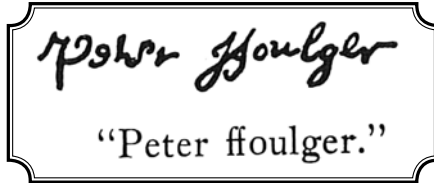

Benjamin Franklin's Grandfather, Peter Folger

A Chronology

by STEPHEN H. GRANT



From Banks, *History of Martha's Vineyard, Annals of Edgartown*, 67.
Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association.

PETER FOLGER (1617–1690)—a leading figure among the first generation of English settlers on Martha's Vineyard—first came to my attention while researching the life of one of his descendants from the Gilded Age, Henry Clay Folger (1857–1930), for a dual biography titled *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger* (2014). The Henry Folders assembled the largest collection of Shakespeare in the world and gave it to the American people conserved in a white marble memorial only two blocks from the U.S. Capitol. Henry Folger had a pronounced but not obsessive interest in his roots and collected articles and correspondence that can be found in the vault at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Interestingly, the name Folger—originating in the Flemish town of Fougères—became known in England at the same time as that of William Shakespeare.¹

In *Collecting Shakespeare*, I wrote that Henry's ancestor Peter was the "first and most colorful of the [Nantucket] island's Folger clan." I later found out he wasn't the first, but the son of the first, John Folger. After

1 English spelling was not yet standardized during the reign of Elizabeth I, and Folger (like Shakespeare) was spelled in many ways. In conducting research for this article, I came across the following variants: Foilger, Ffoulger, ffoulger, Foulgier, Fougieri, Foulger & Folger.

Stephen H. Grant worked in Asia, Africa, and Central America as an educator for the U. S. Agency for International Development, before becoming a full-time writer. He is the author of *Collecting Shakespeare* (2014), a joint biography of Henry and Emily Folger, founders of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

further archival digging and personal interviews, I stand by *colorful* as a description of Peter Folger, and would add that he also must have been the most *versatile* Folger. Many, in fact, consider him the most *valuable* to the community of early settlers of Massachusetts' offshore islands.

As the annotated bibliography included in this article shows, researchers and authors overwhelmingly conclude that, as engaging as Peter Folger's life appears, there is a conspicuous absence of evidence to back up many assertions about it. Such is the nature of twenty-first-century explorations into seventeenth-century people's lives and accomplishments. The following timeline, therefore, will convey some bare bones of not so much what we know as what we *think* we know. The article sticks closely to the early history of the Folger family on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, leaving to others the task of filling out the picture by describing the fairly complicated religious, political, and social trends of the early modern period.

Why a timeline? Many biographers recommend starting a book-length study by developing a timeline. A timeline covers the who, what, where, and when, setting the stage for background, context, and details to be fleshed out. The eve of 2017, which will mark the 400th birth anniversary of Peter Folger and the 350th of Abiah Folger Franklin, is an auspicious moment at which to begin that process.



PETER FOLGER: A CHRONOLOGY

1593 – John Folger born in the village of Diss, 20 miles southwest of Norwich in the county of Norfolk, East Anglia, England.

1617 (April) – John Folger's son Peter Folger born near the city of Norwich, East Anglia.

1635 (July-September) – Peter Folger leaves school to accompany his father John to London to take part in the Puritan migration to America. John may have brought with him his wife, Merible. Peter's younger sister Ruth may have come along. The passengers pay the five-pound fare and, in Plymouth, board their vessel—that may have been the *Abigail*—containing 220 passengers and a cargo of cattle. They sail the North Atlantic, headed for the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Also on board is Puritan preacher Rev. Hugh Peters, secretly fleeing the King's Searchers, and his indentured maidservant Mary Morrell, who will become Mrs. Peter Folger.

1635 (October) – The *Abigail* sails into Boston Harbor.

1639 – After a stay in Dedham, Massachusetts, John, Merible, and Peter Folger settle in Watertown, where the men work in the gristmill of English merchant Thomas Mayhew.

