

# The Lee Family and Nineteenth-Century Shinnecock Whaling

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1 The American whaling industry originated on Long Island in the mid-seventeenth century, and as the historian John Strong has demonstrated in numerous books and articles, including his essay in this collection, Native American men's labor was fundamental to the enterprise's growth and success.<sup>[1]</sup> The bounty of whales off Long Island and Cape Cod had inspired European colonists to enter the business within the first generation of English settlement. They whaled first from shore-based stations, and when whales near the coast became depleted, they headed to the North Atlantic, then the South Atlantic, and in the 1790s ventured around Cape Horn to whale in the Pacific Ocean. Concurrent with its global expansion, the American whaling industry developed into a mega-capitalist endeavor run by wealthy, stay-at-home investors whose large ships and barks carried twenty to forty men as crew and three to five whaleboats for hunting whales on the deep sea. Although Massachusetts came to dominate the industry in the nineteenth century, Long Island was well-represented in the world's oceans by whaleships out of Sag Harbor, New York, and as their ancestors had done, Native men from Long Island continued to work as whalers, no longer from the Long Island shore but instead on three-four year voyages that took them halfway around the world and back.

2 Herman Melville etched this era of whaling into the American psyche, and indeed the publication of his whaling masterpiece, *Moby-Dick*, in 1851 coincided with the industry's peak in the numbers of ships and laborers involved and the geographic reach of American whaling into all the world's oceans. But Native American whalers in his lifetime were not at all like he depicted them. His character Tashtego, supposedly a Wampanoag from Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts, exhibited primitive hunting instincts in his ability to spot whales at a distance and wield a harpoon with precision. As I discuss at more length in my recent books on Native whaling history (a book on the nineteenth century called *Native American Whalers and the World* and an edited collection of documents and oral histories, covering the seventeenth century up to present-day remembrances, called *Living with Whales*), Native Americans in the whaling industry in the 1840s and later rose in the ranks to become third, second, and even first mates. They exhibited a commitment to whaling as a profession and the skills required of those in command: literacy, the ability to make complex navigational calculations, and crew management. And they were rewarded for their professionalism with positions of authority, which meant also a higher rate of pay, enough to secure them a comfortable living.<sup>[2]</sup>

3 Nothing shows this better than the success achieved by members of the Lee family from the Shinnecock Reservation in Southampton, New York. Even though the five Lee brothers—Milton, Ferdinand, Notley, Robert (James R. Lee on crew lists), and Garrison (William L.G. Lee on crew lists)—composed the most illustrious Shinnecock whaling family of the nineteenth century, other Native men from Long Island and southern New England similarly rose to distinction as whaleship officers. Therefore, even though the concentration of so much whaling talent in one family was exceptional, the Lee brothers' experiences reveal much about the significance of whaling in the economy and culture of the Shinnecock Indian community and reflect developments in Long Island and American whaling history more generally.

4 The eldest of the brothers was Milton, born around 1831. The youngest was Garrison, born seventeen years later. Their Shinnecock mother, Roxana Bunn, had married their African American father, James Lee, soon after he moved north from Maryland. He was said to have been an escaped slave, which suggests that the naming of their youngest son after abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison was especially meaningful. A "large, well-built man, of good appearance" and "a natural orator," Lee converted to the Second Adventist Church and officiated as that church's pastor on the Shinnecock Reservation, garnering the nickname "Priest Lee." James and Roxana Lee had many daughters, too, but it is the sons who are the focus of this essay, since they all went on to become whalers.<sup>[3]</sup>

5 They did so at a time when Sag Harbor's whaling industry was in decline, and like many men schooled in the rich whaling legacy of eastern Long Island, they pursued whaling careers by finding employment elsewhere.<sup>[4]</sup> I constructed voyage histories for the Lees (see table) from crew lists and other sources but unfortunately am missing

some of their earliest voyages, probably because they were on vessels out of Sag Harbor. Sag Harbor's surviving whaling records are not as complete as those for other whaling ports, especially when compared to those for New Bedford, Massachusetts, the largest whaling port in the world. In 1852, New Bedford's weekly trade newspaper, *The Whalers' Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript*, began printing the name and rank of crew members upon a vessel's departure. And the National Archives at Boston has nearly a complete collection of the U.S. Customs House crew lists for New Bedford area whaling voyages and for those out of New London, Connecticut as well. Because these official crew lists recorded the name, birthplace, residence, age, complexion, and even height of the men making up each vessel's crew, they make it possible to follow a Native whaler's entire career from when he started whaling, usually sometime in his mid-teens, to his early forties, at which point he typically retired and took up farming or entered another, less arduous maritime industry closer to home.<sup>[5]</sup> In short, it was easiest to find the Lees in the records once they showed up on New Bedford vessels.

