

# *Amos Fortune*

## *The Man and His Legacy*



# *Amos Fortune*

## *The Man and His Legacy*

Peter Lambert

Amos Fortune Forum  
Jaffrey, New Hampshire  
August 2000

## Acknowledgements

*Amos Fortune, The Man and His Legacy* was researched, written, and designed by Peter Lambert, a native of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, and a 2000 graduate of Keene State College. The idea of a booklet bringing together the facts, legends, and documents relating to Amos Fortune had been discussed for some time by two different groups: the Trustees of the Jaffrey Public Library, custodian of the Amos Fortune papers and of the funds left to the town in his estate, and the Amos Fortune Forum which organizes a summer lecture series honoring the memory of Jaffrey's famous citizen. The Library convened a committee to oversee the project and recruited Peter Lambert to do the job. The Forum then agreed to fund the project, as well as manage the editing and printing process. Finally, the Library will distribute the booklet to teachers and others interested in learning more about Amos Fortune's life.

Many individuals helped produce this booklet. Thanks go to Mary Jo Marvin for her editorial expertise, to Professor David Leinster of Keene State College for reviewing the manuscript, and to Angela Robie, executive editor of *The Equinox*, the newspaper of Keene State College, for technical assistance. A special thanks must go to Elizabeth Yates, who brought Amos Fortune to the world's attention in her 1951 book, *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, and also carefully reviewed this manuscript. Others who lent invaluable support include Margaret Bean, William Driscoll, Cynthia Hamilton, Margaret Johnson, and Joan Knight, Jaffrey's Library Director.

Printed by Savron Graphics, Jaffrey, New Hampshire

### Photo Credits

Cover illustration: *Amos Fortune* by Nora S. Unwin, Courtesy of the Jaffrey Civic Center. Photo: Robert B. Stephenson

All images are from the Library of Congress with the following exceptions:

Those on pages 7, 8, & 15: Daniel Cutter's *History of Jaffrey*

Those on pages 9 & 13: Albert Annett's *History of Jaffrey, Vol. I*

Those on pages 19, 20, & 22 (top): Jaffrey Public Library

Page 20 (bottom): Danforth, Hartford CT: English Pewter Tankard/Beakers:

Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum of Art

© 2000 The Amos Fortune Forum.

This book entitled *Amos Fortune, The Man and His Legacy* is copyrighted; however, the book and portions thereof may be copied for educational purposes without obtaining approval from the Amos Fortune Forum.

# Contents

Map of 18th Century New England.....	Page 1
The Story of Amos Fortune.....	Page 2
Epilogue.....	Page 15
The Mystery of Celyndia.....	Page 17
Notes.....	Page 18
Pictures.....	Page 19
Bibliography.....	Page 21
Major Sources.....	Page 23
Map of 18th Century Jaffrey.....	Page 25
Documents & Transcriptions.....	Page 27
Unsigned 1763 Manumission.....	Page 27
Simon Carter Agreement.....	Page 29
Richardson Agreement.....	Page 31
Woburn Land Deed.....	Page 33
Power of Attorney for Pompey Blackman.....	Page 35
Purchase of Lydia.....	Page 37
Purchase of Violate.....	Page 39
Simon Peter Apprenticeship.....	Page 41
Charles Toothaker Apprenticeship.....	Page 43
Various Receipts.....	Page 45
Samuel George Receipt.....	Page 47
Amos Fortune's Will.....	Page 49
Accounting of Estate.....	Page 51
Visiting Jaffrey: Map & Directions.....	Page 53

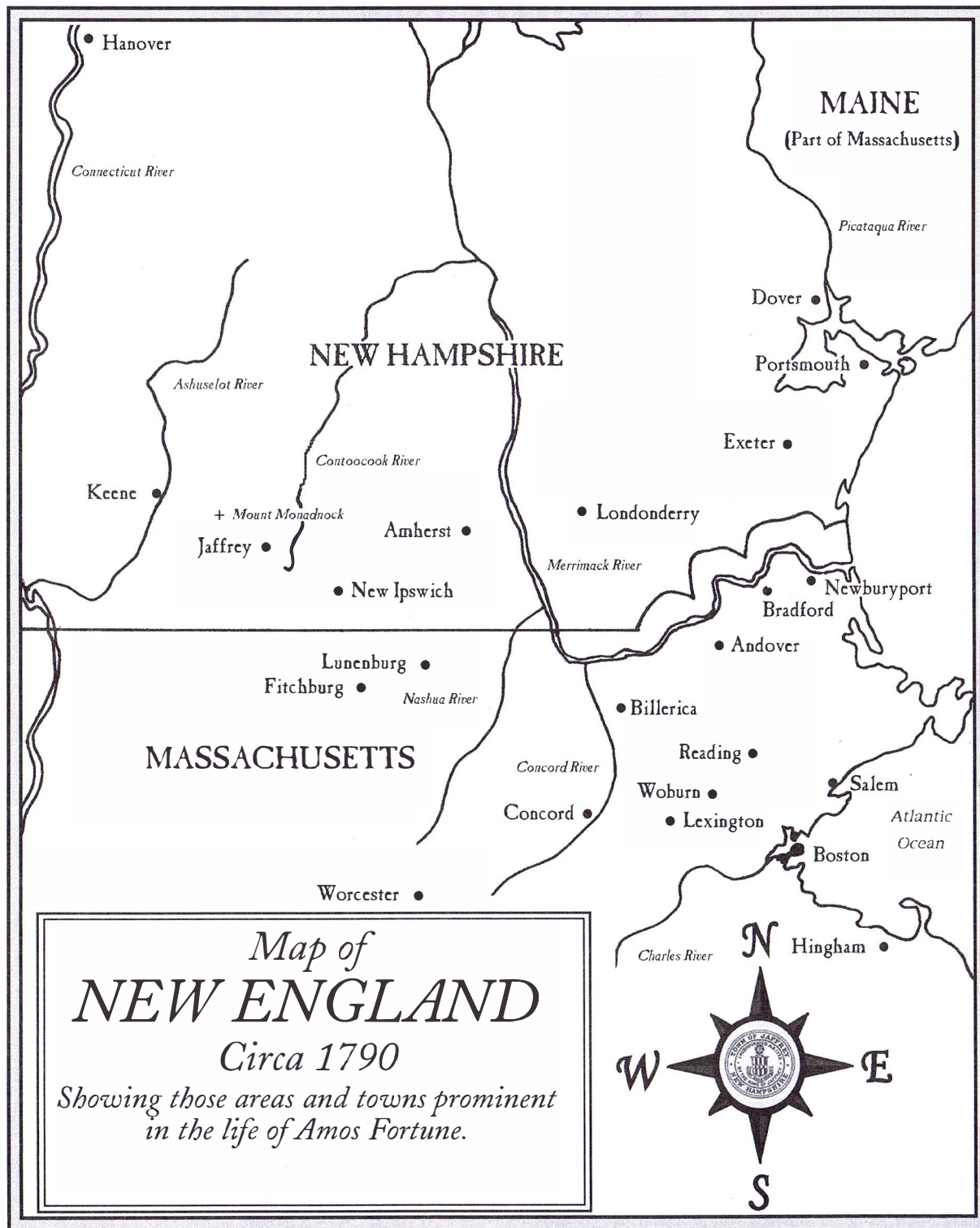
## NOTES

*This booklet endeavors to reveal the true story of Amos Fortune – his life, his family, and the time period in which he lived.*

*The Documents section includes images of many documents that played a part in Amos Fortune's life, along with a transcription of each. The documents were transcribed in 1988 by Lisa R. Bearce, then a librarian in Jaffrey.*

*Items in the timeline in italicized print relate directly to Amos Fortune. Items in regular print are other noteworthy national events. Precedence has been given to events that took place in New England or that deal with slavery in America.*





# The Story of Amos Fortune

## Introduction

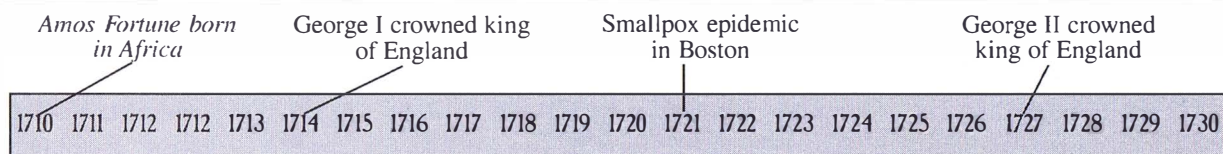
Perhaps no resident of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, past or present, has ever captured the hearts and minds of as many people as Amos Fortune. Brought as a slave from Africa, he purchased his own liberty and that of his wives, was a successful tanner and became one of 18<sup>th</sup> century Jaffrey's most prominent citizens. His story has been related in several books, such as F. Alexander Magoun's fictional biography, *Amos Fortune's Choice*, and Elizabeth Yates' Newbery award-winning children's tale, *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. Yates' work, first published in 1950, has never gone out of print. It has been translated into several languages and is read and taught in countless schools throughout the nation and around the world. The story of Amos Fortune, a man who died 200 years ago, continues to inspire millions.

But what do we really know about Amos Fortune? Official records from the 18<sup>th</sup> century are few, information is sometimes sketchy, and conflicting accounts add to the confusion. Who owned Amos Fortune? When was he made a free man? How many wives did he have? Whatever happened to his "daughter," Celyndia?

Even after exhaustive research, authors of the books on Amos Fortune were left to fill in the gaps using their imaginations. Although the material made for great stories and the books have helped spread Amos Fortune's fame, they have also led to misinformation and myths.



An 18th century map of West Africa. Amos Fortune most likely came from the region along the Atlantic coast known as "Guinea."

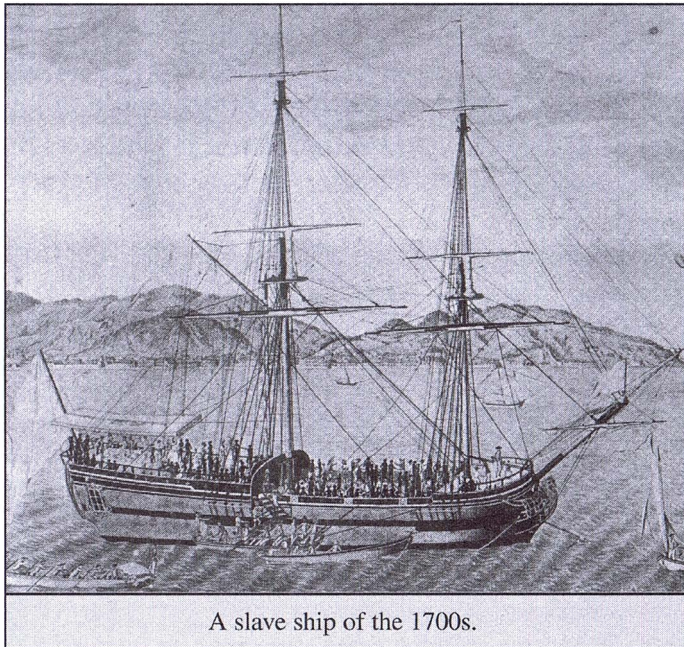




## *Born in Africa, a Slave in America*

1710 - 1768

**A**mos Fortune was probably born around 1710, a date reached by calculating back from his recorded death in 1801 at age 91. His tombstone holds the only clue to his place of birth, saying "Born free in Africa..." Fortune's homeland was probably western Africa in the areas then known as Guinea or the "Gold Coast" (now consisting of such countries as Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ghana) since this was the principal area frequented by slave traders from England and its colonies in America.

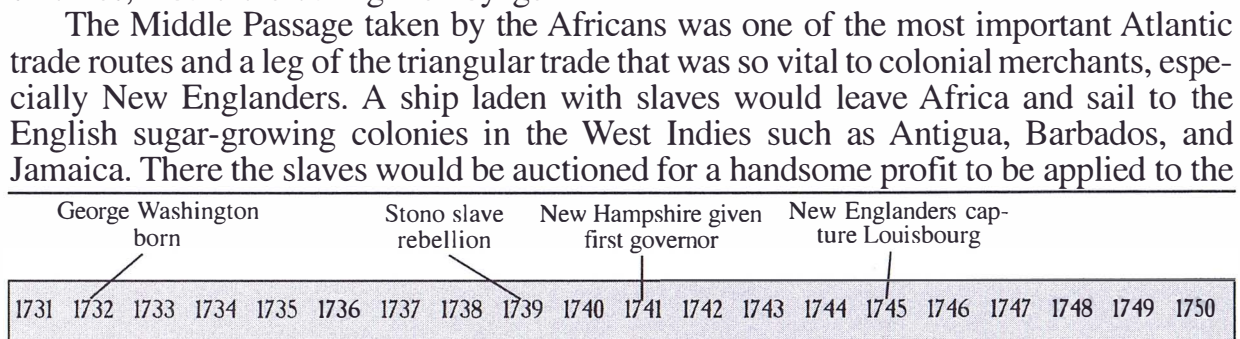


A slave ship of the 1700s.

Nothing is known about his life in Africa, and it is certainly not known whether he was a tribal prince, as dramatically described by Yates in the opening chapter of *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. Even his original name remains a mystery. Yates goes on to tell of white slavers capturing a teenage Amos Fortune in a raid on a village, but like many African slaves he may have been captured by a rival tribe and sold to European slave traders.

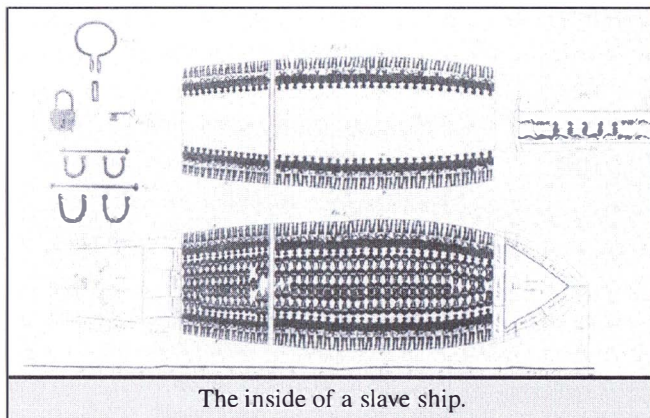
No matter who captured Amos Fortune or where, he must surely have endured the horrendous journey to America known as the "Middle Passage." The name of the ship that brought him to America is unknown, but it was probably a typical slave ship of the day. Slaves were crammed into every available space on the ship. The decks that held the slaves were generally 3.5 feet high, and each slave was given about one foot of horizontal space. Diseases were rampant, and perhaps anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of the slaves, literally packed in like sardines, would die during the voyage.

The Middle Passage taken by the Africans was one of the most important Atlantic trade routes and a leg of the triangular trade that was so vital to colonial merchants, especially New Englanders. A ship laden with slaves would leave Africa and sail to the English sugar-growing colonies in the West Indies such as Antigua, Barbados, and Jamaica. There the slaves would be auctioned for a handsome profit to be applied to the



purchase of molasses, the product of West Indian sugar. The molasses would then be shipped to New England to be made into rum. This rum served as payment for more slaves on the return trip to Africa.

