Settlement and Development of Town of Southampton, 1640-1930

The Town of Southampton, located on Long Island's southerly east end (Suffolk County, New York), is the region's first documented settlement of English-born immigrants. It was chosen in 1640 as a landing site by a small group of Puritan settlers from Lynn, Massachusetts, under the leadership of Captain Daniel Howe. Like those of other eastern Long Island settlements, its original inhabitants first relied for their livelihood on farming and fishing, activities that were later augmented by imported goods introduced through trade primarily with England, the West Indies and other foreign ports. Although severely disrupted by the Revolutionary War in the late-eighteenth century and by the War of 1812 shortly thereafter, the descendants of the Southampton colonists continued a tradition of self-reliance until the late-nineteenth century, when their farm, forest and maritime products reached the New York City markets and ushered in a new era of prosperity.

With the coming of the railroad in the late 1860s and road improvements in the early-twentieth century, the Town of Southampton embraced an increasingly diverse population and emerged in the late-nineteenth century from its traditional agrarian past. By the turn-of-the-twentieth century, Southampton became a seasonal destination with the establishing of summer beach colonies and summer rentals, a trend that continued well into the century. The period 1640-1930 encompasses the evolution and development of the original Southampton settlement and defines a cohesive timeframe that also considers the geographical spread of its farms and villages prior to the post-industrial period, and the changes within the population and resulting settlement patterns that came with the emergence from an agrarian economy.

Characterizing the Town's settlement patterns at the outset of this period, its founders established burial grounds that responded to the geographical spread of its communities. Beginning in the Village of Southampton and later expanding to satellite communities at Mecox, Sagaponack, Bridgehampton, and Westhampton, these burial grounds incorporated practices associated with the Puritan settlers' traditions as well as new world realities. These practices included secular attitudes about the application of church doctrine to burials, and the infrequent use of headstones, which also suggests the economic and geographical challenges of the early settlements.

Later, as burial practices evolved in response to changing attitudes to death and the afterlife, the Town's grave sites and cemeteries also changed in appearance and location. The re-emergence of organized Christian sects and their influence on burial practices is reflected by the location of cemeteries in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the placement of graveyards on or near church property was revived. And it was not uncommon, especially in rural Southampton where farms were scattered and far removed from population centers, to create family burial plots on private land. Just as the location of burial grounds was changing, so too were the headstones, which reflected evolving religious beliefs and attitudes as well as economic conditions that encouraged the use of increasingly elaborate monuments to mark the graves.

Today, nearly fifty historic cemeteries and gravesites survive, each characterizing the evolving social, cultural, economic and environmental context in which Southampton was founded and evolved over a period of 250 years. The Town of Southampton has ownership and management responsibilities for ten burial grounds and gravesites, which themselves form a sub-set or group that characterizes the larger set of historic resources. With

established dates ranging from ca. 1650 to the mid-nineteenth century, the ten town-owned sites reflect changing burial practices, attitudes to religious doctrine and the afterlife, and the social and economic conditions of the region over a 250 year period.

Original Southampton Settlement: Mid-seventeenth Century

The Southampton settlers, a cohesive group of Puritans from the New England settlement at Lynn, Massachusetts, obtained their patent for establishing a "plantation" on Long Island from James Farrett, the agent of William Alexander, Earl of Stirling. Alexander received a grant for the entire island from Charles I, King of England, just four years prior, in 1636. His agent's patent with the colonists provided for settling "eight myles square of land…and that they [were] to take their Choice to sit downe upon as best liketh them." Inasmuch as Alexander claimed all of Long Island, the expedition was not originally bound for its eastern end; however, it first landed to the west at Manhasset Bay (Nassau County), which was claimed as Dutch territory. Detained briefly by the Dutch but later released, the leaders of the expedition and their families sailed east along the coast of Long Island Sound, and in June of 1640 landed at Conscience Point (North Sea), later part of the Town of Southampton, thus founding the first English settlement in New York State.

