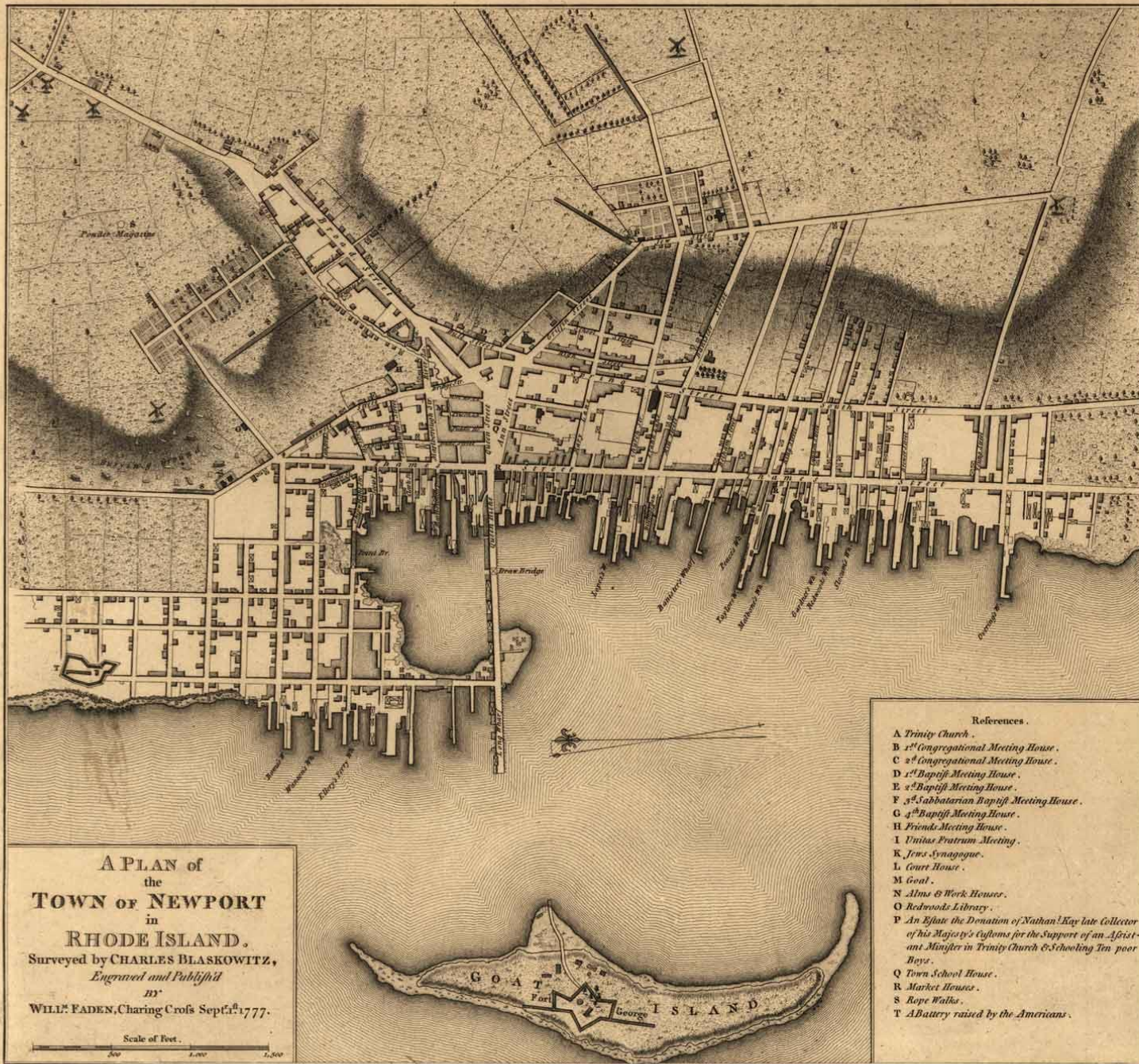




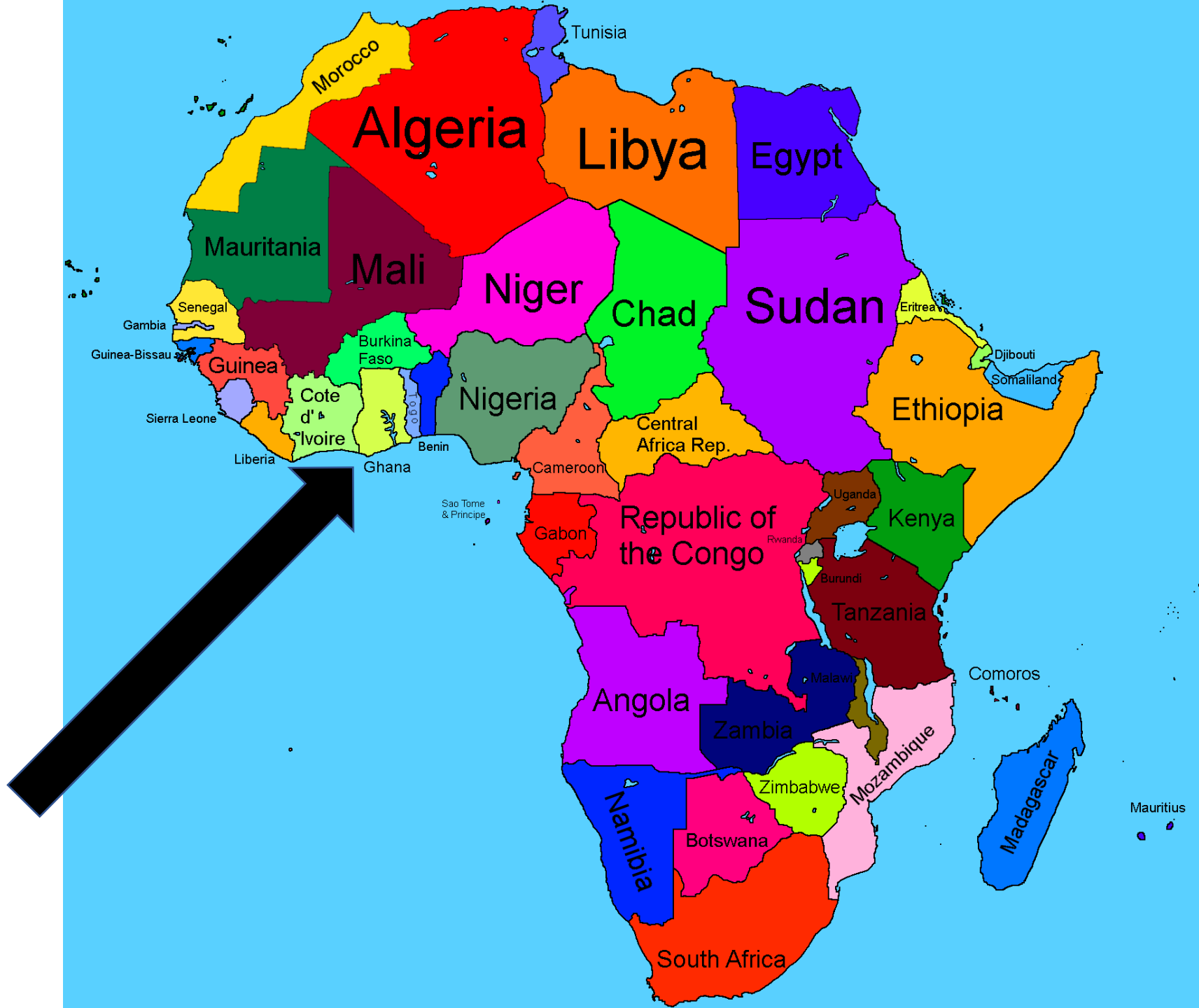
# God's Little Acre

Common Burying Ground

Newport  
Rhode Island



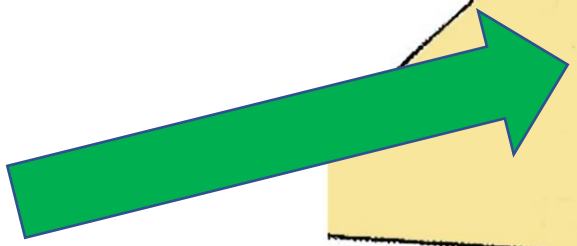
England  
 Scotland  
 Germany  
 Spain  
 France  
 Portugal  
**Africa**

