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2013, Volume 23, Issue 2

The Migration of Jupiter Hammon and His Family: From Slavery to Freedom and its Consequences

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Abstract: Extensive research relating to the Jupiter Hammon family suggests a kinship history that plots their journey from West Africa into bondage within the plantation system of the West Indies and North America and their journey into free society in the Town of Huntington, NY, through a combination of mutual support, self-sufficiency, and notable resilience.

Keywords: African American, elder care, emancipation, family, Hammon, Jupiter, New York, poverty, slavery

Introduction

- ¹ Jupiter Hammon, acclaimed as the United States' first published African American poet, is now recognized as a significant figure in American literature. Born in 1711, he published his first poem in 1760 and died about 1805, leaving an important body of poetry and prose. He lived most of his life on a large northern plantation, the Manor of Queens Village, a principal holding of the Lloyd Family.^[1] He was owned by a succession of Lloyd family members who facilitated his education and the publication of his work. In recent years, scholars have examined his writings in greater depth. They have also sought to learn more about his

life and its broader historical context in order to illuminate our understanding of Northern slavery and its demise during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[2]

- 2 Among Hammon's more controversial writings was his last published work, *An Address to the Negroes in the State Of New York* (1787), in which he stated that "it may be more for our own comfort" to remain in bondage rather than be freed.[3] While this statement has been interpreted as an apologia for slavery, he was referring specifically to the concern, wide-spread at the time, that northern slave holders might abdicate responsibility for elderly slaves, no longer able to fend for themselves after lifetimes of service, by manumitting them without adequate provision for their care. Since he was elderly himself and, at the time that he penned his address, all of his family members remained enslaved, this issue was relevant to his personal situation since he had no assurance of care if he was freed. However, a recently discovered poem by Jupiter Hammon, written two months after the Address but never published, speaks less equivocally of the evils of slavery and the merits of freedom.[4] Even so, as general manumission became more likely, the issue of how freed slaves who were elderly, impoverished, or in ill health were to be treated emerged as a critical and very troubling issue for African Americans; for all former slaves, the avenues to self-sufficiency were often rocky and uncertain and their place as a minority within the broader white-dominated society of the North remained to be negotiated.
- 3 In her pioneering book *Jupiter Hammon and the Biblical Beginnings of African-American Literature*, Sondra A. O'Neale defended Jupiter Hammon's suggestion that elderly slaves might benefit by remaining in bondage, observing that, with respect to Hammon's own situation, "we know of no wife, children, or other younger family members, either slave or free, who could have cared for him, or provided a home [for him if he were freed,] nor is there evidence that housing was available." [5] This paper argues to the contrary that Jupiter Hammon actually had an extensive family in the Town of Huntington that resided near him in bondage and, following their manumission in the early 1790s, sheltered him in freedom. Indeed, during the immediate post-manumission period on Long Island, kinship ties were the strongest source of economic stability for freed persons, particularly for elderly slaves; without them, protection and support were often meager or unobtainable, depending on the uncertain charity of the town's Overseers of the Poor. Hence, the first generation of freed African Americans, many of whom were already in their middle or later years upon manumission, tended to stay quite near the sites of their former enslavement. Faced with limited economic opportunities in some of these locales, their children were more likely to seek employment farther afield, with mixed consequences for the continued maintenance of family ties. Nevertheless, another striking conclusion of this paper is that the areas chosen for settlement by Jupiter Hammon and his family members in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, persist to this day in having a strong African American presence.
- 4 Part I, encompassing the years 1640 through 1838, traces Jupiter

Hammon's family from its probable West African origins through seven generations on Long Island, documenting the family's movements and places of residence while enslaved. Part II, covering the years from 1790 through 1838, uses census records, property records, and local archival records to identify and locate family members as they moved from slavery to freedom.

I. The Hammon Family Migration Within the Atlantic Plantation System (1640-1838)

- 5 Early documentation relating to African American families generally ranges from the fragmentary to the nonexistent. In the case of the Hammons, however, an extraordinary number of original documents survive which have been used here to compile a preliminary genealogy. Although not comprehensive or altogether conclusive, it provides a revealing glimpse into the family's journey across time and space – from the mid-seventeenth century in West Africa to the nineteenth century in North America. Even more remarkably, the sites of three former plantations where various family members were enslaved remain extant today, including the Constant Plantation (in Barbados), the Manor of Shelter Island, New York, and the Manor of Queens Village where they were bound in servitude for about 130 years.
- 6 The family surname of Hammon, however, first appeared in the mid-eighteenth century when the family was owned by Henry Lloyd. This appellation, attributed to the poet Jupiter (and underscoring his creative bent) was inspired by a religious context. Jupiter was a devout Christian and his faith profoundly influenced his literary work. For example, he inherited his father Obium's prayer book (found among the Lloyd papers) which was inscribed "obium Rooe [sic] – his book. God give him grace – 1710/11". [6] Evidently, Obium was taught to read the Bible at a very early date with the approval of his masters. The word inscribed next to Obium was deciphered in 1888 to be "Rooe". However, it is currently believed to be "Rose", the name of the woman who apparently became Obium's wife, about December of 1710. The same book was later inscribed by their son, "Jupiter Lloyd his book AD 1745." It is the only instance of the surname Lloyd ever being applied to Jupiter, by himself or any of the Lloyd family. A possible source for the name he later adopted is the Bible—perhaps the one he purchased for himself in 1733—since many editions published during this period included a glossary of terms in which the Latin word "Jupiter" was defined as meaning lord or father and signified salvation and the Hebrew word "hammon" was defined as preparation.[7] Thus when the poet adopted the surname Hammon for himself, with the apparent approval of the Lloyd family, sometime after 1745, its implied meaning reflected his belief in Salvation Preparation.[8] His brother Obediah also adopted it before his death not later than 1755, but spelled it with a "d", as found in the English surname Hammond.
- 7 The apparent progenitors of the Long Island family that came to be called Hammon were Tamero and Oyo, two African-born slaves.[9] Certain details imbedded in the records indicate their West African origins and their transportation to America in the early 1660s. Tamero, listed as the husband of Oyo in the will of Nathaniel Sylvester (their

master on the Shelter Island plantation) may be identified with the Igbo-speaking Ibo district located in the southeastern interior region of what is now Nigeria, in West Africa.[10] The Ibo obtained slaves from among their own people at this time and brought them to the coastal port of Old Calabar, where they monopolized the local trade with European slave ships. Some captains sailed to Spanish ports via the notorious Middle Passage, a voyage of several weeks across the Atlantic Ocean. Spanish law required that, upon arriving in America, incoming slaves be baptized in the Catholic religion, resulting in the common occurrence of arbitrary baptism names. Occasionally, groups of unsold captives from Spanish ports were brought to the English island of Barbados and sold to the planters there.[11]

- 8 Oyo, the wife of Tamero, may be identified likewise with the Yoruba-speaking kingdom of Oyo located in the western interior region of what is now Nigeria. The Fon people of Dahomey acquired Oyo captives at this time through intermittent warfare and village raids and sold them to coastal “big men” in the vicinity of Ouidah. English slave ships normally sailed from this port directly to English possessions, including Barbados. Captive Africans were customarily identified in ships’ manifests by their port of embarkation and their ethnicity. As a result, ethnic identifiers were often assigned to individual slaves as given names, including Oyo. [12]
- 9 Tamero and Oyo likely arrived separately on Barbados in the early 1660s. Their new home was the Constant Plantation, which produced sugar and was owned by a partnership of merchants, including Constant and Nathaniel Sylvester.[13] The Barbados partners also acquired all of Shelter Island, located in Peconic Bay, adjacent to Long Island. It served as a provisioning plantation, producing food supplies for the Barbados work force. Several enslaved Africans were transferred from Barbados to Shelter Island, including Tamero and Oyo.[14] Nathaniel Sylvester obtained a royal warrant establishing the Lordship and Manor of Shelter Island in 1666; by 1673, Nathaniel and his brother Constant had secured sole interests from their other partners in the Manor, including ownership of the Manor slaves.[15]
- 10 When Nathaniel died in 1680, his will listed the enslaved Africans who resided there.[16] Tamero and Oyo were named, heading one of six families, with four children, one girl and three boys, including their son Obium (c. 1668-1757).[17] His name is significant. Obium is one of several spellings of the Igbo word Obia, which means diviner, one who communicates with the spirits.[18] The name was a powerful statement of identity likely given to him by his Igbo-speaking father, rather than by his Yoruba-speaking mother. In Nathaniel’s will, the words boy and girl were coded, at the time, to indicate an age range of 6 to 18. An average spacing of 2 years between children indicates that the youngest child in 1680 was born not later than 1674 and that Obium was about 12 years old.[19] Another document of 1687 lists Obium as a man, coded to mean aged 19 years or more. [20] Obium’s birth year thus can be extrapolated to be circa 1668. Tamero and Oyo were last mentioned in the records in 1688.[21] They likely died before 1698 and were buried in the African Cemetery at the Sylvester Manor.[22]