The extent of the first land grant is described in the original conveyance to the English settlers dated December 23, 1640:

> MEMORANDUM; It is agreed upon between James Farret, agent, and Edward Howell, John Gosmer, Edmund Harrington, Daniel How, Thomas Halsey, Edward Needham, Allen Breed, Thomas Sayre, Henry Walton, George Wells, William Harker, and Job Sayre; that whereupon it is agreed upon in a covenant passed between us touching the extente of a plantacon in Long Island, that the aforesaid Mr. Edward Howell and his co-partners shall enjoy eight miles square of land, or so much as the said eight miles shall containe, and that now lie in said bounds, being layd out and agreed uppon: It is to begin at a place westward from Shinnecock, entitled the name of the place where the Indians drawe over their cannoes out of the north bay, over to the south side of the island, and from there to run along that neck of land eastward the whole breadth between the bay aforesaid, to the easterly end of an island or neck of land lying over against the island commonly known by the name of Mr. Ferret's Island. To enjoy all and every parte thereof, according as yt is expressed in our agreement elsewhere, with that island or neck, lying over against Mr. Farret's Island, formerly expressed. JAMES FARRET.
> (Thompson, History of Long Island, Vol. II, p. 148)

After spending the first decade of settlement securing clear title to the original land grant from the Native American inhabitants and establishing rudimentary homesteads in the easterly section of today's Southampton village (so-called "Old Town"), the freeholders moved their settlement to the west, to an area equivalent to present-day Main Street. The ca.1660 Thomas Halsey House (National Register listed, 1988) now located at #249 South Main Street is the oldest surviving architectural relic of that settlement. The Old Southampton Burying Ground (National Register-listed, 1988) is situated nearby and preserves gravestones surviving from

the 1670s, and is contemporary with the Thomas Halsey House. Together, these historic sites represent the two most visible remnants of Southampton's original seventeenth century settlement.

The Old Southampton Burying Ground, now surrounded by a later nineteenth century residential neighborhood, occupied a large, open meadow reserved by the original town settlers for the purpose of disposal of the deceased. Characteristic of prevailing Puritan attitudes and their rejection of church influence and ritual, the burial ground was located at a distance from the church, thus reinforcing the customs and values associated with secular burial practices of the day. Also reflecting Puritan traditions was the scarcity of headstones in this burial ground; many of those interred were accorded only a wooden marker, and undoubtedly many more may have been buried with no physical marker whatsoever. Underlying this burial practice was a resignation and acceptance of death as the inevitable end to life, an event over which man had no control, and one which deserved no lasting memorial or celebration.

Exceptions to the rule do exist, and these miraculously survive in the form of several seventeenth and early eighteenth century headstones associated with prominent members of the early Southampton settlement. Among these rare headstones was the massive 1706 brownstone that marked the grave of Colonel Mathew Howell. A descendant of Southampton colonist Edward Howell, it is clear that for reasons of superior rank and his elevated status in the community, Howell overlooked his Puritan scruples in arranging for this monumental gravestone to be carved with the family's coat-of-arms in stone imported from Connecticut. Another, similar stone of 1708 was for William Herrick, another prominent community figure, whose gravestone appeared to have been carved by the same hand. These and the cluster of other head and footstones dating from this period indicated that wealth was concentrated in a very few hands in the early settlement, and that the majority of colonists were of more modest means and adhered, either through belief or necessity, to the prevailing Puritan traditions that eschewed such showy displays. While there was a scattering of later stones as well, the Old Southampton Burying Ground appears today as an open space, devoid for the most part of any evidence of the hundreds or even thousands of early settlers buried there.

Early Expansion and the Impact on the Native American Population

Within the first decade of settlement, the number of inhabitants increased rapidly from about twelve to nearly thirty "freemen" and their families, prompting them to turn their collective attention to the expansion of the Town's land holdings. By the end of the seventeenth century, the original eight-mile-square grant was augmented with purchases of large tracts of land to both the west and east. However, this land was not entirely unoccupied. In this regard, constructive relations with the native Algonquians was crucial to success, as the Indians remained numerous and widely dispersed, and were initially perceived as a potential threat to the settlers' ambitions.

Any resistance on the part of the Native Americans to the inevitable increase and expansion of white settlement on eastern Long Island was, in the end, futile. In fact, it was common for individual tribes to seek protection from other tribes by securing alliances with the settlers, a decision inspired in part no doubt by the improved weaponry that the Europeans possessed. Although scattered instances of violence against the Southampton

settlement were recorded, such acts were rapidly suppressed or avenged. Writing about the Indian population that inhabited Long Island at the time of initial European contact, one authority generalized that:

> …a group closely resembling the Mohegans of Connecticut lived at the eastern extremity [and that] all subdivisions…were communities, more or less migratory in their habits, each under the leadership of a chief or headman, and having no distinct characteristics. Their villages were small, rarely numbering over one hundred persons. When they grew larger they usually divided and formed a new community. The reason for this was sometimes economic, sometimes due to a feud or a murder, or perhaps to a breakdown in the communal system of government. Through all these parturitions their language stock survived but their loose form of government was not conducive to unity and their alliances were usually of short duration. Thus it happened that no concerted attack was ever made on the white settlers.
> (Morice, "The Indians of Long Island;" in Bailey, Long Island, Vol. I, p. 107)

Writing further, the author identified the Shinnecock as the group that occupied Long Island's "south fluke from Canoe Place (or perhaps as far west as Westhampton) to East Hampton" and that "their sachem Nowedonah was the first to greet the English colonists from Lynn who landed at Conscience Point in June, 1640, and [that] a treaty was signed in December by which the English acquired the territory which is now Southampton."

