Slavery in Massachusetts:
A descendent of early settlers investigates the connections in Newburyport, Massachusetts

by

Susan M. Harvey

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Thesis supervisor: Dr. Laura Baker

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Fitchburg State University

Fitchburg, Massachusetts

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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MA THESIS

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This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Susan M. Harvey

has been approved by the Examining Committee

for the thesis requirement for the Masters degree in

History

Thesis committee:

Thesis supervisor

Member

Member

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money is worth today. He has been completely supportive of this entire adventure. I dedicate this work to him.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the connections between Newbury and Newburyport, Massachusetts, and the transatlantic slave trade beginning with Newbury's founding in 1635 to the early nineteenth century. The "peculiar institution" of slavery is often associated only with the southern United States, but its economic impact was felt throughout all of the North American colonies/states, particularly in New England. By examining the livelihoods, trading practices and estates of the residents in these towns, I make clear that their economy was inextricably linked to the trading of Africans and to slave-made goods. I have focused my research on shipbuilding, specifically the building of vessels for slaving; the trade of New England-grown goods with the West Indies that continued into the nineteenth century; and the distilling of molasses into rum, which was used to purchase Africans. Newburyport was a leader in all of these areas. Data have been collected from a variety of sources including a collection of uncatalogued probate inventories of Newburyport residents, an online slave trade database, multiple histories of the towns, a variety of shipping registration records, and other published sources on the economy and slavery in New England. Also discussed are some of the issues surrounding the abolition movement in New England. Challenging the argument that because there were so few slaves in New England there was no involvement with the slave trade, this thesis adds to the growing body of work on the subject of New England's complicity in the crime of buying and selling human beings and perpetuating the slave trade through its trading practices. The economy of New England was completely dependent on the slave-based plantation economy and the transatlantic slave trade.

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INTRODUCTION

Newbury exported fish and timber to the West Indies to be exchanged for molasses and sugar. Part of the cargo was re-exported to Europe. Part was kept in New England and the molasses made into rum. This profitable "triangle trade" formed the base of the New England economy.[1]

The sign from which this quote is taken is on the wall in the main hallway and entrance to the Custom House Maritime Museum in Newburyport, Massachusetts. It is the first thing one reads when beginning a self-guided tour throughout the museum. On a recent visit, I observed a small group of people enter and read this first sign. "But the Triangle Trade means slavery – there were no slaves here," remarked one of the individuals, a middle-aged woman like myself. Trying to describe this to her companions, she traced the familiar triangle in the air with her finger: ships with rum to Africa, ships with slaves to the Caribbean, and ships with slaves to the southern part of the American colonies. I have found that is the prevailing notion of how the Triangle trade worked: that because we had no tobacco or cotton plantations in New England, slavery did not exist here. But the real issue of New England's involvement with the Triangle Trade is not so much the presence of slaves, though there were African slaves in New England, but the economy the slave labor created. The woman in the Custom House Maritime Museum did not think about where the rum came from, how it was made, who made it, and who garnered the profits from it. The production and consumption of sugar did not enter her equation. Nor did she question the profits made from the building of all those ships, most of which came from New England, and many from Newburyport itself. Once we begin examining those two aspects of the slave trade, rum and ships, more aspects of the triangle become apparent, and the deep involvement of New England becomes clear as the layers of omission and denial are peeled away. African slaves should have been

[1] Signage in the Custom House Maritime Museum, Newburyport, MA, 25 Water Street.

included in the museum sign as well. Everyone in New England benefited from the gigantic economic machine that used the forced labor of stolen people to make big profits for free people.

Interest in the relevance of northern slavery to, and its importance in the evolution of, a strong colonial New England economy has increased on the part of both scholars and the general public in the last thirty-some years. Research in this field has provided evidence to support the theory that the Triangle Trade was an integral, even dominant part of the New England economy, despite the fact that New Englanders were not slaveholders to the extent that Southerners were.[2] The major New England seaports of Boston and Salem, Massachusetts, and Newport, Rhode Island, have been examined extensively in regard to the shipbuilding and trading practices that involved African slavery. Research in the last decade by Katrina Browne has uncovered that Browne's own ancestors, the DeWolfs of Bristol, Rhode Island, accumulated more wealth from the slave trade than any other family in the country.[3] According to Browne, the economies of New England towns revolved around slavery, from building and sailing the ships that transported slaves and goods to and from the West Indies, to fishing for the abundant cod to feed the slaves in the Caribbean, to distilling the molasses made by slaves to make rum for use in trading for slaves or for sale to townsmen and people in other colonies. One did not have to own a slave to derive an economic benefit from the trade, and therefore perpetuate it.

That plantation slavery did not exist in the North as it did in the South is history that has never been questioned. There are ample reasons why fewer Africans were

[2] John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-178* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1991), 103, 136, 172.
[3] Katrina Browne, *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, DVD (California Newsreel, 2008).

brought to New England: an abundance of white labor, and farming on a small scale, are but two. That the transatlantic slave economy fueled the economy of the North, and particularly colonial New England, is a history that is less accepted. Ships were built in and sailed from New England for fishing, for trading goods and for trading slaves. The ships carried New England rum to the coast of Africa, where it was exchanged for human beings. The ships then sailed to the West Indies where the people were exchanged for molasses and sugar. The molasses was brought to New England where it was made into millions of gallons of rum. New England also supplied the dried salt cod that fed the slaves in the West Indies, because the Caribbean Islands did not produce enough food for this growing population. According to Mark Kurlansky, "West India was the commercial name for the lowest-quality salt cod.…[It] represented a steadily increasing percentage of the output of New England, Nova Scotia, and to a lesser degree, Newfoundland."[4] Despite their current embrace of famed abolitionist and native son, William Lloyd Garrison, the towns of Newbury and Newburyport were no less involved in the slave trade than were the towns of Boston, Salem, or Providence. This is Newbury's history, too.

The intent of this essay is to outline the extent to which the economies of Newbury and Newburyport, from their founding to the antebellum era of the nineteenth century, relied upon the transatlantic African slave trade and the slave-powered sugar islands of the West Indies. As the woman in the Newburyport Custom House Maritime Museum demonstrated, I believe we have been asking the wrong questions when it comes to slavery in New England. It is our economic ties to the transatlantic slave trade that implicates New England in the monumental tragedy that took the lives of millions of

[4] Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (NY: Penguin Books, 1997), 80-81.

human beings and in doing so, formed the basis of America's economy. The presence of slaves or lack thereof in New England has little to do with whether or not the region is complicit in sustaining the transatlantic slave trade.

My initial interest in delving into Newburyport's past stems from the fact that I am a descendant of a first settler in Newbury, as is my husband, Bartlett Harvey, Jr., and my desire to discover whether or not our families profited from the slave trade. When we rephrase the question to ask what the importance of slave labor and slave-made products were to a town's economy, and therefore either directly or indirectly to its inhabitants, the impact of the slave trade on New England towns becomes clear. Everyone benefited from the transatlantic slave trade in one way or another. Finally, I intend my research to add to the growing body of historical studies about the slave trade and New England. Aspects of Newburyport's history have been studied by many people, but to my knowledge never in regard to its relationship with the slave trade.

Forming the basis for my research on families in these towns is an uncatalogued collection of probate inventories gathered in the 1970s and '80s. This archival project was conducted by Newbury residents Wilhelmina Lunt, Sylvia Lunt, Gregory Laing, Paulina Condon, Margaret Rice, Harriet Gould, and Olive Bascom in cooperation with the Historical Society of Old Newbury and Governor Dummer Academy, hereinafter referred to as the Lunt Inventories. The study they conducted was based on 640 Newbury household inventories (75 percent of an estimated 850) photocopied from original documents on file at the Essex County Probate Court in Salem, Massachusetts. The criteria for the selection of individual records are unknown to me; however, they do appear to represent most of the well-known families in these towns. I have spoken with the only person still alive of the group that collected the inventories, Harriett Gould. Mrs.

Gould indicated that most of the individuals who were involved in the collection process were descendants of early settlers, but could offer nothing beyond that to indicate why certain families were included and others were not. Ship registers and shipping records, including those assembled by Bernard and Lotte Bailyn, and the *Ship Registers of the District of Newburyport, MA, 1789-1870* have also been utilized to create a clear picture of the involvement of Newbury residents in the Triangle Trade. In addition, I have made an extensive review of the online *Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, which has compiled almost 35,000 voyages of slave ships dating between 1514 and 1867 to ascertain the involvement of residents in the building of ships using for slaving. The histories of Newbury, Newburyport and West Newbury written by a number of people have also provided material for this essay. It is by a careful review of all of these sources that I intend to reveal the connections between Newbury, Newburyport, and the slave trade.

In Chapter One, I provide a brief look at the beginnings of slavery in colonial New England, Massachusetts in particular. A thorough examination of the entire transatlantic slave trade is not the focus of this work. It is my intent to establish that slavery and the slave trade were a part of the life of Newbury and of New England from their very beginnings as English settlements.

Chapter Two provides background on the founding of Newbury in 1635, and an introduction to the first settlers and the ancestors that focused my attention on Newburyport in the first place. Their original livelihoods as farmers and keepers of livestock evolved into lives connected to the sea, as some of the settlers moved north from their original landing place on the Parker River to the broad Merrimack River, where it opens into the Atlantic. This division that grew between the farmers and those on

the “waterside” reached a breaking point in the early eighteenth century, and the town of Newburyport (the waterside) was founded in 1764.

The subject of African (and Indian) slavery, and its place in Newbury follows in Chapter Three. Though a review of the probate inventories makes it clear that not everyone in Newbury owned a slave, it was a common enough practice and certainly not discouraged. The Lunt Inventories have provided much of my information on the ownership of slaves from the seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries.

The occupations of shipbuilding and fishing, the livelihoods from which many of the settlers on the waterside learned to make their living, form the basis of Chapter Four. I have focused primarily on shipbuilding, as this is one of the strongest links between the slave trade and Newburyport. Shipbuilding in Newbury began in the seventeenth century and lasted well into the nineteenth century. The various ship registers and the database of the transatlantic slave trade provide strong evidence that Newburyport’s economy relied heavily on building vessels for both the transatlantic slave trade and West Indies trade.

Sugar, molasses, rum, and the West Indies trade, from which much of the wealth in Newburyport was derived, are discussed in Chapter Five. Distilling strong liquors was a part of Newbury’s economy as early as the 1640s, not long after it was settled in 1635. Newburyport became a leader in distilling rum in New England, and rum became the currency of the age, used to purchase thousands of African slaves. The last rum distillery in Newburyport was closed in 1920 when Prohibition took effect.

In Chapter Six, I briefly cover the role of Newburyport merchants and mariners in the Revolutionary War, and the war’s effect on the financial health of the region. This examination of Newburyport’s role in the War for Independence is not meant to be as

thorough as its role warrants; that is another essay in itself. In addition, I examine post-Revolutionary Newburyport and the changes that occurred in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, including Newburyport's part in the War of 1812 and the economic decline following the devastating fire of 1811, in which much of the downtown waterside area was demolished.

The efforts of William Lloyd Garrison and others to promote the abolition of slavery and the struggles to attain it at home in Newburyport are discussed in Chapter Seven. Newburyport was a station on the Underground Railroad in the antebellum era, despite the anti-abolitionist feelings that were prominent in this town and many northern areas. The abolition of slavery in the Northern states in the early nineteenth century did not abolish racism or the continued reliance on slave-made products.

Reflecting on all that I have learned on this voyage into the past, in my conclusion I discuss the importance of the slave trade to Newburyport's economy from its beginning to the era of the industrial revolution and the cotton mills, to the economy of Massachusetts in general, and to the lives of our ancestors. The connection of the slave trade to Newburyport is as obvious today as it was in the eighteenth century; one just needs to know where to look.

CHAPTER 1

SLAVERY IN THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES

No African came in freedom to the shores of the New World; consequently all those found there are now slaves or freedmen. The Negro transmits to his descendants at birth the external mark of his ignominy.[5]

The first Africans brought to the mainland of North America accompanied Spanish explorers in the early years of the sixteenth century.[6] The Portuguese had begun the practice of trading in human beings captured from island communities off the western coast of Africa in the 1400s. Records of shipments of African slaves to the Spanish New World date from 1510.[7] "By 1532 the middle passage direct from the island [of Guinea] to North and possibly South America was formally opened."[8] The British colony of Virginia received its first African slaves in August of 1619 aboard a Dutch man-o'-war. We know this from at least two reliable sources, Captain John Smith, and John Rolfe, an early Virginia tobacco planter (and the husband of Pocahontas). The slaves came from Angola via a Spanish ship that was captured by a ship sailing from Flushing in the Netherlands, resulting in the slaves' appearance on the Dutch ship. This ship arrived at Point-Comfort near the Jamestown settlement in August 1619. The slaves were traded for food.[9] Rolfe's letter to Sir Edwin Sandys, a portion of which is transcribed below, includes details that Smith omitted from his *Generall Historie of Virginia* printed in 1624.

> About the latter end of August, a Dutch man of Warr of the burden of a 160 tunnes arriued at Point-Comfort, the Commandors name Capt Jope, his Pilott for the West Indies one M^{r} Marmaduke and Englishman. They mett wth the *Trier* in the West Indyes, and determined to hold consort ship

[5] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J.P. Mayer (New York: Harper Collins, 1969), 341.
[6] Richard R. Wright, "Negro Companions of the Spanish Explorers," *American Anthropologist* 4 (1902): 217-228.
[7] Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (London: Verso, 2010), 135.
[8] John L. Vogt, "The Early Sao Tome-Principe Slave Trade with Mina, 1500-1540," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 6. 3 (1973): 466.
[9] Engle Sluiter, "New Light on the '20 and Odd Negroes' arriving in Virginia, August 1619," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54.2 (Apr. 1997): 395-398.

> hitherward, but in their passage lost one the other. He brought not any thing but 20 and odd Negroes, w[ch] the Governo[r] and Cape Marchant bought for victualle (whereof he was in greate need as he pretended) at the best and easiest rate they could. He had a lardge and ample Commyssion from his Excellency to range and to take purchase in the West Indyes. Three or 4 daies after the Trier arriued.[10]

Ira Berlin relates that many of the first slaves in the Chesapeake region were already familiar with the customs and languages of the New World, having been enslaved first in the Caribbean. "They understood the languages of the Atlantic, bore Hispanic and occasionally English names, and were familiar with Christianity and other aspects of European culture."[11] Most of the slaves that were brought to British North America in the 1600s arrived via this route. But it was not the British who began the trading of people for profit, nor was the Chesapeake the only place where slaves existed in the early British colonies. Accounts exist that suggest African slaves accompanied several passengers on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Others indicate that early New England settler Samuel Maverick kept slaves in what is now East Boston, Massachusetts, after his arrival in 1624.[12] Both stories are acknowledged by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, which states that the first African slaves in Boston had certainly arrived prior to 1638.[13] Thus, African slavery existed in our two earliest British American colonial settlements from their beginnings. Most importantly for this study, African slavery and the slave trade were parts of New England life, and, as shall be shown, the basis of its economy. In his

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[10] Rolfe to Sandys, Jan. 1619/20, in Sluiter, 395-396.
[11] Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1998), 29.
[12] C.S. Manegold. *Ten Hills Farm The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2012), 43-44; Lorenzo J. Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England* (NY: Atheneum, 1974), 16.
[13] John C. McLean*, Resources for Researching Massachusetts Slaves and Slaveholders* (Boston: New England Genealogical Society) http://www.newenglandancestors.org/research/services/articles_resources_mass_slaves.asp, (accessed 11/19/10).

comprehensive work, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776*, Lorenzo Greene makes the following claim:

> By 1676 Bay Colony merchants were bringing slaves from the distant island of Madagascar. Two years later John Endicott and John Saffin of Boston were selling these slaves in Virginia. In 1681 Saffin, merchant and jurist, was smuggling slaves overland through Rhode Island into Massachusetts. By 1700 Boston traders were supplying other New England colonies with Negroes. In short, the New England slave trade of the seventeenth century seems to have been centered almost wholly in Massachusetts.[14]

The British acts controlling trade and navigation, begun in the seventeenth century, required the American colonies to import British-manufactured goods in exchange for goods from the colonies. However, with the exception of the wood harvested from virgin forests and a few cash crops, New England had little to offer England. Therefore, New England was "encouraged…to solve the problem of returns through trade with the West Indies and Africa."[15] Trade with the West Indies became the life-blood of several New England coastal communities, particularly in Massachusetts, along with trade with Africa. According to James Rawley and Stephen Behrendt,

> American slave traders divide into two groups: those who sent out ships to transport slaves and those who served as business agents for others. The first group were to be found mainly in the Northern ports – Boston and Salem in Massachusetts; Newport, Providence, and Bristol in Rhode Island; (and) New York.[16]

Information gathered from the *Voyages: Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* suggests that the residents of Newburyport did not necessarily trade in slaves, though some townspeople did own them, but they certainly built many of the ships that were utilized in the trade by British owners (and some American). In 1771 New England was the center

[14] Lorenzo Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 22.
[15] James A. Rawley and Stephen D. Behrendt, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: A History, Revised Edition* (Lincoln, Neb: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005), 267.
[16] Rawley and Behrendt, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: A History,* 289.

of American shipbuilding, with Massachusetts at the top of the list.[17] Table I in the Appendix is a table of those ships identified as having been built in Newbury for the slave trade. It includes the years of construction, the year(s) of the voyages, the names of the vessels, the rigs and tonnage of the vessels, the locations where the slaves were delivered, and the flags under which the ships were sailing. All vessels constructed in Newbury sailed under the flags of either Great Britain or the United States. Forty-seven vessels used in the transatlantic slave trade were constructed in "Newbury" between 1734 and 1858. Those vessels conducted eighty-eight transatlantic voyages between the years 1735 and 1863, carrying 22,619 Africans taken from a variety of places along the African coast. Due to the horrors of the Middle Passage, only 19,037 human beings actually arrived in the Caribbean or the southern American colonies.

The Massachusetts towns of Amesbury and Salisbury are both neighboring towns of Newburyport and Newbury on the Merrimack River. Ship yards stretched along and crowded the waterfront of the wide Merrimack for several miles in the eighteenth century, and many of the Newburyport tradesmen involved in building seagoing vessels found work in shipyards in these towns as well as in Newburyport. Table II lists those ships built for the slave trade in ship yards along the Merrimack River in Amesbury and Salisbury. Nine ships are identified as having been built in ship yards in these two towns between 1753 and 1853. These ships conducted seventeen voyages between 1754 and 1860, carrying 2,664 Africans to lives of servitude out of the original 2,990 people who embarked upon the vessels in Africa. All of the vessels that were built in Massachusetts ports other than in Newbury, along the Merrimack River, or in Boston, are listed in Table III, with their places of construction identified. This list constitutes twenty-nine vessels

[17] Rawley and Behrendt, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: A History,* 291.

making thirty-eight voyages. Table IV lists those vessels built for the slave trade in New Hampshire and Maine. Because what is today the state of Maine was, until 1820, considered part of Massachusetts, some of these vessels might fall into the category of vessels constructed in Massachusetts. Eight vessels were built along the shores of the Piscataqua River, the dividing line between current-day New Hampshire and Maine, for use in the slave trade, and fourteen vessels in all were created in this region. Piscataqua was also the name of current-day Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The distance between Newburyport and Portsmouth is only twenty-three miles; craftsmen from Newbury could have easily traveled this short distance north to find work building ships. The last vessel listed in this table was a brigantine built in Camden, Maine, in 1854.

Another large group of vessels exists whose home ports are designated in the database only as "New England," which includes Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New Hampshire. Counting only those vessels whose origins are not clearly identified as being in any specific location in New England, this list indicates that between the years 1705 and 1794 one hundred forty-nine vessels were constructed for use in the transatlantic slave trade.[18] It is entirely possible that some of these vessels were constructed in Newbury, adding to the forty-seven that are known to have been built there. No other port in Massachusetts, except Boston, built this many vessels for the transatlantic slave trade.

In my attempts to discover whether residents of Newbury and Newburyport were investors, owners or captains of vessels used in the transatlantic slave trade, I reviewed the primary sources most often used to construct a picture of the shipbuilding activity in

[18] David Eltis and Martin Halbert. *Voyages*: *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (Atlanta: Emory University), http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/index.faces (accessed 8/27/11).

Newbury. None of the vessels listed in the tables in the Appendix are included in the *Ship Registers of the District of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1789-1870,* nor in Robert K. Cheney's *Maritime History of the Merrimack: Shipbuilding*, nor in the Bailyns' study. There is a conspicuous gap of vessel registrations from approximately 1714 to 1784 for this geographical area according to resources available to me. A review of the Vital Records for Newbury and Newburyport does not reveal the names of the owners and captains of the slave ships as listed in the *Voyages Database* to be residents of the area, with one exception. As most of the vessels sailed under a British flag, it must be assumed that they had British owners, who may have sent their own captains to sail the vessels back to Britain, where many of the slave voyages began. The owners could also have been from other parts of the Colonies. The names of the crews are not included in the *Voyages: Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*. The sources for listings in the database are mostly from English shipping sources. Thus, it appears from this review that Newbury men were not the owners of the vessels used as transatlantic slave ships, but made their profit from other ways related to the trade, such as building the slaving vessels and conducting direct trade with the West Indies.

The authors of the *Atlas of Transatlantic Slave Trade*, David Eltis and David Richardson, estimate that approximately 27,000 slaves came to the Northern United States between 1501 and 1867.[19] Approximately 10,000 of those slaves "reached New England directly from Africa…Ninety percent arrived in Boston- and Newport-owned vessels."[20] Of course this number pales in comparison to the number of slaves delivered to the Chesapeake region, 129,000, or to the Southern colonies/states, 211,000.

[19] David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2010), 18.
[20] Eltis and Richardson, 215.

Twenty-two thousand Africans were delivered to the Gulf Coast in this same time period.[21] Included in this comprehensive volume are many detailed maps, one of which shows the "Ports in the Americas Where Slave Voyages Were Outfitted, 1642-1807." The New England ports include New London, Connecticut; Newport and Bristol, Rhode Island; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Piscataqua, variously identified as Portsmouth, New Hampshire or what is now Kittery, Maine; and Boston, Salem, and Newbury, Massachusetts.[22] As all of these towns are also listed as places in which slavers were constructed this is not surprising. Outfitting a ship called upon the skills of many people from many professions. The townspeople of Newbury and Newburyport provided everything from designing and building ships for the transatlantic voyages, to catching the fish to feed the slaves, to making the barrels that held the molasses they then turned into rum, to everything in between. Farmers in Newbury provided food, crops, livestock (horses, cows and pigs) and timber for trade in the Caribbean. The Puritan farmers who settled the area at the mouth of the Merrimack River put Newbury on the map of the *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*.

