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From the "Beginning": Anglo-American Settler Colonialism in New England

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Abstract: In this article, I use the lens of critical family history—and the history of the Doane family—to undertake an analysis of Anglo-American settler colonialism in the New England region of the United States. My standpoint in writing this narrative is as a twelfth-generation descendant of Deacon John Doane, who arrived in Plymouth Colony circa 1630 and whose family history is intertwined with issues of settler colonial conquest and dispossession, enslavement, erasure, and the creation of myths of origin and possession. This analysis is also grounded in the larger contexts of the history of New England and the history of the United States. I conclude with a reflection upon the implications of settler colonial myths and historical erasure for current racial politics in the United States.

Keywords: settler colonialism; United States; New England; Anglo-American; indigeneity; enslavement; historical narratives; dispossession; erasure

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1. Introduction

Growing up in the 1960s and 1970s in the New England region of the United States, I learned a story about my family, a story that located us in the history of both New England and the United States. I learned that my original "American" ancestor, who carried the surname Doane that I bear today, had arrived in Plymouth Colony in the early 1630s, barely a decade after the storied arrival of the first Pilgrim colonists on the Mayflower. While he immediately became a prominent member of the colony, after a decade or so he moved with a group of other settlers and "founded" the town of Eastham on the outer reaches of the Cape Cod peninsula that juts eastward into the Atlantic Ocean. There, they lived as farmers and seafarers for over 150 years, until the widow of one of my ancestors remarried and moved to a village in Western Massachusetts, where the family lived for well over a century. Here, they engaged in farming and at-home manufacturing until the childhood of my father, when they were forced to leave when the area was flooded to create the Quabbin reservoir to supply the water needs of Boston and other Eastern Massachusetts cities and towns.

This narrative was supplemented by my own experiences. As a child living in Massachusetts, I visited Plymouth Plantation, a mid-20th century recreation of the first English colonial village. In the same town, I also visited the iconic "Plymouth Rock," a rock with a questionable history that has become immortalized as a symbol of the origins of the United States (Gambino 2011). Later, I traveled with my family to Eastham, where I saw a marker noting the location of my ancestor's homestead in 1644 and a picnic area bearing our name that included a large boulder known as Doane Rock. Armed with this knowledge, I constructed an image of New England as the place where "my people" lived, where I could take pride in a landscape filled with quaint villages, covered bridges, white churches on town commons, old mill towns, dairy farms, and all of the history that they represented. When I witnessed ethnic rivalries between Italian-Americans and Irish- Americans in one community, I felt a sense of removal. These conflicts did not involve me. I was not "ethnic," I was just an "American". After all, my family had been there "from the beginning". Except that they had not—and there is much more to the story. As I have learned over the years,

the untold story involved the erasure of the indigenous peoples of New England—and so much more.[1]

2. Analytical Framework

In this article, I use the lens of critical family history—and the history of the Doane family—to undertake an analysis of Anglo-American settler colonialism in New England. Additionally, I challenge the dominant White Anglo-American origins narrative that frames New England as the "cradle of liberty" while ignoring a history of conquest, genocide, and enslavement. As many have argued over the past few years, settler colonialism—the conquest, domination, and "replacement" of indigenous peoples by colonial invaders—is the fundamental framework for understanding the emergence and historical development of the United States (Glenn 2015; Hixson 2013; Wolfe 2006; Veracini 2011). At its core, settler colonialism is about territory, that is, the establishment and legitimation of White possession of the land occupied by indigenous peoples (Moreton-Robinson 2015). It is also important to acknowledge the complexity of settler colonialism. It was not a simple matter of conquest, land theft, and genocide, but incorporated a series of practices such as forced assimilation and "statistical extermination". Ultimately, as Patrick Wolfe (2006) asserted, settler colonialism is a structure, not an event, which means that it is embedded in the new society—connecting the past to the present—as the processes of displacement and replacement play out over time. In the same vein, other analysts have connected the logic and structure of American settler colonialism to the foreign and military policy of the U.S. "empire state," illuminating the connection between early practices and the present (Hixson 2013; Jung 2015; Dunbar-Ortiz 2014).

Beyond the United States, "settler colonialism" is used to characterize a number of societies, most notably New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, but also including South Africa, Israel, and—arguably—much of Latin America. One somewhat unique aspect of the U.S. case was the introduction, especially following the removal of indigenous peoples, of enslaved Africans in order to meet the seemingly insatiable need for cheap labor. By the beginning of the U.S. Civil War, the 1860 Census recorded nearly 4 million enslaved Blacks in the South and another 500,000 free Blacks throughout the country (probably an undercount in both cases). Among other outcomes, this—and subsequent events–had the effect of centering U.S. racial discourse on the Black–White binary instead of the ongoing encounter with indigeneity. Consequently, the discussion below will engage with the interconnections and overlap between the ongoing settler colonial project and enslavement, as both dynamics played an important role in shaping American society.

Another key element in the evolution of settler colonialism is the ongoing production of historical narratives. As we know, historical narratives are socially constructed—a combination of deliberate emphasis and selective forgetting. Socially, politically, and culturally, these narratives provide the basis for group identity (ethnic groups, nations), and in the case of nations, the core claims of legitimacy and the right to possession of territory. In the settler colonial context, this involves both the erasure of indigeneity (to support settler possession) and the incorporation of indigenous contact (to support settler differentiation from the metropole). In the case of New England, an emerging claim of "settler indigeneity"—the depiction of English settlers as the first "civilized" inhabitants—combined with other claims such as the backing of Divine Providence and "manifest destiny" to serve as the core of what would become "American" national identity. When this was further combined with the erasure of the "foundational violence" of settler society and the denial of involvement with enslavement, the stage was set for a virtuous origin myth for the United States. As James Loewen (1995) has demonstrated, these myths have become embedded in textbooks used in public schools.

One point of emphasis stemming from the settler colonialism framework is that the erasure of indigeneity is an ongoing process that continues in the present. White erasure and narratives of indigenous disappearance are at the core of settler claims of "legitimacy". They are also a central component of current settler colonial structures inasmuch as White settler "unwillingness to recognize indigenous continuance" (DeLucia 2018, p. xii) both reinforces settler origin myths and serves as the foundation for ongoing dispossession by writing indigenous peoples out of existence. As both Jean O'Brien (2010) and Christine DeLucia (2018) have illustrated, this occurs in museums, archives, local histories, historical sites and markers, and local commemorations. This historical and social elimination enables present-day White settler colonizers to engage in the "dutiful lamentation" of past atrocities while ignoring the realities of the present (DeLucia 2018, p. 6).

I believe that critical settler family history can make an important contribution to the understanding of the evolution of settler colonialism in New England and in the United States. As outlined by Christine Sleeter (2020), critical family history transcends basic family history research and examines family history in a range of social, political, and economic contexts, with particular emphasis on power relationships. The connection between family history and the larger history of an area is important, because families are the settings in which lives are lived and histories are passed to following generations. If, as American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, history is "the private man's [sic] biography writ large", then family history is a link in making this connection. As Sleeter (2020) observes, it "personalizes the past". Thus, family history both reflects and is a constituent part of broader historical narratives.

In the case of settler colonialism in New England, critical settler family history offers the particular advantage of providing a lens that captures the length of the historical experience. While historical scholarship over the past two decades—much of which is cited below—has done much to describe the often-ignored history of settler colonialism and enslavement in New England, individual works have generally focused upon a particular war, area, or practice. This is particularly true with regard to the connections between settler conflicts with indigenous peoples and New England's involvement with enslavement. Similarly, much of the popular understanding of history is linked to a specific event or historical site such as Plymouth Plantation or King Philip's War. What is needed are more integrative works that stitch together historical fragments into a coherent narrative, for it is only in its totality that that the history of the racist past of the United States—and its implications for the present—can be completely understood. Critical settler family history forces us to connect the dots; to examine linkages between different times, places, and narratives.

Another question that can fairly be asked involves the rationale for the focus upon the Doane family (beyond the fact that it is my family). While there have been histories that discuss the role of the Winthrop/Royall family (Manegold 2010), the DeWolf family (DeWolf 2008), and the Brown family (Rappleye 2006) in enslavement and the slave trade, all of these involve extremely wealthy and politically influential families. What is unique about the history of the Doane family is that it is *not* unique, but it describes the experience over generations of an average settler colonial family. This is important because, as will be seen below, it demonstrates how all European Americans are directly or indirectly complicit in and beneficiaries of settler colonialism and elimination, enslavement and exploitation, and the establishment of White supremacy. It is yet further evidence that W.E.B. Du Bois' ([1935] 1998, p. 700) "wages of whiteness" were enjoyed by all White Americans.