1640 – John Folger acquires 6 acres of land in Watertown near the

meeting house common and builds a homestall.

1641 – Thomas Mayhew buys Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket, and the Elizabeth Islands from Alexander, Lord Stirling and others for £40.

1642 (Spring) – The Folgers move to Martha’s Vineyard where Peter becomes right-hand man to Governor Thomas Mayhew. Mayhew asks Peter Folger to bargain with the local Wampanoag leaders (sachems) for rights to the lands.

1642 – Peter Folger pays Rev. Hugh Peters for the remaining years of Mary Morrell’s indenture and marries her.

1648 – John and Peter Folger acquire land in the main town on Martha’s Vineyard, originally dubbed Great Harbour in 1652 and renamed Edgartown in 1671.

1650 – John and Peter Folger have acquired 10 acres each near each other, according to Early Settler map drawn up by Ardis Mayhew and reproduced at right.

1652 – Peter Folger is named Great Harbour’s first schoolmaster.

1652 (June 26) – Great Harbour grants Peter Folger two acres of land near the schoolhouse.

1652 (September) – John Folger is chosen to serve the community as hog-reeve: constable charged with appraising the damages by stray swine.

1653 – Peter Folger and five others are appointed to govern the Martha’s Vineyard community.

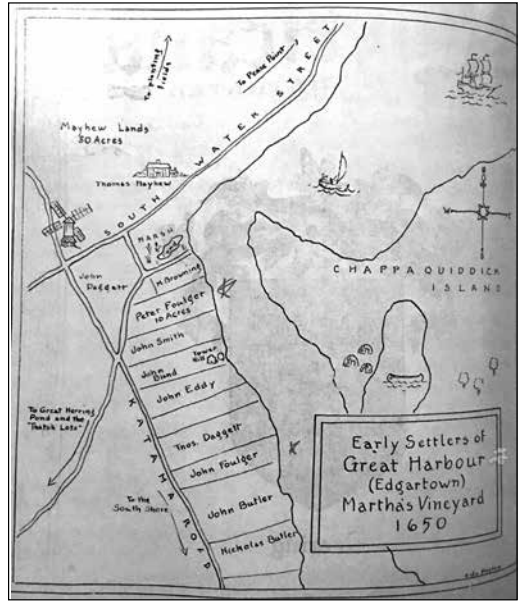
1655 – Peter Folger and four others are appointed to resolve controversies in the community.

1656 – Peter Folger, who has learned the Wampanoag language, is employed by Thomas Mayhew Jr. to teach English to native youths.

1657 (late fall) – Thomas Mayhew, Jr., departs Martha’s Vineyard for England, leaving Peter Folger to continue with the education and catechism of young Indians, but his ship is lost at sea.

1659 – Peter Folger’s salary as English schoolmaster is £20.

1659 – Peter Folger makes first trip to Nantucket as interpreter for Martha’s Vineyard patrons and some off-Island men (mainly Tristram Coffin of Salisbury, Mass.) looking for land acquisition. Peter Folger is asked to negotiate with local Wampanoag for the land. Tristram Coffin and his



Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association.

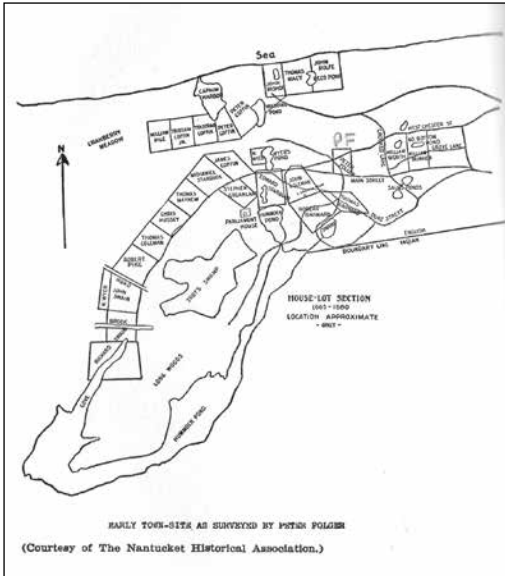
partners—often called the Proprietors or the First Purchasers—buy all of Nantucket, except for one lot that is reserved for Thomas Mayhew, Sr. The price: £30 plus two beaver hats. For another £5 they obtain adjacent Tuckernuck Island.