A rare instance of Indian aggression and violence against the Southampton settlers was recorded with the murder of Mrs. Thomas Halsey, which naturally threw the young colony into fear and disarray:

> A general Indian uprising was expected, and messengers were sent to Wyandanch by the town magistrates, requiring his immediate attendance. It so happened that Lion Gardiner was spending the night at the Chieftain's Lodge. The advisors of Wyandanch attempted to dissuade him from going to Southampton, saying that the English would undoubtedly kill him, but Gardiner advised him to go, courageously stating that he would remain as a hostage. Wyandanch set out for Southampton, found the Indians who were guilty of the crime, and himself took them to Hartford for trial.
> (Schur, "The Hamptons of Suffolk;" in Bailey, Long Island, Vol. I, p. 217)

The same author goes on to describe the early burning of some houses in Southampton by "an Indian and a woman servant" but this act of violence was also resolved and nothing larger seems to have grown from this unusual incident. For the most part, the white settlers appear to have lived side-by-side with the Native American population, dealing with lesser annoyances such as the Indian custom of digging vegetable cellars (an unintended pitfall for the settlers' domestic cattle) with appropriate legislation, persuasion and if need be, punishment.

Among the many benefits derived from interaction with the native inhabitants may have been the adoption of their farming techniques and the discovery of indigenous plant species, notably maize, pumpkins, squash, cucumbers and tobacco. Of particular value was an agricultural practice that was characteristic of coastal

Indians in which "herring, menhaden and other fish were mixed with the soil as fertilizer," and the custom for storing food for winter may have also been useful to the early settlers:

> Much of the native food was dried and stored in pits for use during the winter, but they seem to have been ignorant of the method of salting fish to preserve it. The pits in which the Indians stored their food for winter use were made by digging holes four or five feet deep, roofed with poles and thatched. These were the "Indian Barnes" referred to in the early laws of Southampton. (Morice, "The Indians of Long Island;" in Bailey, Long Island, Vol. I, p. 142)

A further contribution debated by scholars was of the Native Americans sharing their rudimentary techniques of whaling, including the salvage of whale carcasses that washed onto the beaches that was nevertheless practiced from the start by both Indians and Europeans in the Southampton colony. As early as 1644, a mere four years after its founding, the town was divided into wards within which responsibilities were assigned for patrolling the ocean beaches and, if necessary, cutting up the drift whales for rendering into oil. Fines and other punishments were legislated against those who neglected this responsibility. By the 1650s, actual whaling "companies" emerged, and from these evolved the sophisticated shipping interests of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that generated large profits and generally reshaped the culture and economy of the region. Native Americans contributed to the success and profit of whaling at the very least, by providing a willing labor force. One early Town record dating October 7, 1672, stated for example: "Ordered, that no Indian employed in the whaling business shall have more than one trucking coat for each whale that his company shall kill, or half the blubber, without the whale bone."

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Native American population of eastern Long Island was consolidated for the most part onto a large neck of land lying to the west of Southampton Village, now the Shinnecock Reservation. The Indian culture that pervaded the region at the initial point of European contact had by that time succumbed to numerous factors, which resulted in both the loss of land ownership and the decimation of its population. The impact of earlier generations of Indians on the settlement and expansion of Southampton cannot be discounted, however, as may be seen by the acquisition of large tracts of land throughout the region.

The first of these was the so-called Quogue Purchase. John Ogden, an early proprietor or "freeman" of the town, purchased land lying to the west of Canoe Place from the Indian Sachem Wyandanch in 1659. Known as the Quogue Purchase, this extensive tract encompassed present-day Hampton Bays (Good Ground), East Quogue and Quogue, and was to be of strategic importance due to the unusual geographical configuration of Canoe Place which imposed a "bottleneck" on land travel between the Island's settlements to the east and west. The importance of keeping an open land passage through this natural isthmus continued to figure in the history of the area for many years to come. To illustrate this fact, after Gersham Culver purchased land on the west side of Canoe Place from the Southampton Town Trustees in 1687 and 1697 and his son Jeremiah acquired additional land there prior to the creation of the Canoe Place subdivision in 1738-39, the Town trustees stated that "… Culver binds himself and his heirs not to hinder any carts to pass through said land, and there shall be a passing road through said land at all times" (*Southampton Town Records*, Vol. III.). This ancient road was first named the South Country Road, later became Quogue Road, and finally became known as Montauk Highway.

