TRISTRAM COFFIN

MIGRATIONS/RESIDENCES: Tristram Coffin, age 32, his widowed mother [JOAN (KEMBER) COFFIN (EF)\(^1\)], about age 58, two sisters, Eunice, age 24 and Mary, about 22, his wife Dionis, also about age 32, and their five children (Peter, 12, Elizabeth, about 11, Tristram, Jr., about 10, James, age 2, and John, probably less than 1), all came to New England from Brixton, co. Devon, England, before 20 or 30 October 1642, when the death of son John was recorded at Haverhill. Tradition states that the Coffins came on the same ship as Robert Clements, with whom Tristram was associated in New England. For about eighteen years the Coffins bounced around from Salisbury to Haverhill, to Newbury, back to Salisbury, to Newbury again and to Salisbury once more. In 1660 Tristram and some of his children settled permanently on Nantucket Island.\(^2\)

PARENTAGE/FAMILY: Eldest child of ten children of Peter and JOAN (KEMBER) COFFIN (EF).\(^3\) His only surviving brother, John, died in England between 1642 and 1644 and two sisters, Joane and Deborah, either died before the family left for New England or married in England. The two sisters who came to New England were Eunice, who is said (without documentation) to have married a man named William Butler in New England, and Mary, who married at Boston ALEXANDER ADAMS (EF). See Early Families NE, Joan (Kember) Coffin and Alexander Adams for further information.

29 December 1612: The will of Joan’s father, “Robert Keymer of Lower Hareston, Brixton, co. Devon, England,” made bequests to: “Joane my Dawghter the Wyfe of Peter Cawfing twoe yoe sheepe”; and “unto Tristram and Joane the children of Peter Cawfing to eche of them one yoe sheepe.” 24 May 1625: The will of Anna Kember of Brixton dated made bequests “to Peter Coffing’s children.” **4 21 December 1627, proved 13 March 1627/8**: The will of “Peter Coffyn of the Parish of Brixton in ye county of Devon” left most of his estate to his son Tristram, including all his lands and rents in the county of Devon, a feather bed, “my best brazen panne and my best brazen croke.” Peter gave his wife “Johan Coffyn” lands and tenements in the Parish of Brixton during her widowhood, for which she was to pay Tristram 50 shillings four times a year. If the payments were not made, Tristram had the authority to impound property until they were. If Joan remarried, she would immediately lose her right to the tenement called “Siferheay lying in Butlers in y6 parish of Brixton. If Tristram died without male issue, his property would go to the next son, John Coffyn. The four daughters, Johan Coffyn, Deborah Coffyn, Eunice Coffyn and Mary Coffyn were to receive £30 each when they were 20 years old. Son John Coffyn would receive £40 at the age of 21, and the child w’ my wife now goeth withal” was to have £30 when he or she reached the age of 20.\(^5\) See Early Families NE, Joan (Kember) Coffin for further information.

4 January 1627/8, proved 3 April 1628: The will of Tristram’s uncle, John Coffin, of Brixton, was proved after being contested by John’s brother Nicholas and sister Ann. John gave 20 shillings each to his brother

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3 Pillsbury, 2:603; Noyes-Gilman, 244-45.


5 Pillsbury, 2:603-604.
Peter’s children: Joane, Deborah, Eunice and Mary Coffin when they reached the age of 12 [sic], with Tristram as residuary legatee and executor.  

**BIRTH/BAPTISM:** Baptized at Brixton, co. Devon, England, 11 March 1609/10.  

**DEATH/BURIAL:** Died on Nantucket Island, 3 October 1681.  

**MARRIED:** Probably at Brixton, between 16 December 1627 and 18 July 1630.  

**BRIDE:** Dionis/Dewence Stevens.  

**PARENTAGE/FAMILY:** Daughter of Robert and Dionis/Duence/Dewence (_____) Stevens of Brixton, England. She had four full siblings, and four [who were probably] half-siblings, all of whom lived and died in England. Her sister Lydia married Henry Kember, presumably related to Tristram’s mother Joan Kember. The will of Robert Stevens of Ford, yeoman, dated 16 December 1627 and proved 4 February 1627/8, gave to daughters “Dewence” and Lydia, £40 at age 21.  