The slaves who landed in the West Indies were subjected to harsh and cruel treatment by plantation owners determined to get the maximum amount of labor out of their investment. More than a million slaves were shipped to the West Indies between 1666 and 1780. However, between the years 1708 and 1735 (most likely the period during which Amos Fortune would have been brought to North America) the population of



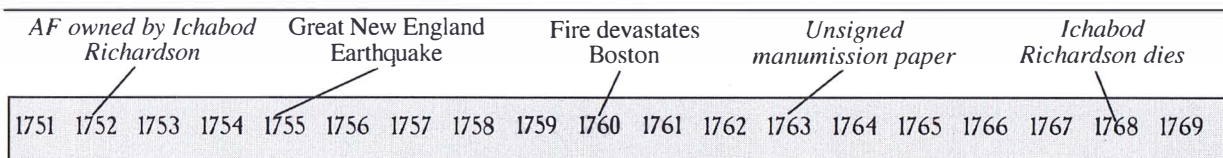
The inside of a slave ship.

Africans in the West Indies grew only from 42,000 to 46,000. Of the 85,000 slaves imported into the region during this same period, more than 80,000 appear to have perished on the plantations. Slavery in the American South (Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia) appears to have been less harsh than in the West Indies. Nevertheless, most slaves there worked long days in intense heat in tobacco, indigo, and rice fields.

Amos Fortune well deserves the name given to him for he was indeed lucky to be spared the West Indian and Southern experience and to wind up in New England. Slavery in the New England colonies was quite different than in the South. No large plantations existed in the North, eliminating the need for large slave populations to work the fields. What slaves there were (and it is estimated that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century only 5% of the northern population was black) worked alongside their masters and white laborers on small farms, or learned trades in shops in the larger towns.

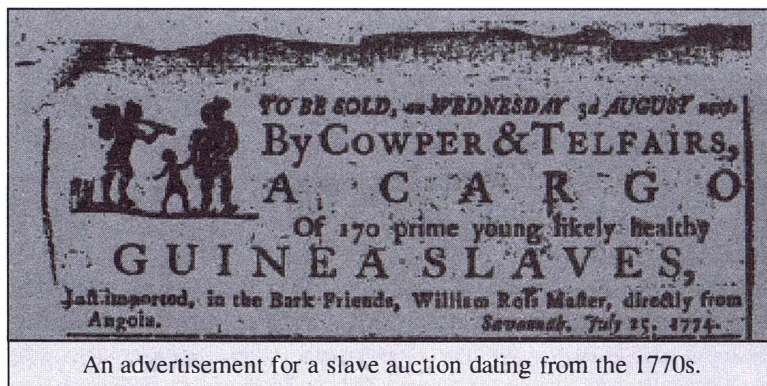
When or where a ship carrying Amos Fortune arrived in New England is unknown, but Yates' story tells of his sale in Boston. But he could also have landed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, another major New England port and one of the busiest in the British Empire. Both Boston and Portsmouth had small populations of African descent in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

In her story, Yates has a Quaker in Boston (whom she names Caleb Copeland) purchase the slave to be called Amos Fortune. Later records clearly show that Fortune could read and write, and Yates speculates that he may have been taught by Quakers. There were no schools for Africans in New England, but Quaker women would set up classes to educate the Africans so that slaves and their masters could communicate. These women, however, had a higher motive. They believed they could mitigate the evils of the slave trade if the heathen were educated and Christianized.





Magoun imagines a different scenario in his book wherein Amos Fortune was purchased by a Boston bookbinder named Deacon Fortune. This explains how Amos Fortune learned how to bind books, which he would later do as a tanner, and it accounts for the name Fortune since many slaves were given their master's family name. On the other hand, Yates writes that Amos was called "Fortune" because people believed he was fortunate to have benevolent owners. Albert Annett, the author of *The History of Jaffrey*, believes that early on Amos was given the name Fortunatus as a sarcastic reference to his slave status. A receipt from later in Amos Fortune's life does refer to him as Mr. Fortunatus. Annett contends the Biblical name Amos would be bestowed later, by a more pious master.



An advertisement for a slave auction dating from the 1770s.

The earliest record we have of Amos Fortune dates from 1752 when he was owned by Ichabod Richardson, a tanner who lived in Woburn, Massachusetts. Richardson's first will, dated May 11, 1752, specifies that six years following his master's death, Amos Fortune is to be freed.

What follows presents a confusing record. Documents are missing or unsigned; archaic 18th century legal language is difficult to decipher. On December 30, 1763, Richardson had a formal manumission paper drawn up, promising freedom for Fortune four years after that date, or upon the death of Richardson should he die before the four years were over. However, the paper was never signed, and therefore was not legally binding.

Five days before Richardson's sudden and unexpected death in 1768, he signed a new will which did not mention Amos Fortune or his freedom. Since there was no legal manumission paper and since the 1752 will was supplanted by the later one, Fortune remained legal property which could be sold again. But Amos Fortune was already 58 and not likely to be purchased.

### *He Purchased Liberty....*

1769 - 1780

In May 1769 Simon Carter of Woburn, one of Ichabod Richardson's heirs, drafted a document that required Amos Fortune to pay Carter £6 each year for several years. Although Amos Fortune was legally a slave, these payments would "pay off his bond" and allow him to live life more or less as a free man. These

<i>Manumission paper signed</i>		<i>Jaffrey incorporated</i>		<i>AF buys land in Woburn</i>		<i>Declaration of Independence</i>		<i>AF marries Lydia</i>		<i>AF marries Violate</i>	
1770	1771	1772	1773	1774	1775	1776	1777	1778	1779	1780	

payments were set aside as a trust fund, in case Fortune ever became disabled and unable to support himself. The fund thus saved Richardson's heirs, if Fortune were still a slave, or the town of Woburn, if he were free, from having to support him.

In November 1769, a manumission paper was drawn up stating that Amos Fortune was free retroactive to May 9, 1769, the date of Carter's document. The new paper meant in effect that Fortune could work for himself but would be free only after the aforementioned payments had been completed. He made the last

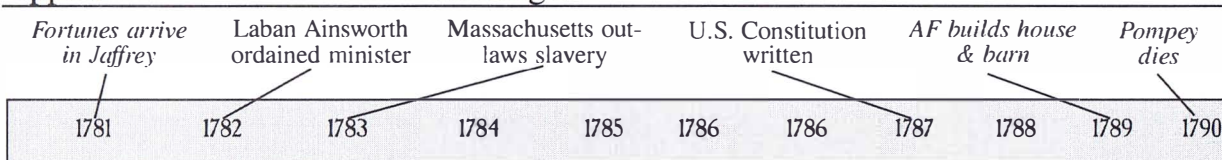
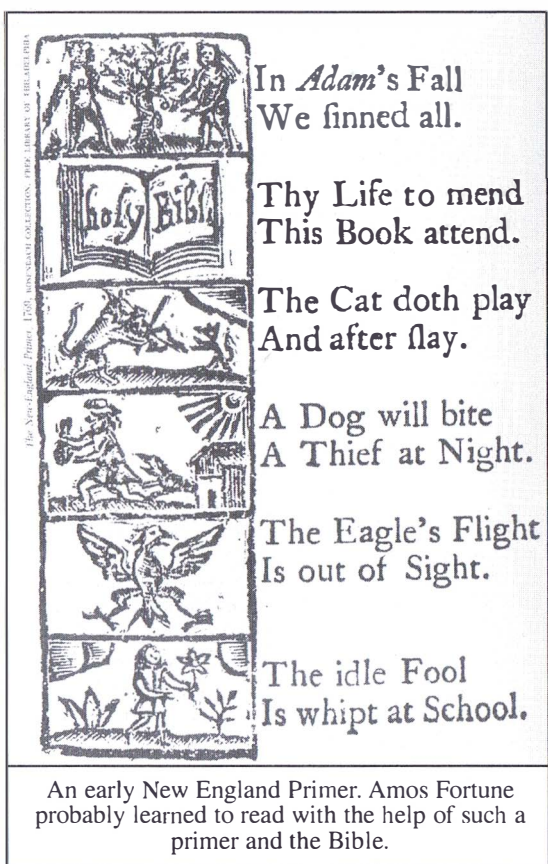
payments in November 1770, when he was 60 years old. Amos Fortune was at last a free man.

Nothing is known about the life of Amos Fortune between 1770 and 1774. He may have continued to work at Ichabod Richardson's tannery, which was being run by Richardson's nephew Leonard. He must have earned some money, for on July 20, 1774, he spent £16.13s. on a half acre of land on the Wilmington Road in Woburn, on which he constructed a small house.

Not only did Amos Fortune have a house, he also had several acquaintances in the Woburn area. One was Pompey Blackman, another African slave who lived in Lexington, Massachusetts. Calling him his "trusty friend," Blackman authorized Fortune to act as his representative in business matters in 1777. Blackman was illiterate (he was unable to sign his name on the document giving Amos Fortune the power of attorney), so his trust indicates the high regard in which Amos Fortune was held by his peers.

Fortune's family life has been a matter of controversy. Some versions of his life have

him purchasing the freedom of three African women: an unnamed woman in 1775 who died; Lydia Somerset in 1778, who also soon died; and Violate Baldwin in 1779. Yates names the anonymous 1775 woman Lily. However, the Woburn records do not show Amos Fortune marrying anyone before 1778. All marriages and intentions to marry had to be registered by law, so the absence of any references would appear to rule out an earlier marriage.<sup>1</sup>





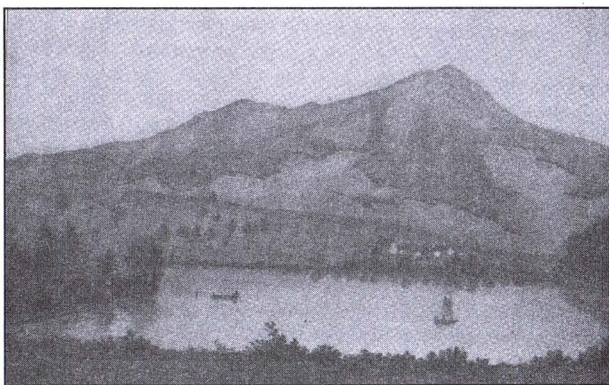
The woman who died in 1778 was Amos Fortune's true first wife, Lydia Somerset of Billerica, Massachusetts. They probably became acquainted because the son of Lydia's master, Josiah Bowers, had married a girl from the Richardson family. Lydia was many years younger than Amos Fortune, but was a widow with three daughters. On June 23, 1778, Amos purchased Lydia from her master for £50 (a high, but common price), and he filed his intent to marry her with the Woburn town clerk the next day. They were married on July 8, 1778, in Lexington, Massachusetts. No details of their short married life are known, for Lydia died three months later on October 3, 1778. Presumably she is buried in Woburn, but no headstone has been found.

Amos Fortune's second wife, who outlived him, was Violate Baldwin. She was owned by James Baldwin of North Woburn. Baldwin's wife Ruth was Ichabod Richardson's first cousin, and both the Baldwins and the Richardsons attended the Woburn Congregational Church. The Africans had a designated section in the balcony, as was customary in many New England churches, so the Fortunes may have met there.

On November 9, 1779, Amos Fortune purchased Violate Baldwin's freedom from the Baldwins for £50, and married her the next day in Woburn. She was 50 years old at the time, and he was 69.

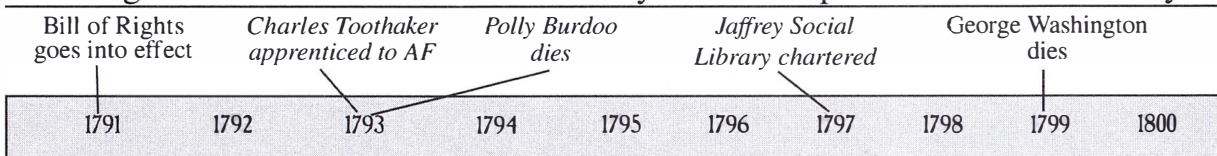
*...Professed Christianity, Lived Reputably,  
1781 - 1799*

Amos Fortune and his wife Violate came to Jaffrey in 1781. But what made them leave their house in Woburn? In her book, Yates describes a fictitious scene when Amos Fortune, traveling to Keene in 1779, passes through Jaffrey, and believing he has reached the promised land, decides to come back with his family. She also tells of Amos Fortune delivering leather to a Mr. Samuel George in Keene, who sells him a coat and fur hat. Although Amos Fortune did receive these items from George as security for leather, it was in 1799, after he had moved to Jaffrey. There is no record of Amos Fortune visiting Keene prior to his arrival in Jaffrey.



The pastures on Mount Monadnock, circa 1800.

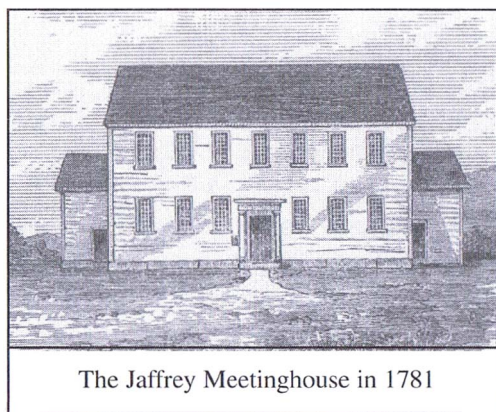
Magoun and others speculate that the Phillips family in Andover, Massachusetts, encouraged the Fortunes to settle in Jaffrey. The Phillips owned a bookbindery in



Andover, about 15 miles from Woburn, which a tanner such as Fortune would have visited. The Phillips, who would later found the Phillips Academies in Andover and Exeter, New Hampshire, owned large tracts of land in Jaffrey and encouraged at least three other families to settle there.

Magoun also speculates that Fortune may have been attracted by the possibility of free land for settlers in the New Hampshire wilderness. In reality, land was no longer free in New Hampshire, a fact Magoun's book has Amos Fortune discovering after arriving in Jaffrey. It seems unlikely, however, that he would not have done his homework and known about land availability in New Hampshire before moving his family there.

In the summer of 1781 the Fortunes arrived in Jaffrey. Amos Fortune was 71 years old and Violate was 52. Soon after their arrival, in an incident related in every account of Amos Fortune, they were "warned out" by Jaffrey town constable Joseph Thorndike. This incident is sometimes interpreted to mean that Jaffrey residents did not want a black family in town, an assumption that is entirely erroneous. The facts are quite different. Far from being discriminatory, the "warning out" was standard procedure.

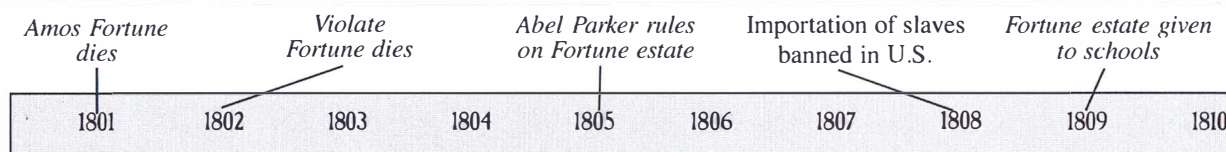


The Jaffrey Meetinghouse in 1781

New Hampshire towns were then, as now, required by law to support needy families. To spare the town taxpayers from having to support such people, the town selectmen directed constables to "warn out" new arrivals, telling them to depart the town forthwith and warning them that, if they stayed, the town would refuse to be held liable if they became destitute. Jaffrey records show that among those "warned out" were John Fitch, for whom Fitchburg, Massachusetts, was named; Peter and Hannah Davis and their daughter, also named Hannah, who became renowned as the first bandbox manufacturer; and Alpheus Crosby, who would become captain of the Jaffrey-Rindge Cavalry Company. The Fortunes were certainly in good company!