After Ogden's purchase of 1659, the town expanded its boundaries farther to the west, and after two subsequent owners, Capt. John Scott and John Topping, the land was dubbed the "Quogue Purchase/Canoe Place Division" and subdivided into lots in 1738-39 for settlement by the Town proprietors. One significant burial ground was established in the western reaches of Southampton Town by the early eighteenth century at Quogue, surviving today with grave markers dating from the mid-eighteenth century. The boundaries of the Town were also pushed to the east at this time, encompassing present-day Bridgehampton, Mecox and Sagaponack. The earliest documented burial at Mecox was that of Anthony Ludlam, who died on March 17, 1681. The settlements of Bridgehampton and Sagaponack date at least from the 1670s, and it appeared that burial grounds were laid out in each of them by this time. Like the original burial ground in Southampton Village, those in these outlying communities were set aside without any geographic relationship to the churches that served their populations, a symptom of the lingering Puritan tradition that survived well into the eighteenth century.

Unlike the earliest Southampton site, however, the later burial grounds reflected a trend in gravestone art that one historian described as a transition from "resignation" to "awe." The plain, often primitive style of the stones associated with the original settlement evolved with imagery featuring death's heads and other motifs meant to evoke the reality of death and the primary duty of all Christians, that of preparing for death. The stark imagery of death incorporated into gravestone art of this period appeared harsh and uncompromising, and scholars also detected a shift in contemporary religious attitudes that it represented. The ambivalence toward death that was characteristic of Puritan thought, wavering between viewing it as the gateway to heaven and the recognition that it might alternatively hold eternal punishment for one's sins and inherent wickedness, evolved from resignation to "fearful reverence." The human skulls, skeletons and hourglasses denoting the inevitable passage of time depicted on the gravestones of the early eighteenth century became sources of contemplation as much as reminders of one's fate. In fact, some of the skull motifs were given wings, a device that not only fit well with the carvers' artistic compositions, but also served as a metaphor for the soul's flight to heaven. The earliest gravestones at Quogue, Bridgehampton, Mecox and Sagaponack reflected this shift in religious attitudes corresponding to the evolution of religious thought in the early to mid-eighteenth century.

Eighteenth Century Population Growth and Settlement Patterns

As the early population centers of Southampton Town grew larger throughout the eighteenth century, two related phenomena took place: new hamlets were created in response to economic conditions and opportunities, and many families gradually dispersed across the region onto large farms that were located at increasing distances from the villages. Each of these trends in the growth of the population and patterns of settlement were reflected in the location, appearance and characteristics of new or expanded burial grounds and grave sites. Perhaps the most remarkable example of a new settlement, and one that would have a profound economic impact on the region as a whole, was the founding of the Village of Sag Harbor. It would become home to at least four cemeteries and host the region's first gravestone carver (ca. 1790), an indication of its rapid expansion and economic prosperity.

First settled in 1707, Sag Harbor evolved because of a large natural harbor that provided deep water moorings for ships that the earlier settlements, such as Southampton, could not accommodate. Taking its name from

nearby Sagaponack, it was originally called the Port of Sagg. The new settlement was at first primarily a shipping *entrepot*, and evolved to prominence as the whaling industry and other coastal and international commerce thrived. Its first wharf was constructed in 1742 and was enlarged several times, as Sag Harbor became home to some of the Town of Southampton's most prosperous families. The creation of its burial ground occurred as soon as the local population required one. While the original site disappeared long ago and was built over, a second one, known as the Old Sag Harbor Burial Ground (National Register listed 1973), was laid out in the mid-eighteenth century and survives today with gravestones dating from the 1760s. The earliest gravestones were characteristic of the period. The religious values of the inhabitants such as winged death's heads and similar motifs predominated and the location was typical as well. Although the Old Sag Harbor Burial Ground is now located adjacent to a church, it was laid out long before the 1844 construction date of the Presbyterian Church that now occupies the adjoining site. The Puritan tradition of separating burial customs and practices from church ritual had thus prevailed late into the eighteenth century, and the carvings of the headstones reflected contemporary and evolving religious attitudes to death and the afterlife.