In reconstructing—or decolonizing—this narrative, I will draw upon *The Doane Family* (Doane 1960; Doane Family Association of America 1975) for information on my direct ancestors, who constitute my primary focus, as well as others who bear the Doane surname. However, families transcend surnames—particularly in light of the patriarchal nature of family histories—and, given the large size of early New England families and the existence of multiple marriages, the Doane family within a couple of generations was connected to a broad range of surnames and locations. Families are also embedded in communities both

local and larger that provide the context for life and the creation of history. Consequently, I will also use histories of Plymouth, Eastham, Cape Cod, settler–indigenous contact and conflict in Southern New England, and the role of enslavement in New England to situate the history of the Doane family.

3. In the Beginning

My original Doane ancestor (I am the 12th generation), John Doane, arrived in Plymouth Colony around 1630. Although nothing is definitively known regarding his life prior to arriving in Plymouth, it is clear that he was familiar to the inhabitants of Plymouth as he quickly assumed prominent roles in the community, including serving as an assistant to Governor William Bradford and as a deacon in the church, a title that he carried for the remainder of his life (Doane 1960). While he missed the hardship and precarious situation of the first few years of the colony, John Doane can certainly be viewed as contributing to the legacy of Plymouth in the settler culture of the United States.

As many have observed, Plymouth Colony occupies an iconic—one might almost say foundational—role in European American history. Despite the fact that it was established more than a decade (1607–1620) after Jamestown in Virginia, the Plymouth story has become a mythical "origin" narrative for the United States (Pestana 2020; Loewen 1995). The "Pilgrims'" (they never referred to themselves as such) quest for religious freedom, their creation of a governing document—the "Mayflower Compact"—that provided a basis for democracy, and the harmonious image of the "First Thanksgiving" were all promoted by later writers and woven into a myth that provides a much more virtuous beginning for the United States than the commercially oriented Jamestown experience (Loewen 1995; Dunbar-Ortiz 2014). Additionally, according to *The Doane Family* (Doane 1960), in 1636 John Doane served on a committee that revised and extended the Mayflower Compact into a broader set of laws for the colony. This all sounds like a wonderful beginning, both for the Doane family and for what would eventually become the United States–except for the fact that it was *not* the beginning. Much that was and is known was omitted from popular history in order to create the Pilgrim/Plymouth myth.

Beyond the fact that Plymouth was not the first permanent English settlement in North America, it did not by any stretch of the imagination represent the first European or English presence in New England. For over a century prior to 1620, English, French, Portuguese, Basque, and Dutch fisherfolk, adventurers, and explorers (including Cabot, Verrazzano, Smith, Champlain, Hudson, and Block) had sailed along the coasts of New England and the Canadian Maritimes, often coming ashore to explore, dry fish, obtain water, and even trade with the indigenous peoples. In some cases, their actions were much less benign. Early Plymouth records (Bradford 1948) note the invaluable assistance provided by two English-speaking indigenous people, Tisquantum (popularly Squanto) and Samoset, who not only served as intermediaries with local indigenous peoples, but also provided the settlers with vital local knowledge and survival skills[2]. As Mark Kurlansky (1997) observed, the initial settlers, who were primarily townspeople, were in danger of starving while on fertile soil and adjacent to the richest fishing grounds in the world. The source of Tisquantum's English language skills can be traced back to his capture and enslavement (along with many others) by an English captain, Thomas Hunt in 1614, although he later managed to return to New England.[3] This and similar events undoubtedly explain the suspicious and hostile reaction of indigenous peoples when they met the Plymouth settlers at "First Encounter Beach" on Cape Cod (Bradford 1948).

Additionally, the land was certainly not empty wilderness—despite whatever fantasies entered into the colonial imaginary. Indigenous peoples had lived there for millennia, hunting, fishing, harvesting, and eventually farming, all while trading, negotiating, intermarrying, and at times fighting with neighboring groups. The arrival of Europeans brought cataclysmic change to the indigenous way of life. In addition to conflict and trade opportunities, the Europeans also brought diseases to which many indigenous peoples had little or no resistance. When the Plymouth settlers arrived in late 1620, the local Wampanoag

people who inhabited the surrounding area had been devastated by an outbreak of disease, most likely smallpox (but possibly also leptospirosis), from 1617 to 1619 that ravaged the population, with death rates estimated between 33% and 90%, and severely traumatized the survivors (Silverman 2020). The Wampanoag community of Patuxet that had been adjacent to the land where Plymouth was established was depopulated to the extent of seeming abandoned, a state of affairs that was viewed as "God's Providence" by the settlers. Consequently, the welcome that the Wampanoag extended to the Plymouth settlers was not grounded in servility or amazement, but rather the strategic response of a ravaged people in welcoming potential trading partners and allies against the hostile Narragansett people to the west (Silverman 2020). This state of affairs was certainly fortuitous for both the Plymouth settlers and the subsequent Massachusetts Bay settlers who arrived in Boston and Salem in 1628. It was also beneficial for the Plymouth Colony to enjoy several decades of relatively peaceful coexistence with the neighboring Wampanoag communities.

It is also a mistake to view Plymouth Colony as an isolated settlement of independent settlers. In addition to seeking religious freedom, Plymouth quickly became a trading post, as the fledgling settlement sought to establish outposts in Maine, Connecticut, and other places in Massachusetts to facilitate trade with indigenous groups, most notably in furs that could be used to pay off the colony's accumulated debt to its investors (Bradford 1948; Pestana 2020).And by the middle of the 17th century, the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies were engaged in well-established trade with various locations in the Caribbean (Pestana 2020; Kurlansky 1997). Thus, the New England colonies were quickly incorporated into the capitalist world economy (Wallerstein 1980) and corresponding networks of trade and political conflict.

4. Cape Cod, Land Acquisition, and Settler–Indigenous Interaction

In 1644–1645, John Doane, along with a group of other families, left Plymouth, which in the words of William Bradford (1948, p. 403) was becoming "limited and barren," to establish a settlement on the outer part of Cape Cod. Plymouth was indeed becoming a "backwater" (Pestana 2020, p. 85) and was rapidly being supplanted by the larger and more active Massachusetts Bay Colony. The parting was apparently amicable, as those leaving were pursuing better opportunities, although Bradford (1948, p. 404) did observe that they were moving to a place "on the outskirts of the country, and remote from all society". On Cape Cod, the migrants settled at Nauset, named for the local branch of the Wampanoag people from whom they had arranged to "purchase" large tracts of land. According to the family records (Doane 1960, p. 14), the land (comprising the bulk of the current towns of Eastham, Orleans, and Wellfleet) was purchased for "moose skins, Indian boats, wampum, and little knives". John Doane took possession of about 200 acres north of the harbor and is credited with being one of the "first" settlers of Eastham (Pratt 1844).[4]

The issue of land "purchase" played a very important role in the history of settler colonialism in New England. In the Doane family record, the land purchase is mentioned without comment, as if it were simply another economic transaction; in fact, it is possible to sense a feeling of virtuousness that the land was purchased and clear title was established—which was not always the case in the history of the United States. But the core problem was that English settler colonizers and indigenous peoples had dramatically different if not diametrically opposing understandings of land tenancy and "ownership". For the English settlers, land ownership meant control—the ability to restrict access—and permanent occupancy, including the ability to sell land or bequeath it to one's heirs. English settlers had left a country where the enclosure and privatization of the "commons" had become customary practice and many of those left landless by the practice had been forced to leave the countryside for the cities—and in many cases this became a driving force behind emigration and settler colonialism. Ironically, as historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2014, p. 36) observed, the evicted and displaced "became the land hungry settlers".

For indigenous communities on the other hand, land was held communally, and occupancy of a particular space did not include enclosure or permanent ownership

(Murphy 2018). Land sales to English settlers were viewed as more akin to rentals or temporary use permits. Moreover, occupancy of land definitely did not include the ability to restrict its use by others or to hold it over multiple generations. In a description of the original land purchase in Nauset/Eastham, there are stipulations regarding indigenous planting and fishing rights (Pratt 1844; Silverman 2020).

This disjunction was bound to lead to conflict, particularly as the English settler population increased. John Doane's will in 1768 (Doane 1960, pp. 16–17) clearly leaves his extensive holdings to his children, with no mention of indigenous access. The English settler community soon felt the "inconvenience" of having indigenous residents "at both ends of town" and pressured them to sell more land and to enclose their property (Pratt 1844, p. 22). At the same time, the relative size of the Nauset population probably discouraged the settlers from moving too quickly to enforce "property rights". Later, in 1685, there is reference to the town of Eastham prohibiting indigenous residents "from gathering pine knots and tar and cutting wood on the town commons" and there were subsequent additional restrictions in the following years (Silverman 2020, pp. 364–5). Issues of land tenancy and ownership would increase over the years to come.