It is also unlikely the Fortunes met Constable Thorndike immediately upon their arrival in town. Jaffrey selectmen had to authorize warnings-out, which usually occurred anywhere from one to three months after a family's arrival. Jaffrey's selectmen in 1781 (Daniel Emery, William Pope, and Thomas Mower) did not authorize the warning-out until September, probably a month or two after the Fortunes' arrival.

One way or another, Amos Fortune did not heed Constable Thorndike's warning and became a hard-working, respected citizen of Jaffrey. In describing the Fortunes' search for land, Elizabeth Yates again creates a scene following the "warning out" when Amos meets the Reverend Laban Ainsworth in that parson's new





house. This could not have happened. Jaffrey men first met Ainsworth at his Dartmouth College commencement September 19, 1781, a week after Constable Thorndike recorded warning the Fortunes out of town. Ainsworth would not become Jaffrey's ordained minister until 1782, and his house was not constructed until 1788. So Amos Fortune probably welcomed Laban Ainsworth to town, not the other way around.

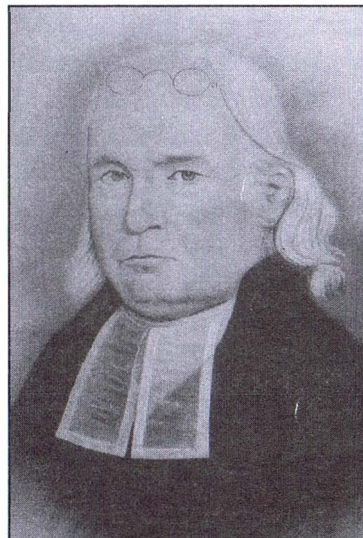
Fortune did, however, settle on a piece of land that would eventually become part of Ainsworth's estate. It was town land reserved for the minister, but as Ainsworth had not arrived the selectmen allowed Amos Fortune to settle there temporarily. The land is located west of the Ainsworth house, along Route 124 south of Dublin Road, along the banks of a small brook (a requirement for a tanner since water is needed in the tanning process).

Amos Fortune stayed on Laban Ainsworth's land until 1789. On April 25 of that year he bought 25 acres of land along the road to Sharon (now Amos Fortune Road) in the northwest part of lot 18, range 6, from William Turner for £45. The land was situated on Tyler Brook, which flows south from Garfield Pond to the Contoocook River. He dug his tanning pits here, and built a small house and a barn. Both the house and barn are still standing, and a sign marks them as the Fortune Homestead.

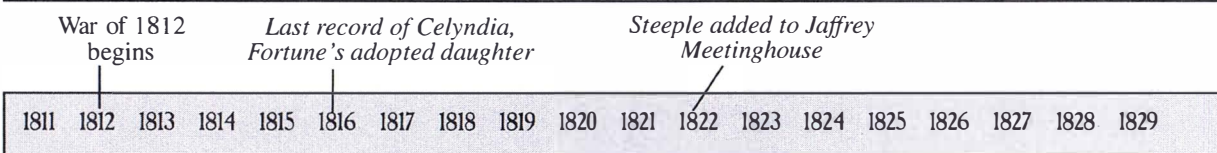
Amos Fortune was acknowledged as one of the finest tanners in the area, and indeed in New England. Former clients from Woburn and other towns in eastern Massachusetts sent their hides to Jaffrey, judging by receipts such as those from Thomas Hapgood of Reading. Other receipts exist from an Elizabeth Cady of Amherst, New Hampshire; Thomas Brown of New Ipswich; and others.

Amos Fortune had another person working for him during the 1780s – Pompey Blackman, his old friend from Woburn, who earned his liberty fighting in the Revolutionary War<sup>2</sup> and now went by the name Pompey Freeman. In Jaffrey, however, he soon was known both as Freeman and as Pompey Fortune. Amos Fortune apparently sent for his friend a few years after he arrived in Jaffrey. Records of "Pomp" visiting Benjamin Prescott's tavern frequently throughout the 1780s show him buying rum for Amos Fortune and purchasing whisky for himself. Pompey worked with his longtime friend until he died on May 20, 1790. Like other poor people of the time, he was probably buried in an unmarked grave in the Old Burying Ground.

With his devoted worker gone, Fortune, now an old man nearing the end of his



Reverend  
Laban Ainsworth



career, needed help. The opening of a competing tannery just east of the town center by John Cutter in 1789 may have also induced Amos Fortune to take on apprentices. Apprenticeship was a common practice at that time. A young man would sign a contract pledging to work for a craftsman for a set period of time with no payment except for room and board. In return, the craftsman would agree to teach the man everything he knew regarding his chosen profession. Amos Fortune is known to have taken on two apprentices, who certainly would have considered themselves fortunate to be apprenticed to one of the best tanners in the area.

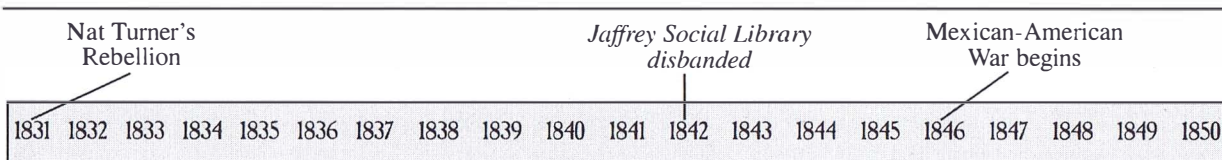
The first was Simon Peter of Jaffrey, a black man. No further information has been found relating to Peter. In 1793, when Peter's apprenticeship was over, Fortune signed on another young man, Charles Toothaker of Lunenburg, Massachusetts. Charles' father Roger had the contract drawn up and acted as agent for his son, for Charles was not of legal age. Soon after Charles became an apprentice, the rest of the family decided to move to Jaffrey. The records show that on March 10, 1794, Constable Samuel Briant was ordered to "warn out" Roger and Mary Toothaker, their daughters Luvisa, Carlonia, and Polly, and sons Samuel, Allen, and James. They apparently arrived in Jaffrey in April 1793, just one month after Charles' apprenticeship contract was signed. Unfortunately, nothing further is recorded regarding any member of the family, including Charles.

### *In other words...*

"In a world such as ours today...it is good to be reminded of a life such as Amos Fortune. He lived the only force that is greater than any bomb: simple affection, deep-hearted love. Modes change but not values, and all that he stood for in his day is vital in ours: those 'inalienable rights' whose achievement is part of the long mountain we all are climbing as we emerge from our various forms of slavery into the fullness of freedom."

- Elizabeth Yates, 1951

Amos Fortune had other people living in his new house as well. Sometime before 1790 Moses Burdoo, a black man, died and left his family destitute. He had lived originally in the extreme southeast of the town, known as Squantum, but couldn't make a go of it. He sold his farm and took up blacksmithing near the mills in Slab City Village, just south of the town center. The Burdoo's probably were friends of the Fortunes, as they were both black families and shared a pew in the Meetinghouse gallery. Burdoo's second blacksmith shop would also have been less than a mile away from Fortune's first tannery at the foot of the hill. Once Moses Burdoo died, his wife Lois was left to support her several sons and daughters with little or no income. Most of the children had been born in Jaffrey, so the town was responsible for them. Amos and Violate Fortune agreed to take Polly, the eldest daughter, into their home.





Contrary to a moving scene in Yates' book called "Auctioned for Freedom," Polly's care probably was not auctioned off to the lowest bidder. Jaffrey citizens did not vote to "vendue," or take bids on the care of the poor, until 1794, a few years after Polly was handed over to the Fortunes. Polly Burdoo was not a very healthy girl, and she died in December 1793, age 15. The following November Fortune was given £1.16s. for having supported Polly. She was probably buried in an unmarked grave near the Fortunes' graves in the Old Burying Ground.<sup>3</sup>

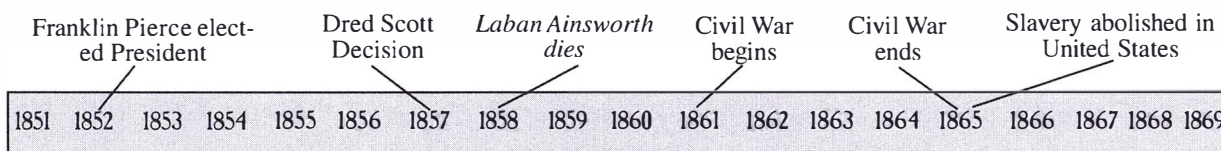
Amos Fortune was one of the more prominent and prosperous citizens of the young town of Jaffrey. He was a full member of the church and attended the religious services every Sunday in the Meetinghouse led by Reverend Ainsworth. Church membership was very important in those days. Though most townspeople attended the services, only a handful were full church members because rules governing membership were very strict. Fortune had become a member of the church in Woburn, and upon presenting the necessary documents he was accepted into the Jaffrey church.

### *Church Membership*

Although nearly every person in a New England town attended church services (called meetings), only a select few were regarded as official members of the church ("church" here referring to a congregation, not a building). To become a member of the church, a candidate went through extensive questioning by other church members on theology, tenants of the faith, and knowledge of scriptures. Both men and women could become members. Church membership had religious, as well as social, benefits.

Meetinghouse pews were rented by various families in Jaffrey, with the wealthiest usually getting the choice seating. Amos Fortune did not own a pew in the Meetinghouse like many other prominent townspeople. It is assumed that he sat in the section that was set aside for the "Negroes" of Jaffrey. This would have been located in the second-floor balcony, in the northwest corner of the building. While this arrangement indicates some racial discrimination in Jaffrey, it was a common practice throughout New England. However, even if Amos Fortune had been white, he still would not have been able to rent a pew. Pews were much sought-after, and many people in town were unable to afford one.

By all accounts, and judging by the inventory of his estate, Amos Fortune was a particularly well-dressed man. He owned silver shoe buckles and several coats, including a fur coat for winter. After 1799 he may have gone to the Sunday church meeting wearing the blue coat and fur hat he took as collateral from Samuel George in Keene. He owned a silver watch which sold for a large sum at auction following his death. A complete listing of his household inventory can be found on page 46 of this booklet.



Amos Fortune was instrumental in founding Jaffrey's first library. The Jaffrey Social Library had its first meeting in 1789 but did not become a formal group until 1796, and then was not chartered by the state until 1797. It started with 22 members, but 30 others soon joined. Among the members

### *In other words...*

"Well done, Amos. Green be the turf above you! You have left a good name and shining example to all the world. We are proud to claim you as a citizen and brother. Monadnock will not last longer than the influence of your generous spirit and honest heart...Jaffrey will be a better and richer town for your example."

-Albert Annett,  
*The History of Jaffrey*

were Reverend Ainsworth, Abel Parker, Dr. Adonijah Howe, and Colonel Benjamin Prescott. The meetings were held Saturday evenings at Ainsworth's house for the first few years, and later met in one of the local taverns. Dues were set at \$3.00 a year, but collection was sporadic at best. The society had 72 books in 1802, the year after Fortune died, many dealing with history and travel. It voted to remove several books "of little value" which included *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *Don Quixote*. Amos Fortune allegedly bound several of the Library's books.

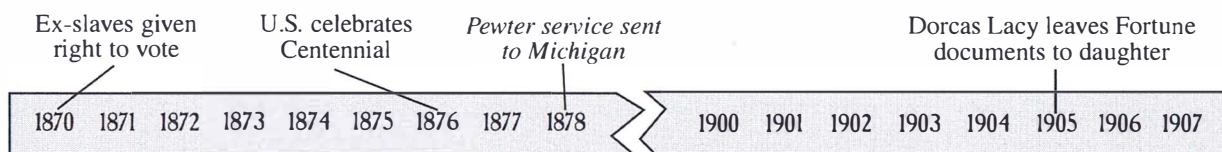
By the year 1800 Jaffrey had grown to be a sizable town, with a population of 1,341 people. The

Third New Hampshire Turnpike, now Route 124, had been chartered the year before and had improved transportation through the town. Several stores had been built, and mills had sprung up at the fledgling Factory Village.<sup>4</sup> It was a very different town from the one Amos Fortune had entered in 1781.

### *...And Died Hopefully.* 1800 - 1801

Amos Fortune, too, had changed. He was now 90 years old, and his wife was 70. He did not sign on any new apprentices after Charles Toothaker's term was over. On September 21, 1801, he received a \$1,000 cash mortgage from Deacon Eleazer Spofford, who owned the mills along the Contoocook River in Factory Village. He also asked Spofford be the executor of his estate.

At this point, the records regarding the Fortunes' finances become confusing. The Fortune-Spofford mortgage appears in the Cheshire County Registry of Deeds in Keene, but why Fortune needed \$1,000 cash at that time is a mystery. In his research, Magoun found that, only a few months earlier, Fortune had borrowed \$104 from Spofford to settle his account at Joseph Thorndike's store (the same Thorndike who had warned him out of town in 1781).





Amos Fortune did buy the land on Tyler Brook from William Turner for little money down back in 1789. He gave Turner a mortgage of about \$150 for the rest. But after Amos Fortune's death, his property was appraised at only \$566, and, as Executor, Spofford sold it for \$500, free of all encumbrances. All told, Amos Fortune's possessions added up to only \$759.29. And yet he was able to leave large bequests to the church and schools. There must have been circumstances relating to the mortgage of which there are no record.



Reverend Ainsworth's residence.  
The Jaffrey Social Library held its meetings here.

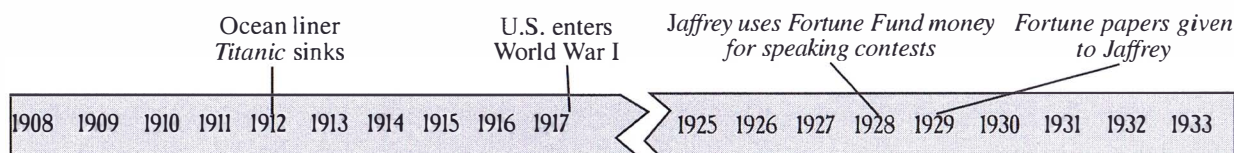
On November 17, 1801, just 45 days after signing a will drawn up by Roger Gilmore, Amos Fortune died at age 91. He was buried behind the Meetinghouse in the Old Burying Ground. This in itself was unusual, for in many New England towns blacks were buried outside the cemetery walls with wooden grave markers that would slowly decay over time.

That the Fortunes would be buried inside the cemetery grounds with large, attractive grave markers is quite remarkable. It speaks of two things. First, that Fortune was prosperous and able to afford stone markers (few other blacks were as financially solvent). Second, and perhaps most important, it reflects the high esteem in which Fortune was held by the townspeople.