[21] Eltis and Richardson, 18.
[22] Eltis and Richardson, 65.

CHAPTER 2

BEGINNINGS: THE FOUNDING OF "NEWBERRY"

May 6th. 1635. Quascacunquen is allowed by the court to be a plantation, and… the name of the said plantation shall be changed, and shall hereafter be called Newberry.[23]

Newbury and Newburyport, Massachusetts, are located on the northern coast of Massachusetts, just below the state line of New Hampshire, approximately 40 miles north of Boston. Newbury was settled in 1635 by immigrants from the East Anglian region of England, who were motivated to come to New England primarily for religious reasons. The Puritans who immigrated to the Massachusetts Bay Colony at this time were a part of what has become known as the Great Migration, the peak period of which lasted from 1629-1640, "years when the Puritan crisis in England reached its height."[24] For the most part, they departed their homes in England as family groups, and most of the men (more than half) were skilled "artisans or craftsmen."[25] In all, of the 65,000 Englishmen and women who made the voyage to America and the Caribbean, some 20,000 came to New England.[26] The cost of the voyage was approximately £25 sterling for a family. That almost "60 percent of all settlers in New England" could afford to pay this fee indicates that most were from the "middle ranks" of English society, many even wealthy enough to have servants.[27]

The four-hundred-ton ship *Mary and John* departed London on its third voyage to New England in the spring of 1634. The passengers arrived in Boston in May and made

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[23] Joshua Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury, from 1635 to 1845* (Boston: Samuel Drake, 1845), 14, from *Colonial Records*.
[24] Lynn Betlock, "New England's Great Migration," *New England Historical Genealogical Society*, 2, http://www.greatmigration.org/new_englands_great_migration.html, accessed 11/13/11.
[25] Betlock, "New England's Great Migration," p.2.
[26] Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955), 16.
[27] Daniel Vickers, *Farmers & Fisherman: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1850* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1994), 14.

their way up the coast to the recently founded community of Agawam (Ipswich). The following spring several of those new immigrants, including the Reverend Thomas Parker, "applied to the General Court for permission to settle Newbury," or Quascacunquen as it was then called by the native peoples who lived in the area.[28] The permission was granted and the name of the new plantation was changed, "hereafter to be called Newberry,"[29] in honor of a town of that name in Berkshire, England, where Reverend Parker had preached. Governor Winthrop was only too happy to have them settle there, as he wanted to secure this area for the Massachusetts Bay Company. Winthrop wished to scuttle a claim to the land around the Merrimack River and along the coast by Captain John Mason, who had settled in the area of what is now York, Maine. This new plantation of Newbury was bounded by the Quascacunquen (now Parker) River to the south, the Merrimack River to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. According to its charter, the Massachusetts Bay Company's territory technically included land "extending three miles north of the Merrimack River to a line three miles south of the Charles, thus embracing Boston Harbor."[30] It would not be long before Newbury settlers moved north of the Merrimack to lay claim to the three miles of land there, providing them use of both sides of the river.

Among the passengers on the *Mary and John* in 1635 were brothers Richard and John Bartlet, cordwainers (shoemakers) from Stopham, England. My husband, Bartlett Harvey, is a descendent of Richard. The Bartlets came to Newbury with some money. According to the history of the family written by Levi Bartlett published in 1876, prior to

[28] Bethany Groff, *A Brief History of Old Newbury From Settlement to Separation* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2008), 20.
[29] Groff, *A Brief History of Old Newbury*, 21-22.
[30] Robert G. Albion, William A. Baker, and Benjamin W. Labaree, *New England and the Sea* (Mystic, CT: The Maritime Historical Assoc., Inc., 1972), 19.

immigrating to New England, John and Richard had "sold back their lands to the then heir of the Stopham estates, and thereby had the pecuniary means to come to this country and make a fair start in their new homes."[31] Anthony Morse and his brother William, also shoemakers, arrived in New England in the spring of 1635 aboard the ship the *James,* out of Southampton, England. They originated from Marlborough in the County of Wiltshire.[32] The Morse brothers made their way up the coast from Boston in a shallop, and joined the first settlers in Newbury, settling along what is now called the Parker River. I am a descendent of Anthony Morse. A monument commemorating the first settlers was erected in 1905 on the Lower Green in Newbury by the Sons and Daughters of the First Settlers of Newbury. It was dedicated "to the men and women who settled in Newbury from 1635 to 1650 and founded its municipal, social, and religious life."[33] It lists both Richard Bartlet and Anthony Morse. (Photos in the Appendix.)

In the first year of settlement their housing was rudimentary at best; most probably their shelter consisted of "a combination of tents, dugout sod huts, and a sort of modified wigwam, copied from the light sapling and bark or hide dwellings of the local natives and covered with mud and sod."[34] But almost immediately, house lots, the size determined by the owner's original investment in the plantation, were set up along the river.[35] In his *History of Newbury, Mass., 1635-1902*, John Currier describes the system for granting house lots.

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[31] Levi Bartlett, *Genealogical and Biographical Sketches of the Bartlett Family in England and America* (Lawrence: Geo. S. Merrill & Crocker, Printers, 1876), 12.
[32] Peter Wilson Coldham, *The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607-1660* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc., 1987), 133.
[33] The Sons and Daughters of the First Settlers of Newbury, Monument, www.sonsanddaughtersofnewbury.org , (accessed 1/29/2012).
[34] Groff, *A Brief History of Old Newbury*, 27.
[35] Groff, *A Brief History of Old Newbury*, 27.

> A house lot of four acres, with the right of pasturage, was assigned to the poorest settlers; fifty acres were allotted to every person who paid for his own transportation to New England; two hundred acres to every one contributing fifty pounds to the common stock; and a larger or smaller number to other cash contributors in proportion to the amount invested by them.[36]

The settlers were interested in raising livestock and immediately began importing sheep and cattle to the new plantation. To that end, on "June 3, 1635, two Dutch ships, loaded with horses, heifers and sheep, arrived at Boston," to be delivered to the farmers at Newbury.[37] Meadows for grazing and fields for planting were also laid out in time for their arrival. In 1638 William Morse was appointed "keeper of the herd of sheep and goats."[38] In addition, the General Court also gave permission to settlers Richard Dummer and John Spencer for the building of a mill and a fish trap at the falls in Newbury.[39] The creation of the town of Rowley in 1639, between Ipswich and Newbury, occasioned the move by 1645 of many Newbury families to a new settlement north of the Parker River, along the Merrimack River, where a new meeting house was built. This settlement along the mouth of the Merrimack provided the opportunity for the settlers to begin to move away from farming and to engage in fishing and commerce. The waters of the Merrimack and the Atlantic would provide the sustenance and livelihood for the residents of what would become the thriving port town of Newburyport.

By 1640, the first acts of the Long Parliament in England, which aimed at reformation of both state and church, encouraged more English to stay home rather than emigrate to the Americas or the Caribbean. This change created a downturn in the economy of New England, which was based on the importation and distribution of

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[36] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass., 1635-1902* (Boston: Damrell & Upham, 1902), 36.
[37] Currier, *History of Newbury*, *Mass.*, 30.
[38] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass.,* 56.
[39] Groff, *A Brief History of Old Newbury*, 28.

English goods paid for by the cash or credit brought by immigrants. Production of home goods, such as iron works, spinning and weaving, and finding other markets for trade became the goal of Puritan New England over the next two decades. Winthrop encouraged and reminded the Bay Colony Puritan residents that "labor gave meaning to life and dignity to the worker," reminding them that, "whatsoever we stand in neede of is treasured in the earth by the Creator, and to be feched thense by the sweate of [our] Browes."[40] Those men who had been the leading merchants when the downturn began became the leading figures in the port towns of New England.[41] "Trade, in making material and real the value of men's labors in fields and on the sea, created dependences and networks of relationships, which [were] long-lasting and important to the whole community."[42] The residents of Newbury, Massachusetts, were well situated to make the most of the economic changes that occurred after 1640.

Many of Newbury's farmer settlers found it difficult to maintain their farms and livestock without the help they could have hired at home in England. Those with larger estates and a little money were able to pay for day laborers, or buy Africans or Native Americans as slaves, but most could not. [43] Many small farmers were forced to learn to fish for their livelihoods; they learned how to exploit the cod, turning to the example set by the fishermen in Newfoundland. By importing servants from the West Country in England, whose ancestors had been fishing in the waters of Newfoundland for a century, the men of Massachusetts learned the fishing trade.[44] Soon, and "for the remainder of the colonial period, Newfoundland would continue to be almost completely dependent on

[40] John Winthrop, as quoted in Stephen Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth: The Economic Culture of Puritan New England* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995), 15.
[41] Bailyn, *The New England Merchants*, 46, 73, 75.
[42] Bailyn, *The New England Merchants,* 75.
[43] Daniel Vickers, *Farmers & Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1850* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1994), 55-56.
[44] Vickers, *Farmers & Fishermen*, 91-92.

New England for its provisions and rum."[45] The first contacts between Puritan fishing merchants and Londoners began in 1641, beginning the trading of fish and pipestaves in Spain and the Azores for wine, sugar and provisions brought back to New England. So lucrative was the fishing trade that "by the end of the colonial period, over 10 percent of the Massachusetts labor force derived the bulk of its income from the work in the fisheries.[46] During the English civil war, New Englanders broke ties with the English fisheries and began to create their own markets. It was at this time that, as Bernard Bailyn states, "New England merchants [joined together and financed] independent voyages with fish to the southern ports, returning with wine and other semi-tropical products." In a short time these merchants were in complete control of the trade "between New England and the southern ports, relying on a further exchange of goods to secure the profits from this trade."[47] Bailyn, who, with his wife Lotte, created a statistical study of Massachusetts shipping between 1697 and 1714, believes that 1643 truly marks the birth of "New England independent commerce, for no less than five New England vessels cleared ports for the ocean routes" in that year.[48] The following year another four vessels departed laden with fish for the Canary Islands. One of these ships made the first-known triangular slave voyage in New England history, returning from the Canaries via Barbados with Africans aboard, who were traded for tobacco. According to Bailyn, "this voyage introduced New England to the trade in Negroes…and the rich possibilities of commerce with the West Indies."[49]

[45] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 20.
[46] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 300.
[47] Bailyn, *New England Merchants*, 81-82.
[48] Bailyn, *New England Merchants*, 83.
[49] Bailyn, *New England Merchants*, 84.

A testimony from the court files in Salem in 1672 provides evidence as to the profitability of the early voyages of Newbury ships to the West Indies for Newbury resident Abraham Toppan.

> I Ann Hills, sometime servant to Abraham Toppan, testify that Abraham Toppan did make sundry voyages to the Barbadoes, of which one or two were profitable, the produce being brought home in sugars, cotton wool and molasses, which were then commodities, rendering great profit, wool being then at twelve pence, sugar at six or eight pence per pound profit, of which he brought great quantities.
>
> Jacob Toppan testifieth that the last voyage from Barbadoes above mentioned he brought home eight barrels and one hogshead of sugar and two or three hundred thousand pounds of cotton wool.[50]

As the seventeenth century progressed, African and Indian slaves in Newbury helped with chores, farming, and the building of ocean-going vessels to increase and perpetuate this profitable new trade. In his 1845 *Sketch of the History of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury, from 1635 to 1845*, Joshua Coffin states that "prior to 1700, the number [of slaves] was small, although a large proportion of the wealthy families had one or more," and they were "bought and sold without scruple, by all classes of people."[51]

[50] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, *etc*., 112.
[51] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, *etc*., 336.

CHAPTER 3

SLAVERY IN NEWBURY AND NEW ENGLAND

There should never be any bond slavery…unless,
It be lawful captives taken in just wars.
And such strangers as willingly sell themselves.
Or are sold to us . . .
This exempts none . . .[52]

In their recent expose´ on the complicity of the North in the African slave trade, Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank of *The Hartford Courant,* wrote, "The nation's wealth, from the very beginning, depended upon the exploitation of black people on three continents."[53] And from the very beginning it was the coastal towns of New England that derived wealth and prosperity from the trading of human beings and the exploitation of their labor. In the things New Englanders purchased and consumed and crafted, New Englanders were complicit and Newbury, Massachusetts, was no exception. Though the number of slaves in New England was never large, slavery did exist there.

Massachusetts was the first English colony to legally recognize slavery, embodied in the Massachusetts Body of Liberties published in 1641. The Body of Liberties is largely based upon the Magna Carta and forms the basis for the Massachusetts Constitution. It also includes many liberties that later were included in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights, and has been viewed as being ahead of its time.[54] Slavery was codified into law in the other slave-holding colonies as well, and the laws were upheld by the courts. By the beginning of the eighteenth century white indentured servitude in America was rare, and slavery had become the institution that provided the labor that fueled the Triangle Trade, enabling slave owners and traders to amass great

[52] C.S. Manegold, *Ten Hills Farm:* 46, from *Massachusetts Body of Liberties*, section 91.
[53] Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jennifer Frank. *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2006), xxix.
[54] Massachusetts Body of Liberties. http://www.mass.gov, (accessed 11/19/10).

fortunes. The Virginia General Assembly passed the *Slave Codes of 1705,* removing any doubt about how Africans would henceforth be treated in that colony, and "seal(ed) the fate of Africans and their progeny for generations to come."[55] Other colonies followed Virginia's lead. One section of Virginia's Slave Codes that was adopted by other colonies clarified that all enslaved persons would be viewed as "real estate," and therefore, inheritable by members of a deceased master's family. It reads as follows:

> October 1705-CHAP. XXII: II. Be it enacted, by the governor, council and burgesses of this present general assembly, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this act, all negro, mulatto, and Indian slaves, in all courts of judicature, and other places, within this dominion, shall be held, taken, and adjudged, to be real estate (and not chattels;) and shall descend unto the heirs and widows of persons departing this life, according to the manner and custom of land of inheritance, held in fee simple.[56]

Slaves in Massachusetts were treated no differently than those in Virginia, despite their scarcity in the region. Though Africans had occasionally been brought to New England from the West Indies before 1643, Lorenzo Greene fixes 1644 as the first year in which "Boston traders attempted to import slaves directly from Africa, when an association of business men sent three ships there for gold dust and Negroes."[57] The one ship that was apparently able to successfully complete the triangle, "returned to Boston the following year with a cargo of wine, salt, sugar and tobacco, having exchanged her Negroes for these products in Barbados."[58] Two important discoveries were made on this voyage: the trade in Africans was profitable, and the possibilities of trade with the West Indies were seemingly endless. By 1700 New England merchants had "laid the foundations of a lucrative commerce,…[though by this time] there were probably not

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[55] Park Ethnography Program, National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/history/ethnography/aah/aaheritage/histContextsE.htm, accessed 11/19/10.
[56] Laws on Slavery, 1705, Chap. XXII, Virtual Jamestown.
[57] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 20.
[58] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 20-21.

more than a thousand negroes in all the Puritan colonies."[59] The purchase of slaves from the Caribbean to work on farms in New England increased as the arrival of white indentured servants dropped off. According to Lorenzo Greene,

> in 1680 Governor Bradstreet reported to the Committee on Trade and Plantations that forty to fifty Negroes had been brought into Massachusetts from Madagascar. Most of these were women who were sold for £10, £15, and £20 apiece.[60]

Slaves brought to New England were not generally of the "highest quality," as they were not intended to be used for the demanding labor required of slaves in the sugar islands or on the plantations of the Southern colonies. New England buyers often purchased the sickly or "refuse" slaves that were less expensive. Massachusetts Governor Dudley complained to the Board of Trade in 1708, informing it that "the Negroes…brought in from the West Indies, are usually the worst servants they have."[61] Slaves who had spent some time in the West Indies were preferred over the "raw, turbulent Negroes brought directly from Africa," because "they had become acclimated, were more accustomed to regular labor, could speak some English and, to some degree, were familiar with Occidental customs."[62] In addition, a slave who had already survived the scourge of smallpox was desired over those who had not, as the slave would not bring with him or her the risk of coming down with the dreadful disease, thereby protecting the new owner and his family from the risk of contagion. When the services of a slave were no longer needed, selling a slave in New England was similar to selling any other commodity: they were sold for cash or on credit, or even on the installment plan.[63]

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[59] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 22-23.
[60] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 32, from *Historical Documents relating to the American Colonial Church*.
[61] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 35.
[62] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 36.
[63] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 38, 46.

A typical seventeenth-century cargo list on a ship bound for the West Indies would include "barrel staves and hoops, shingles and boards, dried or pickled fish, flour, bread, butter, peas, beef and pork, and occasionally horses, cattle, and poultry," thus providing an income for local farmers as well as others. In the eighteenth century the cargo would have included "manufactured goods like spermaceti candles, bricks, furniture, and even house frames, knocked apart for easy shipment but easily reassembled once ashore," providing a new market for local masons, carpenters, and builders.[64] Payment was in bills of exchange and molasses. The Massachusetts trade of manufactured goods and human beings for luxury items only grew from this time onwards, though it remained small in comparison with the Dutch West India Company and English Royal African Company. However, by 1700 "Boston traders were supplying the other New England colonies with Negroes," as well as the Southern colonies, such as Virginia.[65] When the British Committee for Trade and Foreign Plantations requested information from the New England colonies as to the extent of their engagement "in the Negro trade before 1700," Massachusetts was the only colony to officially admit to its involvement in the trade.[66]

In 1705-06 Massachusetts led all of New England by placing "a tax of £4 on every imported Negro."[67] Failure to register the importation of Negros would carry "a penalty of £8 for every Negro undeclared."[68] The colony enriched its coffers either way. Other colonies followed this example and set their own duties on the importation of slaves, and penalties for avoiding the tax. Lorenzo Greene explained as follows:

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[64] Albion, et al., *New England and the Sea*, 33.
[65] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 22.
[66] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 22.
[67] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 50.
[68] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 50.

> A loophole was provided in the Massachusetts statute by a clause permitting a Negro to remain in the colony for a year after importation, upon the owner's promise to sell him out of the colony at the expiration of that period. In the event that he did so, the importer 'could draw back' the entire duty of £4. Should the Negro die within six weeks after his arrival, the purchaser of the slave was permitted to recover the duty.[69]

The British Parliament saw these duties as an impediment to the slave trade, which went against its wishes, and in 1732 ordered that taxes on slaves were to be repealed throughout New England. The following is an order received by Massachusetts Governor Jonathan Belcher, a slave-trader himself.

> Whereas Acts have been passed in some of our Plantations in America for laying Duties on the Importation and Exportation of Negroes to the Discouragement of the Merchants trading thither – from the Coast of Africa . . . It is our Will and Pleasure That you do not give your Assent to or pass any Law imposing Duties upon Negroes imported into Our Province of the Massachusetts Bay payable by the Importer or upon any slaves exported that have not been sold in Our said Province, and continued there for the Space of Twelve Months. [70]

Though other New England colonies obeyed the order almost immediately, Massachusetts took its time by instituting temporary laws to circumvent the cancellation of duties.

Other laws aimed at restricting the rights of slaves were enacted in Massachusetts, such as the *Act For The Better Preventing of A Spurious And Mixt Issue*, which listed the punishments that would befall any "negro or molatto man [who] shall commit fornication with an English woman or a woman of any other Christian nation within this province."[71] In 1703 Massachusetts passed *An Act To Prevent Disorders In The Night*, which "prohibited Indians, blacks, or mulattoes, whether slaves or servants, from being abroad

[69] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 52.
[70] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 56-57.
[71] Robert H. Romer, *Slavery in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts* (Florence, MA: Levellers Press, 2009), 24.

after 9 P.M."[72] An additional act adopted in 1703, *An Act Relating To Molato And Negro Slaves*, "prohibited the manumission of any slave unless the owner provided security to ensure that the freed slave would not become a financial liability to the town."[73]

As noted previously, the number of slaves in New England was never very great. New England's first census, taken in 1715, indicates that there were approximately 158,000 white residents and 4,150 blacks in the entire region. "The Negro represented less than three percent of the total inhabitants."[74] Massachusetts had the largest number of Africans with 2,000, Connecticut had 1,500, Rhode Island had 500, and New Hampshire trailed with 150.[75] In the Lunt collection of over 600 probate inventories from Newburyport, Newbury, and West Newbury and the Probate Records of Essex County, only a few indicate ownership of slaves. The probate inventories in this archive collected by Lunt, et al., suggest that for most slave owners in Newbury and Newburyport, the majority of the wealth in their estates was in real estate – land, buildings, and pews in the meeting houses.

The earliest reference to slave ownership in Newbury is in the probate inventory of Samuel Moody, whose estate was proven in Essex County in 1675. His total estate was worth £1838.3.8, according to George Little and Benjamin Rolfe, who took the inventory. Moody's real estate holdings represented most of his estate, valued at £1342, and his personal estate made up the balance, including "a Negro boy, 25£."[76] The next reference to slave ownership is from the probate inventory of Captain Paul White, one of the first people to own an ordinary (tavern) in Newbury, who also owned a warehouse, wharf, and

[72] Romer, *Slavery in the Connecticut Valley*, 25.
[73] Romer, *Slavery in the Connecticut Valley*, 26-27.
[74] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 73.
[75] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 74.
[76] Dow, *The Probate Inventories of Essex County*, *Docket 18,621*, 8-9.

mill. In addition to the valuing of his "1 Negrow, £30," it is worth listing some of his belongings at the time of his death in 1679 because they reflect such a strong connection to the slave trade at this early date. In his warehouse were 4,000 lbs. of sugar; two hogsheads salt; one-half hogshead molasses; 188 gallons of rum, valued at £34.8; and two still worms for distilling rum. In his shop were another eighty-four gallons of rum, plus four hogsheads and two barrels of same, and one old still with part of a worm. Captain White's effects in Barbados equaled £100. His entire estate was worth £2035.5, or approximately $158,000 in current (year 2000) dollars.[77] (Probate Inventory in Appendix.)