My branch of the Doane family lived in Nauset/Eastham for 165 years and six generations, playing various roles in the community and making a living as farmers and sailors. Interestingly, following the initial purchase of land from the Nauset people, there is virtually no mention of indigenous people in the family records. The one exception to this was a notation that Ephriam Doane, the youngest son of John Doane, was with several others "fined 25 shillings each for trading liquor with the Indians" and another "50 shillings each for permitting the Indians to have liquor in their boats" (Doane 1960, p. 31). Otherwise, it is as if, from a 21st century perspective, the Nausets sold their land and retired to Florida on the proceeds. This is just the beginning of the erasure of indigenous people from the history of Cape Cod, New England, and the United States. Reality, however, is different, as the English settler colonizers and the Nauset people lived alongside each other for many years.

While histories of Eastham (Pratt 1844) and Cape Cod (Swift 1897) do mention the Nauset and Wampanoag peoples, the role of indigenous inhabitants—outside of warfare, which will be discussed separately below—is at best peripheral to the narrative. A review of histories finds references (1663) to a court to hear disputes between the Nausets and the English regarding damage to crops committed by settler livestock, (1684) to a requirement that the Nausets pay taxes and assemble annually to hear the criminal laws read, and (1685) an agreement to pay a bounty to Nausets for the killing of wolves that were attacking the cattle and sheep of English settlers (Pratt 1844). All of these reflect the extension of English governance over indigenous populations. Perhaps the most significant interactions involved the active missionary work undertaken to convert members of the indigenous population to Christianity, a project that was undertaken by English settlers across much of New England (Pestana 2020). This was more than a manifestation of religious zeal. In his analysis of settler colonialism in South Africa, Bernard Magubane (1979) characterizes the role of missionaries as agents of colonialism through their role in persuading Africans to accept the practices and values of the colonizers. However, as David Silverman (2020) contends, this was not a simple matter of passive conversion, but a dynamic process where indigenous communities adapted Christianity to meet their own needs and as a political strategy for survival. "Praying Indians" and "praying towns" enjoyed both better access for trade and a sense of protection from military attacks from English settlers. This phenomenon was strong on Cape Cod and in Eastham, as an enumeration in 1685 counted nearly 1000 "praying Indians" in Barnstable County (which includes Cape Cod and adjacent islands), 500 of whom were in Nauset/Eastham (Pratt 1844; Swift 1897). In the long run, however, the adoption of Christianity did little to advance the cause of Nauset communities on Cape Cod as conquest and disease continued to reduce their numbers. Additional aspects of conquest and erasure will be discussed below.

Given that my ancestors lived alongside Wampanoag/Nauset peoples for several generations, one might wonder about the nature of their individual relationships with, as well as their attitudes towards, their indigenous neighbors. In the absence of any direct writings, it is possible to draw a few inferences from the larger social context. English settler colonizers arriving in New England in the 1620s had already been primed to view indigenous people as "savages" by a century's worth of descriptions from European explorers, fisherfolk, and settlers who had visited the shores of North America. In his description of the *Mayflower's* arrival at Cape Cod, William Bradford (1948, p. 86) said "what could they see but a desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men". The early English settler colonizers feared the indigenous people as "savages" and "heathens" (even though the Wampanoags, based upon previous contact, had better reason to fear the English), discouraged them from entering the Plymouth settlement, and treated them with suspicion (muskets conspicuously present) during many negotiations (Cave 1996; Silverman 2020). From a theological perspective, indigenous peoples were viewed as "satanic savages" who needed to be overcome to demonstrate God's favor (Cave 1996, p. 171). The outbreaks of disease that wiped out entire Wampanoag villages were viewed as "Divine Providence," while Wampanoag assistance that probably saved the Plymouth settlement in its first years was seen as "Divine intervention" instead of kindness or strategic aid on the part of the natives (Cave 1996). While relations were generally peaceable during the first decades of the Plymouth settlement, the English were not hesitant to muster Myles Standish and a group of soldiers during any small conflicts or recurring war scares (Silverman 2020).

The worldview of English Protestants also predisposed them to view the indigenous peoples of New England through an unfavorable lens. As Kay Anderson (2007, p. 192) has argued, European thought often defined humanity in sharp contrast to "savagery". To be human was to distinguish oneself from nature, "including the human animal". Similarly, the "Protestant ethic" (Weber 1958) so often displayed by the Puritans viewed material gain and wealth as signs of God's favor. For the English settlers, the indigenous economy, which often involved seasonal movement and planting as opposed to permanent settlements and defined farms, was generally viewed as displaying an inherent inability or unwillingness to improve, that is, to become fully human (O'Brien 2010; Cave 1996). On the other hand, as early Rhode Island leader Roger Williams observed, the sharing social arrangements of indigenous communities meant that "there were no beggars amongst them, no fatherless children unprovided for" (Murphy 2018).

It is important not to reduce settler actions towards indigenous peoples to a simple racist caricature but to acknowledge at least some degree of ambivalence or complexity. In the early years, English settlers lived in relatively close proximity to indigenous communities and often engaged in trade. Allies and intermediaries such as Ousamequin (Massasoit) and Tisquantum were spoken of in positive terms (Bradford 1948). Multiple observers applauded indigenous skill and perseverance in hunting, fishing, and farming (Cave 1996; Silverman 2020). Missionaries such as Samuel Treat, Richard Bourne, and John Eliot, who worked closely with Wampanoag communities, spoke glowingly of their social organization and morality (Pratt 1844; Swift 1897). In the final accounting, however, as Silverman (2020, p. 157) observes, too few English colonists were able to see beyond the stereotypes to appreciate the essential humanity of indigenous peoples. Additionally, as Victoria Freeman (2000) and Walter Hixson (2013) have noted, while settler–indigenous relations were frequently characterized by ambivalence and complexity, including what might be described as "good intentions," the logic of settler colonialism ultimately pushed relentlessly toward elimination.

5. War, Dispossession, Ethnic Cleansing, and Erasure

Despite the ongoing fears of the English colonizers and a few small skirmishes, there was relative peace in Southern New England for several decades. While Plymouth and the Wampanoags had reached an understanding, the absence of conflict was probably

as much a reflection of the relative weakness of both sides—the small numbers of the Plymouth settlers and the impact of disease upon the Wampanoags. The one exception to this was the "Pequot War" of 1636–1637, a conflict that is often overlooked in broader historical narratives, but which in many ways set the tone for future conflicts between the English/American settler colonizers and indigenous peoples across what would become the United States. This war had its origins in conflicts between the Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Pequot people of Southeastern Connecticut over control of trade—especially the lucrative fur trade—in the Connecticut River Valley. By this time, Massachusetts had established a number of trading posts along the river and emigrants and dissidents from Massachusetts had established settlements (Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor) along the river. While the actual triggering event was an altercation leading to the death of a Massachusetts-based trader, for which the Massachusetts Bay leaders blamed the Pequots, the overarching driving force was the desire of the Puritans to establish hegemony over the Connecticut region (Cave 1996).

Plymouth Colony, where John Doane and his family still resided in 1636–1637, was not directly involved in the conflict and had been reluctant to become involved. Bradford (1948) provides excerpts from a lengthy correspondence with Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop in which Winthrop responds to Plymouth grievances regarding competition in trading outposts in Maine and Connecticut, as well as Massachusetts' recklessness in provoking war with the Pequots, and calls upon Plymouth to provide military support in the spirit of English settler solidarity and their common defense against indigenous peoples. Plymouth eventually agreed to provide 50 soldiers, but they did not arrive in Connecticut until the war had been concluded (Bradford 1948). There is no mention of John Doane in this matter, but given his position in the Plymouth Colony, it is quite likely that he was a participant in any deliberations at Plymouth.

After some initial skirmishes, the war ended with a decisive victory for the English forces. The crucial battle in the war was an attack by the English and their Narragansett and Mohegan allies (indigenous alliances with the English reflected their own strategic concerns) on the Pequot stronghold of Fort Mystic in what is now Groton, Connecticut. English troops led by John Mason of Connecticut attacked and set fire to the fort and, to the horror of their indigenous allies, massacred all of those attempting to escape, including many women and children (Cave 1996; Bradford 1948), with a total death toll estimated at over 400 (Bradford 1948). Following what might be termed as a series of "mop-up" operations, the Pequots were eliminated as a military presence in Southern New England and many survivors who surrendered or were taken captive were either executed (warriors) or enslaved. Although this violence was directed only towards the Pequots, as Alfred Cave (1996) emphasized, it served notice to all indigenous peoples that the English settlers were a powerful and barbaric foe.