The full text of Amos Fortune's will can be found on page 44. He made provisions for Violate's housing and well-being; Deacon Spofford promised him that she would not be evicted after his death.

The affection that Jaffrey had for Amos Fortune was matched only by the affection Fortune had for his adopted town. To complete his will, he stipulated that with any money left over from his estate after the debts were paid, a "handsome present" was to be made to the church in Jaffrey. Further, if any money remained, that amount should be given to the town to support Schoolhouse #8. This small schoolhouse, located on present Nutting Road just over a mile east of the Fortune house, was where Celyndia, his adopted daughter, would have attended school (*for more on Celyndia, see page 17*).

Less than a year after Amos Fortune's death, Violate also died and was buried next to him in the cemetery. Today visitors of all ages come to read the inscriptions, said to have been written by Reverend Ainsworth himself:



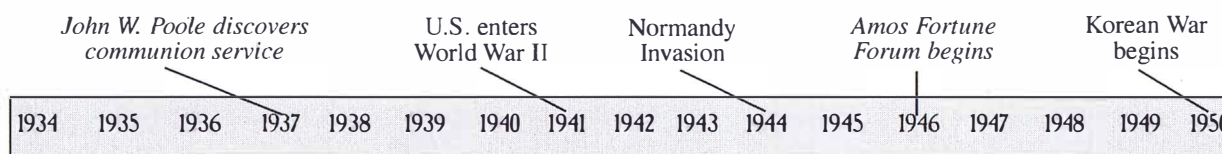
Sacred  
to the memory of  
Amos Fortune  
who was born free in  
Africa a slave in America  
he purchased liberty  
professed Christianity  
lived reputably and  
died hopefully  
Nov. 17, 1801  
Aet. 91

Sacred  
to the memory of  
Violate  
by sale the slave of  
Amos Fortune by  
marriage his wife by  
her fidelity his friend  
and solace she died  
his widow  
Sept. 13, 1802  
Aet. 73

Yet Amos Fortune's story was not over. Fulfilling his role as executor, Eleazer Spofford inventoried Fortune's goods and sold them off. He brought in \$770.20 and repaid all the estate's debts. After Violate Fortune's death, some of the money was used to pay for the care she had received during her last days. By 1805, Spofford appeared before the local probate court and announced that \$370.04 remained. The court was presided over by Jaffrey's own Abel Parker, who had been wounded at the battle of Bunker Hill and who represented Jaffrey at the New Hampshire Federal Constitutional Convention in 1788.

Parker ruled that \$100 be given to the Church of Jaffrey, as stipulated in Amos Fortune's will. This was used to buy a pewter communion service. Contrary to popular belief – a myth perpetuated in Yates' book – Fortune did not give the church a silver service. He merely left money, the amount of which was determined by Judge Parker and the service was pewter, not silver. He ordered Spofford to purchase gravestones for both Fortunes which were engraved by William Farnsworth and cost \$11 to make and \$4 to transport to the cemetery.

In 1809, after all these outlays, Spofford still had \$233.85 from Amos Fortune's estate. Parker ruled that this be given to the Town for the support of Schoolhouse #8. Because this schoolhouse was no longer in operation, a special act of the New Hampshire legislature allowed the money to be used for the support of all schoolchildren in Jaffrey. In 1928 the Town of Jaffrey voted to use the money for prizes in public-speaking contests in the schools. When the public-speaking contests were discontinued years later the money sat idle. In 1977 the students of Conant High School in Jaffrey used the funds for a book of creative writing that was mailed to every household in the town. The fund then remained dormant until it was transferred to the Jaffrey Public Library. The income is currently being used to develop educational materials on Amos Fortune. As you read this booklet, you are a direct beneficiary of the generosity and benevolence of one of Jaffrey's greatest citizens, Amos Fortune.



## – EPILOGUE –

**Laban Ainsworth**, Jaffrey's minister, continued to preach in Jaffrey until his death in 1858. He served a total of 76 years, a record reportedly unmatched by any Congregational minister in the United States. The inscription on his gravestone, which lies less than 20 yards from those of Amos and Violate Fortune, ends with "*I have fought a good fight, I have kept my course, I have kept the FAITH.*"

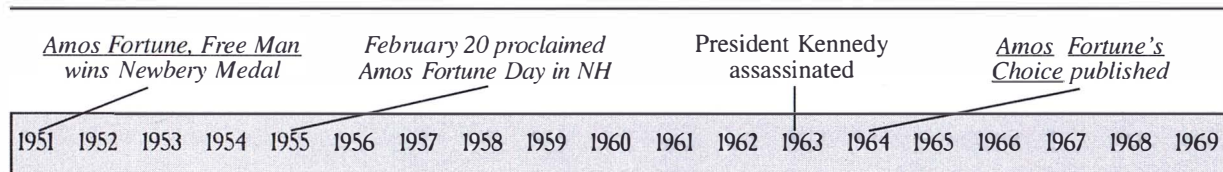
**Judge Abel Parker**, who ruled on Amos Fortune's will, would later be a member of the New Hampshire General Court representing Jaffrey, a member of the electoral college in the Presidential election of 1824, and Jaffrey's postmaster for five years. He died in 1831 and was buried near the Ainsworths.

**Deacon Eleazar Spofford**, the executor of the Fortune estate, sold his mills in 1813. He later sold his farm and moved to Bradford, Massachusetts, in 1821. He died in 1828 and is buried in Groveland cemetery. His widow moved back to Jaffrey where she died in 1836.

**The Jaffrey Social Library**, of which Amos Fortune was a charter member, transferred his membership after his death to Jacob Baldwin. The Society had its last meeting in 1842, although it had been defunct for almost 10 years. The books are now a prized possession of the Jaffrey Public Library; those allegedly bound by Amos Fortune show no deterioration to this day.

**The Manumission Papers** and other important documents that Amos Fortune owned, came into the hands of Dorcas Perkins Lacy, who married into one of the old Jaffrey families. How the Lacys obtained the papers is unknown. When Dorcas Lacy died in 1905 the papers were inherited by her daughter, Sophia Ursula Slason (Jaffrey's librarian for several years), and then given to Sophia's daughter Celia Frances Slason. She donated the Fortune papers to the Town of Jaffrey and then moved to Los Angeles, California. The papers remain in a special collection in the Jaffrey Public Library.

**The Pewter Communion Service** was used by the First Church of Jaffrey until 1878. Under the influence of a new minister who was not a Jaffrey native, the congregation voted to "dispose of the old communion service as [the Prudential Committee and deacons] deem best." It was sent to a home missionary church in Michigan, which didn't like its antiquated looks and gave it to a parishioner. This





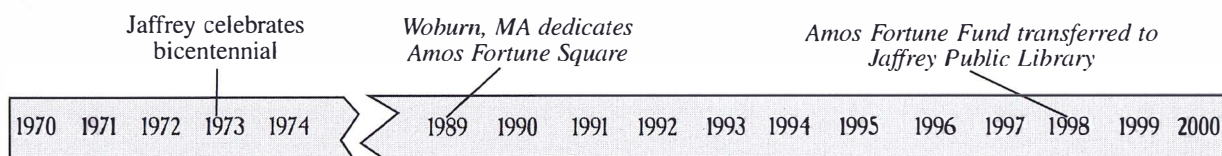
parishioner's daughter decided to sell the pewter and contacted an expert on antique ecclesiastical pewterware. This expert, by an incredible coincidence, happened to be John Ward Poole of Jaffrey, whose brother Joel Poole had been a member of the Prudential Committee of the First Church of Jaffrey the year before the service was given up. Remembering his father's and brother's description of the communion service, including several features unique to this service, John Poole III instantly recognized the Michigan pewter as the Amos Fortune set. It is unknown why Poole did not try to bring the service back to Jaffrey (his father "never forgave" the minister for giving up the service), but he was at least able to uncover its history. The service is now part of the pewter collection of the Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn, New York.

**The Amos Fortune Forum:** In 1946 a group of Jaffrey Center residents decided to start a summer lecture series, inviting local personalities to speak on a variety of issues. They named the series the Amos Fortune Forum. It continues to meet on seven Friday nights in the Jaffrey Meetinghouse and lasts exactly one hour. Each speaker is presented with a jug of maple syrup and a copy of Elizabeth Yates' *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. Traditionally, speakers should live within sight of Mount Monadnock, though exceptions are made for men and women with local connections. Topics each season are deliberately varied. Past speakers have included scientist Harlow Shapley, philosopher Julius Seelye Bixler, writers Thornton Wilder and May Sarton, historian Henry Steele Commager, inventor Edwin Land, and of course Elizabeth Yates and Alexander Magoun.

**Mount Monadnock:** This mountain rises 3,165 feet above sea level in the northwest quarter of Jaffrey. Although Amos Fortune never lived on it, nor do we have proof that he ever climbed it, it did play an important role in the early days of Jaffrey and has been mentioned in all books relating the tale of Amos Fortune.

Today Mount Monadnock is completely forested except for the summit, which is bare rock. In Amos Fortune's day this situation would have been reversed. The early settlers cleared much of the forest on the lower half for pasture and fields. It was difficult growing crops on the slopes of the mountain, but they provided good grazing for livestock. Some of the leather from these animals might have been tanned by Amos Fortune.

The summit, however, was completely forested. This island of dense woods was a refuge for wolves and bears, which preyed on the farmers' livestock. The farmers set fire to the mountain several times in the early 1800s in an attempt to drive out the wolves and bears. They succeeded, but the soil at the top of the mountain then eroded away, leaving the bare summit we see today.





## *The Mystery of Celyndia*

**A**nother matter of controversy surrounding Amos Fortune's life is that of his "adoptive daughter" Celyndia. Yates portrays her as a young girl and the natural daughter of Violate. Magoun disputes this, owing to the lack of any records of a previous marriage of Violate or even of the birth of the child. He also cites Violate's age as a factor, as she would have been near or at the end of her child-bearing years at the time Celyndia would have been born.

The warning-out records add to the mystery surrounding Celyndia. Constable Thorndike only records warning out Amos and Violate Fortune, not Celyndia. Other warning-out records include names of children. Unless Thorndike made an error, it means that Celyndia was not with Amos and Violate Fortune when they first moved to town in 1781.

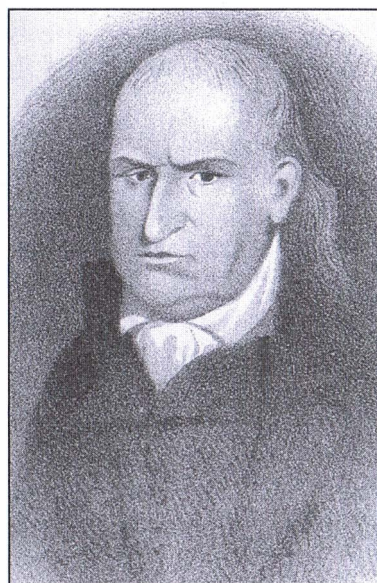
The first record of Celyndia is a receipt from December of 1785, certifying that Amos Fortune paid Dr. Adonijah Howe "for Shillings and eight Pence for Dctring Celinda [Mary] for a Burst." No explanation exists for the use of the name Mary in this receipt.

Celyndia probably attended the #8 schoolhouse – the school mentioned in Fortune's will – in Jaffrey.

Maps of Jaffrey's early school districts plainly show the Fortune residence inside District 8, and all children were required to attend the town schools.

In his will, Amos Fortune left Celyndia, his "adopted daughter," her bed, a spinning wheel, and the right to live in his house as long as she remained single. Judge Abel Parker also ruled that \$20 of Amos Fortune's estate be given to Celyndia, saying that it was Fortune's "intention...to do something more for Sylinda Fortune his adopted daughter than her having the articles of household furniture mentioned."

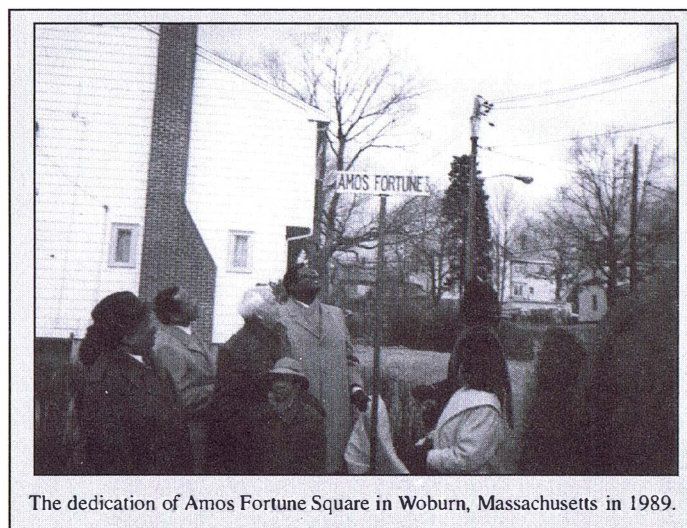
We also have mention in Daniel Emery's account book that Celyndia owed 37¢ for gin in 1807, and Dr. Adonijah Howe's records indicate Celyndia owed 75¢ in 1816. This places her in Jaffrey as late as 1816, but there is no further record of her. She probably married and moved out of town.



Judge Abel Parker

## Notes

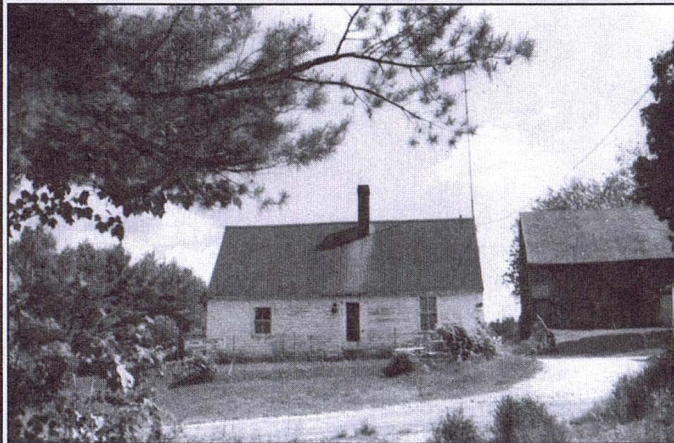
1. *Magoun believes that the mistake stems from a Woburn city clerk who, attempting to decipher the fading 18th century ink, mistook the 1778 for 1775 in the death certificate of the "wife of Amos Fortune."*
2. *Records show that Pompey Blackman/Freeman was one of three blacks from Lexington who participated in the battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. Another was named Eli Burdoo. Any connection between him and the Jaffrey Burdoos has not been found.*
3. *The other Burdoos did not have an easy life. Moses Burdoo Jr. died just seven years after his sister. Their mother Lois died in 1847 at the "Poor House," which was a farm owned by the town where paupers could go to live and work. She was buried in Jaffrey, but the location is unknown. The only member of the family whose whereabouts is known is Sally, who was five when her father died. She, too, died young in 1827 and was buried at the old East Hill graveyard in Peterborough, New Hampshire. She alone has a headstone.*
4. *In Amos Fortune's day, the town of Jaffrey contained three main villages: Squantum in the extreme southeast of town, Factory Village along the Contoocook River, and Jaffrey in the middle of the town. Factory Village became known as East Jaffrey in the 19th century. In the mid 20th century the name East Jaffrey was changed to Jaffrey, and the former Jaffrey became Jaffrey Center. Squantum has remained unchanged.*



The dedication of Amos Fortune Square in Woburn, Massachusetts in 1989.