At the far western end of the Town, another settlement emerged in the mid-eighteenth century in response to the needs of a burgeoning population. The hamlet of Beaverdam, now Westhampton, originated with the construction of a grist mill in 1748. Part of the Quogue Purchase, the site overlooked one of the many streams that flowed into the bays along the Town's southerly shoreline and was made available for development as a result of a town-sponsored land division in the late 1730s. Soon thereafter, a small community arose around the mill with additional land allotted by the Town for a church, school and burying ground. The church was known to have stood prior to 1758, while the oldest interment in the burying ground is documented to 1754. Typical of its day, the burying ground was non-sectarian. Unlike many of the period, it continued as an active cemetery after the adjacent Presbyterian church was moved to Quogue in 1832. The earliest gravestones in the Westhampton Cemetery are those that are grouped closest to the main road bordering the site. Characteristic of the period, they preserve the winged death's heads and other motifs associated with the religious attitudes and burial practices of the mid- to late-eighteenth century.

Simultaneous with the settlement pattern that resulted in the creation of new hamlets such as Sag Harbor and Beaverdam (Westhampton), several of the existing villages saw a large increase in population, a phenomenon that resulted in the laying out of new burying grounds. The North End Burial Ground in Southampton village (National Register listed, 1988) and the Poxabogue Cemetery in Sagaponack are each examples of the trend. As the original burying grounds filled up by the early-eighteenth century, new ones were "opened" to accommodate their needs. While these sites were established, yet another sector of the Town's population acquired tracts of open farmland or inherited portions of large land holdings, as descendants of the original settlers were now in their fourth or fifth generation and required homesteads of their own.

The dispersal of the Town population was not uniform across the region, however, as thicker woodland and a hilly terrain characterized the northerly areas and served as impediments to development, including that of village-making. (It may be noted that even today, Sag Harbor remains the only such settlement on the northern border of the Town). Many of the farms were situated at considerable distances from the established villages where the communal burying grounds were located, and as a result, two trends arose with regard to burial practices: the creation of small cemeteries that served a limited population, many of whom shared the same

surname; and the burial of family members in private plots on the farms themselves. While such private burials were discouraged (they were outlawed in the eighteenth century), the practice continued until well into the mid-nineteenth century.

Several significant examples illustrating these settlement trends may be cited, all of which originated in the late eighteenth century. For example, small burial grounds were established at North Sea, Squiretown (Hampton Bays), Flanders, North Haven and Noyac. None of these places ever assembled more than a modest concentration of population, but each was considered desirable enough as the location for a communal burial ground that would serve the needs of the surrounding area more effectively than the larger, more established sites "in town." Each measured less than a half-acre in size, preserved a noticeable concentration of surnames indicating the inter-related nature of the families who used it, and each followed the burial practices and customs of the day, such as an accessible location along a roadway, east-facing burials, and carved motifs and epitaphs reflecting contemporary religious beliefs.

The North Sea Burial Ground dates from the 1780s, although few stones survive from that period and there are many later stones as the site remained active into the mid-twentieth century. The earliest are concentrated at the easterly end and follow the traditional placement and use of motifs common to the period. Those at Squiretown/Hampton Bays (Fournier Burying Ground) and Noyac (Edwards Cemetery) are similar to those at North Sea, but the concentration of surnames has actually resulted in a colloquial name change for each of these sites. The earliest surviving gravestone in the Edwards Cemetery dates from 1768, while the Fournier Burying Ground begins in 1802, each indicative of the period in which these burial grounds were laid out. The Ferry Road Cemetery in North Haven, which is the smallest of these examples, preserves eleven gravestones of the local Havens, Byram and Hamilton families, the oldest of which dates from 1792. The orientation and carved motifs of the earliest gravestones are typical of the period. These four sites typify the settlement trends of the mid- to late eighteenth century, which perpetuated the custom of creating non-sectarian burial grounds originating in the seventeenth century, and displaying a variety of headstones that incorporated motifs and orientation common to the period.