1660 – Peter Folger visits Nantucket soon after its purchase to stake out lots, initially on the western end.

1660 (fall) – John Folger dies on Martha’s Vineyard.

1661 (May) – Peter Folger returns to Nantucket to finish surveying the land.

1662 (February 27) – Widowed, Merible Folger signs a deed selling her Martha’s Vineyard property.



1662 – Peter Folger visits Nantucket to act as a witness for land transfers. It may be then when the results of his surveying take the form of the map at left, where Peter Folger’s property is on Main Street, not far from a boundary line between English land and Indian land.

1662 (fall) – Uncomfortable with religious trends in Massachusetts, Peter Folger becomes attracted to Roger Williams—who welcomes Baptists and other religious minorities in his Rhode Island colony—and takes his family to Newport.

1662 (December 3) – Peter Folger sells his home on Martha’s Vineyard and leases a house and land from William Corry in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

William Corry in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

1663 – Dissatisfied with life in Rhode Island, Peter Folger decides to move his family to Nantucket.

1663 (July 4) – Tristram Coffin, Thomas Mayhew, Sr., and the other First Purchasers offer Peter Folger a half share in their venture with a lot on Nantucket called Rogers Field.

1664 – Peter Folger is described as surveyor, joiner, blacksmith, and weaver. His eldest son Eleazar is a shoemaker.

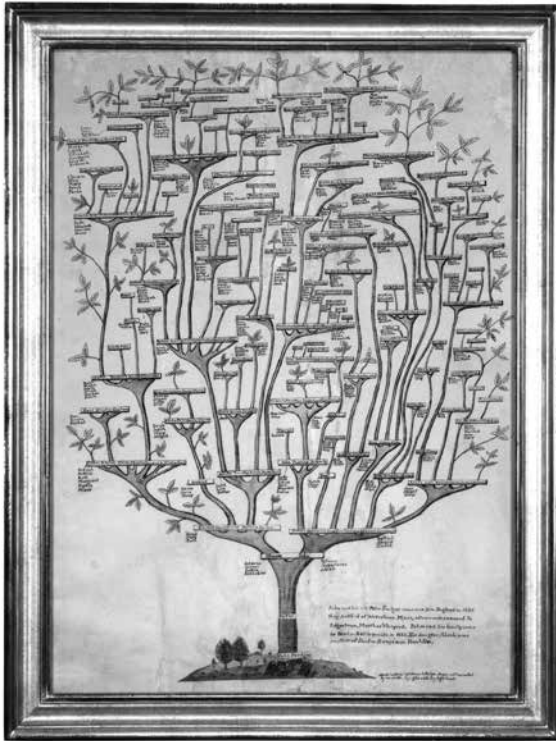
1665 – Sachem Metacomet, known to the English as King Philip, lands unannounced on Nantucket with a flotilla of war canoes in response to an alleged offense against the Wampanoag tribe. Official interpreter Peter Folger successfully calms the sachem, who leaves the island.

1666 – Nantucket’s first gristmill is built at Wesco Pond, and Peter Folger is appointed miller.

1675 – A political schism evolves between two groups of Nantucket leaders, with half-share man Peter Folger siding with Captain John Gardner, who arrived on the island in 1672 to organize the cod-fishing industry. This faction is called the Defenders of the Duke’s Charter. The other camp, called the Defenders of the Old Company and consisting of the First Purchasers, is led by Tristram Coffin.

