

(Meshack Cuffee in Anonymous ca. 1815).<sup>152</sup> The term “Mulatto” generally denoted a person with Black ancestors as well as White or Indian or other non-Black ancestors, and, therefore, its use here does not rule out Indian or Shinnecock ancestry for Peter John. Paul Cuffee’s son Vincent Cuffee (and Paul’s widow Hannah) were debarred from drawing land on the reservation in 1815 (*Indian Records Book 2*, 42).<sup>153</sup> Yet the New York Missionary Society, an institution for which he worked for about 14 years, erected a tombstone for Paul Cuffee that describes him as “an Indian of the Shinnecock Tribe” (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 21).

Ten historical individuals on the 1865 reservation have documented descent from Paul Cuffee. A total of 723 current members claim Paul Cuffee as an ancestor, excluding the 51 members who claim that descent through Noah Cuffee (see “Special Note” at the end of this appendix). All 723 claim descent through one child of Paul Cuffee (son Vincent Cuffee), and 573 have documented their descent, generation-by-generation, from Paul Cuffee. Of these 573 current members, 333 demonstrate descent from both Paul Cuffee and James Bunn.

#### James Bunn (b.ca.1767-d.aft.1836)

The petitioner’s genealogical database states, without source citation, that James Bunn was born circa 1774 in Islip (two towns southwest of Southampton), Suffolk County, NY. James Bunn does not appear in any of the extant pre-1800 Indian records. The earliest appearance of James Bunn in records reviewed for the PF is the 1800 Federal census of Southampton (Census 1800, 67). The following year James Bunn was elected a Shinnecock Trustee (*Indian Records Book 2*, 34).

The notes taken on James Bunn’s circa 1815 statements in support of Hannah [—?—] Cuffee’s entitlement to draw land give his age at that time as 48, placing his birth at circa 1767 (James Bunn in Anonymous ca.1815). James Bunn claimed to have known Paul Cuffee for 40 years, or since circa 1775, at which time James Bunn would have been about 8 years old. The notes on James Bunn’s acquaintanceship with Paul’s wife Hannah [—?—] are less clear: “Have known Hannah Cuffee, 40 years lived at the wading River” (James Bunn in Anonymous ca.1815). James Bunn himself may have resided in Wading River before his arrival in Southampton, if he was claiming to have known her for 40 years, especially as he knew Hannah’s “mother was a molatto and lived at Wading river her husband was a black man—came to Shinnecock to live 21 years ago” (James Bunn in Anonymous ca. 1815).<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> An alternative interpretation is that Meshack was describing his paternal grandmother (i.e., the mother of Peter Cuffee) as “Peggy” the Montauk woman.

<sup>153</sup> Shinnecock reservation residents could draw annual allotments for farm land, subject to certain restrictions spelled out by the Shinnecock Trustees in 1799 (*Indian Records Book 2*, 33). The Town Trustees’ records and *Indian Records Books* show that specific individuals were debarred from drawing land in 1806 and in 1815, but the reasons for the debarments do not appear in the record.

<sup>154</sup> James Bunn made no assertion that Hannah [—?—] Cuffee had Indian ancestry, although his use of the term “Mulatto” allows for that possibility.

alternately at Islip, Poospetauk, Canoe Place, and Montauk, a distance of more than eighty miles; besides, he occasionally visited and supplied vacant churches in the State of New Jersey. (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 19)

A contemporary of Paul Cuffee—James Bunn—furnished a statement circa 1815 about his long acquaintance with both Paul Cuffee and his wife Hannah:

Have known Hannah Cuffee, 40 years lived at the wading River. ~~was~~ her mother was a molatto and lived at Wading river her husband was a black man—came to Shinnecock to live 21 years ago, was Paul's wife,—Has known Paul 40 years never came to Shinnecock till he was settled there. Paul has been dead 2 years-  
[strikeouts, spelling, and punctuation in the original] (James Bunn *in* Anonymous ca.1815)

Three contemporary accounts identify Paul Cuffee's parents (Peter Cuffee and Jayne Peter) and maternal grandparents (Rev. Peter John, or "Priest Peter," and Peggy, a "Montauk sq[u]aw") (Anonymous ca. 1815; *Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 17). One of these contemporary accounts is from Paul Cuffee's brother Meshack Cuffee.<sup>151</sup> Neither Paul's brother nor his acquaintance of 40 years, James Bunn, attributed Shinnecock ancestry to Paul, although Meshack stated that their grandmother was Montauk. Presbyterian minister Nathaniel Scudder Prime (b.1785-d.1856) stated in his 1845 Long Island history that he knew the Rev. Paul Cuffee personally, and heard him preach (Prime 1845, 116). Prime did not identify Cuffee as Shinnecock but instead quoted the 1839 church history that stated Paul Cuffee was Shinnecock (Prime 1845, 115).