### *Amos Fortune's house and barn*



The road on which they are located has been named for Amos Fortune. The house is still inhabited, and the barn is still used.

### *The house, barn, and brook*



Tyler Brook, which Amos used for his tanning, is seen in the foreground. The pits Amos dug to allow the hides to soak were located alongside the brook.





The Jaffrey Meetinghouse, where the Fortunes worshipped. They would have never have seen the steeple: it was not added until 1822. Amos and Violate Fortune are buried behind this building.



Research strongly suggests that this is the pewter communion service the Church of Jaffrey purchased with the money bequeathed by Amos Fortune. The service is now in the Brooklyn Museum.

## *Bibliography*

Annett, Albert and Alice E.E. Lehtinen. *History of Jaffrey*. Jaffrey, New Hampshire: Town of Jaffrey, 1937.

*An excellent source for information on the history of Jaffrey from the first English settlement until the 1930s. It includes short biographies of several prominent Jaffrey residents, including Amos Fortune. This book is the first in a four-volume set.*

Bailyn, Bernard, et. al. *The Great Republic, Volume I*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1992.

*A textbook written by several preeminent historians that covers American history until the end of Southern Reconstruction in 1877.*

Cutter, Daniel. *History of the Town of Jaffrey*. Concord, New Hampshire: Republican Press Association, 1881.

*The first written history of Jaffrey. Although out of print for more than 100 years, a few copies can still be found in the Jaffrey Public Library.*

Greene, Theodore. "Jaffrey in Amos Fortune's Day" in *Amos Fortune Forum - Fifty Years*. Jaffrey, New Hampshire: The Amos Fortune Forum, 1996.

*A special publication commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Amos Fortune Forum, including a biography of Amos Fortune and a transcript of a speech on early Jaffrey.*

Henretta, James. *America's History*. New York City, New York: Worth Publishers, 1993.

*Another textbook by noted historians that covers United States history.*

Magoun, F. Alexander. *Amos Fortune's Choice*. Freeport, Maine: The Bond Wheelwright Company, 1964.

*One of the two major works devoted to Amos Fortune.*

Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. New York City, New York: E.P Dutton, 1950.

*The Newbery Award-winning children's book on Amos Fortune.*





The two identical-looking gravestones on the left are those of Amos (left) and Violate (right) Fortune. Pompey Freeman may have been buried here also. The Meetinghouse and horsesheds are seen in the background. The gravesite has many visitors every year, many of whom leave flowers or other mementos. The grave of Judge Abel Parker is just behind the tall obelisk-shaped gravestone on the right. The grave of Rev. Laban Ainsworth is not shown, but would be to the right of the edge of the picture.



## Major Sources

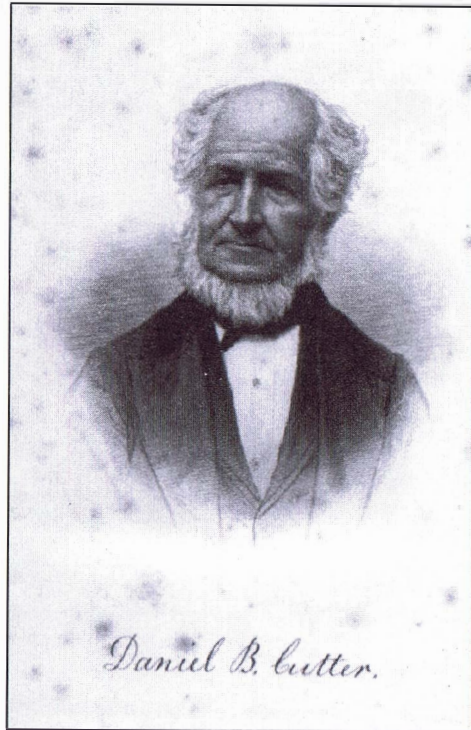
*During the writing of the preceding narrative, four sources were invaluable in the research on Amos Fortune and Jaffrey during the turn of the 19th century. Publication information on these four sources can be found in the bibliography. They are listed here in the order in which they were written.*

**History of Jaffrey by Daniel Cutter:** This history was written by a member of one of early Jaffrey's prominent families. Though information on Amos Fortune is limited, this history contains detailed biographies of many of his contemporaries. It was published just a few years after the town's centennial (1873) and includes a transcript of speeches delivered for that celebration.

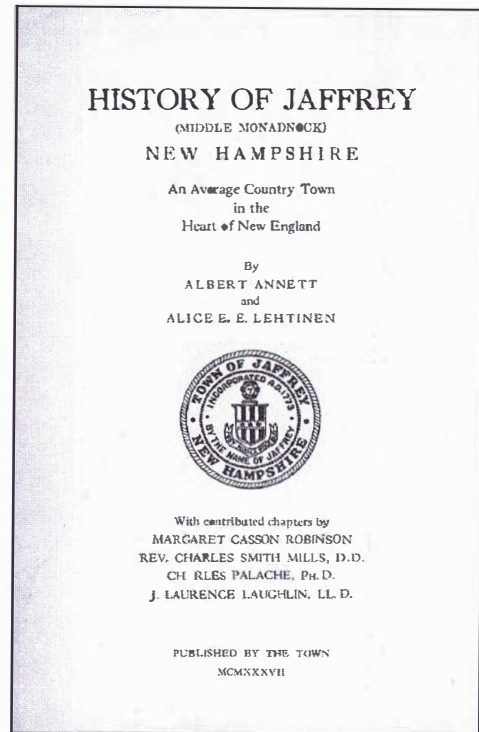
**History of Jaffrey by Annett and Lehtinen:** This is the first book in the official four-volume set on the history of the town. Albert Annett was a noted public servant in Jaffrey, as well as an avid outdoorsman and the proprietor of the Annett Box Company. When he died, Alice Lehtinen of Jaffrey completed the work on the first two volumes. This history is the most comprehensive chronicle of Jaffrey's past, and perhaps the first work to devote a special section to Amos Fortune. Though inaccurate in some aspects, this special section was a compendium of the information known about Amos Fortune at the time it was written in 1937.

**Amos Fortune, Free Man, by Elizabeth Yates:** Certainly this work is the most famous of the books written about Amos Fortune and his family. Elizabeth Yates McGreal, a New York native who moved to the Monadnock Region, said that she attended an Amos Fortune Forum and, visiting the Fortune graves behind the Meetinghouse, was inspired by Amos Fortune's story. Yates compiled all available information on Amos Fortune to write her book. Like any good storyteller, however, she filled in missing information with her own imagination. The result was a widely popular children's book that won the Newbery Award for outstanding American children's literature in 1951. She frequently visited schools and gave talks on Amos Fortune to children who had read her book. It remains a very popular book for children in upper elementary school. Elizabeth Yates later lived in Concord, New Hampshire, and helped review this manuscript.

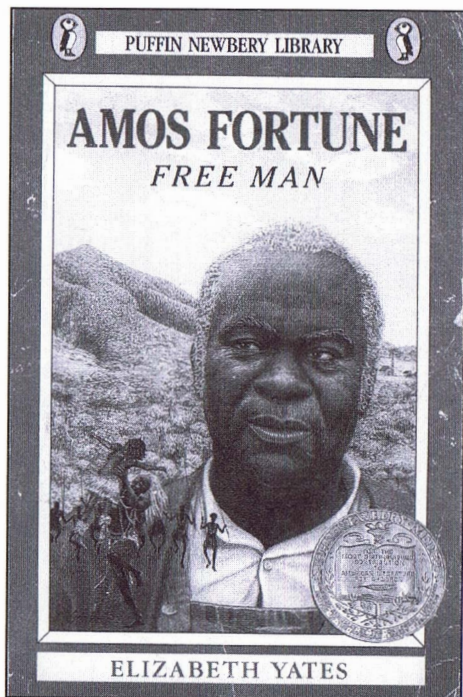
**Amos Fortune's Choice by F. Alexander Magoun:** Magoun was a professor of Human Relations in Industry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an occasional resident of Jaffrey. Concerned with what he felt was gross historical distortion and pure fiction found in the written accounts of Amos Fortune's life, Magoun set out to do more research and write a "true" account of Amos Fortune's life. However, as he freely admitted, "not enough is known for a real biography, and yet too much is available to ignore." However educated his speculation may be, Magoun's work contains as much fiction as it does factual information. Yet he added to the volume of research done on Amos Fortune, and his was the first book on Amos Fortune not written for children. It was published in 1964.



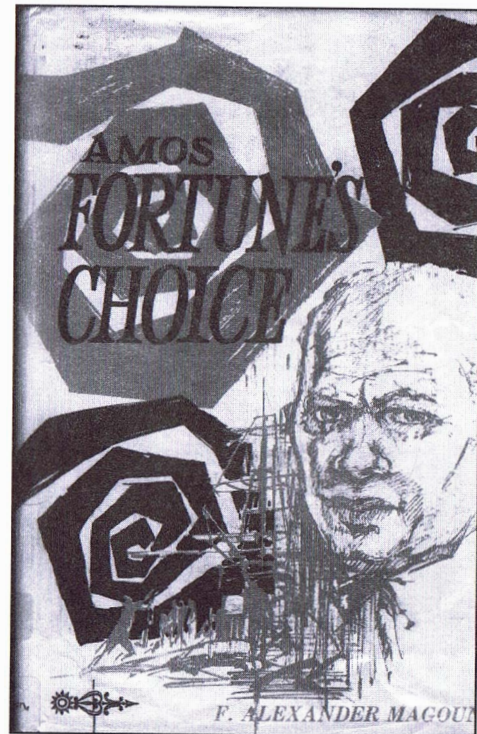
Daniel Cutter, author of *History of Jaffrey* (1880)



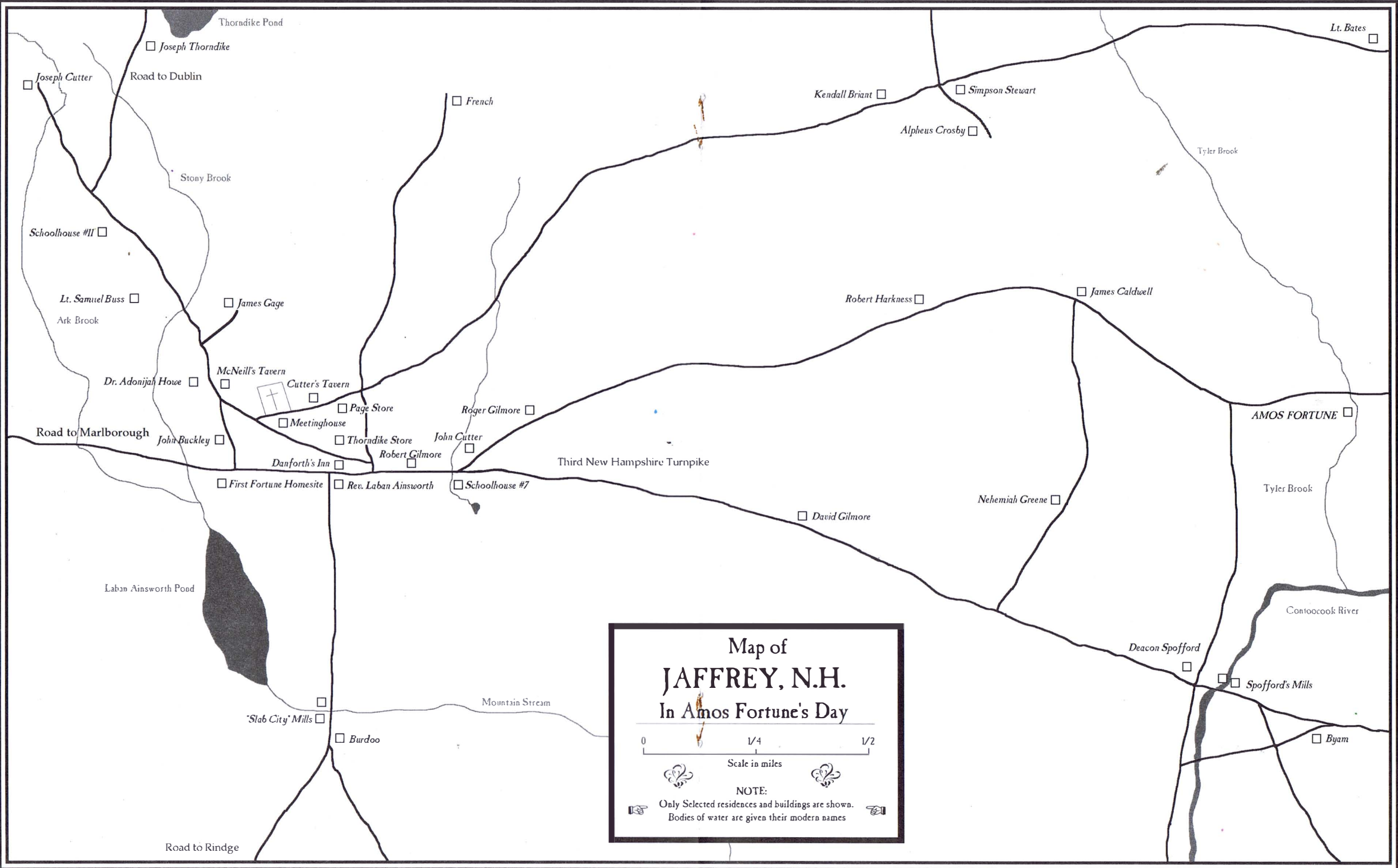
*History of Jaffrey* (1937) by Annett and Lehtinen



Latest cover design for Yates' *Amos Fortune, Free Man*



Magoun's *Amos Fortune's Choice*





Know all Men By these Presents that I Ichabod Richardson  
 of Woburn in the County of Middlesex and Province of the Mass  
 achusetts Bay in New England Tanner, for diverse good Reasons  
 me herunto especially moving Have and by these presents  
 Do, Covenant, promise grant and agree to, and with my Negro  
 man Amos, That at the end of four years next ensuing  
 this Date (or at my Decease if it should fall within that  
 Term) that he the Said Amos shall <sup>be</sup> Discharged Freed,  
 and Set at Liberty from my Service power & Command  
 for ever, and have full Liberty to Trade Traffick and  
 dispose of him Self, in all respects as he pleases, and Have  
 and Enjoy & convert to his own use all the profit of his  
 own Labour and Industry equal to men that are freeborn  
 and that neither I, nor my Heirs, nor any other person, or  
 persons acting or claiming by or under me or them, shall  
 have, challenge, or Claim any Right to or in his person  
 property or Labour, but Therefrom shall be Excluded  
 and for ever Debarred by force & virtue of these presents.  
 In Witness Whereof I the D. Ichabod Richardson have here  
 unto Set my hand & Seal the thirtieth day of December  
 1763. in the fourth year of his Majesty's Reign &c  
 Signed Sealed & Delivered  
 in presence of



## *The Unsigned Manumission Paper (1763)*

Know all men by these Presents that I Ichabod Richardson of Woburn in the county of Middx: and province of Massachusetts-bay in New England Tanner, for diverse good Reasons me hereunto especially moving Have and by these presents do Covenant, promise grant and agree to, and with my Negroe man Amos, That at the end of four years next insuing this Date (or at my Decease if it should fall within that Term) that he the said Amos shall then be Discharged, Freed, and Set at Liberty from my Service power & Command for ever, and have full Liberty to trade Traffick and dispose of him Self, in all Respects asd he pleases, and Have and Enjoy & convert to his own use all the profit of his own Labour and Industery equal to men that are freborn, and that neither I, nor my Heirs, nor any other person, or persons acting, or claiming by or under me or them, Shall have, challenge, or Claim any Right to, or in his person property or Labours, but Therefrom shall be Excluded and for ever Declared by force & virtue of these presents, In Witness Whereof I the Sd Ichabod Richardson have here unto Set my hand & Seal the thirtieth day of December 1763 in the fourth year of his majesties Reign &c

Signed Sealed & Delivered  
in presence of



I know all men by these presents that Simon Carter  
of Woburn in the County of Middlesex and province of the most excellent  
King for their England common and bound and firmly holden to  
Amos Fortune of Woburn in the aforesaid County and province  
Carter in full and just Sum of Six pound Lawfull money to  
be paid him yearly to the which payment well and truly to  
be made I bind my Self my heirs or Executors as administrators  
hereby by these presents sealed with my Seal dated this ninth  
day of May many one thousand seven hundred and sixty nine.