1676 – Magistrate Thomas Macy requests that Peter Folger, as Clerk of Courts, turn over the town record book, along with other items such as minutes, the record book holds the original deeds of land purchased from the Indians. Fearing some shenanigans by the adverse party, Folger refuses to give up the important book, and is imprisoned in the Nantucket jail, the first Englishman to be incarcerated there. While the political prisoner is reproached for his silence and civil disobedience, Peter is the object of support from family, friends, and Indians. The island government comes to a standstill.

1676 (April 23) – From prison, Peter Folger is the author of a poem of 428 lines, “A Looking Glasse For the Times,” published in Cambridge, Mass. It is a plea for religious tolerance.



Courtesy of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society.

1677 (March 27) – From prison, Peter Folger writes a petition to the British governor in New York asking for clemency for a poor old man sixty years old not able to care for his family.

1678 – The governor, responsible for administration of the island of Nantucket, rules that Peter Folger’s imprisonment is illegal. Released after 14 months in jail, Folger returns to active life. He does not turn over the town record book, the whereabouts of which remain unknown to this day.

1690 (June 29) – Peter Folger dies on Nantucket.

1704 – Mary Morrell Folger dies on Nantucket.

The Nine Children of Peter Folger and Mary Morrell

Joanna Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1645
Married John Coleman of Newbury, Mass. on Nantucket in 1666
Died on Nantucket on May 18, 1719
8 children

Bethia Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1646
Married John Barnard of Salisbury, Mass. on Nantucket on Feb. 26, 1668
Both drowned June 6, 1669, on a passage between Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket
No children

Dorcas Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1647
Married Joseph Pratt of Charlestown, Mass. on Nantucket on Feb. 12, 1675
Died in Charlestown, Mass. on Dec. 24, 1712
9 children

Eleazar Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1648
Married Sarah Gardner of Salem, Mass. on Nantucket in 1671
Died in Boston in 1716
7 children

Bethshua Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1655

Married Joseph Pope of Salem, Mass. in 1679
Died on Nantucket in 1720
8 children

Patience Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1657
Married (1) Ebenezer Harker of North Carolina, then (2) James Gardner
Died on Nantucket on March 17, 1716
2 children

John Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1659
Married Mary Barnard in 1688
Died on Nantucket on August 23, 1732
9 children

Experience Folger

Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1661
Married John Swain, Jr. in 1687
Died on Nantucket on June 4, 1739
9 children

Abiah Folger

Born on Nantucket on August 15, 1667
Married Josiah Franklin of Boston on Nantucket on Nov. 25, 1689
Died in Boston on May 18, 1752
10 children (plus reared 5 stepchildren)
62 children were born of the 10 Folger unions above.

CONCLUSION

Not having any idea what would await him, at age 18 Peter Folger accompanied his father from England to the New World, never to return. He had to have been aware of the contentious religious atmosphere in East Anglia that was prompting hundreds of families to seek greater independence in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He must also have realized to some degree that as the only son of a barely literate man, and as someone who had benefited from schooling and some technical training, he would likely be thrust into situations that would push him to act, define his character, and test his mettle.

Assessing Peter Folger's talents and accomplishments over a half-century of Massachusetts life along with those of his more famous grandson leads one to conclude they both displayed substance and strength of character as well as an impressive versatility.

Peter Folger	Benjamin Franklin
Surveyor	Printer
Miller	Postmaster
Weaver	Publisher
Blacksmith	Currency cutter
Teacher	Scientist
Clerk	Inventor
Joiner	Civic activist
Poet	Author
Philosopher	Statesman
Negotiator	Diplomat
Interpreter	Politician
Polymath	Polymath

Even less is known about Abiah Folger Franklin than about her father. Nevertheless, some Vineyarders and Nantucketers strongly believe that the talents which distinguished Benjamin Franklin were "Folger traits" inherited from Peter. The late Nantucket author Bob Mooney was one of those believers who stretched the comparison to cover physical appearance as in the image here.



Concept by author Bob Mooney and illustrator Diane Swartz of what Peter Folger may have looked like, reproduced in Mooney, *Tales of Nantucket*.