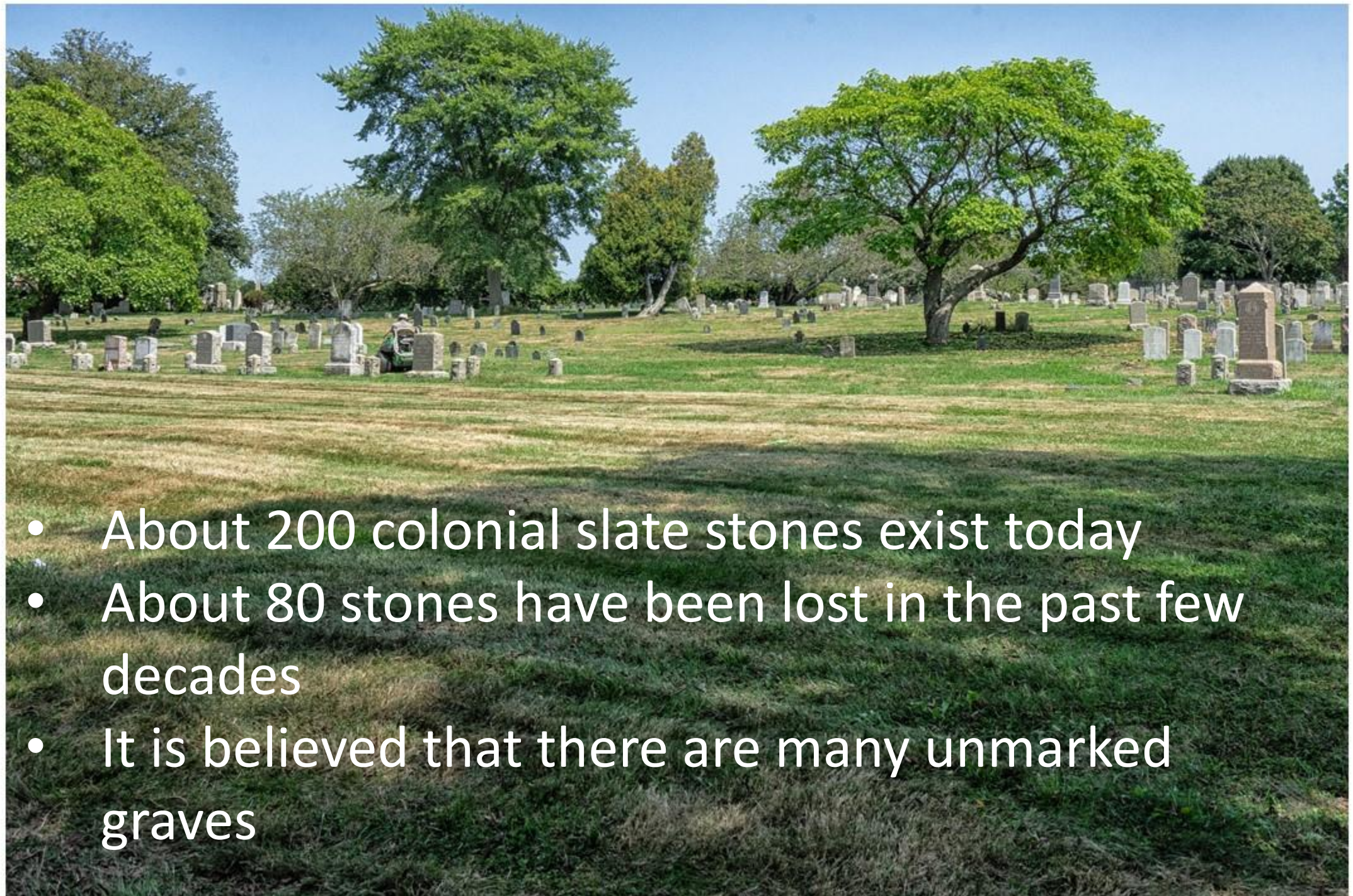




COMMON BURYING GROUND NEWPORT, RI

85% of Colonial  
Newport  
is buried in the  
Common Burying  
Ground





- About 200 colonial slate stones exist today
- About 80 stones have been lost in the past few decades
- It is believed that there are many unmarked graves



- Gravestones for enslaved people is unusual
- There are more stones for enslaved people in God's Little Acre than the rest of New England combined!



God's Little Acre is the **largest collection** of marked graves from the 1800s for people of African heritage in the country

- Combined with documents the stones help explore the colonial African community
- For many people the stone is the **only documentation** of their lives
- Information on stones provide valuable **data** for genealogists and historians



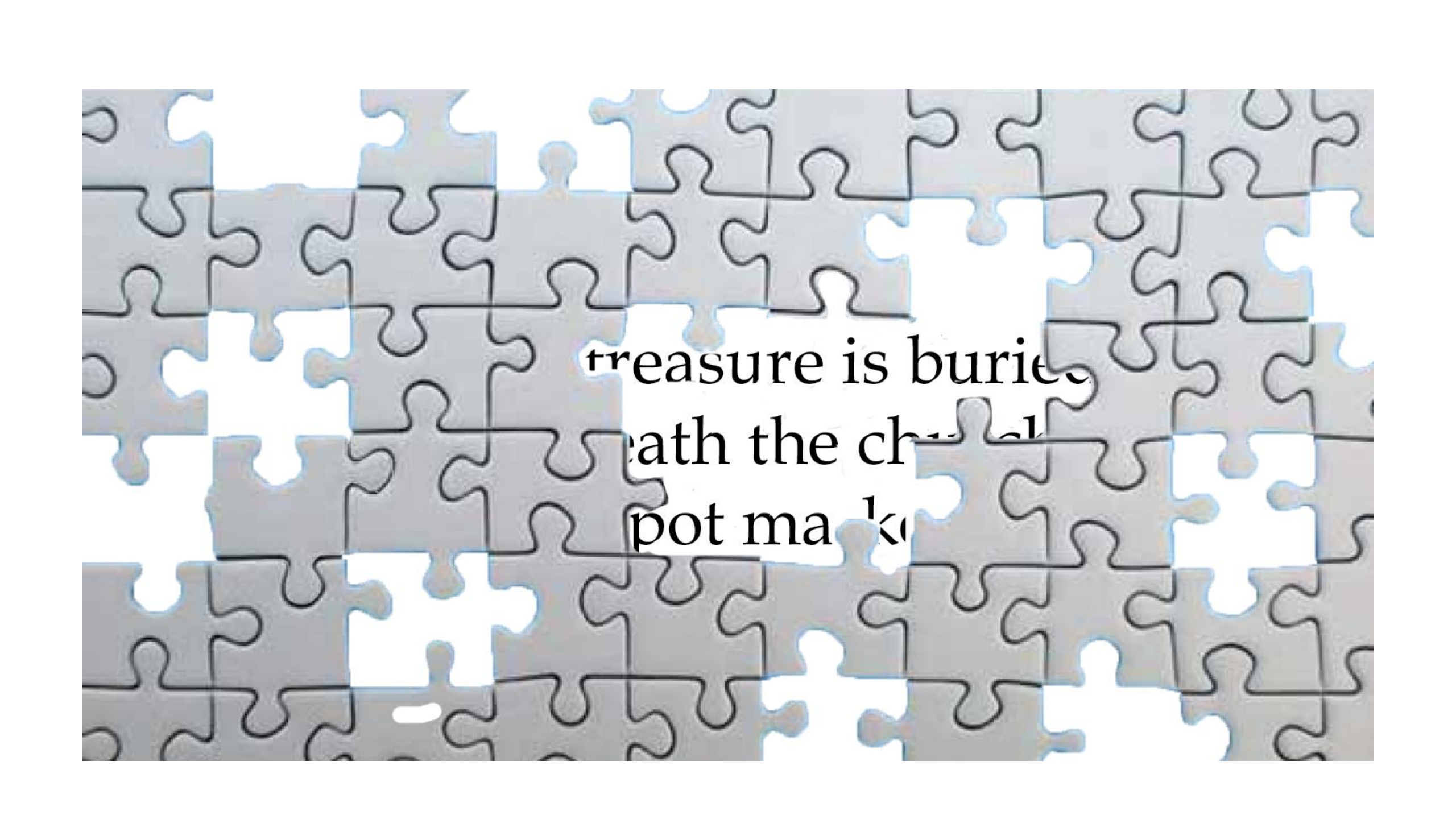
- Writing history is **story telling** that should **be based on facts** expressed in an **unbiased format**.
- The challenge to the researcher is to piece together the story and offer ideas as to the missing pieces.





treasur

tie 1  
na 10



treasure is buried  
underneath the church  
pot marks



**Classic Greek and Roman names** used include Plato, Pompey, Prince, Scipio, Hercules

**English names** used frequently used- Violet, Adam, Ann, Charles, Peggy, Arthur, , etc

Names reflecting **location** were used- Newport, Bristol, etc.

**African Names for the Day of the Week Born**

	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>
<b>Monday</b>	Adwoa, Adjoa, Ajoba, Adjo, Adzoa, Edzoa	Cudjo, Cudgo, Cujo, Cugo, Cudgeo Kwadwo, Kojo, Jojo, Kudjoe, Kwadzo, Kwedzo
<b>Tuesday</b>	Abena, Araba, Abla	Cubbenah, Cubbe, Kwabena, Ebo, Kobina, Kobby, Kobla
<b>Wednesday</b>	Akua, Ekua, Akuba, Aku, Kukua	Quarco, Quarker Kwaku, Kweku, Kuuku
<b>Thursday</b>	Yaa, Aba, Yawa, Yaba, Yaayaa	Yarrow, Ekow, Yaw, Yao, Yawo
<b>Friday</b>	Afua, Efua, Efie ,Afia, Afi	Kofi, Cuffee, Cuffe, Cuff Kofi/Fiifi/Yoofi
<b>Saturday</b>	Ama, Amma, Awo	Quamino, Quamino Kwame, Kwami, Ato, Atoapem, Kwamena
<b>Sunday</b>	Akosua, Esi, Asi	Quashee, Quash Kosi, Akwasi, Kwasi, Kwesi, Sisi



We know history of  
some of the people  
buried here:

## Hector Butcher

First known  
stone in God's  
Little Acre

carved by  
John Stevens I



47 stones include the word "servant" meaning enslaved person

"servant" not used after 1775 on any stones

17 stones use the word "negro"

SABANA GARDNER

LUCKY  
DRELLY  
LITTLE  
DIE

Here lyeth  
Hector Butcher  
Negro, late Seruant  
to M<sup>rs</sup> Ann Butcher  
of Barbadoes aged  
37 years & dyed  
August VII<sup>th</sup> 1720



## Arthur Tikey Flagg

- Enslaved to ropemaker Ebenezer Flagg
- As a free person, was a rope maker
- listed as a free man in 1790 but not 1774
- Member of the Seventh Day Baptists Church
- Was an important member of the Free African Union Society
- Is buried with his family





# Zingo Stevens

- Enslaved to John Stevens II, mason and gravestone carver
- Was a mason (not a stone carver)
- An active member of the Second Congregational Church
- Listed as free in 1790 but not 1774
- Three wives, children and grandchildren buried here, but not Zingo
- Friends with Caesar Lyndon



Tuesday August 12th 1766. This day the following Persons took a pleasant ride out to Portsmouth are as follows Viz

- Boston Vose
- Lingo Stevens & Mylis Lyndon
- Nepton Siphon & Wife
- Prime Thurston d<sup>r</sup>
- Cesar Lyndon & Sarah Searing



Necessaries bo<sup>d</sup> for Support of Nature are as follows Viz.