The Condition of the above obligation is that if the above named  
Simon Carter shall pay to the above named Amos Fortune three  
pound Lawfull money of this province yearly the which aforesaid  
three pound Lawfull money the aforesaid Amos is obliged by his Bond  
of even date with these presents to pay to the aforesaid Simon  
which money is to be in bank for the said Amos young if he should  
be disabled by sickness or one other way then said money is to  
Endure by the heirs of the estate of his deceased mother  
Robert Richardson and is then to be paid to him or expended upon him  
with care and providance and if said Amos shall not be disabled  
by sickness or one other way so but that he can comfortably  
support him self then the aforesaid three pound is that to  
be paid yearly but the first thereof is to be paid  
yearly during the natural life of the said Amos but the said  
Amos is at his death to have a Title to dispose of all the money he shall  
put in bank in said Carters hands for as full and ample Amos  
as if he had never a have put said money out of his own hand  
Provided however the less if the aforesaid Simon shall pay to the aforesaid  
Amos when disabled or aforesaid and at his death or aforesaid the aforesaid  
money to be put in to his hand be the same more or less then  
the above obligation to be void and of none effect  
other wise to remain and abide in full force and virtue  
Signed sealed and delivered

In presence of us  
James Wapman  
Jesse Johnson.

Simon Carter

Simon Carter



## *Simon Carter Agreement (1769)*

Know all men By theas presents that I Simon Carter of Woburn in the County of Middelsix and prvince of the massachusetts Bay in New England yeoman am Bound and firmly holden to Amos Fortune of woburn in the afoarsaid County and province Currier in the full and Just Sume of Six pund Lawfull mony to to Be paid him yearly to the which payment well and truly to be maid I Bind my Self my [hares] or Executors or administratives firmly by these presents Sealed with my Seal dated this ninth day of may anno dommy one thousand seven hundred and Sixty nine. The condition of the above obligation is that of the above named simon Carter shall pay to the above named Amos Fortune three pounds Lawfull mony the afoorsaid amos is obliged by his Bond of Even date with theas presents to pay to the afoorsaid Simon which mony is to Be in Banke for the Said amoses yous if he Should Be disenabled by Sickness or one other way then Said mpony is to Endemnefy the [hares] of the Estate of his deseased master Icobod Richardson and is then to be paid to him or Expended upon him with Care and prudence and if Said amos Shall not Be disenabled By Sickness or one other way So But that he Can Comfortedly Suport him Self then the afoarsaid three pounds is Not to to Be paid yearly But the Increst theirof is to Be paid yearly during the natural Life of the Said Amos But the Said Amos is at his Deseas to have a Rite to dispose of all the mony he hath put in Banke in Said Carters hands In as full and ampel [?] as if he had a never a have put Said mony out of his [one] hans Provided Never the less if the afoorsaid Simon Shall pay to the afoarsaid mony to be put in to his hand be the Same more or less then the above obligation is to Be void and of none Efect other wise to Remain and abid in full force and virtue Sined Sealed and deliverd

In presents of us  
James Wyman  
Isaac Johnson  
John Cutter

Simon Carter



Know all Men by these presents that we Hannah Richardson the  
 doers named the said Thomas Head and Samuel Head of the County of Middlesex  
 in the State of New England for Edmund Richardson a Minor Thomas Head Esq. and  
 Hannah his Wife Simon Carter Esq. and Susanna his Wife and James  
 Richardson Esq. as Administrators to the Estate of Deborah Richardson  
 late of Woburn dec'd of Woburn aforesaid and Joseph Head Esq.  
 Executors with Relief his Wife of Cambridge being all in the County  
 of Middlesex and Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England  
 and the Heirs of the Estate seal and personal of the aforesaid deceased  
 Deborah. In consideration of the many faithful services Amos Fortune did  
 perform to the said Deborah in his Life time and hath since professed to  
 us respectively whereby our several Interests have been greatly increased  
 do for ourselves respectively and our several Heirs Executors or assigns and

Grant unto the said Amos Fortune the full and free Liberty of his person  
 and services from and after the ninth day of May Seventeen hundred  
 Eighty and nine to have hold and improve to his own sole Use and  
 behoof forever in as full and ample a manner as any free born man what  
 ever might or should do so that no person or persons from by or under us or  
 in the Name Head or Right of us or any or either of us above named or  
 in the Name Head or Right of our Heirs or of any or either of them  
 from and after the Ninth day of May 1769 Exercise any Estate  
 Interest Claim or Demand of what Name soever shall have claim  
 Challenge or Demand bet of and from the same we and they are  
 and shall be for ever excluded and discharged Furthermore we and each  
 of us above named do Covenant with the said Amos that we have full  
 Power and lawful Authority to Grant unto him the full and free Li-  
 berty of his person and services in the form aforesaid and that we nor  
 any of us will subject him the said Amos to the Bonds by Law in such  
 Case required In Confirmation whereof and of all above written we have  
 hereunto set our hands and seals this twenty third day of November  
 in the Eleventh Year of of his Majesty's Reign. To Wits Hannah  
 Richardson and seal Edmund Richardson and seal Deborah Richardson  
 and seal Thomas Head and seal James Richardson and seal Simon Car-  
 ter and seal Joseph Head and seal Edmund Richardson and seal Susanna  
 Carter and seal Hannah Head her Mark - and seal Relief her  
 and seal signed sealed and delivered in presence of James Hyman Isaac  
 Johnson John Lutter Junr John Caldwell Isaac Caldwell Francis  
 Johnson Isaac Johnson George Hyman Isaac Johnson Amos Fortune  
 Field Stephen Richardson Junr Nathl Richardson  
 Middl<sup>y</sup> Camb Nov<sup>r</sup> 23: 1772: past and Introd<sup>d</sup> by Wm. Smith Secy

Amos Fortune 178  
 Hannah Richardson  
 Amos Fortune  
 August 9: 1772  
 446

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
 A Copy from Records of Middlesex So. District Registry of Deeds  
 Book.....73.....Page 437, 438



## *Richardson Agreement (1770)*

Know all Men by these presents that we Hannah Richarson Wi  
 dow Leonard Richardson yeoman Ichabod Richardson Joiner Oliver Richardson  
 Yeoman as Guardian for Edmund Richardson a Minor Thomas Reed Yeoman and  
 Hannah his Wife Simon Carter Yeoman and Susanna his Wife and Jonas  
 Richardson Gentleman as Adminr to the Estate of Ichabod Richardson  
 Curryer late of Woburn dece all of Woburn aforesaid and Joseph Reed Hus  
 bndman with Relief his wife of Cambridge being all in the County  
 of Middlesex and Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England  
 and the Heirs of the Estate seal and personal of the aforesaid deceased  
 Ichabod In Consideration of the Many feathful Services Amos Fortune did  
 perform to the said decd Ichabod in his Life Time and hath since performed to  
 us Respectively whereby our Several Interests have been greatly increased  
 do for ourselves Respectively and our Serveral Heirs Executors Give and  
 Grant unto the said Amos Fortune the full and free Liberty of his person  
 and Services from and after the ninth day of May Seventeen hundred  
 Sixty and nine To Have Hold and Improve to his own sole Use and  
 Behoof forever in as full and Ample a Manner as any free born Man what  
 ever might or should do so that no person or persons from by or Under us or  
 in the Name Stead or Right of Us or any or Either of us above named or  
 in The Name Stead or Right of our Heirs or of any or Eithr of them  
 from and after the Ninth day of May 1769 aforesaid any Estate  
 Interest Claim or Demand but of and from the same we and they are  
 and shall be for [?] Secluded and deba[r]jed Futhermore we are and each  
 of Us above named do Covenant with the said Amos that we have full  
 power and Lawful Authority to Grant unto him the full ands free Li  
 berty of his person and Services in the Form aforesaid and that we nor  
 any of Us will Subject him the said Amos to the Bonds by Law in such  
 Case Required In Confirmation whereof and of all above written we have  
 hereunto let our hands and seals this twenty third day of November  
 oin the Eleventh Year of his Majesty's Reign D1770 Hannah  
 Richardson and Seal Leonard Richardson and Seal Ichabod Richarson  
 and Seal Thomas Reed and Seal Jonas Richardson and Seal Simon Car  
 ter and Seal Joseph Reed and Seal Edmund Richardson and Seal Relief Reed  
 and Seal Signed Sealed and Delivered in presence of James Wyman Isaac  
 Johnson John Cutter Junr John Caldwell Enoch Caldwell Francis  
 Johnson Isaac Johnson ?epe Eyman Isaac Johnson Eunice Mans  
 field Stephen Richardson Junr Ruth Richardson



Know all men by these presents that I Isaac Johnson  
of Middletown in the County of Middlesex, and Province of the Massachusetts  
Bay in New England do hereby

In Consideration of Sixteen pounds thirteen Shillings and four pence  
Lawfull money paid me by Amos Chubbuck of Middletown aforesaid  
I have the Receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge and do hereby give grant sell  
and Convey unto the said Amos and his heirs a certain messuage of Land  
lying for Middletown being by Estimation about one half acre Bounded  
westwardly on the County Road leading to Wilmington Southwardly  
partly on Land of Nathan Wyman and partly on Land of Mary and  
Hannah Codgins to a Stake and Stones and Eastwardly on my one Land  
with a straight Line up the hill to a fast Rock with three Stones thereon  
then Northwardly on my one Land with a straight Line till it comes to  
a Stake and Stones by the water by the Road

To have and to hold the same to the said Amos and his heirs to his  
and their sole use and behoove forever and I do Covenant with the  
said Amos and his heirs and assigns that I am Lawfully seized in fee  
of the premises that they are free of all incumbrance that I have  
good Right to sell and Convey the same to the said Amos in manner  
aforesaid and I will warrant and Defend the same to the said Amos and  
his heirs and assigns forever against the Lawfull Claims and demands  
of all persons and Judith the wife of the said Isaac in token of her Consent  
in giving up her Right of dower and year of third to gather with the said  
Isaac this first day of April in the thirteenth year of his Majesty's Reign  
A.D. 1773 At his hand and Seal

David Thompson  
Ezra Parker

Isaac Johnson

His

Judith Johnson

make

Middletown: July 20 1774

Isaac Johnson above named acknowledged  
the above Instrument to be his Deed

Witness Josiah Johnson Jun<sup>r</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>



## *Woburn Land Deed (1774)*

Know all men by theas presents that I Isaac Johnson  
of Woburn In the County of Middlesex and province of the Massachusetts  
Bay in New England Taner  
In consideration of Sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and four pence  
Lawfull mony paid me by Amos Fortune of Woburn afoorsaid  
Currier the Receipt whearof I do hearby acknowledg to hearby give grant Sell  
and Convay unto the Said Amos and his [hous] a Center [meswage] of Land  
Leying in Woburn Being By Estemation about one half acre Bounded  
Westwardly on the COUNTRY Rode Leading to Wilmington Southern by  
partly on Land of Nathan Wyman and partly on Lands of many and  
Hannah Codgin to a stake and Stones and Eastwardly on my own Lands  
with a Strait Line up the hill to a fast Rock with Some Stones theiron  
them Northardly on my own lans with a strait line till it comes to  
a Stake and Stones by the [ ] by the Rode.  
To have and to hold the Same to the Said Amos and his hares to his and  
their Sole use and Behove forever and I do ovenant with the  
Said Amos and his hares and [ ] that I am Lawfully clied in face  
of the premaces that thay are free of all incumbrence that I have  
good Rite to Sell and Convay the Same to the Said Amos in manner  
afoorsaid and I will warrant and Defenc the Same to the Said Amos and  
his hares and [ ] forever against the Lawfull Clames and demands  
of all persons and Judith the wife of the said Isaac in token of his Covenant  
in giving up his Right of [ ] and [ ] of third to gather with the Said  
Isaac this first day of Apriel in the thirteenth year of his Majesties Reign  
sets his hand and Seal

Signed Sealed and Delivered in presents of  
David Thompson  
Ebenezer Pike

Isaac Johnson  
Hir  
Judith X Johnson  
marke



I NOW a Man by these Presents that  
 Pompey Blackman of Lexington in the  
 County of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts  
 Bay in New England Labourer (for diverse  
 good Causes & Considerations hereunto moving  
 have made Ordained Constituted and by these  
 do make constitute Ordain and appoint my  
 Trusty Friend Amos Fortune of Woburn in the  
 County Above, Lawyer, my true & Lawful  
 Attorney, for me, in my Name, to and for my  
 Use, to ask demand recover or receive of and  
 from all Persons Indebted to me the Pompey  
 Blackman full Due Debts and Demands whether  
 by Note, Bond, or any other way made to appear  
 justly due to me the said Pompey. Giving and by  
 these Presents granting to my said Attorney my sole  
 and full Power & Authority to take pursue and follow  
 such legal Courses, for the recovering receiving &  
 obtaining of the same as my self might or  
 could do, were I personally present, and upon re-  
 ceipt of the same, Acquittances and other Sufficient  
 Discharges for me in my Name to make Sign  
 Seal & deliver, all & singular things or things which  
 are or may be necessary concerning the Premises as  
 fully & intirely as the said Pompey Blackman in  
 my own Person, ought or could do in and about the  
 same, Ratifying Willing & Confirming whatsoever  
 my said Attorney shall lawfully do, or Cause to be done  
 in and about the execution of the Premises by Virtue  
 of these Presents In Witness hereof I have hereunto  
 Set my Hand and Seal this Sealed Day of April  
 Anno Domini One Thousand Seven Hundred and  
 Seventy Seven