Slave ownership was not restricted to only the wealthy, as indicated by the probate inventory of William Pilsbury, Sr., who died in 1686. His entire estate was valued at only £317.15.10, most of it tied up in real estate. He did, however, have "a man servant" valued at £12.[78] Both Africans and Native Americans were kept as servants in Newbury. Thomas Hale, Jr. owned land in four towns worth £140 when he died in 1688, plus "an Indian servant" worth £20.[79] When Richard Dummer, Esq. died in 1691, his estate was worth slightly more than Captain White's, but the difference here is that most of it was tied up in real estate, not in rum. However, this Captain of the Militia also had "a Negro" valued at £60.[80] Moses Gerrish, who died in 1695, also had his estate tied up in land. His estate was worth only £704.15.00, but it included "one Indian slave" valued at £20.[81]

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[77] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #29616; John J. McCusker*, How Much is that in Real Money? A Historical Commodity Price Index for Use as a Deflator of Money Values in the Economy of the United States* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 2001), calculations made using Tables A-1 and D-1.
[78] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, # N/A.
[79] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #12183.
[80] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, # 8360.
[81] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #10769.

When George Thurlo died in 1714 his land and the buildings thereon represented the bulk of his estate, which was valued at £791.15, but also included "one negro servant near fifty years of age at £10."[82] The 1716 estate of Daniel Noyes amounted to £1540.10 in land holdings, making up most of his £2049 estate. He also had £250 in debts due to him and "one Negro man" valued at £40.[83] Ezekiel Hale, Gentleman and Yeoman, had an estate worth £4521.97 when he died in 1740. Much of the estate is represented in land holdings in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but it also included "eighty pounds of tobacco" and "his Negro man Cofar, ninety pounds."[84]

Slaves were often left to the widows of their deceased owners, as in the case of Judith Noyes, who died in 1754. Her real estate did not amount to much, only £119.6.8, and that was most of her estate. But also listed as her property was "A Negro Man Scipio, His Bed and Gun," valued at £8.13.4.[85]

When yeoman Thomas Follinsbee died in 1755 his estate included three Bibles, three psalm books and another sixteen bound books, all valued at £1.0.6. His land and buildings were valued at £912.05. Follinsbee's estate also included "a Negro man Tom," worth £30.[86] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.) William Ilsley was a yeoman and Captain of the Militia when he died in 1761. His estate was valued at £1058.11, most of which was in real estate, but also included "a Neagro lad" valued at £40.[87] John Weed of Newbury died intestate in 1759, leaving an estate that was estimated at £874.13.3. His most valuable possessions included his "Homestead & Buildings,…Six acres of Pasthure,…and Ten Acres at Brown's Garden," worth £380.0.0; "Silver Tankard Cup & 6

[82] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #27585.
[83] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #19736.
[84] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #12102.
[85] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #19794.
[86] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #9722.
[87] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #14474.

Spoons," worth £14.11.6; and "Negro Jed £45…Negro Tryphinia £35." Weed also had among his belongings "Husbandry Utensills" and "Old Rigging & Canvas" and "fishing lines," worth very little money, but indicating how he probably had made his living. In addition, notes in hand due to him totaled approximately £270, approximately a third of his estate.[88] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.) Before the creation of banks, individuals needing money for any number of reasons would borrow money at interest from friends and family. Some of the probate inventories in the Lunt collection list up to two or more pages of debts due to the deceased.

Anthony Gwynn, merchant, and possibly sea captain, died in 1777 just after the American Revolutionary War began. "The Mansion House with the wharf and all the land adjoining" was valued at £2600. In the house were several china tea sets, many coffee cups, two sugar pots and eight pounds of "wrought silver," in addition to his Negro, valued at £20.[89] In this collection of probate inventories, the latest one to record owning a slave is that of the Reverend Moses Hale in 1779. Reverend Hale left an estate worth £3442.6. His library was extensive, valued at £109. He also had land and buildings in Rowley, silver spoons and watch, and a "Negro woman" valued at £20.[90] The slaves included in these foregoing probate inventories do not comprise an exhaustive listing, because probate inventories only record what is owned at the time of death, not what was owned throughout a lifetime. Nevertheless, they are probably representative of slave ownership in the period covered by these inventories.

Another source of information about slave-owning in Newbury is Joshua Coffin's *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury, from 1635 to 1845.*

[88] Lunt et al, *Probate* Inventories, #29212.
[89] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #11992.
[90] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #12155.

Coffin includes portions of several wills and probate inventories regarding slave ownership, such as Henry Jaques 1687 will in which he made the following disposition:

> My will is that whereas Jasper, my Indian, hath been a good servant to me my will is that he shall serve my executor faithfully after my decease six years and then he shall be free.[91]

Coffin claimed that some residents of the towns owned more than one slave, as is evident in Richard Dole's 1698 will, in which he parcels out his several slaves to his children. To one child he gave

> my great bible, fowling piece, musket and also my negro boy Tom. To son William, (my) negro boy Mingo, to daughter Hannah, my negro maid named Lucy. My negro Grace shall have her freedom, if she will accept it. My negro servant Betty shall serve two years, and then she shall be free.[92]

More often than not, slaves were listed with other household or farm items in wills, probate inventories and estate sales, as indicated by Rice Edwards' sale of his estate. Edwards, shipwright of Newbury, sold to Edmund Greenleaf in 1716 "my whole personal estate with all my goods and chattels as also one negro man, one cow, three pigs with timber, plank and boards."[93] Slaves were bought and sold as easily as livestock. In 1725 Jonathan Poore of Newbury bought from Theophilus Cotton of Hampton an "Indian boy Sippai aged about sixteen." That same year Poore sold to Mr. Richard Kelly "a nagrow man, called Reuben, for which I have received an hundred pounds in bills of credit."[94] Slaves obviously ranged in price, but one can only imagine what quality of slave could be purchased for one hundred pounds of discounted bills of credit. Twelve years later Ezekiel Chase sold to John Merrill "my negro boy named Titus about one year and a half old during his natural life" for forty pounds.[95] This one and one-half year-old

[91] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 336.
[92] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 336.
[93] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.
[94] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.
[95] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.

boy cost more than the twenty-one year-old slave named Moses Titcomb that William Johnson, Newbury shipwright, sold the following year for thirty-five pounds.

> To Moses Titcomb to his heirs and assigns forever a certain negro-man called by the name of Cambridge of the age of about twenty-one years – and that the said Moses Titcomb, his heirs, executors, and administrators shall by virtue of this deed have, hould, use and improve said negro man Cambridge during the whole term of his natural life.[96]

In telling these stories, Joshua Coffin asks his readers to try to place themselves in the era of the people about whom he is writing. At the time he wrote his book in 1845, slavery was abolished in Massachusetts, but had not yet been abolished throughout the United States. That would not happen for another twenty years after an unimaginable amount of blood had been shed. Significantly, he does not apologize for the fact that his forbears and many families he knew had owned slaves. Upon his review of the wills and deeds from which these stories come, it became clear to him, as surely it must be clear to anyone who reads them, that this was business as usual.

> These deeds were sometimes of great length, and written with as much formality and minuteness as the deeds to an estate worth a million of money, and, with a few exceptions, all classes of people, merchants, farmers, mechanics, professors of religion, and ministers of the gospel, bought and sold slaves, apparently without the slightest idea of the enormity of the sin, and on the same principle that they would purchase a horse, a sheep, or a piece of land. They thus necessarily sanctioned the slave trade, and all its unspeakable abominations.[97]

This is a particularly personal statement for Coffin to make, as two branches of the Coffin family were among the leading slave-holding families in New England in the eighteenth century. At the end of his 1942 book, *The Negro in Colonial America, 1620-1776*, Lorenzo Greene includes several appendices detailing the number and distribution of Negroes in Colonial New England. The total number of blacks in Massachusetts in 1776

[96] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.
[97] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.

amounted to no more than 1.5 percent of the population. The total number of whites in that year was 343,845 and the total number of blacks was 5,249.[98] In Essex County in the years 1754 and 1755 Newbury claimed fifty slaves, of whom sixteen were female and thirty-four male. This number is bettered only by Salem with eighty-three and Gloucester with sixty-one.[99] In 1764 Negroes and Mulattoes accounted for 1,070 people in a population of 43,751 in Essex County. In that year there were also eight Indians among the population in Essex County.[100] Greene's Appendix H lists the 162 leading slave-holding families in Colonial New England. Of the fifty-four families found in Massachusetts, seven of the leading families were in Newbury. They are listed as the following: Joseph Coffin, Nathaniel Coffin, Moses Gerrish, Richard Greenleaf, Samuel Mogridge, Henry Rolfe, and Henry Short.[101] Minnie Atkinson added a few more names in her 1933 *History of the First Religious Society of Newburyport, Massachusetts*, writing, "Some of the early parishioners were slave owners…William Johnson, Moses Titcomb, Edmund Greenleaf, Ezekiel Chase and several others reckoned slaves in the sum of their not inconsiderable wealth."[102]

One of Joshua Coffin's ancestors was Joseph Coffin, a colonel in the militia. When his estate was settled in November 1771 he left the following to his daughters, splitting the services of one slave between them:

> 1771, Nov. 27. Daughter Sarah, Dr. to part of a negro girl
> To part of negro girl Lucy, £45, old tenor
> 1771, Nov. 27. Daughter Susanna, Dr.
> To part of negro girl Lucy, £45, old tenor.[103]

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[98] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, Appendix A, 337.
[99] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, Appendix C, 340.
[100] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, Appendix F, 347.
[101] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 356.
[102] Minnie Atkinson, *A History of the First Religious Society in Newburyport, Massachusetts* (Newburyport: News Pub. Co., 1933), 17-18.
[103] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 337.

Coffin's daughters' inheritance of Lucy, literally splitting her between them, is an example of the Virginia inheritance laws that became commonplace among all the colonies. Slaves were real estate, to be handed down to one's heirs.

Some of Newbury's slave owners made bequests to their slaves upon their deaths, which indicate that certain fondness existed between master and slave. When the Reverend Matthias Plant, minister at Queen Anne's Chapel, made his will in 1751, he left his slave Lucy "all but seventeen acres of a lott of Land…I also give her her Freedom after the decease of my widow Lydia Plant," on the condition that

> the said negro garl Luce hath in all Fidelity, from time to time, both in Word and Deed behaved herself very respectfully and Duitifully as an Honist and faithful servant, she ye s^{d} Luce shal be Intitled to the above Privelidge & Bequest. But on the contrary if her behaver be disonist, stubourn to what she ought to be to me or her s^{d} mistres, then this my Bequest of freedom and Land given to her & her assigns shal be void and of none effect, and the said Luce in this case shal be my s^{d} wid^{ws} and she shal Dispose of her at her own Discresion Tho I would not have my s^{d} wid^{w} make a slave of her if she should be gilty of some common fallings, but such faults shall be look^{t} over.[104]

When Reverend Plant's wife died two years later, Lydia Plant left to her slaves Robin and Lucy, "their freedom, and liberty also to live for four years in the house that she owned and occupied at the time of her decease, with the use of household utensils, beds, sheets, blankets, etc."[105]

Regardless of any affection that might exist between master and slave, continued affection was often contingent upon a certain level of behavior. The 1754 estate inventory for Samuel Morgaridge listed "three negroes" whose value amounted to £133.6s.8d. He had left instructions that his wife was to have "the service of negro Peter 'if he behaves

[104] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 255.
[105] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 255.

well,'" and the authority to sell his other slaves Primus and Lucy.[106] Peter apparently behaved reasonably well until at least 1765 when Morgaridge's widow Mary sold him "and a negro woman called Luce" to Enoch Sawyer, a physician in Newbury. Mary received a handsome sum for the slaves as indicated in her account in the probate records:

> Received for negro Primus £31.12.0
> For the use of Primus for eight years 37.06.8
> For the use of Negro Lucy 05.00.0
> Negro Peter valued at 44.08.10
> Negro for use of children . . . . . 44.08.10[107]

John Weed's widow Sarah was concerned that "her negro Joel" might have difficulty supporting himself after he received his freedom, so on September 22, 1768, she "gave a bond for fifty pounds to the selectmen of Newbury" as security.[108]

As for what jobs the slaves in Newbury did, it is most probable that they served as farm help and as house servants, but other jobs were also held by African and Indian slaves in New England. Black servants were used as laborers and skilled carpenters in the shipyards in New England. They were "longshoremen and truckmen along the waterfront" and mariners aboard ships.[109] Slaves often provided a more stable workforce in the shipyards when demand for labor was high and skilled craftsmen were unavailable. The first record of slave labor in the building of a ship was found in the account book of the brigantine *Fourtune*, built in a Boston shipyard in 1713. The builder, Jonathan Bowers, hired three slaves from three separate owners. Their wages were high and their length of employment considerable, suggesting that they were skilled laborers. Their skill also suggests that the use of slave labor in ship building had begun before the turn of the

[106] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 255-256.
[107] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 256.
[108] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 256.
[109] Albion, et al., *New England and the Sea*, 37.

century. As the eighteenth century progressed, ship builders all over New England were employing skilled and unskilled slave labor. The more skilled a slave was, the more the slave was worth, so it was advantageous for an owner to have his slave trained in the apprenticeship system, as freemen were. At least one slave owned by a Newbury builder was raised to be a shipwright.[110] On the eve of the Revolutionary War, when shipbuilding supported much of the economy in Newbury and Newburyport, the slaves' labor was all but required in the major industry of Newburyport. [111]

[110] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 63-64.
[111] Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2000), 41.

CHAPTER 4

SHIPBUILDING ON THE MERRIMACK RIVER

The power of Massachusetts as a commercial state lay in her ships, and the men who built, owned, and sailed them.[112]

From an early date Boston was the main shipbuilding center in Massachusetts, but other port towns also built ships for fishing and trade. Newbury, despite its location at the deep-water mouth of the Merrimack River, and its easy access to the great quantities of timber inland, built only a few ships before 1690. The first record of a land grant to build a wharf in Newbury dates from 1655, when land on the Merrimack River was granted to Captain Paul White to build a wharf, dock and warehouse. However, in his *Economic and Social History of New England*, William Weeden states that despite this formality, "facilities for navigation had long existed there."[113]

In 1660 the English Parliament passed the Navigation Act, which "restricted trade with England's colonies to vessels of English or English colonial ownership and whose masters and three fourths of whose crews were English."[114] Enforcement of the Act was left to governors and customs officers. This did not work out as well as planned, requiring a subsequent law to be passed in 1696, the *Act for Preventing Frauds and Regulating Abuses in the Plantation Trade*. Oaths from the owners of all vessels were required by this law, stating "that no Foreigner, directly or indirectly, hath any Share, or Part, or Interest therein."[115] As a by-product of this Act, all ships engaged in overseas or inter-plantation trade were required to be registered. These records demonstrate the increase in shipbuilding and ownership in Massachusetts, and in Newbury in particular.

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[112] Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 161.
[113] William Weeden, *Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1789* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1890), 159.
[114] Bernard Bailyn and Lotte Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping 1697-1714: A Statistical Study* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1959), 3.
[115] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 4.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, New England became the commercial center of the American colonies. Edward Randolph, the British royal agent in Massachusetts, in 1689 described the situation well:

> The other *American plantations* cannot well subsist without New England, which is by a thousand leagues nearer to them than either *England* or *Ireland*; so that they are supplied with provisions, beef, pork, meal, fish, etc., also with the lumber trade, deal boards, pipe staves, etc., chiefly from *New England*. Also the Caribbee Islands have their horses from thense.[116]

As the population increased in New England, more of the provisions grown at home were kept at home, so by the end of the seventeenth century, fishing and shipbuilding became the foundation of the economy. According to Stephen Innes, "the vitality of Massachusetts Bay's most lucrative exports – salted fish and seagoing vessels – would depend on the West Indian connection," for the entire colonial period.[117]

From the beginning of shipbuilding in New England, merchants investing in the vessels spread the financial risk of launching them by dividing up the cost into shares of halves, quarters, eighths and sixteenths. Rarely would an investor bear the entire expense (and possible loss) of a vessel by himself.[118] The financing of vessels in this manner is represented in the early probate inventory of John Bartlet of Newbury, who died February 5, 1678. The inventory, taken by Stephen Grenlefe (Greenleaf), Sr. and William Chandler on March 5, 1678, includes in his personal estate "part in two vessells," as well as "Indego and . . . tobacco," indicating not only a share in financing ships, but also the possession of goods made from slave labor. [119] This is a pattern of investing that continued into the nineteenth century.

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[116] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 20.
[117] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 298.
[118] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 288; Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 11.
[119] George Francis Dow, ed., *The Probate Records of Essex County, Massachusetts. 3 vols*. (New York: Arno Press, 1977), *Docket 1,887*, 289.

Though permission for the building of a few wharves and docks was granted prior to the turn of the century, access to the waters of the Merrimack was made more possible after 1700 when wharves and docks along the river grew in number until the entire waterside was bustling with activity. This growth was partly the result of Boston merchants looking to invest in shipyards where the access to timber was greater. In his *"Ould Newbury": Historical and Biographical Sketches*, John Currier relates the building boom:

> After the year 1700, the wharves and docks along the riverside steadily increased in number.…William Johnson, John Greenleaf, and others were granted liberty to build a wharf at the foot of Chandler's Lane, afterwards called "the lower wharf," and at the same time Abiel Somerby was granted permission to build a wharf at the foot of Ordway's Lane that was subsequently designated "the upper long wharf"; and between these two extreme points other active and enterprising merchants had their warehouses and docks.[120]

By 1727 "there were between twenty-five and thirty shipyards on the Merrimack River."[121] Shipbuilders in Newbury and Newburyport acquired land for building vessels and their level of prosperity was on a par with the merchants of the town. Some builders became merchants as well, as in the case of the shipwright Gideon Woodwell. In 1762 he bought land and established his shipyard on the Merrimack. Fifty-two vessels were built in his yard between that year and 1773.[122] At the same time he ran a shop selling "English" and "West India" goods.[123] In exchange for ships built for merchants, Woodwell received goods from them, which he was then able to use (in part) to pay his workers.[124] His success begat success: "three generations of Woodwells built ships at

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[120] John J. Currier, *"Ould Newbury": Historical and Biographical Sketches* (Boston: Damrell & Upham, 1896), 162.
[121] Robert K. Cheney, *Maritime History of the Merrimack: Shipbuilding* (Newburyport: Newburyport Press, Inc., 1964), 7.
[122] Cheney, *Maritime History of the Merrimack,* 14.
[123] Cheney, *Maritime History of the Merrimack,* 17.
[124] Joseph A. Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America* (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 1976), 72-73

Newbury."[125] In the small communities of Newbury and Newburyport, it was not uncommon for families to continue shipbuilding for two or more generations, or to have shipbuilding families combine as a result of marriage. The same John Greenleaf, shipwright, who was granted the liberty to build a wharf in Newburyport, married the daughter of his former employer. He established his own shipyard by 1750, "and became one of Newbury's leading builders during the 1760s and 1770s."[126]

According to the statistical studies conducted by Bernard and Lotte Bailyn, the shipping registration records as of December 1698 show Massachusetts as the leader in shipbuilding and ownership at the end of the seventeenth century. Of the 211 total vessels registered, 171 were owned and built in Massachusetts. Forty-eight of the 171 vessels built in Massachusetts were solely owned, but 284 individuals were investors in the remaining vessels.[127] Newbury counts two vessels in this registration, with a total of four investors, and one vessel solely owned. The vessels were a 30-ton sloop and a 30-ton brig. Boston claimed the most vessels at 124 with 261 investors, and Salem the next greatest number at 21 vessels and 26 people investing. Sole ownership of vessels was not the norm; the data suggest that "the average number of co-owners per vessel tended to increase with the average size of the vessel," particularly in the smaller towns. [128] Boston and Salem represent the two towns with most sole-ownership of vessels, indicating a greater number of investors with larger personal fortunes residing there than in the other shipbuilding towns.[129] Owning a vessel outright seems to have been an attractive option only when two variables were met:

[125] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America,* 75.
[126] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America,* 74.
[127] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping,* Table I, 78.
[128] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 16.
[129] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 17.

> where the efficient size of vessels was small enough to keep the capital demands and risks within reasonable limits (which appears to have been considerably less than 90 tons), and where mercantile capital had accumulated in individual concentrations large enough to make such investments and risks feasible.[130]

Between 1674 and 1696 shipbuilders in Newbury produced four sloops, one bark and two brigantines for a total tonnage of 199, as compared to the ships built in the Salem area which totaled 1,397 tons.[131] (The Salem area included the ports of Ipswich, Gloucester, Beverly, Salem and Marblehead.) In the next twenty years Newbury surpassed the Salem area in building ships for both Boston and London merchants. "Between 1709 and 1714, Newbury launched almost twice as much tonnage as it had in the previous six years, continuing to build both coastal and oceangoing vessels."[132] In five years Newbury produced twenty-eight sloops, two barks, eleven brigantines, and eleven ships, totaling 2,625 tons. The entire Salem area produced only forty-seven ships in total, equaling 1,665 tons.[133] Joseph Goldenberg suggests that "cheap construction rates probably explain the increase in building" in Newbury, in addition to the fact that larger ships could be built there and "timber was more plentiful there than in Boston."[134] Whatever the reasons, shipbuilding and the trade it encouraged and produced began to involve the entire region.

The registration records demonstrate that shipbuilding increased in Newbury along the Merrimack River over the next thirty-three years. In his *Historical Sketch of Ship Building on the Merrimac River*, John Currier writes that the ship register shows

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[130] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 16.
[131] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 132.
[132] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 36.
[133] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 143.
[134] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America,* 36.

"130 vessels built on the Merrimac between 1681 and 1714."[135] The Bailyns' research records the vessels built in every Massachusetts town between 1674 and 1714. Newbury was the leader in shipbuilding in the Merrimack River area, increasing their production from 5.9 percent of the 1698 Massachusetts fleet to 8.7 percent by 1714. Of the 1,257 vessels built in this time period, 109 were built and registered in Newbury, representing 5,137 tons. This number is only surpassed by Salem, with 140 vessels, Scituate with 159 vessels, and Boston with 437 vessels in the same time period. However, vessels registered in Boston were not all built there; in fact, Boston built only 28 percent of its own vessels, with Newbury building 4.9 percent of Boston–registered vessels.[136] Shipbuilding was spread out along the New England coastline; where a ship was built did not necessarily indicate its port of registration nor of ownership.