6 The table lists twenty-five or so whaling voyages known to have had one of the Lees in the crew. Only two of these voyages left from Long Island. In 1847, when Sag Harbor still had a thriving whaling business, seventeen-year-old Milton shipped on the *Panama*, a remarkable voyage because it had ten Shinnecock men (five Cuffees, two Bunns, two Eleazers, and "Minturn" Lee) in a crew of 26, thus making Shinnecoeks more than one third of the ship's complement. And Notley began whaling on a Long Island vessel, the *Philip the First* of Greenport, probably on its 1854-1858 voyage.<sup>[6]</sup> It is very likely that Ferdinand got his start on Long Island, too, because he must have had several years' worth of whaling to his credit before showing up in New Bedford records as third mate on the 1857-1860 voyage of the *Young Phenix*. Before they made the transition to New Bedford, Milton and Notley looked for employment nearby, across the Sound in New London, which after New Bedford and Nantucket was the nation's third largest whaling port, followed by Sag Harbor. By 1863, all five brothers had made the shift to New Bedford. When the industry later transitioned to San Francisco, so did a few of the Lees, though they continued to return home to the Shinnecock reservation to rest up in between voyages.<sup>[7]</sup>

7 Presumably, New Bedford's busier waterfront offered the Lees more choices and the opportunity to negotiate a good lay (share of the profit) and high rank. Various New Bedford whaling firms hired them—Nathan Church, E.C. Jones, Loum Snow, Swift & Perry, Swift & Allen, Jonathan Bourne, Jr.—so the Lees were not choosing their ships out of loyalty or connection to a particular ship owner.<sup>[8]</sup> However, they almost always had at least one other Shinnecock whaler as company, occasionally one of their own brothers. The bark *Pioneer* of New London, 1862-1863, had Notley and Garrison aboard and five other Shinnecock men: Russell Bunn, Abraham Cuffee, and Moses, Joshua, and Israel Kellis. On his next voyage, on New Bedford's *Nassau*, Garrison served alongside Noah and Chelsey Beaman, Moses and Alonzo Kellis, Alonzo Eleazer, and James Cuffee. Clearly, these large contingents of Shinnecock whalers coordinated their plans so as to ship together.

8 No more than two of the Lee brothers ever sailed together at a time, however, and their work histories varied considerably. Notley and Robert showed the least interest in whaling. After several voyages, Notley had risen only as far as boatsteerer (the rank of a petty officer who also had the duty of harpooning whales) when he and Garrison, also a boatsteerer, joined the *Abraham Barker* in 1871. A year later, Notley deserted at the Tonga Islands with two other crewmen. The captain retrieved the other two by offering a reward but did not want Notley back and made no effort on his behalf, even though his whereabouts were known. Garrison stayed committed to the voyage; nearly a year before Notley's desertion, he had been promoted to fourth mate. Notley never returned home. He may have formed personal attachments that made it difficult to leave or just preferred life on a Pacific isle. Years later, Garrison told a visitor who inquired about the Lees' extraordinary whaling achievements that the family had had no word from Notley in ten years but had heard that he had "reached the Kingsmill group of islands in the Pacific, married the chief's daughter, and is now king there."<sup>[9]</sup> As for Robert, Garrison reported that he been to sea for six years, the equivalent of two voyages, though he appears on crew lists for three. Shortly after Robert returned on the *California* in 1876, he was one of ten Shinnecock men who drowned while salvaging the wreck of the *Circassian* off the Long Island shore. Every Shinnecock family suffered from this horrific tragedy, and the Lees were no exception.<sup>[10]</sup>

9 The Lees' reputation as superior whalers rested primarily on Milton, Ferdinand, and Garrison, who all attained

positions of high rank. Milton and Garrison rose to be first mates on New Bedford whaleships. Ferdinand made it even further, to captain. Native American captains were a rarity in the whaling industry. Others of Native descent were related to the Paul Cuffe family of Westport, Massachusetts (not related to the Long Island Cuffees) and Amos Haskins, of Aquinnah Wampanoag ancestry but raised in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts. Being hired as first mate, but especially as captain, was not easy for a Native American, and the Lees faced many challenges. As a job, whaling was extraordinarily taxing. This created openings for Native men because, if more white men had sought out whaling as a profession, the racist climate of the nineteenth century would not have promoted Indians into positions of authority and responsibility. But whaling was tedious, dangerous, and smelly work, and the lay system of payment—based on shares, not on wages—made it high risk, allowing for a windfall reward one voyage and a total loss the next.[11] Surviving logbooks from the Lee brothers' voyages, including several kept by the Lees themselves while first mates, reveal something of their lives at sea and the kinds of difficulties they dealt with as whalers.