While there was relative peace for several decades following the Pequot War, relations between the English colonizers and indigenous peoples moved inexorably towards conflict. The key dynamic in this process was the expansion of English settlement, both geographically and in terms of population. While Plymouth expanded slowly into Southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod, the Massachusetts Bay colony grew more rapidly, driven by 15,000–20,000 immigrants between 1629 and 1640 (Silverman 2020, p. 220). As Silverman (2020, p. 221) observed, this was further buttressed by natural increase—both high birthrates and longevity. This was evident in the Doane family, as John Doane, who lived to the age of 95, had 5 children and 34 grandchildren (not all of whom survived childhood), while his son John (also my direct ancestor) lived to age 73 and had 11 children (Doane 1960). By the 1670s, the English settler population in New England was estimated to be 52,000, many of whom lived in settlements spread across Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and along the Northern New England coast (Schultz and Tougias 1999).

This expansion translated into a constant English demand for land, often "purchased" under rather dubious conditions. When land acquisition was combined with English settler understandings of land tenancy and the frequent violation of agreements regarding land

use, Native Americans were left feeling besieged and confined. Following the deaths in the early 1660s of Plymouth's longtime Wampanoag ally Ousamequin (Masssasoit) and his eldest son Wamsutta (the latter under conditions viewed as suspicious by the Wampanoags), Ousamequin's younger son Pumetacom (known in English as Philip) sought to build alliances with other Southern New England groups to counteract settler expansionism. After years of rising tensions and threats of war, conflict was triggered by Plymouth Colony's decision to prosecute three Wampanoags for the murder of another Wampanoag, thus violating the sovereignty of the Wampanoag people, and war broke out in Southeastern Massachusetts in June 1675.

What has historically become known as "King Philip's War" was a major conflict that, while centered in Southeastern New England, played out over much of New England. It pitted an alliance of indigenous peoples (Wampanoags, Narragansetts, Nipmucks, Podunks, Nashoways, Wabanakis, and Pocumtucks) against the various English colonies (Massachusetts Bay—which included present day New Hampshire and Maine, Plymouth, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) and their indigenous Mohegan allies (Schultz and Tougias 1999). By the time the war concluded following the death of Pumetacom in battle in 1676 and a treaty between the British government and the Wabanakis (Maine and New Hampshire) in 1678, it was on a per capita basis the deadliest conflict in American history with an estimated 800 English and 3000 indigenous deaths (Schultz and Tougias 1999, p. 5). While the English settler colonizers consolidated their hold on Southern New England, it came with a heavy cost, as many English settlements were burned (including present day Worcester, Springfield, and Providence) and the settler economy was devastated. Settler communities faced heavy debt for war expenses that persisted for decades (Swift 1897). For the indigenous people of Southern New England, despite military successes that threatened to push the English back into heavily fortified coastal towns (they conducted raids within 25 miles of Boston), the war was a disaster. Those who survived the war—and post-war executions and enslavement—experienced displacement, land seizure, increased colonial control, and virtual elimination as regional political entities.

For my Doane ancestors, their location on the outer reaches of Cape Cod protected them from direct involvement in the war, which was a result of distance (the nearest conflict, Middleboro, was 66 miles away) and location (any raiders on Cape Cod would have had limited options for escape and Plymouth maintained a guard at the beginning of the Cape to prevent any movement to or from the Cape). At the same time, they undoubtedly experienced the psychological and economic effects of the war, including some level of fear given the significant numbers of Wampanoags living in close proximity to them (Swift 1897). Fortunately for the Cape Cod settler communities, the Wampanoags on Cape Cod (Nausets, Mashpees), most of whom were in "praying villages," made a strategic decision—or a "devil's bargain" (Silverman 2020, p. 326) not to participate in the war, despite entreaties from Pumetacom.[5] Yet, due to the all-encompassing nature of settler colonialism, the Cape settlers were still caught up in the war. Eastham records note that the town was required to furnish 18 soldiers (as best as I can determine, no Doanes were included) and to contribute funds for the war and for debt after the war (Pratt 1844, p. 42). Despite the felt precarity of their position, the Eastham settler community did feel secure enough to offer sanctuary, which was politely declined, to the English inhabitants of Rehoboth, Taunton, and Bridgewater, southeastern Massachusetts towns that had been attacked by the Wampanoags (Pratt 1844, p. 42).

While much of popular history treats the conclusion of King Philip's War as the end of hostilities between English settler colonizers and indigenous peoples in New England, this is simply not true (Brooks 2018). On the northern frontier, the Wabanakis fought the English to at least a draw and arguably even won the conflict as they pushed many English back to Southern Maine and, in the Treaty of Casco, required that any returning English settlers pay rent (in corn) to the Wabanaki sachems as an acknowledgement of indigenous ownership (Brooks 2018; Schultz and Tougias 1999). Even this was only a temporary cessation of hostilities, as Maine remained contested territory between the English, the Wabanakis, and the French (who were allied with the Wabanakis) for decades—including what are referred to as Queen Anne's War and King William's War—until 1729, and conflict persisted in Canada (and occasionally on the northern frontier) until 1763 when the English drove the French out of Canada. For much of this time, ongoing Wabanaki raids reduced the permanent English presence in Maine to settlements in the extreme south such as Kittery, York, and Wells (Woodard 2004). For my Doane ancestors on Cape Cod, while the war was far away from their homes, it remained a constant presence as towns across New England, including Eastham, were required to provide funds and soldiers for the conflict (Pratt 1844). My direct ancestor, Nehemiah Doane, along with other relatives, is recorded as having fought against the French in Nova Scotia (Doane 1960, p. 96).

As a child growing up in the 1960s and early 1970s, I spent summers in the coastal Maine town of Castine, where my grandparents and other family members lived in retirement. Castine had a strategic location at the head of Penobscot Bay and on the border of lands claimed by the English and the French (Acadia), was the site of conflicts, and was later contested by the English and the settlers during the Revolutionary War (Buker 2002). A historical marker in town described it as being on "the battle lines of four nations" (French, Dutch, English, and American), with the Wabanakis excluded from consideration. The one mention of indigenous people on the many historical signs in the town was a description of how at that location three English captives had been tortured and burned to death by Madockawando, a noted Wabanaki/Penobscot sachem.[6] This reinforces an all-too-familiar settler trope associating "savage" indigenous peoples with barbaric violence. For most Americans, the notion of "scalping" (removing the top of the head with hair attached as a trophy) is historically and culturally associated with "Indians". While indigenous peoples may historically have practiced scalping, the reality is more complex. The English used scalping or beheading in Ireland as a means of collecting bounties for killing Irish and it was also a common practice among settlers in New England; for example, during the Pequot War (Takaki 1993; Dunbar-Ortiz 2014). Settler Hannah Dustin became a hero in 1697 for killing 10 Wabanakis (including six children) during her escape from captivity and presenting their scalps to the Massachusetts General Court in exchange for a bounty (Schultz and Tougias 1999; Dunbar-Ortiz 2014). Even from the beginning, English settlers used barbaric tactics. Myles Standish in 1623 responded to rumors of an indigenous uprising by massacring eight Wampanoags, beheading their leader, and displaying his head atop a post at Plymouth Colony (Cave 1996; Silverman 2020). At the conclusion of King Philip's War, Pumetacom's (Philip's) body was decapitated and his head was displayed at Plymouth Colony for two decades (Schultz and Tougias 1999; Silverman 2020). Thus, there was no small measure of hypocrisy when in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, the settler colonists charged King George of England with bringing war from "the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions".

Returning to Southern New England, the aftermath of King Philip's war brought continued problems for indigenous peoples. On Cape Cod, despite their loyalty (or non-belligerence) during the war, the Nauset people experienced both loss of land and population decline. Cape Cod historical sources contain multiple references to indigenous land sales and in 1712, Eastham and Orleans surveyed the line between the two towns "running through land formerly reserved for the Indians"—the presumption is that there were no Indians left to occupy the lands (Swift 1897, p. 160). By 1745, according to Enoch

Pratt (1844, p. 40) "few Indians were left in the township of Eastham" and a 1764 census found 11 "Indians" in Eastham and 5 in Wellfleet, the latter town having separated from Eastham. While larger communities remained at Mashpee and on Martha's Vineyard, Silverman (2020, p. 390) estimates that by the mid-1770s, the indigenous population of Cape Cod was well below 10% of the population and for Massachusetts as a whole, the figure was approximately one percent.

From the settler perspective, this trend gave rise to a spate of interpretations which claimed to explain the "extinction" of indigenous peoples and their "replacement" by English settlers or "Americans" (O'Brien 2010). For example, a 19th century history of Cape Cod ((Swift 1897, pp. 331–2) describes indigenous peoples as "doomed to extinction" following contact with "civilized" Europeans—a matter of "survival of the fittest". O'Brien (2010) analyzes "firsting and lasting," a process of historical cleansing through which local historians across New England established settler colonizers as founders and claimed the disappearance of indigenous people. This was also reflected in popular culture, including books (James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*), plays (the wildly popular 19th century play Metamora; or the Last of the Wampanoags, a fictionalized account of King Philip's War—Lepore 1998), and art (John Max Stanley's "The Last of Their Race" which depicted—with obvious symbolism—a small group of indigenous people huddled along the Pacific shore as the sun sets into the ocean). Taken as a whole, this was an attempt to embed the legitimacy of the "White possessive" (Moreton-Robinson 2015) into history and culture. Additionally, the appropriation of indigenous culture—including place names—and the idea of the frontier helped establish the assertion of American "exceptionalism," for as Jill Lepore (1998, p. 200) observed, "without its aboriginal heritage, America was only a more vulgar England, but with it, America was a unique nation, with a unique culture and its own unique past".