To a Pigg to roast	£8. 10. 0
To so much paid for house Room	1. 4. 0
To Wine	3. 12. 0
To Bread	1. 8. 0
To Rum	2. 10. 0
To Green Corn 60/ Limes for Punch 20/	4. 0. 0
To Sugar	2. 4. 0
To Butter	1. 0. 0
To Tea 40/ Coffee 15/	2. 15. 0
To 1 pint Rum for killing Pigg	0. 10. 0
	<hr/>
	33. 13. 0

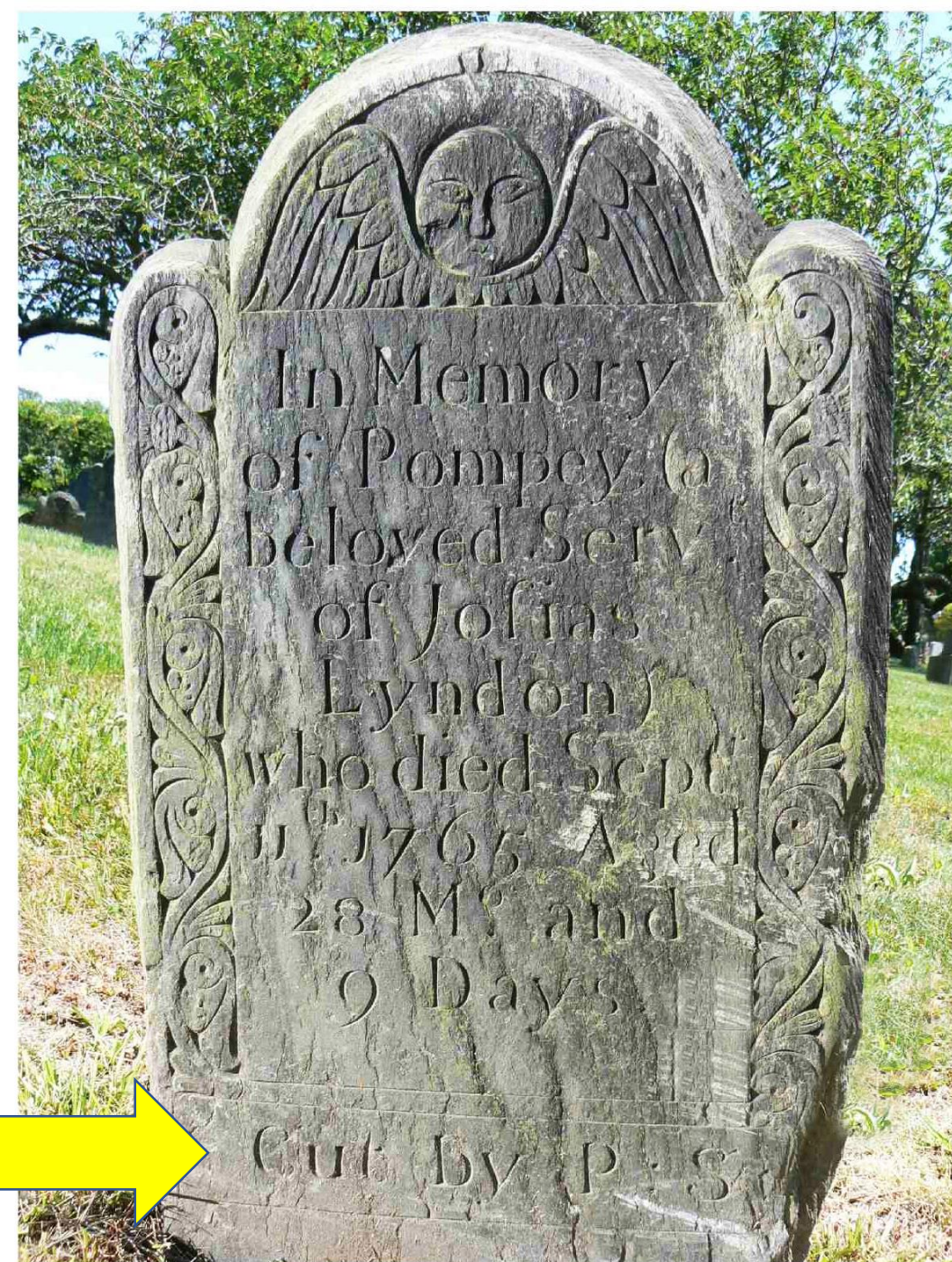
6. 14  
 6. 14  
 6. 14  
 6. 14  
 33. 8. 0  
 33. 13. 0  
 33. 13. 0

£33. 13. 0 } £21. 18. 0  
 2. 15  
 8 10

Diary Page describing a picnic taken with friends

# Caesar Lyndon

- Father of Pompey Lyndon-Friend to Zingo Stevens
  - Personal secretary and clerk to Josiah Lyndon who was clerk to the colony for 48 years
  - Active in the Free African Union Society (est. 1780)
  - Businessman in addition to his duties with Lyndon
  - Kept a diary that exists in the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society
- 
- Who carved the stone and signed it “P.S?”





## Pompe Stevens

- Enslaved to William Stevens
- The stones and his enslavement to William are the only documents we have about Pompe
- “This Stone was cut by Pompe Stevens in Memory of his Brother Cuffee Gibbs who died December 27<sup>th</sup> 1768 aged ---Year”



Documentation about Pompe Stevens is only found on grave stones.

He initialed one, signed one, and is **noted on this stone** for his son.

William Stevens is given credit for carving this stone.

Early research concluded that Pompe and Zingo were the same person. We now know this is wrong.



## Occramar Marycoo, Newport Gardner

- Enslaved to Caleb Gardner at age 14 in 1760
- Wrote/composed music, gave lessons
- An active member and deacon in the First Congregational Church
- 1791 won the lottery, purchased his and his family freedom
- 1792 joined the Free African Union Society.
- 1824 founding member of the Colored Union Church
- December 31, 1825 sailed to Africa with friends and supporters
- Died 1826 at 80 years of age
- Buried here are Limas Gardner(1821), wife of Newport, children- Silva (1784), Charles (1798), Abraham (1798)



## Charity Duchess Quamino

- Born 1739, enslaved at age 14 to John and Mary Channing
- In addition to her other domestic skills, was an exceptional baker
- Acquired the reputation as the Pastry Queen of Rhode Island
- Served here frosted plum cakes, twice, to George Washington
- About 1769 married John Quamino
- John died 1776 serving the patriot effort as a privateer against the British
- Duchess would buy a 1/6 share in the Palls and Biers Society



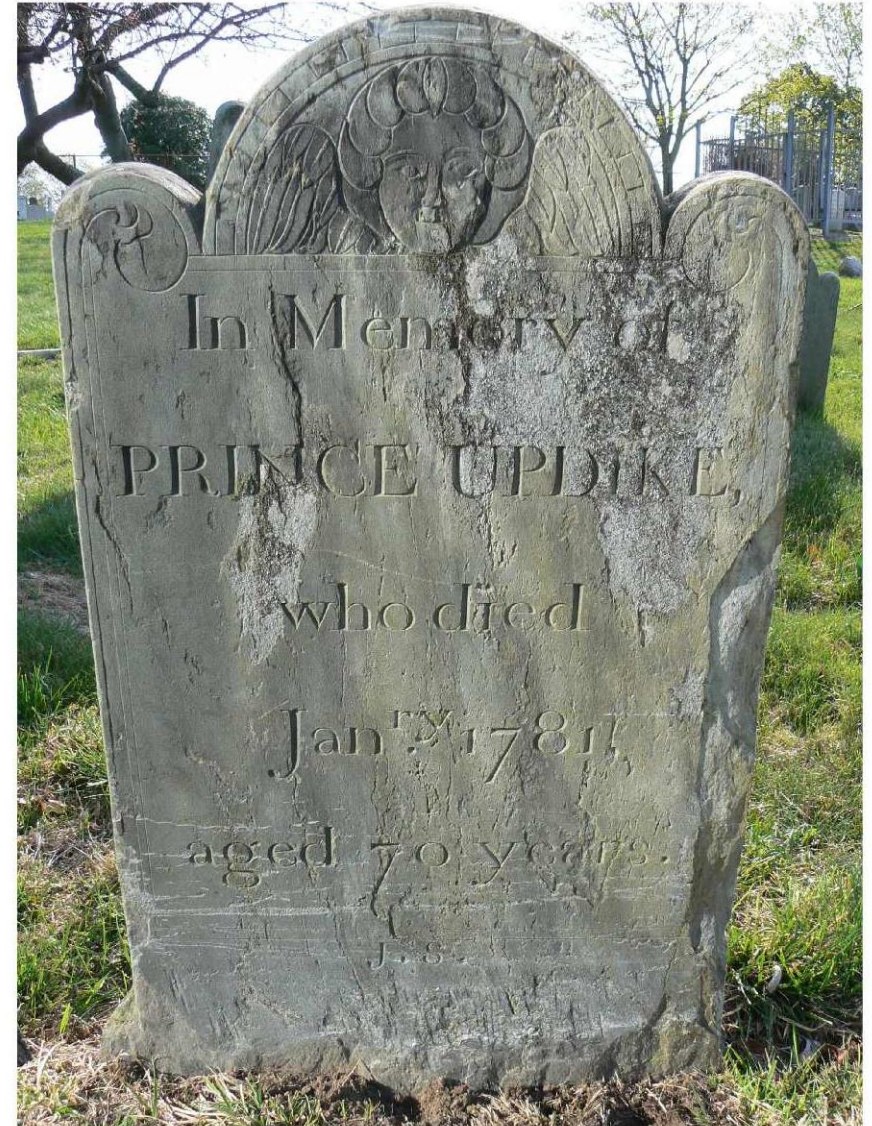
In memory of  
Dutchess Quamino  
a free black  
of distinguished excellence  
Intelligent, industrious  
Affectionate, honest  
and of  
exemplary piety  
who died  
June 29, 1804

These inspirational words were written by William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), foremost Unitarian minister in America.