At the same time that small communal burial grounds began to appear, another practice became more commonplace throughout the Town as well: the creation of even smaller family burial plots, located on private land. Given the ephemeral nature of these sites, it is assumed that many have disappeared. In fact, since the 1920s when a systematic survey of cemeteries and gravesites was undertaken in Southampton Town, several documented family gravesites have been lost (notable examples existed in North Sea, Flanders and North Haven). Despite the unfortunate loss of many of these unique gravestone sites and the cultural information associated with them, several examples have survived. These sites remain in Noyac (Jessups Neck/Morton Wildlife Refuge and Rogers), North Haven (Stock Farm, Havens, Payne and Duvall), Flanders (Hubbard and "Pleasure Woods") and Hampton Bays (Cuffee). Of those surviving, the Jessup gravestone is the earliest, dating from the 1720s, whereas the stones in Flanders and Hampton Bays date from the mid-nineteenth century, showing that the practice was widespread and of long duration. These widely scattered, individual gravestones or small clusters of family graves are indicative of a stage in the settlement of the Town in which many families remained living in rural semi-isolation. Only with the gradual increase in population, the eventual subdivision of many of the family farms once commonplace in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the

reappearance in the late nineteenth century of large, centrally located cemeteries associated with specific religious denominations did the practice of burying the dead on private land finally disappear.

Settlement Patterns of the Early to Mid-nineteenth Century

The early-nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of a new era in the growth of the Town, and with it came a change in burial practices that reflected national trends and attitudes to both death and the treatment of the dead. Whereas Puritan traditions had informed the burial practices and funerary customs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by rejecting church ritual and reminding the living to be resigned to their death, an "enlightened" approach evolved in the nineteenth century in response to a series of religious awakenings that reshaped the very foundation of Christian thought and beliefs. In the words of one scholar: "What [was] transformed around 1800 is not merely Puritanism but Western civilization; what goes into decline is not merely Calvinism but Christianity, or at least that Platonic kind of Christianity which emphasizes the afterlife rather than this life." It was a period in which the Town also experienced significant population growth, much of it concentrated in the towns and villages, but one that affected the surrounding countryside as well.

Denominational churches flourished, and with them the trend of mourning the loss of fellow parishioners grew in popular religious practice. It has been observed that the concern over death by the nineteenth century ceased to be seen as a transcendental phenomenon and, instead, had become more social in nature. While non-sectarian burial grounds throughout the Town remained active, a new type of cemetery also emerged, one that was either affiliated directly with or maintained to some extent by an adjacent church and its congregants. It was no coincidence, for example, that when a "new" Presbyterian Church was constructed in Sag Harbor in 1844, it was sited next to the Old Burial Ground, which remained active until 1886. Similarly, the Presbyterian Church in Westhampton constructed a new edifice in Quogue in 1832. Simultaneously, a cemetery was laid out directly behind it. In nearby Remsenberg, Eastport, East Quogue and Hampton Bays, new churches were also built in the mid-nineteenth century adjoining pre-existing cemeteries.

This trend toward re-uniting churches with burial grounds reinforced the role that parishioners played in mourning the loss of the departed and contemplating the prospect of their own "eternal reward." One example of the trend that is of particular importance in the history of the Town was the construction of an "Indian Chapel" in Canoe Place, intended to reinvigorate the missionary activities of the early nineteenth century which sought to convert the scattered Native Americans who remained living in the region to Christianity. Adjoining the chapel, which was sited at a crossroads on the old Montauk Highway on the outskirts of Hampton Bays, was a burying ground laid out for the parishioners. While the efforts of the missionaries, notably those of the Native American Rev. Paul Cuffee, may have met with only limited success, the fact that Indian parishioners were actually buried in this graveyard was evidence to the contrary. Regrettably, with the construction of the railroad in 1867, the site was destroyed and the remains of those interred were "relocated" to the nearby Shinnecock Reservation. The chapel itself had apparently fallen into disrepair and disuse many years before, leaving little evidence of the missionary activities that had prevailed throughout the region in the early nineteenth century. All that remains visible today of the chapel and its burying ground is the grave marker of Paul Cuffee himself,

which was relocated to a nearby site adjacent to the railroad tracks to serve as a memorial to him and his Christian followers.

The growing practice of contemplating the graves of the newly departed had an even wider influence on cemetery planning in the nineteenth century. As church-goers were drawn into the trend of mourning their deceased family members and fallen heroes, planners devised a new form of "destination" cemetery that would satisfy what one scholar describes as the "interrelationship among mourning, memory, and immortality." The Rural Cemetery Movement, which originated in America with Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831 and spread across the nation in many large and small cities by mid-century, would have its impact on the Town of Southampton as well. It corresponded to an era in which some of the older burying grounds were filling up, and thus provided an opportunity for exploiting the national trend.