**BIRTH/BAPTISM:** Baptized at Brixton, 4 March 1609/10.  

**DEATH/BURIAL:** Died probably at Nantucket, after 29 November 1681.  

**LAND/PROPERTY:** Tristram Coffin was of the landed gentry in England, owning property in Dorset and Devon counties.  

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7 Noyes-Gilman, 245.  

8 Pillsbury, 2:604-05, 612-14 (ref. Nantucket Court of Sessions, 29 November 1681, administration “on the estate of Mr. Tristram Coffin, deceased, the 3d day of October, 1681,” and inventory 8 August 1682 “of the estate of Mr. Tristram Coffin, Senior, who departed this life October 3d day of October, on[e] thousand six hundred eighty one”); Massachusetts Vital Records to 1850 (Online Database: AmericanAncestors.org, NEHGS, 2001-2010) [hereinafter MA VR NEHGS], Nantucket, 5:188 (”2d, 10 mo [dup. Oct. 2] 1681, P.R.38. 2d, 10 mo., P.R.63”). *See RESOURCES* for further information about abbreviations used in the Nantucket vital records books.; William C. Folger, “A Record of Births, Deaths, and Marriages on Nantucket, Beginning in 1662,” *NEHGR*, 7(1853):261 (“2 day of October 1681”).  

9 Pillsbury, 2:603, 623-24 (after her father’s will and before the baptism of first child).  


11 Pillsbury, 2:605, 624; Noyes-Gilman, 245.  

12 Pillsbury, 2:605 (administration on husband’s estate).  

13 Pillsbury, 2:605.  


17 Essex Antiquarian, 1(1897):178.  


19 Pillsbury, 2:607.  

Henry Lunt of Newbury and wife Ann exchanged land with Tristram Coffin, also of Newbury. Lunt received eight acres of upland in the South Field and Tristram received four and three quarter acres of arable land in the Little Field.21 12 April 1659: Tristram Coffin “of Salisbury” sold with wife Dionis for £28 to Lionel [Worth?] of Newbury, 40 acres of upland in Newbury that was part of the farm granted by the town to Mr. Edward Rawson, from whom Coffin purchased it.22 2 July 1659: He was one of nine Salisbury men who purchased 19/20ths of the island of Nantucket for £20 and two beaver hats from Thomas Mayhew, who had purchased the island from the agents of Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Lord Sterling. Of the ten original shares Tristram, senior, and his son Peter held one share each, and sons Tristram, Jr., and James each held one half of a share.23 21 June 1660: Peter Folger of “Martaines vineyard, did upon The Request of Tristram Coffyn Senior And with the Consent of Pattacoohanet, Sachem of tuckanuck devid The Island of Tuckanuck .. and The Aforesaid Tristram Coffyn Senior Is to have The South sid of the Iland according to This line And Pattacoohonet Is to have The North Sid.”24 15 July 1661: The owners of Nantucket agreed to choose their lots, with the first being “Tristram Coffin, Sen., who “had his house lot layed out at Cappammet, by the aforesaid Lot layers, at Cappamet Harbour head, sixty rods squar, or thereabouts, the east side line of it bounded by the highway; the south side bounded by a rock southward of the pond; the north by the harbor head; the west side bounded by the lot of Tristram Coffin, Jr. ..”25 “Tristram Coffin’s house lot was a tract of the usual dimensions, bounded on the north by Cappam Harbor. He called this region Northam or Cappamet. The spot where his house was placed is marked by a stone monument.”26