10 Milton reached the rank of first mate in good time, at the age of 25 and after three voyages. He must have impressed the owners of the bark *Amazon*, because he was a boatsteerer on that vessel in 1852 and made first mate on its next voyage four years later. As was customary for first mates, he kept the official logbook. It reads like any other logbook with a daily accounting of the weather, sail handling, location of the vessel, whales seen or caught, and crew problems. Drama erupted on the *Amazon* seven months into the voyage, on May 14, 1857, while “boiling” into oil the blubber from a whale caught in King George Sound, southwestern Australia. A petty dispute between Captain Robert D. Eldridge and the third mate degraded into abusive language and insults, resulting in the third mate's demotion and banishment from the “cabin” (quarters reserved for the captain and officers). Captain Eldridge took the logbook from Lee to record his version of the debacle, and then had Lee confirm the truth of Eldridge's statement by signing as “Witness.” What Lee thought of all this is indeterminable since the laconic logbook style does not reveal much emotion or reflection. Lee recorded a more dramatic incident in the November 21, 1857 entry. The captain's boat harpooned a sperm whale, which turned around, “seized the boat in his mouth,” and then dove, taking down into the sea the boatsteerer who had become caught in the harpoon line.

11 Other highlights of the voyage, from a reader's perspective, are the entries recording the attempted desertion and punishment of three members of the crew while still at Australia in early October, 1857. These men were punished in the usual ways, by being flogged and imprisoned “in irons in the forehole.” The logbook does not say if Lee himself wielded the lash. In any case, Lee had had enough of this particular voyage or, more likely, this particular captain. Instead of deserting, which risked ruining his future in the industry, he asked Captain Eldridge for his discharge in March 1858, while the vessel lay at Nukuhiva in the Marquesas.[12] He returned to New Bedford two years later as first mate on the *Christopher Mitchell*, whose owners expressed complete satisfaction with his work and recommended him as first mate on future voyages.[13]

12 Despite that recommendation, Milton ended his whaling years as second mate. Racism may have prevented some owners from considering him as first mate, but another cause could have been the mysterious ailment he had developed by 1865. That year, on the *Eagle*, Captain James McKenzie described Lee in his journal as “sick has fits.”[14] Lee did not continue the voyage but left at its first port-of-call, Fayal in the Azores, and returned to the United States in August, 1865 on the Azorean passenger vessel *Evarista* with eleven other American seamen whose voyages had been cut short by discharges or desertion.[15] His 1869 death at sea by drowning apparently happened near home, on the Shinnecock Reservation, and not while on a whaling voyage.[16]

13 It took Ferdinand somewhat longer to reach the rank of first mate, which he did at the age of 30 on the 1864-1868 voyage of the *Roman*. However, his progress was steady and assured as ship owners routinely supported his advancement, as evident in the notes on officers' capabilities that hiring agents maintained. Ferdinand consistently received high praise. He was rated an “A1” whaleman, an “A1” officer, and capable of being a “good 2 mate” when he arrived back at New Bedford as third mate on the *Young Phenix* in 1860. After returning on the *Young Phenix* in 1863 as second mate, he was rated an “A1 whaleman, good officer, will make good mate.”[17] On this voyage, he and others among the crew caught a disease while in the Indian Ocean, and Lee was frequently off duty for sickness. On his next voyage, within a few months of departing New Bedford as first mate on the *Eliza Adams*, Lee

was ill again, this time dangerously so. Captain Caleb O. Hamblin took him to two doctors in Fayal, one Portuguese and one English, and the diagnosis was “not favorable.”<sup>[18]</sup> Lee did recover, however, and when the *Eliza Adams* returned to port in 1871, the trade newspaper extolled its 2,000 barrels of sperm oil, 1,400 barrels of whale oil, and 11,000 pounds of baleen as a “splendid catch” reminiscent of “ye ancient times.”<sup>[19]</sup> The sizable return cargo would have been a factor in the owners of the *Callao* giving Lee his own ship to command on his next voyage.

14 Garrison’s reminiscences about his and his brothers’ whaling put a positive spin on Ferdinand’s stint as captain of the *Callao*, claiming that he had “made a good voyage of four years in her to the South Pacific,” but the logbook paints the voyage as a disaster, due primarily to Ferdinand’s problems with his officers and crew.<sup>[20]</sup> The *Callao* left New Bedford on July 15, 1871 with thirty-three men under Lee’s command, most of whom to judge by their Portuguese names were probably Azorean and Cape Verdean. A few had Irish names, and three were Shinnecock: third mate Andrew Kellis and seamen Luther Cuffee and Gilbert Eleazer.<sup>[21]</sup> The logbook of the *Callao*’s first two years reads like a typical voyage with one death and several desertions, first at the Azores and later at the port of Albany, Australia, which the *Callao* retreated to every few months for provisions while whaling on the same ground where the *Eliza Adams* on Lee’s previous voyage had done so well.