Oakwood Cemetery in Sag Harbor is the best example of one that was conceived with some of the picturesque qualities of the new cemetery type in mind. While laid out within a grid of parallel paths, its naturalistic landscape and towering trees were left untouched, and rather than the soldier-like rows of gravestones that typified the older burial grounds, its markers were grouped into family plots, often surrounding a monumental headstone. Characteristic of the burials in a rural cemetery, which deferred to the natural contours of the landscape over the tradition of facing the deceased to the East, many of those interred at Oakwood Cemetery broke with this age-old practice. Even pre-existing burial grounds followed the trend; those at East Quogue and North Sea, for example, which remained active well into the nineteenth century, reflected the new ethic of deferring to the natural landscape while defining small, family plots that featured fencing and distinctive plantings that echoed the larger, picturesque examples of the Rural Cemetery Movement.

Settlement Patterns of the Late-nineteenth Century/Early-twentieth Century

The early-twentieth century corresponds to the end of the period of significance in the evolution of the Town. By 1930, all of its cemeteries and burying grounds had been laid out. Many of the smaller, older ones had been filled and were considered as historic relics. Larger ones, several of recent origin, were created to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population. New, non-sectarian cemeteries were created in Bridgehampton (Edgewood Cemetery), Tuckahoe (Southampton Cemetery), Eastport (Eastport Cemetery) and East Quogue (Oakwood Cemetery), while the existing Bridgehampton Cemetery adjacent to the Presbyterian Church was enlarged through private initiative. Two Roman Catholic cemeteries were also established in the 1880s, one near Southampton Village (Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Cemetery) and the other near Sag Harbor (St. Andrews Cemetery), both reflecting the massive immigration of Irish, Italians, Polish and other traditionally non-protestant European immigrants to the region in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Attracted by opportunities for employment, at first as farm laborers, in village shops and in the homes of the more affluent classes, this ethnic population grew as the century came to a close. While their churches were typically constructed within the towns and villages, the cemeteries that served this population sought larger tracts of land for expansion on the outskirts of town.

In response to the Town's growing population, some of the larger, older cemeteries were also expanded to meet its needs. These included the Westhampton Cemetery (Westhampton), Oakwood Cemetery (Sag Harbor), and Good Ground Cemetery (Hampton Bays). The Westhampton Cemetery had originated as a small burying ground in the mid-eighteenth century, first serving only the early settlers of Beaverdam (original name of Westhampton Beach) and the satellite communities that arose out of the Quogue Purchase. By the late-nineteenth century, however, this area in the western part of the Town experienced significant population growth, due in large part to the construction of the railroad that spurred development in south shore communities like Westhampton Beach. The Westhampton Cemetery expanded its boundaries to accommodate the expansion of the communities around it. Similarly, the Village of Sag Harbor and hamlet of Hampton Bays saw large increases in their populations in the late-nineteenth century, and the non-sectarian cemeteries that served them were expanded accordingly. Each of these cemeteries, which originated in the mid-nineteenth century, remains active to the present.

Mirroring national trends, the gravestones in this period became increasingly monumental, an indication (to one scholar) of a new defiance in religious thought. The trend toward mourning the deceased, often reflected in urn and willow motifs, had given way to large scaled markers employing individualized designs reflecting the interests and accomplishments of the deceased. Not surprisingly, many of these larger sized stones and more elaborate designs may be found in the more affluent communities such as Southampton and Sag Harbor, where the wealthier and more traveled of the town's citizens resided. For example, as a result of the fortunes amassed in the whaling trade at mid-century, several monumental obelisks dating from the 1850s and '60s marked the graves of its ships' captains, local shipping entrepreneurs and leading citizens in Oakwood Cemetery in Sag Harbor. One notable monument was the so-called "Broken Mast Monument," a towering white marble obelisk that simulated the broken mast of a whale ship, erected in 1856 to memorialize ships' captains lost at sea. Nearby obelisks associated with the locally prominent Huntting, Howell and Cook families dated from this period as well; collectively, they formed a visual metaphor for the ships' masts that once dotted the harbor.

By the early-twentieth century, settlement patterns were fairly well established with more densely settled areas along the coastlines and more sparsely populated inland rural areas. In the summers, coastal populations swelled as seasonal residents took advantage of the breezes from inland bays and the Atlantic Ocean. Improvements in roads and rail service brought weekend travelers from the city out to the beaches and the scenic areas of Southampton. The Town and villages capitalized on the area as a destination and promoted its New England connections, historic architecture and landmarks. Many of the early settlement period cemeteries were noted in travel guides as historic landmarks worthy of attention by the curious traveler. Active cemeteries served the permanent population and were located in inland, less traveled areas. The majority of the active cemeteries were developing as lawn or memorial parks that required large tracts of land for expansion in quieter sections of the town.