Many owners were not from the colonies. The following is a list of vessels built at Newbury for English owners from 1698-1714:

1698 – Sloop *Ann*, Portsmouth, England, 40 tons
1703 – Ship *Samuel & David* of Boston, 100 tons
1708 – Ship *John* of London, 120 tons
1709 – Ship *Bond* of London, 310 tons
1709 – Ship *Prince Eugene* of London, 160 tons
1711 – Sloop *Hannah & Elizabeth* of London, 70 tons
1712 – Sloop *Ann & Mary* of London, 70 tons
1712 – Ship *Rowlandson* of London, 150 tons
1712 – Ship *Content* of London, 90 tons
1713 – Sloop *William & James* of Glasgow, 40 tons
1713 – Sloop _____ of London, 50 tons
1713 – Sloop *Mary & Sarah* of Barbadoes, 20 tons[137]

Though many early vessels built in Newbury were owned by English merchants, Newbury residents profited increasingly by ownership of the vessels that carried West

[135] John J. Currier, *Historical Sketch of Ship Building on the Merrimack River* (Newburyport: William H. Huse & Co., 1877), 20.
[136] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 51, 52, 104-105.
[137] Currier, *Historical Sketch of Ship Building on the Merrimack*, 20-21.

Indies goods, not just from the goods themselves. From the 1640s onward, the West Indies trade "created a demand for seamen in the ports of New England. From thirty-five to forty-five shillings per month was offered, and in addition to these good wages, a small space aboard ship was allowed each man where he might stow personal venture to trade 'on his own hook.'"[138]

New England merchants would occasionally give the ships' captains the authority to sell vessels in the West Indies "if stated minimum prices were met," as a way to augment the income made on the goods.[139] In return, cash, credit and goods were received and the captains would travel back on another ship bound for New England. [140] Ships' masters may have had part ownership in the vessels, whose sale made them an increased profit from the trip, but the crews' interests were restricted to shares in the cargoes only.[141] The residents who stayed at home could buy and sell the goods that arrived when the seamen came back to port, as noted by John McElroy in his article on "Seafaring Seventeenth-Century in New England,"

> From Portsmouth to New Haven, the tidewater towns of New England were the busiest ports in the western world. As if drawn by a magnet, all the spoils of the hemisphere found their way into the holds of her ships to be carried thither. Tobacco and indigo from Virginia; sugar from Barbados, Jamaica, and other sugar islands; wool from the Carolinas; logwood from the Gulf of Honduras or Campeche Bay; ginger, cocoa, fustick, rum, and the other products of the West Indies were discharged on New England wharves.[142]

Investors in ships and cargo pooled their funds together, basing their collaboration most often on social or business connections. Local ownership of ocean-going vessels

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[138] John William McElroy, "Seafaring in Seventeenth-Century New England," *The New England Quarterly* 8.3 (Sep. 1935): 333.
[139] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 98.
[140] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 98-99.
[141] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 11.
[142] McElroy, "Seafaring in Seventeenth-Century New England,": 354-355.

was typical in all of the coastal Massachusetts towns, with investors either residing in the town or in neighboring communities. The only exception to this pattern was Salem, which had 19.1 percent of its fleet owned by Bostonians.[143] In 1710 one out of every six adult males in Newbury was part-owner of an ocean-going vessel, including a trader and a weaver. Many investors claimed the title "merchant," but that "designation could be assumed easily by anyone involved in trade or maritime activity."[144] Investing in shares of a vessel was widespread across the social spectrum, including small entrepreneurs and artisans, and was definitely not reserved only for what might be termed a "merchant aristocracy."[145] In this early shipbuilding period, no Newbury residents were investors in ten or more vessels, but that changed as Newbury grew in shipbuilding prominence.[146] Partial ownership in vessels became common and was found in all levels of society, as evidenced by a review of the Lunt probate inventories.

When Stephen Coffin of Newbury died in 1725, he owned twenty-three acres of land, valued at £2130, on which he kept his beef cattle and swine and grew his crops. With his other provisions in his cellar he had molasses, but hardly anything to talk about – it was listed with his warming pan and frying pan and amounted to no more than £6.12. Coffin also had "intruist in a sloop," amounting to £100. Anthony Morse, Jr. was one of the three men who took this inventory.[147] Another man named Stephen Coffin, also of Newbury, died in 1734. When his inventory was taken his real estate holdings, "the Housings Barne and Land by the House continuing about eighteen or nineteen acres of land adjoining and about nine akers of pasture land," amounted to £496. The next most

[143] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 29, 36.
[144] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping*, 57, 58.
[145] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping,* 59.
[146] Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping,* 128-133.
[147] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #3790.

valuable item in Coffin's inventory was "one quarter part of a Sloop *Cato the Dove*, rigging and all fit for the sea, two hundred pounds" He also had 150 gallons of rum valued at £30.[148]

Offin Boardman's 1736 probate inventory included something that became more prevalent in the inventories as the century progressed: letters of credit and debts due to him, in this case ranging from the amount of £14 to as little as 10 shillings. In addition, Boardman owned parts of two vessels when he died: "one third part of a sloop - £90," . . . "the third part of a sloop - £150."[149]

Deacon Joshua Beck left a valuable estate totaling £2754.8.8 when he died in 1747. His real estate alone was valued at £1535.18. This amount included "half a right in the Long Wharf Wharehouse" and "a sixteenth part of a Sloop about Eighty Tuns." Listed under "Household furniture," after "2 Sadles & a Bridle," is "a Negro Woman £45." Though he is referred to as a "Gentleman," from his inventory it appears he was also a merchant, as there is an entire page of "In Shop Goods" that includes gloves and threads and many various fabrics including silk, buttons, leather, ivory combs and black lace, to name but a few items. [150] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.)

Mr. John Crocker, Jr., may have also been a merchant, as his 1757 inventory contains items such as yards of calico, cotton, lace, and checked linen, as well as stockings. It also includes "850 Gall[ns] of Mollases" valued at £102, plus "900 of Sugar," "400 of Coffee," and "250 of Allspice," indicating trade with the West Indies plantations. To make those connections, Crocker also owned at the time of his death the "Sloop

[148] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #5791.
[149] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #2713.
[150] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, #2231.

Speedwell," "1/8 of the Duck Schoo[ner]," and "1/2 & 3/16 of the Sloop ____."[151] Jonathan Woodman was an investor in several vessels, yet it seems clear from the 1748 probate inventory taken at the time of his death that he was probably a small farmer and not a shipbuilder. He owned twenty-eight acres of land, cows, a horse, and swine. But Woodman also owned the "warehouse wharf & brest work & about 156 feets land front,…one right in the green wharf warehouse & land," so perhaps he was selling farm produce abroad. In addition, he owned "one Eight part of the Sloop *Eagle*, …one quarter part of the Sloop *Speedwell*,…(and) one eight part of the Sloop *Hannah*."[152] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.) These varied patterns of vessel ownership indicate the egalitarian opportunity in Newbury and Newburyport for townspeople to share in the profits of the Atlantic trade, but certainly began to lead to the creation of a "merchant aristocracy".

Though ownership in vessels and trade goods were ways to make money from trade in the West Indies for some people, the building of the vessels actually provided steady work and income for more residents of Newbury than did ship ownership. A merchant, or more often a group of merchants, would contract with a shipwright to build a vessel. Seagoing vessels of any size needed timber, so shipwrights would begin the task of building a ship or other vessel by securing lumber from a timber merchant or a local farmer. It would not be uncommon to find a shipwright using at least a portion of the down payment from the merchants to purchase the plank or timber. Shipwrights then hired workers to help hoist the cut pieces of lumber into place. While the initial stages of

[151] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #1757.
[152] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #30597.

building occurred, many other "craftsmen were also at work on the ship," all men living in the local community. [153]

> Joiners smoothed the outside planking, built rails and did interior cabin work. Caulkers filled seams with oakum to make the ship watertight. With iron more plentiful in the colonies than in England, colonial builders used more iron on masts, blocks, and deckware than British shipwrights did; . . . Responsible for all the iron work on the vessel, smiths also had the task of forging anchors. A mason laid bricks to support the galley, a tinman lined the scuppers, and a glazier installed glass ports. Mast-makers, sailmakers, blockmakers, and ropemakers supplied their respective products. Other tradesmen included painters, riggers, boatmakers, coopers, tanners, and carvers. Before sailing, the ship required the services of instrument makers, chairmakers and upholsterers to complete the officers' quarters, and brewers, bakers, and butchers to supply provisions.[154]

As this description makes clear, trade with the West Indies provided employment for entire towns. In addition, the fishermen "caught and packed the cod and mackerel," which was traded for sugar and molasses; the innkeeping women "provided bed and board for the mariners;" and the ordinary farmers and artisans "spent their free time shaving shingles and making pipestaves."[155] The construction of a large (100-300-ton) vessel could require "up to two hundred workers" before it was ready to launch.[156] The number of people who benefited from the building of a vessel only increased with population growth. On the eve of the American Revolution in 1773, the population of Newburyport numbered 3,000. At this time the total number of adult males in Newburyport was 699, and of those men, the occupations of 84.7 percent of them were ascertained by Bernard Labaree.[157] The number of men making a living as "Maritime Artisans" was 136. These professions include blockmakers, boatbuilders, caulkers,

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[153] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 88-89.
[154] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 89.
[155] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 279.
[156] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 290.
[157] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans: The Merchants of Newburyport, 1764-1815* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), 5.

coopers, mastmakers, riggers, ropemakers, sailmakers, shipsmiths, and shipwrights. "Merchants and Professional Men" numbered 173, among these 14 distillers, 36 merchants and 83 shipmasters. There were 27 "Shopkeepers and Innholders," including three innkeepers. Labaree lists thirty Mariners in the list of 79 "Laborers and Others." The largest group is the "Domestic Artisans," numbering 177. Fourteen blacksmiths and 39 joiners are among them.[158] If one reflects on the number of people required to build and outfit a vessel, it is clear that almost everyone in Newburyport would have been involved in one way or another with the shipping trade, creating the basis for the economy in the town and its environs.

Vessels varied in size and construction depending on their intended use. The vessels most commonly used in the early trade with the West Indies were the sloop and the ketch, which were rarely built bigger than fifty tons, averaged about thirty tons, and were "manned by crews of five or six."[159] The sloop is "a single-mast vessel of Dutch origin…and by the 1690s, [had] displac[ed] other types as the principal coasting craft."[160] Sloops from American ports were commonly used in the coastal and island slave trade. They were "fast in the water and easily maneuvered, with shallow draft and light displacement. [In addition, they] required a modest crew of five to ten."[161] The bark, a two-masted, square-sail rig, was largely replaced by the brigantine, or brig, in the eighteenth century. The brig "carried a combination rig with square sails on the foremast and a fore-and-aft sail on the main" mast, making it a more complicated, but more versatile rig.[162] Some merchants preferred using a snow for the West Indies trade, a ship

[158] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans,* 4-5.
[159] Albion, et al., *New England and the Sea*, 23, Bailyn and Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping,* 19.
[160] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America,* 39.
[161] Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), 64.
[162] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 39.

that "averaged 10-30 tons larger than brigantines,…which had square sails on both masts plus a small fore-and-aft sail set on a pole about a foot behind the mainmast."[163] Table I in the Appendix reveals that twenty-one snows were built in Newbury for use in the transatlantic slave trade. The only vessel built in greater numbers was the ship, "the most common vessel for ocean voyages."[164] Ships were "identified by square sails on the fore- and mainmasts and a lateen-rigged mizzen mast. A ship's tonnage might be as little as 40 or greater than 400." [165] Twenty-two ships were built in Newbury for the use in the transatlantic slave trade.[166]

The smaller vessels used primarily for trading with the West Indies, which sometimes carried back to New England a few slaves in addition to the molasses, sugar and other goods, might not have met the requirements for slavers crossing to Africa and back, but they still would have required all the trades listed above. The construction of a slaver required specifications a West Indies coaster would not have needed, so the building and outfitting of a slaver would have been clear to all involved in its construction. In 1745 a Liverpool merchant named Joseph Manesty sent to his builder in Rhode Island the specifications he felt were necessary for two ships to make a slaving voyage. Manesty was the "primary owner of at least nine vessels" engaged in the slave trade, so it is likely he knew what would be required. Manesty requested that his ships be made of "the best white Oak Timber," to be found in the "woodlands of New England."[167] The ships' specifications included the following:

> Square stern'd, 58 feet in length, 22 feet in width, and 10 feet deep in the hold, with a height of 5 feet twixt the Decks …He wanted the sides of

[163] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 80.
[164] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 5.
[165] Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, 5.
[166] *Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trading Database*.
[167] Rediker, *The Slave Ship,* 50.

> vessels flared for the more commodious stowing [of] Negroes twixt the Decks.[168]

In an 1801 description of a slave ship John Riland described the decks on a medium-sized slaver of about 140 tons as about four and a half feet apart in height, "so most men would not have been able to stand up" when they were shackled together in the lower decks, thus allowing for "more commodious stowing."[169] Marcus Rediker includes that there were also "platforms, which were routinely built on the lower deck of slavers, from the edge of the ship inward about six feet, to increase the number of slaves to be carried."[170] Ships built for the slave trade would have included these specifications in addition to others that were necessary parts of any slave voyage. Of utmost importance was something called "the barricado," placed in the middle of the vessel on the main deck, as described here:

> The barricado [was] a strong wooden barrier ten feet high that bisected the ship near the mainmast and extended about two feet over each side of the vessel. This structure, built to turn any vessel into a slaver, separated the bonded men from the women and served as a defensive barrier behind which the crew could retreat (to the women's side) in moments of slave insurrection, but it was also a military installation of sorts from which the crew guarded and controlled the enslaved people on board.[171]

As this description makes clear, the construction of a slaving vessel, regardless of the rig, differed from that of a vessel intended for the trade of non-human goods, and therefore, would have been obvious to any and all building and outfitting the vessels. Forty-seven slavers were constructed in Newbury between 1734 and 1858, making generations of Newburyporters complicit in the slave trade.

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[168] Rediker, *The Slave Ship,* 50-51.
[169] Rediker, *The Slave Ship,* 68.
[170] Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, 68.
[171] Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, 70.

Newburyport mariners also benefited from the slave trade, though many seem to have died nearly penniless according to some of the probate inventories in the Lunt collection. The inventories suggest that most mariners had little in the way of real estate and not much in their personal estate, as their lives were spent at sea. That appears to be the case particularly after the Revolution for the seamen, if not the captains. Many of the probate inventories of mariners in the Lunt collection reveal estates worth less than $100. However, ship Captain Theophilus Bradbury seems to be an exception. At his death in 1765, several years before the Revolution erupted, he owned quite a bit of real estate, and parts of three vessels.

> Dwelling House & Barn & about one acre & half of Land adjoining,…the one halfe of a River Lot or Lots in partnership with Crispin Bradberys Heirs about one Hundred & ten foot front,…Half a Rite in Queen Wharf,…Two thirds of a Cows Rite in the fourth General Pasture,…one Pew in the Rever[nd] Mr Lowells Meetinghouse,…one Rite in the township of Naraganset,…one quarter & one _____ of the Sloop Speedwell,…one Eighth part of the Sloop Sucksess' (Success), (and)…one Eighth part of the Sloop Moley' (Molly).[172]

Captain Bradbury's personal estate included various fabrics including silk, ribbons, buttons, dinner ware, cases of knives and forks and "twenty Eight Pounds of Pewter," to name but a few of the many items listed. That he was sailing to and trading in the West Indies is quite clear from the items listed at the end of his inventory: "four hundred & fifty two gallons of Malases," "Six Hundred Fifty five pounds of Coffee," "two hundred & half & five pounds of Sugar," and "one Hundred fifty two pounds of coco."[173] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.)

There is only one individual associated with Newburyport that it can clearly be said profited directly from the slave trade as more than a distiller of rum or owner or

[172] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories,* #3007, 1.
[173] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #3007, 2.

builder of a ship. In a review of the *Voyages Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* and the Lunt probate inventories, it appears that Captain Thomas Thomas not only owned a distillhouse, but he also owned at least one ship and two wharves, and he captained slave ships. Captain Thomas was born in England in 1737. According to the *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport*, before the Revolutionary War Thomas was in the employ of Newburyport merchant Michael Dalton; but it seems he must also have been in the employ of others, as he is listed as the captain on four separate slave voyages, three on the same ship, the *Lark.*[174] Captain Thomas sailed the *Lark*, a ship of 100 tons under the flag of Great Britain, for the first time in 1765, picking up 138 Africans from an unnamed place and delivering 113 of them to Kingston, Jamaica, for vessel owner John Fowler.[175] In 1767 Thomas captained the *Lark* twice more, once in February and once in December, both times purchasing slaves from New Calabar in the Bight of Biafra. Of the 276 slaves Thomas purchased in February, 209 were delivered to Savanna la Mar. In the spring of 1768, Thomas delivered 230 of the original 259 Africans to Antigua. John Fowler was the owner on both of these voyages as well, but shared the risk (and fortune) on the first of the 1767 voyages with John Waugh.[176] Captain Thomas's last slave voyage, at least according to the Voyages Database, was in 1787 flying an American flag. The vessel was the *Polly and Sally*, registered in Salem, but only the tonnage is listed – 50 tons – not the rig. The voyage began in Massachusetts, acquired slaves in an unspecified African port, and delivered 126 surviving Africans (out of the original 149) to an

[174] William H. Bayley and Oliver O. Jones, *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport, Massachusetts, From its Incorporation in 1772 to the Year 1906: Together with a Complete Roster and Narrative of Important Events in the Lives of its Members* (Newburyport: Press of the Daily News, 1906), 320-321.
[175] Voyages: *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, Voyage 17595, *Lark* (1765).
[176] *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, Voyage 17596, *Lark* (1767) and Voyage 17653 (1767).

unnamed place. The owner's name was Captain George Crowninshield, quite possibly the same man who was the head of an influential seafaring and trading family in Salem.[177]

Upon his death in 1796, Captain Thomas left his family his mansion house on High Street in Newburyport, valued at $6000; two dwelling houses, store, outhouses and wharf, in Merrimack Street, totaling $5000; a distillhouse, stores and wharf in Merrimack Street valued at $4000; and a farm in Newbury and Rowley, and land in New Hampshire, totaling $2700. He owned ten shares in the Merrimack Bank worth $1,000, and his ship *Thomas* and appurtenances was valued at $3000. Captain Thomas's entire estate was worth $25,959.86, representing wealth derived from the trading in human beings and the products they harvested and made.[178] In the currency of the year 2000, his wealth would have amounted to approximately $336,000.[179] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix)

Thomas's distillhouse was but one of several in Newburyport, for the making of rum in the eighteenth century had become a very profitable enterprise and another way in which Newburyport played a leading part in the transatlantic slave trade.

[177] *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, Voyage 37150, *Polly and Sally* (1787)
[178] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories,* #27475.
[179] McCusker, *How Much is that in Real Money?* Calculated using Tables 1A and D-1.

CHAPTER 5

SUGAR, RUM AND MOLASSES

Rum was a magical as well as a heady distillation: its fluid stream reached far Guinea, distant Newfoundland, remote Indian trading posts; and it joined slaves, gold-dust, the mackerel and cod, and peltries with the fortune of the New England trading enterprises.[180]

The trade in alcoholic beverages in the North American colonies began even before Boston was established in 1630. Spanish wines, Sack (white wine), and Aquavitae (Holland gin) were traded by the Dutch in New Plymouth as early as 1627.[181] Indeed, the *Mayflower* itself was loaded with enough beer and Aquavitae to supply the Pilgrims until the following spring. The Massachusetts Bay Company came even better prepared: "the *Arabella* alone carried about 10,000 gallons of beer, 120 hogsheads of malt and 12 gallons of aquavitae."[182] With seventeen ordinaries operating in Massachusetts by 1646, the manufacture and trade of wine, beer, and strong water had become a part of the economy.

In their 1635 September session, "the General Court . . . licensed Francis Plumer to keep an ordinary," thus providing the comforts of a tavern for the first settlers at Newbury.[183] In 1637 John Knight of Newbury "was granted liberty to keepe an ordinary and give entertainment to such as neede." This was followed by permission to Edmond Greenleaf "to keepe a house of entertainment" in 1639.[184] In 1647 Tristram Coffin, Sr. was also granted a license to keep an ordinary and a ferry on the Newbury side of the Merrimack River.[185] The ordinary served as more than just a place to get a drink: it was a

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[180] Louis M. Hacker, *from* John J. McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution: The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 8.
[181] Dean Albertson, "Puritan Liquor in the Planting of New England," *The New England Quarterly* 23.4 (1950): 481.
[182] Albertson, "Puritan Liquor in the Planting of New England": 478-479.
[183] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass.,* 40.
[184] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass.,* 71.
[185] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass.,* 72.

meeting place, a place to exchange news, find work and companionship. As more ordinaries were licensed, there were increased opportunities to share a pint with a neighbor, a pint of inexpensive, more potent beer than one probably had at home. Most, if not all, of the immigrants to the Massachusetts Bay Colony arrived with the knowledge and equipage to make their own beer, just as they had done at home in England. Seventeenth-century water supplies were not treated and, therefore, water was an unhealthy beverage thought only appropriate for animals and sometimes for cooking.[186] Though these tavern owners were certainly Puritans, they saw nothing immoral in the selling or drinking of alcohol when the alternative might well poison one. The creation of ordinaries provided a way to make an income from home brews as well as from imported spirits. However, the licenses to sell alcoholic beverages came with strict regulations. The Massachusetts General Court created over 40 laws regulating the drinking of alcoholic beverages, including a restriction to "prevent excess tippling (anything longer than half an hour)." Ordinaries were to close at 9:00 p.m., and "night meetings" and "night walking" were curtailed by constables hired to prevent time spent at "unprofitable uses," such as card playing, dancing or the like.[187] In the minds of the Puritan fathers of Newbury, public drunkenness would lead to "idle minds and begging hands," and was responsible for the "debauchery of fisherman."[188] Taverns were to be "well regulated, orderly, and respectable [operated by] only men and women of good moral character."[189] To keep tight control of the ordinaries, one Massachusetts law in the late seventeenth century "provided that only voters and church members, the colony's elite, were eligible

[186] Albertson, "Puritan Liquor in the Planting of New England": 477.
[187] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 148.
[188] Frederick H. Smith, *Caribbean Rum: A Social and Economic History* (Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2005), 31.
[189] W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 28.

to hold licenses."[190] The public house became a focus of community life, despite the strict laws, providing a place in which business, politics and local affairs were discussed. Many ordinaries in New England were built next door to the meeting houses "so that Sunday worshippers could congregate there before and after the service."[191] Owners of public houses, therefore, stood to make a decent living from the regular trade.