- 11 The death in 1687 of Constant Sylvester of Barbados forced the settlement of outstanding debts among the Sylvester relatives. One result was the sale of Obium to James Lloyd on September 26, 1687. Obium was taken to the town house of James and Grizzell Sylvester Lloyd, in Boston, Massachusetts.[23] Another Lloyd slave, a girl named Rose (c. 1681-1745), was already residing in Boston when Obium arrived there. James Lloyd bound her out, for an annual fee, to the household of Edward Higby, a tenant farmer at the Lloyd family Manor of Queens Village.[24] Obium attempted to escape from Boston on horseback in 1691, but was caught and bound out to others, for an annual fee ranging from 5 to 7 pounds in provincial currency.[25] James Lloyd died in 1693 and his estate, including Obium and the Lloyd Manor, was inherited jointly by his children Grizzell, Henry, Joseph, and Rebecca.[26] Several other African American slaves, including Rose, had been inherited jointly by the Lloyd children from their mother, Grizzell Sylvester Lloyd, by right of dowry.[27]
- 12 When Henry Lloyd relocated from Boston to Long Island, he gathered together five African American slaves from Boston to work at the Lloyd Manor, including Rose (c. 1681-1745) who had already lived there for 22 years. Obium (c. 1668-1757) arrived in March of 1709 from Boston, where he had been bound out to Henry Lloyd's father-in-law John Nelson.[28] Jack (c. 1670-1730) also arrived from Boston, where he had served in the household of Henry Lloyd's sister Rebecca, wife of James Oliver. Jack was trained as a butcher, possibly on the Sylvester family Manor of Shelter Island, and may have been one of Obium's two younger brothers.[29] Nero (c. 1690 – nlt 1755) and Bridget (c. 1690-1769) also arrived from Boston, where they served in the households of Henry's brother Joseph Lloyd and his sister Rebecca Lloyd Oliver.[30] Obium, Rose, Nero, and Bridget remained on the Lloyd Manor as the slaves of Henry Lloyd. Jack remained the property of Rebecca Lloyd Oliver and was eventually bound out for an annual fee, probably not later than 1718, to work as a butcher in New York City.[31] Obium and Rose were the parents of two sons, Jupiter (the poet) and Obediah. Nero and Bridget, who were about a generation younger, are identified here as the progenitors of the Kit family on the Manor and the parents of three children. The Hammon and Kit families merged through later intermarriages; by the nineteenth century, they were the common ancestors of all Hammon family descendants living in the Town of Huntington, New York.[32]
- 13 Jupiter Hammon (October 17, 1711-1805) grew up to become a butler and senior servant at the Lloyd Manor and apparently never married or had children. The Hammon family line continued through Jupiter's brother, Obediah Hammond (c. 1715-nlt 1755). He was affiliated with the St. John's Episcopal Church of Huntington and had a wife and three children, namely Richard (c. 1740-nlt 1790), Cato (c. 1742-nlt 1790), and Ruth (c. 1744-May 5, 1817). All known Hammon family descendants apparently trace back via Richard and Ruth to Obediah. [33]
- 14 New York conducted a census of slaves in 1755, which enumerated eight African Americans, five male and three female, residing on the Lloyd

Manor at that time.^[34] They included: Obium (aged 87), Jupiter (44), Kit (40), Samuel (33), Benjamin (17), Bridget (65), Hannah (40), and Cloe (14). The census did not include Elkanah Kit (17) or Obediah Hammond's children Richard (15), Cato (13), and Ruth (11). The Hammond children had apparently been orphaned before that date and were living with Henry Lloyd's sons in New England. Elkanah Kit had been sent with them.^[35]

- 15 Henry Lloyd died in 1763 and the Lloyd Manor was equally divided in 1764 between his four surviving sons: Henry Jr., John, Joseph II, and Dr. James II. Their father's will enjoined all of the brothers to share the expenses of caring for the Manor slaves in their old age.^[36] Despite his later worries about elderly slaves being left indigent, Jupiter was unusual in that his master rewarded his years of service with the proceeds of an orchard, which seem to have provided him with some modest retirement income.^[37] The family papers clearly show that the Lloyd brothers felt a sense of familial regard for the Hammon and Kit families, perhaps since they had all grown up together. Although other slaves were bought and sold in the course of business, members of these two families were apparently never sold away. John Lloyd Jr., who was being groomed to take over the management of the Manor farms, was strictly instructed to ensure the comfort and contentment of Cato Hammond (c. 1742-nlt 1790) when he was returned to the Lloyd Manor in 1769.^[38]
- 16 Richard Hammond was returned to the Manor about 1757.^[39] His wife Cloe (January 13, 1741-nlt 1790) was a member of the Kit family.^[40] Their two sons, Benjamin (c. 1761-1827) and Boston (c. 1763-1836) lived with their extended family on the Manor, except during the Revolutionary War, when they all fled as refugees to Hartford, Connecticut.^[41] They returned to the Manor at the end of the war and became the first members of the Hammon family to attain their freedom and later settle in Huntington, New York. Benjamin Hammon and his wife Phoebe (1767-after 1830) were freed by John Lloyd Jr. in 1791 (and again by Amelia Lloyd in June 1793) and were married as free persons.^[42] Their three children—an unidentified son (c. 1792-after 1821), Samuel (c. 1794-after 1821), and Charity (1806-after 1830)—were always legally free. Benjamin's grandson, Daniel Hammond (1814-May 3, 1838), the child of his unidentified son, was apparently indentured for a time to assure his education. Boston Hammond was also set free in 1791. He and his wife Peni (c. 1765-December 25, 1838) were also married as free persons and their five children were always legally free.
- 17 Elkanah Kit (January 29, 1738-c. 1804) and his wife Ruth Hammond Kit (c. 1744-May 5, 1817) were sent from Long Island to John Lloyd's home in Stamford, Connecticut not later than 1755.^[43] They eventually had four children, a son Edward (c. 1765-after 1795) and daughters Juda (c. 1768-after 1798), Nancy (c. 1770-after 1802), and Sarah (c. 1780-nlt 1805), all born and raised in bondage. The family left Stamford when John Lloyd took up residence on his part of the Lloyd Manor about 1783.^[44] Edward became the property of John Lloyd Jr. before 1790 and Sarah likewise in 1791; in 1792, both were inherited by John Lloyd Jr.'s widow Amelia.^[45] Edward gained his freedom in 1795, when

Amelia's petition for it was approved by the Town of Oyster Bay, New York.[46] When John Lloyd Sr. died in 1795, Elkanah, Ruth, Juda, and Nancy were inherited by Henry Lloyd III, who did not own slaves himself and immediately gave them their freedom.[47]

- 18 The protection of slaves, under the New York law of 1785, was flawed and resulted in some confusion, which was clarified by the Act of 1788. Between 1791 and 1795, Benjamin, Phoebe, Boston, Peni, Elkanah, Ruth, Edward, Juda, Nancy, and Jupiter were all set at liberty. During the 1790's, the former Lloyd Manor was within the political jurisdiction of the Town of Oyster Bay, where Town officials and many former masters apparently misinterpreted the law and unilaterally "manumitted or set at liberty" their slaves, without proper documentation. Years later, some of these former slaves petitioned the Town in order to establish a formal legal record and obtain manumission papers.[48] Only Edward's manumission was properly entered in the Oyster Bay Town Records. Although other family members were acknowledged as free in various documents, Samuel, Hannah and Sarah Kit (Elkanah's uncle, mother and daughter respectively) died in bondage. Sarah, the last known Hammon family descendant who was enslaved, apparently died before reaching the minimum legal age for manumission. As this convoluted account suggests, the last decades of the eighteenth century in New York were a time of flux as enslaved people, slave owners, and government officials alike grappled with the transition away from a system of institutionalized bondage.