—Courtesy Nantucket Historical Association and Robert C. Mooney

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Florence Bennett, *A Grandfather for Benjamin Franklin: The true story of a Nantucket pioneer and his mates*. Boston: Meador, 1940.

This 75-year-old book is the longest volume on Peter Folger I've found, 462 pages containing 27 chapters and 19 illustrations. I looked for information on how Peter Folger learned the tongue of the Wampanoag Indi-

ans. I learned that Roger Williams published in 1643 *Key into the Languages of America*. The “Indian-speak” term for Folger was “the White Chief’s Old-Young Man,” implying that although young in years he was old in experience and wisdom. Anderson is fun to read because she uses her imagination: “What else can Peter have had in his chimney cupboard? Certainly *The Bay-Psalms Book*,” she writes. Author Clarence King (see below) believes that Captain John Gardner brought Peter Folger a volume of Shakespeare’s plays he had purchased in Boston. April 23, 1676 (Shakespeare’s 112th birthday and only his 60th deathday) is the date of Peter Folger’s poem published in Boston, *A Looking Glasse for the Times*. It lies in the Nantucket Historical Association’s archives, marked “Original document, written by Peter Folger himself.” A second document, dated March 27, 1677, contains the “four-square” signature Folger used. In this plea for clemency after his imprisonment, Folger describes himself as “a poore old Man . . . hauing liued 30 yeares upon this Island.” The bibliography includes 35 documents. Grr, no index.

Anderson, Robert C., George F. Sanborn Jr., Melinda L. Sanborn, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England 1634–1635*, Vol. II C–F. Boston: New England Historical and Genealogical Society, 2001.

I delved into this 738-page tome with great expectation that I’d find confirmation of the ship—many say the *Abigail*—that carried Peter Folger and Mary Morrell from London to Massachusetts in September 1635, but came up with only one line about Peter regarding his daughter Joanna, followed by “but the evidence for this has not been found.” No ship log exists confirming for sure when the couple arrived in Boston and on which vessel.

Baldwin, Ada Harriet. *His Mother’s Kindred*. Serialized in four issues of *Americana Illustrated*, vol. 35, no. 1-4. New York: American Historical Company, 1941.

Ada Harriet Baldwin was a Folger from Baltimore, Maryland. In her 185-page study, which I was delighted to find in the Nantucket Historical Association library, she admits to “sorting out contradictory tales” about the Folgers’ origins. She believes the first Folgers were Flemish weavers who sought refuge in the industrial towns of East Anglia, England, when they went about learning to become skilled craftsmen. The early Folgers were not adventurers; they were deeply religious, quiet, and hard-working. Nevertheless, they set out for adventure when father John and son Peter Folger cross the Atlantic and arrived in Boston on October 6, 1635. A few years later, “Peter Foulger married Mary Morrill of Salem, having bought her of Hugh Peters for the sum of twenty pounds.” Peter set about learning the dialect of the Algonquin tongue spoken by the Wampanoag. In her last serial contribution, Baldwin lingers on Peter Folger’s opus, “A Looking

Glasse For the Times,” quoting Benjamin Franklin’s evaluation: “the valiant doggerel of Peter Folger, although totally lacking in charm and poetic inspiration, is not without a gleam of humor, and is a good example of the versifying of his day.” The last issue also shows two Folger land plots on an early Martha’s Vineyard map.

Banks, Charles Edward, *The History of Martha’s Vineyard, Dukes County Massachusetts in Three Volumes*. Boston: George H. Dean, 1911.