15 Signs of deeper trouble begin showing up in the logbook in April 1873, when at the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, Lee discharged first mate William A. Wood and shipped Charles H. Manly in his place. Other officers were promoted at the same time, Andrew Kellis now becoming second mate. At Hobart, Australia in November 1873, the men deserted in droves. Second mate Kellis was not much help as Hobart police put him in jail on the 21st of November for “drunken and disorderly conduct.” The *Callao* was stranded at Hobart for most of December “for want of crew” according to the logbook’s December 18th entry. Desertion was common on long whaling voyages, but this defection reached crippling proportions. The cause for it could have been due to any number of factors. Perhaps white men did not like serving under an Indian, or Lee did not exude confidence and authority in his role as captain. Or maybe Lee was just unlucky to find himself at sea with a bunch of malcontents.

16 Finally, Lee managed to hire a new first mate, John G. Morrison, who a few years back had captained the New Bedford whaler *Clarice* but presumably not to the owners’ satisfaction, since here he was in Hobart, unemployed and willing to go as first mate on the *Callao*. In a letter to acquaintances in New Bedford, Morrison defended Lee by asserting that “Captain Lee was using all possible means for catching them [the deserters], and had been partially successful.”<sup>[22]</sup> With some of the deserters caught and other men newly shipped, the *Callao* returned to whaling and finally, in 1874, had a productive streak, especially while chasing humpbacks at the Tonga Islands. Here, Ferdinand met up with his brother Notley, by accident or by design, and hired him temporarily as fourth mate. When the *Callao* left the area, Notley stayed on at Tonga. So did Morrison, the first mate. Ferdinand may have eyed Morrison’s discharge favorably because Morrison had had several violent altercations with crew members. In the logbook, Lee explained Morrison’s discharge only by writing that it was “by mutual consent” and that he “could not get along in the ship.”<sup>[23]</sup> There were more desertions, more discharges (including Kellis, whom Lee discharged for illness at the Bay of Islands in December, 1874), and two more first mates before the *Callao* rounded the Cape of Good Hope and arrived back in New Bedford in September 1875. Its modest cargo of oil and whalebone proved a loss to its owners.<sup>[24]</sup> Kellis survived and somehow made his way back home, only to go out again. He appears on the 1876 crew list of the ship *Milton* of New Bedford, not as an officer but a notch below, as boatsteerer.<sup>[25]</sup>

17 Ferdinand Lee also returned to whaling, but a decade later, at a lower rank, and maybe because he felt like he had to get away from the Shinnecock reservation for a while. In 1881 and again in 1882, the community elected him to serve as one of its three trustees. But tribal members then charged him with purloining money from the sale of seaweed on tribal property and instructed the three trustees elected in 1883 to sue him when the funds were not forthcoming.<sup>[26]</sup> Shortly after this conflict with his neighbors, he left for a season of Arctic whaling on the *Amethyst* of San Francisco, which had as first mate Moses Walker, another eminent Shinnecock who had been whaling since his teens.<sup>[27]</sup> Ferdinand Lee signed on as the *Amethyst*’s second mate. Last seen in mid-October off Cape Lisburne (Alaska) in the Chukchi Sea by men on the whaleship *Atlantic*, the *Amethyst* inspired a search that lasted well over a year. Those knowledgeable about Arctic whaling speculated on its fate. It was an old vessel, having been built in

1822, but was still considered seaworthy, and its captain, Patrick H. Cootey, was “an excellent seaman, who ha[d] a perfect knowledge of Arctic dangers” and three decades of whaling experience. The most logical explanation was that a gale overwhelmed the *Amethyst* and pushed it deep into ice floes. There persisted hope of the crew’s survival because “if the crew reached Land they will meet with friendly natives.”[28] But the U.S. Revenue Service’s search expedition was unable to locate the remains of the *Amethyst* and its crew.[29]

