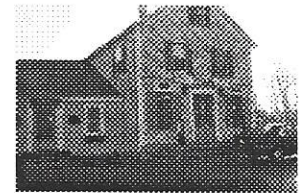
Also interred in the Elm Street Cemetery was the youngest son of Captain



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

William and his wife, Charles Tucker. Charles Tucker was born in 1824 and began his education in Dartmouth. Eventually, after attending the Friends School in Providence (Moses Brown), he did choose to go to sea for at least one voyage. Shipping papers tell us that he was just under 5 feet 7 inches in height and had light skin, light hair and gray eyes. This was a short career, however, and he too, turned to trade to make a living. Born at Smith Mills, Charles moved to Russells Mills after he married a cousin, Alice Tucker. Alice was the daughter of the merchant, Abraham Tucker.

Charles went into business with his brother-in-law Abner Tucker, and together they ran a store in Russells Mills. Sometime between 1850 and 1854 Charles purchased or obtained as part of his marriage, the property that is now known as Davoll's General Store. Alice was born in 1833 and they were married before 1852. The 1850 census listed Charles Tucker as unmarried and living with the family of Samuel Reed, wheelwright. At that time Charles owned \$4000 worth of real and personal property. This was a substantial holding for a 26 year old. The 1854 map of Dartmouth shows him as the owner of the property in Russells Mills which had formerly been owned by Benjamin R. Tucker, Alice's uncle. (This is the current Davoll's)



Alice and Charles were associated with a number of parcels of land in the 1850's. Many of these lots seem to be connected to the settlement of estates-- especially the estate of Alice's uncle, Henry Tucker. Alice's brothers and sisters sold Alice and Charles 50 acres of land in Russells Mills that was located east of the Friends Meeting House. They also sold, along with Alice's brothers and sisters, land and a building (not the boat house, however,) at the corner of Gulf and Bakerville Road to Stephen Barker. This was land owned by Henry Tucker when he died in 1852. In 1859, Charles and Alice sold land and a building that



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

were located one mile from Russells Mills on the north side of the road leading to Hick's Bridge (sic). This was the Osman Wood farm that Charles inherited from his father's sister who had married Osman Wood.

Most of these land sales were of property that either Charles or Alice had inherited upon the death of a relative. Charles was not a farmer, nor did he make his living through land speculation. He and his brother-in law, Abner, moved from being general merchants to being whaling agents. They owned and outfitted whaling ships.

By 1850 New Bedford was the "Whaling Capital of the World." However, other local towns including Dartmouth were involved in the whaling trade. Ships from the Old Dartmouth region were exploring the whaling grounds in the Pacific; by 1835 they were whaling off the coast of Alaska. The region was prominent in the whaling industry not just because of the ships and sailors, but because of the shoreside industries that supported those whalers. Increasing demand for whale products increased the price of whale oil and sperm oil.

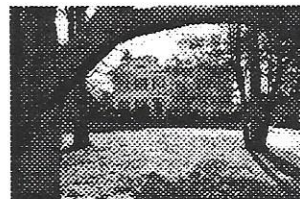
While not as busy as New Bedford, Dartmouth had sixteen whale ships sail from Apponegansett Harbor in Dartmouth in the 1830's. One ship returned with a cargo worth over \$66,000. Whaling was a profitable business and some one had to outfit the ships and make all the arrangements to finance and supply the voyage. This was the job of the whale agent; this was Charles Tucker's profession.

Charles and Abner began their careers as whale agents in Padanaram, but eventually they moved the business to New Bedford. Charles remained a Dartmouth resident and did not move to the city. The 1860 census listed Charles Tucker as a trader with real estate worth \$5000 and a personal estate

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

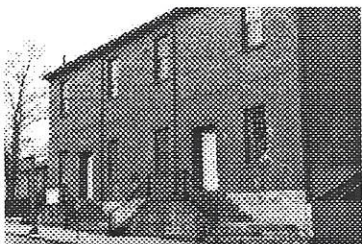
worth \$27,000. Alice was 28, and they had two children, William Abraham, eight, and Mary aged five. Catherine Conway, born in Ireland, lived with the family as a domestic servant. The family also boarded the local teacher named Charles Smith in 1860. (The custom of the teacher being boarded at the houses of local citizens had continued since the early days of Dartmouth.)

In 1862 Charles Tucker bought a home on Franklin Street from his partner, Abner. This large and imposing home was a reflection of the prosperity of the family. A year later, Henry Almy Tucker, the third child and second son of Charles and Alice, was born in the



house on Franklin Street and died there four months later. By 1880, the 46 year old Charles was listed as having personal property worth \$35,000 and as owning real estate worth \$6,700. This was wealthy for the 1880's. In 1880, William Almy was living at home at the age of 18 and working as a clerk. Arthur Leslie Tucker was four and at home. Mary had died at the age of seven. Also living with the family in 1870 was Margaret Kaley, age 22, a servant, born in Ireland, who probably left there due to the potato famine, and Samuel Delano who was listed as a laborer.

Not only was Charles one of the owners of a successful business in New Bedford, but he became active in other areas of commerce. He served as one of the directors of Citizens Bank and was on other boards as well. He attended



Friends Meeting, usually in New Bedford, and so kept up the family tradition of being a member of the Society of Friends. He apparently never got involved with politics, but one nineteenth century biographical work on important local citizens asserts that he definitely was a Republican. In the late nineteenth century, the Republican

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Party was the party of business as well as being the political party that freed the slaves.

By 1880 Charles retired from business and was living what was considered to be a quiet, useful life. He was seen as a good neighbor. When Charles died in September 1890, he was buried in the Elm Street Cemetery in Padanaram. Alice Tucker survived her husband by 28 years. She died in 1918 and was buried along with her husband and her children. The house on Franklin Street was taken over by her youngest son, Arthur Leslie Tucker.

Charles Tucker and his father William Tucker were a reflection of the changes that were occurring in Dartmouth in the nineteenth century. William was raised in a farming family, went to sea and then retired to live on a farm. Charles became a whale ship agent, and when he retired lived a more suburban type of life in Padanaram Village. Their lives may also reflect some of the religious changes that were occurring. The Society of Friends was not increasing membership. As a number of merchants grew more prosperous, they felt uncomfortable with the restrictions of the religious group. By the 1850's a number of New Bedford Quakers left the Society of Friends and joined other churches such as the Unitarian and the Congregation. While Charles did attend Quaker Meeting in New Bedford, he did not appear to be active in the Society. His father and mother also did not seem to be active members in Quaker activities. Not all Tuckers, however, left the land and ceased being active in the Society of Friends in the nineteenth century.



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## *A Not-So-Changing Community*

### *Another View of Nineteenth Century Dartmouth*

#### *The fifth and six generations*

#### James and Benjamin and their families

Dartmouth in the nineteenth century was primarily a farming community. Its population did not grow much between 1800 and 1900. There was a ship building industry and some whaling vessels left from town harbors. A salt works industry developed in the town. However, in many ways, the town remained a basically rural farming community much like it had been in the eighteenth century.

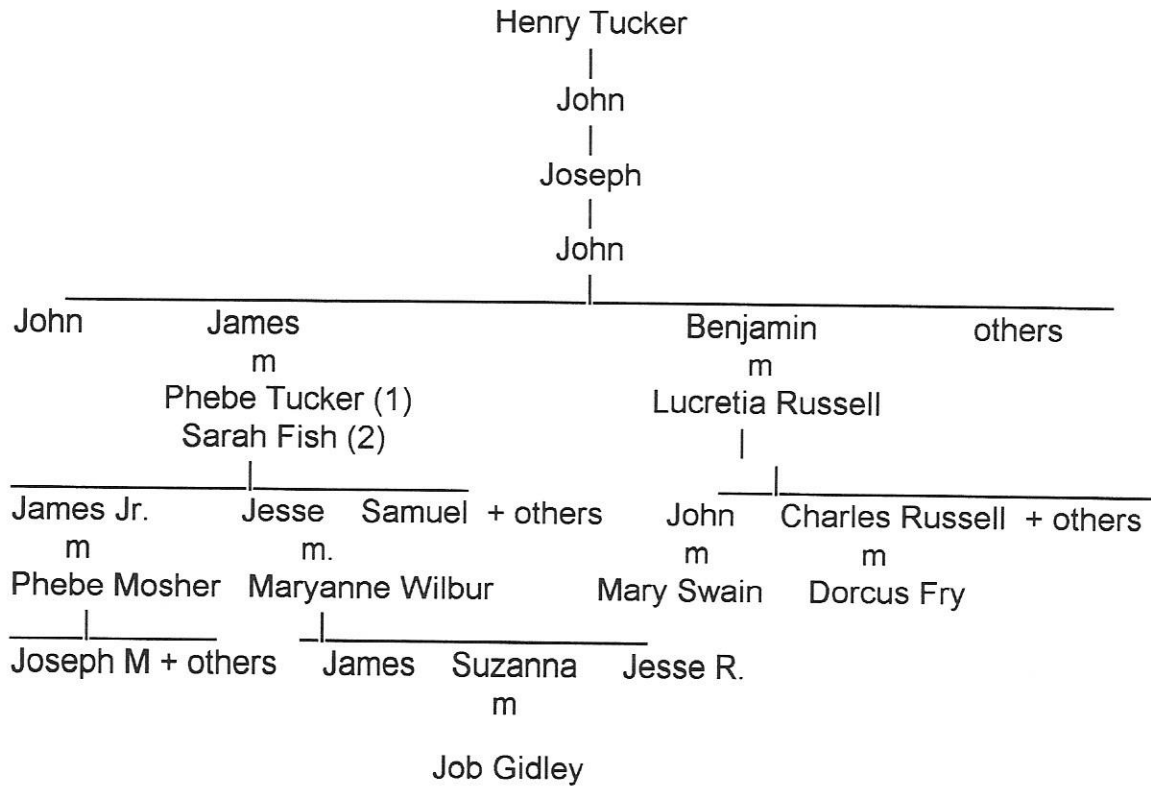
James and Benjamin Tucker were the sons of John Tucker and Rhoda Wing Tucker who lived on the original homestead Tucker Farm on Tucker Road. Both of these men stayed on the land; both built houses for their families that are still standing today; both were very important in the Society of Friends. These two men carried on the Tucker family traditions.

James Tucker was born in 1777, during the American Revolution. He grew up in the original Tucker house built by his great grandfather, John Tucker, in the 1720's. When James was 21, he married Phebe Tucker, the daughter of Benjamin and Silvia Tucker. Phebe was 26 when they were married. They had three children before Phebe died in 1810. Lydia was born in 1798; Sylvia was born in 1801, and James Jr. born in 1807. Just where the young family lived is unclear. James Tucker was not listed as the head of a household on the 1800 census. They might have been living on the Tucker Farm on Tucker Road or with Phebe's parents. (The census of 1800 named only the head of the



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## Family Tree Part IVa



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

household and the ages of all others living with them)

By 1801 James was made the clerk of Dartmouth Monthly Meeting, a position that he held until 1833. He was also an Elder in the Meeting by 1807. When Phebe died in 1810, she was buried in the Apponagansett Meeting House Cemetery. James's deep religious faith was to play a role in his second marriage to Sarah Fish of Rhode Island.

It was quite common for widowers with young children to marry shortly after the death of their wife. James Jr. was about three when his mother died. James Tucker did remarry, but it was not until 1813. His choice was Sarah Fish, "a ministering friend." Sarah's religious concerns and a bit of her life were described in her Memoirs published in 1848, eight years after she died.

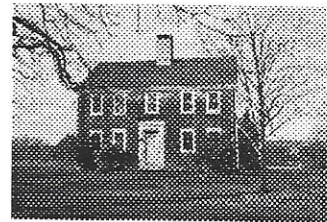
Sarah was the daughter of Preserved and Sarah Fish. She grew up in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Her family was not terribly religious; she said that her father tended to be Quaker and her mother tended to be Baptist. As a teenager she began "to take much delight in young company, in jesting and vain conversation." (Memoirs, p. 9) At age 16 she almost became a Methodist after attending a revival, but was stopped by her father's disapproval of that religious group. Sarah was very concerned about being a good Christian, and when visiting an aunt in Little Compton, she was introduced to the Society of Friends.

