

Rev. Paul Cuffee Gravesite
Suffolk County, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is a 1.058-acre triangular shaped lot bounded on the north by the Long Island Rail Road and on the south by Main Country Road (Montauk Highway). The east boundary is the property line that runs from the highway to the railroad between the adjacent lot on the east. The boundary is illustrated on the attached map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property boundary is the same as during the period of significance.

The size and configuration of the narrow, triangular 1.058-acre property on which the Cuffee Gravesite is located, resulted from the acquisition in 1869 of a right-of-way to construct the Long Island Rail Road. By a deed dated December 20, 1869, the railroad acquired a narrow strip of land from William W. and Julia A. Warner immediately to the west, making reference to the "Indian burying ground" on its easterly border (Suffolk County Deed Liber 220, Page 81). On August 31, 1869, the railroad acquired a right-of-way across the burying ground itself (Suffolk County Deed Liber 220, Page 83).

What distinguishes the two documents is that the Warner deed was an actual conveyance of title to real property, whereas the Indian deed was in fact a quitclaim. It appears from the following language in the Indian deed that the railroad's intention was to secure the right to build across the burying ground by gaining releases from each of the Indians whose relatives were interred there:

"This Indenture...between Alphonzo Eleazer, James Cuffee, Vincent Cuffee, Luther Bunn, Russie Bunn, Allen Bunn, Paul Cuffee, Darius Jackson, Wm. Richards, Alphonso Killes, Franklin B. Killes, Oliver Killes, Thomas Bemen, David H. Walker, Agee Cuffee, James Sell, David Killes, James S. Cuffee, David Bunn, David W. Bunn, Frank Brewer, John Walker, Nathaniel Cuffee, Wickham Cuffee, James Bunn, Nelson Bunn and John Thomson, all of the Shinnecock tribe of Indians...have quit-claimed All of that certain tract of land lying in the western part of Canoeplace in the aforesaid Town of Southampton, over which the aforesaid Long Island Railroad Company has made a survey for its branch Railroad from the Manor to Sag Harbor, and desires to locate its said branch Railroad the said ground being a part of the lot of ground known as the Indian burying ground situate and lying between the Quogue Country road and the Riverhead country road a little westerly of the junction of said roads.

Notable among the Indian surnames is that of Cuffee, seven in all, some of whom no doubt were among the Rev. Paul Cuffee's descendents. Of additional interest is that the deed makes reference to the fact that the right-of-way acquired by the railroad was bordered both to the south and the north by the Indian burying ground, although it is only the land to the south of the tracks that has come down to the present as the site of Rev. Paul Cuffee's grave.

Rev. Paul Cuffee Gravesite
Suffolk County, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 2

After completion of the railroad in 1870, the Cuffee Gravesite and the land north of the railroad's right-of-way (formerly Lot #5 of the Canoe Place Division) changed hands several times. By the turn-of-the-century, it belonged to Charles J. Hardy (Suffolk County Deed Liber 542, Pages 461, 464 & 467). Hardy's son, Charles J., Jr., conveyed the property to Tillie Feldman in 1960 (Suffolk County Deed Liber 4793, Page 140). Later owners include Michael D. Schaffer (1960), S. Robert Gettinger and Charles W. Trench (1966), Hampton Hills Associates (1966) and Patrick E. Malloy (1982). The Town of Southampton acquired the property for preservation purposes in 2003.