

Indians Sold City's North End to 'Freemen'

The northern half of what is today Fall River was purchased from the Indians in 1659 by "freemen" from Plymouth Colony.

The land bought by these men was therefore called Freetown, and the northern part of Fall River was part of Freetown until 1803, when it became a separate town.

The land of the Freeman's Purchase had its Southern boundary

at what is now Bedford Street and extended northward to Stacey's Creek at the Southern boundary of Berkley.

It was purchased from Osamequin, Wamsutta and Tattapanum for "twenty coats, two rugs, two iron pots, two kettles and one little kettle, eight pairs of shoes, six pairs of stockings, one dozen hoes, one dozen hatchets, two yards of broad-

cloth," plus the settlement of a debt to Wamsutta.

There were 26 purchasers in all, Cap. James Cudworth, Josiah Winslow Sr., Constant Southworth and John Barnes being the principal ones. The land was divided evenly into 26 lots. Each was numbered in order, number one being at Bedford Street. Each lot had a frontage

of a third-of-a-mile on the Taunton River and extended four miles Easterly from the river. The tracts of land were assigned to the purchasers by lot. The northern part of Fall River amounted to the first thirteen and a portion of the fourteenth tract.

In the year 1683, the Freeman's Purchase became Freetown, and two years it became part of the

newly-enlarged Bristol County, which was made up of Bristol, Barnstable, Plymouth and Freetown, together with the land included in the Pocasset Purchase.

In 1692 the Plymouth Colony government which had jurisdiction over the entire area of Bristol County came to an end when it was merged with the Massachusetts Bay Colony.