The introduction of trade with the West Indies brought another drink, rum, to New England, where it found an easy entry into Puritan society, despite the duties on alcohol imposed by the New England colonies and the proscriptions against drunkenness. Some New Englanders moved to the Caribbean not long after their arrival in New England, extending the commercial systems of their families, and creating a triangle of interests between England, the Caribbean and New England.[192] After several unsuccessful attempts to grow sugar cane in Jamestown and Bermuda, the British found they were able to grow sugar cane on the island of Barbados, which British Captain John Powell claimed for them in 1625. [193] An early sugar planter on the island of Antigua, another early British settlement, was Samuel Winthrop, the younger son of Massachusetts governor John Winthrop, who arrived there in 1647 from New England, and by 1670 was the president of the Antigua Council.[194] Through correspondence between friends and family, the needs of the island planters became known to New Englanders, who quickly recognized that the trade with the West Indies might garner even more profits than the established trade with Spain and the Wine Islands. As early as 1647, John Winthrop became aware that the planters in Barbados "are so intent upon planting sugar that they had rather buy foode at

[190] Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic* 28.
[191] Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic*, 28.
[192] Bailyn, *The New England Merchants*, 88.
[193] Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*: The place of Sugar in Modern History (New York: Penguin, 1985), 37.
[194] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1972), 125.

very deare rates than produce it by labour, soe infinite is the profit of sugar works after once accomplished."[195] In his journal, Winthrop attributes this new opportunity to divine providence:

> It pleased the Lord to open to us a trade with Barbados and other islands in the West Indies, which as it provided gainful, so the commodities we had in exchange there for our cattle and provisions, as sugar, cotton, tobacco, and indigo, were a good help to discharge our engagements in England.[196]

English planters in the West Indies had originally planned to grow tobacco and cotton on these islands, but these original farms were displaced by large sugar plantations within the first few decades of the arrival of the Europeans. In 1650 the crops exported from Barbados, almost exclusively sugar, molasses and rum, "were worth over three million pounds."[197] The make-up of the population on the islands changed dramatically in a very short time. In 1645 there were "11,200 small white farmers and 5,680 Negro slaves; in 1667 there were 745 large plantation owners and 82,023 slaves."[198] By then there were only two classes in West Indies society: "wealthy planters and oppressed slaves."[199] Cotton and tobacco became mainland crops and thousands more slaves were sent to the American colonies in the South to work on those plantations, but sugar, rum and molasses reigned in the West Indies.

Sugar production required many hands performing back-breaking labor. In an effort to provide workers for this grueling job, the British expanded their trade of African slaves to include their placement on the "sugar islands" of the West Indies. Sugarcane is harvested yearly, usually between January and May in the dry season. Because sugarcane

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[195] Bailyn, *The New England Merchants*, 85.
[196] Richard S. Dunn & Laetitia Yeandle, eds., *The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630-1649* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1996), 329.
[197] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1994), 25.
[198] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 23.
[199] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery,* 25.

spoils quickly once cut, it had to be brought immediately to the mill to be squeezed dry and its juice put into large kettles to boil.[200] Rum historian Frederick Smith explains the process:

> During the boiling process, impurities, known as scum, bubbled to the surface and were skimmed off. Lime, egg whites, and the blood of cattle were some of the ingredients added to the boiling cane juice to help bring impurities to the surface. . . . Once the sugar boiler believed the juice had reached an appropriate viscosity, it was transferred to wooden barrels or earthenware molds in the purging house. There, remaining impurities – at this point called molasses – drained off, leaving a barrel of still-wet muscavado or a brownish loaf of sugar. Claying, a more common practice in Barbados and the French islands, consisted of capping the sugar mold with wet clay. Claying purged the loaf of more molasses and left a lighter semirefined sugar.[201]

With increased production of sugar on Barbados and other British West Indies islands, sugar became a mass commodity in Europe and the colonies, one that was no longer consumed by only the wealthy.

The British and other European colonists started by making sugar, but they quickly found a use for the residue that became just as profitable – rum. Early sugar planters in the West Indies learned that when mixed with water and left out in the sun, molasses ferments and turns into a fairly lethal concoction the planters called "Kill Devill."[202] This beverage was first used as a provision for the seamen who came to the islands, but the planters soon realized that as distilled rum it had marketability beyond their shores. Various recipes for making the beverage evolved, but essentially rum is made from a *wash*, a combination of four basic ingredients, all but one the waste products of sugar making. [203] Scum, molasses, dunder ("the waste of previous distillations"), and

[200] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 43.
[201] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 43-44.
[202] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 31.
[203] Mintz, *Sweetness and Power,* 21-22; Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 44.

water created the mixture that was then left to ferment and be turned into rum.[204] Sometimes rum was made from damaged canes – gnawed on by rats, brought down in hurricanes, dried out from droughts or singed by fires – making the sugarcanes "useless for sugar making."[205] And though the idea was to get as much sugar as possible squeezed out of the cane for consumption as sugar, the more sugar in the wash meant the more potent the resulting alcoholic beverage when made into rum. It did not take the West Indies planters long to realize just how much money they could make from these two products. Barbados became the "leading supplier of rum to the continental colonies" in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. "In the period 1699-1701, Barbados alone exported an annual average of nearly 600,000 gallons of rum, which represented 19 percent of the value of all Barbados exports."[206] Most of this rum was exported to the North American colonies, primarily to the Chesapeake region and New England. However, imports of rum to New England diminished from that time on, as molasses became the primary import. New Englanders became distillers of rum, and rum became "the currency of the age."[207]

If the New Englanders distilling the molasses did not travel to the West Indies to see the cane harvested, they may not have realized the brutal work involved in the effort to create the molasses. The African slaves who cut the cane and boiled it down and produced the sugar and distilled the rum worked from sun-up to sun-down. The life-span of a male slave working cane might reach seventeen years, but it averaged about seven years.[208] Because the turn-over of workers was so great, as was the increase in planting

[204] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 44.
[205] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 45.
[206] Smith, *Caribbean Rum,* 28.
[207] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 29.
[208] Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 323.

sugarcane, more and more Africans each year were transported to the West Indies as a part of the growing Triangle Trade. Though the cost of slaves increased, "what governed the slave system in the English islands from about 1660 to 1760 was the superabundant supply of new Negroes,"[209] who remained cheap relative to the profits from sugar cane. An example of how much sugar was able to be realized on these islands is that as early as 1655, "283 tons of 'clayed' sugars and 6,667 tons of 'muscovado' sugars were produced in Barbados."[210]

By the end of the seventeenth century, Newbury's demand for alcohol included a growing demand for locally made rum. According to John Currier's *History of Newbury, MA*, in August of 1653 Edmund Greenleaf of Newbury "sold a dwelling-house and one acre of land, with a still-house and the fixtures connected therewith, to Capt. Paul White." Captain White then petitioned the Court at Salem for a license "to still strong waters for a yeare and sell by the quart," which he was granted in 1662. "Caleb Moody built a malt-house as early as 1673," and in 1692 James Ordway, Sr., "owned a dwelling-house and malt-house on the north-westerly corner of Ordway's Lane." In 1673 Captain Paul White had a petition filed against him by tavern owner Hugh March for selling wine. At the root of his petition was the not-insignificant matter of competition: "so it is that captain White under colour of providing sacrament wines, doth frequently retail wines unto the inhabitants and others to the damage and disabling your petitioner."[211] Joshua Coffin included his own thoughts on the subject of the consumption of alcohol in his history of Newbury when he wrote, "the quantity of wine used on sacramental occasions during the year (1673) was, as we shall hereafter see, very great."[212]

[209] Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 324.
[210] Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 37.
[211]Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, etc.*71.
[212] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, etc.*71.

According to John McCusker, an economic historian of the rum trade, the first rum distillery in New England is thought to have been operating as early as 1648 in Salem, Massachusetts, but he dates with certainty a commercial rum distillery in Rhode Island operating in 1684.[213] Rum was the ideal merchandise because it was easy to transport and it "could be warehoused cheaply, withstood any climate and improper handling, and increased in value as it aged."[214] Large profits were to be made by distilling molasses into rum, so New England merchants encouraged the trade of molasses. By the turn of the eighteenth century, with distilleries established all up and down the coast, rum began to vie for first place as the most popular alcoholic drink among the common people. At least one historian estimates that "by this time, rum was being consumed at a rate of nearly four American gallons per year for every man, woman and child in the colonies," even though New England rum was considered "inferior to the West Indies variety and often inelegantly referred to as 'stinking rum.'"[215] Even in a period of economic recession in 1713, the annual per capita consumption of rum in Massachusetts was 2.6 gallons, representing a large home market for this beverage.[216] Demand became so great that the New England merchants began buying up molasses from the French and Dutch islands in the Caribbean, prompting Parliament to pass the Molasses Act of 1733. This Act instituted a high duty of sixpence per gallon on "foreign" imported molasses, in an attempt to curtail the burgeoning distilleries in New England and pull the market back to the planters in the West Indies. It did not work because enforcement was lax, so the New England merchants continued to make a handy profit from distilling smuggled molasses, as "rum then accounted for 80 percent of exports."[217] The number of rum

[213] McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America*, 290; Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 31.
[214] Smith, *Caribbean Rum*, 31.
[215] Tom Standage, *A History of the World in 6 Glasses* (New York: Walker & Co., 2005), 118.
[216] McCusker, *Report to the Board of Trade, 2 March 1716/17*, in *Rum and the American Revolution*, 437.
[217] Standage, *A History of the World in 6 Glasses*, 117.

distilleries in Boston "grew from eight in 1738 to sixty-three in 1750."[218] But Boston was not the only town with a growing rum business. On May 18, 1738 the selectmen and justices of the peace of Newbury granted permission to Joseph Lunt, Jr., the "liberty to erect a still house on the corner of Thomas Moodeys lane by the end of his Malt house for the distilling of strong liquors."[219]

A market for rum and other West Indies products was ripe from the beginning for Newbury merchants' investments. Much of the rum that was made in Newbury was sold locally to the residents of the town. Rum was the "chief manufacture" in New England in 1750. The magnitude of this industry was so great that by this year, "about fifteen thousand hogsheads of molasses were annually converted into rum in Massachusetts alone."[220] According to George Dow, "with rum, New England carried on a lucrative trade with the Indians and rum also served to keep the fisheries alive…there was no article that could take the place of rum in the Guinea trade."[221] The number of gallons of rum produced in Massachusetts in the year 1770 was 2,059,000, of which the colony exported 912,000 gallons. In comparison, Rhode Island produced the next greatest quantity of rum that year, but it was only 814,000 gallons, of which it exported 430,000 gallons, or about half of its production.[222] The over 2 million gallons of local rum produced in Massachusetts in 1770 represented 43.2 percent of the total amount of rum distilled in North America in that year, and "New England exports of rum to Africa represented over four-fifths of the total colonial exports [of rum]."[223]

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[218] Standage, *A History of the World in 6 Glasses*, 118.
[219] Currier, *History of Newbury, MA*, 262-264.
[220] George Francis Dow, *Slave Ships and Slaving* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2002), 256.
[221] Dow, *Slave Ships and Slaving*, 256-257.
[222] McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution,* 474.
[223] McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution,* 439; Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery*, 80.

Research by Frederick Smith makes clear that alcohol was not unfamiliar to Africans when the British began trading rum for slaves. In the context of gift giving, the Dutch West India Company had introduced alcohol, making "daily presentations of brandy to the King and the principal traders" as a way to "draw off the Blacks from trading with the Portuguese." Before long "it became an inviolable custom for all Europeans."[224] Smith cites English slave trader John Atkins as stating in 1735 that "the African trader 'never cares to treat with dry lips.'"[225] Though alcohol represented only a portion of the items traded for slaves, it's use was valued by all the "major slave trading nations."[226]

By 1770, on the eve of the American Revolution, there were 140 rum distilleries in North America, the great majority of them in New England. Newburyport, which in 1764 was set off as a separate town from Newbury, could claim ten.[227] At its incorporation as a town, Newburyport measured a mere "six hundred and thirty acres, less than a mile square," and was the smallest town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[228] The only town that had more rum distilleries operating at this time was Boston with thirty-six. The bustling seaport of Salem had only five.

The distillers in Newburyport could count on any number of merchants, traders and mariners to deliver molasses to them for distillation into New England rum. Those same purveyors also provided the "better" rum made in the West Indies, as well as sugar, coffee, tobacco and other products from the Caribbean. Johnson Chase was a Newbury trader and part of a family that settled in Newbury prior to 1700. His real estate holdings

[224] Frederick Smith, "Slavery and Spirituality: Alcohol in Caribbean Slave Societies" (Article from PhD diss., Univ. of Florida, 2001), 1. www.kislakfoundation.org/prize/200102.html (accessed August 13, 2012).
[225] Smith, "Slavery and Spirituality," 1.
[226] Smith, "Slavery and Spirituality," 2.
[227] McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America*, 290-291.
[228] Coffin, *A Sketch of a History of Newbury, etc*., 228-229.

were small – a house, barn, 1 cow and 1 swine on a quarter-acre lot –when he died in 1760. According to the probate inventory of his estate, the contents of his Trading Stock included 161 gallons of molasses, 20 gallons of rum and 100 pounds of coffee. Chase was also owed debts in the amount of £42.13.7, approximately a quarter of his total worth of £192.15.02.[229]

The ancestors of Captain William Gerrish were also early settlers in Newbury. When Captain Gerrish died in 1763, he left behind a substantially larger estate than Mr. Chase had done. His real estate alone was valued at £797.6.8 when his estate was inventoried. This included "a Dwelling House, warehouse, Shop, Barne, Wharf and the Lot of Land they Stand Upon" and "one River Lot, 101 foot front." In the listing of the Captain's personal estate, found between the cow, swine and their winter hay and his three sheets and three underbeds, is "Fifty pounds of tobacco, thirty Gallons of Rum, (and) Fifty Eight Dozen of Bread." The last item on the inventory is "Divers Bonds & Notes to the value of £245.9.9 ¼," indicating that he was in a position to loan money to others in the community. His total estate was worth approximately £1768.[230]

Sugar and molasses represented profits for the mother country, too, and Parliament was very much aware that the New England colonists were making a tidy sum by circumventing existing laws. In an effort to satisfy the need for revenue following the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, Parliament proposed the Sugar Act of 1764 to enforce the Molasses Act. Its aim was also to curtail the smuggling of molasses and sugar into the Colonies. Massachusetts merchants were particularly aggrieved by this Act and they stated as much in a formal reply to Parliament, directly linking the slave trade with

[229] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #5138.
[230] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #10776.

the New England economy. This paper, entitled *A Statement of the Massachusetts Trade and Fisheries*, made the following claim:

> Asserting that sugar and molasses were the main ingredients of the slave trade, the merchants claimed that any duty imposed upon these articles would ruin the fisheries, cause the destruction of the rum distilleries, and destroy the slave trade. Destruction of the Negro commerce would throw 5,000 seamen out of employment and would cause almost 700 ships to rot in idleness at their wharves. Not only would it affect those immediately engaged in these industries, but its blighting effects would topple the whole dependent economic structure. Coopers, tanners, barrel makers, and even farmers would be reduced to poverty and misery, if the Act were enforced. In short, the Sugar Act, by destroying the slave trade, would stop the wheels of New England industry.[231]

As late as 1768-72, the trade connection between Puritan New England and the slave plantations of the West Indies comprised "nearly 64 percent of (New England's) exports," as the region sent "£303,000 in exports annually to the Caribbean."[232] Enforcement of the Sugar Act would have slowed Newburyport's economy to a halt. On the eve of the Revolution, the livelihood of most of the men (and some women) in this small seaport town relied, if not directly, at least indirectly upon the transportation and manufacture of molasses into rum, a crucial leg of the Triangle Trade. The coffers of Newburyport's merchants were full and the distillers had good reason to be happy. However, only some of them would weather the Revolution and maintain their fortunes.

[231] "Fitch Papers," Conn. Hist. Soc. Colls., XVIII, 262-273, as quoted in Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 69.
[232] Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth*, 297.

CHAPTER 6

REVOLUTIONARY AND POST-INDEPENDENCE NEWBURYPORT

Her geographic advantages gave Newburyport an economic and political eminence in pre-Revolutionary northern Essex [County]).[233]

When the Townshend Acts were instituted in 1767, taxing paper, paint, glass, lead, and tea, the merchants of Newburyport hesitated to join Boston in its protest of the Acts by pledging non-consumption of foreign goods. To Newburyport, that meant non-importation. At a special town meeting that spring, the citizens rejected the non-importation agreement stating it would be detrimental to the town, by adopting the following report:

> This town has been in a great Measure Supported for many Years past by the Building of Ships which have been purchased mostly by the Inhabitants of and for the use of Great Britain: the manner in which we have been paid for the Ships has been mainly by British Manufactures So that the Importation and Purchase of these and our Staple Business (if we may so express it) have been almost inseperably[sic] united.[234]

But within six weeks the Newburyport merchants arrived at the decision to follow Boston's lead. Ultimately they were motivated by both patriotism and economics to support Boston, for "they had imported too many goods the previous year, and these stocks were moving slowly."[235] By 1770 Newburyport was on board, resolving at a town meeting in March of that year "not to use or buy foreign tea and to discourage its use by others."[236] Not drinking tea in Newburyport (as elsewhere in the Colonies) became a passion. But because trade with the West Indies represented most of the basis of the economy, smuggling of goods continued despite the pleas from Boston.

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[233] Ronald N. Tagney, *A County in Revolution: Essex County at the Dawning of Independence* (Manchester, MA: Cricket Press, 1976), 2.
[234] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 20-21, from *Town Records, I, 121-122*.
[235] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 21.
[236] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 25.

Britain's response to the Boston Tea Party in November of 1773 included, among other things, the closing of Boston's port and the institution of a Royal Governor for the colony of Massachusetts. When the residents of Newburyport learned of the Intolerable Acts, Newburyport residents took the radical action of agreeing "to break off all trade with the West Indies and Great Britain if the other Massachusetts ports would agree to it," pending the re-opening of Boston's port or normalization of relations with Great Britain.[237] Learning of the Newburyport merchants' proposal, Sam Adams enthusiastically wrote to James Warren of their "noble example of publick spirit," and his desire that "Plymouth which has hitherto stood foremost would now condescend to second Newbury Port."[238]

When it came time to take up arms, men from Newburyport, Newbury and West Newbury fought in the Revolutionary War, including my ancestor Stephen Morse, a captain of a militia. Many Newburyport merchants turned their vessels into privateers in the service of the American navy. It is estimated that "over half of Massachusetts' privateers were sailing out of Essex County ports," with Newburyport providing 112 vessels.[239] Indeed, the Marine Society of Newburyport claims that "the first privateer fitted out within the limits of the original thirteen colonies, sailed from Newburyport, in August, 1775, and was owned by Nathaniel Tracy."[240] For many merchants, their patriotism cost them dearly in terms of their own private fortunes. "With their capital tied up in unredeemed government notes and in unsold stock," many, such as Tristram Dalton, were in financial ruin. [241] But not all merchants suffered so. William Bartlet and Moses

[237] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 30-31.
[238] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 31.
[239] Tagney, *A County in Revolution*, 268.
[240] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society*, 496.
[241] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 43.

Brown are but two who turned their vessels into privateers and continued to do well following the war, as will be shown.

The war greatly reduced trade and shipping in general, but only temporarily. In her 1851 *History of Newburyport*, E. Vale Smith relates that although "two years before the close of the war tonnage of Newburyport was but 7,176,…seven years after, it had grown to 11,870, an increase of some sixty per cent."[242] With new vessels built and ready for sail again, off they went to both the East and West Indies and to Europe. The revival of the merchantmen in place of the privateers was felt in many corners of the town, as suggested by Mrs. Smith's cheerful prose.

> With the revival of foreign trade, business of all kinds was awakened to a new life. The artisan and mechanic resumed their tools, putting aside the old muskets and rifles…As our first fleet of merchantmen returned, and money became plenty, the retail traders launched out into unwonted investments, and Cornhill and King Street again displayed English goods, and retail traders without fear invited their customers even to purchase *tea*.[243]

Though there was a decline in the British transatlantic slave trade in the 1770s and early 1780s, primarily because of the American Revolutionary War, the trade did continue. On the ships built in Newbury and along the Merrimack River, there was one slave voyage in 1775, three in 1776 and two in 1777. These were not, of course, the only slaving vessels Britain had at its disposal, but this pattern may be representative of the downturn in slaving voyages that Britain launched during the years she was at war with America. Slaving voyages on Newbury vessels picked up again in 1784 after the war and continued into the nineteenth century. In fact, "the largest ten-year period of slave exports in the history of British trade occurred in 1797-1806."[244]Great Britain outlawed the slave

[242] E. Vale Smith, *History of Newburyport from the earliest settlement of the country to the present time. With a biographical appendix* (Boston: Damrell and Moore, 1851), 123.
[243] Smith, *History of Newburyport,* 123 (emphasis in the original).
[244] Rawley and Behrendt, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 143.

trade in 1807, the year prior to the United States doing the same. Discussion of abolition of slavery, not just the trade, began in earnest as the Americans began to fight against an oppressive king and recognized there were slaves among them who also wanted their freedom. Laws promulgating the gradual abolition of slavery made their way into state constitutions after the Revolution was won, but it would be a longer siege to win the war abolishing slavery. If the legal purchasing of African slaves was nearing an end, the trading of slave-made goods was not.