Racist theories of savagery and inferiority notwithstanding, it is clear that the dramatic decline and in some cases disappearance of indigenous communities in New England can be laid at the feet of English settler colonialism. Beyond the ravages of disease and warfare, the continuous taking of land destroyed the traditional economic basis of indigenous life, particularly the disruption of trade networks, the creation of dependence on European goods, and the restriction or elimination of daily movement and seasonal migration for hunting, fishing, and farming. Following King Philip's War, settler land taking increased through direct coercion (being forced into reservations), coercive debt-driven land sales, and state action such as detribalization followed by land "purchase" (Murphy 2018). And even when indigenous communities possessed land, English colonial courts and legislatures often failed to support their rights (Silverman 2020). Forcing indigenous people into restricted communities/reservations with a limited economic base also had the effect of forcing them into the colonial labor market, often in dangerous occupations (military, whaling) and even, driven by debt and coercion, into indentured servitude—including children whose parents were destitute (Silverman 2020). This had the effect of further reducing the size of the remaining communities.

In addition to the historical/cultural erasure described above, settler colonizers also engaged in political and social erasure. For example, when the shortage of males due to losses at sea or in the military led to exogamous marriages—often with free Blacks—White settler society then claimed that succeeding generations were no longer "pure Indians" (O'Brien 2010; Silverman 2020). And to the extent that indigenous peoples adopted European customs and culture, their authenticity was also questioned, for "Indians can never be modern" (O'Brien 2010, p. xxi). Finally, state government attempted to erase indigeneity through enforced citizenship and detribalization, the latter based upon the settler conceit that only settler colonial institutions could confer legitimacy upon indigenous peoples (Simpson 2014; Murphy 2018; Silverman 2020). Yet, while all of these measures have taken their toll upon indigenous peoples in New England, there is also the reality that indigenous communities have persisted to the present. Additionally, as many recent scholars remind us, it is important to recognize both past and ongoing resistance to settler

colonial domination and erasure (Freeman 2000; O'Brien 2010; Simpson 2014; Brooks 2018; Silverman 2020).

As we well know, what transpired in New England was repeated in various forms across the North American continent (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014). While my branch of the Doane family remained in Massachusetts, other Doanes—and other relatives who no longer carried the Doane surname—undoubtedly participated in settler colonial practices as part of the westward expansion of the United States. In the family genealogy (Doane 1960), there are multiple references to living in, being born in, and passing through "Indian country". At least two Doanes are mentioned as serving as "Indian agents" for a branch of government. One Doane family, which settled in the Pennsylvania "wilderness," is described (in a telling example of "flipping the script") as experiencing "many troubles and disasters in consequence of the hostility of the Indians" (Doane 1960, p. 120). Another descendant of John Doane is said to have staked a claim on the first day of the land run when the Cherokee Strip in Oklahoma was opened (after the U.S. government coerced the Cherokees to make indigenous land available to White settlers). During his initial settlement, he is reported to have endured—again, the emphasis upon settler hardship—difficult conditions along with "coyotes, prairie dogs, rattle snakes, buffaloes, Indians, thieves and outlaws" (Doane Family Association of America 1975, p. 272).

Undoubtedly the most horrifying chapter in the interface between the Doane family history and the settler colonial history of the United States was written by Gustavus Cheyney Doane. Gustavus Doane was in the eighth generation of Doanes in the United States; among the descendants of John Doane, his family line and mine diverged in the fifth generation.[7] He had an interesting life, including serving in the Civil War and as a Reconstruction era "carpetbagger" (military administrator), participating in an abortive Arctic expedition, and serving with the Second Cavalry in Western wars against indigenous peoples (Scott 2007). Doane is perhaps best known for his work as a military escort with the expedition that surveyed what is now Yellowstone National Park in 1870, and his report on the land is credited as being influential in the establishment of Yellowstone as the first U.S. national park in 1872 (Scott 2007). Mount Doane, a 10,551 foot peak in Yellowstone, is named in his honor.

Gustavus Doane's service in the Second Cavalry included campaigns against the Nez Perce and Geronimo, but his notoriety comes from his role in the Marias River Massacre (Wylie 2016). In January of 1870, Doane was in command of Company F of the Second Cavalry which, along with three other companies under the overall command of Major Eugene Baker, had been ordered by General Philip Sheridan to punish a group of Piegan Blackfeet that had been accused of stealing horses and attacking settlers (Scott 2007). On the morning of 23 January 1870, Baker's forces, with Doane's company in the lead, attacked and brutally massacred an encampment of Piegan that was not the group for which they had been searching (Wylie 2016). At the conclusion of the massacre (there was little or no attempt at resistance), 173 Piegans by the official U.S. military count, a much larger number by other accounts, had been killed, the overwhelming majority of whom were noncombatant women and children, and the survivors were left to die in the cold Montana winter (Wylie 2016). Even for the settler colonial U.S. society of the 1870s, this action evoked a public outcry, including commentary by the *New York Times* and calls for a Congressional investigation, but in the end the military successfully downplayed the massacre and no action was taken against any of the participants (Wylie 2016). Gustavus Doane remained unrepentant and was even proud of his actions, and he was later quoted (Wylie 2016, pp. 243–4) as saying that he thought at the time, while watching the blood flow on the surface of the frozen river, "that the work we were then doing would be rewarded". Despite the negative response at the time, the massacre of the Piegans on the Marias River seemingly faded from public memory (particularly in comparison to the historical attention devoted to the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn, known in settler culture as "Custer's Last Stand," where the U.S. 7th Cavalry suffered a devastating defeat at the hands of indigenous forces). To complete the process of erasure, Gustavus Cheyney Doane's

entry in the Doane family record (Doane Family Association of America 1975, pp. 66–67) mentions that he "was for many years engaged in fighting Indians and scouting on the plains," but makes absolutely no reference to the Marias Massacre.[8]

6. Enslavement, Complicity, and Denial

For most discussions of U.S. history, issues of the conquest and colonization of indigenous peoples are considered separately from enslavement, or at best, with the assumption that the ethnic cleansing of indigenous peoples was a necessary precursor to the plantation economy grounded in the enslavement of Africans. In addition, enslavement was popularly viewed as a Southern practice, one that was opposed by the North and which it fought the Civil War to abolish (Melish 1998). This is particularly embedded in the historical memory of New England and over time has become part of the American narrative. In reality, both of these claims are simply not true. Enslavement was from the beginning intertwined with the oppression of indigenous peoples, and the North, including New England, was an active participant in the practice of enslavement in the United States. A was the case throughout the American colonies, enslavement was driven by the need for cheap labor.

Contrary to popular historical memory, the recorded history of English enslavement practices in New England begins with indigenous peoples. In the aftermath of the Pequot War, the Massachusetts Bay Colony enslaved many of the survivors and sent some to Puritan-controlled Providence Island in the Western Caribbean, where they were exchanged for enslaved Africans, who were then brought back to New England (Hardesty 2019; Manegold 2010). This constituted both the first recorded presence of enslaved Africans in New England, and a demonstration of how quickly the English settler colonizers in New England were integrated into the entire Atlantic/Caribbean colonial trade network. Other survivors, particularly women and children, were enslaved and distributed to settler households in Connecticut and Massachusetts (Silverman 2020). This practice was repeated after other conflicts, most notably King Philip's War, when as many as two thousand indigenous were enslaved, with men primarily shipped to the Caribbean or even to Spain or North Africa, while women and children were kept in Southern New England (Lepore 1998; Silverman 2020). By the 1700s, when it was no longer possible to ship enslaved indigenous people overseas, many were still sentenced to bound labor for debt or as punishment for crimes and/or to cover court costs, and children were indentured into labor when parents were sentenced or needed to pay debt (Silverman 2020).