18 The fifth and youngest Lee brother, Garrison, had a career that matched Milton’s and Ferdinand’s in that he also reached a high rank. However, by chance, Garrison specialized in North Atlantic whaling grounds. On at least two voyages, he overwintered in Hudson Bay, or “Greenland” as he called it. On his first voyage, on the *Pioneer* at the age of sixteen, they were “frozen in” for ten months under conditions so extreme that two of the crew were “frozen to Death” on November 15, 1852. Twenty years later, the schooner *Abbie Bradford* made a similar voyage with Garrison as first mate. “Eight months out [of New Bedford], the captain died of consumption,” Garrison recalled, “and I took command of the ship, and after completing the voyage brought the vessel into port.” He probably kept the logbook for the duration of the voyage, but it has no signature to confirm its authorship. It suggests that this was an efficient and profitable voyage, especially after the captain’s long illness and death in April, when Lee took over. Although the logbook entries are spare in details, they give insight into what it was like for the crew to overwinter in Hudson Bay. They secured the schooner at Marble Island by banking it with snow. Some of the men went “gunning” to lay in a food supply, but they came to depend almost entirely on a hundred or more Native people to hunt for them. Some of these laborers had joined the *Abbie Bradford* at Cape Fullerton and were dropped off back home at the end of the voyage. Others came by sled from the Hudson Bay “mainland” and brought walrus, seals, bear, and deer to the schooner over the coldest winter months, presumably in exchange for trade goods. Unaccustomed to an Arctic diet, several of the crew were suffering from scurvy by the time the schooner pulled into New Bedford in September.[30]

19 Garrison returned home to the Shinnecock reservation to live at the family homestead with his mother (his father had died a few years earlier). Thus it happened that Garrison was out in the family garden in 1882 when a Southampton resident strolled through the reservation with a guest. They stopped to learn more about this “remarkable” yet “characteristic” Shinnecock family with “five sons, every one a seaman, and several rising to be masters.” Garrison recited the highlights of his and his brothers’ whaling careers to the tourist, who later published an account of their conversation. One can almost see Garrison from the writer’s description: “a stalwart fellow of over six feet, showing the Indian characteristics as plainly as his mother; and leaning on his plough handles, he gave us his family annals modestly, but without hesitation.”[31] This moment of bucolic retrospection would have been the perfect way to wrap up the Lee brothers’ story, with hard lives rewarded in the end by a peaceful retirement. But Garrison continued whaling, and in 1885, the vessel he was first mate on, the *Rainbow* of New Bedford, “was crushed in the ice near Cape Naverin ... and sank in fifteen minutes.”[32] The crew took refuge on nearby whalers. Garrison went aboard the *Amethyst*, probably choosing that vessel over others because of its Shinnecock officers, Moses Walker and Ferdinand Lee.[33] So, Garrison was on the *Amethyst* with Ferdinand when that vessel and its crew went missing.

20 By 1885, the only surviving Lee brother may have been Notley. Perhaps Notley lived to old age at Tonga or in the Kingsmill Group (today’s Gilbert Islands) and has descendants somewhere in the Pacific. The others all died young: Milton, Robert, and Garrison in their thirties and Ferdinand in his early fifties. Milton and Ferdinand had children who grew up on the Shinnecock Reservation, and indeed the whaling legacy of the Lee family does not end with the five Lee brothers but with Milton’s son Milton Winfield Lee Jr., called Winfield by family and friends. He went on only one voyage—that of the schooner *Abbie Bradford* to Hudson Bay with his uncle Garrison as first mate and acting captain after the schooner’s original captain died midway through the voyage. In their book of *Family Recollections*, Winfield’s granddaughters Beulah and Mabel Shippen gave his memories of this voyage: “He told of meeting Eskimos while his ship was ‘frozen in’ and recalled how the Eskimo ladies loved to come aboard and dance. His most emphatic memories, however, were of using try pots which were used to boil the whale blubber to extract the oil. He said the stench of the boiled blubber would last in his nose even after he got home. A walrus tusk memento of his experiences stayed in our parlor on the floor. As children we were required to dust it regularly.”[34] The noxious

smell of boiling whale blubber may have kept Winfield from pursuing whaling as a vocation as his father and uncles had done, but also by the 1880s the American whaling industry had just about run its course. Whereas at one time nearly all Shinnecock men had made their living as whalers, most in the twentieth century now looked to earn a livelihood closer to home. Employment at the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, founded in the 1890s, gave some Shinnecock men the means as talented and dedicated golfers to earn a living, travel the world, and acquire local and international celebrity reminiscent of the career trajectories followed by their fathers and grandfathers in the whaling industry.[35]

21 However, the memory of whaling remained a strong force in the Shinnecock community as later generations were born in or otherwise knew of the several houses on the reservation bought with “whaling money.” These houses were modest in size but still the most substantial homes on the Shinnecock Reservation. They were emblematic of the importance whaling income held in the impoverished reservation setting. One of these whaling houses belonged to Milton Lee and his Shinnecock wife, Mary Rebecca Kellis, known as Aunt Becky to the Shinnecock community and regarded with great affection and respect.[36] From a young age, Milton endured drudgery and hardship to earn a basic living for his family, but so did Becky Kellis. For decades, probably while Milton and Andrew Kellis (her second husband) were at sea, she labored as a maid and housekeeper in the houses of some of eastern Long Island’s most elite families, including, for a while, Theodore Roosevelt’s.[37] While the occupations open to Shinnecock men and women in the nineteenth century allowed them to take pride in a job well done and carried a hint of glamour due to their worldly associations, these were working people with difficult lives marked by arduous labor, low remuneration, and long absences from home and family. Holly Haile Davis of the Shinnecock community today explains what these Shinnecock men were probably thinking while far away in the Pacific or Arctic for three or four years at a time: “it means that there’ll be food on the table, and we can still live on our land, which has been our greatest accomplishment as Shinnecock people.”[38]