She was so impressed with Friends beliefs that she became a member in 1800 at the age of 21. In the following years she spent much of her time in prayer and reading the Bible in order to keep away from the more frivolous pursuits of her friends. By the age of 24, she began to minister. In 1810 at the age of 31, she and another woman traveled to Society of Friends Meetings in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Their ultimate destination was Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Sarah became ill on the trip and returned to Rhode Island in what she called a feeble state. Illness was to be a continuing problem

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

for Sarah.

At the age of 34 Sarah Fish became Sarah Fish Tucker when she married James Tucker who was then 36. In her Memoirs, it is clear that James serving as a Society of Friends Elder was very important to her. Shortly after the wedding, Sarah left James and her new family to go on a series of visits to various quarterly Meetings. These Meetings were in Salem, Massachusetts, Vasselborough, Maine, and Sandwich, Massachusetts. She then "removed to Dartmouth, and settled to housekeeping with my dear husband and his children." (Memoirs p. 25). At some point just before or after the marriage, James built a new house for his children and new wife. This simple Georgian style house was built on a hill just south of his father's house and the home that his brother Benjamin built earlier. This house stands today in Dartmouth on Tucker Road and is known as the Farmhouse on Friends Academy's property.

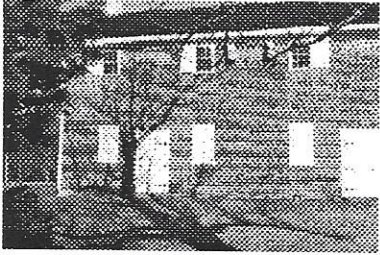


Sarah was relatively old for being a bride in the early nineteenth century, and marriage was not easy for her. In her memoirs she wrote "I was for 6 or 7 years successively visited with sickness by which I was often confined to my room and bed for weeks and months and almost may I not say for years; not being able to go out sometimes more than twice or thrice in the course of a year." ( p. 25). These illnesses seem to correspond with a series of pregnancies. She had three children who lived and at least one child who died unnamed. Reading between the lines, however, in her Memoirs, Sarah may have had as many as eight pregnancies. They could have been difficult pregnancies (particularly in light of her age) which confined her to her home, or Sarah may have felt that pregnant women should not be seen in public. This was not an uncommon belief to hold in the nineteenth century.



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

When Sarah was well enough to leave home as she was in 1820, she participated in Monthly and Annual Meetings. She and James also undertook to visit families in the area to talk to them about their religious beliefs. After the birth of her last child, Samuel, she and Susan Howland of New Bedford visited



nearly all the Meetings that were part of the Rhode Island Friends Quarterly Meeting. In 1825 she asked permission of Dartmouth Monthly Meeting to attend the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Their approval was given and ratified by the Quarterly Meeting that met in July.

On September 19, 1825, Sarah F. Tucker left home accompanied by Hannah Dennis from Rhode Island; the two women headed toward Philadelphia, but stopped at Meetings in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey before arriving in the Philadelphia area. There were days when they did not attend a Society of Friends Meeting; however, there were days when they attended two. Sarah wrote home everyday, according to her memoirs, but she was gone from home more than three months. In those three months she attended sixty Society of Friends Meetings.

She returned to find her husband ill; he had "a cancer in the nose" (Memoirs, p. 47). James was confined to the house throughout the winter and spring, but was eventually cured. This trip did not totally cure Sarah of her desire to travel, and she was an active participant in Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings. In 1827 Sarah and James together traveled for 2 months visiting Meetings in Massachusetts such as Lynn, Salem and Amesbury, in New Hampshire such as Seabrook and Dover, and in Maine such as Berwick. Portland, Falmouth, Windham and Gorham.

Despite her travel and her attendance at Society of Friends Meetings,



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Sarah was always struggling with her religious beliefs. When she turned 49, she wrote in her journal that she was "a poor unworthy worm of the dust" and pledged that the "few remaining days of my life may be more fully devoted and consecrated to serve Him." (p. 54) The struggle was intensified the following year when her son Samuel had an accident with a knife and stick while she was attending Yearly Meeting. His eye was damaged, and he was eventually became legally blind. Samuel, the only child that she mentioned by name in her journal, would have been about six or seven at the time of the accident . She wrote that he had been going to school and that he looked to be a promising student.

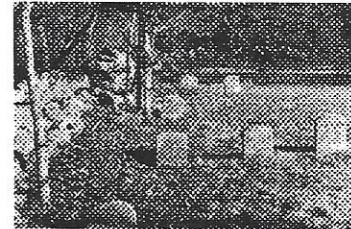
However, several weeks later she took off again, leaving son Samuel, husband James and the other children at home. She visited Meetings in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. She was gone for thirty-one days and was pleased that she attended twenty six meetings. While in Providence she stayed with Moses Brown and visited the school that he was setting up in that city. This was the last major trip for Sarah.

In August 1830, Sarah became ill and was confined to bed for three weeks. This is the beginning of a ten year-period of unspecified illnesses which confined Sarah at home much of the time. "At home" for Sarah meant that she could only visit local Meetings such as New Bedford or Allen's Neck or Westport. In April and May of 1834, she visited about fifty area families to talk to them about membership in the Society of Friends, but by the fall of 1835, James was going alone to Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meeting. Even her children were going to Meeting while she was confined at home in bed. Her son, Samuel, went to Boston with his father in September 1835 to the eye infirmary. His sight was growing worse. Surgery was recommended, and the family started Samuel on medical treatment to prepare him for that surgery.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

1839 was a difficult year for Sarah and her family. She continued to be ill, and in October, her husband James took Samuel, then 17, to New York to have an operation on his eyes to see if there could be some improvement. They were gone six weeks. Sarah's sister, Mary Fish, came to stay with her while James was away. Unexpectedly, Mary had a stroke and died. When Samuel returned after the operation, there was only minimal improvement to his eyesight, and the prognosis was not good. In addition to dealing with her sister's death and her son's poor sight, Sarah wrote in her journal that winter that she had a soreness in her lungs, a cough and tightness in her chest. Several months later, Sarah Fish Tucker died in March 1840 at the age of 61.

Dartmouth Monthly Meeting said of Sarah that she was "sound in doctrine; her ministry was weighty and edifying." (Memoirs p. 198) She had served as a Society of Friends minister for 37 years. James Tucker lived another three years. He died in December of 1843 at the age of 67. He was buried at Apponegansett as had been Sarah and his first wife, Phebe.



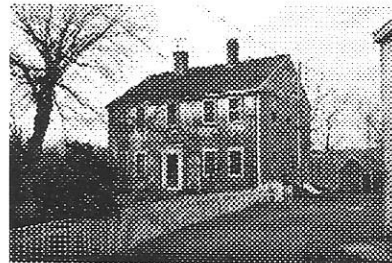
As a result of Sarah's memoirs, James may seem somewhat overshadowed by his wife. He was obviously a successful farmer. He was the head of a household of seven in the 1830 census. His eldest son James Jr. was already married and living elsewhere, as was daughter Silvia who was married in 1823 to Thomas K. Wilbur of Dartmouth. James was highly respected among members of the Society of Friends and worked often to gain and to keep members. By the time of the 1840 census, James was living as a farmer with his two youngest sons, Jesse and Samuel. The census recorded his profession simply as farmer.

When James died, Dartmouth Monthly Meeting said that he was "diligent

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

in the attendance of religious meetings, and encouraged his family in the performance of the same duty. He possessed a sound discriminating mind, had remarkably clear perception. Benevolence, sympathy and genuine hospitality were conspicuous traits in his character." (Memoirs, p. 202). In an interesting use of words, the Monthly Meeting testimonial says that James was an affectionate companion to his first wife and lived in near affection to his second. At the time of his death, James' share of his father's property passed to his son Jesse who continued to farm the property. James was also survived by another son, James Jr., several daughters, and his brother Benjamin.

Benjamin Tucker was born in 1781 and thus was four years younger than James. At the age of 21, he married Lucretia Russell; they had three children. The eldest was John born in 1805; then came Rhoda in 1808, and the last child was Charles Russell Tucker who was born in 1809. About the time this last child was born, Benjamin and Lucretia built another house on the homestead property that was close to and at right angles to the original house. This was a two-and-a-half story federal style house. Originally it was a half house, but it was added on to several times during the nineteenth century. Benjamin and his brother James jointly worked the land, and after James built his house further to the south, they informally divided the property. When their father died in 1820, this division was formalized a bit more.



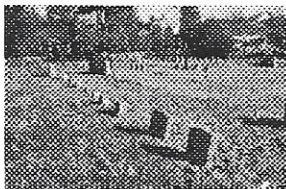
Benjamin Tucker was also important in the Society of Friends, but he was involved in a split that occurred among area Quakers. At the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1827 a schism occurred in the Society. Elias Hicks questioned some of the basic beliefs of the Society, and he and his followers



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

broke away and formed a more liberal branch (somewhat Unitarian) of the society. This group was known as the Hicksites. The more conservative or orthodox Friends were concerned; some felt that perhaps the Society did need to make some reforms. Rules and discipline began to be relaxed in various Meetings. However, some of the more traditional Friends felt that even these modest reforms were going too far and that the Society needed to strictly follow the guidelines and discipline set up in the seventeenth century. This group was lead by John Wilbur. Eventually, just as the Hicksites had done, the Wilburites created a new branch of the Society of Friends.

These divisions within the Society of Friends were cause for concern among the Dartmouth area Quakers during the 1830's and 1840's. The Tuckers of Tucker farm, Benjamin and his family and James and his family, allied themselves with the more conservative, Wilburite faction. Others in the town, however, obviously supported the Hicksite side. The third group took a more moderate approach. In 1845, the local Wilburites separated themselves totally from New England Yearly meeting and built their own Meeting House. Benjamin Tucker gave them the land for the new Meeting House in 1850. Ten years later



he sold the Wilburite Meeting a burying ground on Chase Road for \$1. Benjamin Tucker and his nephew Jesse Tucker were members of this more conservative group of Friends.

In 1850 Benjamin Tucker and his wife Lucretia, both over 70, were living at the homestead farm alone. Their children had left the farm. Benjamin's property, real and personal, was valued by the census as being worth \$14,000. His personal property included more than furnishing and tools, however; Benjamin was also a stock holder. In 1834 he spent \$1000 to buy 10 shares of Mechanics Insurance Company, one of the many commercial enterprises



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growing in New Bedford.

Benjamin Tucker did sell some land during his life time. In 1829 he sold about 54 acres for \$1600 to the Barkers. The description of the location of the land starts with the phrase "beginning at the black oak on the highway." In 1859, he sold 9 acres of land to Stephen Swift for \$375. This land was on the west side of Slocum Road. In one interesting real estate transaction in 1850, Benjamin borrowed \$175 from his nephews Jesse and Samuel Tucker. A lot consisting of one acre and sixty four rods was the collateral. Benjamin was to pay back \$75 in three years at 6% interest and pay \$100 for fire insurance. The mortgage was successfully discharged before 1853, and Benjamin retained the lot.

When Lucretia Tucker died in 1852, she was buried in the Wilburite Burial Ground on Chase Road. The 1860 census shows that Benjamin was living at the homestead farm with a cousin Mary Tucker ( born in 1792) and a servant named Sarah Simmons. His land was valued at \$15,000, and his personal estate was worth \$65,000. Benjamin Tucker died in December 1861 and was buried along with Lucretia in the Chase Road Burial Ground. Neither of his two sons or his daughter came back to live on the homestead farm; they had chosen different paths.

Charles Russell Tucker bought out his brother and sister's interest in the farm for \$8000. However, a series of tenant farmers lived on and ran the farm until it was sold by his heirs in 1882. Charles R. Tucker's son Benjamin may have lived on the farm for a while and Joseph M. Tucker, son of James Jr., and Benjamin's great nephew worked the farm for a number of years until his death. After Joseph's death, his wife Cornelia continued to live there for a short period of time.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

James Tucker Jr., born in 1807, spent his life on the land as a farmer. The son of James and Phebe Tucker, he made family history difficult by marrying a woman named Phebe. At the age of 20, he married Phebe Mosher. James did not inherit the house that his father built at the time of the second marriage, but he did have other Tucker land. Some land he inherited from his mother's branch of the Tucker family, and some he may have gotten from his father.