# Prince Updike

- Enslaved to Daniel Updike at Smith Castle, North Kingston, RI
- Was a master chocolate grinder
- Hired by Aaron Lopez of Newport to grind chocolate
  
- Stone carved by John Stevens III





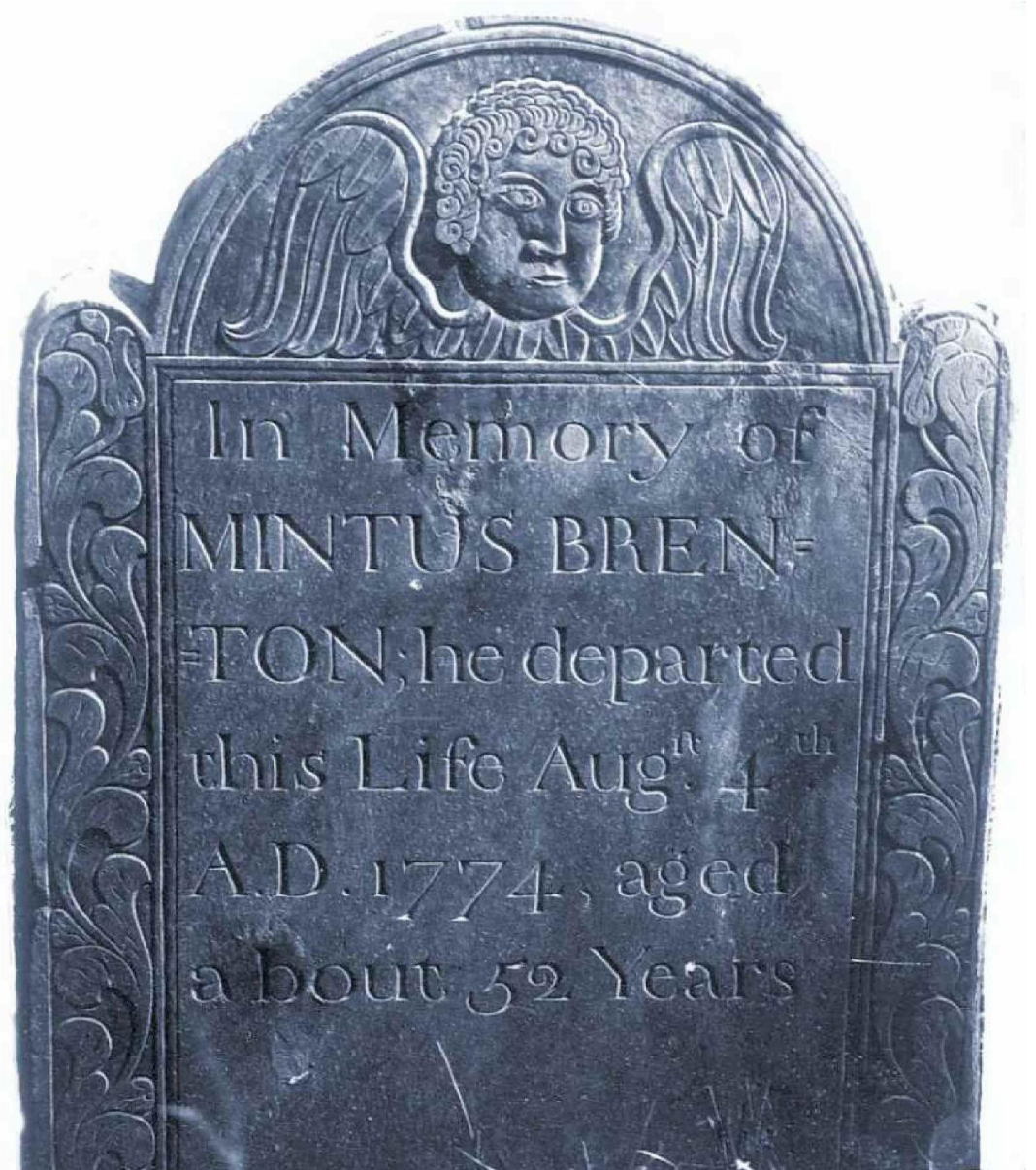
Some stones  
are viewed as  
having features  
more African  
than European



In Memory of  
MINTUS BRENTON; he departed  
this Life Aug<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>  
A.D. 1774, aged  
about 52 Years

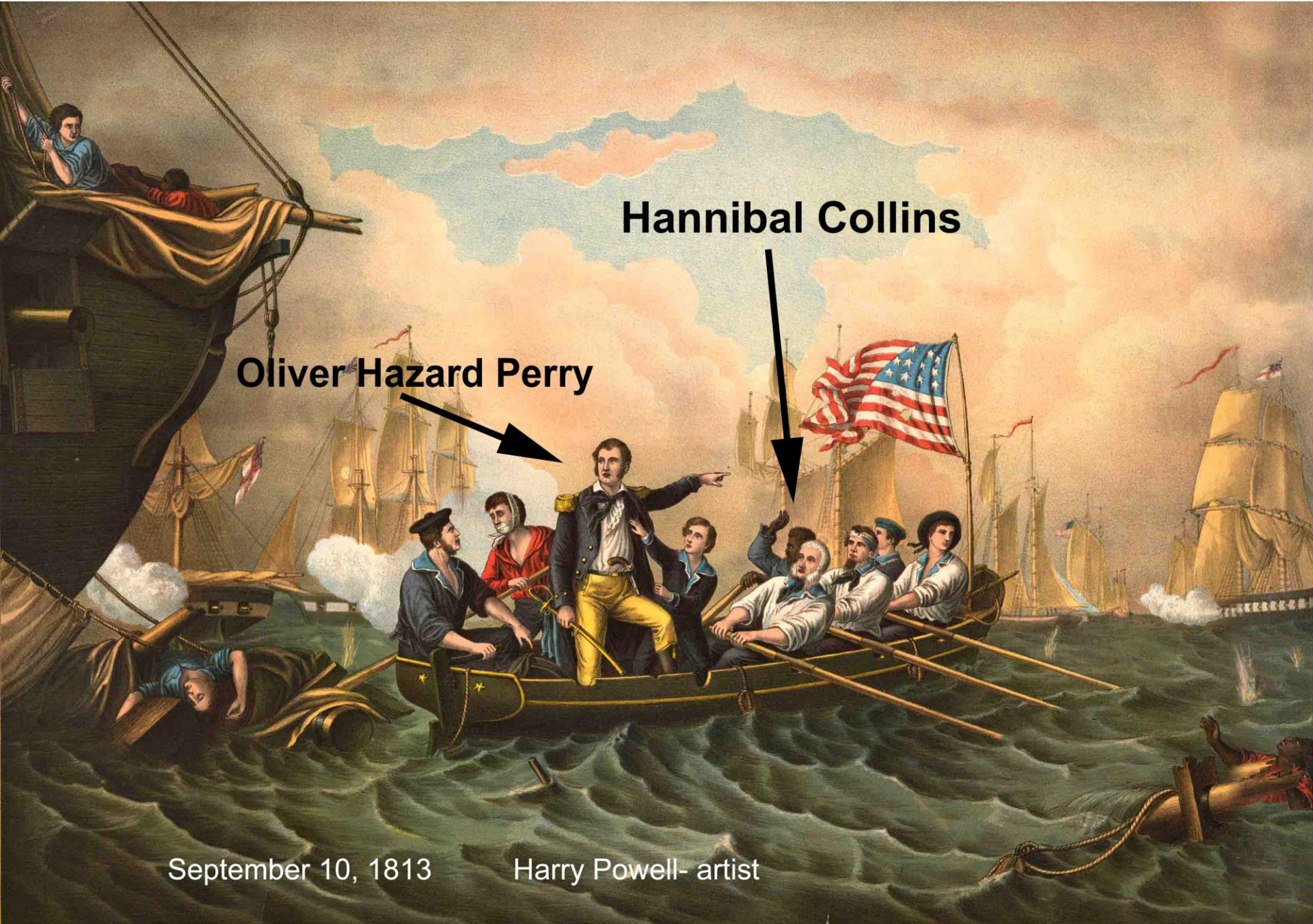
Why the change  
in imagery?

Stone preservation is vital for future research.