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## Appendix

### Known Whaling Voyages of the Lee Brothers

Table, 1

Name	Voyage	Rank	Comments
Milton (Lee 1832-1869)	Ship <i>Panama</i> of Sag Harbor (1847-1850)	-	-
	Ship <i>Peruvian</i> of New London (1850-1852)	-	-
	Bark <i>Amazon</i> of Fairhaven (1852-1856)	boatsteerer	-
	Bark <i>Amazon</i> of Fairhaven (1856-1860)	1st mate	Kept logbook (#ODHS 337 NBWM) until discharged at Marquesas 1858
	Ship <i>Christopher Mitchell</i> of New Bedford (1856-1860)	1st mate	joined vessel in Pacific ca. 1859
	Ship <i>Abigail</i> of New Bedford (1862-1865) possibly with Robert	2nd mate	ship burnt by <i>Shenandoah</i> in Okhotsk Sea

Name	Voyage	Rank	Comments
	Bark <i>Eagle</i> of New Bedford (1865-1869)	2nd mate	Discharged Fayal 1865
Ferdinand Lee (1833/34-1885)	Ship <i>Young Phenix</i> of New Bedford (1857-1860)	3rd mate	-
	Ship <i>Young Phenix</i> of New Bedford (1857-1860)	2nd mate	-
	Ship <i>Roman</i> of New Bedford (1864-1868)	1st mate	(discharged before 1867?)
	Ship <i>Eliza Adams</i> of New Bedford (1867-1871)	1st mate	kept logbook (#ODHS 265 at NBWM)
	Bark <i>Callao</i> of New Bedford (1871-1875) hired Notley in 1874	captain	partially kept logbook (#ODHS 667 at NBWM)
	Bark <i>Amethyst</i> of San Francisco (1885-1885)	2nd mate	Wrecked in Arctic crew lost
Notley Lee (1840/41-?)	<i>Philip I</i> of Greenport (1854-1858)?	-	-
	Brig <i>Pioneer</i> of New London (1862-1863) with Garrison	-	-
	Bark <i>Martha</i> of New Bedford (1863-1868)	boatsteerer	-
	Bark <i>Abraham Barker</i> of New Bedford (1871-1875) with Garrison	boatsteerer	deserted Tonga Oct. 1872
	Bark <i>Callao</i> of New Bedford (1871-1875) with Ferdinand	4th mate	hired at Tonga for humpback whaling season 1874
James R. Lee [Robert] (1844/45-1876)	Ship <i>Abigail</i> of New Bedford (1862-1865) [signed up but not on voyage?] if aboard with Milton	boatsteer	-
	Bark <i>Trident</i> of New Bedford (1865-1871)	boatsteerer	-
	Ship <i>California</i> of New Bedford (1872-1876)	boatsteerer	-
William L.G. Lee [Garrison] (1846/47-1885)	Brig <i>Pioneer</i> of New London (1862-1863) with Notley	greenhand	-
	Ship <i>Nassau</i> of New Bedford (1863-1865)	boatsteerer	ship burnt by <i>Shenandoah</i> near St. Lawrence Island
	<i>Florida</i> of San Francisco (1870-1871)	1st mate?	-

Name	Voyage	Rank	Comments
	Bark <i>Abraham Barker</i> of New Bedford (1871-1875) with Notley	boatsteerer to 4th mate	-
	Bark <i>Swallow</i> of New Bedford (1876-1878)	-	-
	Schooner <i>Abbie Bradford</i> of New Bedford (1880-1881) with nephew Milton Lee Jr.	1st mate to acting captain	logbook probably kept by him (#ODHS 489B NBWM)
	Bark <i>Rainbow</i> of New Bedford (1884-1885)	-	wrecked in Arctic Garrison joined <i>Amethyst</i> which then wrecked