II. Migration of the Family Within Huntington, NY (1790-1838)

- 19 At the end of the eighteenth century, Jupiter Hammon, as well as a number of other family members, migrated from their respective Lloyd Manor residences to Huntington Village, where they began to establish new lives within a fledgling free African American community.[49] The 1800 Federal Census for Huntington contains a tantalizing entry for a three-member household, headed by a Jupiter with no last name and listed under "All other free Persons." This may be the household of Jupiter Hammon, Benjamin Hammon and Phoebe, Benjamin's wife. Since Benjamin actually owned the house, Jupiter's designation as the head of household may reflect his seniority and that the income from his orchards was then the family's main source of support.[50] John Brush was listed as their neighbor to the immediate north.
- 20 According to the records of the Overseers of the Poor, Benjamin Hammon testified that he purchased a house in 1799 from Stephen Brown for \$125.[51] A property title search included in the Town of Huntington Historic Sites Survey (1979), locates Brush's house at 125 West Shore Road, placing Jupiter's residence at 73 West Shore Road. [52] These houses were the only houses on that part of West Shore Road in 1800.[53] They were situated approximately a mile north of Huntington Village at the head of the harbor, where a large gristmill was constructed by Zophar Platt in 1752.[54] John Brush purchased the mill and adjacent house in 1763.[55] Benjamin's purchase of a house in this locale may well have been motivated by employment opportunities at the mill, on sailing vessels, or in local shipbuilding enterprises; the proximity of the Park Avenue home of Amelia Lloyd, one of his former

owners, could have provided additional employment options.

- 21 At the time that Benjamin Hammon purchased the house, Jupiter Hammon was 88 years old and very likely in need of some assistance. Since his birth in 1761, Benjamin, the grandson of Jupiter's brother Obediah, had lived in the same household with Jupiter. As Jupiter's second closest relative, with whom he had the longest relationship of any of his existing family, Benjamin was of the right age to manage both the house and Jupiter's care. According to the ledgers of Peleg Wood's store, Jupiter and Benjamin were living in Huntington Village by 1796/7.^[56] On January 9, 1797, for example, the ledger documents that Jupiter purchased rum and a jug.^[57] Since this appears to have been his only purchase at the Wood Store within the critical time period between 1796 and his death, circa 1805, it seems likely that he was living with his grand-nephew who also had an account at the store.^[58]
- 22 Yet if Jupiter relied on his grand-nephew to provide a home for him in his later years, he also contributed enough financially that following his death in 1805 the family struggled to make ends meet. Benjamin's sale of the house around that same time may be connected to Jupiter's death and the loss of his income to the household.^[59] By 1821, Benjamin was, according to his own description, "destitute of the means of support."^[60] Constant shifts in employment and the general instability of the laboring economy rendered the lives of many first generation freedmen similarly precarious, particularly as they aged. This is a theme which pervades the narratives of Hammon family members, and other manumitted slaves as well.
- 23 The 1800 US Federal Census for Oyster Bay lists Boston, the younger brother of Benjamin, as a head of household enumerated by name and residing within the Mathias Abbot household on Lloyd Neck.^[61] Boston worked for Mathias Abbot as a free laborer for several years after his manumission in Oyster Bay in 1791.^[62] His household included his wife Peni and five children whose names and genders remain unknown, except for one son who died about April 15, 1830, whose coffin was charged to the Town of Huntington Overseers of the Poor.^[63]
- 24 Boston and Peni, while not enumerated in any other census, are well documented by other sources, which indicate their residence in the Huntington Village area, beginning not later than August 2, 1796. The Peleg Wood Account Ledger #4 contains entries for provisions purchased, or services rendered, for the inclusive dates August 2, 1796 through November 12, 1796.^[64] This log contains a long list of food and household items purchased by Boston, as well as such services as "shoes mended." On the credit side a note indicates he was to work for Peleg Wood for six months at a salary of 24 pounds, to settle his account. A further note, dated June 17, 1797, reads, "one day lost Child sick." Although Boston and his wife were able to live as an independent family after removing from their place of bondage, the need for him to labor for a local merchant to pay off their debts was typical of the economic strategies employed by several Hammon family members and reveals how tenuous their economic survival remained.

The ledger kept by Peleg Wood's son, John Wood, between the years 1829 and 1850, contains the last store account entries found for Boston, before he sought assistance from the Overseers of the Poor. These charges are dated 11 July and 29 July, 1829 for the purchase of rye flour and tobacco. On July 15, a partial payment was entered for 3 shillings 8 pence in cash.[65] The Peleg Wood and John Wood ledgers, documenting purchases at the store on West Neck Road, indicate that Boston's family was living within northwest Huntington Village.

- 26 The Overseers of the Poor provided Boston's family with aid from January to March, 1836 that included several loads of wood, 2 bushels of corn, flour, and molasses. Again, on 30 March, 1836, charges included 3 shillings for 10 pounds of flour and 10 shillings for 3 pounds of pork for "Boston of colour." [66] Given the lack of previous listings of aid to Boston, these provisions, supplied at the end of his life, were probably emergency supplies to the family when he was unable to work. After the first quarter of 1836, no further entries are noted for Boston by the Overseers of the Poor which suggests that he probably died around March of that year. In July, Boston would have been 73 years old.
- 27 Not long thereafter, his wife Peni was admitted to the Poor House. On March 17, 1837, their records state "Peni of colour ... 1[number of persons]," signifying she was now alone.[67] Without her lifelong companion and most likely physically unable to care for herself, Peni needed more comprehensive care. In the Overseers' report of "Paupers Deaths at the Poor House," "Peni of colour widow of Boston" was recorded to have died on December 25, 1838.[68] Aged 72 at her death, she was buried at Town expense in the Old Burying Ground.
- 28 Elkanah and Ruth Hammond Kit and their daughters Juda and Nancy were held in bondage by John Lloyd Sr. at least until his death and the probate of his will in 1795. In December, 1795, John Sr.'s eldest son Henry III formally inherited his property, and with it, the Kit family. [69] The Kit family, although not retaining the Hammon name, were close relations of Jupiter Hammon through Ruth Hammond Kit, the niece of Jupiter Hammon by his brother Obediah. Ruth was Jupiter's closest living relative.
- 29 Shortly after 1795, both Nancy and Juda appear in the records of Peleg Wood's Huntington store.[70] The ledger entries, designated as accounts belonging to Nancy Lloyd and Juda Lloyd respectively, are dated October 1796. Both accounts have been brought over from a previous ledger indicating that they had likely been freed at the time John Lloyd's will was probated, although no formal records of their manumissions have been found.
- 30 The ledger entries for Nancy and Juda at the Wood store are revealing. Nancy's account adds five years interest, accruing on an unpaid October 1796 balance. A notation dated June 30, 1802, credits the account "by cash in full received of Henry Lloyd [III]," who perhaps paid the bill to avoid a charge of abandonment or to preserve Nancy's freedom. The law as of 1799 specified that if freed persons were unable to care for

themselves, they would become the charge of their former owner. Juda's account details the purchase of serge, chintz, muslin and calico as well as binding, evidently to make clothing either for herself or for her newly-freed family, most likely including her mother and father. Juda's account shows a continuing effort to pay the bill, at first by work and cash and thereafter by cash alone, suggesting she was either employed, supported by a wage earner, or both. She succeeded in paying the account in full, making a total of seven payments between October 1796 and July 1798.[71]