In 1831, he gave Thankful Gifford, a widow, \$60 to obtain clear title to more than 13 acres of land in town. Her husband had lost the land to Humphrey Russell by defaulting on a mortgage in 1823. James Tucker bought the land from Russell and cleared the title by paying Mrs. Gifford.

James and his wife Phebe had six children between 1828 and 1849. His daughter Ruth became Mrs. Brownell, and by 1850 she and her year-old daughter were living with James and Phebe. James was listed on the 1850 Census as a farmer with property, real and personal, worth \$5000. In 1870 James's property was only worth \$2500, and just his son Samuel and daughter-in-law Emma were living at the family home. The family did have a servant in 1870. Ellen Smith was black and aged 13. Also living with the family was an eight year old named William T. Leonard who was probably a grandson.

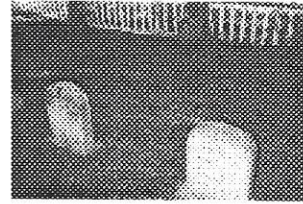
James Tucker's son, Joseph M., was born in December 1835. Just about the time the Civil War broke out, Joseph shipped out of New Bedford on the bark Sea Fox. The ship left in November 1861 and did not return until October of 1865. This probably was not his first voyage since he served as second mate for the trip. Shipping papers tell us that Joseph was 5'10" tall with light skin, 'ash' color hair and hazel eyes.

Joseph settled down after this trip and having missed the fighting during the war. He married a woman named Cornelia and began to manage the

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

homestead farm for his cousin Charles Russell Tucker. 1870 census records indicate that the family was not financially well off. Joseph's real property was only worth \$100 and his personal property worth \$800. They had two daughters by that time, Sylvia and Mahala. However, six years later, Joseph M. Tucker was dead. Some family members in the twentieth century think that he died on the homestead farm.

He was buried at Apponegansett. His widow, Cornelia Tucker, married again; this time she was the wife of John Peck of Dartmouth.



When she died in 1923, she too was buried at Apponegansett, as was John Peck. Mahala Tucker, the younger daughter of Joseph M. never married and died in 1949. She was buried along with her parents in Apponegansett Meeting House Cemetery.

Her grandfather, James Tucker died in 1873 and he, too, was buried at Apponegansett. This might indicate that he did not join his brother, Jesse, his uncle Benjamin, and other family members as a member of the Wilburite Friends Meeting at Smith Mills. Yet, Dartmouth Monthly Meeting Records list James Tucker as being disowned by the Meeting in November of 1847. His wife, Phebe, who died in 1883, also was buried at Apponegansett.

James Tucker's half brother Jesse, born in 1817 to James and Sarah F. Tucker, continued the family tradition of farming. Born in the house built by his father, he eventually inherited that house when his father died in 1843. As a young man, Jesse did leave the farm for a short while. He attended a school in Providence (probably Moses Brown) when he was about 14 or 15. When he was 22, he boarded with his cousin Charles Russell Tucker in New Bedford and worked as a clerk in that city.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

By the time of his father's death in 1843, he had returned home and went on to spend the rest of his life as a farmer who specialized in milk production. He considered himself a general farmer. He married Mary Anne (Marion) Wilbur in late November 1843, and they had four children including one set of twins. One of the twins died shortly after birth, and so only three children grew to be adults.

Mary Anne Wilbur had been born in Hopkinton, Rhode Island, in 1818. Her older sister Alice became James Tucker's housekeeper when Sarah Fish Tucker died. Mary Anne taught school in Dartmouth for a while and then married Jesse Tucker. Her family remember her as being "spare in build, her hair was as black as it could be, until a few years before her death, when streaks of white appeared. Her eyes were also black." (Tucker family papers) Mary Anne always kept busy; she knit if she could find nothing else to do. She was a kind and moral person. Her family said, "...by her the hungry were fed and the needy relieved and all forms of oppression were odious to her." (Tucker family papers) Mary Anne's sister Alice continued to live with her sister and brother-in-law until her death in 1888. She had been trained as a "tailoress" before becoming a housekeeper for James Tucker. She continued to sew for the family and was one of the first people in the area to get a sewing machine. Her machine, an early Howe, was eventually given to her niece Susanna Tucker Gidley. The machine was in the attic of the Gidley farm in the 1920's. Alice was buried at the Chase Road Friends Burial Ground.

In addition to carrying on the family tradition of farming the original Tucker land, Jesse was a serious member of the Society of Friends and a member of the Wilburite Meeting, which continued the discipline and traditions of the seventeenth century. Given his mother's devotion to the Society and her concerns about her faith, this is not surprising. Jesse Tucker also continued the family tradition of serving the town. For many years he was a member of the



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

town' s Auditing Committee; this was the nineteenth century name for the Finance Committee. He also served on the School Committee for the town. Education continued to be important to the Tucker family.

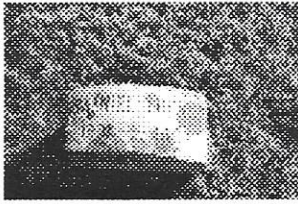
Jesse Tucker's household was a large one. The 1850 census showed him as the head of a household of ten including himself. By 1850 all of the children were born; the twins Issac and Jesse R. were only a month old. In addition to the children, Samuel Tucker, his blind brother, lived with Jesse and Mary Anne, as did Alice Wilbur, Mary Anne's older sister. Henry Fish, who was probably a cousin, was working there as a farmhand. Anna Lincoln, age 17, was working as a domestic for the family.

His household only got larger over the years. By 1860 not only were there the three children (Issac had died), Jesse, Mary Anne, Samuel Tucker, Alice Wilbur and Henry Fish, but there was another farmhand, John Gardner and the school teacher, Mary Howland, who boarded with the family. In 1860 Jesse Tucker's real property was valued by the census at \$5000 and his personal property was worth \$3,300. Alice Wilbur had a personal estate worth \$800. Henry Fish had real property worth \$280, and personal property worth \$1500.

Jesse's brother Samuel, despite his handicap of blindness, kept active on the farm. He was responsible for filling the wood box. He sawed the wood and split it. He tended the fires for the family. He also built hen houses and chicken coops. His great nieces remember that he kept tin toys which included a wheelbarrow and a horse and cart on a high shelf and took them down for them to use. Samuel loved to listen to his brother Jesse read: as his great nieces grew older, they too read to him. At one point in 1880 Samuel's health was failing, and he was not able to stand or even to dress himself. Family records indicated that Dr. Bartlett visited weekly and treated him with gentian pepsin salicylica soda citrate magnesia. (Gentian is a plant used as a tonic; pepsin was

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

used as an aid to digestion; salicylica is a form of aspirin; the soda citrate was



probably just a flavoring.) Samuel lived another thirteen years in spite of this treatment. When he died in 1893, he was buried in the Chase Road Burial Ground.

Jesse basically kept all of the land that he inherited, but he did sell some bits of property which were located away from the farm. He and his brother Samuel sold their share of Pasque Island. In a letter in the 1890's to his cousin Doctor Edward Tucker, Jesse explained that none of them had ever lived there, and they rarely spent any time there. Thus, he and Samuel sold the eastern half of the island that they owned, when cousin Joseph sold the western half. In 1862 Samuel and Jesse sold their one remaining lot in the "great swamp" or "cedar swamp." A year later their cousin Charles Russell Tucker also sold his remaining share of the swamp.

By 1870 Jesse was the head of a large household. His blind brother, Samuel, and sister-in-law Alice still lived with the family. Daughter Susanna, age 23, was living at home and had no job. Jesse and Mary Anne's older son, James H. Tucker, had left home. He was already 25 years old and had been disowned by the Society of Friends when he was 21. Younger son Jesse R. was living and working on the farm. Working with Jesse and his son were Henry Fish and two other farm laborers. Frederick Peckham was 28. John Simpson was 17. Jesse's real property was valued at \$5000, and his personal estate was valued at \$3250. Samuel must have been considered to be half owner of all the personal estate, for his personal estate was also valued at \$3250.

By 1880, Jesse Tucker was a grandfather. His daughter Suzanna had married Job S. Gidley, and by the time of the census, the young family had two children, Mary Jessie and Henry. In 1882 the original homestead farm with two houses on it became the property of Job Gidley, but the young couple

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

apparently were living on the homestead farm by the time of the 1880 census. Some records seem to indicate that the farm passed from the estate of Charles Russell Tucker (Benjamin's son) to Jesse to Job Gidley. Others indicate that it went directly from Charles R. Tucker to Job Gidley. Perhaps the truth is that some land passed directly and some indirectly. It is clear from notes that Jesse wrote in the 1880's that he remained in the farmhouse "up the hill," the farmhouse built by his father, while the Gidley family lived in the house built by Benjamin Tucker.

The census records of 1880 reveal an interesting trend. The three non-family workers on the farm were all from the Azores. Whaling voyages had for years been stopping in various locations all over the world picking up additional crew. The Azores was a frequent stop. Many of the Azorean whalers did not return to the islands after the voyage but settled in the New Bedford area. They were joined by friends and family members. In the late nineteenth century, many Azorean immigrants were coming to the region and were a source of inexpensive labor. While some immigrants worked in maritime trades and in the developing factories, others made their way to Dartmouth and began to work on local farms. In 1880, the Tucker/Gidley family had two men born in the Azores in their early 20's working as farm laborers. One Azorean woman, age 21, was listed as a domestic servant.

As Jesse Tucker grew older, his son Jesse R. took over the running of the farm. However, Jesse Sr. remained active. He was very close to his granddaughter Mary Jessie Gidley, and in the 1880's they exchanged a series of notes and letters. Many of these notes have been preserved by the family and are in the Tucker collection at the Whaling Museum. In early 1883 Jesse wrote to Mary Jessie saying, "I have been planting potatoes today and making fences to keep the hens where they should be and plowing some." (Tucker Collection

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

ODHS) He was 64 years old when he wrote the note. He continued by asking her if she had seen blue birds or heard robins yet. In many of his notes to Mary Jessie, it is clear that Jesse Tucker had a close relationship to nature. He kept track of when the first dandelions appeared and wrote about the "peeping" of the frogs. Jesse's grandchildren recalled as adults that he helped them identify constellations and always was watching for wild flowers.

Jesse Tucker also wrote poetry. Some poetry was for his grandchildren who frequently asked for more, but he also wrote about the memories of Quaker Meeting. The Apponegansett Meeting House published a poem by Jesse Tucker in their Centennial Booklet.

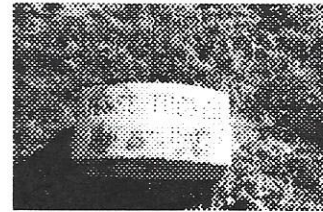
Jesse Tucker had an active interest in family history, and the Tucker Collection in the Old Dartmouth Historical Society has a series of letters between Jesse and his cousin Dr. Edward Tucker in which they talk about family history. Both were interested in their family's past. The letters also give insight into their daily lives. When Jesse was 81 years old, he went to Newport for a day of sightseeing. He took a trolley from North Dartmouth to Fall River, transferred in Fall River to another trolley to Newport. This was a two and one-half hour trip that cost 20 cents. While in Newport, he visited the Old Mill, the beach and the museums. He then took the trolley back home. That same year Edward Tucker suggested that Jesse might like to go to West Falmouth. He could leave New Bedford by boat at 8:30 a.m., arrive at Woods Hole and then take a train to West Falmouth. He would arrive by 10 a.m. The return trip would begin at 3:30, and Jesse would arrive back home around 5:20 p.m. Whether or not Jesse made the trip cannot be determined from the surviving letters. His grandchildren recalled that he liked to read about travel and that he traveled in his mind a great deal. He made few actual trips, however.