Banks was a surgeon and Vineyard historian. I consulted this first edition at the Library of Congress, but it exists also in a 1966 edition. Only volumes I and II contain information on Peter Folger, and some on his father, John. The thick volumes are particularly rich in tracing land lots (3 acres, 8 acres) on Martha’s Vineyard (including Chappaquiddick) that John and Peter purchased or sold. We read about Peter as a school master and teacher of religion to the Indians. “Peter Folger was the first school-master, and the building where he taught was on the Old Mill path near the Sarson lot on Slough hill.” As for where Peter Folger lived, “His home lot was on Tower Hill, north of the cemetery, about the site occupied by the house of the late Sol Smith Russell.” Banks is good about divulging actual dates (month, day, year) when he has evidence, and for admitting on the many occasions when the early settlers’ movements were shrouded in uncertainty.

Douglas-Lithgow, R. A. *Nantucket: A History*. New York: Putnam, 1914.

Robert Alexander Douglas-Lithgow (1846–1917) calls his twenty chapters from “Geology of the Island” to “Quaint Nantucketers” the first systematic historical record of Nantucket since 1835. “There was little in the way of handicrafts to which he could not turn his skill,” wrote Douglas-Lithgow of Peter Folger. We learn here that between 1666 and 1676 Peter Folger was put in charge of the grist-mills at Lily Pond, an assertion missing in many other accounts. The name of the town Sherburne (Shearburn) was changed to Nantucket in 1795, more than a century after Peter Folger’s time.

Downs-Watson, Kim. “Peter Foulger: What We Have Discovered About a Most Remarkable Man,” *Historic Nantucket*, vol. 30, no. 4 (Apr 1983), 22–31.

Interestingly, the research for this two-part article was commissioned by the husband of a Foulger descendant in memory of his wife. We learn that Zaccheus Macy was one of many who held Peter Foulger in high esteem, calling him “the most indispensable settler among the first Nantucketers.” Addressing the availability of hard facts regarding Peter Foulger’s life, the author warns us that “much of the data had very little, if any, documented evidence behind it.” This charge pertains to the arrival in the New World in that “no ships’ logs, yet available, list Peter and/or Foulger family among their passengers.” The article is especially rich in its footnotes, references, manuscripts, and bibliography.

Downs-Watson, Kim. "Peter Foulger: What We Have Discovered About a Most Remarkable Man," *Historic Nantucket*, vol. 31, no. 3 (Jan 1984), 14–21.

Kim Downs-Watson noted in this second article that after 19 months (more than I spent) of research on the life of Peter Folger she was still unable to find many key answers to turn statements of "traditional conjecture" into "substantiated facts." What delighted her, however, was the outpouring of interest in Peter Foulger that Part 1 had prompted: letters, phone calls, and a visit from Mrs. John A. Foulger who made the voyage from Wymondham, England!

Fischer, David Hackett. *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*. London: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Fischer's lengthy study does not mention Peter Folger, but offers a fascinating description of the Puritan immigrants from Eastern England during the 17th century. Archbishop William Laud complained that "East Anglia was the throbbing heart of heresy in England." Dissent was a tradition there. Immigrants to the New World were not only deeply pious in unconventional ways. They were extremely literate, highly skilled, and heavily urban. They were people of substance and character, with a trace of obstinacy. They traveled in family groups. All of these traits fit Peter Folger.

Gardner, Grace Brown. *Fifty Famous Nantucketers and Other Sketches*. Manuscript in the archives of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society.

It was very exciting to leaf slowly through this manuscript from the archives of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society in Boston. The handwritten volume was compiled by Helen R. Kluegal of Kaneohe, Hawaii. Gardner wrote columns on the same subject for *The Inquirer and Mirror* (Nantucket, Mass.), published 1949–1950. Four of the fifty are Folgers: #3 Peter Folger, #6 Abiah Folger, #14 Walter Folger, and #25 James A. Folger.

Hinchman, Lydia (Mitchell) Swain. *Early Settlers of Nantucket 1650–1850: Their Associates and Descendants*. Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1901.