The merchant aristocracy of Newburyport reached its greatest power from 1764-1782. At the outset of this period Newburyport was recognized by the General Court as the wealthiest per capita and most densely populated town (2,300 inhabitants) in the Province of Massachusetts Bay.[245] In the early 1790s following the War for Independence, commerce in Newburyport was booming. Echoing Mrs. Smith, but providing more detail, Benjamin Labaree reports the following:

> Total tonnage of vessels registered and enrolled increased by 50 percent, from under 12,000 tons in 1790 to over 18,000 three years later – mostly brigs, schooners, and sloops for the West Indies trade, which was the backbone of Newburyport's commerce. In 1790 half the vessels clearing the Merrimack called at one or another Caribbean port, and by 1793 over three quarters of the entries were from these islands.[246]

The basics of the import trade remained the same as they had been pre-war: molasses and sugar, with some cocoa, coffee, cotton and indigo often added to the cargo lists. Exports also remained stable, with fish, lumber and rum remaining important parts of Newburyport's export trade. In addition, "country provisions such as butter, ham, and cheese found a lively market in the Caribbean along with manufactured articles like hats

[245] Peter Benes, *Old Town and The Waterside: Two Hundred Years of Tradition and Change in Newbury, Newburyport and West Newbury, 1635-1835* (Newburyport: Historical Society of Old Newbury, 1986), 17.
[246] Labaree*, Patriots and Partisans*, 97.

and shoes."[247] The most famous rum made in Newburyport began its life in 1790 when Alexander Caldwell began operating his distillery.[248] By 1820, when the distilleries in Newburyport had been reduced to four, Caldwell's was still operating. It was the only distillery still in operation by 1904, in its same location on Merrimack Street at the foot of Kent Street.[249]

Trade was booming in Newburyport in the last decade of the eighteenth century, a time of great change in not only the country but also the town. Based on the Newburyport Custom House records from 1790-1792, the Marine Society of Newburyport submitted the following report in 1906:

> Many of the vessels, according to the ancient record we have at hand, were from Guadeloupe with molasses, sugar and coffee, Madeira with wines, Cape Breton with mackerel, England with merchandise and salmon, Turk Island and Cape Francois with salt, molasses, coffee, cocoa and tobacco, from Bilboa with silk handkerchiefs and silk goods, from St. John's with grindstones, from Rotterdam with liquors and gunpowder; vessels arrived from Liverpool, Vigo and Cadiz, Spain, Port au Prince, Dunkirk, Gibraltar, etc. The importation of molasses and sugar from Guadeloupe principally was an important trade, but most everything of foreign production came to this port.[250]

Clearly, the American Revolution did not end the West Indies and foreign trade. Newburyport cooper Joseph Wainwright left only £33.19.10 when he died in 1783, but among his few possessions at the time of his death was 188 gallons of molasses.[251] (Probate Inventory in the Appendix.) For many, the West Indies trade was as healthy as it had been before the war. An invoice that Captain John Bagley carried with him to a market in the West Indies in 1801 is an indication of the thriving trade. Bagley was sailing his schooner *Regulator* "in the employ of William Wyer in the West Indies trade."

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[247] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 98.
[248] Jean Foley Doyle, *Life in Newburyport, 1900-1950* (Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Pub., 2007), 295.
[249] Currier, *History of Newburyport, MA, 1764-1905, Vol. 1* (Boston: Damrell & Upham, 1905), 147.
[250] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport,* 488.
[251] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventory* #28685.

334^{oo} feet board plank and joist at $12	$396.00
1 3-4 m hoops at $25	43.75
100 shaken hhds.	50.00
40 molasses hhds.	40.00
6 barrels mackerel at $10	60.00
45 kegs herring at 3 shillings	33.75
44 1-2 m shingles at 2 shillings	89.00
9 barrels N.E. rum, 293 gallons at 4 shillings, 6 pence	$219.75
24 barrels flour at $14	336.00
54 hhds. codfish at $6	2758.50
22 hhds. scale fish at $4	72.00
	$4098.75

Newburyport, May 6, 1801. [252]

Captain William P. Johnson was a charter member of the Marine Society of Newburyport, joining on November 12, 1772, upon its founding. During the Revolutionary War and afterward, Captain Johnson commanded several vessels on behalf of the United States: the brig *American Hero* in 1776, the brig *William* in 1783, the brig *Sally* in 1785, the brig *Industry* in 1789, and the brig *Henry* in 1791. After he retired from his life at sea, Johnson "became a successful merchant and importer of foreign goods."[253] The Marine Society included in his short biography a listing of the inventory of his estate at the time of his death in 1804.

> At his decease the inventory of his estate amounted to more than $116,000, including the brigantine *Elizabeth Coates* and her cargo consisting of 88 hhds. sugar, 6182 gallons of molasses, one-half of invoice of schooner *Polly and Sally*, $3800 freight money of brigantine *Ann from Trieste*, $300 real estate, dwelling house and barn on Federal Street valued at $8000, wharf and three stores on Water Street $12,000, old house and land on Water Street $2000, farm buildings thereon at Byfield, $10,000.[254]

Supporting this level of importation of goods from the West Indies, John Currier, in his 1877 book *Shipbuilding on the Merrimack River*, provides further evidence of the level of West Indies trade. "In one month, from April 14th to May 14th, 1805, there were

[252] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport,* 341.
[253] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport*, 322.
[254] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport*, 322.

imported by citizens of Newburyport, goods to the value of eight hundred thousand dollars," a fairly remarkable sum by any standards.[255] He also reports that tonnage in the ship yards along the Merrimack increased in 1805. "In November, 1805, there was registered in this district 41 ships, 62 brigs, 2 snows, 2 barks, 66 schooners, with sloops and other small craft belonging to inhabitants of the town."[256] According to Currier, the shipyards that had begun building ships in the middle of the eighteenth century continued in full swing after the war.

> It will be remembered that in the year 1800 Capt. J. Woodwell was building at the lower end of town, and Mr. Elias Jackman was occupied at his yard near the Chain Bridge; while at intermediate points, there were at least six or eight yards in full operation, among which may be named those of Joseph Coffin, Elisha Briggs, Stephen Dutton and Messrs. Jonathan and Thomas Merrill. Further up the river at Salisbury, and also on the banks of the Powow, vessels were in the course of construction, while ship building was not yet abandoned at Haverhill.[257]

Newburyport ship construction changed from working for English clients to U.S. clients. Ownership of more ships stayed local and the local wealth increased as a result. According to both the *Ship Registers of the District of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1789-1870*, and Cheney's *Maritime History of the Merrimack: Shipbuilding*, Newburyport resident Ebenezer Stocker was the owner of at least twenty-one vessels in the decades following the Revolution. Of those, fifteen were built on the Merrimack River and are of all descriptions and sizes. [258] Stocker's name is not found in the records of the *Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, but he was assumed to be involved with the slave trade, at least as far as his insurance company was concerned. The Boston Marine Insurance Society wrote to Mr. Stocker in March of 1802 stating the following:

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[255] Currier, *Historical Sketch of Shipbuilding on the Merrimack*, 31.
[256] Currier, *Historical Sketch of Shipbuilding on the Merrimack,* 31.
[257] Currier, *Historical Sketch of Shipbuilding on the Merrimack,* 33.
[258] *Ship Registers of the District of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1789-1870* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1937), 155.

> We have always declined writing on Vessels to the Coast of Africa after Slaves. I suppose the one mentioned in your letter from Havannah must be of that description.[259]

Stocker's involvement in the West Indies trade may have also included the purchasing of slaves there and selling them in the Southern states, as being a slaver did not necessarily mean having to travel across the Atlantic to purchase slaves. Because there is a dearth of records regarding these Caribbean transactions, one can only guess how many other Newburyport merchants were also involved in the slave trade.

Among the most prominent exporters and importers in Massachusetts were several Newburyport men: Tristram Dalton, Patrick Tracy and his son Nathaniel, Nathaniel Carter, Jonathan Jackson, William P. Johnson, Moses Brown, and William Bartlet. Several of those men would benefit from the changes in the economy that began in the early nineteenth century. Their livelihoods were made and their wealth acquired through trade in the West Indies and new global markets and as a result, contributed much to the economy of Newburyport.

William Bartlet was born in Newbury in 1747. He was the son of a successful cordwainer, Edmund Bartlet, himself a descendant of first settlers. William Bartlet accumulated enough wealth on his own before the end of the Revolution "to purchase wharves, warehouses, and vessels from merchants of the older generation who were faced with financial difficulties."[260] He acquired his first vessel by 1783.[261] Bartlet built himself a fine home at 13 Federal Street (still standing – see photo in Appendix), and from his wharf at the foot of this street, "his fleet of vessels sailed mainly to the West Indies and to northern Europe.…In the fourteen years of neutral trade between 1793 and 1807, his

[259] Elizabeth Donnan, "The New England Slave Trade after the Revolution," *The New England Quarterly* 3.2 (Apr., 1930): 274.
[260] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 207.
[261] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans.* 95.

wealth increased fivefold to over $500,000, maintaining him as Newburyport's richest inhabitant."[262] The responsibility for raising money for the construction of the sloop-of-war *Merrimack*, built in 1798 for use against the French, was largely his. Bartlet's ship *Rosa*, captained by Samuel Chase of Newburyport and sailed to the West Indies in 1799, was taken by the privateer *La Egypt Conquise*. William Bayley and Oliver Jones note in their *History of the Marine Society of Newburyport*, that the "ship and cargo was one of the most valuable that ever sailed out of Newburyport for the West Indies," valued at more than $100,000.[263] In 1795 Bartlet and fellow merchant Moses Brown led other Newburyport merchants to incorporate the first bank in town, the Merrimack Bank, "capitalized at $150,000."[264] Less than a decade later, Bartlet bought out the other owners of the Newburyport Woolen Manufactory and "sold it as a factory for the manufacture of cotton goods."[265] Bartlet's ship "*Pomona* was the first Newburyport vessel to complete a voyage to India" in 1807.[266] In 1811 another ship of Bartlet's, the *Hesper*, "was captured by a British privateer…and condemned by the high court at Copenhagen."[267] The vessel and cargo were valued at $78,000. From the wealth that he gained in the West Indies trade, he gave considerable monies to charitable institutions including the Andover Theological Seminary, opened in 1808, to which he gave over $150,000.[268] William Bartlet died in Newburyport in 1841 at the age of ninety-four.[269]

Moses Brown was born in Newbury in 1742. Brown's first occupation was chaisemaker, and he must have done at least moderately well because he was able to

[262] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 207.
[263] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society,* 361, 369.
[264] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 99.
[265] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 99.
[266] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 207.
[267] Bayley and Jones, *History of the Marine Society*, 363.
[268] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 207
[269] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 208

invest "some of his earnings in molasses and sugar cargoes," which he sold at a good profit locally.[270] Following the Revolutionary War, Brown "turned fulltime to mercantile activities," increasing his wealth fourfold in the period of neutral trade. According to Benjamin Labaree, "Brown made his fortune primarily in the importation of sugar and molasses, which he in turn sold to several of the town's ten distilleries."[271] In 1807 Moses Brown's wealth was estimated at $275,500, making him the second wealthiest man in Newburyport.[272] He invested his profits in real estate and the Newburyport Marine Insurance Company, and, with Bartlet, donated money to the Andover Newton Theological Society.[273] In 1791 Brown purchased Tristram Dalton's house on State Street, now the Newburyport Public Library, and lived there until he died in 1827 at the age of eighty-four. (Photo of sign in front of the building in the Appendix.)

Tristram Dalton was born in Newbury 1738, the son of Michael Dalton. Tristram joined his father's prosperous mercantile business in Newburyport upon his graduation from Harvard in 1755. After his father died, his mother married the widower Patrick Tracy, linking two powerful Newburyport families.[274] Dalton was a delegate to the convention to ratify the constitution, and was chosen "as one of the first two United States senators from Massachusetts" in 1788.[275] Dalton moved to his large home on Pipe Stave Hill in Newbury and sold his house on State Street to Moses Brown in 1791. He was not as fortunate as his fellow merchants in terms of increasing his wealth. After the Revolution the mercantile business he had inherited from his father suffered severely and eventually Dalton was forced to file for bankruptcy. The inventory of his estate at the

[270] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 208.
[271] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 95.
[272] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 208.
[273] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc*., 275.
[274] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 11.
[275] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 208.

time of his bankruptcy in 1813 was valued at $2,727.84.[276] Dalton died at the age of seventy-nine in Boston.

Jonathan Greenleaf, a descendant of first settlers, was born in Newbury in 1727. As a young man he apprenticed as a ship builder and by the mid-1740s he had "established his own yard at the foot of Federal Street, constructing vessels for sale abroad as well as for local customers."[277] During the Revolutionary War, Greenleaf "built several armed warships," but his ship building business and other ventures did not do well following the end of the war. Greenleaf was involved in colonial and state politics "almost continuously from 1769 to 1791." When he died in Newburyport in 1807, his estate was worth a little more than $10,000.[278]

At the time of his death in 1799, the estate of Judge Benjamin Greenleaf, cousin to Jonathan Greenleaf, was worth $24,186.32, his probate inventory stretching to five pages and listing the effects of his personal estate by room. He owned his mansion house on Union Street, Newburyport, and many parcels of land in Newburyport, Haverhill, and Salisbury, totaling $15,077. Among his possessions were several sets of fine china dining plates, cups and saucers, tea sets and boxes, tea pots and sugar bowls, 42 wine glasses, mahogany tables, and 290.5 oz of silver plate, totaling $322.45. The debts due to him from his fellow Newburyporters cover fully two and one-half pages of the inventory. It appears that Mr. Greenleaf lived a comfortable life style, availing himself of the goods from the West Indies trade that were available in the Market Square.[279] (Probate Inventory in Appendix.)

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[276] Lunt, et al., *Probate Inventories*, #N/A.
[277] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 213.
[278] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 213.
[279] Lunt, et al, *Probate Inventories*, # N/A.

John Pettingell was born in Newbury in 1745. A descendant of first settler Richard Pettingell, as a young man John apprenticed as a cordwainer, as had William Bartlet. A few years prior to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Pettingell "opened a shop on Market Square where he sold West India goods."[280] During the war he "owned shares in at least two privateers,"[281] and unlike some of his fellow merchants, continued to grow his fortune after the war ended. Perhaps it was because he had less invested than others did, or spread out his investments better to limit his risk, but from the end of the war to 1807, he had increased his wealth almost tenfold, "so that by 1807 he ranked fourth in wealth among Newburyporters with an estate worth $108,000."[282]

Though most of the aforementioned men flourished in the Federal period, many in New England found the policies of President Thomas Jefferson to be detrimental to their livelihoods. In 1807 Congress passed the Embargo Act, President Jefferson's disastrous policy forbidding any American vessel to leave any American port for a foreign one, in an attempt to stop trading with both France and Britain. The effect of this Act was felt by the entire country, but had an absolutely dire effect on Newburyport and all of Massachusetts. As Samuel Eliot Morison notes, at the time the Embargo Act took effect, "Massachusetts was the principal shipowning commonwealth in America."[283]

> Her total tonnage per capita was more than twice that of any other state. Her registered tonnage in foreign trade in 1807, 310,310 tons, was thirty-seven per cent of the total of the United States, and more than twice that of her nearest competitor, New York. In coasting trade she was also first, although her proportion was slightly less. Her fishing fleet, 62,214 tons, was eighty-eight per cent of the total; and although there was nothing in the embargo acts to prevent fishing, loss of the foreign market put the greater part of the fleet out of commission.[284]

[280] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 216.
[281] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 216.
[282] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 216.
[283] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 188.
[284] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 188-189.

Ending the exports on Newburyport ships literally stopped cold the economic system of the entire Merrimack region. All of the vessels the town had out at sea had returned by the end of 1808, and despite the fact that the ships brought with them "$763,347 worth of imports, including 2,000,000 pounds of sugar," no one had any money to buy anything.[285] John Currier wrote that "many prominent citizens were associated with the merchants of Newburyport in the development of trade with the West Indies and the continent of Europe. [When the Embargo went into effect] all business of a commercial character was necessarily suspended."[286] As Benjamin Labaree recounts, "merchants no longer had any need for lumber, fish, and other domestic articles formerly shipped to the West Indies for sugar and coffee."[287] And rum? It could still be manufactured, but it was no longer in high demand when purchasing food and meeting one's debts took priority. By the beginning months of 1809, Newburyport had established two soup kitchens for the needy. The needy included almost everyone who had been involved in the West Indies trade, from the shipbuilders, and all their tradesmen, to the fishermen, the unskilled workers on the wharves, and the hundreds of mariners who crewed and captained the vessels.[288]

Though not promulgated by Jefferson's administration, the statute that prohibited the importation of slaves into the United States took effect on January 1, 1808. This statute included provisions for forfeiture of vessels being used in the slave trade, and fines for every person involved in any way with the intent to transport slaves, which further circumscribed employment opportunities for those individuals involved in the building of vessels for the trade.

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[285] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 153.
[286] Currier, *History of Newbury, MA,* 620.
[287] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 154.
[288] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 154-155.

> **SEC. 3**. *And be it further enacted*, That all and every person so building, fitting out, equipping, loading, or otherwise preparing or sending away, any ship or vessel, knowing or intending that the same shall be employed in such trade or business, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, or any ways aiding or abetting therein, shall severally forfeit and pay twenty thousand dollars, one moiety thereof to the use of the United States, and the other moiety to the use of any person or persons who shall sue for and prosecute the same to effect. [289]

The merchants of Newburyport called a town meeting in August of 1808, creating a resolution (unanimously approved) that petitioned President Jefferson to lift the Embargo because of the damage it was doing to the economy of the entire area, or at least to allow them "trade with the nonbelligerent world." Daniel A. White, Joseph Dana, and Enoch Titcomb, who had drafted the petition, were supported by merchants William Bartlet, Moses Brown, Abner Wood, William Coombs and lawyers Jeremiah Nelson and Ebenezer Mosely. To their dismay, Jefferson responded that only Congress could repeal the Act – he was powerless to do so.[290]

The Embargo Act was finally repealed in February 1809, only to be replaced by the Non-Intercourse Act, which at least did allow trade with nonbelligerents. Newburyporters lost no time; by March 15, "several vessels were ready for sea."[291] The repeal of the Act did spur new shipbuilding, as Currier recounts that in 1810 "there were built on the Merrimackk River 21 ships, 13 brigs, 1 schooner, and 7 other small craft, the total tonnage of which, was above 12,000 tons."[292] By several accounts the most important voyage by a Newburyport vessel during the Non-Intercourse period was one made by John Pettengill's ship *Rolla*. It "returned from Sumatra in February 1810 with a valuable cargo of pepper, most of which he sent on to Russia along with 100,000 pounds

[289] U.S. Statute II, Chap. XXII, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/Nineteenth_century/s1004.asp, (accessed2/24/12).
[290] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 158-166.
[291] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 168.
[292] Currier, *Historical Sketch of Shipbuilding on the Merrimack*, 32.

of coffee."[293] Newburyport merchants "adjusted their commercial activities," and found new ports of call in the non-French and British Caribbean and "along the South American coast."[294]

But for many in Newburyport, the interruption of trade and all related businesses created by the 1807 Embargo and the end of the importation of slaves were just two of several calamities to befall the town's economic interests. On the evening on May 31, 1811, a disastrous fire began in a stable on Mechanic Row in the Market Square area down by the wharves. Burning all night, it "cleared a large tract of land of 16 and a half acres in a part of the town the most compact, and containing a much larger proportion of the wealth of the town than any other part."[295] Further description of the losses, as reported in the newspapers at the time, declared "the loss of property is immense, and cannot fall short of 1,000,000 dollars. Upwards of 90 families are driven from their habitations…"[296] The economic loss was perhaps worse, as this left no family untouched.

> The whole of Centre-street was laid in ashes, and the whole range of buildings in Merchant's-row on the Ferry-wharf, also all the stores on the several wharves between the market and Marquand's wharf, including the latter.…It is estimated that nearly 250 buildings were burnt, most of which were stores and dwellinghouses; in which number all the dry goods stores in town are included; four printing-offices being the whole number in town, and including the Newburyport Herald office; the custom-house; the surveyor's office; the post-office; 2 insurance offices, the Union and Phenix; the Baptist meeting-house; 4 attornies' offices; 4 book stores, the loss of which is 30,000 dollars, and also the town library.[297]

In addition to the losses on Ferry Wharf and Marquand's Wharf, the warehouses, stores, and ship chandleries on wharves owned by Boardman, O'Brien, Jackson, Atwood, and

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[293] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 171.
[294] Labaree, *Patriots and Partisans*, 171.
[295]Withingham Gilman and John Gilman, *An Account of the Great Fire, which Destroyed about 250 Buildings in Newburyport on the Night of the 31st of May, 1811* (1811; repr., Decorah, Iowa: Anundsen Pub., 1989), 3.
[296] Gilman and Gilman, *An Account of the Great Fire,* 5.
[297] Gilman and Gilman, *An Account of the Great Fire,* 3-4.

Carter were also burned. In addition, Boardman lost a schooner, *B.G. Boardman*, about 100 tons, that was "burnt to the water's edge."[298]

Help and relief came from other towns, including Boston, Salem, Portsmouth, and Haverhill. The Newburyport selectmen were authorized "to receive all monies and donations," and the following men were "appointed to solicit subscriptions and receive donations from the inhabitants of Newburyport," specifically, William Bartlet, William Moart, Moses Brown, Benjamin Pierce, T. M. Clark, Nicholas Johnson, Joseph Williams, John Pettingel, and Isaac Adams.[299] Within the next several months, "the sufferers received in donations, about one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars."[300] Just as Newburyport was getting back on its feet and beginning to rebuild (in brick this time), a ninety-day embargo against Great Britain was passed by the Congress in April of 1812. By June, President James Madison had asked the Congress for a declaration of war against England.[301]

At a town meeting days after the declaration of war, the voters in Newburyport met to pass a series of resolutions stating their opposition to the war. They were unanimous votes.[302] The resolutions were printed, "and sent to every town in the county of Essex."[303] Many Newburyport residents held firm Federalist political beliefs, as did much of the population of New England. Though the town never actively sought secession from the United States, as was proposed at the Hartford Convention, in 1813 the town did "petition the legislature for some relief from the ruinous effects of the

[298] Gilman and Gilman, *An Account of the Great Fire,* 11.
[299] Gilman and Gilman, *An Account of the Great Fire,* 12-13.
[300] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc.,* 277.
[301] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc.,* 277.
[302] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc.,* 277; Currier, *A History of Newbury, MA*, 621.
[303] Currier, *A History of Newbury, MA*, 621.

unconstitutional embargo law, forced and imposed on us by the general government."[304] Despite the town's opposition to the war, Currier reports that in that same year it prepared for war.

> An observatory was erected on March's Hill in Newburyport, …from the top of which the movements of vessels approaching the mouth of the Merrimack river could distinctly be seen. Alarm posts were established on Plum island, and two gunboats were stationed in the harbor of Newburyport from the middle of October until the following spring.[305]

The sloop-of-war *Wasp* was built in Newbury over the winter of 1813-1814 and crewed by men from Newburyport and Newbury. Currier relates that in "her brief but brilliant career," she "captured thirteen vessels, destroying twelve of them and sending one into port," before meeting her demise in a battle with an English frigate in November 1814.[306] The men of the area not only served at sea, but also, briefly, on land. In October 1814, the military regiments and companies from the towns in Essex County were ordered to assemble for training to defend the inhabitants of the area. The extensive listing of the men in Lt. Col. Ebenezer Hale's Regiment, Second brigade, Second Division that Currier includes in his history from the Town Records, included William Bartlet, Captain, in Captain Emery's Company; Israel, Charles, Isaac, William, David, Moses, James, and Richard Bartlet, all privates in various companies; and Joseph and Amos Morse, privates.[307] However, before any of them saw any fighting, a peace treaty was signed in Ghent, Belgium, on Christmas Eve, 1814, ending "Mr. Madison's War." News of the declaration of peace made it to Newburyport on February 13, 1815.[308]

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[304] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc.,* 278.
[305] Currier, *A History of Newbury, MA,* 621.
[306] Currier, *A History of Newbury, MA,* 623-624.
[307] Currier, *A History of Newbury, MA*, 625-630.
[308] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newburyport, etc.,* 278.