COMMUNITY: 1644: “Tristram Coffyn is allowed to keep an ordinary in Newbury, sell wine, and keep a ferry on Newbury side [of the Merrimack River] and George Carr on Salisbury side of Carr’s island.”28 4 November 1645: “Tristram Coffen of Haverhill,” was one of eight men “Made fre” [Freemen].29 26 December 1647: “Tristram Coffin (sen) is allowed to keep an ordinary and retayle wine, paying according to order, and also granted liberty to keep a ferry at Newbury side.”30 28 March 1648: Town of Newbury presented by General Court “for want of a convenient, safe way from the new town to the Ferry side,” witnessed by Tristram Coffin of Newberry.31 28 March 1654: “Trustram Cofen, sr., Trustram Cofen, jr.” among those cited for being “defective in the town watch at Newbury.”32 1659: “Mr. Coffyn” was one of seventy-six names on the “Country Rate” for Salisbury.33 22/29 June 1671: Coffin was commissioned by the governor of New York as Chief Magistrate in and over the Islands of Nantucket and Tuchanuckett.34 1673-1680: during “The Nantucket Insurrection,” when Nantucket Islanders disagreed over whether they should remain under the government of New York or become a part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Coffin was on the pro-Massachusetts side.35 16 September

22 Pillsbury, 2:607.
24 “Martha’s Vineyard,” NEHGR, 12(1858):33.
26 Nantucket Land Owners, 64.
27 Pillsbury, 2:605.
28 Pillsbury, 2:606; Coffin’s Newbury Hist, 43.
29 Pillsbury, 2:606; “Ipswich Court Records and Files,” Essex Antiquarian, 8(1904):5.
30 Pillsbury, 2:606; Coffin’s Newbury Hist, 49.
32 EQC, 1:30; “Ipswich Court Records and Files,” Essex Antiquarian, 10(1906):170.
33 Salisbury Amesbury Fans, 15.
34 Pillsbury, 2:608; Certain Comeoverers, 2:718; Nantucket Hist, 31-32.
35 Pillsbury, 2:608-10; Certain Comeoverers, 2:718-20; Nantucket Land Owners, 4, 13-20 (from 1660 to 1692 Nantucket was a part of New York colony; after 1692 it became part of Massachusetts Bay Colony); Nantucket Hist, 43-44.
1677: Gov. Andros appointed Tristram Coffin Chief Magistrate of Nantucket and he held the office until 1680 when John Gardner was appointed, a year before Coffin’s death.36

**CHURCH:** 1639-1640: church warden at Brixton. 37

**COURT:** 1641: Tristram Coffin was the Constable of Brixton in 1641, “and that some differences having arisen between him and Thomas Maynard, of Brixton, gent., they were, about midsummer in that year, referred to the arbitration of Robert Savery and Henry Pollexen, Esq.” No details or outcome of this arbitration have been published. 38

In the summer of 1646, Tristram Coffin of Haverhill and others were involved in a series of legal actions concerning a case of beef that was to be delivered to Boston on the boat of Robert Codnam. 39

June 30 1646: “Mr. Sam. Winsley of Salisbury and Mr. Trist. Coffin of Haverell sued Richard Ayre/Aree of Salisbury.”

1 July 1646: Samuel Winsley testified “that when he had carried down goods to load Codnam’s vessel, Mr. Coffin desired to have his beef carried. Deponent said he would refer it to Goodman Codnam, who told him not to overload the vessel but rather to put some of the bolts on shore. Ralph Blazdale and Robt. Quinbee also desposed.”

John Stephens deposed “that he went to his brother Codnam to inquire whether this hogshead of beef was staved with his consent. At first he did not consent, but upon second inquiry, he bad him do as he would.”

6 July 1647: Tristram Coffin v. Robert Codnam, Richard Ayre and Nath. Greene “Case about beef delivered aboard Codnam’s vessel to be carried to Boston.”

Other Essex Quarterly Court records. 40

28 March 1648: Richard Littlehale v. Tristram Coffin, nonsuited. 25


14 June 1653: “Trista Coffin, attorney of Willi. Furber acknowledged the latter’s bill brought in by widow Chase, upon which she sued said Furber.”