- 31 No further record was found for either Nancy or Juda. They either removed from the Town or married into other households. Nancy's failure to pay her bill for five years, entailing Henry Lloyd's intervention in 1802, may indicate that she had died or that she had abandoned the account by leaving the area. Although uncorroborated, a reasonable theory is that Nancy and Juda, like many members of the younger generation of African Americans after manumission, were forced to leave their homes in search of greater job prospects elsewhere; their elderly parents, meanwhile, remained behind in Huntington and faced growing economic hardship as they aged.
- 32 One of the few options available to former slaves who became indigent was to submit to another form of coerced labor, namely annual terms of servitude. Under the auspices of the Oversees of the Poor, they were bound out to work for local employers based on contracts that were auctioned off each year to the highest bidder. Beginning in 1805, ten years after the family's manumission, Ruth Hammond Kit, mother of Nancy and Juda, was among the "the poor put out for one year" to the highest bidder.[72] For the next twelve years, the Overseers duly noted the price of her services and the names of those who bid on her services, including Gilbert Platt, owner of Platt's Tavern (3 separate years), Rebecca Sammis (5 separate years), Selah Smith (2 separate years), and Timothy Bennett (2 separate years).[73] On April 2, 1817, Timothy Bennett's successful bid for "Ruth Kitt (of colour)" was only 5 shillings and 6 pence, a very low price for the year, indicating the seventy-three year old woman was probably in ill-health.[74] Indeed, her term with him was brief. According to the "Record of the deaths of the Poor since 1808," on "May 5, 1817 Ruth Kit (of colour) Departed this life." [75] Bennett may well have bid on her in an act of mercy since he later paid an additional \$59 to the Overseers, possibly to cover her burial expenses. Her unfortunate slide into indigence seems to have been precipitated by her husband's death. Since her daughters may have moved away (or possibly died) and effectively abandoned her, she was bereft of family support.
- 33 Ruth Kit's long dependency on the vagaries of the Town's management of the poor in the early nineteenth century is a poignant reminder of the struggles endured by the formerly enslaved in making the difficult passage to freedom. She was caught up in a complicated system of hiring out the poor, standing outside in the April weather on the Village Common, suffering the indignities of the "public gaze" for yet another year, waiting to know with whom she would be living, and worrying about whether she would be adequately provided for and what the

nature of her service would be.[76] This system, regulations notwithstanding, left a lot to the discretion of the successful bidder, and the Overseers' oversight responsibilities were not spelled out. Hence there is no way of knowing what sort of labor was expected of Ruth or what care, if any, she received.

- 34 Forced to sell his house following Jupiter's death, Benjamin Hammond and his growing family, which now included three children (Samuel, Charity, and an unnamed son), moved to an area on the southeast side of Huntington Village that remains a historically black community today. [77] They resided in a house on, or adjacent to, property belonging to Nathaniel S. Prime and Mary Prime at 18 Spring Road. [78] By 1820, his son Samuel Hammond had apparently married and established his own household, opposite Alexander Mather who resided at 324 Park Avenue.[79] This location suggests that Samuel may have rented a house owned by the Prime family.[80] Alternatively, he may have found lodgings in the rectory of the St. John's Episcopal Church, which was often vacant because it did not have a resident pastor.[81] Unlike his father who, at least briefly, possessed a house, Samuel was unable to acquire property of his own. Since no further references to him have been found in the village of Huntington, however, Samuel may have followed the pattern of out-migration in search of employment opportunities.
- 35 In Samuel's case, evidence suggests that that he may have ventured to Amityville. In 1860, an African American male child age 7 also named Samuel Hammond, son of Levi and Almira, appears in the census for Amityville, the largest village south of Huntington (and part of the Town of Huntington until 1872). It is not implausible that this child was the grandson of Samuel Hammond. Amityville developed a large African American population in the nineteenth century and was the site of the first African Methodist Episcopal Church (founded 1815) in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.[82] The AME church network, dotting the north and south shores of Long Island, may have facilitated migration as well as marriages among the members of different congregations.[83] By 1845, the Amityville AME Church had exactly the same number of congregants as the Huntington AME church.[84] With its comparatively thriving African American community, Amityville may easily have been an attractive employment and residential destination for Samuel Hammond, although his presence there remains unconfirmed.[85] Meanwhile, Benjamin Hammon's household was enumerated in the 1820 Census for Huntington under "Free Colored Persons" as including one male under 14, one male 45 and over, and one female 45 and over. The 1820 Census is the first time that African Americans were designated by age cohorts. This household appears to comprise Benjamin (age 59), Phoebe (age 53), and their grandson Daniel Hammond (age 6).[86] By then, Benjamin had moved his family to a house in the vicinity of Creek Road, possibly into the home of their eldest son to become their grandson's caregivers. A distinguishing feature of this area was once again the presence of a grist mill, which provided employment opportunities until it closed in 1826.[87]
- 36 Although this area soon developed into one of Huntington's most

enduring African American settlements, the Hammon family continued to face setbacks. In 1821, Benjamin made an application to the Overseers of the Poor, suggesting a downturn in their circumstances around the same time that Samuel departed Huntington Village. In 1823, Benjamin reappeared in the Overseers of the Poor Records, but interestingly not this time as the recipient of aid but as a bidder on another man's labor contract.[88] An entry under "the conditions of hiring out the Poor are the same as the preceding years" with a date of April 2, 1823 lists "Saml Starr of colour to Ben Lloyd color" with a comparatively low price of \$3.25, paid by Divine Hewlett, possibly the men's former employer.[89] A notice of Samuel Starr's death in the Overseers records, on April 22, 1823 provides the reason for the low amount.[90] He was dying when Benjamin took him in, an apparent act of friendship. Such acts of providing charitable support for those no longer able to care for themselves, and where realistically little other aid would have been available, is a recurrent pattern, as seen in the case of Jupiter Hammon's niece, Ruth Kit. The need for such personal interventions in the market-based indentured labor system for the poor highlights the deficiencies of social welfare for former slaves who were elderly or infirm and could no longer work.

- 37 Benjamin lived until at least July 1827, when he was last recorded in Nathaniel Potter's Day Book buying a substantial number of household provisions.[91] The Potter Day Book also notes that, as early as 1823, Benjamin had paid for his purchases by doing farm work for Potter. This affiliation suggests that Potter rescued him from uncertain financial circumstances, by extending credit to Benjamin and allowing him to work off his debt in the last years before his death. In the 1830 census, the only remaining Hammon recorded in Huntington by name was Benjamin's twenty-four year old daughter, Charity Hammond, who was listed with her mother, Phoebe, then 64. They resided within a cluster of households on Spring Road near Main Street, the same neighborhood where her father, Benjamin Hammon dwelled in 1810.[92] Charity apparently harbored her mother until her death, suggesting why Phoebe's name, unlike the names of Peni and Ruth Kit, never found its way into the records of the Overseers of the Poor.
- 38 At the southern end of Spring Road where it meets Nassau Road and New York Avenue, the 1836 Coast Survey designates one structure occupied by a "Negro." [93] This is another compelling example of first generation freed persons seeking to live near already established African American household members, in areas near their former places of enslavement. This is also fascinating evidence of an African American post-manumission settlement area which remains to this day. The Evergreen Missionary Baptist church, founded in 1910, near where an African American household is indicated on the map, has a congregation larger than any other African American church in the Town of Huntington. In addition, a small enclave of African American residents living there today reveals the endurance of this community, the only surviving African American community within Huntington Village that was not decimated by Urban Renewal programs in the 1950s and 60s.