On the 1900 census, Jesse Tucker was listed as the head of the



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

household, but his son Jesse R. was listed as renting the farm from his father and running it. Jesse Tucker died in 1902 after having lived a life that was very much like the lives of earlier Tucker ancestors. He lived in the same house for eighty-five years. He was buried in the Society of Friends Burial Ground on Chase Road along with other members of his family.



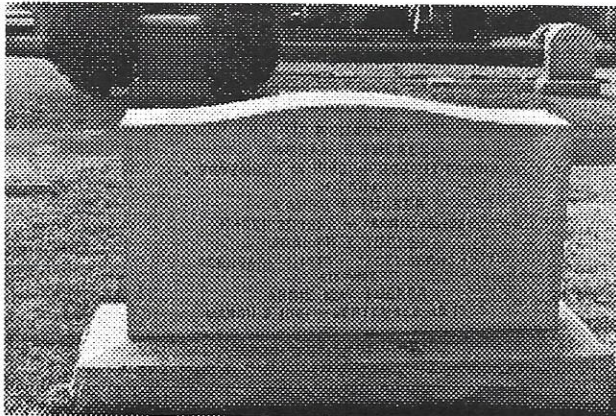
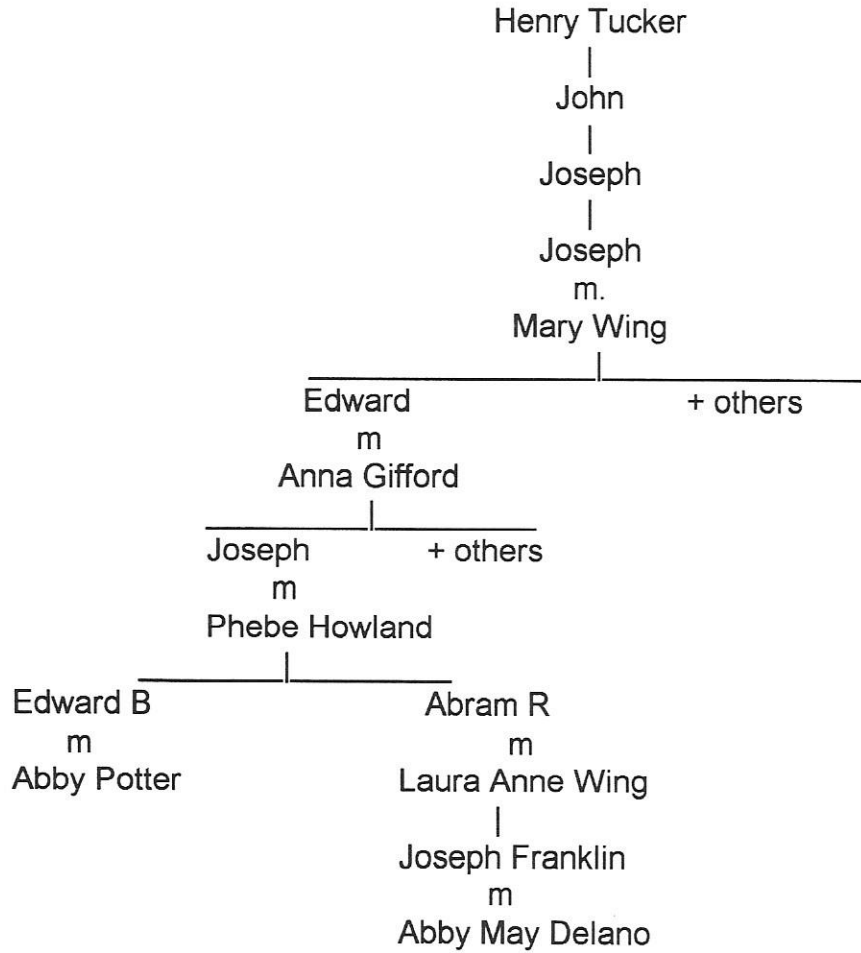
Jesse R. Tucker continued to run the farm after his father's death. He married, but had only had two daughters, Sarah and Mira. In 1915 when he was almost 65, he sold about seventy acres of land, the house, and the outbuildings for the sum of \$1500 to Jose De S. Salvador. This is the first official property transfer in the land's history. Every other time this land changed hands it was through a will, or by a family arrangement and not by sale. Neither Jesse R. or his older brother James H. Tucker had sons to carry on the family name or to inherit the land. This absence of sons was a sign of the changes that would occur within the family in the twentieth century.

## Edward and his family

Benjamin and James Tucker were not the only family members who remained in town in the early nineteenth century. A cousin, Edward Tucker, also lived in Dartmouth and earned his living by farming. He was the only son of Joseph Tucker and Mary Wing Tucker and, thus, a cousin of Benjamin and James. Born in 1765, he married Ann Gifford when he was 24 years old. At that time he built a home south of Allen Street on what is now Tucker Lane. This house and property would descend in his family through his son, grandson and great grandson. Edward lead a rather uneventful life in the late eighteenth and

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree Part IVb



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

early nineteenth century. He was one of Barzillai's heirs, and Edward's death around 1833 was a complication in settling the estate. His death meant that instead of thirteen heirs, there were nineteen.

However, only one of Edward's seven children was a son, Joseph, born in 1806. Two of Joseph's six sisters married. Elizabeth married Zephaniah Barker of Renselaer County, New York; Julia married Abraham Anthony of Dartmouth. The others died unmarried. As a child, Joseph attended the town school only during the three winter months. The other months, he helped on the farm. In May of 1832, Joseph married Phebe Howland and eventually inherited about 300 acres from his father. By people in Dartmouth, Joseph was seen as honest, hardworking, and economical, but above all he was respected. It was said that in politics he started life as a Whig, but eventually became a Republican after that party was founded in the 1850's

In 1850 Joseph Tucker's household included his wife, Phebe, his sons, Edward age 13, Abram, age 7 and his unmarried sister, Mary. His property was worth \$4000 according to the census. The 56 year old Mary owned property worth \$3000. By 1860, his worth had increased. His real property was worth \$6600 and his personal property was \$4500. His son Edward had left home, but Abram was still living at home and working as a farm hand.

Edward's sister Mary moved in with her sister Julia and her husband Abraham Anthony by 1860. She continued to be a woman of some means, holding real property worth \$4000 and personal property worth another \$4000. Mary Tucker died on Halloween 1868 and was buried at Apponegansett. The New Bedford Registry of Deeds has records of a type of prenuptial agreement made in 1851 between Mary Tucker of Dartmouth and Gideon Smith of North Providence. There were two Mary Tuckers living in the Smith Mills area in 1851, and it is not clear which one was referred to in the agreement. The contract



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

stated that the personal property belonging to Mary Tucker would remain hers after the marriage. If it was this Mary Tucker who drew up and signed that agreement, she was 59 at the time, and the marriage never took place, since she died unmarried.

The 1870 census records showed that Joseph's family continued to increase its worth somewhat. Joseph's real estate was worth \$7000, but his personal estate was worth only \$3000. Abram was still living at home working on the farm, but the family also had two other workers. Ida May was 19 and worked as a domestic servant. (She had been living with the family in 1860.) James Jackson, 21, worked for and with Joseph and Abram. He was black.

By 1880 Joseph's household had shrunk to just Phebe and himself. She was 68; he was 74. They were aided by Frances Enos, age 20, who was counted on the census as a domestic servant. Phebe died in 1888; Joseph in 1892. They were buried in Apponegansett Meeting House Burial Ground.

Joseph's elder son Edward, who had been born in 1836, married Abbie Gifford when he was 20. She was only 16 at the time of the wedding. Shortly after the marriage, Abby inherited 80 acres of the Potter homestead in the settlement of a family estate, and by 1860 the couple owned property worth more than \$8000. Census records listed Edward as a farmer with real property worth \$3000 and personal property worth \$2000. Abbie had real property in her own right worth \$3500. Their child, Nellie A. Tucker, was four years old, and helping Edward on the farm was Edward Soreil who was 27.

By 1870 Edward's real property value was worth \$4000, and his personal estate was worth another \$4000. Abbie's property had increased in value to \$4000 also. Their daughter Nellie was in school, while 16 year old Mary Gifford was living with the family as a domestic servant. Nellie left home before the 1880 census, and Edward and Abbie continued to live on the farm. Lottie Munford,



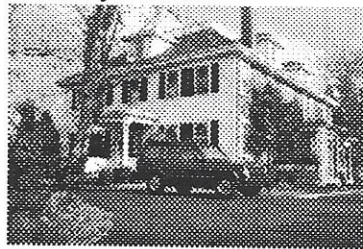
## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

age 14, was in service with them. After this, Edward and Abbie Tucker disappear from the public record. They were apparently not buried in Dartmouth.

Edward's younger brother Abram was born in the home that he eventually inherited. He went to public schools in Dartmouth, as his brother undoubtedly did. Abram also attended Rochester Academy for a while. He married Laura A. Wing of Westport, and they had one son Joseph Franklin Tucker.

Abram lived a relatively quiet life in Dartmouth. He owned about 250 acres of land south of Allen Street. He was considered to be a general farmer, but he did specialize in providing timber for ship building. By 1880 Abram and his wife (who for some reason was listed as Henrietta on the census) had two employees on the farm. Mary Silva, age 20, born in the Azores, helped in the house while William Barney, age 22, helped with the farming. Abram was not active in town affairs, and, at the age of 60, he turned the farm over to his son, Joseph Franklin. Abram died in 1910 of heart trouble and was buried in the Elm Street Cemetery.

Joseph Franklin Tucker had been born in February 1873. He started his education in the public schools of Dartmouth, but he attended Moses Brown in Providence for a while. In 1892 he graduated from Bryant & Stratton Commercial College in Rhode Island. The farm and the house on Tucker Lane were turned over to him in 1903 just about the time he got married.



Joseph Franklin Tucker married Abbie May Delano in June 1903 and lived a quiet life as a farmer in Dartmouth. He attended Apponegansett Meeting, keeping up the family's Quaker tradition. He was a member of the South Bristol County Farm Club. He died in December 1947 at his home on

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Tucker Lane and was survived only by his widow. Eventually his Tucker land was sold and turned into the development of Merrymount. The life of Joseph Tucker reflects many of the changes that occurred in the Tucker family in the twentieth century.

Benjamin Tucker, James Tucker and their sons along with Edward Tucker and his descendants had lifespans that covered the time period from the American Revolution to the beginning of the twentieth century. They, and many others who lived in Dartmouth during the same time, were farmers who had a sense of duty to their community, their faith and their families. They were productive, respected citizens. However, growth and change were inevitable in the town and in the Tucker family.

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Nineteenth Century Tuckers

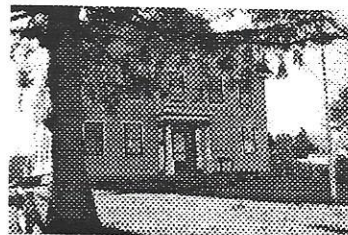
### Moving Away

While some Tuckers such as Benjamin Tucker may have stayed in Dartmouth and farmed, his sons did not. They were attracted by the sea and commercial life. Thus, they and their families began an exodus from Dartmouth in the nineteenth century. Benjamin and Lucretia Tucker had two sons: John was born in 1805, and Charles Russell was born in 1809. Both of them left Dartmouth and made their homes elsewhere.

John Tucker chose to go to sea. Shipping papers show that he was 5 feet 6 inches tall with light hair, fair skin and brown eyes. One of his first voyages was on the ship Timoleon which left New Bedford in June 1822. He would have just turned 17 when the trip began. The Timoleon was probably a merchant vessel, for it was back in June of 1823. After a month in port, the Timoleon sailed again with John Tucker on board. In 1825 John shipped out on the Triton as he did for the next several years on what seemed to be a series of one-year trips.