The 432-page book with 36 chapters and 3 appendices is a gold mine of genealogical information about the early settlers on Nantucket. Most of the chapters are family specific. Since I was tracing the Folger family, I looked mainly in one location (chapter 9). But since the early settlers intermarried a lot, I skimmed all the other chapters. There seemed to be a drawing of Peter Folger, but the image was not at all clear in the Kindle format. In the appendix I found a veritable index of 49 Folger families; this was very useful for me. Early chapters gave specific information about both settler and Indian deeds, with month, day, and year of signature. Ms. Hinchman cites where the old documents may be found. She gives her best guess about the origin of each family. She believes that Peter was a Baptist who may have become a Quaker in old age.

In reading this book I came across the names of several families that I knew from my youth growing up in Massachusetts. I emailed one person whose name I recognized. She responded: “Yes, you have found my roots!”

I end with this rare incident of humor in a dry book. At Vassar College, a visitor greeted [astronomy professor] Maria Mitchell, originally of Nantucket: “Miss Mitchell, I met a cousin of yours the other day.” Her reply, “Oh, very likely. I have five thousand cousins on Nantucket.” At the time, that was the entire population of Nantucket.

King, Clarence. *The Half-Share Man: Peter Folger of Nantucket: Grandfather of Benjamin Franklin*. Nantucket: Poets Corner Press, 1972.

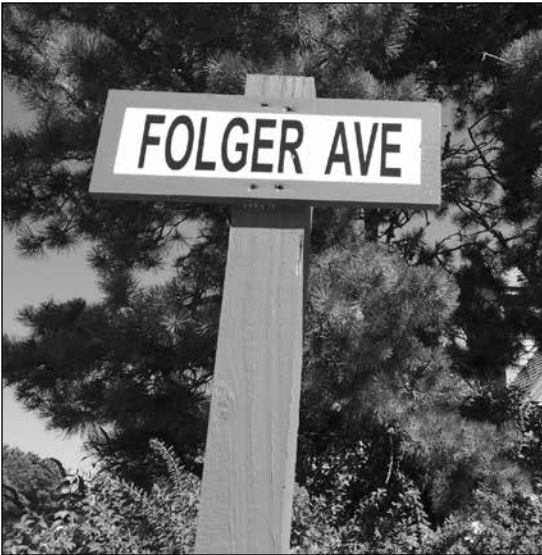
From chapter two: “He dashed toward her and she came staggering to meet him. He wrapped his arms about her and kissed her. She threw her arms about his neck and her eager lips responded to his kisses. . .” The “he” is Peter Folger and the “she” is Mary Morrell. The time is September 1635. The place of their tryst is the deck of the *Abigail* during a hurricane. Although Clarence King (1883–1974) in his slim volume about Peter Folger uses engaging historical fiction, he follows very closely all the important historical moments in Folger’s life. Who will be able to confirm King’s assertion that Peter Folger’s horse was named Aristotle?

Labaree, Leonard W., et al., eds., *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Franklin started to write his *Autobiography* in 1771 at the age of 65. Peter Folger had died in 1690 and his daughter Abiah in 1752 when Franklin was 46. In early pages of his *Autobiography*, Franklin writes only a few (but favorable) words about his maternal grandfather: “My Mother the 2d Wife was Abiah Folger, a Daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first Settlers of New England, of whom honourable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church History of that Country as a *godly learned Englishman*.” The genealogical research that Franklin conducted in England was focused on his paternal side. In 1758 Franklin visited his paternal grandfather’s grave in Oxfordshire, but does not appear to have visited the Folger ancestral land in East Anglia. In any case, Franklin gives genealogical information about both sides of his family in his *Papers*.

Mooney, Robert F. *Tales of Nantucket*. Nantucket: Wesco, 1990.

I had the pleasure of a work session with Bob Mooney in his Nantucket home on August 1, 2015. One of my questions to him was, “We have a copy of Peter Folger’s signature in the Banks book, but do we know what he looked like”? His face broke into a mischievous smile. “No, we don’t, but I have an idea about it. Diane Swartz translated it from my imagination to a drawing in *Tales of Nantucket* introducing my chapter, ‘The Missing Record.’ I think he might have looked a lot like his grandson, Benjamin Franklin.”