Mehitable  
Wife of  
Hannibal Collins  
Who died  
Jan. 25, 1860  
Aged 77 years



**Hannibal Collins**

**Oliver Hazard Perry**

September 10, 1813

Harry Powell- artist

# RWU research ideas

1. Add to the directory of individuals
2. Select a group of stones and explore the relations within the family and the community- Overing, Tikey/Flagg, etc.
3. Explore stones for people with common surname to establish connections, or not!
4. Identify slave holders in Newport and connect to burials with a focus on the enslaved person.
5. Explore industries and the involvement of enslaved people identifying members of the African community involved- Spermaceti candles, rum, furniture, ships, etc.
6. Explore church affiliations and enslaved persons
7. Connect post 1800 burials and enslaved ancestors
8. Research should be based on records, facts, documents
9. Explore the connections of the dead with communities outside of Newport
10. **Discuss and explore theories based on the research**

Bannister Brenton Brown Bull Coggeshall Collins Cranston

Easton Gardner Harris Johnson Malbone Nichols Overing Pedro Redwood

Rodman Tanner Taylor Thurston Tillinghast Weeden

Resources:

<http://www.ripnewport.com/gla.html>

<http://rihistoriccemeteries.org/searchgravesnameonly.aspx>

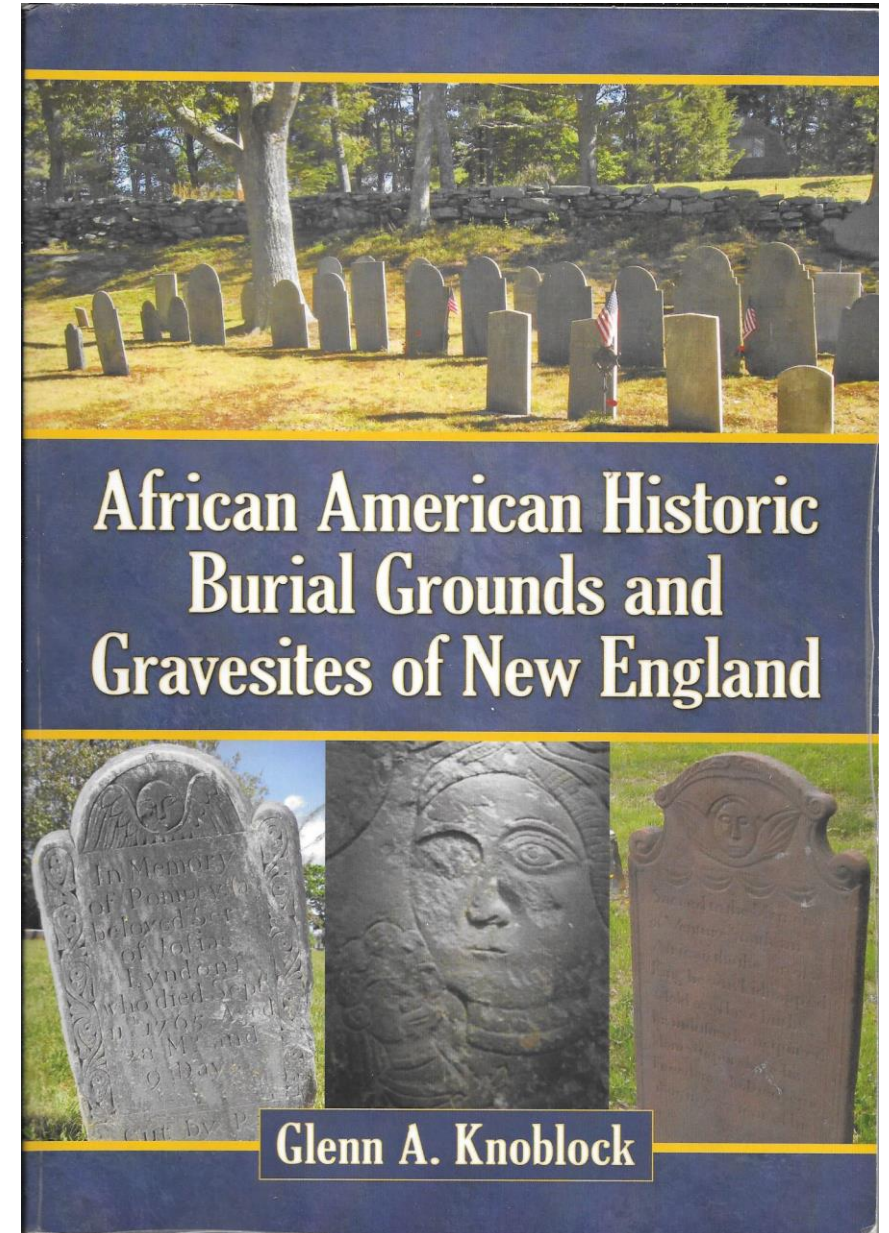
Knoblock, Glenn, African American Historic Burial Grounds and Gravesites of New England, Jefferson, North Carolina, McFarland and Company, Inc, 2016

Luti, Vincent, Mallet and Chisel, Boston, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2002

(This is the most specific publication about colonial carvers in Newport with a focus on the Stevens Shop)

Youngken, Richard, African Americans in Newport, The Newport Historical Society, Newport RI, 1998

God's Little Acre- <http://www.colonialcemetery.com/>

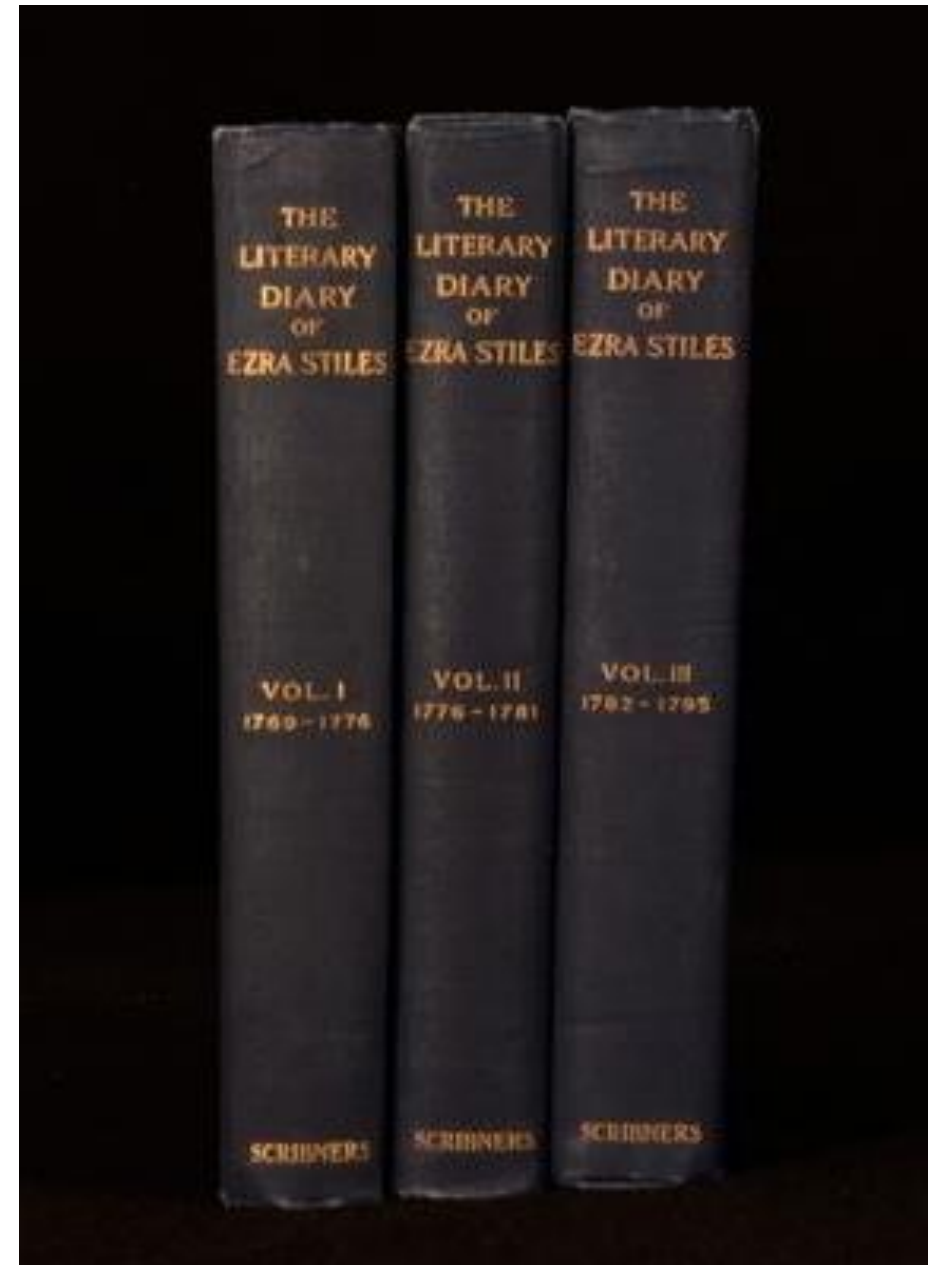




The largest research challenge will be to find primary sources (probate records, letters, diaries, church records, newspaper articles).

Your research may build on existing knowledge or add to what is known.

Sources (end notes, bibliography) from work you review may help locate additional primary sources.