By 1836, the US Coast Survey shows four structures on the north and west sides of Creek Road.[94] The easternmost structure, now known as 61 Creek Road, is still standing. It was conveyed to Peter Crippen by Elbert Walters in 1864.[95] The adjacent structure was conveyed to Nelson Smith by Elbert Walters in 1854.[96] Both Crippen and Smith were founders in 1843 of the First (Bethel) African Methodist Episcopal Church, which quickly became a bulwark of the black communities in Huntington (and nearby Cold Spring Harbor), providing an effective network of social support unavailable to the first generation of freed persons.[97] Although their membership in the AME church cannot be confirmed, Hammond family members may well have later sought out that affiliation, especially given how influential the AME founders were in this closely-knit community.[98]

Conclusion

- 40 As attested by the precarious existence of most Hammon family members, Jupiter Hammon's concerns for the economic survival of former slaves who were elderly was well founded. Many survived only by cobbling together meager assistance from the Overseers of the Poor and from local merchants who extended credit or bartered provisions in exchange for labor, a system entirely dependent on merchants' good will. Moreover, this was a safety net in name only since it was predicated on the physical ability of the laborer to carry out his or her work obligations; even when the Overseers of the Poor assumed care, the recipient, no matter in what physical condition, was required to work, literally until he or she dropped. When the Poor House was established in 1790, it was not a place available to everyone in need. The experiences of those depicted here augured for a more dependable and fairer system. The costs of freedom for that first generation of freed men and women who struggled to survive in the absence of a meaningful safety net or sufficient economic opportunities, make it clear how close to the truth Jupiter Hammon came, in admonishing those that supported manumission without thought to the actual conditions for those manumitted.
- 41 The census indicated that many members of this first generation of freed African Americans lived interspersed among white households. At the same time, however, there is strong evidence that cohesive African American communities began to form as early as the first decade after manumission.[99] Jupiter Hammon's family members appear to have sought the protection and familiarity afforded by these early community clusters. When younger manumitted persons chose or were forced to leave these early settlement communities to seek employment elsewhere, it caused the breakdown of family support networks and left the elderly dependent on non-family solutions for care. Fortunately, the churches later formed in these early communities, that became their unifying centers, afforded another very important means of protection for elderly manumitted persons, in the form of shared responsibility for their care. In one documented case, the care of an elderly freedwoman was shared by several different First AME Church (now Bethel AME) member households. Undoubtedly there were other similar arrangements which prevented the formerly enslaved from becoming a public responsibility. The numbers of elderly versus the numbers who

appear in the Overseers of the Poor rolls would suggest this.[100]

- 42 Some of these African American communities have persisted until the present day, in spite of urban renewal activities which destroyed structures, reworked settlement patterns, and separated residents from their communities of origin. Descendants of the core group who migrated into Huntington Village after manumission may also be found in adjacent communities such as Amityville, Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, and communities further east including Setauket and Sag Harbor which also had significant African American populations in the early nineteenth century, as shown by their many African Methodist Episcopal and AME (Zion) churches.[101] As exemplified by the intertwined relationships of Jupiter Hammon's family members, African American kinship networks, fragile as they sometimes were in the antebellum North, did provide a modicum of reliability, both economically and socially; without them, protection and support for the most vulnerable elderly members of that population were often illusory.[102]

Appendix

THE HAMMON FAMILY LINE OF DESCENT MATRIX

FIRST GENERATION

Tamero (1) (c. 1640-nlt 1698), married c. 1667, wife Oyo (1) (c. 1640-nlt 1698)

SECOND GENERATION

Obium (2, Tamero1) (c. 1668-1757), married 1710, wife Rose (2) (c. 1681-1745)

Jack (2, Tamero1) (c. 1670 -1730)

Tom (2, Tamero1) (c. 1672-after 1698)

Betty (2, Tamero1) (c. 1674-after 1698)

THIRD GENERATION

Jupiter Hammon (3, Obium2, Tamero1) (Oct 17, 1711-1805)

Obediah Hammond (3, Obium2, Tamero1) (c. 1715-nlt 1755), married c. 1739, wife unknown

FOURTH GENERATION

Richard Hammond (4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamero1) (c. 1740-nlt 1790), married c. 1760

Wife Cloe (of Richard4) (Kit family3, Isaac2, Nero1) (Jan 13, 1741-nlt 1790)

Cato Hammond (4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamero1) (c. 1742-nlt 1790)

Ruth Hammond Kit (4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamero1) (c. 1744-May 5, 1817), married c. 1764

Husband Elkanah Kit (of Ruth4) (Kit family3, Kit2, Nero1) (Jan 29, 1738-1804)

FIFTH GENERATION

Benjamin Hammon (5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1761-1827),
married 1791

Wife Phoebe (of Benjamin5) (c. 1767-after 1830)

Boston Hammond (5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1763-1836),
married 1791

Wife Peni (of Boston5) (c. 1765-Dec 25, 1838)

Edward Kit (5, Ruth4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1765-after 1795)

Juda Kit (5, Ruth4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1768-after 1798)

Nancy Kit (5, Ruth4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1770-after 1802)

Sarah Kit (5, Ruth4, Obediah3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1780-nlt 1805)

SIXTH GENERATION

Unknown (6, Ben5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1792-after 1821)
married 1813

Samuel Hammond (6, Ben5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (c. 1794-after
1821)

Charity Hammond (6, Ben5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (1806-after
1830)

Five Children of Boston Hammond (6, Boston5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2,
Tamer01)

SEVENTH GENERATION

Daniel (7, Unknown6, Ben5, Rich4, Obed3, Obium2, Tamer01) (1814-May 3,
1838)

Notes

[1] The Manor of Queens Village occupied all of what is presently referred to on maps as Lloyd Neck, situated within the current boundaries of the Incorporated Village of Lloyd Harbor, within the Town of Huntington, in the very northwest quadrant of Suffolk County adjacent to the Nassau County line. Until 1885 Lloyd Neck was a part of Queens County and the Town of Oyster Bay. Nassau County, including the Town of Oyster Bay, was formed from Queens County in 1898. The original Manor of Queens Village comprised some 3,000 acres at the time Jupiter Hammon and members of his family resided there.

[2] Stanley Ransom and Oscar Wegelin, eds., *America's First Negro Poet; the Complete Works of Jupiter Hammon of Long Island* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1970); Sondra A. O'Neale, *Jupiter Hammon and the Biblical Beginnings of African American Literature* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press; [Philadelphia]: American Theological Library Association Society, 1993); Sondra A. O'Neale, "Jupiter Hammon: America's First Black Writer," *Long Island Studies: Evoking A Sense of Place*, ed. Joann P. Krieg (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1988), 119-128; Sidney Kaplan and Emma Nogrady Kaplan, "The Emergence of Gifts and Powers [Jupiter Hammon]," *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*, revised edition (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 191-200; Marshalette Gillings, "Jupiter Hammon: America's First Black Poet," *Long Island*

Historical Journal, 14, Nos. 1-2, (Fall 2001/Spring 2002), 147-155; Phillip M. Richards, "Nationalist Themes in the Preaching of Jupiter Hammon," *Early American Literature*, 25, No. 2 (1990), 123-138; George Wallace, "Jupiter Hammon, A New Appraisal," (paper presented to the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities on the occasion of Jupiter Hammon's 300th Anniversary celebration, October 15, 2011.) <http://poetry.about.com/od/18thcpoets/a/Jupiter-Hammon.htm?p=1>, April 13, 2012.

[3] Jupiter Hammon, "An Address to the Negroes in the State of New-York (1787)," Paul Royster, ed. *Electronic Texts in American Studies*, Paper 12. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/12>. Accessed April, 2012.

[4] Before the address was published, the first manumission law of 1785 was promulgated. It neglected to cover the issue of the care of elderly, already manumitted slaves. It may be argued that the Address aided in amending the 1785 law in 1788. Jupiter Hammon, *An Essay on Slavery with Submission to Divine Providence Knowing that God Rules Over All Things*, Hillhouse Family Papers, 1707-1943 (inclusive), 1771-1938 (bulk), Image No. 1016207 11-10-1786, Group No. MS0282, Series XVI, Box No. 80, Folder No. 499, Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University; "UT Arlington Professor, Graduate Student Discover Poem written by 18th Century Slave from New York," News Center, University of Texas, Arlington, 2/5/2013, Online.

[5] O'Neale, *Biblical Beginnings*, 222.

[6] Henry Lloyd IV, "Curious Old Hymn Book and Golden Buried Treasure at Huntington," *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 16, 1888.

[7] Jean B. Osann, *Henry Lloyd's Saltbox Manor House*, rev. ed. (Huntington, NY: Lloyd Harbor Historical Society, 1982), 24.