Two cemeteries that best reflect the growth and impact of Southampton as a seasonal or travel destination are the Cuffee Burial Site and Good Ground Cemetery, both in Hampton Bays. As described previously in this document, the Cuffee Burial site was originally a church associated burial ground established in the early nineteenth century for the adjacent Native American chapel. The Reverend Paul Cuffee was the minister of the chapel until his death in 1812. When the railroad came through Hampton Bays in the mid-nineteenth century,

the burials were removed except for Rev. Cuffee. Over time the chapel also disappeared but the site was preserved first by the railroad and later by the local citizens with fencing and a new grave marker both to honor Cuffee and to mark it as a historic site.

In contrast, the Good Ground Cemetery was established in the 1880s on land donated by Sylvanus Jackson, identified in the U.S. Census as a house carpenter. The land was adjacent to the Methodist Church in Good Ground on the main road, now Montauk Highway, and may have been part of the church but eventually came under the auspices of the private Good Ground Cemetery Association. The older section just north of the church contained a number of burials arranged in plots or groupings around large monuments, some with fencing with the burials showing the traditional east-west orientation. As the cemetery grew north toward Sunrise Highway, the sections were divided into large, uniform rectangular green lawns with burials arranged in rows and oriented north-south. Reflecting the practices of lawn cemeteries and memorial parks, the markers were smaller or lower mass produced stones, mostly of polished granite, associated with individual burials. Sections have scatterings of evergreens and shrubs. Although it is bounded by a busy highway on the north and the main commercial thoroughfare on the south, the cemetery is buffered from the roads by undeveloped land. The only indication that a large, still active cemetery exists behind the church is the roadway known as Cemetery Road, providing a quiet place for reflection and peaceful rest for local and perhaps even some seasonal residents who purchased plots from the association.

Summary

The burying grounds, cemeteries and grave sites that survive throughout the Town of Southampton represent the growth and settlement patterns of this eastern Long Island region, from its origins in the mid-seventeenth century to the early modern period. They collectively preserve the fragile evidence of where the Puritan immigrants from New England established their first communities, and reflected their patterns of settlement into neighboring areas that were acquired either through peaceful negotiation with the Native American inhabitants, or through forceful eviction and exploitation. Beginning with the Old Burial Ground in Southampton (a relic of the oldest settlement) one can trace the early spread of the population into remote rural enclaves along the ocean shore such as Mecox and Sagaponack to the east of Southampton, and into Canoe Place and Beaverdam to the west as the result of the Quogue Purchase of 1659. Remarkably, even the smaller and once remote burial grounds like those at Flying Point, Hayground and Poxabogue survive, all mute testaments to the settlement patterns of the earliest Southampton colonists.

Later burial grounds and sites represent the further development of the Town, the establishment of new population centers in the eighteenth century, and the proliferation of large family farms that remained isolated from village life until well into the nineteenth century. Characterizing this period are sites associated with some of the Town's most prosperous communities, including Sag Harbor and Southampton, which emerged in the nineteenth century as the social and economic centers of the region. The practice of burying the dead on private land was also widespread in this period, however, reflecting the importance of farming to the region and the relative isolation of rural residents. Only with the explosion of the population in the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, and the gradual disappearance of large scaled farming, would this practice be abandoned.

Extending into the twentieth century, Southampton's cemeteries and grave sites continue to represent the evolution of the region, reflecting the influx of immigrants, the impact of the railroad and the shifting demographics of its population. Once homogeneous in the composition of its inhabitants, this Puritan settlement became increasingly diverse, a trend reflected in its later cemeteries and their affiliation with specific Christian denominations. The Town's treatment and interactions with the Native American population is also represented by its burying grounds and gravesites. In addition to the cemetery established on the Shinnecock Reservation, which was the final resting place for those who managed to survive the encroachment on Native American lands into the nineteenth century. The memorial marker for the Rev. Paul Cuffee also exists, now an isolated gravestone marking the site of an Indian chapel and the missionary's grave. By contrast, the large and elaborate white obelisks of Sag Harbor's ships' captains and business tycoons also survive, reflecting the wealth and sophistication of this former whaling center. Collectively, the burial grounds, cemeteries and gravesites of the Town of Southampton form a tangible record of its settlement, growth and prosperity from the earliest period through the early-twentieth century.