# R.I.P. Newport

Rhode Island

[HOME](#)

[BURIAL SITES](#)

[GRAVE DATABASE](#)

[GOD'S LITTLE ACRE](#)

[CARVERS](#)

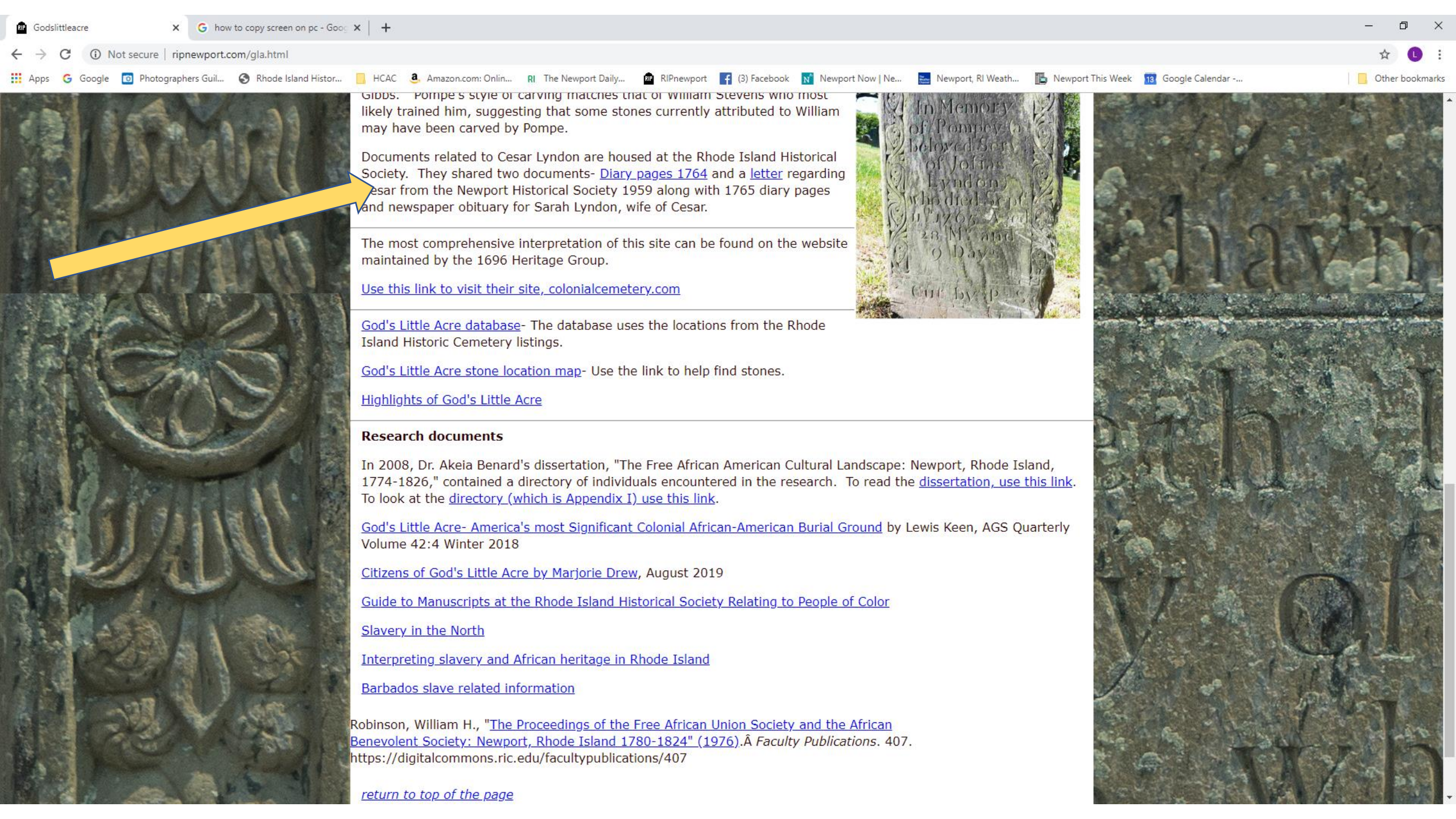
[OTHER INFORMATION](#)

[SAVE OUR STONES](#)



God's Little Acre is the oldest and largest existing African burying grounds in the United States with the largest collection of 18th century stones for people of African heritage in the country. Although the total number of individuals buried here is unknown, there was at one time approximately 275 professionally carved slate headstones.





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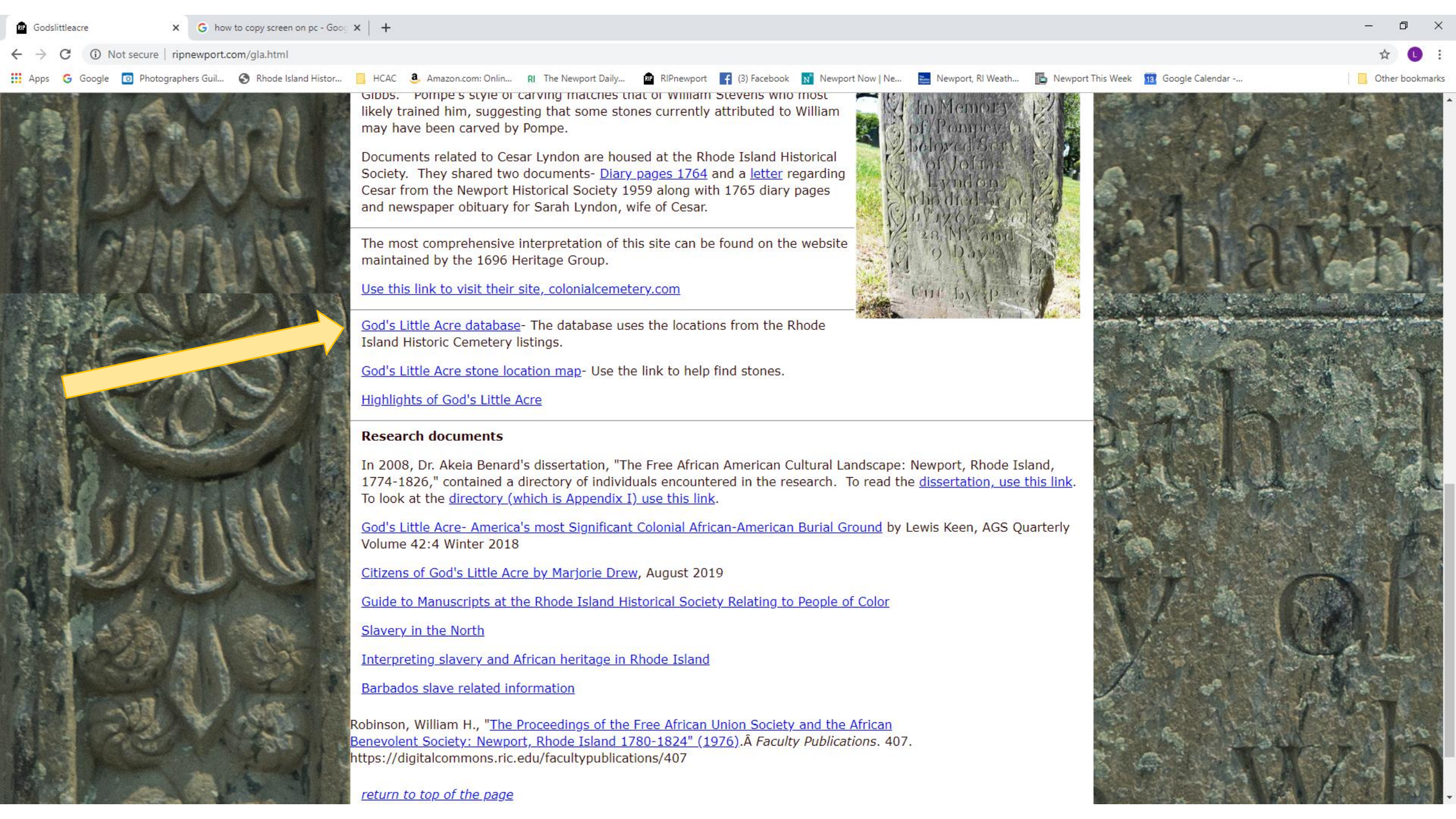
[Interpreting slavery and African heritage in Rhode Island](#)

[Barbados slave related information](#)

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### Additional facts

1. 1720- first known stone
2. 17 stones use the word "negro"
3. 47 stones use the word "servant"
4. No stone use "servant" after 1775
5. "Servant" used for enslaved person

### Names on stones

When Africans arrived in New England, names were changed by the owners. Caleb Gardner purchased and renamed Occramer Marycoo as Newport Gardner. Some members of the community were able to retain their African names as Arthur Flagg was also known by the name Arthur Tikey, his African surname. African names used include "Cujo" for boys born on Monday and "Cuffee" for those born on Friday.

### The Free African Union Society

The society was formed in 1780 and was one of the earliest African-American organizations in the country. Many of its earliest leaders and their families rest in this site.



**406- Cuffee Gibbs (1728c-1768)** This stone was carved by Pompe Stevens, brother to Cuffee. Pompe was enslaved in the shop of William Stevens. This stone and the one for Pompey Lyndon are the only two known stones carved by an African carver. Since Cuffee was trained by William, their styles are the same, possibly Pompey was actually the carver of many stones attributed to William.

**421-Pompey Lyndon (1763c-1765).** Caesar (farther of Pompey) was the personal secretary and clerk to Josiah Lyndon who was the clerk to the Colony of Rhode Island for 48 years (in addition to being governor). We have many documents (including a diary) written by Caesar indicating and it is likely that he wrote many of the laws of the colony.

The gravestone states that Pompey Lyndon was a "faithful servant of Josiah Lyndon, died September 11, 1765 age 28 months 9 days. Caesar recorded in his diary "Our little darling Pompey was born ye 2 May 1763. Taken ill in the night this day with bloody flux September 5 1765 and died Wednesday morning about one quarter after nine o'clock being the 11th of said September 1765"

This stone was carved by "PS", believed to be Pompe Stevens

**452- Prince Updike (1711c-1781)** Earlier in his life, Prince was enslaved at Smith Castle to Daniel Updike but as a free man was a Newport businessman. He is regarded as a master chocolate grinder and records indicted Aaron Lopez was an important client.