September 1653: “Tristram Coffin’s wife [was] presented for selling beer for three pence a quart.” She proved by the testimony of Samuel Moores that she put six bushels of malt into the hogshead and hence was discharged by the Court, the law being that beer should sell for fourpence per quart and four bushels of malt should go to the hogshead. Case discharged. 41

11 April 1654: “Mr. Tristra. Coffyn,” served on jury of trials at Ipswich Quarterly court, and at same court “Theophilus Satchwell v. Tristra. Coffyn. For not insuring him of three acres of accommodation according to promise. Verdict for defendant.”

12 April 1655: “Tristram Coffin, aged about 46 years, deposed that from five to seven years before, at Nuberie, he heard M’ Cutting, as attorney for her husband, John Cutting, who had gone to sea, bargain with Josiah Cobham and Richard Currier for two lots of meadow in Salisbury, one cow being the consideration.”

10 October 1658: Inventory of estate of Robert Clemens taken by Tristram Coffyn, Sr., and William White. 44

2 October 1662: “M’ Trustrum Coffin” of Nantucket was sued by two individuals in Plymouth Colony Court. Hugh Cole sued for £10 damages for non-payment on a boat Coffin bought from him. The court awarded Cole £5 damages and costs. Jonathan Hatch sued for £20 for non-payment on a bill of £13.10s. The court gave Hatch the amount of the bill and 40 shillings damages plus costs. A committee was appointed to appraise impounded property of Coffin’s at the house of George Watson consisting of two

36 *Pillsbury*, 2:610.
37 *Pillsbury*, 2:605.
40 *EQC*, 1:139, 177, 197, 280, 282.
41 *EQC*, 1:303; *Noyes-Gilman*, 246.
42 *EQC*, 1:339, 345.
44 *The Probate Records of Essex County, Massachusetts* (Salem, Mass.: 1916), 1:274.
45 *EQC*, 9:160.
cables, 123 pounds of loose ropes and a blocke, which were valued at £8.16s.3d.\footnote{Nathaniel B. Shurtleff and David Pulsifer, eds., \textit{Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England}, 12 vols. in 10 (Boston: 1855-1861), 7:104.} 6 June 1677: Tristram Coffin aged 67 years testified in General Court regarding Capt. John Gardner.\footnote{Nantucket Land Owners, 36-37.}

6 November 1680: Tristram Coffin was charged with infringement of the Court of Admiralty law regarding a cast away French ship that was salvaged in 1678 by the people of the Island while he was magistrate. The charge was that he neglected to make a satisfactory account to the Court. He was penalized the full estimated value of the ship and cargo, “and this after he had parted with all of his property excepting enough for the old age of himself and his wife.” Coffin produced an account that he had disposed of 2016 hides he had rescued that no one else though worth the effort. His petition mentioned that his son John Coffin borrowed money to pay his fine and to keep Tristram out of jail. The final value set at £343, was negotiated and the Court accepted his payment in full of £150.\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:608-10; \textit{Noyes-Gilman}, 246; Ann Smith Lainhart, “Nantucket Ear Marks 1665-1813,” \textit{NEHGR}, 150(1996):204.}

\textbf{OCCUPATION:} Planter, large landowner on Nantucket Island. Tradition states that he was the first person to plough land in Haverhill, having constructed his own plough.” The ear marks of Tristram Coffin, Sr., in Nantucket were “a top Cut on both Ears.” He served as Chief Magistrate (Governor) of Nantucket in 1671, and 1677-1680.\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:608-10; \textit{Noyes-Gilman}, 246; \textit{Noyes-Gilman}, 247-48; \textit{Nantucket Hist}, 68-71.}