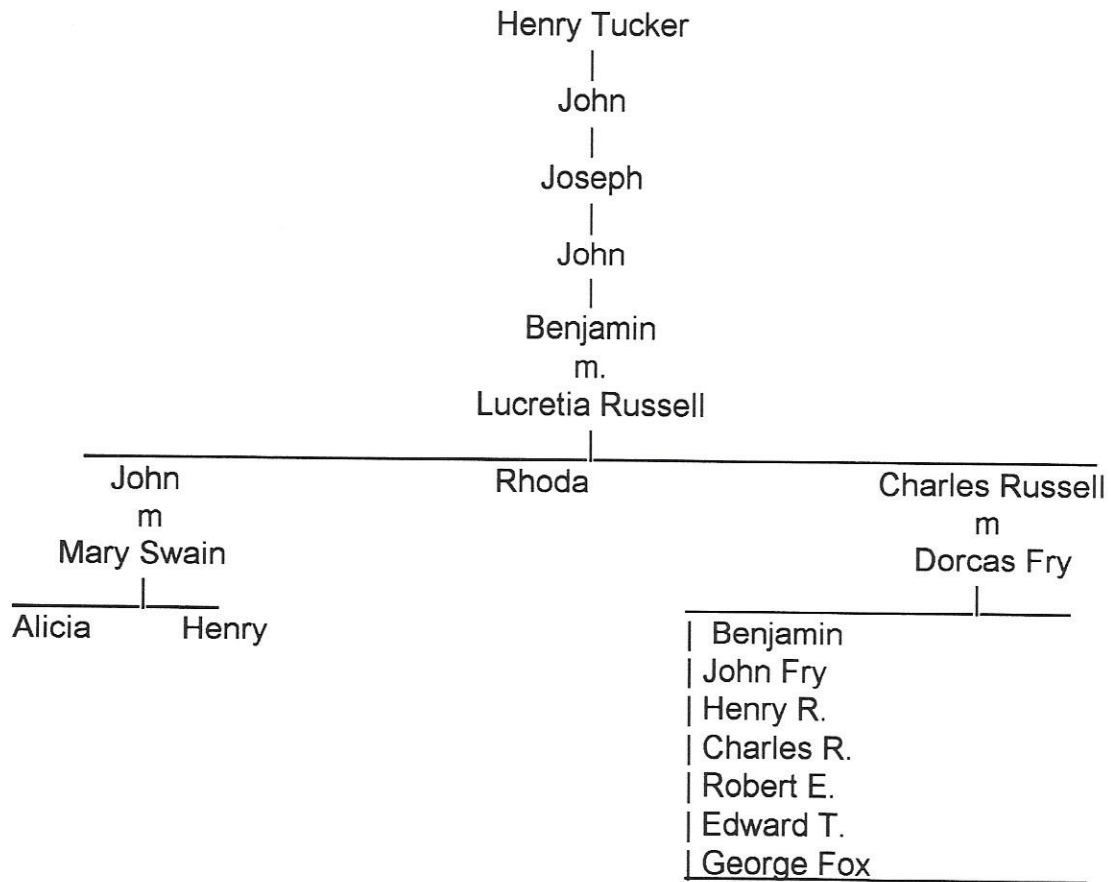
In May 1831, John married Mary Swain of Nantucket. The Swain family was one of the prominent whaling families on that island. They also had connections with the New Bedford area. By 1833 the couple had a daughter named Alicia. In 1842 they had a son, Henry A. Tucker.

John apparently was successful in his career, for he was listed in the 1849 New Bedford Directory as a master mariner. He was also listed as being in California. John and his family lived in Dartmouth according to the 1840 census and was recorded being involved in sea navigation. About this time John bought a house on State



# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree Part Va





## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Road which had been built by David Ryder. He sold the house in the late 1840's, and the house eventually became an inn known as the Saratoga House. However, by 1850, Mary and the children were living by themselves in Dartmouth. She was listed as the head of a household and owned property worth \$7000. She was one of the wealthier Tuckers in the town, owning more property than most other family members listed on the census. Martha Sloan, born in England and age 30, served as a domestic servant for the family. By 1860, Mary and her children vanished from the census records. The family may have traveled to California to join her husband John who stayed there after the gold rush.

There is another possibility, however. In 1851 a legal agreement was recorded with the Registry of Deeds involving a Mary Tucker. On April 4, 1851, a Mary Tucker of Dartmouth and Gideon Smith of North Providence were contemplating marriage. The recorded agreement stipulated that Mary's home at Smith Mills and all of her other assets were to remain her property, sole and separate, when they married (Registry of Deeds, Book 21, p. 57). The agreement continued by listing Mary's assets that included a note for \$1350 from Charles Russell Tucker. The money had been borrowed January 13, 1851. She was owed one third of a \$5000 note plus interest from George Randall. There was a smaller note for \$266 which would be paid in September 1851 in addition to shares of stock in the Fall River Rail Road, the New Bedford Taunton Rail Corporation, Merchants Bank of New Bedford and the Marine Bank of New Bedford. There was another Mary Tucker who may have been living in Dartmouth in 1851, but she would have been 59 years old. Mary Swain Tucker may have heard that John died and in contemplating remarriage, wanted to protect her assets for her children by making this agreement. Whatever the explanation was, Mary Swain Tucker, her children and her husband John

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

vanished from Dartmouth records by 1860.

While John Tucker moved 3000 miles from his home, his brother Charles Russell only moved into New Bedford. Born in 1809, Charles R. Tucker attended the Friends School in Providence (Moses Brown) and graduated about 1825. (It is probable that his brother John was also educated at Moses Brown). Not knowing exactly what career to follow, Charles R. began to teach in various schools in Dartmouth and Westport for about 4 years. In 1830 he went to work for Issac Howland Jr. & Company in New Bedford. By 1836, he was listed in the New Bedford Directory as ship chandler and grocer. A ship chandler provided supplies to ships for their voyages. Charles married Dorcus Fry, and the couple were living at 35 South Second Street where their first child, Benjamin, was born and died.

Eventually the Charles Russell Tuckers had seven children. Several died young and others did not marry or have children. The family lived several places in New Bedford. From South Second Street, they moved to Middle Street and then to Seventh Street, and by 1856, they owned a home known as "Woodlee" on Acushnet Avenue.

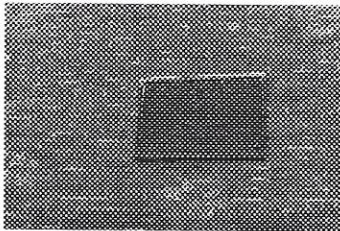
While Charles Russell's business address did not change as much as his home address, his business was growing and changing. Along with Edward Mandell, in the early 1840's he formed Charles R. Tucker & Co.; they were whaling agents. In 1841 Charles Russell Tucker's company was the managing owner of six whaling vessels -- about 3% of the vessels sailing from New Bedford. One of the ships was the Benjamin Tucker which might have been named in honor of Charles Russell's father or for his son, born in 1836, or both. The company also owned the barks Canton, Mars and Marcella and the ships Minerva and Lafayette. These vessels and the others that were eventually owned by Charles R. Tucker & Company had many successful voyages. The

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

company was very prosperous.

Charles R. Tucker's ability was recognized by others in the area who viewed him as extremely enterprising. By the time he started his own firm, he was a trustee of the New Bedford Institution for Savings (NBIS) and of the Mechanics Insurance Company. In 1853 he was named the President of the Merchant National Bank, an office that he held until his death in 1876. He was also on the board of various other local firms such as the Union Screw Co. and Marine Mutual Insurance. Briefly, in the late 1840's when New Bedford became a city, he served as a city councilor. He served as a school board member for the City of New Bedford, as a Trustee of the Moses Brown School and on the Board of Trustees of the Swain School.

Charles was also an important member of the New Bedford Society of



Friends. He served as Clerk of the New Bedford Meeting and eventually as an Elder and an Overseer. At the time of his death, he was serving as the Clerk of the New England Yearly Meeting. His financial abilities helped out the Meeting especially when

dealing with a fund known as the John West Fund. This fund was set up to help the "worthy poor" and was begun with a modest bequest. Tucker's advice and investment know-how helped the fund to grow substantially.

Despite being important in the business community of New Bedford, Charles Russell Tucker kept close ties to the area where he grew up. North of his family home in the village of Smith Mills, John Cummings had a general store. Throughout the 1840's and 1850's Tucker did a great deal of business with the Cummings store, frequently asking them for supplies before going to other businesses. He ordered various supplies from wood to potatoes from the Cummings store. Letters that survive show that Charles Russell would



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

frequently write to John Cummings indicating that he needed so much of a product and just how much could Cummings provide. He also gave John Cummings various investment opportunities that the Cummings family took advantage of, increasing their wealth substantially. When John Cummings died, Charles Russell Tucker paid the estate \$1166. 67 to settle his account with the Cummings Store.

The Civil War period was a difficult time for whaling. The heyday of whaling in the 1850's decreased the supply of whales, and so whaling voyages were becoming longer. Drake's oil well in Pennsylvania meant another source of oil for light and lubrication, and by 1858 kerosene was being distilled in New Bedford. The war also was harmful as Confederate ships went to into battle against unarmed whaling vessels. One confederate ship, the Alabama, destroyed more than 60 union vessels between 1862 and 1864. Of that number 25 were whaling vessels from New Bedford, and one of those ships was the Benjamin Tucker. Charles Russell Tucker's ship, one of the Alabama's first victims, was captured and burned in September 1862. The Benjamin Tucker was carrying about 450 barrels of oil when it was destroyed some 300 miles west of the Island of Flores in the Indian Ocean. The Civil War marked a change in the development of whaling: a number of people began to transfer their business interests elsewhere.

Charles Russell Tucker died in 1876 at the age of 67 as a citizen of New Bedford. He did not return to Dartmouth, the place of his birth, even to be buried. His children also made their home in New Bedford.

His son, Benjamin Tucker, born 1836, was working in his father's office by the time he was 20. According to the 1870 census Benjamin tried life as a farmer when he was in his early 30's. Zenas Cowen worked for him, while Rebecca Cowen acted as his housekeeper. A 10 year old child named Austin



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

George was also listed as living on the farm. By 1880, however, no Benjamin Tucker was living in Dartmouth. Perhaps this was an experiment that did not work. He eventually moved to New Hampshire. Benjamin married Maria McKeage and had a daughter Edith who was born in 1877.

Charles Russell Tucker's second son was John Fry Tucker. John Fry began his career as a bookkeeper at Mechanics Bank. Eventually, he was a merchant in his father's business. He became a Board Member of Citizens National Bank in 1875. Married twice, he died in June 1886, aged 46.

His younger brother, Henry R. Tucker, died unmarried in 1870 at the age of 39. He worked in the clothing business and was listed in the 1870 City Directory as a merchant tailor with a shop at 39-42 N. Water Street. He lived on Acushnet Avenue, probably in the family home.

The fourth son of Charles R. Tucker and his wife Dorcus, Charles Russell Tucker Jr., also died relatively young. He died in 1891 at the age of 56 after having been in feeble health for some time. He began his business career as a clerk for the Commercial Insurance Company, located on North Water Street. He married Mary Bourne and had three children.

The fifth Tucker son, Robert Earle Tucker, never married. At 21 he was a bank clerk at the Merchant's National Bank where his father was Bank President. Robert Earle died in California in 1873 at the age of 26.

The sixth son of Charles Russell Tucker and his wife Dorcas had a much longer and more prominent life. Born in September 1849, Edward Tobey Tucker graduated from Brown University in 1871. He then attended Harvard Medical School and returned to his home city to serve as a physician. In addition to his practice, he served as the City Physician in charge of the Almshouse in 1904 and worked with the Overseer of the Poor for many years. He was a member of the School Committee between 1893 and 1898. He was a founding member of

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

the Old Dartmouth Historical Society (Whaling Museum) and was a lover of history. He wrote many letters to his relative (first cousin once removed), Jesse Tucker, about family history. Some of these letters have been preserved and are in the Old Dartmouth Historical Society collection. The Old Dartmouth published some of his historical writings in their Historical Sketches.