The 18<sup>th</sup> century gravestones for people of African heritage located in God's Little Acre make this site historic. Although the total number of individuals buried here is unknown, there were, at one time, approximately 275 professionally carved slate headstones.

This is the largest collection of gravestones for 18<sup>th</sup> century people of African heritage in the country!

While the size of the collection is remarkable, each stone is an important historic and artistic artifact. The information, the images, and the grouping of the stones informs us about the people for whom they were carved and the society in which they lived.

Carvings on some stones in the 1770s and are interpreted as being more African than European in design (John Stevens III, carver)

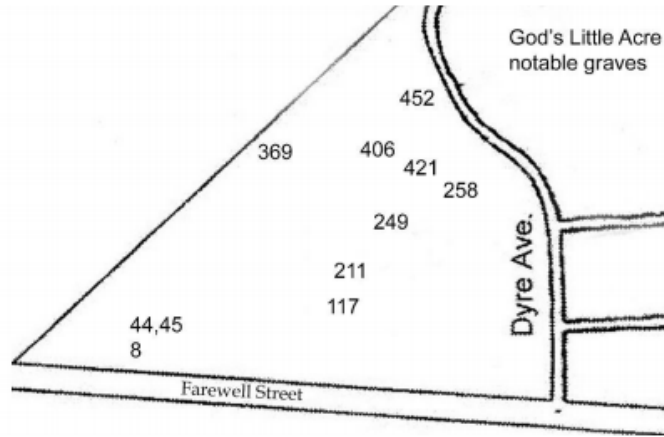
**8-Charity Duchess Quamino (1739c-1804)**

Born in Africa, at age fourteen she arrived in Newport and was enslaved in the home of John and Mary Channing. Duchess served the family for decades and her talent as a baker set her apart from other servants. She was able to sell her baked goods in public and earned the reputation as the Pastry Queen of Rhode Island. Her most famous customer was George Washington who enjoyed her frosted plum cakes on two separate occasions.

Duchess married **John Quamino** about 1769 who was later sent to the College of New Jersey (now Princeton) to be educated as part of a plan to send people to Africa as missionaries. The plan ended when John was killed privateering to earn money to buy his family's freedom. About 1780, Duchess became a free person.

In memory of  
Dutchess Quamino  
a free black  
of distinguished excellence  
Intelligent, industrious  
Affectionate, honest  
and of  
exemplary piety  
who died  
June 29, 1804

These inspirational words on her gravestone were written by William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), foremost Unitarian minister in America and child in the Channing house in which Duchess served.



**44-Newport Gardner family-** Silva (1783c-1784), Charles Quamine (1794-1798), Abraham (1796c-1798); Newport Gardner (1746-1826), also known as Occramer Marycoo, was a member of the First Congregational Church, a musician, teacher, a founding member of the Free African Union Society (1780). He died a free man in Africa in 1826 and is not buried here. He was a leader in the African community and had a strong friendship with Rev. Samuel Hopkins of the First Congregational church, an ardent abolitionist.

**117-Hector Bucher (1683c-1720)** is the first known burial in this section. There was a sugar plantation in Barbados owned by the Butcher family at this time but Hector and Ann connection to it is not yet established.

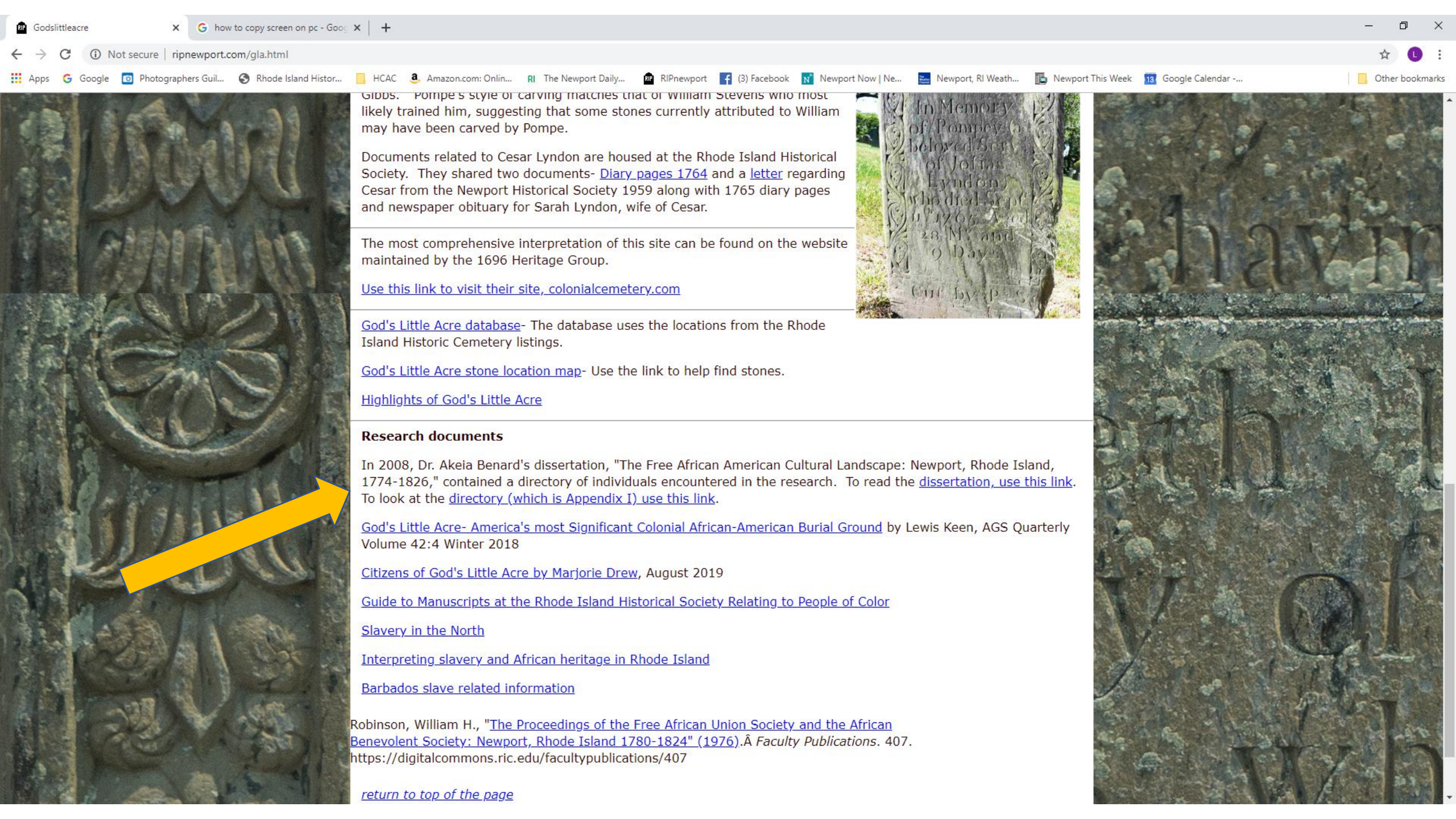
**211-Mehitable Collins (1783-1860)** was the daughter-in-law of Hannibal Collins who served Oliver Hazard Perry at the battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

**249- Arthur Tikey Flagg(1733c-1810) and family** Arthur was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church, a rope maker, and a prominent member of the Free African Union Society. He was likely enslaved to Ebenezer Flagg before becoming a free man. When Arthur's son Solomon Nuba died in 1785 the surname used was not Flagg, but Tikey. The other family stones, including Arthur's, use the name Flagg.

**258-Pompey Brenton (1717-1772)** The image on this stone appears more African than European to many people and was carved by John Stevens III. Pompey was elected Governor at "Lection Day", a practice that started in Newport in 1756. This multi day event combined African and European elements and included a parade, dancing, and voting. African governors, while mostly a ceremonial position, did help resolve issues within the African community.

**367- Zingo Stevens family**

Zingo Stevens was enslaved to John Stevens II. Evidence indicates that he was a mason and most likely helped build Touro Synagogue and the Redwood Library. His family were members of Ezra Stiles church (Second Congregational). Zingo and his wife were friendly with Caesar Lyndon and information about a picnic they enjoyed with friends is include in the Lyndon diary.