The Embargo, the fire, the war, and the abolition of the importation of slaves had all taken a major toll on Newburyport's merchants. Neutral trade with England was possible once again, but economic interests had shifted onto a new path. America was looking westward, and the industrial revolution, born in England at the end of the last century, moved many merchants to look to manufacturing to make their fortunes. Francis Cabot Lowell and Patrick Tracy Jackson, both born in Newburyport and members of influential shipping families, opened "the first complete American cotton factory" in Waltham, Massachusetts, in 1814.[309] By 1816 they had obtained a protective tariff, despite opposition from the shipping community. Within a short time textile mills were established in Lowell, Lawrence and Chicopee, Massachusetts, and in Manchester, New Hampshire. By 1840, Massachusetts had moved "from wharf to waterfall," as "every country town with a good-sized brook or river set up a textile or paper mill, or iron foundry," for the most part leaving behind its shipping past.[310] During the years of the Embargo and War of 1812, the cotton planters in the southern states actually fared pretty well, supported in large part by their northern brethren. The production of cotton goods was stimulated during this time by "the falling imports from England…providing a new market for New England cotton textile manufactures."[311] By 1850, it was estimated that "mills in New England used 150 million pounds of Southern cotton a year," and by 1860 those mills "produced a full 75 percent of the nation's total: 850 million yards of cloth."[312]

[309] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 214.
[310] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 214.
[311] Ronald Bailey, "'Those Valuable People the Africans:' The Economic Impact of Slave(ry) Trade on Textile Industrialization in New England," in *The Meaning of Slavery in the North*, ed. Blatt & Roediger (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 23.
[312] Farrow, Lang and Frank, *Complicity*, 26.

During the transition period "from wharf to waterfall," Newburyport resident Caleb Cushing worried in 1825 that "Newburyport has withered under the influence of Boston."[313] Cushing was referring to the fact that the population had dropped considerably (from 7634 in 1810 to 6375 in 1830), and that the Middlesex Canal, opened in 1803, had diverted all the lumber and manufactured goods from the Merrimack Valley and southern New Hampshire directly to Boston, bypassing Newburyport. Newburyport's trade in the West Indies was being undermined by the growing ports in Maine (Portland, Boothbay and Bangor) sending lumber and fish directly to the Caribbean. And Gloucester became the primary fishing port in Essex County. The cotton goods manufacturers had set up their mills in nearby Haverhill, Lawrence and Lowell. Merchants from all over the North Shore of Massachusetts moved to the city of Boston to conduct their business.[314]

However, textile manufacturing did become a part of Newburyport's economy just a few years after Caleb Cushing decried the town's demise. An article in the *Boston Daily Globe* from 1875 entitled "Newburyport: Some Interesting Facts about the City at the Mouth of the Merrimackk," notes in great detail its manufacturing industries, including the cotton mills. Cotton, planted and picked first by slaves then by "free" blacks in the south, continued to come north via the sea to fuel the cotton mills in New England.

> The Introduction of cotton manufacture dates from 1834, when the Essex Mill was established with a capital of $100,000.…The industry is at present carried on by four corporations, employing over 1100 hands and annually paying out for labor over half a million dollars. They are as follows:
>
> Ocean Mill – Corner of Monroe and Kent Streets, incorporated in 1846

[313] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 216.
[314] Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 216.

Bartlett Steam Mills – Pleasant Street, incorporated in 1837 as Wessacomcon Mills

Peabody Mills – Federal Street, incorporated in 1845 as the Globe Steam Mills

Masconomet Mill, incorporated in 1842 as James Steam Mill[315]

Though the Newburyport mills were outshone by the mills in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill, they still fed the economy of Newburyport and encouraged a "class of New Englanders whose cotton interests caused them to sympathize with Southern slavery."[316]

There was another movement that was taking hold in New England in the early nineteenth century, eventually given voice by a son of Newburyport, William Lloyd Garrison. That movement was abolition. By the time Lowell and Jackson set up their mill in Waltham, Africans in Massachusetts were freemen. But their brethren in the southern states, growing and harvesting the cotton that fueled the mills in the north, were not. The importation of slaves was now illegal, and the West Indies trade was falling off, but the "legal" crop of cotton continued to make the merchants of New England wealthy off the labor of enslaved people. Garrison and the New England abolitionists wanted to end that.

[315] "Newburyport: Some Interesting Facts about the City," *The Boston Daily Globe*, September 25, 1875, 4.
[316] Gene Dattel, Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Pub., 2009), 89.

CHAPTER 7

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY AND NEWBURYPORT

Why is it that the Americans have abolished slavery in the North of the Union, and why have they kept it in the South and aggravated its rigors? The answer is easy. In the United States people abolish slavery not for the sake of the Negroes but of the white people.[317]

The first anti-slavery tract to be published in the American colonies, *The Selling of Joseph,* was written by Massachusetts Judge Samuel Sewall in 1700. Sewall's fame as a judge stems from his position on the Court of Oyer and Terminer where he served as a judge during the Salem Witch Trials in 1692. He is known to be the only judge presiding over those trials who ever issued a public apology. Sewall was born in 1652 in Hampshire, England, and emigrated with his family to Newbury in 1661 when he was nine years old. He removed to Boston following his graduation from Harvard in 1671.[318] Though he made religious arguments against slavery in *The Selling of Joseph*, and remained a pious Puritan for all of his life, he was also a slave owner. A kind one, perhaps, for when "his Negro Boston died, Sewall 'made a good fire, set chairs and gave sack' to those who came to mourn the dead slave."[319] Still, Sewall is also listed as one of the 162 leading slave-holding families in colonial New England.[320]Like Thomas Jefferson a century later, Sewall damned the owning of human beings, but continued the practice himself.

Following the Seven Years' War, ideas of freedom were not restricted to white colonists. Richard Greenleaf, among those listed as one of the leading slave-holding families in Newburyport, was sued by his slave Caesar in 1773 for unlawfully detaining

[317] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 344.
[318] Mel Yazawa, ed., *The Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1998), 5-6.
[319] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 284-285.
[320] Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, Appendix H, 354.

him in slavery. The court found for Caesar, awarding him eighteen pounds, damages and costs, though he had requested fifty pounds.[321] That same year two young Newbury natives, Theodore Parsons and Eliphalet Pearson, held a "forensic disputation on the legality of enslaving Africans" at their graduation exercises from Harvard. The question they debated was "*whether the slavery, to which Africans are in this province, by the permission of law, subjected, be agreeable to the law of nature*." Their discourse was published as a forty-eight page pamphlet later in the year.[322]

Though there were a few groups and individuals, mainly Quakers, arguing for abolition of the slave trade in the eighteenth century prior to the Revolutionary War, they made few advances for their cause. However, there was some abolitionist interest in Newbury when the war began. The warrant for the town meeting in Newbury to be held on August 8, 1775, included the following:

> Article 3. To see if the town will signify by their vote their Disapprobation of Slavery, or of keeping slaves, and, if voted, then
> Article 4. To see if the Town by their vote will instruct their Representative to use his utmost Endeavors in the General Court that all Slaves in this Colony may be set at Liberty.[323]

Once the Revolutionary War was won and the U.S. Constitution ratified, the question of abolishing the slave trade as codified in the federal Constitution was put off again for another twenty years. However, the move to abolish slavery itself was attempted in several states. The legislatures of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island joined forces in 1788, signing into law acts to prohibit the slave trade in those states. In 1788 the Massachusetts Legislature passed *An* ACT *to prevent the slave-trade, and for granting relief to the families of such unhappy persons as may be kidnapped or*

[321] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 241, 339; Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 183.
[322] Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury*, 339.
[323] Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass*., 257.

decoyed away from this Commonwealth, signed by James Warren, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and Samuel Adams, President of the Massachusetts Senate. Not only did this cover the transporting, buying and selling of slaves, but also the insuring of them.

> *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid*, That all insurance which shall be made within this State, on any vessel fitted out with intention as aforesaid, and having on board slaves, in order to be transported from Africa as aforesaid, or upon any slave so shipped on board of any vessel for transportation, shall be void, and of no effect; and this act may be given in evidence under the general issue, in any suit or action commenced for the recovery of insurance so made.[324]

Even before the federal prohibition of importing slaves was made law, obstacles to slave importation were instituted at the state and local levels. The following list provides the years when the northern New England and Mid-Atlantic states abolished slavery, most of which did so gradually, allowing for slavery to exist for many years after the decisions. Despite the good their good intent, many of these laws were not strictly enforced.

Vermont, 1777 (slavery prohibited by the state constitution)
Pennsylvania, 1780 (Gradual Abolition legislation)
Massachusetts, 1783 (Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling)
New Hampshire, 1783 or 1789 (accounts vary--no judicial records verify abolition)
Rhode Island, 1784 (Gradual Abolition legislation)
Connecticut, 1784 and 1797 (Gradual Abolition legislation)
New York, 1799 and 1817 (Gradual Abolition legislation)[325]

A strong voice for abolition came from a son of Newburyport. William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*, was born there in

[324] John Carter, *Constitution of a Society for Abolishing the Slave-Trade, with Several Acts of the Legislatures of the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode-Island, for that Purpose* (Providence, 1789), 12-15.
[325] Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), 3.

1805.[326] When his mother moved south to Lynn for work, Garrison moved in with an older couple living on Summer Street, Ezekiel and Salome Bartlet. After an apprenticeship with the *Newburyport Herald* and, and a brief attempt at starting his own paper in Newburyport, the *Free Press*, Garrison moved to Boston in 1825, though he continued to visit Newburyport. [327] When he learned that the ship *Francis*, owned by Newburyport merchant Francis Todd, shipped seventy-five slaves from Baltimore to New Orleans in 1829, Garrison quickly made it clear that he intended "to cover with thick infamy all who were concerned in the nefarious business."[328] Regrettably, the *Voyages Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* does not include inter-state traffic of slaves on ships. Inter-state trading of slaves remained legal following the 1808 ban on the importation of slaves. Despite the early prohibition of slavery in Massachusetts, Jane Uscilka maintains that slavery "continued on an illicit level for some years," until the abolition of slavery was declared at the federal level in 1865 upon ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.[329]

Fighting the system of slavery and the laws that upheld it was not a new initiative when Garrison began speaking out against it in the late 1820s. Prior to the first Fugitive Slave Act, passed in 1793 by the 2nd Congress, abolitionists were working to subvert the system of slavery. The Fugitive Slave Act addressed the way in which Article IV, Section 2 of the United States Constitution, was to be executed. This Section guaranteed the right to repossess any "person held to service or labor," otherwise known as slaves.[330]

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[326] Mayer, *All on Fire*, 11.
[327] Currier, *"Ould Newbury*, 683-684.
[328] Mayer, 76 (emphasis in the original).
[329] Jane M. Uscilka, *The Newburyport Black Heritage Trail: Searching for African-American History in Newburyport* (Newburyport: Author, 2002), 11.
[330] "Africans in America," Public Broadcasting System, *Fugitive Slave Act of 1793*.

> 'An act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from the service of their masters,' that authorized the arrest or seizure of fugitives and empowered 'any magistrate of a county, city or town' to rule on the matter. The act further established a fine of $500 against any person who aided a fugitive.[331]

The Act was promulgated partly in response to a growing network of people all over the country who, since the Revolution, were willing to assist fugitive slaves in their escapes north. It was not until 1831 that this network received the name by which we know it today – the Underground Railroad – reflecting the language of the new steam railroad system.

> The system even used terms used in railroading: the homes and businesses where fugitives would rest and eat were called 'stations' and 'depots' and were run by 'stationmasters,' those who contributed money or goods were 'stockholders,' and the 'conductor' was responsible for moving fugitives from one station to the next. [332]

Newburyport became part of the Underground Railroad about the same time William Lloyd Garrison was making his first anti-slavery speech, which he delivered in Park Street Church in Boston on July 4, 1829.[333] There were no less than five Underground Railroad "lines" that came out of Boston by this time, radiating like spokes on a wheel. The fifth line, also called the "shore line," came out of Boston and "ran through Lynn, Salem, Marblehead, Beverly, Ipswich, Newburyport, and Amesbury to Seabrook, New Hampshire, unless the branch from Amesbury to West Newbury was used."[334] Three lines actually went north from Salem, only one of which went by way of Beverly, Ipswich, Newburyport and Amesbury on into New Hampshire at Seabrook.[335] Three men in Newburyport are known to have been actively involved in the Underground Railroad

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[331] "Africans in America," Public Broadcasting System, *Fugitive Slave Act of 1793*.
[332] "Africans in America," Public Broadcasting System, *The Underground Railroad*.
[333] Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1936), 24.
[334] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 32.
[335] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 35.

there: Captain Alexander Graves, Mr. Jackman, and Richard Plumer.[336] Access to Plumer and Jackman family letters allowed historian Walter Siebert to relate the following information about how the system worked.

> Mr. Plumer was prominent as a dry-good merchant and Garrisonian abolitionist, who later in life held various public positions. He lived in a two-story frame house at No. 63 Federal Street, with a barn in the rear, and went at night in his spring wagon with his son Wendell Phillips, a lad of eight or nine years, to the south end of the bridge over the Parker River for the fugitives brought there by the men of Ipswich. The fugitives were stowed among sacks of grain in the wagon and driven back through town, if the way was clear, to the house of Mr. Jackman, at the north end, who took them up to Lee, New Hampshire, a distance of twenty-seven miles. Sometimes Mr. Plumer himself drove as far as Amesbury, crossing the old chain bridge over the Merrimack, and delivered his charges to John Greenleaf Whittier or his agent.…There were occasions, however, when he drove six miles out the river road to West Newbury and delivered them to a Quaker, Robert Brown, whose farm was at Turkey Hill. Once he was so closely pursued that he drew up to Mr. Brown's cornfield and told his passengers to run for their lives. They quickly disappeared down the rows of corn and got away.…When the way through Newburyport was not clear, Mr. Plumer hid the fugitives in [Joshua Coffin's] barn [at Newbury], or in the cellar of his house under hay.[337]

Today there remain several stories circulating in Newburyport about tunnels that used to exist underground, running from High Street and connecting to tunnels running from houses on Federal, State and Green streets down to the wharves. Legend has it that these tunnels were built during the Embargo for smuggling goods in from the sea, attempting to maintain the lucrative trade with the Caribbean. The tunnel that supposedly ran from William Bartlet's home on Federal Street down to his wharf at the lower end of the street is now blocked up, but the outline of the entrance is reportedly still there. One can see how, for Bartlet, "the owner of a large fleet of vessels employed constantly in trade with the East and East Indies," a tunnel would have been the answer to the vexing problem of how to continue his business at a time when that kind of business was

[336] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 35.
[337] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 35-36.

prohibited.[338] Decades later, so this story continues, the tunnels were also used by runaway slaves. According to a story told her by her father, George Noyes, Newburyporter Dorice Noyes Sunman had no doubt the slaves used the tunnel on Federal Street when she re-told the story of their use in 1978.

> The slave tunnel ran right up Federal Street, Dad said. The ships used to come in at the foot of Federal Street. They'd go up in the water of the French priest's house (the Bartlet house) and when they saw three lights they'd get a warm coat for the captain, go down and get the slaves and bring them right up the Federal Street tunnel to High Street and what was Mrs. McClintock's house.…There was a fireplace with a room in back of it so they could get warm and eat. Then the slaves would be led to the cemetery where the tunnel ended and they'd hide in the woods until the carriage-maker had a carriage to deliver. The carriage-maker was against slavery. They'd be dressed like women with bonnets and when he had a carriage ready they'd be taken out of town to the underground railroad or sometimes to a ship headed for Prince Edward's Island.[339]

With the exception of the outlines of what looks to have been tunnel openings in the cellars of several houses on these streets, there has been no evidence found that tunnels running up the streets and into the cemetery actually existed. These tales do not correspond to the better-documented history of the workings of the Underground Railroad. Perhaps they are a way to deflect the listener from the truth of the overwhelming pro-slavery sentiment that actually existed in the town. As Mrs. Sunman admits, "Newburyport was polarized by the slavery issue and anyone aiding runaway slaves did so with guarded secrecy. …Those who were found out by their neighbors were reported and punished to the full extent of the law."[340]

William Lloyd Garrison knew of his hometown's uneasiness with the issue of slavery and its economic reliance on slave-made goods. His growing reputation as an

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[338] Barbara Buoymaster and Paul Guyton, "The Mystery of Underground Newburyport," *North Shore Magazine,* July 29, 1978, 3-4
[339] Buoymaster and Guyton, "The Mystery of Underground Newburyport," 4-5.
[340] Buoymaster and Guyton, "The Mystery of Underground Newburyport," 20.

abolitionist led him to speak in his hometown on the subject of slavery on September 28, 1830. On that date he "addressed a large audience in the meeting-house on Titcomb Street, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. Luther F. Dimmick."[341] This was the first of two speeches he was to give there, "but on account of the excitement created by his first address, the doors of the meeting house were closed against him."[342] Too many of the residents of Newburyport were not yet ready to hear about abolition, including many of its faithful churchgoers.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson was, for a short time, the pastor at the First Religious Society in Newburyport in the 1840s. He resigned from his position at the Unitarian Church as the town "was largely pro-slavery on account of its commercial relations with Southern ports," and because many of his parishioners "resented his advocacy of the anti-slavery cause."[343] This included several of Newburyport's sea captains, who "saw no sin in returning fugitive slaves to their owners."[344] The town went so far as to imprison a Milford, New Hampshire, man for months for "opening his mouth" in Newburyport "in behalf of two and a half million of his enslaved fellow-men."[345] It seems that stripping a man of his civil liberties was not a problem if his free speech might endanger the economic well-being of the town.

Garrison had more success in Boston, but that road was not easy either. Garrison's publication of *The Liberator*, begun in 1831, helped to launch several northern abolitionist societies based in Boston and its environs, thereby changing how the North, and New England in particular, were perceived in relation to the African slave trade.

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[341] John J. Currier, *"Ould Newbury*, 684. This hall is currently the Central Congregational Church in Newburyport.
[342] Currier, *"Ould Newbury",* 685.
[343] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 36-37.
[344] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 37.
[345] Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 37.

Unfortunately, equality for the Negro was not the driving force behind much of the abolition movement in the North. Enslaved people "disappeared" from the landscape of New England over the first several decades of the nineteenth century as slavery was gradually abolished, and freed blacks became an invisible minority, no longer reminding whites of their past sins. But the abolition movement threatened just that. Now revered, black abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, David Walker and Maria Stewart said and wrote things that made many white Northerners uncomfortable, despite the fact that the number of blacks in New England was never greater than two percent of the population even at the height of the slave trade. The push westward into the new territories also complicated the notion of "free" and "slave" states and where blacks were wanted and not. The Free Soilers, among others, spoke with loud voices. Though slavery was no longer a significant part of the mindset of New Englanders, racism and the economic importance of slavery remained.

The anti-abolitionist feelings held out up to and into the years of the Civil War. Another son of Newburyport, (and an ancestor of mine) Samuel F. B. Morse, was a wealthy and prominent anti-abolitionist who founded two societies in 1861 for the specific purpose of supporting efforts to "uphold the right and justice of slaveholding" in America. Morse wrote that the institution of slavery "exists for wise and good ends *by the will of God*."[346] Though his sentiments about upholding slavery lay with the Southern states, he was not in favor of secession. Indeed, he knew upon which side his bread was buttered: his wealth and that of his forebears was dependent on the institution of slavery. Like so many men before him, the economics of slavery trumped any question of morality.

[346] Larry E. Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840* (Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1987), 256.

When slavery ended on a federal level, it was replaced in the South by black codes, sharecropping, and debt peonage, creating a system that was slavery in all but name. Northerners allowed these things to happen for the good of the Union and for the nation's economy, for by this time, only the very old could remember slaves ever having been in the North. The process of forgetting about the North's involvement with slavery and the slave trade evolved over several generations until it seemed slavery had never had a place in New England. A new era of shipbuilding was in full swing with the grand clipper ships taking the place of the slavers and West Indies traders on the wharves of the Merrimack River. The wealth of the region had become disassociated from the slave trade. Witness the visitor to the Newburyport Custom House Maritime Museum and her mistaken belief that the North had no part in the Triangle Trade.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

We've heard people say, 'You've got to place it in the context of the times,' and 'this is the way things were done,' and 'this is how life was.' And I sit in that dungeon and I say bullshit. It was an evil thing and they knew it was an evil thing and they did it anyway.[347]

The statement above was made by Tom DeWolf after he had visited Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, where his DeWolf family ancestors had purchased and enslaved thousands of Africans for their own economic profit. Nothing I have found in my research on Newbury and Newburyport leads me to believe any individual or family from those towns was as active a figure in the transatlantic slave trade as were the DeWolfs from Bristol, Rhode Island. However, I have shown that many individuals and families in Newburyport and Newbury did profit directly and indirectly from the transatlantic slave trade, some handsomely and some in small ways, but profit they did. Only the ports in Rhode Island out-built Newbury in terms of numbers of ships constructed for the slave trade. The currency used to purchase the slaves was rum, made in more distilleries in Newburyport than in any other town in Massachusetts except Boston. Even those who died with little wealth, but had sugar bowls and silver sugar tongs among their last possessions, benefited from the labor of the enslaved by using the sugar they harvested. Despite the legality of the slave trade throughout much of its eighteenth-century fortune-building, Newburyport hung on to the old ways as long as it could because slave-made goods were beneficial, indeed crucial, to its economy, even after slavery was prohibited in Massachusetts. The beneficiaries of the transatlantic slave trade were the owners/investors who made money from the trade in humans; the ship builders who made money from the sale of their vessels and who gave employment to craftsmen of many ilk;

[347] Thomas N. DeWolf, *Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008), 117-118.

the mariners who captained and crewed the vessels on the African and West Indies routes; the farmers who sold their crops and livestock to the island plantations; the fishermen who sold their cod to the sugar islands in the Caribbean; the merchants who bought and sold the sugar, tobacco, rice, indigo, coffee, tea and spices produced by slave labor; the consumers who were able to put sugar or molasses in their tea and afford fine cloth and all manner of goods not otherwise available to them in New England; the slave owners who profited from the slaves' labor; and the distillers who turned the molasses into rum and sold it both locally and in Africa for more slaves.