With the rapid expansion of trade between New England and the Caribbean, the number of enslaved Africans arriving in New England also increased, especially in that enslaved Africans had the advantage to English settlers of having no connection to the area and were thus less likely to escape or be a focus for conflict (Hardesty 2019).[9] Some wealthy New England families, such as the Winthrops and the Royalls, actually settled on Caribbean islands such as Antigua, thereby further facilitating trade links (Manegold 2010). Additionally, by the end of the 17th century, sailing vessels from New England were already landing on the coast of Africa and participating directly in the slave trade, albeit as relatively minor players, although Rhode Island enslavers sent over 1000 voyages to Africa and brought an estimated 100,000 enslaved persons back to the Americas (Farrow et al. 2005; Warren 2016). Even though the number of enslaved Africans in New England was never large, constituting well less than 5% of the population, they still played an important economic role (Clark-Pujara 2016). Enslaved workers labored in distilleries and shipyards, as craftsmen and on farms, in households and on public works projects, all of which contributed to the settler colonial economy (Hardesty 2019). While the enslaved population was concentrated in seaports (Boston, Newport) and in Southeastern New England, where a few larger plantations had a larger number of enslaved workers, they could also be found in rural communities such as Deerfield in northwestern Massachusetts (Clark-Pujara 2016; Hardesty 2019). And as Joanne Melish (1998) has demonstrated, the economic contributions made by even one enslaved worker could have a significant positive impact upon the resources and wealth of an individual household. Connecticut is reported to have had over

5000 enslaved Africans at the beginning of the American Revolution in the 1770s (Farrow et al. 2005, p. 10).

Given the location of my ancestors on Cape Cod, there could be a reasonable expectation that they had little or no direct involvement with enslavement. While there is no record of any of my ancestors directly being enslavers—which is by no means definitive proof—as the descendants of John Doane spread out across New England, some of them did participate in the practice. For example, a Seth Doane, whose name appears in the family records as living in the Connecticut River Valley near Middletown (Doane 1960, p. 108), is listed in a historical study as having enslaved two persons in 1790 (Hartford Courant 2002). Hannah Doane, a granddaughter of John Doane, was married to an Ezekiel Cushing of Falmouth, Maine who is recorded as having been an enslaver and is said to have "given one [slave] to each of his children as part of their marriage portion" (Doane 1960, p. 58). Ultimately, the question as to whether my direct ancestors owned slaves does not matter. The impact of enslavement transcends the question of ownership. In 1809, my direct ancestor (great-great-great-great grandfather) Samuel Dill Doane (1774–1809) died and was buried at sea "on a voyage to or from the West Indies" (Doane 1960, p. 156). His vessel may or may not have carried enslaved Africans, but it was undoubtedly part of the larger web of economic activities rooted in enslavement and historically referred to as the "triangular trade". While his widow remarried and moved to the town of Dana in west central Massachusetts, Samuel's son, my great-great-great grandfather Leonard Doane (1798–1868), went to sea and sailed on a number of voyages including ports in the South Atlantic and West Indies (Doane 1960, p. 278).

The experiences of these Doane family members underscore an important point: all White New Englanders were complicit in and benefitted from enslavement. Virtually from the beginning, the economic development of New England was accelerated by its participation in activities connected to enslavement. Even if the number of enslaved persons in New England and the direct participation in transporting enslaved Africans were relatively small, the economic impact was not. By the late 17th century, 80 percent of the tonnage of colonial vessels trading in Barbados was registered to ports in New England (Warren 2016, p. 77). Ships from New England carried fish, cattle, lumber, food, and other items to the Caribbean; they returned with sugar, molasses, and other products (Hardesty 2019). The molasses was made into rum, which was either exported or taken to Africa in exchange for enslaved persons. By the 1700s, New England had dozens of rum distilleries and it had become a major source of revenue for the region. John Doane, a grandson of the original John Doane, lived in Boston and listed his occupation as "distiller" in 1696 (Doane 1960, p. 35). Looking at the broader picture, it was virtually impossible not to be part of this economic matrix. Whether one caught fish off the Grand Banks, grew onions in Connecticut, cut lumber, or worked as a shipbuilder, sailmaker, cooper, or sailor, they were part of this economic network. As Christy Clark-Pujara (2016, p. 2) commented, "the business of slavery, as apart from the institution of slavery, allowed New England to become an economic powerhouse without ever producing a staple or cash crop". According to Bernard Bailyn (cited in (Lang 2002, p. 9)), New England prior to the Revolutionary War had perhaps the highest standard of living in the world.

Following the Revolutionary War, while trade with the Caribbean continued, the U.S. South began emerging as the leading cotton producer in the world, particularly after the invention of the cotton gin, which exponentially increased the production of usable cotton (Farrow et al. 2005). This added another dimension to the engagement of New England and the North with enslavement-based economic activity. New York City-based merchants and bankers oversaw much of the cotton trade (which accounted for half of U.S. exports), Northern and New England producers provided necessary goods for Southern plantations, and Northern (including Connecticut-based) insurance companies provided stability for the entire system (Farrow et al. 2005). The next step in this process was the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in New England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the primary focus of which was textiles with cotton from Southern plantations, the primary raw

material. Mills were built along the banks of New England rivers, with great complexes in cities such as Lowell and Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Manchester, New Hampshire, to the extent that by 1860 New England produced 75 percent of the cloth in the United States (Farrow et al. 2005). All of this was based upon enslaved labor and, ironically, one of the major products was "Negro cloth," a cheap garment that was sold to plantation owners to clothe enslaved workers (Clark-Pujara 2016). Even after the Civil War and the end of enslavement in the United States, cotton—now predominantly picked by African American sharecroppers (often in a system of debt peonage)—remained important to the U.S. economy and New England textile manufacturing. Until the textile industry moved to the South and eventually overseas in search of cheaper labor, it provided economic activity and jobs for generations of primarily European immigrants in the Northeast. As a teenager in 1972, I actually spent six months working in one of the last remnants of the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, New Hampshire, once the largest single textile mill in the world (Hareven and Langenbach 1978).

The economic connections forged by trade with the Caribbean and with the U.S. South supported a wide range of activities. For example, both Leonard Doane and his son (my great-great-grandfather) George Wood Doane (1827–1899) worked and dealt in the manufacture of palm leaf hats (Doane 1960), which was an important industry in Central Massachusetts, especially the town of Dana in which they resided (Booth 2016; Howe 1951; Dublin 1991). This industry involved the importation of palm leaves from the Caribbean (likely picked by enslaved or coerced labor), the manufacture of hats either in factories or as "homework," and the sale of the hats to be worn in warm climates—many of which were worn by enslaved agricultural workers (Booth 2016). I had heard about the palm leaf hats from my father, but not the connection to enslavement; instead, it was simply presented as a way to make a living. This illustrates the degree to which other enslavement-related activities were embedded in the New England economy, even in locations far from major commercial or manufacturing centers.

The most important takeaway from this discussion is the need to emphasize the centrality of enslavement to understanding the history of the United States. If, as Edward Baptist (2014, p. 322) argues, "the northern economy's industrial sector was built on the backs of enslaved people," then despite its removal from the enslavement-based plantation economy, New England's economic development happened because of its central role in enslavement-related business. Additionally, it is safe to say that enslavement-based economic activity played a central role in the industrial and economic development of the United States. For New England, this was the gift that kept on giving. The family fortunes amassed through the triangular trade and the textile industry provided capital for the growth of banking and insurance and investment in other industries, as well as endowments for some of the most prestigious universities in the United States (Wilder 2013).

Unlike the abrupt end to enslavement that occurred as a result of the Civil War, emancipation in New England occurred earlier and was in many cases more gradual. Following the Revolutionary War, there was a substantial increase in antislavery mobilization by both free Blacks and White abolitionists, but there remained substantial opposition to change. In Massachusetts, where my ancestors lived, enslavement was ruled unconstitutional by the state Supreme Court in 1783; however, this did not result in immediate emancipation; instead, enslavement became indefensible under the law, which in turn required individuals to file suit to obtain their freedom (Hardesty 2019; Litwack 1961).[10] Connecticut and Rhode Island, the other New England states with significant numbers of enslaved persons, established gradual emancipation laws in the 1780s, which required enslaved persons to reach the age of majority before they could become free (Hardesty 2019). Over the following years, the number of enslaved persons in New England dropped dramatically and the abolitionist movement gained political influence.

Given these developments, as well as the relatively small number of slaves to begin with, New Englanders constructed, as Melish (1998, p. xiii) observed, "a public narrative of

a free, white New England". This enabled New Englanders to set themselves in distinction to the enslavement-dependent South, to minimize ("brief and mild") or erase the existence of enslavement in New England, and to claim to reflect the best of American exceptionalism back to the Mayflower and the first battles of the Revolutionary War (Hardesty 2019; Melish 1998; Litwack 1961). This was, in essence, a repackaging of settler colonial erasure for new circumstances in order to construct an image of a glorious and virtuous past. These claims are reflected in the Doane family history, as Leonard Doane is described as being "an Abolitionist, a member of the Free Soil Party (as was his son George), and a lifelong Republican rejoicing in the freedom of the slave" (Doane 1960, p. 279). The same entry connects to the broader narrative by describing Leonard (p. 280) as "a true son of Pilgrim sires".