[8] The original publisher's information is lost. The glossary (Alphabetical Table) may be found in other extant eighteenth-century Bibles, such as: Rev. John Brown, *The Self-Interpreting Bible: Containing the Sacred Text of the Old and New Testaments* (New York: Hodge and Campbell, 1792). Several other credible sources explain the origins of Jupiter Hammon's name. Sondra A. O'Neale also posits a Biblical origin for the name. Margaret Brucia advances the argument that his name may have been suggested by a book in Henry Lloyd's possession referred to as Ogilby's *Virgil* in an inventory of 1706. A second book from that inventory is entitled *Histoire du Monde*, with no author noted. Both of these books describe the God Jupiter Hammon. In *Histoire du Monde*, Vol. 2, Book 17 entitled "De Merveilles du Monde" in Chapter I refers to "D'autres ajoutent a ces Merveilles, le JUPITER HAMMON..."; see George Loveridge Bowen, *James Lloyd II, M.D. (1728-1810) and his Family on Lloyd Neck* (Printed by author and Lloyd Harbor Historical Society, 1988), 12; Margaret A. Brucia, "The African American Poet, Jupiter Hammon: A Home-born Slave and His Classical Name," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Springer, New York, NY, Spring 2001), 515-522; Urbain Chevreau, *Histoire du Monde*, Chez la Veuve d'Edme Martin & Jean Boudot, 1686, Vol. 2, Book 17, Chapter 1, 325.

[9] Nathaniel Sylvester, *Last Will and Testament, March 19, 1680, Proved October 2, 1680*, General Sylvester Dering II Documents 1:6, Shelter Island Historical Society, Shelter Island, NY (SIHS); Nathaniel Sylvester, *Probate Inventory, September 22, 1680*, General Sylvester Dering II Documents 1:1 (SIHS).

[10] Ibid.

[11] Douglas B. Chambers, "My Own Nation": *Igbo Exiles in the Diaspora* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 73-91; Basil Davidson, *The African Slave Trade, Pre-*

Colonial History 1450-1850 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961), 53-75, 102-7, 198-223; Phillip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 62-73; Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 91-4; Patricia M. Samford, *Subfloor Pits and the Archaeology of Slavery in Colonial Virginia* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 29-40; John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 183-205.

[12] Davidson, *African Slave Trade*, 53-75, 102-107, 224-246; Rediker, *Slave Ship*, 88-90; Samford, *Subfloor Pits*, 29-40; Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 183-205.

[13] Vincent T. Harlow, *A History of Barbados 1625-1685* (London: Oxford University/Clarendon Press, 1926), Frontispiece – Ligon 1657 Map; Gaynell Stone, *The Sugar Connection: Holland – Barbados – Shelter Island* (Stony Brook, NY: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, 2011), DVD; Sylvester Dering II Documents, 1:1, 1:6, SIHS; Nathaniel Sylvester Estate, *Bill of Sale – Estate of Nathaniel Sylvester to James Lloyd, for Four Slaves, September 26, 1687*, Sylvester Manor Archive, NYU, Record Group I, Series A, Box 140, Folder 21, http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/fales/sylvester_content.html; Peter Sylvester, *Bond – Peter Sylvester to James Lloyd, for Two Slaves, September 11, 1688*, Sylvester Manor Archive, NYU, Record Group I, Series A, Box 140, Folder 22, http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/fales/sylvester_content.html; Lloyd, “Curious Old Hymn Book,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 16, 1888; Dorothy C. Barck, ed., *Papers of the Lloyd Family of the Manor of Queens Village, Lloyd’s Neck, Long Island, New York 1654-1826* (New York: Little and Ives/New York Historical Society, 1927), 219-221, 293-294; Bowen, *James Lloyd II*, 2-6.

[14] Stone, *The Sugar Connection*; Sylvester Dering II Documents, 1:1, 1:6, SIHS; Sylvester Manor Archive, NYU, I: A: 140: 21, 22; Barck, 109-115, 219-221, 293-294.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Sylvester Dering II Documents, 1:1, 1:6, SIHS.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Chambers, *Igbo Exiles*, 73-91.

[19] Sylvester Dering II Documents, 1:1, 1:6, SIHS.

[20] Barck, 110.

[21] Sylvester Manor Archive, NYU, I: A: 140: 22.

[22] Stone, *The Sugar Connection*; Edmund Bailey O’Callaghan, *Lists of Inhabitants of Colonial New York: Excerpted from the Documentary History of the State of New York* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1979), 51.

[23] Sylvester Manor Archive, NYU, I: A: 140: 21.

[24] Barck, 105.

[25] Barck, 144.

[26] Barck, 117.

[27] Kenneth Scott and Susan E. Klaffky, *A History of the Joseph Lloyd Manor House* (New York: Publishing Center for Cultural Resources/Society for the

Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1976), 8-9. By ancient custom, Grizzell Sylvester Lloyd retained certain legal ownership of real and personal property by right of dowry, although most property rights were vested in her husband, James Lloyd. When Grizzell died in 1689, the captive Africans that had been her property were inherited jointly by her husband and children. When James died in 1693, their children retained equal shares by right of survivorship. That did not include Rebecca, who was the daughter of Rebecca Leverett, the second wife of James Lloyd. The papers of the Sylvester and Lloyd families reflect several instances of informal transfers of ownership without bills of sale among family members. Using their own terminology, ownership of a slave was “made over” from one Lloyd family member to another. Jack, the butcher, became the property of Rebecca Lloyd Oliver in this manner.

[28] Barck, *Papers of the Lloyd Family*, 187-188.

[29] Bowen, *James Lloyd II*, 10; Barck, 261.

[30] Bowen, 10.

[31] Barck, 261; Osann, *Henry Lloyd's Saltbox Manor House*, 4-6; Scott, *Joseph Lloyd Manor House*, 8-9.

[32] Osann, 23; Scott, 8-9, 59; St. John's Episcopal Church Manuscript Collection, 4, Huntington Historical Society Library, Huntington, NY; Moses Scudder, ed., *Records of the First Church in Huntington, Long Island, 1723-1779* (Huntington, NY: Printed by author, 1898), 28, 31, 33, 39. The identification and relationship of Hammon and Kit family members was extrapolated from these sources and numerous mentions and significant omissions found in the papers of the Lloyd family and the public records of the Town of Huntington, which are cited in Part II of this paper.

[33] Ibid.

[34] John Cox Jr. ed., *Oyster Bay Town Records; Vol. 8, 1795-1878* (Oyster Bay, NY: Town of Oyster Bay, 1940), 325-326.

[35] These are further instances of slaves being “made over” from one Lloyd family member to another. The records indicate that Henry Lloyd Sr. transferred the Hammond children and Elkanah Kit in this manner. Richard went to Henry Lloyd Jr. of Boston, MA. Cato went to Dr. James Lloyd II, also of Boston, MA. Elkanah Kit and Ruth Hammond went to John Lloyd Sr. of Stamford, CT.

[36] Barck, 642-650, 713, 716-726.

[37] Barck, 734, 746.

[38] Barck, 716, 721-726.

[39] Richard was “made over” for the second time by Henry Lloyd Jr. of Boston, MA to his brother Joseph Lloyd II of Long Island and thus returned to the Manor of Queens Village.

[40] Osann, 23.

[41] Osann, 30-38; Bowen, 133-138, 153-156.

[42] Scott, 59; Rufus B. Langhans, ed., *Huntington Overseers of the Poor Records, 1752-1861, Parts 1 and 2* (Huntington, NY: Town of Huntington, 1986), Part 2, 113.

[43] Cox, Vol. 8, 325-326.

[44] Osann, 40. John Lloyd Sr. and his family were residing on Lloyd's Neck when the U. S. Federal Census was taken in 1790.

[45] Scott, 59; Osann, 39-40.

[46] John Cox Jr., ed., *Oyster Bay Town Records; Vol. 7, 1764-1795* (Oyster Bay, NY: Town of Oyster Bay, 1938), 266.

[47] Barck, 853-7.

[48] Cox, Vol. 7, 92, 226, 266, 318.