**Sources for Table, 1:** For demographic information, Household #381, Southampton, NY, 1850 U.S. manuscript census, and West Hampton, NY, 1870 U.S. Census Mortality Schedule [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); Paul E. Sluby, *The Family Recollections of Beulah A. Shippen and Mabel S. (Shippen) Hatcher* (Long Island, NY: B.A. Shippen, 1994); Charles Burr Todd, *In Olde New York: Sketches of Old Times and Places in Both the State and the City* (New York: Grafton Press, 1907), 222; "The Circassian Wreck," *New York Times*, 1 Jan. 1877. For voyages: Sag Harbor crew lists, "Shipping Papers," Kendall Collection, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library New Bedford, MA (NBWM); New London crew lists, National Archives, *Records of the Collector of Customs for the Collection District New London, Connecticut, 1789-1938*, Microcopy Collection M1162 (see also the searchable "New London Crew Lists: 1803-1879" database (but note that it has transcription errors), Mystic Seaport Museum Research Library, Mystic, CT (MSM), <http://library.mysticseaport.org/initiative/CrSearch.cfm>); New Bedford and Fairhaven crew lists, New Bedford Port Records, National Archives at Boston, Waltham, MA, and for crew lists with ranks, see *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* (WSL), 5 Oct. 1852, 21 Oct. 1856, 5 Aug. 1862, 8 Dec. 1863 (*Nassau*), 15 Dec. 1863 (*Martha*), 19 July 1864, 13 June 1865 (*Eagle*), 21 Nov. 1865 (*Trident*), 30 July 1867, 23 May 1871 (*Abraham Barker*), 18 July 1871 (*Callao*), 13 Aug. 1872, 11 May 1880; for *Shenandoah*, WSL, 1 Aug. & 22 Aug. 1865; for *C. Mitchell & Young Phenix*, "Memorandum of Captains officers coopers Boatstealers &c That came home in Whalers from 1860 to June 1st 1870," Misc. Vol. #37, MSM; for *Eagle*, "List of Vessels sailed for the United States during the quarter ending September 30th 1865 and the names of Seamen sent in them," National Archives, *Despatches from United States Consuls in Fayal, 1795-1897*, Microcopy Collection T203, reel 6; for *Amethyst*, "The Lost Amethyst," Sag Harbor Corrector, 30 Oct. 1886, and *Rainbow*, WSL, 20 Sept. 1887; for *Philip 1* and *Florida*, see Todd, *In Olde New York*, 222; for *Abraham Barker*, 20 and 28 Oct. 1872, Logbook, Log #3, NBWM.

## Notes

[1] John A. Strong, *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island from Earliest Times to 1700* (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 1997); John A. Strong, "The Pigskin Book: Records of Native American Whalemen," *The Long Island Historical Journal* 3 (1990), 17-29; John A. Strong, "Shinnecock and Montauk Whalemen," *The Long Island Historical Journal* 2 (1989), 29-40. See also Everett J. Edwards and Jeannette Edwards Rattray, *Whale Off!: The Story of American Shore Whaling* (1932; reprint, NY: Coward-McCann, 1956); T.H. Breen, *Imagining the Past: East Hampton Histories* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995).

[2] Nancy Shoemaker, *Native American Whalemen and the World: Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015) and, as editor, *Living with Whales: Documents and Oral Histories of Native New England Whaling History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014); also relevant is my article "Mr. Tashtego: Native American Whalemen in Antebellum New England," *Journal of the Early Republic* 33 (Spring 2013), 109-32.

[3]Household #381, Southampton, NY, 1850 U.S. manuscript census, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); "A Man Out of Bondage," William Donaldson Halsey, *Sketches from Local History* (Bridgehampton, NY: n.p., 1935), 153, recounts James Henry Pierson's memories of James Lee but with factual errors; "James Lee," *South Side Signal* (Babylon, NY), 4 Dec. 1875. See also the genealogical information, family stories, and photograph of Milton, Ferdinand, and Garrison (p. 81) in volume of recollections of Milton Lee's descendants, Paul E. Sluby, *The Family Recollections of Beulah A. Shippen and Mabel S. (Shippen) Hatcher* (Long Island, NY: B.A. Shippen, 1994). Official crew lists at the National Archives at Boston, which despite its official name is actually located in Waltham, MA, show that all five brothers were tall, like their father; Ferdinand, at 6' 2 ½", was the tallest. Henceforth, for all voyage information, see table.

[4]For a list of American whaling voyages by year and port, demonstrating the decline in the number of Long Island vessels beginning in the late 1840s and New Bedford's much larger operations, see Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1878; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989).

[5]Shoemaker, *Native American Whalers and the World*, 199-202.

[6]As recorded in a conversation with Garrison Lee in the mid-1880s, in Charles Burr Todd, *In Olde New York: Sketches of Old Times and Places in Both the State and the City* (New York: Grafton Press, 1907), 222. For Philip I voyages, see Judith Navas Lund, *Whaling Masters and Whaling Voyages Sailing from American Ports: A Compilation of Sources* (Gloucester, MA: Ten Pound Book Company, 2001), 623.

[7]Todd, *In Olde New York*, 222.

[8]Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, gives ship agents' names.

[9]Todd, *In Olde New York*, 222.