Doctor Edward T. Tucker was also an important member of the Society of Friends in New Bedford. Beginning in 1883 he served as Clerk of the New Bedford Monthly Meeting. He was 34 at the time. In 1887 he added the job of the Clerk of the Sandwich Quarterly Meeting to his responsibilities. He did have concerns about changes in the attitudes of Society of Friends members. In June 1884 he wrote to Jesse Tucker and said that he was distressed by some of more radical elements who had attended the Yearly Meeting. He believed that there was a "large class within borders of the various yearly meeting, who had better be outside, because they have very little Friends about them, and are more Methodist or Baptists than Friends..." (ODHS Tucker Collection)

Edward T. Tucker married Anna Pope, and they had four children. Robert Earle Tucker, born in 1878, was named for his father's deceased brother. Emily was born in 1880 and lived only eighteen months. George Greenleaf Tucker (perhaps named for American poet and Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier) was born in 1882. He died when he was 20. The last child of Edward and Anna Tucker was Helen, born in 1884. Edward T. Tucker died in 1917 in New Bedford, survived by his wife.

Edward's younger brother and the last child of Charles Russell Tucker was George Fox Tucker. George followed his brother to Brown after attending Friends Academy in New Bedford and Moses Brown in Providence. He graduated from Brown in 1873. He then went to the Law School at Boston University where he got a degree 1874. He was admitted to the Bar in 1876 and

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

worked at Marston and Crapo Law Firm in New Bedford. In 1881 he was made a member of the New Bedford School Committee, but eventually more and more of his practice was located in Boston. Finally, he moved to Middleborough.

George Fox Tucker served as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1890, 1891, and 1892.

In addition to his legal work and his political career, George Fox Tucker found time to write. He wrote a book called The History of the Monroe Doctrine which was published in Boston in 1885. Three years later, he published a very different book, A Quaker Home.

Charles Russell Tucker and his sons were not the only nineteenth century Tuckers who looked to New Bedford and beyond for their careers. Charles R. was a descendent of John Tucker, and some of his more distant cousins, descendants of Abraham, also began to leave the family farms and look for wealth and opportunities in other areas.

## **19th Century Tuckers**

### **Success and Failures**

Born in 1818 in Russells Mills, Abner R. Tucker was the son of Abraham Tucker and Mary Ann Almy. By the age of 19, he was running a small general or variety store in Russells Mills Village. Married in 1838, he and his wife Abby had several children. (By two wives, Abner Tucker had six children: Henry born 1840, Sarah born 1844, Nancy born 1846, William H. born 1848, Benjamin born 1854 and Lydia born 1858.) Shortly after 1850 the family moved into the house that Abner R. had Samuel Davis build for him on Franklin Street. Previously Abner's business



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

interests had shifted into Padanaram village where he was in general trade and had some whaling interests. In 1851 Abner was one of the owners of Tucker and Cummings, one of the largest stores in South Dartmouth.

In 1862, Abner R. sold his Franklin Street house to his brother-in-law, Charles Tucker, because his firm of Tucker and Cummings moved into New Bedford. It began as a wholesale grocery located on Williams Street, but the two owners were also agents for a number of whaling vessels. At first Abner's family lived on the corner of Bonney and Grinnell Streets in New Bedford, but eventually they moved into 77 Spring Street. Tucker and Cummings was a very successful store in New Bedford. In fact, in the 1867 New Bedford City Directory, Tucker and Cummings had a full page, front page ad, in color. This was definitely a sign of a prosperous firm.

However, after 30 years in business, Tucker and Cummings dissolved in 1881. Abner R. Tucker then opened a store of his own on Purchase Street. Eventually, he sold that business and established a coffee, tea and spice store on North Second Street that lasted for 2 years.

Abner R. Tucker was involved with more than just groceries, however. When news of the California Gold Rush hit the area, Abner and others formed the New Bedford & California Mining Company. There were twenty-two shareholders who each put up \$300 to outfit a ship to go to California and mine gold. Not only did Abner R. Tucker own six shares (having put up \$1800), but he also served as Treasurer of the Corporation. In the spring of 1849, the corporation bought the schooner Emmeline and outfitted it. The men who sailed on the Emmeline--in some cases the shareholders-- would get support (food and other necessities) from the Corporation for 18 months. Shareholders would share the profit equally. The original idea was that the shareholders would be the men who went to California and did the work.



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

If a shareholder did not go to California, he had to arrange for someone to take his place. Abner R. Tucker contracted with Obed B. Eldridge of Dartmouth in March 1, 1849. Eldridge had the "right" to go in Tucker's place. In addition to being supported by the company for 18 months, Eldridge would get one half of the profits due to Tucker as a shareholder. Once the company had made \$10,000, Obed Eldridge's share would increase to two thirds of the profit. If for any reason Eldridge defaulted on his agreement with Abner Tucker, he would owe Abner Tucker or his heirs \$600.

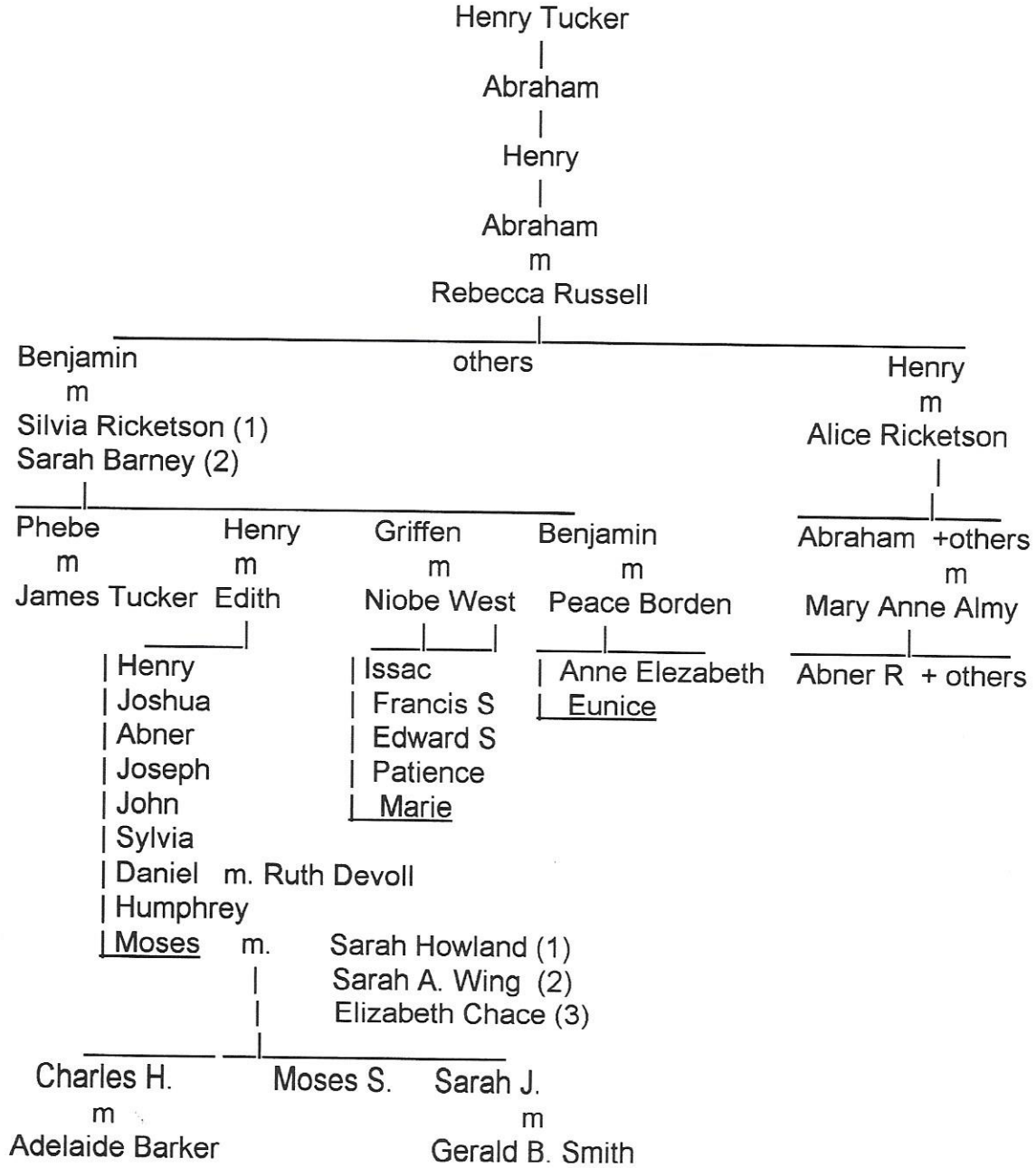
Whether or not this venture was successful, and it probably was not, Abner R. Tucker was a prosperous businessman. The 1850 census gives his worth as \$2500. By 1860 his real property was listed as being worth \$10,000 while his personal property was worth \$8000. By 1853, his wife, Abbie W. Tucker, died, and Abner R. remarried Caroline Cummings, who was born in 1832. Caroline was the mother of Abner's two youngest children, Benjamin and Lydia (referred to as Julia in some family records). Of Abner's six children, only three, Sarah H., Benjamin and Lydia, lived to adulthood.

Abner Tucker died in 1884 after being bedridden for six months. In addition to being a prosperous businessman, he participated in a number of community affairs. While he lived in Dartmouth, he served as a member of the legislature for that town in 1847. In New Bedford he acted as one of the Overseers of the Poor in 1875, 1876, 1879 and 1880. He was a member of the Democratic Party and was, according to his obituary, a pleasant gentleman, much respected (Tucker papers, Southworth Library). His family remained active in New Bedford after his death, for in 1891, his wife Caroline was President of the Ladies Branch of the New Bedford Port Society.

Abner Tucker was not the only descendent of Abraham Tucker to look for opportunity off of the farm. Griffen and Benjamin Tucker were the youngest sons

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree Part Vb



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

of Benjamin Tucker and Sarah Barney. They were somewhat overshadowed by the activities of their brothers Abraham and Henry. Griffen, born in 1786, married Niobe West in 1809. In 1811, after his father died, Griffen inherited the eastward section of the family's land. To the north was Barzillai's land, and to the west was the highway (Tucker Road?) and John Tucker's land. He also got the use of a lane. Griffen began to purchase land in the area of the intersection of State Road and Slocum Road. By 1822 he had a liquor license for property on the northeast corner of that intersection. During the 19th century the intersection of Route 6 and Slocum Road was referred to in deeds as Griffen Tucker's Corner.

In March 1829 a deed was drawn up dividing some of Griffen's brother Abraham's property between Griffen's children, Issac, Edward S., Francis S., Patience Tucker Cornell and Maria Tucker Albro. The deed said that the property was to go to the heirs of Griffen. However, another deed drawn on the same day had Griffen and Niobe selling several parcels of land, including all the land at Griffen Tucker's Corner. The 1830 Dartmouth census listed Griffen Tucker as the head of a household of nine. This included two male children under the age of 5, one male between 10 and 15, two females between the ages of 10 and 15, one male between 15 and 20, one female between 15 and 20 and one female between 40 and 50 (Niobe, probably). Griffen Tucker was not the head of a Dartmouth household according to the 1840 census. At this point, Griffen Tucker disappeared from public records. There is no record of his dying or being buried in Dartmouth.

Griffen's sons left the land and went to sea. Issac, who was born in 1811, married Saphronia Drew of Connecticut in 1836. At age 21 in 1832 he was a sailor aboard the London Packet. His shipping papers indicate that he was 5 feet 8 1/2 inches in height with light skin and dark hair.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Francis Tucker was born in 1822. He also went to sea. Slightly shorter than his brother at 5' 5" in height, Francis had brown hair and gray eyes. He sailed on a number of ships, first going to sea on the ship Washington in June 1838. By 1844 he was serving on board whaling ships. He served as third mate on a two-year trip the bark Jasper took in 1844, and he was given a 1/65th share of the profits. He left New Bedford in September 1847 on the ship Atto for what turned out to be a four-year voyage. Serving as third mate, Francis had a 1/53 share of the profits. Immediately after returning on the Atto, Francis left on the George Washington; this time getting a 1/20 share.

Meanwhile, Francis Tucker married and had an official residence in New Bedford. His wife Lydia was a milliner and dressmaker. She worked out of their home. The Tuckers lived in a variety of locations in New Bedford including Cheapside and Elm Street.