\textbf{PERSONAL:} “He was a royalist, and was, as far as I [Joshua Coffin] can ascertain, the only one of the early settlers of Newbury, who came to America in consequence of the success of Oliver Cromwell.”\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:608.} “In Nantucket, Tristram and his sons held the controlling interest in the Islands, Tristram being the richest man there after his son Peter. With his sons he bought the island of Tuckernuck. He built a cornmill and maintained it and employed large numbers of Indians on his land.”\footnote{Pillsbury, \textit{2:611-12} (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, Old book 63”).}

\textbf{ESTATE:} 14 June 1664: Tristram Coffin of Nantucket made a deed of gift to his daughter Mary Starbuck of “the one half of my accommodations of my purchase, on Nantucket Island ...”; one half of which was at the disposal of Mary and her children, if she had any, and the other half at the disposal of her husband, Nathaniel Starbuck. If Mary died without living children, her husband would inherit the whole.\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:611-12 (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, 2:12}”).}

15 January 1676[7]: “Tristram Coffin, of Nantucket, Senore” deeded to his son Stephen Coffin “the one-half of my land at Cappan, Alies Northam, within the township of Sherborn, situated upon Nantucket Island, that is to say, the one half of my house lot … except “my new dwelling house upon the hill, and my old dwelling house under the hill, by the Erbe garden … .” Stephen was to manage the other half of his father’s lands during his father and mother’s lifetimes.\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:611-12 (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, 2:17}”).}

18 July 1677: Articles of agreement between “Tristram Coffin, Senior, and Stephen Coffin, Son of the aforesaid … both of the Town of Sherborn on the Island of Nantucket … whereas there is a Barn built at Coppamet by us, this present year …” and Stephen having done the most work, he was to have the barn for himself. Stephen consented “in consideration whereof, as also in consideration of the Receiving of Two Thousand foot of boards, and sume Timber, and some Labour of several persons in framing the works … agree that my Father, Tristram Coffin, and my mother Dionis Coffin, shall have the use of the one half of the … barn … and if my Father and Mother … should happen to Dye in some short time, as namely, within seven years after the Date hereof, that I, Stephen Coffin, do engage to pay the some of Ten Pounds to my Father or Mother’s order, within one year after their Decease, if they or either of them order me so to do.”\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:611-12 (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, 1:197}”).}

3 December 1678: deeded to son John Coffin, now of Sherborn, “my new Dwelling house, with all other houses Adjoining unto it, and also the whole half share of land and accommodation” belonging to it;\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:611-12 (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, Old book 63”).} and “in Regard of my Natural affection unto my Grand Children …” gave 10 acres to each to “plant or sow English grain on … upon the Island of Tuckernuck … .” If they planted the grain, they could also keep four sheep per acre for their lifetime.\footnote{\textit{Pillsbury}, 2:611-12 (citing “\textit{Nantucket Deeds, 2:17}”).}
29 November 1681: Administration “on the estate of Mr. Tristram Coffin, deceased, the 3d day of October, 1681” was given to his three sons, James, John and Stephen. 8 August 1682: Inventory of the “estate of Mr. Tristram Coffin, Senior, who departed this life the third day of October, on[e] thousand six hundred eighty one” was presented, “the Court taking into consideration the present state of the estate, together with the best Information of his mind before his decease: doe order the use of the estate for M’ Dionis Coffin, the widow, during her life, after al Just debts are paid.” 9 February 1682/3: James and Stephen Coffin presented evidence that they had made all payments of the estate.57

**CHILDREN** of Tristram and Dionis (Stevens) Coffin.58 See **RESOURCES**.

i. **PETER3 COFFIN**, bp. Brixton, 18 July 1630; d. Exeter, N.H., 21 March 1715, ae. 84;59 m. “about 1655” or by 20 Oct. 1657,60 **ABIGA1 STARBUCK**, dau. of Edward and Katherine (Reynolds) Starbuck,61 d. aft. 27 Jan. 1680.62


iv. **JAMES COFFIN**, bp. Brixton, 11 Sept. 1639; d. Nantucket, “28th 7 mo. 1720 (P.R.38)” or “1st 6 mo. (P.R.63)”76 or “28 July 1620, aged 80 years wanting 14 days”;77 m. Salisbury, “3: 10 m: 1663”78 or