Paul Cuffee does not appear in any of the extant pre-1800 Indian records books, although Bunn's statement indicates that Hannah and/or Paul Cuffee "came to Shinnecock" [*sic*] circa 1794. Land records after his death show that Paul Cuffee owned land off the reservation, in the Canoe Place Division of the Quogue Purchase, but its date of purchase is not known (Squires 6/5/1829). A notice published shortly after Paul Cuffee's death in 1812 cited lots he had mortgaged there in 1810, and refers to him as "late of Montauk" (*Long Island Star* 5/19/1813). An obituary published in two New Jersey newspapers specifies that the Rev. Paul Cuffee died at Montauk (*Palladium of Liberty* 3/16/1812; *Centinel of Freedom* 3/31/1812). No probate for his estate was found in the Suffolk County's Surrogate's Office in Riverhead, NY.

The evidence of Paul Cuffee's tribal ancestry or affiliation is inconsistent. An 1839 church history identified his grandfather as the Rev. Peter John, and a "Peter John" signed the 1764 Shinnecock agreement (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 17; Simeon Tittum *et al.* 6/12/1764). However, Paul Cuffee's brother Meshack Cuffee, whose statements were recorded circa 1815, did not claim their grandfather "Priest Peter" was Shinnecock. Meshack Cuffee claimed that Peter John's child (Paul's mother) by his Montauk wife "Peggy" was "Mulatto"

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<sup>151</sup> Meshack Cuffee's last will and testament identifies Obadiah Cuffee as one of his siblings (Meshack Cuffee 1841), and another contemporary account identifies Obadiah Cuffee as Paul's brother (Allen 1857, 273).

## Appendix D

### Four 18th Century Claimed Shinnecock Ancestors

The Shinnecock petitioner has described the historical process by which members apply for an allotment of land on the reservation. The Shinnecock Trustees must first determine whether a member is "Blood Shinnecock":

To determine blood, an applicant must be a lineal descendant through the paternal and/or maternal line of one or more of the Shinnecock ancestors living in the late 18th century. Those ancestors are 1) Peter Paul Cuffee; 2) James Bunn; 3) Charles Kellis and his wife, Charity Bunn; 4) David Walker (also spelled Wakus), and their consanguineal kin. (Aschenbrenner [2/8/1978], 19)

This appendix presents synopses of evidence and analysis for the 18th century individuals cited above, with the exception of 19th century Charles Kellis who married the daughter of James Bunn, the second historical individual cited. All of Charles Kellis' descendants also descend from James Bunn. Some current members claim Kellis descent solely through a sibling of Charles Kellis. Therefore, the father ascribed to Charles Kellis and Charles' siblings—"David" Kellis—is presented below instead of Charles Kellis.

#### Paul Cuffee (b.1757-d.1812)

An 1839 church history states that "Rev. Paul Cuffee, was the second of seven sons, of Peter Cuffee, a native Indian of the Shinnecock tribe, and was born in the town of Brookhaven, on Long Island, March 4th, 1757" (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 17).<sup>149</sup> This birth date can be calculated from his age at death as inscribed on his tombstone, erected by the New York Missionary Society (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 17, 21). The history also states that Cuffee was indentured as a servant to Maj. Frederick Hudson of Wading River from his youth until age 21 (1778), around which time "he married Hannah, eldest daughter of Robin and Smilas, eminently pious people of color, by whom he had seven children, five of whom survived him" (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 18).<sup>150</sup> Five of the couple's reported seven children were yet living when Rev. Cuffee died in 1812 (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 18). After his religious conversion circa 1778, Paul Cuffee joined the Wading River Indian church and was ordained in 1790 at Poospatuck, in Brookhaven, by the ministers of the "Connecticut Convention" (*Strict Congregational Churches* 1839, 18-19).

About the year 1798, he was employed by the "New York Missionary Society," to labor with the Montauk tribe of Indians, for which he received a liberal compensation. The field of his labors was now extensive. He preached

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<sup>149</sup> Brookhaven is the town adjoining Southampton to the southwest.

<sup>150</sup> Wading River is located on Long Island Sound, at the western end of Riverhead where it adjoins Brookhaven, about 15 miles northwest of the Shinnecock Reservation. See Figure 1.