Marks

Pompey & Blackman

Middlesex ss. April 21<sup>st</sup> 1777

Pompey Blackman above  
 named hath acknowledged the above

his

and the seal and



## *Pompey Blackman Power of Attorney (1777)*

Know all Men by these Presents that I Pompey Blackman of Lexington in the County of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts Bay in New England Labourer for diverse good Causes and Considerations one hereunto moving have made Ordained, Constituted and by these do make Constitute Ordain and Appoint my Trusty Friend, Amos Fortune, of Woburn in the County Above sd, Tanner, my true and Lawful Attorney, for me, in my Name, and to my Use, to Ask demand recover, or receive of and from all Persones Indebted to me the Pompey Blackman all Dues Debts and Demands Whether by Note, Bond, or any other way made to appear justly due to me the said Pompey Giving and by these Presents Granting to my said Attorney my Sole and full Power & Authority to take pursue and follow Such legal causes, for the recovering receiving & obtaining of the Same as I my Self might or could do, were I personally present, and upon receipt of the same, acquittances and other Sufficient Discharges for me & in my Name to make Sign Seal & deliver and all & Singular thing or things which are or may be necessary concerning the Premises as fully & intirely as I the Said Pompey Blackman, in my Own Person, ought or could do in and about the same, Ratifying Allowing & Confirming whatsoever my said Attorney shall lawfully do, or Cause to be done in and about the execution of the Premises by Virtue of these Presents in Witness hereof I have hereunto Set my Hand and seal this Second Day of April Anno Domini One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Seven.

marke  
Pompey X Blackman



Bilena June 23 1778.  
 Then this of Amos Fortune fifty pounds in full for  
 a Negro wale named Lydia, I am now my  
 property the whole I do sell and convey to the above said Amos  
 and I do covenant with the said Amos that I have just and  
 Lawfull Right to sell and convey the said Lydia in the manner  
 aforesaid and I will warrant and defend the said Lydia to him  
 against all the Lawfull Claims and Demands of all persons  
 what ever  
 in presence of  
 her  
 Milesent & Braden  
 mark  
 Isaac Johnson  
 Joseph Brown

This Day Received of Amos Fortune Fifty  
 Pounds in full for a Negro Woman named  
 Vilot being now my property which I now  
 do sell and convey to the above said Amos and  
 I do covenant with the said Amos that I  
 have a just and Lawfull Right to sell and  
 convey the said Vilot in manner as aforesaid  
 and I will warrant and defend the said  
 Vilot to him the said Amos against the Law-  
 full Claims and Demands of all Persons what  
 ever  
 Dated Woburn 9th November 1779  
 Signed Sealed & Delivered  
 in presence of us  
 Samuel Willson  
 Mary Balowise  
 James Balowise



## *Purchase of Lydia (1778) and Violate (1779)*

Bilreca, June ye 23 1778

Then Recd of Amos Fortune fifty pounds in full for a Negro garle Names Lydia Sumersete being now my property the which I do Sell and Convay to the aforesaid Amos and I do Covenant with the Said Amos that I have juste and Lawfull Rite to Sell and Convay the Said Lydea in the manner afoarsaid and I will warrante and Defend the Sais Lydia to him againste all the Lawfull Clames and Demands of all persons What Ever.

Sind Sealed and Delevered  
in presents of

Josiah Bowers

her

Milesent X Braddon

mark

Isaac Johnson

This Day Received of Amos Fortune Fifty pounds in full for a Negro Woman Named Vilot being now my property which I now do Sell and Convey to the afore said Amos and I do Covenannt with the Said Amos that I have a just and Lawfull Right to Sell and Convey the said Vilot in manner as afore said and I will Warrant and defend the said Vilot to him the said Amos against the Law full Claims and Demands of all Persons What ever

Dated Woburn 9th November 1779

Signed Sealed & Delivered  
in presents of us

Samuel Willson

James Baldwin

Mary Baldwin



This Indenture witnesseth that I Simon Peter of  
 Saffrey in the County of Cheshire and State of New Hampshire  
 Negroman do put and bind my self as an Apprentice to  
 Amos Fortune of Saffrey aforesaid Tanner for and during the  
 term of three years from the date hereof to be completed and  
 ended on the twenty first day of July in the year of our lord  
 one thousand seven hundred and thirty three in order to learn  
 the art or Mystery of Tanning and Currying leather. During  
 all said term the said Apprentice my said master shall faith-  
 fully charge his servants keep his Lawfull commands gladly  
 when where they shall do no damage to my said master nor  
 see it to be done by other without Letting or giving Notice  
 thereof to my said Master I will not waste my said Masters  
 goods nor lend them unlawfully to any I will not commit  
 fornication nor contract matrimony within the said term at  
 Cards and Dice or any other unlawful Game I will not play  
 whereby my said master may have damage with his goods or  
 the goods of other, I will not absent my self by day or by  
 night from my said masters Service without his leave but  
 in all things behave my self as a faithfull apprentice ought  
 to do toward my said master during said term and the said  
 Amos Fortune doth hereby Covenant and promise to teach and  
 instruct or cause to be taught and instructed in the art or  
 Calling of tanning and Currying the best way and means he  
 may or can the said apprentice during said term finding for  
 said apprentice during said term suitable meat drink washing  
 Lodging Nursing and physicke suitable apparel during said  
 term and at the end of said term the said apprentice is to be  
 at Liberty without any demands on either side as to the premises  
 abovesmentioned. And for the true and faithfull performance of all  
 and every of the above Covenants and agreements the parties to these  
 presents and either of them bindeth himself to the other firmly  
 In Testimony whereof the parties to these presents have hereunto  
 interchangeably set their hands and seals this twenty first day  
 of July in the year of our lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty  
 signed sealed and delivered in presence of

Thaddeus Blodget  
 Robert Gilmore

Simon Peter  
 Amos Fortune



## *Simon Peter Apprenticeship (1790)*

This indenture witnesseth that I Simon Peter of Jaffrey in the County of Cheshire and State of New Hampshire Negroman do put and bind my Self as an Apprentice to Amos Fortune of Jaffrey aforesaid Tanner for and during the term of three Years from the Date herof to be Completed and ended on the twenty first day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred and Ninety three in order to learn the art or Mistry of Tanning and Currying leather, during all Said term I the Said Apprentice my said master shall faithfully Serve his secrets keep his Lawfull Commands gladly every where obey I will do no damage to my Said master Nor See it to be done by other without Letting or giving Notice thereof to my Said Master I will not waste my said Masters goods nor lend them unlawfully to any I will not Committ fornication nor Contract matrimony within the said term at Cards and dice or any other unlawful Game I will not play whereby my said master may have damage with his goods or the goods of others I will not absent my Self by day or by Night from my said masters Service without his leave but in all things behave my Self as a faithfull apprintice ought to do toward my said master during Said term and the said Amos Fortune doth hereby Covenant and promise to teach and instruct or Cause to be taught and instructed in the art or Calling or tanning and Currying the best way and means he may or Can the said apprentice during said term finding for said apprentice during Said term Suitable meat drinking washing Lodging Nursing and physick Suitable apparel during said term and at the end of Said term the said apprentice is to be at Liberty without any demands on either Side as to the premises abovementioned. And for the true and faithfull performance of all and every of the above Covenants and agreements the parties to these presents and either of them bindeth himself to the other firmly In Testimony whereof the parties to these presents have hereinto interchangably set their hands and Seals this twenty first day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Ninty Signed Sealed and Delivered in presence of us

Thaddeus Blodget

Simon Peter

Robert Gilmore

Amos Fortune



This indenture Witnesseth, that Roger Toothaker  
 of Lunenburg in the county of Worcester and common-  
 wealth of Massachusetts, by his own hand put and set to  
 these presents, voluntarily and of his own free will & accord  
 put and bind his Son, Charles Toothaker an Apprentice  
 to Amos Turner of Saffrey in the county of the five and  
 State of New Hampshire Turner to learn his art trade  
 or Mystery after the manner of an apprentice to serve him  
 from the day of the date hereof set and during the term  
 of untill he shall arrive to the age of twenty one year  
 during all which term the said apprentice this said Master  
 faithfully shall serve his said Master keep his lawful commands  
 gladly every where obey. He shall do no damage to his said  
 Master nor see it to be done by others without letting or  
 giving notice thereof to his said master. He shall  
 not touch his said masters goods nor lend them unlawfully  
 to any. He shall not commit fornication nor commit  
 matrimony within the said term. At cards and dice or  
 any unlawfull games he shall not play whereby his  
 said master may have damage with his own goods nor  
 the goods of others. He shall not absent himself day nor  
 night from his masters service without his leave, nor  
 haunt Alehouses Taverns or play houses but in all things  
 behave himself as a faithful Apprentice ought to do  
 during said term. And the said master shall use the  
 utmost of his Endeavour to teach or cause to be taught  
 or instructed the said Apprentice in the trade or my-  
 stery he now followeth, and procure and provide for  
 him sufficient meat drink Apparel Lodging and  
 Washing fitting for such an Apprentice during the  
 said term, and at the end of said term to procure and  
 provide for said Apprentice and ~~give to him~~ ~~and~~  
~~him about of Charles~~ to learn him if he is capable  
 of learning to read write and Cypher fitting for such an  
 Apprentice. And for the true performance of all and  
 every the said covenants and Agreements either of the  
 said parties bind themselves unto the other by these  
 presents.

In witness Whereof they have interchangeably put  
 their hands and seals this eleventh day of March  
 in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred  
 and Ninety three.

*Signed Charles and released in presence of us*

Jest Wil<sup>m</sup> Turner  
 Jane Turner

Roger Toothaker

Charles Toothaker



## *Charles Toothaker Apprenticeship (1790)*

This indenture Witnesseth that Roger Toothaker of Lunenburg in the County of Worcester and common wealth of Massachusetts physician hath put and doth by these presents Voluntarily who of his own free will & accord put and bind his Son Chalres Toothaker as Apprentice to Amos Fortune of Jaffrey in the county of Cheshire and State of New hampshire Tanner to learn his art trade or Mystery after the manner of an apprenticeship to Serve him from the day of the date mereof for and during the term of untill he Shall arrive to the age of twenty one years During all which term the Said apprentice his Said Master faithfully Shall Serve his Secrets keep his lawful Commands gladly every where obey. He Shall do no damage to his said Master nor See it to be done by others without letting or giving notice thereof to his Said master. He shall not waste his Said masters goods nor lend them unlawfully to any. He Shall not committ fornication nor Contract Matrimony within the Said term. At cards and dice or any unlawfull Games he Shall not play whereby his Said master may have damage with his own goods nor the goods of others. He Shall not absent himself day nor night from his masters Service without his leave, Nor haunt Ale houses Taverns or play houses but in all things behave himself as a faithfull Apprentice ought to do during Said term. And the Said master shall use the Utmost of his Endeavour to teach or cause to be taught or instructed the Said Apprentice in the trade or mystery he now followeth. and procure and provide for him Sufficent meat drink Apparel Lodging and Washing fitting for Such and Apprentice during the said term and at the end of said tp procure and provide for said Apprentice and give to him one Good suit of Clothes and to learn him of he is Capable of learning to Read write and Cypher fitting for such an Apprentice. And for the true performance of all and every the Said covenants and Agreements Either of the Said parties bind themselves unto the other by these presents

In wittness Whereof they have interchangeably put their hand and seals this eleventh day of march in the year of our lord one thousand Seven hundred and Ninty three.

Signed Sealed and delivered in presence of us

Roger Toothaker

Willm Turner

Jane Turner

Charles Toothaker

A

Bridge October 23 1784  
 Mr Fortune Sir please to let me know what  
 have been paid of ~~the~~ leather and this order  
 shall be your discharge for the same per me  
 Daniel Lake junr

B

March 30<sup>th</sup> 1791 then rec<sup>d</sup> one pound in full  
 of all a Compts or demand of Amos Fortune  
 rec<sup>d</sup> by me in full Sam<sup>l</sup> Adams

C

Received of Amos Fortune  
 five pounds Six Shillings  
 & eight pence L<sup>ms</sup> in  
 full of all accounts I say  
 Received by me this 3 day  
 of Decem<sup>r</sup> 1781  
 John Smith Junr

D

Mr Fortune Sir please to Deliver  
 to Messrs. Tole my calf Skin & Sheep  
 Skin he pays for freezing the same  
 and you will oblige me your humble Servant  
 Standing November  
 to 1787  
 Elias Whitney



## *Various Receipts*

Rindge October 23 1789

Mr. Fortune Sir please to let Mr. Cotton [Whiten]  
have ten pound of Sole leather and this order  
Shall be your discharge for the Same persone  
Daniel Lake [ym]

A

March 30 Yr 1790 then Recd one pound in full  
of all a compts on demand of Amos Forten  
Recd by me in full

Saml Adams

B

Received of Amos Fortune  
five pounds Six Shillings  
& Eight pence m [a] in  
full of all acompts I Say  
Receiv'd by me this 3 day  
of Decmbr 1781

C

Mr. Forten Sir Plese to Deliver  
to Benjm Dole my Calf Skin & Sheep  
Skin he paing for Dressing the Same  
and you will oblige me your humble Servent  
[Standing] November Elias Whitney  
the 1 - 1787

D

E

Taffrey November the 25 ye 1785  
 For vallue received I promise to pay to  
 Amos Fortune or order the ~~sum~~ sum of  
 Twenty ~~pounds~~ pound five shilling and  
 Ten pence on demand with interest til  
 paid as witness my hand Christopher Mann  
 Attest Pompy <sup>his</sup> Freeman  
 Marke

F

Woburn July 7<sup>th</sup> 1786  
 To Mr Saml Quinse Esq<sup>r</sup> Sir please to deliver to Amos Fortune  
 the Bearer of this the Note that I delivered to you of Mr Captm Winkhops  
 the principal of <sup>one</sup> four pounds the other three pounds and he will  
 pay you for your trouble and in so doing you will oblige  
 your humble Servent Pompy <sup>his</sup> Blackman  
 Marke

G

Taffrey Decr the 19 1785  
 This may Certify that Mrs Amos Fortune has Paid me  
 four Shillings and eight ~~pence~~ pence for Doctring Clinda Mann  
 for a Burst I Say Rec<sup>d</sup> by me Adonijah Howe



## Various Receipts

Jaffrey November the 25 ye 1785  
For vallue receved I promes to pay to  
Amos Fortune on order the sum of  
Twenty pound five shilling and  
Ten panc on demand with intrest til  
paid as witnes my hand Christopher Man  
[At as]                pomp his Freeman  
X  
mark

E

Woburn July ye 15 1776

To Mr Samel Zuinse Esq. Dir please to deliver to Amos Fortune  
the Barrier of this the note that I deliverd to you of Mr Ephrem Winsh[?]  
the prinsapel of one is four pounds the other three pounds and he will  
pay you for your troubel and in so doing you will oblidge  
his  
your humbel Servent          Pompy X   Blackman  
Marke

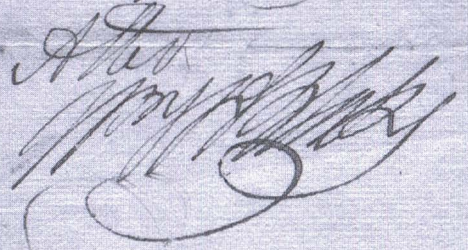
F

Jaffrey Decmb th 19 1785  
This may Certify that Mr. Amos Fortune has Paid me  
for Shillings and eight Pence for Dctring Celinda [Mary]  
for a Burst T' day Re'd by me  
Adonijah Howe