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57 *Pillsbury*, 2:613-14 (citing “Nantucket Court of Sessions”); *Nantucket Land Owners*, 300.
58 *Devon Notes*, II:143; “Haverhill Births,” *Essex Antiquarian*, 4(1900)140; **MA VR NEHGS**, Haverhill, 1:71-72; *Pillsbury*, 614-15; *Certain Comeoverers*, 2:721 (a computation made in 1728 by Stephen Greenleaf, the oldest grandchild of Tristram and Dionis Coffin, states that they had 1582 lineal descendants, of whom 1128 were then living); *Salisbury Amesbury Fams*, 103.
62 *Coffin Fam*, 3; **Dover NH VR**, 108 (birth of last child).
63 *Pillsbury*, 1:591 (deposed age 38 in 1669).
64 *Pillsbury*, 2:615; **MA VR NEHGS**, Newbury, 2:603; *Noyes-Gilman*, 235 (13 Nov.).
67 *Pillsbury*, 1:591; **MA VR NEHGS**, Newbury, 2:604 (“cast on shore at Capbratoon coming from Canada and all lost”).
74 **MA VR NEHGS**, Newbury, 2:570; *Pillsbury*, 2:935; *Sewall’s Diary*, II:149 (“Cousin Noyes brings the News of Mrs. Coffin’s death the 15th inst’, to be buried the 19th. Went away suddenly and easily. A very good Woman of Newbury.”); *Certain Comeoverers*, 2:723 (her gravestone states that she “lived to see 177 of her children and children’s children to the 3d generation”); **MA VR NEHGS**, Newbury, 2:570; *Noyes-Gilman*, 235.
75 *Noyes-Gilman*, 235, 249.
76 **MA VR NEHGS**, Nantucket, 5:160; *Pillsbury*, 2:614 (8 July 1720, aged 80 yrs).
77 *Coffin’s Newbury Hist*, 299.

DEBORAH COFFIN, b. Haverhill, 15 Nov. 1642; d. Haverhill, 30 Dec. 1642.

MARY COFFIN, b. Haverhill, 20 Feb. 1644/5; d. Nantucket, ``13th, 9 mo. 1717, in 74th y. (P.R.38),'' or ``age 72 (P.R. 63)'', by 30 March 1663, NATHANIEL STARBUCK, son of Edward and Katherine (Reynolds) Starbuck, b. abt. 1635 (age at death); d. Nantucket, ``6th, 6mo. 1719 in 85th y. (P.R.38)'' or ``6th, 8 mo. (P.R.63).''

JOHN COFFIN, b. Haverhill, 30 Oct. 1647; d. Edgartown, ``Sept. 5, 1711, a. abt. 64,'' or ``5th 9mo.1711'', m. ``___ 1668'' (``P.R.38''), by 1 June 1669 (birth of child), DEBORAH AUSTIN, dau. of Joseph and Sarah (Starbuck) Austin, d. Nantucket, ``4th 2 mo. 1718 (P.R.38).''

STEPHEN COFFIN, b. Newbury, 11 May 1652; d. Nantucket, ``14 9mo. 1734 (C.R.4 and P.R.63)'' or ``14 11mo. 1734 (P.R.38),'' or ``1735 aged 83'', m. ``___ 1669 (P.R.38)'', MARY BUNKER, dau. of George and Jane (Godfrey) Bunker, b. Topsfield, ``--', 5 mo. 1652 (P.R.38); d. Nantucket, 18 May 1724.