Though this research has been focused on Newburyport, the story is really about all of Massachusetts, and New England in general. Engaging in the slave trade and trading slave-made goods was a question of economics. It was done because it made money and gave this emerging country great prosperity in a short period of time that it would have been hard-pressed to come by otherwise. Supported by Scripture and Puritan teachings and protected by laws, whites forced Africans into lives of perpetual inequality. None of these things can excuse the immorality of buying and selling human beings or for benefiting from their enslavement, nor should Massachusetts or Newburyport ignore this part of their history, unsavory as it may be. Though this part of our history has been buried in the North, it is not new news. On March 16, 1884, a congressman from North Carolina made a speech on the floor of Congress in which he remarked,

> Massachusetts is a State more responsible under heaven than any other community in this land for the introduction of slavery into this continent, with all the curses that have followed it; that it is the nursing mother of the horrors of the middle passage, and that after slavery in Massachusetts was found not to pay, her slaves were sold down South for a consideration, and then their former owners thanked God and sang the long metre Doxology

> through their noses, that they were responsible no longer for the sin of human slavery.[348]

It is interesting that the Congressman did not mention the North's reliance on the South's cotton, as that "grew steadily until the Civil War."[349] New England provided the mills, transportation, banking, insuring and brokering that marketed the cotton from for the plantations of the South.[350]

As for our ancestors, at least some of the Bartlets, William in particular, did very well in the West Indies trade, well enough to become philanthropic with his substantial wealth. Do the ends justify the means? Here I am in sympathy with Tom DeWolf's position. I believe if Newburyporters, my ancestors included, ever thought about it, it is likely they knew the slave trade was evil, and they did it anyway. However, it was common custom throughout the land; and applying current sensibilities, morals and laws to a previous time is a difficult, if not impossible thing to do. Though not many in number, there were abolitionists in Newburyport who tried to end the slave trade, or at least lend a hand to help escaping slaves, but this was not for public knowledge lest their neighbors turn them in. For the most part, Newburyport residents were removed "from the repugnant physical aspects of slave trading."[351] They were not sailing to Africa to purchase slaves, making it much easier to distance themselves from the stark realities of what was involved in purchasing human beings and transporting them over the Middle Passage across the Atlantic.

My husband, Bartlett Harvey, is the descendent of first settler Richard Bartlet. William Bartlet is the descendant of Richard's brother John. Richard Bartlet's son

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[348] Dow, *Slave Ships and Slaving*, 269, from *Congressional Record, Mar. 26., 1884, p. 2284*.
[349] Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 88.
[350] Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 89.
[351] Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 91.

Richard, married Hannah Emery of Newbury, whose family did own ships. Richard's great-grandson Joseph married Jane Colby, from another ship-owning family, so it is possible, even likely, that some of their fortunes were tied to the slave trade. Joseph's brother was Governor Josiah Bartlet, of New Hampshire, who signed the *Declaration of Independence*. Joseph's son Joseph moved to Salisbury in 1773 as its first physician.[352]

The Morse family has been more elusive; there is less about them in this work because their histories have not been as easily uncovered and their probate inventories were not among the collection to which I had access. At least some of Anthony Morse's descendants appear to have remained farmers in Newbury until they moved west to Michigan in the early nineteenth century. From what I can determine, some of the descendants of Anthony's brother William have remained in New England and the Newburyport area. William was a cordwainer like his brother Richard. He had a house in Market Square near the wharves in the seventeenth century, and his wife Elizabeth was the first woman to be involved in the first legal investigation of witchcraft in New England.[353] Neither branch of the Morse family appears to have been found engaged as shipbuilders nor as West Indies merchants. Whatever their trades may have been, they benefited from the town's prosperity brought about by the trade in human flesh. Just as "the coffers of some New England's proudest families were filled with profits from this trade," so were those of the lowest.[354] Everyone in Newburyport profited in some way from the Triangle Trade.

[352] George Adams Boyd, *Three Stimsons and a Bartlett* (Stonington, CT: Pequot Press, 1967), 127.
[353] Dow, *The Probate Records of Essex County*, Docket 18,902, 219.
[354] Albion, et al., *New England and the Sea*, 37.

APPENDIX

Table I

List of Vessels Built in Newbury that were used for Slave Voyages

E = Slaves Embarked DE = Slaves Disembarked

YEAR BUILT	DATE(S) OF VOYAGES	SHIP NAME	RIG/ TONNAGE	# OF SLAVES E and DE	PLACE OF LANDING	FLAG
1734	1735 1737	*Stagenhoe*	Ship/140 T	301 E/257 DE 331 E/283 DE	Jamaica Barbados & Jamaica	GB
1740	1744	*Enterprize*	Snow/50 T	240 E/184 DE	Captured by French. after slaves embark. - French Caribbean	GB
1742	1748 1753	*Middleham*	Snow/100 T	220 E/180 DE 251 E/215 DE	Jamaica Barbados	GB
1744	1750	*Beverly*	Brig/110 T	136 E/121 DE	Barbados	GB
1744	1758	*Livesley*	Ship/80 T	396 E/323 DE	Guadeloupe	GB
1746	1748	*Doddington*	Snow/100 T	240 E/197 DE	Captured after embark. - Americas	GB
1746	1748 1750	*Pretty Peggy*	Snow/80 T	223 E/183 DE 162 E/133 DE	Jamaica Barbados	GB
1746	1749	*Anson*	Snow/110 T	341 E/240 DE	Jamaica	GB
1747	1749 1750 1752	*Minerva*	Ship/140 T	351 E/300 DE 320 E/274 DE 200 E/160 DE	Barbados S. Carolina Virginia	GB
1747	1754	*Ellen*	Ship/140 T	423 E/325 DE	Barbados	GB
1747	1750	*Telemachus*	Ship/140 T	500 E/428 DE	S. Carolina	GB
1748	1748 1750 1751 1752	*Stirling Castle*	Snow/85 T	240 E/197 DE 377 E/268 DE 194 E/166 DE 320 E/274 DE	Antigua Barbados Barbados Jamaica	GB

1748 cont'd.	1754 1755			239 E/205 DE 230 E/197 DE	Jamaica St. Kitts	
1749	1751	*Penelope*	Ship/180 T	300 E/208 DE	Virginia	GB
1749	1751 1752 1754 1755	*Hesketh*	Snow/90 T	243 E/248 DE 280 E/240 DE 182 E/156 DE 269 E/165 DE	Barbados Barbados Barbados Jamaica	GB
1750	1752 1754	*Alice Gally*	Ship/120 T	319 E/260 DE 210 E/180 DE	Virginia Jamaica	GB
1750	1753	*Nancy*	Snow/120 T	230 E/197 DE	Virginia	GB
1750	1755 1758	*Mears*	Snow/ 120 T	113 E/97 DE 270 E/243 DE	Jamaica S. Carolina	GB
1751	1753	*Juno*	Snow/90 T	237 E/197 DE	Nevis	GB
1751	1754 1756 1758 1759 1762	*Rainbow*	Snow/100 T	218 E/127 DE 273 E/234 DE 250 E/201 DE 117 E/100 DE 298 E/255 DE	Barbados Jamaica S. Carolina S. Carolina Antigua	GB
1751	1755	*Daresbury*	Ship/120 T	352 E/287 DE	St. Kitts	GB
1751	1756	*Juno*	Ship/90 T	193 E/157 DE	Jamaica	GB
1752	1754 1755 1757	*Grampus*	Snow/100 T	211 E/181 DE 175 E/150 DE Captured by French before slaves embarked	Barbados St. Kitts	GB
1752	1755	*Black Prince*	Snow/110 T	304 E/260 DE	Jamaica	GB
1753	1756	*Lyon*	Snow/120 T	230 E/197 DE	Jamaica	GB
1753	1763	*Kingston*	Snow/ 90 T	210 E/180 DE	Jamaica	GB
1753	1765	*Rose*	Snow/90 T	222 E/190 DE	Jamaica	GB

1755	1756	*Thomas*	Snow/130 T	210 E/180 DE	Montserrat	GB
1755	1761	*Betty*	Snow/110 T	Captured by French before slaves embarked		GB
1756	1765	*Britannia*	Ship/190 T	270 E/220 DE	Barbados & S. Carolina	GB
1758	1760	*Samuel*	Ship/160 T	Captured by French before slaves embarked		GB
1759	1761	*Brew*	Ship/100 T	352 E/288 DE	French Guiana	GB
1759	1765	*Sandwich*	Ship/150 T	392 E/320 DE	Jamaica & Dutch Caribbean	GB
1759	1766 1769	*Darbyshire*	Ship/150 T	461 E/297 DE 290 E/237 DE	Barbados & St. Vincent Barbados	GB
1760	1766	*Marquis of Granby*	Ship/95 T	221 E/180 DE	Jamaica	GB
1764	1766	*Peggy*	Ship/105 T	98 E/80 DE	Grenada & Antigua	GB
1764	1768 1770 1772	*Ann*	Ship/100 T	338 E/276 DE 424 E /346 DE 310 E/253 DE	Jamaica Barbados Dominica	GB
1765	1771 1772 1784	*Nancy*	Snow/105 T	178 E/152 DE 292 E/250 DE 164 E/150 DE	St. Vincent Virginia Dominica	GB
1765	1776 1777	*Sim*	Ship/180 T	359 E/328 DE 330 E/302 DE	Jamaica & Honduras Dominica	GB
1766	1771 1772 1773 1774 1776	*Fox*	Brig/80 T	174 E/154 DE 282 E/250 DE 174 E/154 DE 148 E/131 DE 111 E – Condemned after slaves embarked*	St. Kitts Virginia Barbados Dominica ?	GB
1767	1776	*Polly*	Snow/100 T	214 E/198 DE	Florida	GB

	1777			214 E/197 DE	West Indies	
1772	1775	*Mill*	Ship/170 T	500 E/400 DE	Grenada	USA
1779	1786 1788 1789 1791 1792 1796	*Fly*	Ship/143 T	340 E/320 DE 325 E/298 DE 239 E/238 DE 250 E/240 DE 233 E/227 DE 359 E/328 DE	Jamaica Jamaica Jamaica Jamaica Jamaica British Guiana	GB
1794	1807	*Juno*	Ship/252 T	448 E/403 DE	Martinique	GB
1795	1802 1803 1803	*Ariadne*	Snow/132 T	175 E/161 DE 20 E/18 DE 273 E/250 DE	Brit. Guiana Montevideo Brit. Guiana	GB
?	1797 1798	*Kitty*	Ship/310 T	444 E/444 DE Shipwrecked or destroyed before slaves embarked	Jamaica	GB
1844	1859 1861	*Ardennes*	Bark/231 T	593 E/488 DE	Slaves to Africa/ Europe, Condemned, St. Helena	USA
1858	1863	*Marghareta/ Mariquita*	Schooner/153 T	473 E/459 DE	Slaves to Africa /Europe, Condemned St. Helena	USA

Total Ships: 47
Total Voyages: 88
Total Slaves Embarked: 22,629
Total Slaves Disembarked: 19,037,
*unknown how many slaves disembarked after the vessel was condemned.
Total Slaves Died on Voyages: 3,582

Source: *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*

Table II

List of Vessels Built on the Merrimackk River that were used for Slave Voyages

E = Slaves Embarked, DE = Slaves Disembarked

YEAR BUILT	DATE(S) OF VOYAGES	SHIP NAME	PLACE CONSTR.	RIG/ TONNAGE	# OF SLAVES E and DE	PLACE OF LANDING	FLAG
1750	1754	*Union*	Salisbury	Snow/130 T	222 E/190 DE	Jamaica	GB
1753	1757	*Vianna*	Salisbury	Snow/80 T	700 E/599 DE	Jamaica	GB
1753	1760	*Isaac*	Salisbury	Snow/80 T	242 E/207 DE	Barbados	GB
1753	1760	*Phoenix*	Salisbury	Snow/80 T	Captured, unspecified before slaves embarked		GB
1758	1760 1763 1764 1766 1767 1768	*Blakeney*	Amesbury	Brig/70 T	153 E/136 DE 154 E/140 DE 148 E/131 DE 139 E/123 DE 171 E/152 DE 131 E/116 DE	St. Kitts St. Kitts St. Kitts Grenada Grenada Antigua	GB
1763	1775	*Bridgetown*	Amesbury	Ship/130 T	Ret. To Europe or America w/o obtaining slaves		GB
1765	1766 1768 1769 1771	*African Queen*	Amesbury	Snow/100 T	194 E/192 DE 222 E/190 DE 145 E/124 DE 33 E/28 DE	Dominica & Grenada Barbados Barbados Antigua - Cut off by Africans. Recaptured & landed slaves in Americas.	GB
1836	1844	*Cyrus*	Salisbury	Brig/112 T	336 E/336 DE	Sierra Leone	USA
1853	1860	*Wildfire*	Amesbury	Bark/337 T	Captured by U.S. with slaves		USA

Total Ships: 9
Total Voyages: 17
Source: *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*

Table III

List of Vessels Built in Massachusetts that were used for Slave Voyages

E = Slaves Embarked DE = Slaves Disembarked

(Does not include ships built in Newbury, or on the Merrimackk River or in Boston)

YEAR BUILT	**DATE(S) OF VOYAGES**	**SHIP NAME**	**PLACE OF CONSTR.**	**RIG/TONNAGE**	**# OF SLAVES E and DE**	**PLACE OF LANDING**	**FLAG**
1739	1749 1775	*Lamb*	Duxbury	Snow/100 T	126 E/ 103 DE 230 E/ 197 DE	S. Carolina Dominica	GB
1745	1754	*David*	Duxbury	Snow/60 T	294 E/ 240 DE	Jamaica	GB
1745	1756	*Prince Tom*	Duxbury	Snow/70 T	298 E/ 255 DE	Barbados	GB
1745	1758	*Juba*	Duxbury	Snow/70 T	232 E/ 199 DE	Jamaica	GB
1746	1754	*Africa*	Scituate	Snow/80 T	133 E/ 114 DE	Jamaica	GB
1748	1756	*Prescott*	Scituate	Schooner/50T	178 E/ 160 DE	Jamaica	GB
1749	1764	*Jenny*	Hingham	Brigantine/70T	144 E/ 128 DE	Barbados	GB
1750	1753 1754	*Rainbow*	Freetown	Sloop/40 T	94 E/78 DE 68 E/61 DE	Jamaica St. Lucia	USA
1753	1766	*Spry*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Sloop/25 T	69E/57 DE	Jamaica	USA
1759	1762	*Endeavour*	Marshfield	Brig/70 T	171 E/ 151 DE	Antigua	GB
1759	1770	*Andromache*	Marshfield	Brig/70 T	162 E/ 144 DE	Dominica	GB
1762	1765	*Polly*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Ship/60 T	117 E/ 100 DE	Jamaica	USA
1763	1765	*Grenada Packet*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Ship/190T	251 E /240 DE	Grenada	GB

1763	1767	*Jesse*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Snow/100 T	331 E/ 283 DE	St. Kitts	GB
1763	1770 1771	*Cameranca*	Marblehead	Brig/70 T	171 E/151 DE 230 E/197 DE	Grenada ?	GB
1764	1766	*Minerva*	Mass. Port, unspecified	_____/30T	62 E/53 DE	Grenada	USA
1764	1766	*Katy*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Brig/40 T	95 E/83 DE	Jamaica	USA
1764	1767	*Queen of Barra*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Snow/50 T	158 E/130 DE	Jamaica	USA
1764	1774	*Polly*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Brig/50 T	101 E/92 DE	Barbados &Jamaica	USA
1764	1773 1775 1776	*Dreadnought*	Hingham	Brig/100 T	192 E/170 DE 210 E/186 DE 193 E/170 DE	Jamaica Grenada St. Croix	GB
1772	1774	*Rising Sun*	Biddeford	Brigantine/90 T	241 E/214 DE	St. Kitts	GB
?	1787	*Polly and Sally*	Reg. in Salem/Trip began in MA	?/50 T	149 E/126 DE	?	USA
1795	1799	*Orange*	Freetown	Brigantine/124 T	120 E/ 119DE	Bahamas & Cuba	USA
1796	1797	*President*	Wiscasset	Ship/323 T	359 E/328 DE	Americas, unspecified	GB
1800	1804 1807	*Mendon*	Weymouth	Ship/137 T	267 E/201 DE 100 E/75 DE	Buenos Aires Dominica	USA
?	1809 1811	*Carlota Teresa*	Mass. Port, unspecified	Brigantine/ ?	140 E/133 DE 279 E/274 DE	Cuba Cuba	Spain
1822	1848 1849	*Herald*	Salem	Ship/242 T	1150 E/ 1110 DE 1,070 E/ 900 DE	Brazil Brazil	USA

1839	1859	*Panchita*	Cohasset	Ship/339 T	740 E/540 DE	Cuba	USA

Source: *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*
Note: Vessels denoted as flying USA flags prior to the American Revolution indicate ship ownership in the American colonies.

Table IV

List of Vessels Built in New Hampshire and Maine that were used for Slave Voyages
E = Slaves Embarked DE = Slaves Disembarked

YEAR BUILT	DATE(S) OF VOYAGES	SHIP NAME	PLACE OF CONSTR.	RIG/TONNAGE	# OF SLAVES E and DE	PLACE OF LANDING	FLAG
1745	1753	*Sanderson*	Portsmouth	Brigantine/40 T	61 E/57 DE	Barbados & Rhode Island	USA
1749	1754	*Friendship*	NH Port, unspecified	Brigantine/80 T	83 E/74 DE	Barbados	GB
?	1757	*Exeter*	NH Port, unspecified	Snow/ ?	61 E/58 DE	Barbados	USA
1756	1758	*Polly*	Piscataqua	Schooner/40 T	131 E/118 DE	S. Carolina	GB
1761	1764	*Black Prince*	Piscataqua	Schooner/40 T	186 E/145 DE	S. Carolina	USA
1763	1775	*Adventure*	Piscataqua	Ship/150 T	352 E/287 DE	Jamaica	GB
1768	1770 1773	*John and Ann*	Portsmouth	Ship/120 T	352 E/287 DE 174 E/142 DE	Barbados St. Kitts & Jamaica	GB
1768	1782	*Three Brothers*	Piscataqua	Ship/200 T	359 E/328 DE	?	GB
1770	1776	*Unanimity*	Piscataqua	Snow/150 T	214 E/197 DE	Jamaica	GB
1771	1796	*Brothers*	Piscataqua	Ship/318 T	557 E/510 DE	Tortola	GB
1775	1799	*Aurora*	Piscataqua	Ship/220 T	374 E/343 DE	Jamaica	GB

	1802 1806 1807				310 E/279 DE 310 E/279 DE 269 E/242 DE	Dominica St. Lucia Jamaica	
1780	1794 1794	*Swift*	Piscataqua	Brig/127 T	213 E/198 DE 210 E/195 DE	Grenada Barbados	GB
1851	1861	*Nightingale*	Portsmouth	Ship/998 T	961 E/801 DE	Liberia	USA
1854	1861	*Toccoa/ Cocoa*	Camden, ME	Brigantine?227 T	757 E/627 DE	Cuba	USA

Source: *Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*
Notes:
1. The vessels built on the Piscataqua River could have been Massachusetts *or* New Hampshire vessels, as the river is the dividing line between current –day New Hampshire and Maine. Until 1820, what is now the State of Maine was considered part of Massachusetts.
2. USA flags prior to the American Revolution indicate ship ownership in the American colonies.

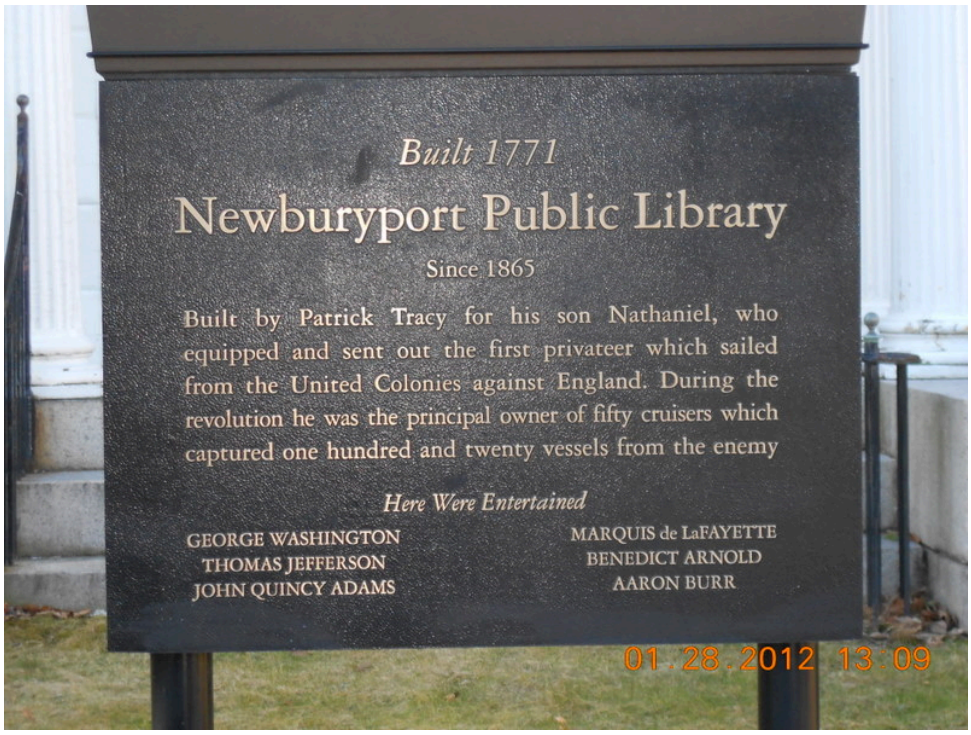
Photos of current-day Newbury and Newburyport, Massachusetts, by the author.

Landing Site of the First Settlers on the Parker River, Newbury, MA

The First Settlers' Burying Ground is located north of the Lower Green on Rte. 1A.

The Monument to the First Settlers placed on the Lower Green in Newbury, MA in 1905.

William Bartlet's house at 13 Federal Street, Newburyport, MA.



Sign in front of the Tracy/Dalton/Brown house at 94 State Street, now the Newburyport Public Library.

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