But the historical realities are more complex, and much less flattering to New England. As the record shows, many "free-soilers" only opposed the expansion of enslavement into the western territories, but did not contest existing practices in the South (Litwack 1961; Fredrickson 1971). Many Northern commercial interests had economic ties to the plantation economy, which left them reluctant to offend the South, even on the eve of the Civil War. Abolitionists did not necessarily advocate for equal rights for free Blacks, often they only supported the elimination of enslavement. Northerners across the political spectrum feared an expanded population of free Blacks, in many cases raising concerns about crime and public assistance that are strikingly similar to contemporary debates on desegregation and immigration. One response involved the colonization movement—"repatriating" Blacks, even those who had lived in the U.S. for several generations, to Africa in a form of "ethnic cleansing"—and the American Colonization Society enjoyed broad support in the North from its founding in 1816 through the mid-1830s and continued to the Civil War (Staudenraus 1961; Melish 1998).[11] This could certainly be construed as a continuation of the settler colonial logic of elimination.

Despite having "freedom," Blacks in New England and in the North faced widespread racism. As Leon Litwack (1961, p. 64) put it, "legal and extralegal discrimination restricted Northern Negroes [sic] in virtually every phase of existence". While there were variations between states (Massachusetts by 1860 permitted Blacks to vote, hold office, serve on a jury, and even intermarry with Whites), Blacks faced extensive discrimination in employment, education, housing, and public accommodations. Individual communities, fearing disorder and/or the need for public support, pushed to remove free Blacks and to prevent others from taking up residence (Melish 1998). Beneath exclusion and discrimination lurked the ever-present threat of mob violence. In one particularly notorious case, repeated acts of violence prevented a Quaker educator, Prudence Crandall, from opening a school for Black girls in Canterbury, Connecticut (Melish 1998). All of this was supported by an expanding "scientific" racist ideology that explained the low status of Blacks as the result of innate inferiority and which was used to support claims that free Whites and free Blacks could never coexist (Smedley 2007; Fredrickson 1971). The outcome of this was the institutionalization of racist ideologies, racist practices, and racial inequality that continued to trouble New England in the decades and centuries to come.

7. Closing the Circle: Why This Matters Today

History matters. Not only because it "created" the present, but also because historical narratives create the frame through which we understand the present. As I have contended throughout this article, Anglo-American settler colonizers created a historical narrative of hardy settlers in the "wilderness" who survived and prospered as a result of virtue, self-reliance, hard work, and what came to be known as "Yankee ingenuity". Bolstered by the Mayflower legend, the story of the "First Thanksgiving," and the claimed status of Massachusetts as the "Cradle of Liberty," the New England narrative became the foundation of the American story and the claim of "American exceptionalism". Yet, as I have also contended in this article, these claims are a lie, or at best a (very) incomplete truth. New England (and American) history and prosperity are built upon the diminution, distortion,

and oftentimes complete erasure of the conquest, dispossession, and "ethnic cleansing" of indigenous peoples and the enslavement, trade in, and theft of the labor of indigenous and African peoples. To ignore these truths is to base our understanding of the present upon a willfully incomplete version of history.

Perhaps the best metaphor for the New England narrative is a dessert called "Indian pudding"—a dish that was frequently served at the family dinner table throughout my childhood. Indian pudding is derived from traditional English "hasty puddings," whose base was wheat flour boiled in milk. In colonial New England (and in the present), the wheat flour was replaced by cornmeal, which of course the settler colonizers learned to make from indigenous peoples, and molasses, which of course was obtained through the enslavement-based "triangular trade" and undoubtedly harvested by enslaved labor. When Indian pudding is discussed however, the settler colonial and enslavement connections are erased and it is simply presented as a "traditional New England dessert" (Yankee Magazine 2020; Perry 2013). Like the pudding, the present tastes better if we ignore the historical context.

These historical narratives also shape an incomplete understanding of family history. Without the context discussed in this article, the history of the Doane family (or any settler colonial family) can be presented as a micro-level version of the mythical New England/American narrative. Within the framework of settler colonial mythology, it is typical to relate my more recent (late 19th and 20th century) family history as one of "descendants of Pilgrims" eking out a living as farmers and at-home manufacturers in a small village in central Massachusetts, with no mention made that this was the ancestral land of the Nipmuck people. When my grandparents (and my father, who was a young child) were displaced in the 1930s when their entire village and the surrounding area was taken by the state of Massachusetts to make the Quabbin Reservoir ("Quabbin" is the Nipmuck word for "place of many waters"—(Tougias 2002, p. xii)), the state carefully relocated town memorials and over 7500 gravesites, a courtesy that was never extended to indigenous peoples. My grandparents relocated to Vermont, where my grandfather worked in a factory but undoubtedly never considered that it existed in Wabanaki land possessed through settler colonialism and in an industrial economy stimulated by enslavement and the triangular trade.[12] Following World War II, my father attended college (the first in our family line to do so) at the University of Vermont (where my parents met) with support from the GI Bill, support that was not as easily utilized by African American veterans who served in a segregated military (Katznelson 2005). Throughout my childhood, my father's career as a minister meant that we moved frequently. While we may have noticed indigenous place names and historical markers, we never contemplated that we lived and vacationed in lands that had belonged to the Pennacook, Massachuset, Wabanaki, and Wampanoag peoples. We grew up in a settler colonial society that "erased" the persistence of indigeneity in New England (Freeman 2000; Silverman 2020). We learned a narrative that enslavement and racial segregation were "Southern practices" in which New England had no part. Over the past few decades, my siblings and I have built upon the cultural capital provided by college-educated parents to carve out lives that have taken us to the middle or upper middle class. While the dominant White cultural frame would attribute this to "hard work" in a meritocratic society, a more critical interpretation would incorporate White privilege, White possession, and the strategic infusion of small but impactful amounts of family wealth (Doane 2014; Johnson 2015). The important insight here is that family narratives are interconnected with larger social narratives, thus making history more personal and more believable. It also connects family mobility to broader cultural frames of individualism and meritocracy, thereby giving family members a sense of a personal stake in the current racial order. Employing a critical perspective to dispel myths and historical omissions is a key step in unraveling White settler colonial narratives.

To understand the present is to acknowledge that the past has never really gone away. Settler colonialism and enslavement are not dark deeds that happened long ago; they created social and ideological structures that continue to evolve and to reproduce systemic

racism. Conquest, dispossession, and ethnic cleansing of indigenous peoples did not end with Wounded Knee in 1890, and the effects of enslavement did not end with the Civil War. Even if these earlier events are partially acknowledged, processes of erasure and denial continue to more recent events. Settler colonialism persisted with BIA domination and forced assimilation of indigenous peoples, U.S. government violation of treaty rights, and the continued dispossession and relocation of individuals. It further extended into Alaska and the illegal annexation of Hawai'i, with the latter turned into a military base and tourist destination at the expense of the Kanaka Maoli (Hixson 2013; Trask 1999; Silva 2004). Similarly, current understanding of more recent history downplays the true nature of the Jim Crow racial order (a system of total domination that extended far beyond separate facilities), the embedding of racial inequality in New Deal and other government programs, and formal and informal discrimination (Katznelson 2005; Blackmon 2008; Rothstein 2017; Taylor 2019).

Through denial and erasure, the racial ideologies of settler colonialism and enslavement are connected with the present. Although claims of innate racial superiority/inferiority and civilization versus savagery have diminished, their influence is reflected in, and perpetuated by, costumes, stereotypes, and sports mascots (DeLoria 1998).[13] The "scientific" racism of the past has been superseded by color-blind racial ideology—the claim that despite past injustices, racism no longer stands as a significant obstacle for historically oppressed groups (Doane 2017; Bonilla-Silva 2018). Drawing upon this framework, the White heirs of settler colonialism and enslavement can fall upon storylines—"socially shared tales" (Bonilla-Silva 2018) such as "the past is the past" and "I didn't own any slaves" (or kill any Indians). The other outcome of this claim of innocence is that the current problems of indigenous peoples and oppressed minorities can be attributed to "cultural deficiency" rather than settler colonialism or white racism.

Historical erasure and the creation of false narratives also have important implications for U.S. racial politics inasmuch as they work to "legitimize" ongoing White possession and White supremacy. With respect to indigenous peoples, settler colonialism imposes an ideal of indigenous "authenticity" that excludes modernity (Bell 2014), which in turn leads to the claim that contemporary indigenous peoples are not "real Indians". Coupled with the "selective forgetting" of land theft, treaty violations, and the attempted bureaucratic elimination of indigenous peoples through relocation and rigid criteria for tribal recognition (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014), this enables Whites to react with outrage towards indigenous land claims, fishing rights, casino operation, or even the assertion of tribal status (Lipsitz 2008; Cramer 2006; Freeman 2000). Ironically, going back to Southern New England, the Mashpee Wampanoags only recently won a 50-year battle for federal recognition and reservation status for their land (Silverman 2020). Similarly, the minimization of the impact of enslavement and the denial of systemic racism provides a platform for White resistance to the Black Lives Matter movement, voting rights, affirmative action, and any discussion of reparations for enslavement.[14] And the legitimation of White, European-American possession of the United States is the basis for mobilization against immigrants deemed as "non-white" in order to protect (White) "American" culture. In an extreme example of irony, early 20th century nativist writer Madison Grant (1916) referred to White Anglo-Saxon Protestants as "Native Americans" in his book *The Passing of the Great Race*, in which he railed against the immigration of "racially inferior" groups from Southern and Eastern Europe. All of this is rooted in ongoing settler colonial structure and ideology.