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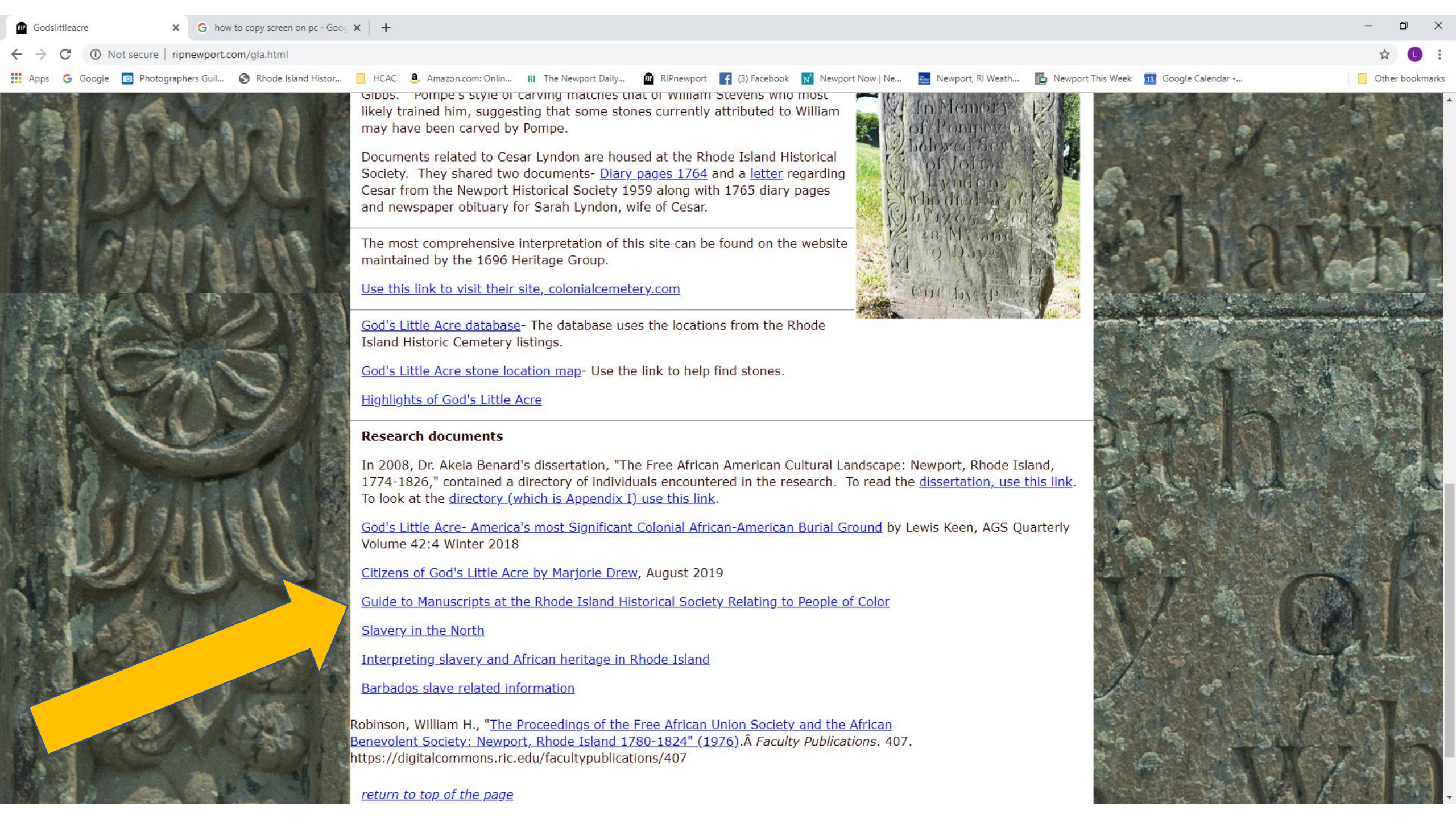
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[Slavery in the North](#)

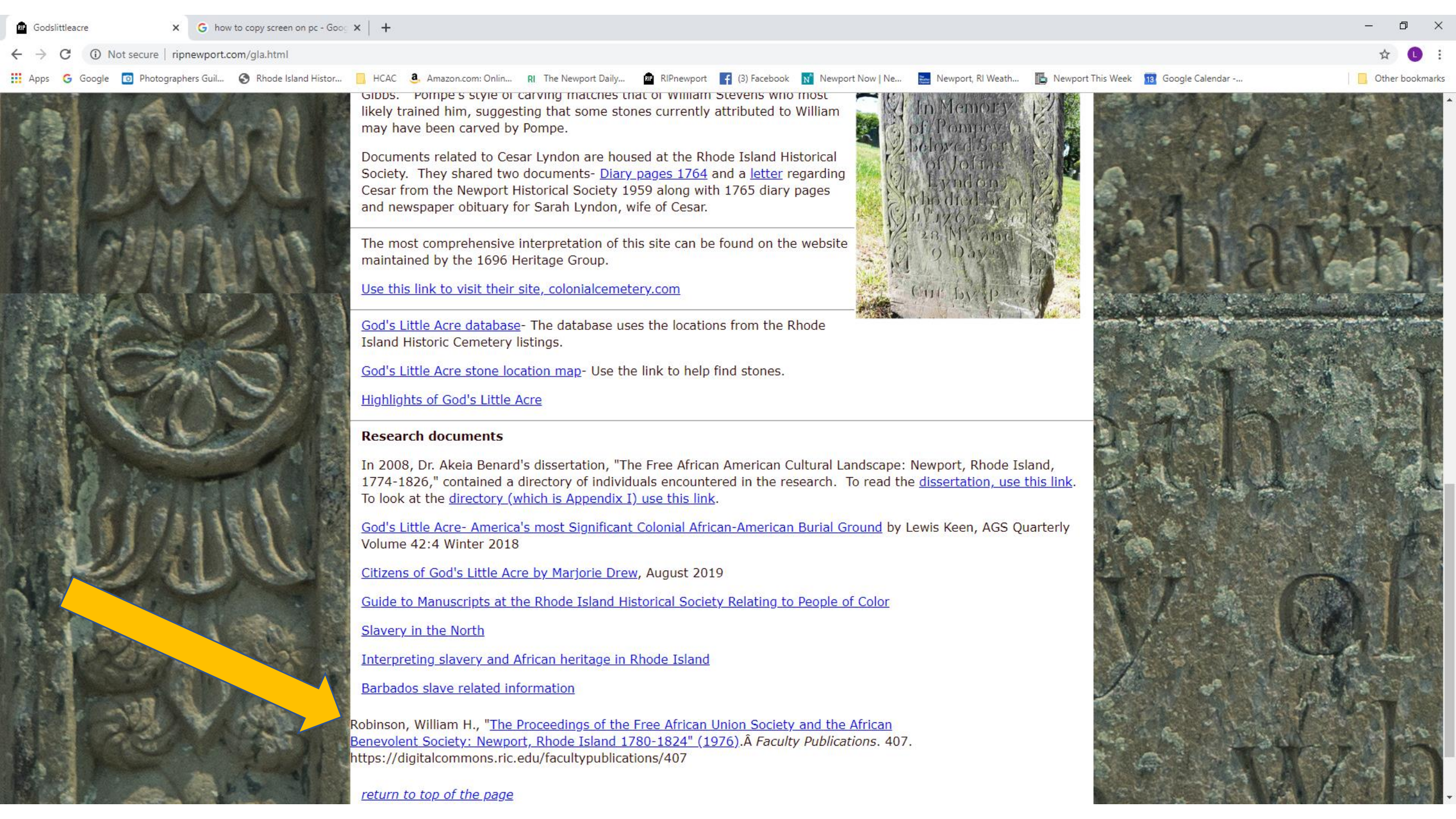
[Interpreting slavery and African heritage in Rhode Island](#)

[Barbados slave related information](#)

Robinson, William H., "[The Proceedings of the Free African Union Society and the African Benevolent Society: Newport, Rhode Island 1780-1824](#)" (1976).*Faculty Publications*. 407. <https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/facultypublications/407>

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GIBBS. — Pompe's style of carving matches that of William Stevens who most likely trained him, suggesting that some stones currently attributed to William may have been carved by Pompe.

Documents related to Cesar Lyndon are housed at the Rhode Island Historical Society. They shared two documents- [Diary pages 1764](#) and a [letter](#) regarding Cesar from the Newport Historical Society 1959 along with 1765 diary pages and newspaper obituary for Sarah Lyndon, wife of Cesar.

The most comprehensive interpretation of this site can be found on the website maintained by the 1696 Heritage Group.

[Use this link to visit their site, colonialcemetery.com](#)

[God's Little Acre database](#)- The database uses the locations from the Rhode Island Historic Cemetery listings.

[God's Little Acre stone location map](#)- Use the link to help find stones.

[Highlights of God's Little Acre](#)

### Research documents

In 2008, Dr. Akeia Benard's dissertation, "The Free African American Cultural Landscape: Newport, Rhode Island, 1774-1826," contained a directory of individuals encountered in the research. To read the [dissertation, use this link](#). To look at the [directory \(which is Appendix I\) use this link](#).

[God's Little Acre- America's most Significant Colonial African-American Burial Ground](#) by Lewis Keen, AGS Quarterly Volume 42:4 Winter 2018

[Citizens of God's Little Acre by Marjorie Drew](#), August 2019

[Guide to Manuscripts at the Rhode Island Historical Society Relating to People of Color](#)

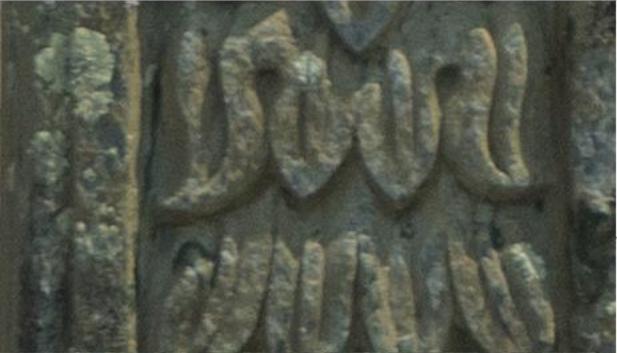
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# Product

What you create (product) needs to make Dr. Mulligan happy!  
Making her happy will make you happy ( a better grade)!

## Potential products from your research:

- Documents to add the RIP site
- Submit your work for publication
- A public presentation of your research in Newport
- Participation in larger God's Little Acre related events. The oldest known burial is 1720 making this year the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Events are being discussed.





Moving forward...

February 6<sup>th</sup> either in class or at  
God's Little Acre

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> - at Newport  
Historical Society

February 20<sup>th</sup> in class to discuss  
research questions

Anytime email Lew at  
[keen1876@cox.net](mailto:keen1876@cox.net)