G



Keene June 17<sup>th</sup> 1799 Recd of Amos Fortune  
 Six Dollars sixty one Cent which I promise  
 to pay in six months. and I have recd.  
 of J. Subscriber. a Blue Bond Cloth Coat  
 a striped pattern jacket and a furr Hat  
 and a pair of Old Shoes which Articles I  
 receive as a Collateral security for the  
 above Six Dollars & sixty one cents and if  
 the said Articles the property of Sam<sup>l</sup> George are not  
 redeemed within six months as aforesaid then the  
 above property to be the property of Amos Fortune

Attest  

 Sam<sup>l</sup> + George  
 Mark  
 Amos Fortune



*Receipt from Samuel George (1799)*

Keene June 17 1799 Rece of Amos Fortune  
Six Dollars Sixty One Cent which I promise  
to pay in Six Months and I have recd  
of sd subscriber a Blue Brod Cloth Coat  
a striped pattern jacket and a fur Hatt  
and a pair of Old Shoes which articles I  
receive as a Collateral security for the  
above Six Dollers & Sixty one Cents and if  
the said Articles the property of Sam George are not  
redeemed within Six Months as aforesaid then the  
above property to be the property of Amos Fortune

his

Attest

Saml X George

[Wm. Black]

Mark

Amos Fortune

In the Name of God Amen. I Anna Fortune of Suffolk in the county of Suffolk and State of New Hampshire being weak in body but of sound and perfect mind and when my Weakness shall be thought for the same, to make and publish this my last will and testament in manner and form following (That is to say)

First I give and bequeath to Silas my beloved wife all the improvement <sup>and profits</sup> of my Real Estate during her Natural life to be viewed and disposed at the discretion of my executor whom I shall hereafter Name

Secondly I order my executor to settle and discharge all the Just debts and demands that lay against my estate at my decease at such time or times as shall appear to him to be necessary and to make use of my personal estate for that purpose as far as it will go toward paying the same

Thirdly I order my executor at his discretion and <sup>when</sup> it appears to him to Answer the best purpose to Satisfy the Just demands that lay against me and likewise for the Support and Maintenance of the said Silas to sell my Real estate together with the Tenement and all the Tools and implements I have for the tanning and Currying business and also my tools and Utensils for husbandry and that my executor either Reserve a Room and accommodation for the said Silas in my dwelling house, or in the Currying Shop, or otherwise to build her a small house, I have make it convenient for her as he shall see fit and that the said Silas have the improvement of the <sup>profits</sup> of said estate after my death one year under the care and direction of my executor

Fourthly I give and bequeath to the said Silas the use and improvement of all my household furniture except the articles hereafter named during her Natural life but <sup>not</sup> to sell or dispose of any one article of the same without the order or Consent of my executor

Fifthly I give and bequeath to Feltydia Fortune my adopted daughter the bed she now improves together with the furniture thereof and a foot wheel and a loom and also a home <sup>in the house</sup> with the said Silas while she remains single and that the said Silas contribute to her necessaries as she may have ability to do

Sixthly I order my executor after my decease and after the decease of the said Silas my beloved wife that have some good money be given to each of us if there is any estate left for that purpose

Seventhly I further order my said executor that after my decease or



## *Amos Fortune's Will (1801)*

In the name of God, Amen, I, Amos Fortune of Jaffrey in the county of Cheshire and State of New Hampshire, Tanner, being weak in body but of sound and perfect mind and memory, blessed be Almighty God for the same, do make and publish this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

(That is to say)

First, I give and bequeath to Vilot my beloved wife all the improvements and profits of my real estate during her natural life to be ordered and disposed at the discretion of my executor whom I shall hereafter name.

Secondly, I order my executor to settle and discharge all the just debts and demands that lay against my estate at my decease at such time or times as shall appear to him to be necessary and to make up of my personal estate for that purpose as far as it will go toward paying the same.

Thirdly, I order my executor at his discretion and when it appears to him to answer the best purpose to satisfy the just demands that lay against me and likewise for the support and maintenance of the said Vilot, to sell my real estate together with the tanyard and all the tools and implements I have for the tanning and currying business and also my tools and utensils for husbandry, and that my executor either reserve a room and accommodations for the said Vilot in my dwelling house, or in the currying shop, or otherwise to build her a small house and make it convenient for her as he shall see fit, and the said Vilot have the improvement of the proceeds of said estate after my debts are paid under the care and guardianship of my said executor.

Fourthly, I give and bequeath to the said Vilot the use and improvement of all my household furniture (except the articles hereafter named) during her natural life, but not to sell or dispose of any one article of the same without the order or liberty of my executor.

Fifthly, I give and bequeath to Celyndia Fortune my adopted daughter, the bed she now improves together with the furniture thereof, and a foot wheel and a loom and also a home in the house with the said Vilot while she remains single, and that the said Vilot contribute to her necessities as she may have ability to do.

Sixthly, I order my executor after my decease and after the decease of said Vilot my beloved wife that handsome grave stones be erected to each of us if there is any estate left for that purpose.

Seventhly, I further order my said executor that after my decease and the decease of the said Vilot that if there is any remainder of my estate, that he give a handsome present of the same to the Church of Christ in this town, and the remaining part if any there be, he give as a present for the support of the school in school house No. eight in this town.

And lastly, I hereby nominate and appoint Eleazer Spofford of Jaffrey aforesaid gentleman the sole executor of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me made, ratifying and confirming this and no other to be my last will and testament.

In witness whereof I have hereunto my hand and seal this third day of October A.D. 1801.

Signed sealed published and declared by the  
above named Amos Fortune to be his last will  
and testament in presence of us who have here-  
unto subscribed our names as witnesses in the  
presence of the testator.

Amos Fortune

Roger Gillmore  
Jacob Baldwin  
Oliver Jewett



An Inventory of the goods and estate of Amos Fortson  
late of Suffolk dec'd as shewn to us the Sub<sup>rs</sup> by the Executors  
to his last will and Testament (v<sup>rs</sup>)

The farm together with the tanyard and buildings 62 586

**Stock**  
one Cow 5/2 one yearling heifer 1/19 one mare 14/- 25-6

**Farming tools**  
one scythe 12/6 one collar and key 1/2 one pair of horse trowsers 4-  
one duck collar one birch bond and leather line 1/4 one chopping ax 5-  
one ironing fork 4/6 two shovels one hoe one pitch fork 1-5  
two horse irons for a plow 4/3 one wheel stone 3/4 one small grindstone 1-38  
one saddle 1/10 one bridle 2/3 one pigpen net of three baskets 12/- 8-9  
one pair of flinders 3/0 one floor brake 1/6 one rake 1/6 1-38  
one lyth and tacking 3/0 one iron hay hook 3/- 1-

**Carrying tools**  
one Carrying knife 6/2 two fleshing knives 13/2 two mooning irons 5-  
small tools for carrying and a lamp 16/6 one pin block 10/6 4-50  
one back shaver 6/10 one paper of lamb black 2-34

**Wearing Apparel**  
one fur hat 6/0 one great coat 12/16 one pair of leather breeches 14-9  
one pair of black velvet breeches 3/0 one black velvet jacket 7/6 1-75  
one brown velvet jacket 3/0 one striped waistcoat 2/0 one pair of boots 1-18  
one deep blue straight bodied coat 20/0 one fustian coloured shirt 6/6 59  
one pair of silver shoe buckles 12/0 one silver watch 3- 12  
two pair of best legs 3/0 one bright in the library 5-  
one lambskin suit 1- 1-

**Household Furniture**  
one feather bed bedding and bighead's two tables 10/- 11-67  
one writing desk 18/0 one low chest with one drawer 4-50  
one looking glass 6/0 one chest with two drawers 2-50  
one window chair 6/0 one house chair 6/0 one pair of bellows 2-42  
one half bushel one peck and one half peck one measure 67  
one bedstead one pump press 6/0 one cheese tub 4/6 2-23  
one meat barrel 3/0 three plates 3/0 one churn 1/6 1-75  
one foot wheel 10/6 one wooden wheel 3/- 2-25  
two sides barrels 1/0 one meat tub 3/0 one wash tub 3/- 2-  
one bed and one pickle tub 3/0 one side saddle 3- 10-50  
one Pillow 1/0 one soap bottle 1/- 84

**Books & Maps**

Note: This appraisal of the estate was made in the old monetary system of English pounds (£), shillings, and pence (Examples: £1-10 = one pound, ten shillings; 4/5 = four shillings, five pence). These figures were then translated into the new monetary system, American dollars and cents.



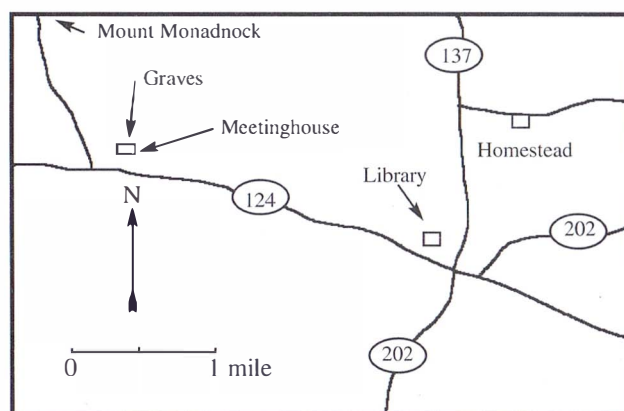
## *Account of the Fortune Estate (1802)*

An Inventory of the Goods and Estate of Amos Fortune late of Jaffrey Decd. as shown to us the Subsrs by the Executor of his last will and testament. (Viz)

The farm together with the tanyard and buildings etc.	\$566.
<u>Stock</u>	
one cow £5-2/ one yearling heifer £1-18/ one mare 14/	\$25.68
<u>Farming tools</u>	
one old plow 13/6 one collar and hayme 7/2	
one pair of horse traces 9/	\$4.05
one duch collar one breech band and leather lines £1-4	
one chopping ax 6/	\$5.00
one dung fork 4/6 two sod shovels 3/ one hoe 1/ one pitchfork 1/	\$1.59
two Nose irons for a slay 4/3 one whetstone 3/7	
one small grindstone 6/	\$1.38
one saddle £1-10/ one bridle 2/5 one pidgeon net 9/	
three baskets 12/	\$8.90
one pair of stilyards 5/ one flax brake 1/6 one rake 1/6	\$1.33
one syth and tackling 3/ one iron hay hook 3/	\$1.00
<u>Currying Tools</u>	
one currying knife 6/ two fleshing knives 15/ two mooning irons 9/	\$5.00
small tools for currying and a lamp 16/6 one pin block 1/6	\$4.50
one bark shave 6/ seven papers of lamb black 8/	\$2.34
<u>Waering Apparel</u>	
one fur hat 6/ one great coat £1-16/ one pair of leather breeches 18/	\$9.00
one pair of black velvet breeches 3/ one black velvet jacket 7/6	\$1.75
one brown velvet jacket 3/ one striped waistcot 2/ one pair of boots 2/	\$1.18
one deep blue strait bodied coat 20/	
one fustick colored strait bodied coat 7/6	\$4.59
one pair of silver shoe buckles 12/ one silver watch £3	\$12.00
two pairs of boot legs 9/ one right in the library	\$5.00
one lambskin surtout	\$1.00
<u>Household furniture</u>	
one feather bed bedding and bedstead £3 two tables 10/	\$11.00
one writing desk 18/ one low chest with one draw 9/	\$4.50
one looking glass 6/ one chest with two draws 9/	\$2.50
one windsor chair 7/6 six house chairs 6/ one pair of bellows 1/	\$2.42
one half bushel one peck and one half peck measures	.67
One bedstead 3/ one cheese press 6/ one cheese tub 4/6	\$2.25
One meat barrel 3/ three pails 3/ one churn 4/6	\$1.75
one foot wheel 10/6 one woolen wheel 3/	\$2.25
two spider barrels 4/ one meat tub 5/ one wash tub 3/	\$2.00
one beer and one pickle tub 3/ one side saddle £3	\$10.50
one pillion 4/ one case (?) bottle 1/	.84
<u>Brass weare</u>	
one warming pan 7/6 one kettle £1.7	\$5.75

[not completed]

## Visiting Jaffrey



**J**affrey is located in Cheshire County, in southwestern New Hampshire. The town is located at the intersection of U.S. Route 202 and state routes 124 and 137.

**The Jaffrey Meetinghouse** is located in the village of Jaffrey Center. Take Route 124 (Main Street) approximately 2 miles west of downtown. The meetinghouse is located on the right at the top of the hill.

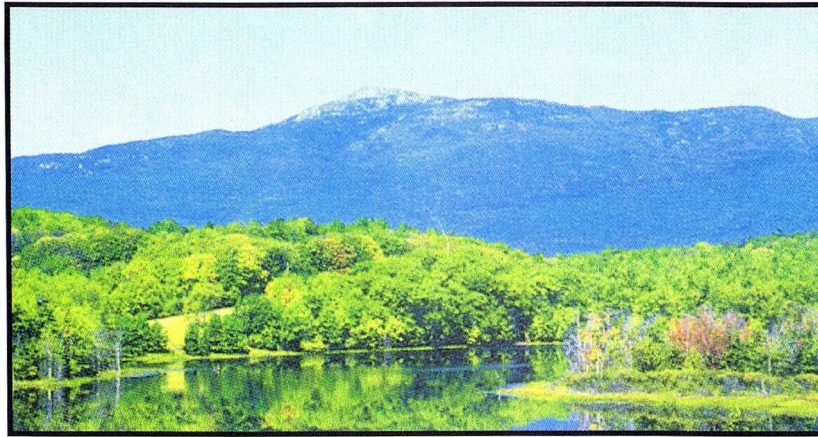
**The Fortune graves** are located in the Old Burial Ground behind the Meetinghouse. *Please be respectful of the cemetery; gravestone rubbings are against the law unless prior permission is obtained from the Jaffrey Board of Selectmen.*

**The Jaffrey Public Library** houses the Amos Fortune papers. The Library is located on Route 124 West (Main Street) approximately 500 yards on the right. *Please note: The papers are not always on public display.*

**Amos Fortune Homestead** is located on Amos Fortune Road. Travel north on Route 137 (North Street). Turn right on Amos Fortune Road (approximately one mile north of downtown). The Amos Fortune house and barn are approximately 1/3 mile down the road on the right. *Please note: This is still a private residence, no tours are given.*

**Mount Monadnock:** The state park is located in the northwestern part of town. Take Route 124 (Main Street) west for approximately 2.5 miles. Turn right on Dublin Road. The park gate is two miles away, on the left.





*Mount Monadnock - Jaffrey, New Hampshire*

*“‘What’s that?’ Celyndia asked, pointing ahead to the mountain that seemed to lie like a great wall across their path.*

*‘It looks like the long, long hill to heaven we’ve all got to climb before we die,’ Violet said quietly.*

*‘They call it Monadnock Mountain,’ Amos answered, ‘Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth –’”*

*Amos Fortune, Free Man  
by Elizabeth Yates*