Francis's brother, Edward S. Tucker, was also a sailor. His shipping papers listed his height as 5' 8" his skin as light, his hair as black and his eyes as dark. When he was 25, he sold 10 acres of land on the west side of a road that was probably Slocum Road and moved into New Bedford. In 1854 when he was 28, he was living on Smith Street in New Bedford and categorized in the City Directory as a laborer; his sea career may not have been successful. The 1860 Dartmouth census had Edward Tucker, mariner, living with Thomas Wilbur. The Wilburs lived on the east side of Tucker Road near the Tucker homestead farm. Edward Tucker was not listed as having any real or personal property of value. At 36 years of age, Edward seemed to be in some economic difficulties and at this point, he disappeared from the public record.

Not only did Griffen Tucker's sons go to sea, so did his younger brother Benjamin. Benjamin was born in 1796. When the brothers divided their father's estate in 1811, Benjamin was still a minor. His share of the homestead included



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

the western half of the house, the barn, corn crib and cellar. The line dividing the property continued through the orchard. He had the right to use the well and to use the lane to go to the highway. His older brother, Henry, had the other half of the house. Not content with his half of the house, Benjamin went to sea and had already completed at least one voyage before his marriage. He married 17 year old Peace Borden of Tiverton in 1820.

Benjamin's shipping papers show that he was very tall for a Tucker, 6' 2 1/2". He left New Bedford in May 1815 on the ship Mary and returned two years later. When he returned, he paid his brother Henry \$823 for the eastern half of the house and 22 acres of the family homestead. Henry retained the right to use the well, and Benjamin had the right to pass from the road to his home. In 1820 he sold 40 acres of his land for \$500. His mother had to give up her dower right to the land and did so.

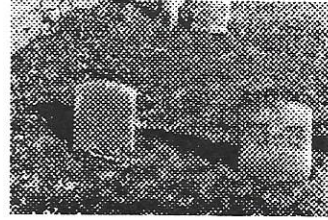
On the 1830 Dartmouth Census, Benjamin was listed as Benjamin Tucker 2nd and was the head of a household of 4. He and his wife had two children according to the census, a boy and a girl. By 1840, Benjamin and Peace had a large, undoubtedly extended family household or else a household with a number of young domestic servants. One male was under the age of five, one male between 10 and 15 and one male was between 40 and 50 (Benjamin). There was one female in each of the following categories, between 5 and 10, 10 and 15, 15 and 20, and 20 to 30.

Benjamin Tucker died in early 1844. When Ann Elezabeth, his daughter, married James Davenport, a rigger from New Bedford, in June 1844, her father was dead. Ann Elezabeth was just 16 years old. Yet, Benjamin's widow, Peace Borden Tucker, gave birth to Eunice B. Tucker two months later in August 1844. Eunice B. Tucker was a posthumous child. Eventually in 1847, Peace Borden Tucker at the age of 44 married Jeremiah Cornell, age 45, who was a single

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

farmer in the Town of Dartmouth .

Benjamin's older brother Henry Tucker was born in 1778 and died in 1839. In 1805 Henry married Edith Howland of Dartmouth and had ten children. Of their eight sons, most went to sea; four ended up in California.



Humphrey, the eldest child, was one of three sons who stayed at home. Born in October 1807, he died just 12 days before his 81st birthday. There is no record of Humphrey getting married, and he seemed to have worked as a laborer most of his life. He was living with his mother when both the 1850 and 1860 censuses were taken. The 1860 census lists Edith, Humphrey's mother, as head of the household, and Humphrey, then 52, as a laborer with personal property worth \$700 and real property worth \$100. Also living with them in 1850 was Joshua H. Tucker, age 25, a sailor. This was Humphrey's youngest brother.

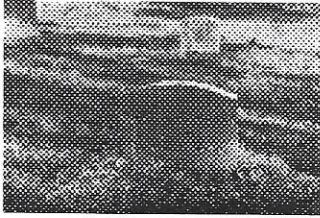
By 1870 , Humphrey was living on the east side of Russells Mills Road between Tucker Road and Bakerville. His mother, Edith, had died, and he was living with Ruth Devoll Tucker and her son David. David at 23 was listed as a mariner and Ruth at 55 was counted as the housekeeper. Ruth was the widow of Humphrey's brother Daniel.

Daniel Tucker, born in 1813, became a sailor. His shipping papers indicate that he was just over 5'9' and had light hair and brown eyes. By the age of 18, he was going to sea. He married Ruth B. Devoll in 1852, and within the year, they had a son Daniel who died shortly after birth. David was born in 1857. The 1850 census recorded that Daniel owned real and personal property worth \$800. This net worth undoubtedly increased when in 1853 Daniel Tucker purchased 16 acres of land, more or less, from George Francis for a total of \$1500. This land was on Russell's Mills Road probably near the intersection of

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Bakerville Road and originally owned by Daniel's uncle Abraham. The land returned to Tucker control after being owned by Francis for 15 years.

Daniel Tucker died unexpectedly in 1857 without making a will. It took a



number of years and many legal documents to settle the estate. The land seemed to pass to Humphrey after he paid off each of the other nine heirs to the estate.

Each got about \$100 for their share of Daniel's estate.

Humphrey then sold 7/10ths of his brother's land plus buildings to Isaac Howland in April of 1871.

During the settlement of Daniel's estate, one brother Abner was at sea. His consent to the settlement of the estate was given by Lydia Ann Chace Tucker who had her husband's power of attorney. Abner Tucker had been born about 1810, and at the age of 28, he married the 18 year old Lydia Chace. They had two children, Abner H. , born in 1840 who became a cooper in New Bedford and Lydia A, born in 1844. By 1850, Abner was listed in the census as seaman, and he owned property, real and personal, worth \$500. Also living with the family was his mother-in -law, Joanna Chace.

The 1850's brought prosperity to a number of people in the region, and Abner Tucker was no exception. By 1860 his real property was worth \$1200 and his personal property was worth \$1000. However, Abner was lost at sea in October 1862. Lydia vanished from the public record by 1870

Several other brothers in the family left the area. John H. Tucker was apprenticed to a blacksmith on Mechanics Lane in New Bedford in 1849, but by 1857, he was living in California. In between he had served as a greenhand on one voyage and a seaman on another, and in 1854 he sailed on the ship Europa for a two-year trip as a cook. As a cook he was to get 1/140th of the take and 1/2 of the slush. He was joined in California by his brothers Joseph, Joshua



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

and Henry S Tucker. John died in Nevada as the result of a boiler explosion.

His brother, Henry S. Tucker, ended up in San Francisco after claiming New Bedford as his residence for a number of years, Born in Dartmouth in 1817, by 1839 he was boarding at 27 Union Street and was listed in the city directory as a mariner. In 1845 he was a mate on a ship that sailed from Newport. By 1849 he was the master of the bark America. City Directories in the 1850's continue to list Henry S. Tucker, but his address is "California."

Henry married Henrietta Thompson of Eastport, Maine in 1843.

Henrietta served as the Principal of the Grove Intermediate School on South Water Street in 1845. For a salary of \$275 a year, she ran the school that was for children seven to ten years of age. While living in New Bedford, the couple had two sons, Henry Jr. and Edwin. Henrietta then took the boys and joined her husband in California where other children were born. In 1883 Henry Jr. married a Tucker cousin in California who died just three weeks after the wedding. Henry Tucker Sr. died in California in 1890 at the age of 72. Henrietta died in 1889.

While Henry, Joshua, Joseph and John may have become prosperous in California, Abner, Daniel and Humphrey were not very wealthy Dartmouth citizens. Their younger brother and the eighth son of Henry and Edith Tucker was more successful. This was Moses G. Tucker, born in 1820.

Moses chose the sea for a career. At 5' 8" with light hair and blue eyes, Moses was acting as a boatsteerer on a whaling ship by 1841. His share was 1/95. In 1847 at the age of 24, he married Sarah Howland who was 18. Three months after the wedding, Moses left on a 2 1/2 year voyage on the ship Montpelier where he served as first mate. After the Montpelier returned to New Bedford, it was fitted out again for another voyage; this time Moses G. Tucker was master with a 1/16th share. (On whaling voyages it was usual for the men

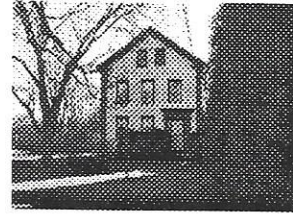


# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

to receive a share of the take instead of or in addition to a salary. Captains would generally just get a share.)

Moses was obviously successful as a mariner. In 1850, Sarah, Moses and their son Charles H. Tucker were living with Sarah's mother. (Moses had just returned from the voyage he left on shortly after getting married.) Sarah died in 1854, probably at the birth of her second son, Moses S. Tucker.

However, in 1857, Moses G Tucker married Sarah Anne Wing. She was 31 at the time of their marriage. Eleven months later Sarah Wing Tucker gave birth to a daughter Sarah J. Francis Tucker. By 1860 Moses and Sarah had a house of their own on Russells Mills Road. His real property was valued at \$3300 and his personal property at another \$3000. They were raising three children, Charles H., age twelve, Moses S., age seven, from the first marriage, and Sarah who was one.



Moses did not spend much time at home. (Between 1847 and 1865 he spent a total of about four years in Dartmouth.) While he was gone, he gave Sarah Tucker power of attorney to act for him. This included paying debts and buying or selling property. His last ship was the Sophia Thornton which left New Bedford in December 1864. It was captured and burned by the Confederate ship Shenandoah that was one of several ship the South used to destroy the Union's trade. At this point Moses Tucker decided to leave the sea and settle down in Dartmouth.

By 1870, Captain Moses Tucker was living on Russells Mills Road, west of the Bakerville intersection. He was classified as a farmer with real property worth \$2800 and personal property worth \$13000. His older son Charles H. Tucker had already gone to sea and was listed as mariner. Moses S. Tucker was 16 and at school. Sarah J. F. was at home.

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Moses G. Tucker's second wife, Sarah Wing Tucker, died in February 1874. In December 1874, Moses married Elizabeth Chace. His third wife was 22 years younger than he. According to the 1880 census records, the two younger children of Captain Tucker, Moses S. and Sarah, were living at home and teaching school in Dartmouth. The family had a 33 year old woman named Anne Traverse living with them and acting as a servant. Anne who had been born in Ireland could not read or write. Moses's older son, Charles, had a home and a family of his own in the town. Captain Moses Tucker served as the town's census taker in the year 1880, continuing the family tradition of public service in the community.

Charles H. Tucker followed his father to sea, but whaling had changed by the time this young man was a mariner. Charles was about 5' 8" tall and had light hair and brown eyes. He sailed on a number of vessels out of New Bedford and was even the captain of the Lagoda between May 1887 and November 1888. (A half-model of the Lagoda is a highlight of the Whaling Museum) By 1884 Charles Tucker was the chief officer of the steam bark Belvedere. Steam power began to be used on whaling vessels at this time; many of these steam vessels did their whaling in the Arctic. Charles Tucker was once again on the Belvedere when it sailed from San Francisco in 1889. He was the keeper of the log

Charles H. Tucker married Adelaide Barker. The couple made their home in Dartmouth with Adelaide's mother, Ruth Barker. Adelaide worked as a dressmaker in addition to the work she did around the house. Charles spent a great deal of time in the Pacific; many of the steam vessels sailed from west coast ports.

Back in Dartmouth, Charles's sister Sarah was known as Jennie Tucker (the J. in her full name perhaps stood for Jennifer). Teaching was to be

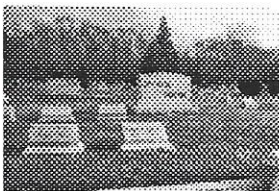


## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Jennie's career for many years. In 1893 she was the teacher at the Bakerville School (this was not far from her family home); she received a salary of \$36 a month for teaching 32 students. She continued teaching at Bakerville until 1897 when she moved to the Bliss Corner Intermediate School. Her salary increased to \$261.