[49] Nathaniel S. Prime, *A History of Long Island, with Special Reference to its Ecclesiastical Concerns* (New York, 1845), 80, 124, 249. Prime describes Huntington Village as follows: "The original settlement, still forming the principal village in the Town [of Huntington] is on the north side spread over a considerable territory at the head of the harbor. The entrance to the harbor is the opening to the [Long Island] Sound between Lloyd's Neck and Eaton's Neck, called Huntington Bay, and extends up into the land, a distance of 5 miles, forming 4 or 5 distinct harbours or principal landings: viz., Lloyd's Harbour—West Neck—Huntington—Little Cow Harbour and Great Cow Harbour... All these harbours lie within the territorial limits of this town, from which a considerable coasting trade is carried on. From a very early period a ferry has been maintained between this village [Huntington Village] and Norwalk, Ct., a distance of 20 miles, which is regulated by the town." He also gives the population of the entire Town in 1840 as 6,562 persons, and 6,746 persons in 1845. Comparatively, the "colored" population is given as 266 persons in 1845 according to the New York State Census as contained in Prime's *History*. His population figures for the Town of Huntington include the present Towns of Huntington and Babylon.

[50] Barck, *Lloyd Papers*, 734, 746.

[51] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 113. According to Benjamin Hammon's deposition, recorded by the Justice of the Peace in Huntington on January 24, 1821, he stated that "he was Born a Slave to Henry Lloyd Senor of Quens Village in the Town of Oysterbay in Queens County and that he the deponent was by him given to Joseph Lloyd & was Manumitted by Mrs [Amelia] Lloyd widow of the sd John Lloyd Deceased in the year 1793 in the month of June at Queens County Court House and about Six years after he was manumitted he purchased a freehold in the Town of Huntington of Stephen Brown for which he gave 125 dollars and that he actually paid the purchass Money and that in a few years after he sold the said freehold estate and has Resided in the sd Town of Huntington ever since he sold his place except for a space of fifteen months which time he worked on hire for John N. Lloyd that he has a wife and three children with him and is destitute of the means of Support and that he asks Relief of the Overseers of the Poor of sd Town of Huntington." The document was signed with Benjamin Hammon's mark.

[52] Town of Huntington Community Development Agency, *Town of Huntington Historic Sites Survey* (Huntington, NY: Town of Huntington Office of the Town Historian, 1979), Building Structure Inventory Form HV122.

[53] Town of Huntington Historic Preservation Commission, *73 West Shore Road Historic Designation Report* (Huntington, NY: Town of Huntington Office of the Town Historian, March 15, 2005); Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey 1979*, HV 126B. House numbering did not occur until the twentieth century after several more structures were built between these two dwellings accounting for the widespread difference in house numbers.

[54] Trustees of the Town of Huntington to Zophar Platt, April 10, 1752, Huntington Town Records, Vol. III, 112. Pursuant to this grant Zophar Platt

built the Lower Mill, located at the west end of present day Mill Dam Road, and references his ownership of the Upper Mills located on the north side of Hill Place, west of New York Avenue adjoining the Creek. The Upper Mill was purchased by Zophar Platt of Jacob Scudder in 1749 and later was owned by Maurice Place. After Place's death, it ceased to operate.

[55] Zophar Platt to John Brush, March 14, 1763, Town of Huntington Town Clerk's Archives, Land Deeds III, original page 142, renumbered 573. John Brush Sr. purchased the mill and homestead in 1763. When he died in 1795, they were inherited by his son, who mortgaged the mill properties on November 13, 1797 to Richard Conkling. (Suffolk County Clerk's Office, *Mortgage Liber D: 119.*) It is John Brush, Jr. who is enumerated north of and adjacent to Jupiter Hammon and Benjamin Hammon in 1800.

[56] W. W. Wood Collection, *Peleg Wood-General Store Ledger#4, 1791-1811/John Wood Ledger #1, 1845-1850* (Huntington, NY: Huntington Historical Society), 83,140.

[57] P. Wood, *Store Ledger #4*, 59.

[58] Morton Pennypacker, "Old Book Shows Jupiter Hammon, Colored Poet, Got Ample L.I. Education," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 3, 1929 (clipping, no page number).

[59] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 113.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Osann, *Henry Lloyd's Saltbox Manor House*, 40.

[62] Scott, 59; Charla E. Bolton, *Founding Fathers and Mothers: African American Settlement in the Post-Manumission Period—Town of Huntington, New York, 1790-1870* (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, New York, New York, 2008). This pattern of employment by former owners or their agents directly after manumission and prior to settlement in a nearby community is noted in this paper.

[63] Rufus B. Langhans, ed., *Huntington Overseers of the Poor Records, 1729-1843 Addendum* (Huntington, NY: Town of Huntington, 1992), 145.

[64] P. Wood, *Store Ledger #4*, 48.

[65] J. Wood, *Ledger #1*, 71.

[66] Langhans, *Overseers Addendum*, 81, 94, 101; the item noted as "Order in fan. Boston" appears several times within the period January–March 1836. The meaning of this entry is not clear.

[67] Romanah Sammis, *Huntington-Babylon Town History* (Huntington NY: Huntington Historical Society, 1937), 79. Most of these charges are against an account allowed by the Overseers of the Poor at the Zophar B. Oakley store. This store was located on the north side of Main Street approximately where the roadbed of New York Avenue runs north from Main Street in Huntington Village. The Town Overseers had specified places to shop for goods including the Oakley store. While not indicative of Boston's precise location, his account there does indicate that it was accessible to his place of residence, and taken together with the purchases at the Wood General Store on West Neck Road, also provides an approximation of his geographical area of residence in northwest Huntington Village.

[68] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 41.

[69] Barck, *Papers of the Lloyd Family*, 853-857.

[70] P. Wood, *Store Ledger #4*, 98, 121.

[71] P. Wood, *Store Ledger #4*, 121.

[72] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 2, 5, 7, 10-12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21-22.

[73] The approximate locations of three of the bidders who took Ruth Kit into their homes can be identified. Timothy Bennet lived in Huntington Village near the northwest corner of Wall and Gerard Streets. Gilbert Platt lived at Platt's Tavern at 410 Park Avenue. Sammis, *Huntington History*, 80; Mrs. Norman D. Talbot, "Huntington's Old Town Spot and the Village Common, Part VII" (paper given before the Huntington Historical Society, April 21, 1924) in *The Long Islander*, June 13, 1924, 16. Accessed online March 3, 2011, <http://apa3.olivesoftware.com/Default/Skins/Suffolk/Client.asp?Skin=Suffolk&AppName=2>.

F.R. Hassler, *U. S. Coast Survey: Central Long Island, New York* (Topographical Map #T-45); New York 1836-1838, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Rockville, MD. Online access <http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/content.php?pid=134971&sid=1223424>. Selah Smith resided in the area then known as Long Swamp, in the vicinity of the ponds formerly known as the Hollow Ponds, north of Maplewood Road, on the west side of Lenox Road. Ruth Kit's removal to Long Swamp, now known as South Huntington, four miles distant, after a life spent in the northern part of Huntington, must have been daunting.

[74] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 22.

[75] Langhans, Part 2, 76.

[76] Mrs. Norman D. Talbot, "Huntington's Old Town Spot and the Village Common, Part II" (paper given before the Huntington Historical Society, April 21, 1924) in *The Long Islander*, May 9, 1924, 16. Accessed online March 3, 2011, <http://apa3.olivesoftware.com/Default/Skins/Suffolk/Client.asp?Skin=Suffolk&AppName=2>; Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 1.

[77] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 113.