Folger Avenue, Miacoment. As Peter Folger labored to produce the first survey maps of Nantucket in 1660, he would not have imagined that three-and-a-half centuries later the island would be smattered with street signs bearing his name: Folger Avenue in Miacoment, Folgers Lane off Cliff Road, Folger Road in Cliffside near Sherburne Turnpike, Folgers Court in Siasconset, Folger Hill off Polpis Road, Folgers Marsh in Polpis near the Shipwreck Museum, and Folger's Creek in Pocomo East. *Author's photograph*

Mooney, Robert F. *More Tales of Nantucket*. Nantucket: Wesco, 2005.

More Tales of Nantucket contains the portrait of James A. Folger, founder of Folger Coffee. Ruth Waldo Newhall published the portrait in her slim book, *The Folger Way: Coffee Pioneering Since 1850*. Mooney cites an astounding figure, "Some forty percent of Nantucket's young men traveled thousands of miles from home" in the Gold Rush, where "whaleships were hastily converted into passenger ships." Bob Mooney died on April 6, 2016 while this article was in its final stages of preparation. He was aware of its being published, and gave me permission to reproduce in it his original pictorial notion of what Peter Folger looked like.

Newhall, Ruth Waldo. *The Folger Way: Coffee Pioneering Since 1850*, San Francisco: J. A. Folger & Co., c. 1960.

I tracked down this coffee company publicity volume at the California Historical Society Library. Only the first of 72 pages in this booklet mentions Peter Folger, and in very general terms. The booklet contains no footnotes or bibliography. I was unable to ascertain where the author's papers reside. Part of my interest in James A. Folger, founder of Folger Coffee, was the fact that his nephew was Henry Clay Folger, the subject of my biography, *Collecting Shakespeare*. "Jim" Folger was born on Nantucket in 1835 and died in Oakland, California in 1889. Jim's fortune was with coffee; Nephew Henry's was with oil. The Folger pair captured two of the most vital product lines of the growing American economy in a period when the United States showed the strength to challenge the supremacy of the European powers and greatly enhance its place on the international stage.

Norton, Henry Franklin. *Martha's Vineyard: Histories, Legends, Stories*. Hartford: Press of the Pyne Printery, 1923.

Norton was born in Oak Bluffs in 1888 and died there in 1961. One mention of Peter Foulger in the slim volume sheds some light on an un-

known element in his life: what did he think of the Indians he met, got to know, and conversed with in their tongue. Foulger found them “very quick to learn and willing to be instructed in the ways of the English.”

Railton, Arthur R. “Teaching and Preaching: Two Hundred Years of Indian Schools,” *Dukes County Intelligencer*, vol. 41, no. 3 (February 2000): 47-65.

In this article, Railton—editor of the *Intelligencer* for 30 years—quotes the Island’s most knowledgeable historian, Richard L. Pease, who wrote that Peter Folger was “employed in teaching the [Indian] youth in reading, writing and the principles of religion by catechizing.”

Railton, Arthur R. “The Indians and the English in Martha’s Vineyard, Part II: Thomas Mayhew Jr., Missionary.” *Dukes County Intelligencer*, vol. 32, no. 2 (November 1990): 43-80.

In a footnote we read that Peter Folger bought Mary Morrell’s freedom for £20.

Salisbury, Geraldine G. *H. Marshall Gardiner’s NANTUCKET POSTCARDS 1910–1940*. G. G. Salisbury, 1995.

H. Marshall Gardiner (1884–1942) had an art shop on Main Street, Nantucket and sold postcards. Geraldine is his youngest of three daughters. Collectors of Nantucket postcards refer to this volume as the go-to source for the tail end of the Golden Age of Postcards about the Island. One of the early black-and-white postcards is entitled, “Birthplace of Benjamin Franklin’s Mother.”



Peter Foulger Museum sign. The Whaling Museum in Nantucket is also called the Peter Foulger Museum. *Courtesy Thomas Quigley*