By the time her father, Captain Moses G. Tucker, died in March 1898, the family's prosperous days were over. In the 1900 census, Sarah J. Tucker, age 40, was listed as head of the household. Her brother Moses S. Tucker, age 46, was living with her in a rented house on Russells Mills Road. His profession was listed as laborer, but he had been unemployed for six months of the previous year. In fact, he had been having trouble paying his taxes for in 1896, 1897 and 1898 he was delinquent with his property taxes in Dartmouth. Moses S. Tucker died in 1901; the cause of death was listed as phthisis. Phthisis was another name for tuberculosis. Along with his father, his mother and his step mother, Moses S. Tucker was buried at Apponegansett Meeting House Burial Ground.

However, shortly after her brother's death, Sarah Tucker married Gerald B. Smith whose first wife had died in 1899. At some point the couple bought



land in the Elm Street Cemetery and created a Tucker Smith plot. Edward's first wife, Susie, and daughter Marian Smith Ferguson were buried there. In addition, the bodies of Captain Moses Tucker, Moses S. Tucker and Sarah Wing Tucker were removed from Apponegansett and reburied in the Tucker Smith plot. Sarah J. F. Tucker Smith was buried alongside her husband after her death in 1926. Sarah's step mother Elisabeth Chase Tucker died in 1921 and was interred in Apponegansett Friends Meeting Burial Ground as was her husband's first wife.

## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Thus in the last years of the nineteenth century many Tucker men left the area looking for new opportunities. Others remained in the town but never married, and still others died with no sons to carry on the Tucker name. While many Tucker descendants lived in the town, the number of people having the surname of Tucker declined.

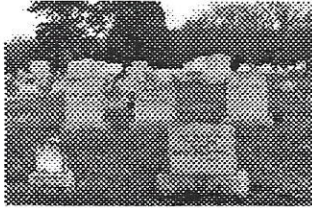


# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Twentieth Century Tuckers

### **Lasting Legacy--Vanishing Family**

In 1992 Frederick Porter Tucker died and was buried in the Elm Street cemetery in Padanaram. At that time he was the only person with the last name of Tucker living in Dartmouth. Today, although there are Tucker descendants living in the town, there is no one who bears the name of Tucker. Frederick Porter Tucker was the son of Arthur Leslie Tucker and the grandson of Charles Tucker. He was an eighth generation Tucker to live in the town of Dartmouth.



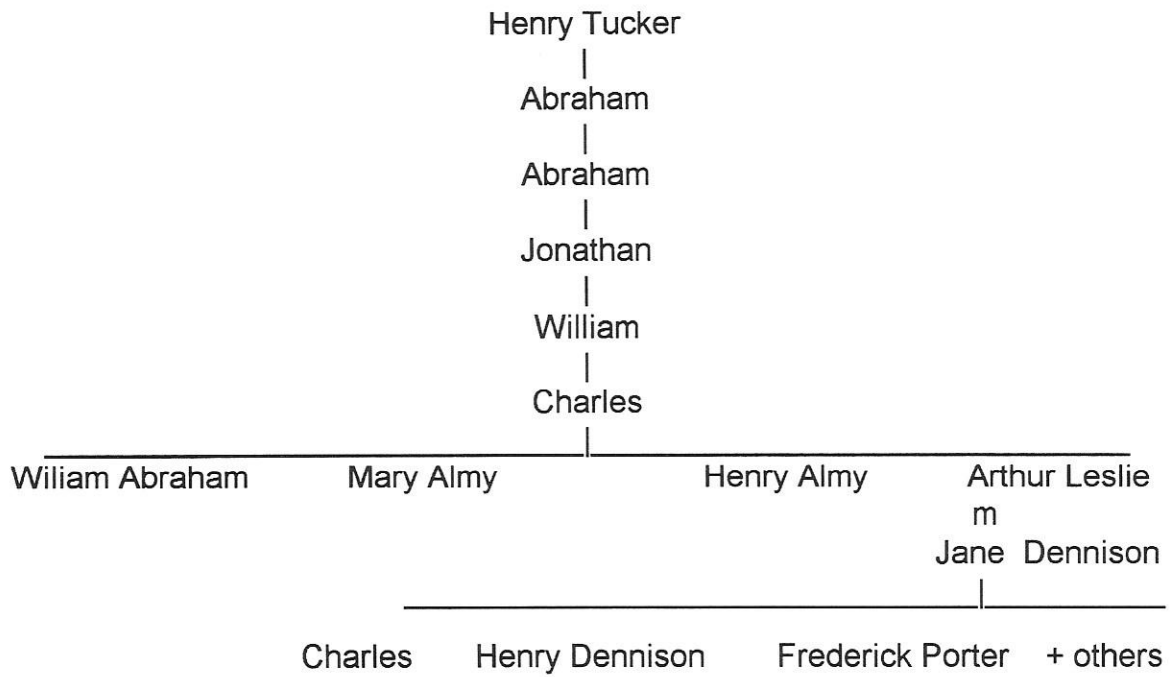
The merchant Charles Tucker had married a distant cousin Alice Tucker and lived in New Bedford. The couple had 4 children. The youngest child, Arthur Leslie Tucker, was born in 1865 while the family was living in Padanaram. Arthur attended Friends Academy in New Bedford and then went to high school at Moses Brown in Providence. He returned to New Bedford and began to work at Achusnet Mills, a cotton mill in the city. Briefly, he went to another mill, but he returned to Acushnet Mills where he worked in the cotton sampling and grading department. Arthur Leslie Tucker became an expert on raw cotton and eventually was a cotton broker in the city of New Bedford, He opened his own office at 25 Water Street in September 1891 at the age of 26. He continued the Tucker tradition of service and was on the Board of Trustees of the New Bedford Five Cent Savings Bank. He disliked politics, but basically was a Republican. He was a member of the Wamsutta Club and the New Bedford Yacht Club, and so he appears to be one of the first Tuckers who sailed for fun rather than for a career. He also served on the Board of Trustees of Friends Academy. By the 1930's, he retired from his business and had moved back to

by Kathleen Fair

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

## Family Tree

### Part VI



## The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Dartmouth. Arthur Leslie Tucker died in 1942 and was buried in the Elm Street Cemetery along with his father and mother.

His son Frederick Porter Tucker, born in New Bedford, also moved to Dartmouth where he lived on Prospect Street. Frederick Porter and his brothers who left the area, had no sons to carry on the family name. Therefore, these two men were among the few remaining Tuckers in the town of Dartmouth after the early twentieth century

In 1900 there were eight Tucker Families living in town. Elizabeth Tucker, a 58 year old widow, was living with her parents, Joseph and Elizabeth Chace. She was the widow of Captain Moses G. Tucker. Her step children, Sarah Tucker and Moses S. Tucker were renting a home on Russells Mills Road. Also on Russells Mills Road lived Mary Tucker, age 42, and her 12 year old daughter. Mary was listed as head of the household, as a farmer who owned her own property and as the mother of one child. Despite the fact that no husband was mentioned, Mary was listed as having been married for 13 years. Samuel Tucker also lived on Russells Mills Road with his wife, Emma. He was 51 and she was 50. He was the son of James Tucker Jr., and like many of his Tucker ancestors, he farmed for a living. His mother-in-law lived with the couple as did the 40 year old Georigana Chace, a servant, and Orrien Butts, a 32 years old laborer. Samuel Tucker was a resident of the town of Dartmouth until his death at age 84 in 1933.

Also having a home on Russells Mills Road was James H. Tucker. In 1900 he was 55 and had been married for 35 years to his wife Alice. Alice was 52. They only had one surviving child, Mary Anne, born in April 1879, and she was still living at home in 1900. James was the son the Jesse Tucker. His younger brother Jesse R. took over the family farm. Jesse R. Tucker and his father Jesse were living at 1118 Tucker Road. Not far from them on Tucker

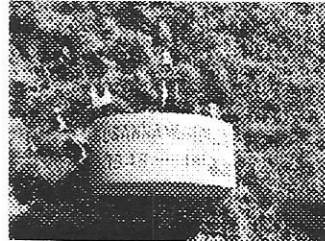


# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

Lane, Abram Tucker was living with his wife, Laura, and his 27 year old son, Joseph

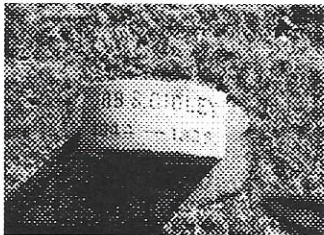
Finally, on Franklin Street in Padanaram village, Alice Tucker, 66 year old widow of Charles Tucker, was living with her son William. She was listed as being the mother of four children, only two of whom were still living. Arthur Leslie Tucker was her son; Frederick Porter Tucker, her grandson.

Perhaps one of the greatest portents of the changing relationship between the Tuckers and the town of Dartmouth was the fact that by 1900 the Tucker Homestead farm was beginning to be known by a new name: Gidley Farm. Job S. Gidley had married Susanna Tucker, daughter of Jesse Tucker in 1874. They had five children, four daughters and a son.



Job Gidley was born in Dartmouth in March 1844. His first, and perhaps primary,

career was that of school teacher. He farmed the land on Tucker Road with the



help of a number of laborers; he had time to get involved in various community affairs. Eventually, he became a school board member and was actively involved in school activities in town. Not only was Job Gidley active in school affairs, he was prominent in

other town activities. He served as town collector and town treasurer, but he was perhaps most remembered for acting as Town Moderator. As late as 1997, there were town meeting members who could remember when they saw Job Gidley as town meeting moderator when they were children. The Gidley family were also dedicated members of the Society of Friends Meeting at Smith Mills. Above all, Job Gidley became an advocate for Dartmouth and its growth.

On July 1, 1893, The Dartmouth and Westport Railroad Company opened



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its line from Union Street to Smith Mills. This festive event was celebrated by bunting on the houses along the way. When the cars reached Smith Mills, a reception was held on the lawn of Edward Tucker's house, and Job Gidley was asked to speak for the town. Claiming that he had just come from the hay fields and had prepared nothing, Mr. Gidley welcomed everyone from Fall River and New Bedford. Even though the Town Hall building planned for Smith Mills was not yet built (it never was built), Job Gidley continued to praise Smith Mills. He claimed that Fall River and New Bedford, the two great manufacturing towns were linked by Smith Mills. He also said "When you get tired of the whirr of the spindles you can come here for quiet and rest and perhaps you can buy a lot here, for I apprehend the town of Dartmouth has one to sell." (Tucker papers, Southworth Library) He talked about the Tuckers in the past and even recited a poem "to the Pascamansett." (sic) He even wondered at what the first settlers would think about the new electric rail line at Smith Mills, just as people today might wonder what Job Gidley would think of Dartmouth and especially the Smith Mills area today.

Job Gidley became such an important and colorful personality in the town that the Tucker farm he acquired through his wife's family soon became known as Gidley farm. It is still known as that today.

Job Gidley saw the changes that were occurring the Dartmouth and welcomed them. He is remembered in a number of ways in the town today including having Gidley School named after him. In many ways, Job Gidley overshadowed the Tuckers who preceded him.

The Tucker family was an important part of the settlement and development of Dartmouth. They played important roles, but were never as prominent as some other families were. For more than 200 years Tuckers farmed in Dartmouth. However, as the community diversified so did the Tucker

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family. Some went to sea, came back, and settled down. Some went to sea and never returned, finding homes elsewhere. Some Tuckers moved to New Bedford and became businessmen; others entered the legal or medical professions.

The Tucker men in the early 1700's had large families, by the 1800's the families were smaller, reflecting a national trend. By the twentieth century, the Tuckers disperse, leaving the area of Dartmouth. Daughters married into other families so that Tucker descendants are known by other names.

The Tucker contribution to the Town of Dartmouth was invaluable. They contributed to their church, playing important roles in the history of Apponegansett Meeting House, Newtown, and Smith Mills Meeting House. They contributed to town government acting in various capacities at the local and state level. They contributed to the growth of the region by developing productive farms, going to sea and going into business. In many ways the history of the Tucker family is a reflection of the history of Dartmouth. While their name may have vanished from current town census lists, their legacy can still be seen in the town's history.

# The Tuckers of Old Dartmouth

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