[78] 1810 US Federal Census, Huntington, Suffolk, NY ("Benjamin Loyd"); Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey 1979*, HV202; E[dward D[orr] G[riffen] Prime, *Notes Genealogical, Biographical and Bibliographical, of the Prime family*. (Cambridge, Mass: Printed for private use [University Press], 1888) 42; Suffolk County Clerk's Office, Record Room, Historic Documents Library, (Suffolk County Center, Riverhead, NY), *Deed Liber N: 177*. Peter Brush, a slave manumitted by John Brush on September 25, 1793, is also adjacent, possibly on the same property as Benjamin (Rufus B. Langhans, ed., *Manumission Book of the Town of Huntington and Babylon, Long Island, New York, with some earlier manumissions 1800-1824*, (Town of Huntington, 1980), 79. Given that both Benjamin Hammon and Peter Brush are enumerated next to the Primes, it is not improbable that they were both employed by the Prime family. Nathaniel S. Prime's grandfather, the Rev. Ebenezer Prime, had baptized many Hammon family members (Moses Scudder, ed., *Records of the First Church in Huntington, Long Island, 1723-1779* (Huntington, NY: Printed by author, 1898.)

Garret Golden is found adjacent to Benjamin on the south in the census and can be located through a series of deeds executed by the Primes and other property owners in the vicinity which reference Garret Golden as an adjoining property owner, supplying further evidence of Benjamin's location (Suffolk County Clerk's Office, *Deed Liber I: 330; Deed Liber 31:336; Deed Liber V: 293; Deed Liber V: 296; Deed Liber 31: 332*). William and Garret Schenck,

who are also enumerated to the south, are documented in the *Huntington Babylon Town History* living at “the head of Meeting House Brook” on the west side of Spring Road, most likely at 239 Spring Road, a house that according to the *Huntington Babylon Town History* dates to 1680 (Sammis, *Huntington History*, 48; Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey*, HV 207B). Ebenezer Gould is to the west at the southeast corner of Main Street and Nassau Road at 182 Main Street (Suffolk County Clerk’s Office, *Deed Liber G: 49*). Based on these data, we conclude that Benjamin and his family were living on Spring Road very near Main Street, affording him ready access to a large number of potential employers, as well as places to purchase household goods and provisions.

[79] Suffolk County Clerk’s Office, *Deed Liber 32:334*.

[80] E.D.G. Prime, *Prime Family Notes*, 24. 325 Park Avenue was a tenant house. It was previously the home of Israel Wood, and built prior to the Revolutionary War. It was demolished in the 1950s. It stood abutting the west side of Park Avenue, one house south of Isaac Losee’s at 269 Park Avenue. For many years it was used as a tenant house by Ezra C. Prime, who owned the property as part his thimble manufacturing concern. Ebenezer Prime’s daughter, Mary, married Israel Wood on August 16, 1763 and died on December 10, 1766, leaving a son and a daughter. It is possible the house descended to the Primes through Mary Prime Wood.

[81] Nathaniel S. Prime, *History of Long Island*, 260.

[82] Lynda R. Day, *Making A Way to Freedom, A History of African Americans on Long Island* (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 1997), 54, 126.

[83] Nathaniel S. Prime, 416, 417. Prime lists nine A.M.E. churches, and ten A.M.E Zion churches. Prime notes that the AME Church appears to be laudably engaged in promoting the interests of their people.

[84] Nathaniel S. Prime, *History of Long Island*, 416. Both Huntington and South Huntington, now Amityville, had 52 congregants listed, the largest number in Suffolk County. In Nassau County, only the Lakeville and Cedar Swamp A.M.E churches had more.

[85] Day, *Making a Way to Freedom*, 54.

[86] Benjamin, although he gave his name as Hammon to the Overseers of the Poor in 1821, is listed as Hammond in the census. It is likely that the census taker may have interpreted the name Hammon as Hammond. Robert C. Hughes, Esq. ed., *Huntington’s Historic Cemeteries Database* (Huntington, NY: Town of Huntington Historian, Ongoing). Daniel is never mentioned by name in the census, or other records examined, but his grave marker is in a section of the Old Burying Ground in the Town of Huntington, located on the south side of Main Street, west of Nassau Road. He is buried near other free blacks adjacent to Nassau Road. His marker records that he died on May 3, 1838 at 24 years of age, attesting to his birth in 1814.

[87] Sammis, *Huntington History*, 32; E. Belcher Hyde, *Atlas of a Part of Suffolk County, Long Island, New York, North Side, Sound Shore, Volume I* (Brooklyn, NY: 1917), Plate #27; Frank H. Johnson, *House on Hill Property (Residence of Rev. Clinton F. Hill)*, Historic Houses Huntington Creek Road, Photograph Collection (Huntington Historical Society Library, Huntington NY), Accession No. 75.1705; Martha K. Hall, *The Heart of Huntington* (Huntington, NY: Huntington Historical Society, 1958), 13; see also endnotes 54.

[88] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 33.

[89] Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey 1979*, CSH

[90] Langhans, *Overseers*, Part 2, 74.

[91] *Nathaniel Potter Day Book*, Oct. 1807-Nov. 1831, Acc. #10-67-183 (Huntington NY: Huntington Historical Society), 448,450.

[92] The households listed, in census order (with addresses where available), are: Charity Hammond, Oliver Conklin, Solomon Ketcham, Ebenezer Gould (239 Spring Road); Ebenezer Prime [II] (18 Spring Road); H. B. Rogers (32 Spring Road); Garret Golden; Ebenezer Smith (126 Spring Road); and Jacob Ketcham (136 Spring Road). The house numbers listed after the name are those for which structures are recorded in the Town of Huntington Historic Sites Survey (Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey 1979*, HV 202, HV 202A, HV 205A, HV 206, HV207B; Hassler, *Map of Central Long Island 1836-1838*, T-45; Chace, 1858 West Huntington; Suffolk County Clerk's Office, *Deed Liber G: 215; Deed Liber V: 293, 296*). The 1836-1838 U.S. Coast Survey for Central Long Island provides a survey of the area south of Main Street in Huntington Village, which contains the names of most of the households listed above in the Census. They are found along the section of Spring Road immediately south of Main Street. Generally, this is in the area of the Meeting House Brook, named from the fact that it ran past Huntington's first church. This brook is near the western edge of the road, no doubt accounting for the cluster of early dwellings close by.

[93] F. R. Hassler, U.S. Coast Survey (Topographical Map T-45).

[94] F.R. Hassler, *U. S. Coast Survey: Harbor and Village of Huntington, North Shore of Long Island, New York* (Topographical Map #T-24); A. D. Mackay & F. H. Gerdes Surveyors, (New York 1836), National Archives, Washington, D.C.
 Online access:
<http://http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/content.php?pid=134971&sid=1223424>

[95] Suffolk County Clerk's Office, *Deed Liber 128:564*.

[96] Suffolk County Clerk's Office, *Deed Liber 28:573*.

[97] Day, *Making a Way to Freedom*, 54; Bolton, *Founding Fathers and Mothers*, 7.

[98] Bolton, *Founding Fathers and Mothers*, Introduction. See also Huntington Community Development, *Historic Sites Survey*, HV128a, 129, 130,131,132,133,133a, 134, 134a, 146.

[99] The area defined by West Shore Road on the west, Mill Dam Road on the north, New York Avenue on the east and Mill Lane on the south, continued to be a significant community of African American families up to the recent past. A second early settlement area was located at the southern end of Spring Road near the junction with Nassau Road.

[100] Bolton, *Founding Fathers and Mothers*, 33. Clarissa Mills, the mother of George Mills is found in successive Censuses, in the households of several different AME church members, including Peter Crippen, Aaron Frazier, Allen Stokely, and Henry Wright. Apparently her care was a church responsibility.

[101] Nathaniel S. Prime, *History of Long Island*, 416.

[102] The authors of this paper have extensive knowledge and experience conducting primary local historical research. Mr. Metcalf has focused on Long Island settlement patterns and cultural development during the Colonial Period and the Early Republic, including African American studies, and has

lectured extensively throughout a long career. He is a recognized expert on early timber frame architecture and has served for many years on the Town of Huntington Historic Preservation Commission. Ms. Bolton, AICP, spent 32 years as a land use planner with the Town of Huntington. During this time she specialized in the planning, survey, and protection of historic resources in the Town of Huntington. In so doing she has documented many historic dwellings, is intimately familiar with title searching processes, as well as available primary records in both municipal and not for profit collections. Both authors have conducted a body of research relating to African American settlement in the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries in the Town of Huntington.