Recent years have brought some hope that the dominant narrative is being changed. Many of the works cited in this article have been written in the past two decades, a reflection of a new historiography giving voice to the perspective of historically oppressed peoples and of new ways of thinking about racism. Social movements on the part of African Americans and Indigenous peoples have brought issues of racial justice into the public arena. The lie that indigenous peoples "vanished" from New England is being shattered (DeLucia 2018; Freeman 2000; Silverman 2020). The Plymouth Plantation that I visited as a boy is now the Plimoth Patuxet Museums and includes exhibits and information

on the Wampanoag people who lived—and still live–in the area.[15] The statue of John Mason, leader of the colonial troops in the 1637 Pequot Massacre, will be removed from the Connecticut state capitol building (Altimari 2021). Other historical sites, including former plantations, are attempting to provide a more complete historical picture. All of this, however, barely qualifies as a beginning.

Yet, one of the lessons of history is that movements for racial justice inevitably evoke countermobilization on the part of the dominant group (Anderson 2016). During the past two years, conservatives have used "Critical Race Theory"—actually a distorted caricature of critical race theory that claims Whites are being taught to hate themselves and to hate America—as a basis for political mobilization (Sprunt 2021). On 4 July 2020 and in a subsequent executive order, then-President Donald Trump criticized critical race theory as a "merciless campaign to wipe out our history, defame our heroes, erase our values, and indoctrinate our children" (Trump 2020). In 2021, a number of Republican-dominated states have enacted or are considering legislation banning the teaching of "critical race theory" in public schools and the issue has become a major talking point for Republican politicians. As I have argued recently (Doane 2020; Doane Forthcoming), one of the key strategies of the "new White nationalism"—an intensified White nationalism that incorporates increased tolerance for overt racism—is the identification of racialized threats to (White) "American" society and the potential "victimization" of White Americans as a basis for mobilizing supporters. Inasmuch as the critique of systemic racism contained in critical race theory and similar approaches constitutes a direct challenge to White dominance and the distortion of history, it is not surprising that it has become a target for racist countermobilization.

In the midst of intensified ideological conflict and the persistence of settler colonialism and systemic racism, there is much to be done. Avril Bell (2014, p. 3) observed that it is stunning "how little we, settler peoples, have learnt about ourselves, our histories, and our relations with indigenous peoples". It is equally stunning how little Americans understand the totality of enslavement and its foundational role in building the United States. These truths exist *despite* historical knowledge that is "out there," albeit known more to academics than to the larger society. In fact, as James Loewen (1995) demonstrated in his pathbreaking work *Lies My Teacher Told* Me, U.S. history textbooks have glossed over most of that which challenges American triumphalism. This needs to change—and the change is not a matter of uncovering facts, but instead is one of creating critical historical narratives that transcend centuries of erasure and denial.

As I have argued above, critical settler family history can make two important contributions to this process. The first is by encouraging a *chronological* narrative from past to present, as opposed to historical works with more limited focus. The full scope of the settler colonial and enslavement projects in New England and in the United States can only truly be appreciated when considered together and in connection to the present. History may too often be presented in piecemeal fashion, but the outcome—contemporary settler colonial and racist structures—stands as a whole. Engaging with coherent narratives holds much more potential for disrupting "white history" and the ongoing settler colonial project than current attempts, however well-meaning, to learn from events in isolation (e.g., 1921 Tulsa Race Riot, the "Trail of Tears"). And going forward, it is equally essential to continue to explore events from the perspective of indigenous peoples (Grenville 2007; Simpson 2014; Trask 1999; Dunbar-Ortiz 2014; Brooks 2018; DeLucia 2018; Freeman 2000).

The second contribution of critical settler family history is to personalize the past through making direct connections between present individual situations and past processes of settler colonialism, enslavement, and systemic racism. As Victoria Freeman (2000) in *Distant Relations* and Kate Grenville (2007) in *Searching for the Secret River* eloquently demonstrate, a critical examination of one's own settler family history forces a fuller and more personal understanding and ownership of the interaction between settler colonialism and indigeneity, one that moves beyond erasure and simple caricatures.[16] Likewise, the history of the Doane family described above is noteworthy because it is *not* noteworthy—the experiences of an "average" family that illuminate how all members of a settler colonial

society both contribute to and benefit from the racialized social structure that emerges. Indeed, what becomes evident is that for any "White" person in New England (or the United States) to say "my family didn't kill any Indians (or own any slaves)" or even "my family didn't immigrate until after all that" is irrelevant. To live in the present is to take ownership of the past, and in turn to be responsible for the future.

Yet, as promising as critical scholarship and critical settler family history may be, the obstacles remain great. Both Charles Mills (1997) and Jennifer Mueller (2017) have highlighted the White creation of "epistemologies of ignorance," worldviews that attempt to provide plausible deniability in the face of historical evidence and current realities. Moments of "racial reckoning" are offset by recurring "White backlash". Nevertheless, the demands of the present moment require that we use every means at our disposal to challenge the false narratives and ideologies of settler colonialism and racial oppression.

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Notes

1 At this point it is appropriate to acknowledge that these words are being written on lands that were the ancestral home of the Tunxis, Poquonook, and Wangunk peoples.

2 William Bradford's *The History of Plymouth Colony* is derived from his journal kept during the years 1620–1651. It is among the oldest accounts from a settler-colonial perspective of Plymouth Colony.

3 Tisquantum's story is an interesting one. Enslaver Thomas Hunt brought him to Spain with the intention of selling him. Fortunately for Tisquantum, members of a religious order recognized him as "Native American," which under Spanish law meant that he could not be enslaved. Now free, Tisquantum found passage on a ship to England, then to Newfoundland, and eventually back to Massachusetts (Pestana 2020).

4 According to Pratt (1844), the surnames of the first Eastham settlers were Prince, Doane, Bangs, Higgins, Snow, Smalley, and Cook. It is safe to assume that the fortunes of these families, and many others that arrived in the following decades, are intertwined with the history of the Doane family. Within two generations, various Doanes are recorded in marriages with dozens of different surnames.

5 "Praying Indians" from Natick and other Eastern Massachusetts towns were moved to a concentration camp on Deer Island in Boston Harbor. Many of these interned Native Americans died due to the inhumane conditions in the camp (Silverman 2020, pp. 324–5).

6 The wording upon the sign was as follows: "UPON THESE HEIGHTS, in 1692, James Giles [brother of John Gyles], a boy, and an Englishman, taken at Casco, held in slavery by Madockawando for attempting to escape, were tortured by fire, compelled to eat their noses and ears and then burned to death at the stake."

7 Gustavus Doane and I are both descendants of John Doane's great-grandson Solomon Doane (1705–1789). Gustavus is then descended from Solomon's son Joshua, while I am descended from another son, Nehemiah Doane.

8 Recently, the leaders of the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Great Sioux Nation petitioned the United States National Park Service to change the name of Mt. Doane on the basis of Gustavus Doane's participation in the Marias Massacre (French 2017). As of this writing, no change has been made by the National Park Service.

9 This is not to imply that enslaved African Americans did not resist. See Hardesty (2019) and Clark-Pujara (2016) for examples.

10 As both Hardesty (2019) and Litwack (1961) observed, enslaved persons in Massachusetts could self-emancipate simply by leaving, as there was no legally enforceable way for former enslavers to require their return.

11 Noted abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison ([1832] 1968) published a scathing critique of the colonization movement.

12 As Freeman (2000, p. 272) notes, many Vermont settlers created a narrative that Vermont was "uninhabited" before the arrival of English settlers.

13 I write these words on the eve of the third game of the 2021 baseball World Series, where 40,000 fans of the Atlanta Braves will repeatedly perform the "tomahawk chop" as a show of hometown pride.

14 For an example of attempts to erase the more recent past (i.e., the "Jim Crow" era), see Lavelle (2015).

15 For an insightful discussion of the Wampanoag Homesite at Plimouth Patuxet, see Peck (2018).

16 In *Distant Relations*, Freeman describes her political engagement with indigenous communities in Canada that had experienced the negative effects of settler colonialism in which her ancestors/relations had participated.

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