[10]Carolyn Erland Brower, "The Circassian Story: 'We'll Float Tonight or We'll Go to Hell!'" in *The Shinnecock Indians: A Culture History*, Suffolk County Archaeological Association, *Readings in Long Island Archaeology and Ethnohistory*, edited by Gaynell Stone, vol. 6 (Lexington, MA: Ginn Custom Publishing, 1993), 367-94.

[11]Shoemaker, "Mr. Tashtego" and *Native American Whalers and the World*, ch. 1.

[12]He was discharged sometime before 22 March 1858, when a new first mate was hired; see logbook. On the *Amazon's* return to New Bedford, Captain Eldridge reported that Lee had been "very anxious for his discharge"; see return crew list at National Archives at Boston, Waltham, MA.

[13]"Memorandum of Captains officers coopers Boatstealers &c That came home in Whalers from 1860 to June 1st 1870," p. 22, Misc. Vol. #37, Mystic Seaport Museum Research Library, Mystic, CT.

[14]Crew list in Captain James H. McKenzie, Journal, bark *Eagle* of New Bedford, 1865-1869, Log #ODHS 329, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, MA.

[15]"List of Vessels sailed for the United States during the quarter ending September 30th 1865 and the names of Seamen sent in them," National Archives, *Despatches from United States Consuls in Fayal, 1795-1897*, Microcopy Collection T203, reel 6.

[16]West Hampton, NY, U.S. Census Mortality Schedule for 1870, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); Sluby, *Family Recollections*, 47.

[17]"Memorandum," 12.

[18]24 Sept. 1867, Caleb O. Hamblen, Journal, Ship *Eliza Adams* of New Bedford, 1867-1871, Log #446, NBWM.

[19]"The First of the Season," *Whalers' Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* (WSL), 7 Feb. 1871.

- [20]Todd, *In Olde New York*, 222
- [21]Crew list, *Callao*, WSL, 18 July 1871.
- [22]18 Dec. 1873, Logbook; "Letters," WSL, 10 Feb. 1874; Morrison's sole voyage in Lund, *Whaling Masters and Whaling Voyages*, 231.
- [23]17 Sept. 1874, logbook, *Callao*.
- [24]David Moment, "The Business of Whaling in America in the 1850s," *Business History Review* 31 (1957), 271-73.
- [25]Crew list, *Milton*, WSL, 2 Jan. 1877.
- [26]"Indian Records Book No. 4, 1880-1908," in Stone, *Shinnecock Indians*, 162-63.
- [27]The first voyage I have found him on was the bark Nimrod of Sag Harbor, 1853-1855, Account Book of Sag Harbor, NY, Whaling Firm Owner Charles T. Dering, 1828-1859, East Hampton Free Public Library, East Hampton, NY.
- [28]"The Amethyst Expedition," *San Francisco Bulletin*, 29 Dec. 1885 and 2 Jan. 1886; see also "The Bark 'Amethyst,'" *Daily Alta California*, 15 Dec. 1885; "The Amethyst," WSL 14 Sept. 1886; "The Lost Amethyst," *Sag Harbor Corrector*, 30 Oct. 1886.
- [29]The trade newspaper in New Bedford published a story of its being found but then retracted it when told by someone in San Francisco that the story was unfounded: "The Lost Whaler Amethyst Found," WSL, 20 Sept. 1887, and "The Finding of the Amethyst," WSL, 11 Oct. 1887.
- [30]Quote "frozen in" is from Todd, *In Olde New York*, 222; quote "frozen to Death" comes from return crew list at National Archives at Boston; other quotations from 15 Dec. 1880 and 18 Feb. 1881, Logbook (see table).
- [31]Todd, *In Olde New York*, 221.
- [32]"News from the Arctic," *San Francisco Bulletin*, 29 May 1885.
- [33]"Lost Whaler Amethyst Found."
- [34]Sluby, *Family Recollections*, 44.
- [35]Baylis Greene, "The Brief Golfing Life of Oscar Bunn," *The Southampton Review* 9 (Summer 2015), <http://thesouthamptonreview.com/memoir-essay/the-brief-golfing-life-of-osacr-bunn-by-baylis-greene/>, accessed 25 Aug. 2015.
- [36]For photographs of this house, see Stone, *Shinnecock Indians*, 289, 312. See also oral histories with Elizabeth Thunder Bird Haile, Holly Haile Davis, and David Bunn Martine and the photograph of "Miss Edna's house," another house built with whaling money, in Shoemaker, *Living with Whales*, 171, 177-78, 189.
- [37]"Aunt Becky, Full Indian, is Dead at 102," *Long Island Daily Press*, 22 April 1836.
- [38]Holly Haile Davis oral history, in Shoemaker, *Living with Whales*, 178.