RESOURCES: Detailed treatments on the early Coffin family have been published in: Ancestry of Charles Stinson Pillsbury and John Sargent Pillsbury, 602-15; Noyes-Gilman Ancestry, Being a Series of Sketches, with a Chart of the Ancestors of Charles Phelps Noyes and Emily H. (Gilman) Noyes, His Wife, 244-51, 278-81; Henry Howland Crapo, Certain Comeoverers, 2 vols. (New Bedford:1912), 2:713-23; and Allen Coffin, The Coffin Family. The Life of Tristram Coffyn, of Nantucket, Mass., ... (Nantucket: 1881). See also "Dionis (Stephens) Coffin and her daughter Mary (Coffin) Starbuck," New England Ancestors (Boston:

79 MA VR NEHGS, Salisbury, 1:308.
80 Dover NH VR, 108; MA VR NEHGS, Salisbury, 2:308 (birth of child); Nantucket, 3:274 (P.R.38); Noyes-Gilman, 249 (1 Nov.); Pillsbury, 2:614 (3 Dec. 1663).
81 Cofin's Newbury Hist, 299.
82 Dover NH VR, 108.
83 MA VR NEHGS, Salisbury, 1:216; Pillsbury, 1:72, 2:614; Josephine C. Frost, comp., Ancestors of Evelyn Wood Keezer wife of Willard Underhill Taylor ... (priv. pub.: 1939), 137, 215 (3 Dec.).
84 Pillsbury, 2:614; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 1:289 (birth of youngest child Jonathan); Nantucket Land Owners, 306 (date of probate of James Coffin's will, which does not mention wife Mary).
86 Haverhill VR, 71; Pillsbury, 2:164 ("16 Nov."); Noyes-Gilman ("16 Nov.").
88 Pillsbury, 2:614; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:545.
89 MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 2:505 (birth of child Mary); Wm. C. Folger, "A Record of Births, Deaths, and Marriages on Nantucket, Beginning in 1662,' NEHGR, 7:181.
90 MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:547; Quint, "Dover Combination,'' NEHGR, 33(1879):98.
91 Pillsbury, 2:615; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:547; GDMNH, 657 (6 Aug. 1719, ae. 84); Nantucket Land Owners, 306 (probate).
92 MA VR NEHGS, Edgartown, 212 (G.R.1, gravestone record, Old North Cemetery, Grove Lane); Pillsbury, 2:615.
93 MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:162.
94 Pillsbury, 2:615; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 1:294, 3:41; Folger, "Nantucket Records,'' NEHGR, 7:181. Caveat: her will does not name all of the children, suggesting that John may have had a first wife.
96 MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:150; Pillsbury, 2:615 (4 Feb. 1718); Nantucket Land Owners, 305 (probate).
97 Pillsbury, 2:615; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 5:185; Noyes-Gilman, 249 (18 May 1734); Nantucket Land Owners, 311 (probate).
98 Cofin's Newbury Hist, 299.
99 Pillsbury, 2:615; MA VR NEHGS, Nantucket, 3:314 (est. birth of first child).
When using the published vital records for Nantucket it is important to note the source of each record, because, in addition to the usual town and church records, the Nantucket vital records also contain information taken from 68 “Private Records.” These include personal collections of family papers, genealogical compilations, etc., some of which may be the only extant source of information for an event, but for which no original source is given.

Two of these private records that are particularly relevant to the Coffin family are: 1. “P.R.38: the William C. Folger collection of genealogical records at the Nantucket Historical Association,” which carries the caveat: “This compilation has been used because of the valuable clues it affords, but its statements should be received with caution, as it is not free from errors. It should also be understood that in many instances the events recorded did not take place in Nantucket”; and 2. “P.R. 63: from a copy of a manuscript kept by Hon. Isaac Coffin, Judge of Probate, in the possession of the Nantucket Atheneum [sic].”

Another consideration with Nantucket vital records is the differences between Quaker dates and Puritan colonial dates, particularly in the case of months named after Gods, which the Quakers referred to by numbers rather than spelling the words, all complicated by the conversion between the “old” calendar (in which March was the 1st month) and the “new calendar” (in which January was the 1st month). For example, records kept by the Congregational church (“C.R.1.”) may vary from those kept by the Society of Friends (“C.R.4.”) but still be for the same day.


Update 12-10-2019: