



VIEW OF MARBLEHEAD NECK 1797

From a painting by Capt. Samuel Stiness, on a wooden fireboard



*MARBLEHEAD
GREAT NECK*

By

RICHARD WHITING SEARLE



Salem, Massachusetts

1937



*(Reprinted from the Historical Collections of the Essex Institute,
Volume LXXIII.)*

Salem, Massachusetts
NEWCOMB & GAUSS CO., Printers
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MARBLE NECKE

Before Marblehead became a town, or when Salem owned all of what now belongs to Marblehead, the vicinity of this latter place was known as Marble Harbour and Marble Necke. The name originated from the supposedly abundant supply of marble to be found here.

A letter written by the Reverend Mr. Higginson, who cruised in 1629 along these shores, describes the New England plantations with special reference to the locality about Salem thus:

though all the country bee as it were a thicke wood for the generall, yet in diverse places there is much ground cleared by the Indians . . . for stone, here is plenty of slates at the Isle of Slate in Massachusetts Bay, and lime stone, and free stone and smooth stone, and iron stone, and marble stone also in such store, that we have great rocks of it, and a harbour hard by. Our plantation is from thence called Marble harbour.

This name was officially in use until 1633. On July 2, 1633, the court in Boston recorded a change in this name while serving a fine on one of the inhabitants as follows: “(2) ——— fined 30s for drunkenness on the Sabath Day at Marblehead (till now in the records called Marble Harbour).”

However, the new title was not generally used and Marblehead was known as Marble Harbour for several years later. Hence, in 1635, even the General Court of

the Massachusetts Bay Colony proclaimed: "It was proved this court that Marble Necke belongs to Salem."

The next year, 1636, the General Court meeting at Salem adopted the new name in their famous: "reading of an order for the division of Marble Head Necke." This motion was the same brought in by Governor Endecott for the establishment of Harvard College.

MARBLEHEAD NECK TOPOGRAPHY

What we now know as Marblehead Neck was in the early days a heavily wooded island about a mile in length, containing roughly three hundred acres and connected with the mainland by an isthmus which was awash at high tide. It had two ponds and a spring to which the fishermen resorted for their water supply. One pond was at the southwest end of the neck, a larger one on the southeast shore, and the spring was on the northwest shore in the central part of the neck. It had, as at present, several beaches, some with sand and others of a rockier nature from which the sailors ballasted their vessels. A natural salt deposit formed by the receding tides was to be found on the southwest shores of the Neck and later, after the Revolutionary War, it became the scene of the "Salt Works" so necessary to the fishing industry.

Evidence of tree growth here may be found in the granting of land to the fishermen of Marblehead. Salem ordered, in 1636, as follows: "To the greatest family not above two acres, and the common of the woods nere adjoining for their goats and their cattle."

We find further reference to wood lands at the same time in: "along the shore towards Marblehead 20 pole into the land, shall be reserved for the commons of the towne to serve them for wood and timber," and, in 1640, we find in the town records of Salem:

ordered that such as have felled timber trees with in twoe miles of the towne of Salem, and any timber trees with in one mile of Marblehead that are fitt for shippinge, that such as have felled them shall be paid for their labor either for their felling w^{ch} is done already or for sawinge . . . for

plank for shippinge, to be paid by such Ship carpenters as are willing to imploy them for that use

We have noted already that the country hereabouts "bee as it were a thicke wood."

Where disputes over the cutting of wood, and trespasses resulting in court action arose, we can find many sworn statements from court records, viz.: In Salem, 1681, it was certified that:

Michael Bowden, aged about thirty years, deposed that he was living on the lot that James Smith let to him, and had cut & delivered by his order sixty cords of wood. He had cut eleven trees from Nicholas Merit's lot, had bought, cut and carried away wood from James Dennis' lot, had carted from Peach's lot wood for William Woods, had carted several cords of wood for John Legg and for John Codner, Nathanael Walton and John Martin. He had hauled away oaks and pines for timber for the use of Marblehead men, and wood for Moses Maverick from his lot, etc.

Even the islands about Marblehead, which are inferior in size to the Neck and lie in locations of greater exposure, were covered with tree growth. As late as December, 1673, we observe from the Salem town records that a committee was formed to safeguard the timber property on Bakers Island as follows: "to take care for the preservation of the wood and timber upon Bakers Iland—and to seaz upon and bring away such wood as they shall find cut by men of Marblehead and all persons are prohibited from falling trees on said ilands without license . . ."

One local historian goes so far as to quote a town decree which offered pay for the clearing of woods. In addition, the *Marblehead Register* of April, 1830, states: "the frames of many of the houses yet standing are constructed from timber which grew on the premises, and there are individuals living who can distinctly recollect a beautiful grove of large trees on Cat Island."

Inasmuch as all buildings were of wooden construction, and in view of the demands from the ship builders, who became active, the supplies of wood were heavily drawn upon. In the following years measures for the preservation of wood lands are mentioned. Thus: "Noe

stranger fishinge in Marblehead shall have libertie to make use of any large timber."

Again we see: "Noe stranger or any inhabitant for strangers shall sell any trees either timber trees or other in the commons."

Finally, in 1678: "it is agreed that thear shall be noe more wood or timber cut up (on) the Neck that is young timber for any us[e] whatever except it be for flakstuf upon penaltie," etc.¹

"Flakstuf" presumably referred to flakes or fences on which fish were dried: the "penaltie" was generally: "five shillings for every tree."

CHARTS OF MARBLEHEAD NECK

The best of the early charts of Marblehead are to be found in the rare map collection of the Widener Library in Cambridge. The earliest ones mention "Salem," the name of Marblehead being omitted until one dated 1634, on which we note "Marble harbour." The Atlantic Neptune charts, published in 1769 for the British Admiralty, are the first of any real value. These are very rare, only four in this country, one each at the Widener Library, the Boston Public Library, the Boston Athenaeum, and the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

In 1806, Nathaniel Bowditch states in his sailing directions for Marblehead:

The only chart of the entrance of this harbor is that published from the survey taken by Holland and his assistants just before the American Revolutionary war. That period was particularly unfavorable for obtaining an accurate survey of the sea-coast as the Americans were generally opposed to its being done at that time fearing that it would give the

¹ An extract of a letter lately received from Harvard Forest, Harvard University, states that: "Within recent years we have come to realize that the practice of burning the underbrush, commonly employed by the Indians, served to favor such species as oak and hickory and pitch-pine, and to keep the forests open and park-like. It seems likely that the forests on Marblehead Neck were also of the oak and hickory type, with some admixture of white and pitch-pine and hemlock, chestnut, maple and beech."

British the great advantage of being able safely to enter with their armed ships into any of our harbors.

Later publishers called Marblehead Neck by its Indian equivalent, Nanepashemet; again we find Manataug on other maps. Such names were invented by owners during the days the Neck was private property, i. e., owned for the most part by an individual or some land company. It is possible, of course, to find plenty of plans and personal charts. John Winthrop made one of these about 1630. They are interesting to look at, but are almost completely inaccurate.

ROAD TO NECK

From a town record, dated May 11, 1706, the following is to be found with respect to a road on the Neck:

We lay out a particular way from Mr. Devereux fence over the Great Harbor beach into the Western part of the Neck & from thence to the Beach commonly called Pitt's Beach by Mr. Homans Marsh with the use of the whole Beach & from the eastern part of said Pitts Beach along by the old way thro the fish fences down to Pedrick's House so called and coves between said Pedrick's house and stage the whole way to be about two poles in Breadth where the land will allow the same, and from said cove up to the houses upon the Neck of about two poles in breadth for the *Town* use saving any Grant therefor.

The Essex Institute Historical Collections, Volume 46, page 5, states:

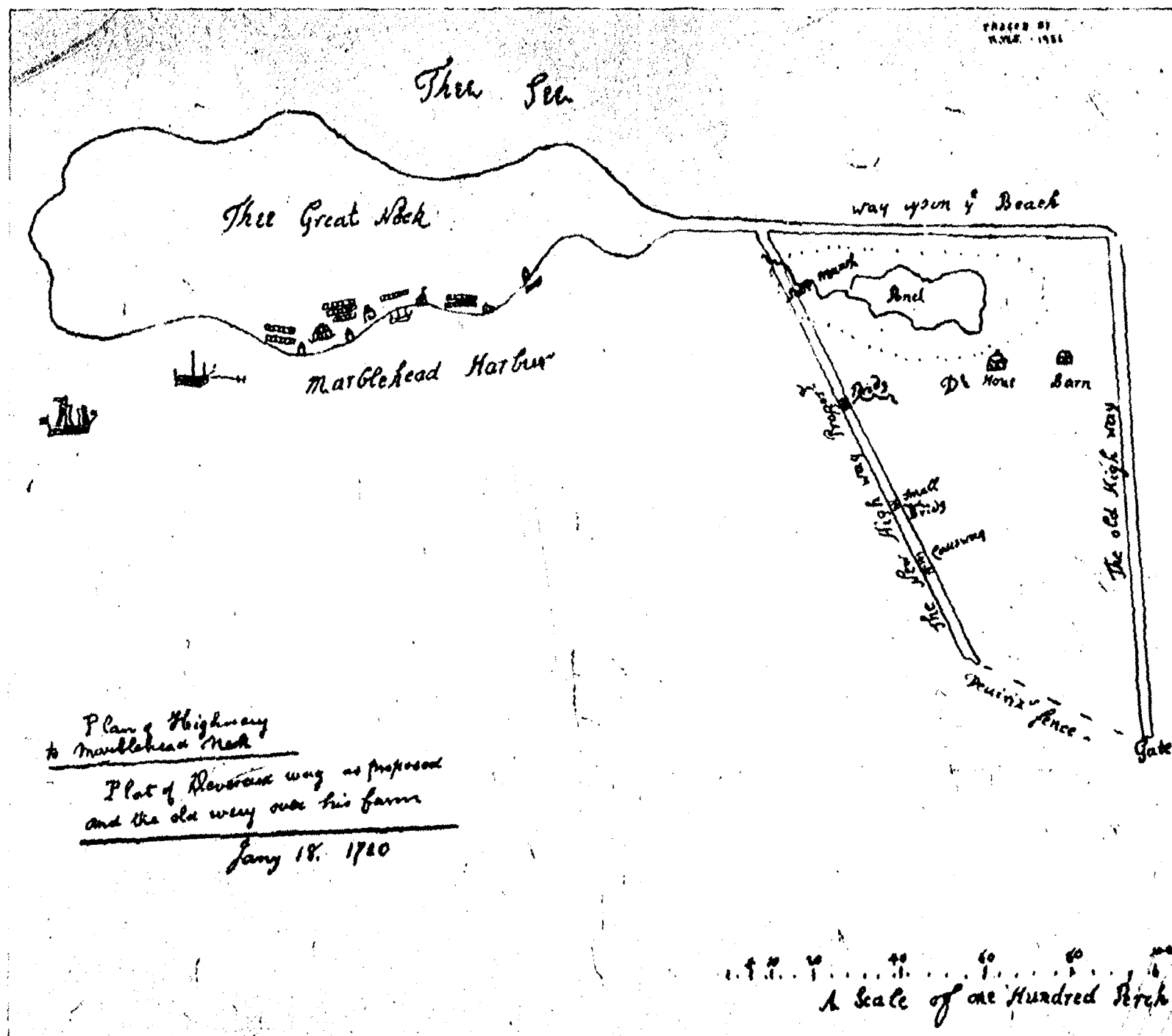
The ancient highway to the Neck through the Devereaux farm was laid out in 1670. Its beginning on the main highway through the town is now Smith street. This old way continued to be used as the only way to the great neck until 1721. This was probably the nearest way over high land, the pond and marsh east of the Devereaux house rendering it inexpedient to construct a road there in the primitive days. In the autumn of 1720, a new way to the Neck was agitated, and a petition signed by "a considerable number" of the inhabitants of Marblehead, was presented to the court of general sessions. It stated that the "ancient" way was encumbered and stopped up, and the prayer requested that

the encumbrances be removed or a change made in the location of the way. Dec. 27, 1720, the court ordered that Capt. William Bowditch, Capt. John Gardner and Capt. Theophilus Burrill be a committee to lay out a way of two rods in width in the old way or in a new location. At the same court, the committee reported, Jan. 18, 1720-1, that they had laid out said way two rods wide and provided that the town or proprietors of common lands in Marblehead should hang a gate at each end of the new road. This report was confirmed by the court on the last-named date. Accompanying the petition was a plan, now on file in the office of the county commissioners. Besides the ways, it shows the location of the Devereaux house and barn, and upon the Neck (which is not drawn to scale and is lacking in shape) are shown the dwelling houses, fish houses and fish flakes, and along the shore are four boats and fishing vessels.

This drawing is of further interest in that it depicts the several houses on the Neck, probably the ones owned by John Searle, Andrew Tucker and John Pedrick. Fish flakes as well as flake houses are represented, also four sailing vessels, one of which is apparently on the beach. The ancient gate can be seen at the end of the old highway, which was a continuation of what is now called Smith street. The scale "of one hundred Perch" may be useful in regard to the old and newly proposed way, but the picture of the Neck should be about three times larger to conform to the same scale.

At a town meeting in 1727, River Head Beach became the subject of further serious consideration in these terms: "Wt may be proper to be done concerning ye Beach at ye upper end of ye great Harbour which is represented as in great danger of being wasted away by ye overflowing of ye water in stormy weather," and, according to the Massachusetts Historical Collections, it appears that:

About the year 1728, it was found that the sea was fast encroaching on the S. W. side of the isthmus, so as to endanger the preservation and security of the harbor. The government of the province at that time attended to the subject, as it represented not only the town in particular, but the trade of the province in general; and ordered by an Act



MARBLEHEAD GREAT NECK IN 1720

From a plan in the office of the Essex County Commissioners, Salem

the sum of 1328£, to be paid out of the public treasury, for necessary repairs . . . about the year 1762 some necessary repairs were made. In the year 1790 although the town had carefully endeavored to secure, support and keep the same in good repair, the government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts considering that the preservation of the said harbor was a matter of public concern etc. granted a sum of £1000. to be raised by a lottery — the proceeds whereof should be applied in repairing the fortifications of the isthmus, before that time made, and in further securing the same.

To quote from a petition of 1790: "the sea in the high tides obtains a passage through the harbour."

This petition came after it was found that the previous repairs had proved insufficient. The big stones on the beach today mark these unsuccessful efforts.

In many of the town meetings, until comparatively late, it was emphasized that no sand or ballast was allowed to be taken from River Head Beach and even Mr. Ephraim Brown, who as late as 1843 made several petitions for a road to the Neck, alleged: "that a part of said way is below high water mark, and within the ebb and flow of the sea." He asked for "a towne way from the Bridge at the end of the Neck lane so called to the Neck lands," and, in 1849, his petition was voted against because: "the road is not necessary to or required by the town, a head way for this road laid below high water mark would endanger vessels driven on shore in tempestuous weather," and thus continued a situation wherein the elements held sway until the erection of the present fine thoroughfare.

EARLY LIFE ON THE NECK

We now turn back for a while to study the early owners and inhabitants and the occupations of those on the Neck. Without digressing, let it be borne in mind that Marblehead, though existing in 1629, was not definitely recognized as a plantation by the general Court until 1635. In 1648-9 Marblehead was allowed to be a township of its own, the same action being confirmed by an order of the General Court. Up to this time Marblehead was

owned by Salem, which relinquished its title by sales and grants of land.

At a town meeting in April, 1669, the regulation of property on the Neck was made in the following manner: "The Townsmen with John Peach senior and John Peach junior are to order the bounds of what land is formerly laid out on the Necke" and, further, "to se that a convenient way be laid out for drift off cattle and els to the Necke on the other side off the Great Harbour," and

Itt is agreed on that whereas divers men claime land on the Neck by vertue off a grant ffrom Salem when we were included in these Towne Ship that all that claime land on that acco shall bring in a copy off Salem Records under the hand of him that keeps the Booke unto the Towns men off Marblehead and whoever shall neglect soe to shew his title by gift purchase Letter off Attorney or other Legall way shall afterward claime no perticular Right to any Land otherwise then a Commoner and that after the first of March next att a seasonable time the commoners or as many of them as may shall Indivor to enquire of the Bounds of the Lotts ther laid out.

And if the Bounds cannot be found they shall measure out soe much Land as appeare the Right of every man according to grawnt and bound markes to be made and all the rest of the Land on the Necke to be accounted as Common to all the Commoners.

The result of this investigation showed that in April, 1670, the following eight families, by grants from Salem, owned a total of thirty-seven acres on the Neck:

To John Goyle	8 acker
To Will Kenner and Nicholas Lison	5 acker
To John Wakfelld	4 acker
To John and Samuell Gatchell	6 acker
To the widow blencher	6 acker
To Rafe Woren	2 acker
To George Chiine	3 acker
To Thomas James	3 acker

John Goyle is the same as John Coitt, the widow blencher as Widow Blanchard, and Rafe Woren as Ralph Warren.

Therefore the remaining ungranted part of the Neck

was "accounted as common to all the commoners." In this connection, by commoners was meant those inhabitants who were first to settle in the town as against the non-commoners who drifted in afterwards and who also probably were of limited means.

It was not without the law for the town to make either sales or leases of this common land. Hence, in 1636, "John Peach fisherman and Nicholas Marriott, having fenced about five acres of ground on Marble Neck" would appear to be the first lessees, yet the town did not approve of this rental and claimed it to be "contrarii to ye orders of ye towne."

In 1671, Robert Bartlot acquired property in the Neck, the same that was formerly owned by John Wakefield through his grant from Salem: "it is agreed that mr John Deverex and John Gachell senior are impowred toe laie out toe Robert Bartlot four ackers of land upon the neck wher it will be convenient for him and not preivditiaall toe the own or toe any portickular mans propriate—this was in leu of 4 ackers granted toe on[e] Wakfeild and bought by Robert Bartlet."

During this period the Neck was used practically entirely for pasturage with shore areas on the harbor-side fenced off into fish yards where the natives could work on their fish-flakes and gardens. "It was agred on that the fence for a lane to the neck showed forth with bee putt out to bee made," and "That the Neck shall be ffenced there are six men chosen" to oversee this work.

A herdsman received twelve pence for each milk cow for the summer season "excepting the Neck people," whence it appears the pasturage was free on the Neck. The situation was different for those who did not belong to Marblehead.

The town records in 1680 state:

It is A Greed that any Inhabitants Beelongeing to this Towne That are properly Commoners accordinge to the Genrll : Courts order: That hath or doth Keepe any neate Catle or horse Kinde more then—There Stent hath ffree Liberty: and priviledge for to drive or Carry Them over to the neck: and there to Keepe them Gratis: allsoe: It is:

ordered That noe Inhabitants of this Towne: which are proper Commoners as Afore Sd: Shall take In or Sufer to bee takne in: or put over to the Affore Sd Neck: any horses or horse Kinde: or any neat Cattle: wich doth or shall Bee-longe to Any other towne or Townes them or they: shall bee liable for to . . . pay the fforffetture of Tenn Shillings Silver for every tyme: or tymes that any prson or prsons Soe found Takeing: of any Strange Cattle: or horses in to the A bove Said neck: and for any Such Cowes or neat Cattle wich are Soe found up one the neck by: those men that are Impowred by the Towne: for to take up Tresspassers: have full power for to drive All Such Cattle or horses to the pound: and whoe Soever oneth the Sd: Cattle or horses: shall pay to the Above Sd: Impounders: ffive Shillings in Silver a tyme for every beast Soe pounded: and as often as they shall bee found by them one the Said neck: and pounded by them.

By "stent" or stint, the word being uncommon today, is meant the limited number of cattle, according to kind allotted to each definite portion into which pasture or common land is divided, or to each person entitled to the right of common pasturage, and also the right of pasturage according to the fixed rate. The word "stent" was in very common use in Marblehead up to the nineteenth century.

Even back in 1660 the fishing industry had reached such proportions that each fisherman was obliged to stamp his mark on his outgoing shipment and anyone omitting "to have a brand or to marke his MACKRILL or neglect to sett it one his caske shall forfitt 20s for every caske sett to saile without his marke."

On the Neck fish were brought in to be spread out on the flakes or fences on which to dry them. Here they were culled and packed for shipment to foreign ports.

A letter from Azor Orne in 1782, and addressed to Major General Lincoln, gives a graphic résumé of the extent of the fishery up to the time of the Revolution:

Marblehead Oct 18 1782

My dear Sir:

Agreably to your request as stated in your letter of the 27 of Sept. I have endeavored to answer the questions therein stated as they respect the Cod fishery at Marblehead before the War.

1. The number of vessels were about 150.
 2. Their size from 30 to 70 tons.
 3. The worth on an average was £450.
 4. Number of men employed from 700-800 including boys.
 5. The sum annually required to keep each vessel in repair, pay insurance and raise a sufficient sum to replace the vessel when rendered unfit for service £100.
 6. The quantity of fish caught on an average 1000 quintels.
 7. Proportion of year employed: 8 months.
 8. The articles called Great General were Salt, Bait, candles Soap and Tallow charged against the whole stock of fish taken.
 9. The articles of Small General were wood, Cedar, Flour, and other small stores and were charged against the men and lads employed in the vessels.
 10. Average price of fish 15s 6d.
 11. It required 10 men to cure 10 vessels fish.
 12. The worth of the land on which flakes were built for 10 vessels £60.
 13. The worth of the buildings and flakes for 10 vessels was £600.
 14. Annual expense of repairs was 60£ for 10 vessels.
 15. The vessels in winter were employed in bringing grain etc. from the Southern Colonies, some to the West Indies, others to Spain and Portugal.
 16. Very few hired out.
- I am my dear General
Your obedient and obliged Humble Servant

A. Orne

With respect to the first house built on the Neck the *Marblehead Register*, April, 1830, goes so far as to think that the earliest house built in Marblehead stood here. The editor says: "to determine with accuracy the oldest house in town perhaps a cellar to be found on the Neck may designate the situation of the house in which John Gatchell resided who received a grant from Salem about the year 1636." It will be recalled that Mr. John Gatchell and Mr. Samuel Gatchell were of the eight persons granted six acres by Salem.

Mr. John Goyte or Goitt, who was likewise granted eight acres, sold these same to William Pitt of Marblehead. Mr. Pitt was one of the earliest of the town's

inhabitants and he disposed of this same property to Christopher Lattimer, his son-in-law, in 1659.

In 1663, Christopher Lattimer sold two of his eight acres to John Pedrick, "which said two acres is pt of the eight acres of land bought by Mr. Wilm Pitt of John Coyt." John Pedrick built a house and barn on this property and lived here, part of the deed reading: "Be it known that John Pedrick of Marblehead Neck . . . fisherman," etc. Mr. Pedrick later found more land necessary and leased adjoining property from the town thus: "June 8th Agreed with *John Pedrick* at the Neck to pay unto the Towne the sume of thirty shillings in silver for the use of the Towne Land where his flakes are and makes his fish on: for the yeares past: and five shillings for this present yeare 1677."

Mr. Latimer sold more of this property in 1672 to Andrew Tucker, who likewise built upon it. Furthermore, Mr. Tucker made leases from the town on additional property as follows:

Jeneworie 5th 1682/83

at a metting of the Select men with thos Chosen to Joyn with them the day and yeor abov written
agred with Andrew tucker for the Land that he hath built twoe houses upon at the neck neor his fish fenc with half an acker of Land to be Laied out to Saied tucker adioyning to Saied houses for which Land and his improvment of a por-sell of Land for his fish yard to this day he is to pay the town the sum of thre pounds in mony at or befor the tenth of Jun next or the Select men in behalf of the town — —

	his mork
(Sa)mll word Recorder	Andrew tucker
	^

this 24th of Julie 1683

(154) at a metting as on the other siede—the Select men with them Chosen to Joyn with them thay have Leased to Andrew tucker all that *Land* that he hath now inclosed for a fish fenc for on hundred year and a day the Land is boundid with a fenc of ston wall which Land Saied tucker is to Inioy for himself and his Sucksesers untill the term of on hundred yeors and a day be Expired he the Saied tucker or his sucksesers paieing the Select men or ther order the Sum of ten shilling a year during the Saied time and in

Caes of Refusall or non paiement by Saied tucker or his sucksesers upon the 25th of morch in the yer 1684 and soe yerlie then the Land is to return to the town agaien and for the true porformanc herof he hath his mark set his hand

his mark
Andrew tucker.
^

In 1678, Mr. Lattimer sold still another piece, containing four acres with a dwelling house, to John Pedrick's son for forty pounds sterling. In this latter deed the first two roads on the Neck are mentioned: "bounded northerly by ye highwaye that runs by ye water side next ye great Harbour" . . . "and a highway that runs cross ye neck westerly"; the assumption being that one road ran along the harbor side of the Neck while the other crossed the Neck from Harbor to ocean.

John Pedrick, the son, sold half an acre of his Neck property to John Searle for fifty pounds. This lot also contained a dwelling house and barn. Mr. Searle was the son-in-law of Mr. Pedrick, senior. He lived here until 1694, when he sold his place to John Turner, a merchant in Salem. The deed of sale in describing the lot states: "bot by me of my father in law John Pederick deced," . . . "and given by my Father Pedrick will and testament to my eldest son," and "lying next ye great Harbour" running northerly to within four feet of a wall on the lower side, "eastward by ye land of Andrew Tucker dece'd."

Likewise Mr. Searle felt the need of a little more property and was accommodated by the town in the following terms: "Sold John Searll a parsell of land upon the Neck bounded with Andrew Tucker upon the N E, John Pedricks fish fence upon the S W, the harbour upon the N W and the highway on the S E. The land is 5½ pole wide and six pole long for which land the said John Searll hath paid the sum of 20s which is full satufaction for said land."

An interesting if not particularly flattering sidelight on these families is to be had from the Essex County Quarterly Court Records of this time:

"Mary, the wife of Andrew Tucker, was fined for

abusing Leonard Bellringer." The "bill of cost of John Searle, constable of Marblehead Neck was brought in for one pound and two shillings."

"Rebecah Allen, aged about twenty eight years, testified that being at Andrew Tucker's house . . . another man said to Bellringer that Goodwife Tucker had broken his head. . . . Thos. Henloe, Goodman Pedrick's servant broke it and Tuckers wife and Bellringer forgave each other and became good friends."

"Thomas Henley testified that he was present during the fray and saw Meary, wife of Andrew Tucker, strike Belringer and deponent carried him out of doors. She came out and took him by the hair of his head and pulled him to the ground upon the stones that paved the yard."

"Ann Gilbert testified that . . . several men came ashore after sun down on a Sabbath day to get water at Andrew Tucker's pump and they came into the house asking for a cup of drink, which they had. Meanwhile the tide overflowed their boat and they were forced to stay all night."

"Complaint of John Searle, constable, living in Marblehead Neck, who upon being informed of this outrage could do no less than report so great disorder."

"Mary Searle aged about twenty years deposed that hearing the fray she ran out of her house and saw Mary Tucker pulling out Bellringer's hair and was about to put it in her pocket. Deponent told her that she was not acting like a Christian to pull a man's hair off, whereupon she flung the hair away."

"Andrew Tucker was presented for excessive drinking in his house in the night, making great disturbance, throwing fire brands, etc."

Others buying land on the Neck during this period, 1683, were Richard Weiss, who received a quarter of an acre for twenty shillings; Thomas Roads, who obtained a parcel of land, "where his new house now stands," for two pounds and eight shillings; and a confirmation of Salem's grant to the Messrs. Gatchell was recorded. Mr. Ingalls was one to lease land on the Neck. He negotiated a strip for two years for his flake yard and agreed to pay

the town one pound and four shillings for the same.

The Indian claims were now presented to the town and by the deed, still open to the public in Abbot Hall, it will be found that Captain Samuell Ward and John Devorix, acting as trustees for the townspeople, made a settlement with the Indians for "all ye s^d township of Marblehead viz as well ye great Neck . . ." for sixteen pounds. This was dated September 16, 1684.

The town continued to sell, grant and lease property as outlined until 1724, when it was decided to make several divisions of the Marblehead lands and have each division separately represented at the town meetings. On the Neck at this time there were about thirty land owners. They therefore appointed their representatives who were to look into the boundaries of their property, settle any general questions, such as regarding pasturage, fences, roads, fish yards, caretakers, the stinting of cattle, etc., or better to quote from the records of one of their meetings: "to choose a clerk, treasurer, hay wards and all other officers for the ensuing year . . . with powers for managing said general Field, preserving the herbage from creaturs having no right there, keep the fences in order and do whatever concerns the interest of the several proprietors."

The proprietors or land owners on the Neck, therefore, on December 4, 1724, set out first, to determine their respective claims. They saw fit in this question to subdivide the Neck into three parts called the first, second and third pastures. Then in each pasture the proprietors' land was measured in so many poles and acres, the number of cows allowed was specified and a description of the survey was made. The situation with respect to roads and a landing place was also considered.

The first meeting of the Neck Proprietors was held April 13, 1724, at Benjamin Stacey's house in Marblehead. Azor Gale, Jr., presided, Mr. Stacey was made clerk, John Waldron was chosen as "shall be ye person to draw the lotts," while the first committee for the proprietors was made up of Richard Skinner, Capt. Richard Trevett, John Waldron, Samuel Rusall and Richard

Reith. The lots on the Neck were given out according to names drawn from a hat. Joseph Burnap and Nathaniel Norden each received approximately seven pounds apiece for their "work in laying out a subdivision of ye Neck." John Stacey held his position of clerk until 1749. The meetings were all at his house. After this date Christopher Bubier took his place as clerk and the meetings henceforth were conducted at the Town House.

At the first meeting the duties are thus recorded:

- viz. 1. to choose a clerk for ye proprietors, to enter & record all votes and orders that from time to time shall be maide and passed in the said proprietors meeting
2. to agree upon and appoint aney other way or method of calling and sommoning meeting for the futture as shall Be most sutable and convenient to the proprietors
3. to subdivide thare commonage on ye Great Neck in manner & form following viz & that every proprietors name as written upon a peas of paper and so put under a Hatt & one man to be chosen to draw for ye whole of ye proprietors see cause beginning when ye proprietors shall think most convenient for the hole in generall

And as every mans name shall be drawed so their lotts shall be laid out to them proportionately until ye whole be divided and in all your doings herin you are to follow ye direction of ye law and so make return here of to me after ye meeting.

Azor Gale Jr

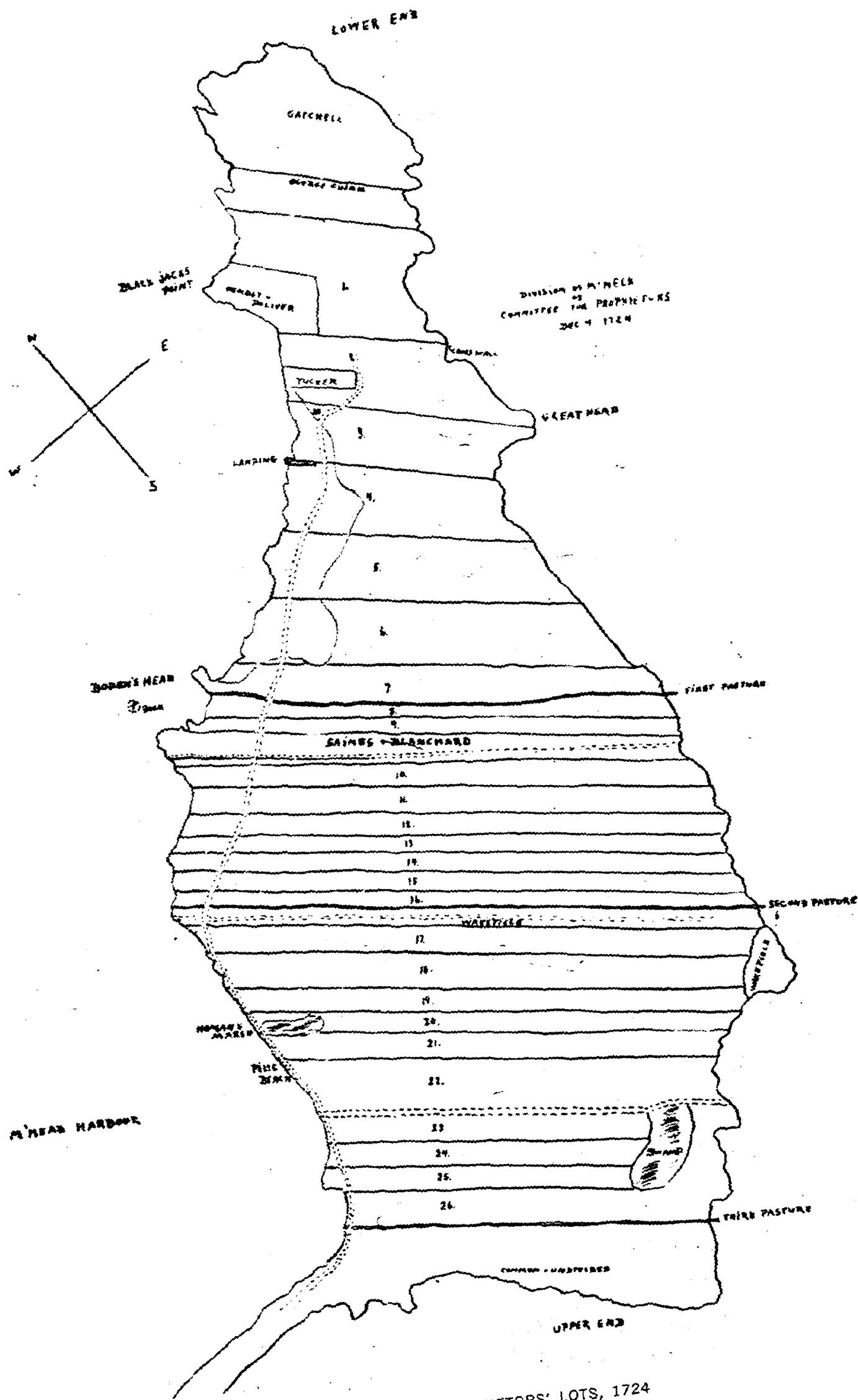
John Stacey Jr Clerk

Herewith is presented a copy of the original records with the names of the members of the two committees, one for deciding on the lots sold, the other for "ye laying out of ye old grants," along with a map which may help to identify these allocations. The map presents only a general survey of the property holdings and cannot be held as strictly accurate.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHART

The three heavy lines running across the Neck show the divisions of the first, second and third pastures.

The dotted lines show the roads, two pole ways across



the Neck, and the road running along the harbor side is that laid out in 1706 "by Homans Marsh, by the fish fences, down to Pedricks house."

The light line from Boden's Head to Tucker's Place represents Tucker's and Pedrick's fence or wall.

Gatchell, Chinn, Saimes and Blanchard and Wakefield had lots granted by Salem and were not given lot numbers by the Neck Proprietors. Wakefield was besides given the South East point of Land because part of his other lot was taken for a highway.

The black square in lot 3 is Pedrick's house. The numbers one to twenty-six represent the lots described as to ownership and bounds in the record of the committee for the proprietors. For instance, lot 1 was to Captain Richard Trevett and his son John, lot 6 was to Nathaniel Nordens, lot 19 to the successors of John Stacey, etc., etc.

Fish fences ran along the harbor side by the road all the way from Pitts Beach to Hendley and Doliver's. They were owned or leased by Homans, Stacey, Norden, Pedrick, Tucker and Ingersoll, and likewise are described in the same Records.

The following is a copy of "Records of proprietors of Marblehead Neck, Being the division of the same by the committee appointed therefore by the proprietrs therof—Dec. 4—1724":

Mhd Dec 4 - 1724

we the subscribers being chosen by ye proprietors of ye great Neck in Mhd to subdivide sd Neck to the proprietors therof.

Their being several old grants which were first laid out and settled & the whole in manner as followeth and ye lotts for ye proprietors of ye said subdivision drawn and a list thereof presented to us we laid out an old grant that was granted to *George Chinn* of three acres next to *John & Samuel Gatchell's* six acres that was granted to them by Salem at ye lowest end of ye said Neck which is in length fifty-two poles and nine poles & one quater at each end.

1 The first lott was to Capt *Richard Trevett* and his son *John* — three rights which is next ye harbor from Chinn to Hindley & Dolivers 22 poles & fourteen feet wide then up — by said Hindly & Doliver and round their land to their south corner which is a savin bush — by a rock. and

then over to ye sea to a stake and stones and next the sea fifty five poles to Chinn's Lott.

2. The second lott was to Mr. *Richard Skinner* next said Trevett's bounded Northwesterly with ye land. of said Trevitt, Hindly and Dolivers, then by the Fish fence to Tuckers land and round Tuckers and wife's land to the fish fence, then by said fish fence to a stake and stones that is at the head of Mrs John Homans fish fence and is one pole & thirteen ft and six inches short of Mr. Homans corner next Ingersols then crost the neck from said stake & stones to a heap of stones near the sea and then forty two poles by ye sea to Capt. Trevitts bounds. This lott being three rights to Skinner & one to his son William Neck deceased.

3 The third lott to Capt. Benjamin James one right bounded Northeasterly on sd Skinners lott & Westerly one pole and fourteen feet. and six inches on said Homans. fish fence and then down by Homan's fish fence within four poles of ye high water mark then two poles from said fence to a heap of stones and from said heap of stones over to the Southeast side of ye Neck to a heap of stones and then by ye sea nineteen poles and a half to Skinners bounds.

4 The fourth Lott was to Jeremiah Gatchell — two rights Bounded Northeasterly by Capt. James land (taking that strip of land between Ingersol's fence & Pedricks wall running down within about eight or ten feet of an old house and then crost to Ingersols fence) and from ye easterly corner of Pedrick's wall over to ye Southeast side of ye neck to a heap of stones and then thirty four poles and eight feet to Capt. James Bounds.

5— The fifth lott was to Col John Leggs successors— two rights bounded northeasterly on Jeremiah Gatchels and Northeasterly eighteen poles and five feet to an inward corner of ye wall, it being Pedricks wall and then turning by ye wall to ye outward corner of the wall and from said outward corner over said neck to the Southeasterly side to a heap of stones and from said stones twenty six poles and twelve feet to Gatchels bounds — the charge of laying out of these two leases of Col John Leggs

6— The sixth lot was to Col Nathaniel Norden, two rights and is at ye Northwest end on Tucker's or Pedrick's fence twelve poles and a half and at ye Southeast end next ye sea — twenty-four poles.

7— The seventh Lott was to Mr. Francis Bowden one right, Northwesterly on Tuckers or Pedricks wall six poles and six feet, and ye Southeast end next ye sea nine poles and

one foot. which is ye End of ye first pasture and the line run of

Range

Southwesterly corner of Tuckers or Pedricks wall to a high split rock near the sea with stones on it an so to the sea and other bounds made between.

8- The eight Lott to William Hinds one right bounded Northeasterly — Bounded on Tuckers or Pedricks wall and is six poles and one half at ye Northwest next ye harbor & at ye Southeasterly end it is five poles and nine feet and this is narrower in ye middle than at each end; which Lott is so because ye wall and Bowdens line is not directly straight which lot contains about three acres and one hundred poles.

9- The ninth lott was to Mr. Richard Ruth, one right, and is at the Northwest end five poles measured square said Lott runs down to ye harbor at ye Southwest end five poles and fifteen feet at ye sea.

Then was Thomas Saine's and widow Blanchar Grants laid out tenn poles wide next the harbor and running crost ye neck, and is at ye Southeast end eight poles wide, which contains nine acres and twenty poles it being two grants granted by Salem to Saines and Blanchor. The twenty is for a Highway thro the said Grant.

10- The tenth Lott William Peach's successors, two rights and is in width at the Northwest end running down to ye harbor seven poles — fourteen feet and a half only a small part of it butting on Col Norden's fish fence and at ye southeast end, nine poles and nine feet and a half next ye sea.

11- The eleventh Lott was to ye successors of Rev Mr. Cheever — two rights nine poles on ye back of ye fish fence next ye harbor, and at ye South east end next the sea ten poles and nine feet and a half.

12- The twelvth lott was to John Colley Esq. two rights next ye fish fence at ye Northwest end eight poles and three quarters, Southeast end tenn poles and one foot.

13- The Thirteenth lott was to John Reed or successors, on right next to the fish fence at ye Northwest end — four poles and a half, at the South end five poles and nine feet and three inches.

14- The fourteenth lott was to Mr. Eben^r Hawks, two rights, at the Northwest end ten poles part against the fish-fence and part running down to the Harbor and at the Southeast end twelve poles & four feet.

15- The fifteenth lott was to Mr. Samuel Russel, one right on ye back of ye fish fence at the North west end five

poles and at ye South east end six poles and one foot.

16— The Lott was to Mr. John Connant, one right on the Fish fence at the Northwest end five poles and at ye South east end six poles and one foot —

And this is the end of the

Second Pasture

and we run the line and made several bounds on the said line

And then was laid out by virtue of a grant by Salem, to John Wakefield four acres and is one hundred and sixty poles long and four poles wide at each end. which is according to said grant allowing eight poles thro said grant for a high way & in line for that eight poles for a way is allowed to him a notch of land giving to ye said grant on the back side of the said grant

17— Was to Mr. Robert Devereux, one right North westerly next the fish fence by the Harbor four poles and two feet and at the Sea four poles and two feet Southeasterly and —

18. Lott was to Elezier Ingalls successors two rights, Northwest and by the fish fence nine poles, and at the Southeast end nine poles wide.

19 — Lott was to John Stacey's successors one right at the Northwest end. at the fish fence five poles wide and five poles at the Southeast end. next the sea.

20 — Lott was Mr. John Waldrens, one right, at the sea. four poles wide and at Mr. Homan's wall one poles wide it being part of his lott & the other part is a peice of land that is lying on the North side of Homan's marsh. bounded. Northeasterly with the Stacey lott by the Fish fence round down to ye Harbor and Southerly by Homans fence and westerly by the harbor.

21 — Lott was Mr. John Edgeham's successors, one right next to Homans wall six poles and a half wide and at ye Southeast end. six poles and half—

22 — Lott was to Mr. Samuel Reed's successors two rights and Northwesterly next to Mr. John Homans wall. fifteen poles and one quarter and at the other end on a square. twelve poles and one half. one part butting on a pond or swamp. at ye spring the other part running down to the beach. But it is to be understood that there is a two pole between the said pond or swamp and said Lott from the way on the Southwest side of said Lott to the Spring with suitable accommodations round the spring, and there is a two

pole way left on the Southwesterly side of the said Reeds Lott [from] sd Pond to Mr. John Homan's wall.

23 - Lott was to Philips Tucker one right next the Swamp at the Southeast end seven poles and six feet wide and seven poles and six feet at Mr. Homans wall.

24 - Lott was to Mr. John Roads, one right, at ye North-east end seven poles and twelve feet and at the swamp seven poles and twelve feet — S. East.

25 - Lott was to Christopher Boobers successors one right eight poles and one half at the Southeast end and nine poles and one half next the harbor.

26. Lott. was to Mr. John Pedrick successors two rights, and for his lott is all ye upper end of ye neck above Boobers Lott excepting the land at the end of the long beach without the wall and the Island that lieth westerly of the pond against Tinker's Island. These two pieces were not measured at the first and not divided & therefore remain to all the proprietors of the said neck.

1 - And we do think it convenient that there is convenient landing place against Ingersolls. for all ye proprietors of the neck and we have left it there, that from the lower end of Mr. Gatchells lot between Pedricks land and Capt. James' lot down to low water mark to be left for that use.

2 - And also we think it convenient that there be a highway from ye upper end of said neck to ye lower end of the said Neck where the propritors of ye said Neck see *meet* and to be two poles wide.

3- and further for our satisfaction we measured Pedricks & Tuckers. land as it is now fenced and we find it to contain nine acres and sixty three poles.

4- And also ye marsh that Mr. Homan hath within fence we allowed to be in full of Ralph Warren Grants of two acres.

And in the above said division we had special regard to quantity & quality according to former vote.

Joseph- Burnap- Sur^r and Richard Trevett, John Waldron, Ebenezer Hawks — Committee for laying ye lots afores^d Richard Trevett. John Waldron, Rich^d Ruth, Committee for ye laying out ye old grants.

Joshua Coombs, described as a shoreman and residing on the Neck, was the first individual to start acquiring property in an extensive way. This was about the years 1730-1760. He bought from Benjamin Hendley for £20.0.0, half an acre, in 1735. The committee for the

Neck Proprietors sold him half an acre for £25.0.0. in 1749. Three years later Mr. Coombs purchased a quarter of an acre from Ebenezer Stacey for £5.0.0. and "near ye said Joshua's dwelling house." In 1756 he bought from Ebenezer Hawks part of William Hands (Hines) old lot No. 8 and part of No. 9, having the year earlier, 1755, acquired lot No. 16, John Conant's, for £18.3.5. In 1757 Ebenezer Hawks sold him his own lot No. 14, described as ten acres, for £40.0.0. He bought an acre of land from Philip Tucker for £40.0.0. and finally in 1759 he acquired from Samuel Stacey half an acre next to his place for £8.0.0.

Humphrey Devereux, identified as a physician, purchased three separate pieces of property. In 1746, he bought from the family of John Neal four acres, being half of lot 5, formerly laid out to Col. John Legg, and half the cows' commonage which Mr. Neal had acquired from Stephen Minot in 1723. This amounted to about four acres and was had at twenty pounds. In 1748, he took over from Philip Tucker lot 23 for thirty pounds. Finally, in 1757, Humphrey Devereux took over lot 11 from Ebenezer Hawks for forty pounds. This consisted of about nine acres, being the same formerly owned by Samuel Cheever.

Other purchases and sales taking place at this period on the Neck may be briefly mentioned.

In 1734, it is interesting to observe in a deed describing lot 3, the estate of Benjamin James, that it is "next ye landing place at Pedricks Cove," disclosing that Pedrick's house was probably not far distant from the landing as shown on the map of the division of the Neck for the Proprietors.

In 1741, John Waldron's lot No. 20 was sold "to discharge his debts" to Joseph Swett for fifty shillings.

In 1747, John Tasker bought two and one-half acres from Thomas Bartlett for 180 pounds. Two years later he bought Doliver's place for 80 pounds.

In 1751, the Committee for the Neck Proprietors sold to Jacob Fowles one and three quarters acres for 40 pounds.

In 1752, Steven Vickery acquired John and his wife Abigail Searle's place.

In 1754, Benjamin Handley bought Tucker's old place for 16 pounds and described, "formerly in the occupation of Andrew Tucker and something more than an acre." Interesting in that it substantiates the proof that he lived here.

In 1756, Robert Hooper acquired lot 19 from the Neck Proprietors for 14 pounds.

Finally, in 1763, John Roads and his wife Miriam sold their lot 24 for 60 pounds to Jeremiah Lee, the same piece described as containing two acres and bounded on the southwest by "a highway leading across the Neck as the wall now stands."

It is not uncommon to find the committee for the Neck Proprietors frequently describe their own unsold lands, such as: "bounded north east on land of ye Neck proprietors" instead of next the land of so and so, or, "on the way or common land by ye wall," etc.

Further, the authority to handle real estate business is in nearly every instance emphasized in the deeds thus: "said proprietors are the only sole and lawfull owners of the said granted and bargained premises and have good rights and lawfull authority to grant, convey and confirm," etc.

During most of this period the committee for these sales was made up of Nathaniel Bowen, Moses Callay, Ebenezer Stacey, Joseph Blaney, Robert Paramore. An earlier committee for the transactions of the Neck Proprietors' property consisted of Joseph Burnap, Richard Trevett, John Waldron, Ebenezer Hawks, Richard Reith.

From Mr. Orne's letter previously quoted we have had an opportunity to see what an important fishing port Marblehead became. Vessels arrived here from the Banks, and, sometimes after the fish were cured, departed for various foreign shores. After Benjamin Boden's death, his estate on the Neck was advertised for sale in the *Salem Gazette* in 1785. Although he did not have as large a fishing interest as some of the other inhabitants, this advertisement stated: "To be sold . . . also a fish fence

at the Great Neck so called sufficient to dry near 1000 quintels of fish, with a warehouse thereon . . .”

Small pox had made serious inroads in this vicinity since 1725 and lasted half a century before its elimination. Vessels coming home from foreign ports were compelled to air their cargoes on one of the islands before bringing them to port. To isolate patients in town the inhabitants sought the purchase of Cat Island from Jonathan Glover. This measure failed, however, so in April, 1777, the town “voted the selectmen be desired to remove all our sick and infected with small pox over to the Neck there to be taken care of,” and in June, 1799, the townsmen discussed “whether to remove the Watch House which is now standing opposite to Col. John Glovers dwelling house, upon some part of the Great Neck and make such additions to the said building as they may think necessary for the convenience and reception of any sick persons as may be brought from sea. . . .” However, it cannot be definitely ascertained that any sick on this account were ever brought here.

Pestilence and the war had left great hardship and poverty. So, in 1780, at a town meeting it was voted “that a committee be appointed to form an estimate of the value of the houses, stores, fish and other fences, which have been necessarily used as fuel by the inhabitants of the town since the commencement of the present war.”

The Rev. William Bentley of Salem, in 1794, visited the Neck and made these notations in his diary:

Mr. Andrews who has the best house on the Neck, is wealthy, possesses 27 acres, part of which lays in the rights of the common land, tho’ each man knows his special property. There are now three dwelling houses upon the Neck, besides their barns & several fish houses. It is said that there were formerly 12 houses, but by the cellars they are judged to have been small & not to be compared to these now standing. Mr. Andrews’ house was built before the war, is painted and in good repair with out houses and excellent stone walls. The other houses are the common farm houses two stories with pitched roofs.

On April 9, 1808, the Neck Proprietors decided to “take into consideration the state of the land at the west-

erly end of said Neck which was left in common and undivided for the use of all the proprietors thereof when said Neck was originally laid out into lotts." Nothing resulted until 1812, when the same vote was passed as well as "the expediency of laying out a road and cartway for passing and repassing from the westerly to the easterly part of said Neck."

Mr. Ephraim Brown, who was one of the Neck Proprietors himself, had been buying in much of the Neck property. In 1834, he purchased from Sarah Doliber for \$300, Lot 12, formerly John Calley's, also another lot "on part of which stood an old dwelling house owned and occupied by Richard Coombs dec'd," bounded south-westerly on the property formerly of John Pedrick. The next year he bought Bakers Island, excepting the light-house property, for \$1,800. From David Blanchard he received half of Lot 26 for \$225, and from Andrew Sturtevant he bought half another lot. This same year, 1835, he paid John Sparhawk, administrator of estate of Jesse Blanchard, \$6,475. For this larger sum Ephraim Brown received "a dwelling house, two barns, fish house and fish flakes and other buildings" from Joseph Doliber and Elias Hendley, 3 or 4 acres, the property of Collyer, Andrews & Blanchard, Henry Reas, Boden, "Coombs, Rhodes and others," and "also a lot of land on which formerly stood the Salt Works conveyed by Evans." This was the lot bought, in 1804, by Ebenezer Giles Evans for \$1,050, from Samuel Sewall, and before this from Nicholas Edgecomb to Robert Hooper (1751). In 1810, Elizabeth Cole purchased it for \$940, "with all the buildings and appurtenances therof lately used and improved for salt works." Mr. Ephraim Brown furthermore by this same deed acquired most of Lots 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 16. The town of Marblehead conveyed him Lots 2, 5, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 23. As a result of these acquisitions the Neck Proprietors held no more meetings and their functions ceased. It is recorded, in 1839, that: "Mr. Ephraim Brown having by purchase become the proprietor or owner of nearly all the several rights or leases on the Great Neck, it is no longer necessary to hold meeting of said proprietors."

In the year 1831 the town of Marblehead gave consideration to the construction of a lighthouse. On August 30th, a petition was brought by Eleazer P. Graves and others to the selectmen:

to call a meeting to take into consideration the subject of having a lighthouse erected by the Government of the United States on the point of Neck at the entrance of the harbour and to see if the town then assembled will petition Congress for that purpose.

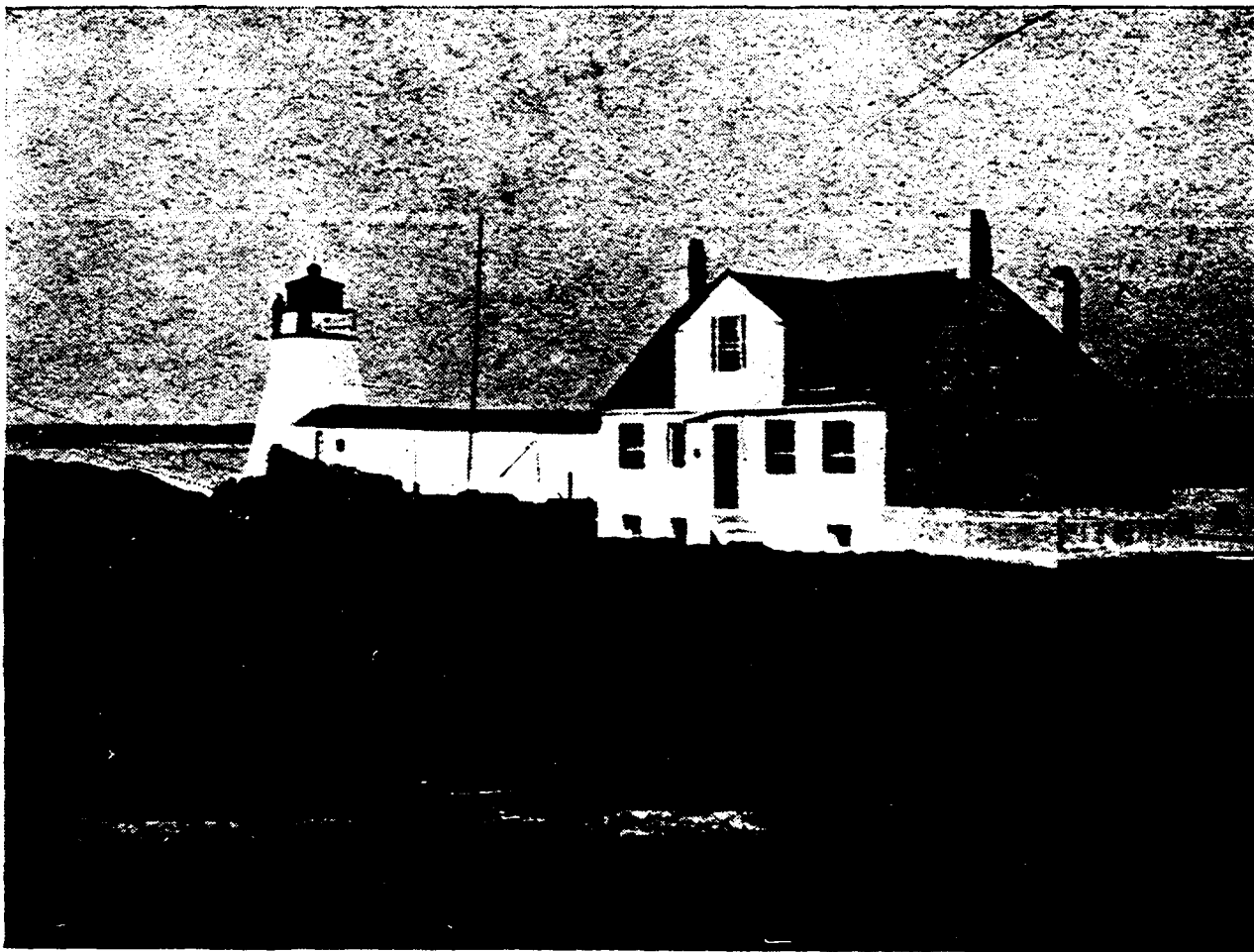
Considerable discussion ensued, not only over the merits of such an undertaking, but also concerning its position. The agent for the Government was Mr. Henshaw, the Collector of Port at Boston. His advice was to locate the lighthouse elsewhere than on the Neck. The local committee, however, resolved:

that it is not our intention to enter into the strife of bargaining for said point of Neck, our only object is to have the best spot selected; we have a good harbour and we wish to make it easy of access to the care worn and weather beaten mariner.

In 1835, definite plans were under way. On May 21st it was voted that the following resolve be accepted, viz.: "that the lighthouse be commenced immediately." A committee of five chosen to carry out this resolve consisted of John Ingalls, Edmund Bray, Richard Caswell, Francis Smith, Peter Dixey, Jr. The premises for the lighthouse were conveyed by Joseph W. Green and Ephraim Brown to the United States on July 10, 1835, and for the sum of \$375.00. Work was started immediately and was completed within the year.

There is an old foundation at the end of the beach butting on the United States property. Maybe one of Marblehead's first houses stood there. An extract of the deed for this property in measuring the land states: "on the harbor side of said Neck, to a cove, including in said cove to the east of said line, a landing for boats and vessels."

The erection of the lighthouse made so favorable an impression upon the people of Marblehead, that with a



THE LIGHTHOUSE OF 1835

Courtesy of Miss Mary B. Bailey



THE EASTERN YACHT CLUB, 1880

Essex Institute Collections

view to extending the facilities of the port appeals were subsequently made for breakwaters in the harbor. A survey, estimate and petition was sent to Congress in 1838 for such construction from either Jack's Point or Point of Neck "into the harbour, to break the force of the sea in North Easterly and Easterly winds and make a safe anchorage for vessels in winter."

In 1840 the town appealed to Mr. Saltonstall of the House of Representatives and in 1845 another appeal was made to the General Court. No funds were ever forthcoming for this enterprise, there was no unanimity of feeling, and it was concluded:

First, a pier on the ballast from the Neck towards Skinners Head might be constructed to afford a shelter for a few fishing vessels and a refuge for a few light coasters or small vessels in case of a sudden blow . . . to make this harbor, not less than thirty thousand dollars would be required to build a pier on the ballast . . . the committee think the disadvantages more than counter balance the advantages of a pier on the ballast.

Mr. Ephraim Brown, who, we have learnt, had acquired nearly the entire Neck, petitioned the General Court, in 1855, for authority "to make and maintain a wharf . . . on the premises of your petitioner, said wharf to extend one hundred and fifty feet from lands of your petitioner."

It is interesting to observe the procedure then, compared to present times. The petition was ordered to be published twice in *The People's Advocate*, Marblehead, and in the *Salem Register*, following which an Act of the Legislature, with the Governor's approval, furnished the necessary authority, as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

Ephraim Brown is hereby authorized to build and maintain a wharf from his own land adjoining the southeast side of the harbor of Marblehead, and to extend the same one hundred and fifty feet from high-water mark; and he shall have the right to lay vessels at the end and sides of said wharf, and to receive wharfage and dockage therefor: *pro-*

vided, this grant shall not interfere with the legal rights of any persons whatever. Approved by the Governor, April 18, 1855.

This same pier exists today in front of what is now called the Samoset House, and both are the property of the Eastern Yacht Club.

This Samoset House is one of the earliest dwellings on the Neck still in use. It was the original property of John Pedrick, whose will, probated October 7, 1686, bequeathed it to one of his sons-in-law, John Stasey. The inventory of this will included two boats, two mooring anchors, and "one black negro servant." In 1776, Stasey's title was sold to John Andrews for seventeen pounds. John Andrews developed and improved his farm and homestead and lived here for over thirty years. In 1805 he sold out to Jesse Blanchard "the dwelling house, barn, fish houses and all other buildings" for \$1,349.96. This sale included three acres Andrews purchased for twenty-one pounds from Amos Dennis, whose wife was the daughter of Capt. Benjamin James, and two lots bought from Michael Coombs for thirty-seven pounds.

Upon the death of Jesse Blanchard, the administrators of his estate put the Neck farm up for auction. As may be seen from the auction announcement the farm had been "improved" considerably, for in 1835 it contained besides the two-story dwelling, two large barns, an ice house and other buildings. Thomas Dalton was the auctioneer. The property was bought by Green and Brown and marked an early acquisition by Ephraim Brown to his substantial Neck ownership in 1839.

The original description and advertisement of the property along with a photographic copy of the same, is thus presented:

Farm at Auction

Postponed on account of the weather

Will be sold by order of Court on Tuesday the 24th day of March at 11 oclock A. M.

That well known Farm, situated on Marblehead Neck, lately belonging to Jesse Blanchard, deceased known by the

FARM AT AUCTION.

~~is~~ **Postponed on account of the weather.**

Will be sold, by order of Court, on Tuesday, the 24th day of March, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

That well known FARM, situated on Marblehead Neck, lately belonging to JESSE BLANCHARD, deceased, known by the name of the NECK FARM, consisting of a two-story Dwelling-house, two large Barns, an Ice-house, and other out-buildings, a Warehouse and Fish-tence, together with about one hundred and thirty acres of Land, about forty of which are mowing and tillage, and a Ballast Beach of considerable value.

In point of local situation, this Farm is not surpassed by any in the State, commanding a view of the town and harbor of Marblehead, and a Bay prospect, equal, if not superior, to that of Nahant. To the sportsman and angler it presents the greatest facilities for the prosecution of their sports. In the summer season, perch and tautog are caught from the rocks in abundance; plovers and curlews abound in the pastures.

Persons disposed to obtain locations for summer residences, will find, in the Neck, capabilities equal to those of Nahant, with the additional conveniences of being nearer Marblehead and Salem, with the advantages of a soil susceptible of cultivation, large quantities of sea-manure being at hand at all seasons of the year. A Public House might be erected here, which would make the Neck a fashionable resort for people from all quarters, as soon as the beauty of its situation and its other attractions became more generally known.

Persons wishing to view the premises, and obtain further information, are desired to call on EPHRAIM BROWN or DAVID BLANCHARD, both of Marblehead, or

J. SPARHAWK, JR.

Marblehead, March 21, 1835. *Printed by J. Sparhawk & Co.*

name of the Neck Farm, consisting of a two story Dwelling-house, two large Barns, an Ice house, and other out buildings, a Warehouse and Fish-fence, together with about one hundred and thirty acres of Land, about forty of which are mowing and tillage and a Ballast Beach of considerable value.

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Persons wishing to view the premises, and obtain further information are desired to call on Ephraim Brown or David Blanchard both of Marblehead or

L. Sparhawk Jr. Adm'r

Marble head March 21 1835

The old homestead became the center of a very intensive produce and dairy farm and the crops were sufficiently bountiful to warrant Mr. Brown's owning several vessels. These were loaded at his stone pier and carried the produce mostly to New York. In 1837, Ephraim Brown purchased the schooner *Echo*, Thomas Trefry, master. Samuel Blackler was master the following year. In 1840, Mr. Brown owned the schooner *James* with John Green, Jr., master.

To realize the extent of farming on the Neck it will be interesting to quote from the extracts of a field meeting held by the Essex County Natural History Society in September, 1858. Mr. Ephraim Brown had tendered the use of the farm house and premises for the field meeting on Marblehead Neck:

The approach to the Neck is by a short beach of sand and rounded pebbles dividing a part of the harbor from the ocean, or else by taking boat or some such small craft and crossing to a convenient wharf on the premises of the farm of Ephraim Brown Jr Esq.

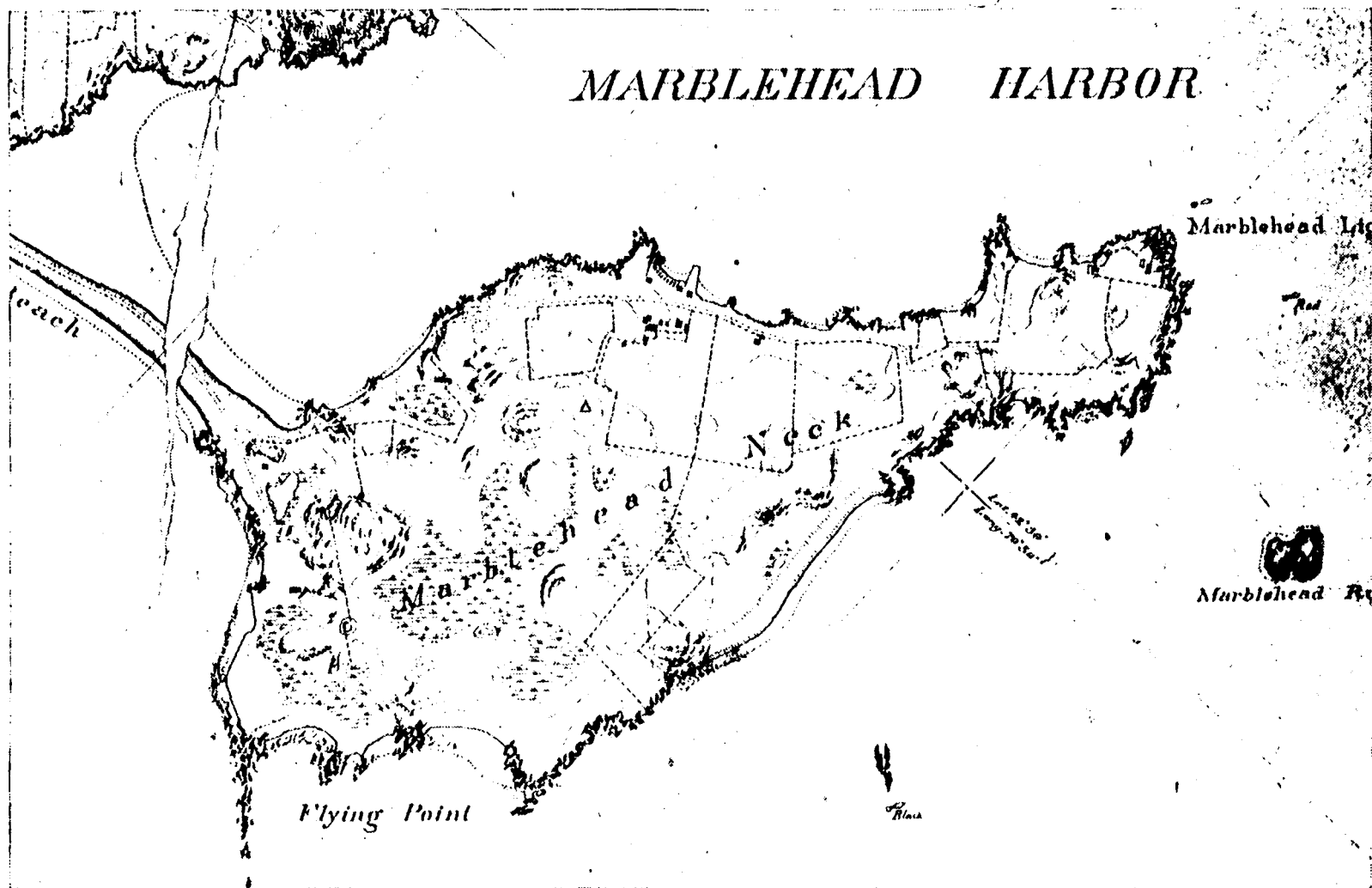
To some the plants which grew upon the salt sand were novel in their botanical experience and gave an interest to the stroll. To others the deliquescing Medusae offered attractions.

The place of rendezvous was the seedroom of the farm, offered us by the proprietor. Mr. Brown's farm indeed occupies a greater portion of the Neck, and its well tilled fields resembled large beds of a garden. The land under cultivation and tillage is about 240 acres. We found 25 acres under hoe culture, and the hay crop is annually about 100 tons. A field of onions quite free from rust and fly promised a harvest which might cause "tears of joy." These are the Danvers yellow onions, and the produce of this year will be about 1500 barrels. Besides this single root crop, there are 4000 marketable cabbages raised to the acre, besides carrots and squashes. The facilities for sea manure renders this farm of great practical value. Those of the party, who visited the premises, pronounced the buildings, stock and management of the farm of the very best character.

After the usual devotion to the contents of the baskets and libations from the spring of cold water the meeting was held, etc. . . ."

Ephraim Brown died in 1861. An inventory of his Neck Farm showed, besides oxen and other cattle, a herd of twelve milk cows.

Another homestead on the Neck still used as a dwelling is the old Manataug and later Atlantic House. In 1848, this was operated as a boarding house under the supervision of a Mr. Cary. In 1854, *The People's Advocate*, Marblehead, commenced running advertisements of the dwelling under the name of "Manataug House," open the year round, and for "points well known to the lovers of Tauntaug Fishing — The Neck lands are the favorite resort of the Plover and Curlew, and afford sport for Gunners during the season." Mr. Samuel Goodwin was then proprietor. In later years it became known as the Union House, under the supervision of Martin Ham, Jr.,



MARBLEHEAD NECK, FROM A TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY MADE IN 1849 - 50

Courtesy of Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

and, in 1874, Mr. S. H. Sawtell operated the hotel under the name of the Atlantic House.

To revert to the history of the lighthouse for a moment, it is interesting to observe from the *Marblehead Ledger*, dated November 14, 1860, that the second keeper of the Marblehead Light was Miss Jane C. Martin. The announcement follows:

Lighthouse Appointment. We learn from the Boston Journal that Miss Jane C. Martin has been appointed Keeper of light on the Neck, vice Ezekiel Darling, resigned. Miss Martin is a daughter of the late Capt. Ambrose Martin, who kept the Baker's Island light for a quarter of a century, and as assistant to her father, gained a thorough experience in light keeping.

Captain Darling was appointed when the Marble head light first went into operation, twenty years ago, and is now compelled to leave from the infirmities of age, being entirely blind. Capt. Darling did good service in the war of 1812, and was actively engaged in several of the privateers, for which Marblehead was noted during the war.

After the Civil War the shipping activities of Marblehead yielded to other industries and to the growth of Boston as a port. Where formerly we have seen that upwards of one hundred vessels were employed in the fishing trade here, the number was now reduced to less than a quarter of that number. A résumé from the town records of 1865 on this situation follows:

Mackerel & Cod Fisheries	
No. Vessels employed in the Mackerel & Cod Fisheries	23
Tonnage	1792
No of Barrels of Mackerel taken	420
Value of same	\$5180.
No of quintals of cod Fish taken	19514
Value of same	\$149,025.
Value of Cod Liver Oil Sold	\$9,979.
“ “ salt consumed in fisheries	\$15,390.
Amount of capital invested in the business	\$92,000.
Coastwise & Carrying Trade	
No of Vessels engaged in the trade	2
Amount of tonnage of said vessels	396
Value of same	\$18,000.
Amount rec'd for freight	\$7,320.

FIRST SUMMER RESIDENTS.

On the Neck, new developments were taking place. In 1867, several families came in the summer time from Nashua, N. H., bought and leased pieces of property from Gregory and Sparhawk on that shore of the Neck which now runs from where the Corinthian Yacht Club is situated southwest to the ferry landing and as described in the deeds "by a cove known by the name of Collyer's Cove." From Lowell came other colonists, so that a summer gathering here grew in all to several hundred in number. Only a few houses were built, most families living in tents and shanties.

The *Commercial Bulletin*, Boston, 1870, described the situation as follows:

The booths and cozy little shanties are in full bloom, dainty city damsels may be seen bereft of fashions folly and conducting themselves in a manner that would shock the sensitive nerves of a sojourner at Newport or Saratoga; and stiff and stern pater familias frees himself entirely from the meshes of his ledger and bank account, and roams about the Neck revelling in the freedom he encounters at every step.

Several extracts from the diary of Captain Philip B. Tucker, a Marblehead fisherman, are of interest with reference to the Neck at this period. He had returned from mackerel fishing on one occasion, and wrote in August, 1871: "Land them (mackerel) to camp Nasua on the neck, had to come on this side to get a dory and go back before i could land them."

November, 1871. Go over to the neck or Spar hawk cove and stop a ballas lighter from taking gravel from cove.

December, 1871. Go over to neck again and fire at the 5 gees wich had come back to fare. Stop at Mr. Goodwins the light house keeper and help him put some hay in his barn loft.

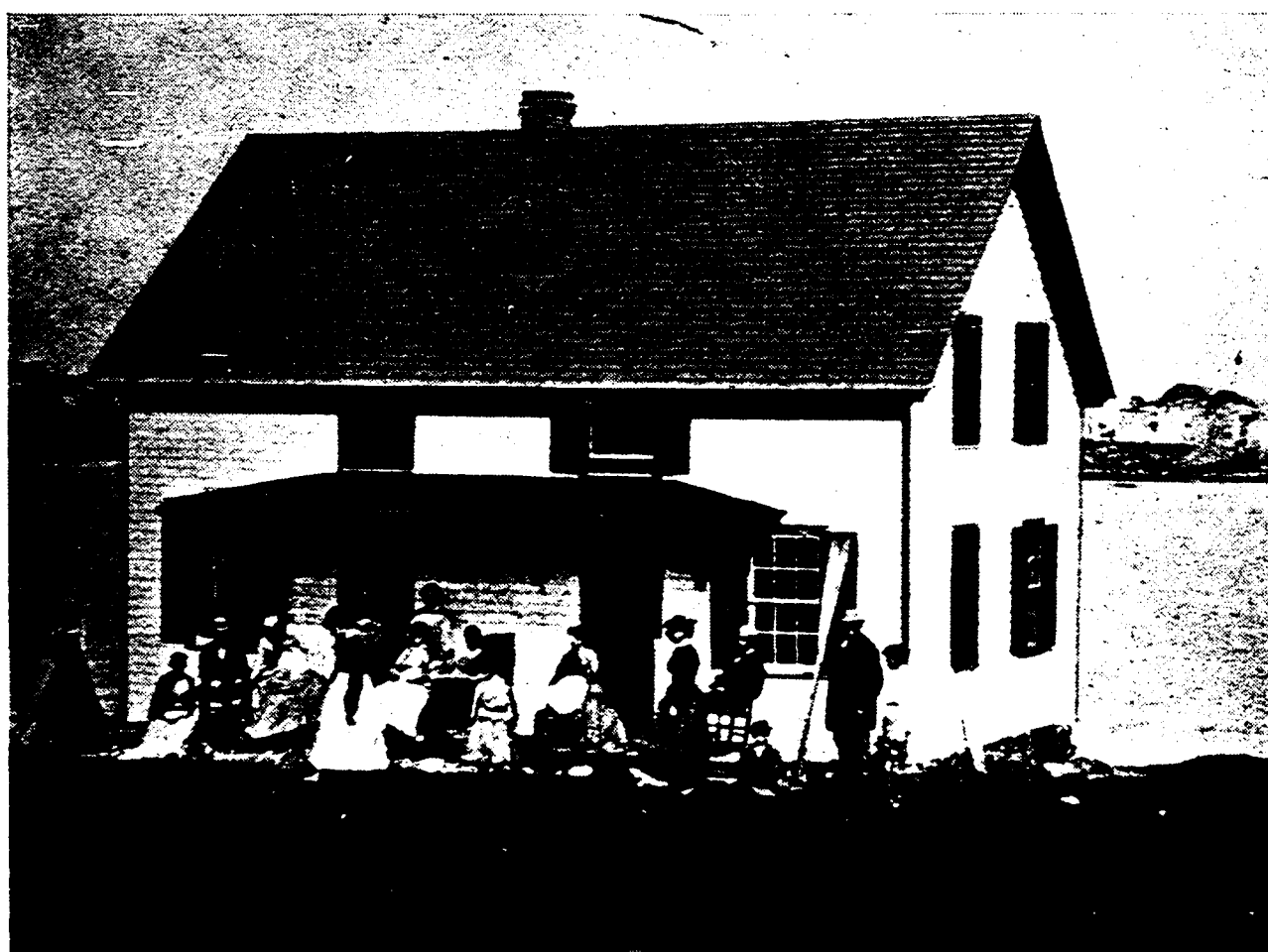
January 11, 1872. Go up to the town house and see the M'head Neck sold at auction for 255 thousand dollars about 5 oclock this afternoon, to a man from Boston, a good many men there biding for it. The Neck was sold from high water mark.

October 1, 1872. Mr John Goodwing, the light keeper resined and moves oft from the lighthouse on the point neck



THE OCEAN AND HARBOR ROADS, AND HOUSES BETWEEN,
LOOKING NORTHEAST TOWARDS THE LIGHTHOUSE, ABOUT 1877

Essex Institute Collections



NASHUA COLONY HOME OF JOHN AND MATTHEW BARR, 1867

Type of houses built by early summer residents

Courtesy of Mrs. John H. Barr

at 12 oclock today, and Mr. James Bailey takes charge at the same time Mr. Goodwing leaves.

On May 20th of this year he rows over to the Neck "to the auction sale of the small houses on the neck today—buy some chares, tables curtins and some other things for \$200."

The situation of free and easy leaseholds was not to last long, for, in 1872, the Trustees of the Brown estate offered nearly the entire Neck at auction. Four pieces of property were excepted: the lighthouse premises; the Sparhawk and Nashua lots; and 95/100 of a stone-walled acre owned by the heirs of Benjamin Stone on the south-west end of the Neck.

A transcript of the advertisements for this sale follows:

NOTICE TO CAPITALISTS INVESTORS AND
PURCHASERS
of
SEASIDE RESIDENCES.

The Executors of the estate of Ephraim Brown Esq., will offer for sale in one lot, at public auction at the Town Hall in Marblehead on Thursday the eleventh of January next at 4 o'clock P.M.

All that part of real estate situate in Marblehead and known as the

MARBLEHEAD GREAT NECK.

Embracing 230 acres of valuable land with over two miles of sea-coast with Farm House, Barn and Outbuildings, also a Boarding House known as the Neck Hotel, with Barns and Outbuildings, all on said premises.

The property is one of the most desirable in Massachusetts and can be sub-divided into many building lots, each having charming views of land and ocean, town and country.

There is a valuable ballast beach on the premises, known as Long Beach, and a large part of the land is now under cultivation, so that a large and increasing income can be immediately obtained by the purchaser.

A fine marginal road has been built by the Town of Marblehead, across the Neck, connecting the premises with the Mainland, and a projected railroad direct from Boston to Marblehead, will make the access to the property very con-

venient to the business men of Boston, and vicinity. There is already a great demand for lots for Summer residences, on this pleasant promontory.

A plan of the property will be shown and the conditions made known at the time of sale.

For further information address,

WILLIAM FABENS)
WM. HUMPHREYS.) EXECUTORS.

Marblehead Mass., Dec. 28, 1871.

The *Marblehead Messenger*, 1872, describes the sale as follows: "The first bid was invited and secured an offer of \$100,000. Bids followed slowly, \$5000., being added with each bid until \$125,000., was offered, when \$1000., additional was added at each bid. . . . The excitement increased rapidly, finding expression in applause, when \$200,000., was offered, again when \$250,000., was offered, and in a wild shout of pleasure and approbation when it was finally knocked off to Mr. Odiorne of Boston for \$255,000."

Title to the land was vested in the hands of a trust company called the Marblehead Great Neck Land Company, of which the following were shareholders: Benjamin W. Thayer, Junius B. Booth, Eben Sears, William Fabens, M. F. Stebbins, Robert D. Evans, Orlando Tompkins, E. A. Sothern, George F. Odiorne, John W. Beals, R. A. Ballou. Messrs. Fabens, Tompkins and Beals acted as trustees. The trustees laid out about two hundred and fifty lots, being from half an acre to two acres in area. They further built and gave name to what now stands as Ocean Avenue. The terms of this sale called for one thousand dollars to be paid at the close of the sale, twenty-five per cent of the remainder in thirty days, the balance on mortgages to be paid in six years with interest at seven per cent payable semi-annually. The *Salem Register* of 1872 stated that "the sale ensures the building of the projected railroad between Lynn and Marblehead." In 1878, the company's mortgage was foreclosed, and the property reverted to the trustees of the old Brown Estate.

Sales of property by the Marblehead Great Neck Land Company, together with those of the trustees of the Brown



SITE OF THE CORINTHIAN YACHT CLUB, COLLYER'S COVE, ABOUT 1867.
 Courtesy of Mrs. Florence S. Hussey, of Nashua, N. H.



THE NASHUA CAMP, ABOUT 1867.
 Courtesy of Mrs. Richard B. Hussey.

Estate brought the total number of houses on the Neck, in 1880, to sixty-eight. The earlier days of pasturing, fishing and farming were now rapidly giving way to the demands of summer transients, and we read of quite different features, such as "there are large numbers of huckleberries, blue berries and black berries in the pastures back of the Atlantic House. They are only waiting to be picked." The Atlantic House, so called, was in 1880 occupied by James C. Carter of New York, President of the Harvard Alumni Association and a Member of the Governor's Council.

The Eastern Yacht Club, which was organized in 1870, built its house from elaborate designs by the architects, Messrs. Snell and Gregerson of Boston. The Nashua and other colonists continued their sojourns and in process of time possessed a grocery store, meeting house, and news bulletin. Title to the meeting house was conveyed in 1879 for the sum of \$300 to "the Marblehead Neck Hall Association a corporation duly established and organized under the General Laws of said Commonwealth."

The bulletin, described as the "Manataug Pebbles," was edited by Chas. D. Howard and Chas. L. Wells. To one contributor, Mr. Thomas Pearson, then a Nashua judge, we are indebted for a fine description of early summer life on the Neck in 1880:

The commencement of the Nashua settlement on Marblehead Neck was in 1867. — Dean A. H. Dunlap here spent the summers of 1865-66, in a small building near the Atlantic House, the last year in company with John and Matthew Barr, Joseph and George McQuestion, and myself. The shanties were owned by Mr. Ham, who had leased the "Farm" from the "Brown Heirs." — In the spring of 1867, having been informed that Mr. John H. Gregory, of Marblehead, owned a small lot of land which he would sell, I purchased it, and at once divided it among my neighbors at Nashua N. H. Opened a street, called Nashua St., from the road leading to the Lighthouse, to the bay, twenty feet wide, and made six lots: A. H. Dunlap one; John Blunt, one; John and Matthew Barr, one; Joseph and George McQuestion, one; Alvah Kimball, Mark A. Adams, F. F. Kimball and Albert F. Adams, one; and I retaining the other sixth.

Dunlap, Blunt, McQuestion and myself, framed some small buildings at Nashua brought them down the last of June, and put them up, with four small barns. The first one was the one erected by me, and now owned by Mrs. T. W. H. Hussey. We went to Nashua after our families, on the 4th day of July, 1867. There was not a single building from the Lighthouse to the "Farm House," occupied by Mr. Ham. We then had to open three gates before we could get at our houses from the "Neck" and then it was through much fault-finding we could pass at all. There was no road from Marblehead proper to the Neck, except alongside the sea wall, and often the tide was up in the road we had to use. Since then the town has built a good, substantial highway.

The next year, 1868, I leased of Mr. Sparhawk his land adjoining the Gregory lot for a term of five years, and sublet it to Nashua citizens, who at once erected some buildings where they now remain.

My first recollection of any "Divine Service" held here was of 1866, when we were living in Mr. Ham's buildings and some tents near the Atlantic House. Further on toward the Lighthouse were quite a number of tents occupied by families from Lowell and Lawrence. It was very near the middle of July when we were informed that a Congregational minister had come to "The Neck" with his family and was "tenting out." He was from Central New York, and I have forgotten his name. The Deacon and I called with a request that he would hold a religious meeting on the next Sunday, if we could find a suitable tent.— He readily consented. A large "boarding-house tent" was obtained, and a personal notification was given to all the residents. On Sunday about fifty persons came together, each bringing his or her seat, and were amply paid by a very well-written, earnest, Christian sermon. I "passed the hat" at the close of the service, and collected three dollars and eight cents. The next year, in 1867, when we built our first houses, we went to Marblehead to meeting.

In the summer of 1868, we had preaching from the piazza of the house built by Deacon Alvah Kimball and Mark A. Adams, by Rev. Mr. Allen of the Stone Church, in Marblehead. Since that time, until the building of the Hall in 1876, meetings were held at different places, among others at Mr. Well's, Mrs. Kimball's, Col. Brodhead's, Mr. Barr's, etc. by clergymen stopping with us. The divine service on Sunday, and the subsequent erection of a hall for religious services, has, from the beginning of the Nashua settlement,



THE ATLANTIC HOUSE IN THE 1860's.

contributed largely to warding off the spirit of Sunday desecration and lawlessness, which was too often indulged in on that day, and tending toward a more quiet Christian observance of it by the temporary dwellers by the sea.

It was no uncommon sight on Sunday evening, in 1869, to count between fifty and seventy-five dories on the Nashua shore.— Those were the most enjoyable days for “rest and fun” which the settlement has ever known. White vest and neck ties, silk hats and kid gloves, trailing dresses, Valenciennes laces, button gloves, and high heeled shoes, banged hair (except what the wind banged), were laid aside and tried to be forgotten in the universal desire to be happy and make everybody else happy on the whole “Neck” — a sigh for the good old times!

What is to be the future of “the Neck” time only can tell. It was an experiment on the part of the original proprietors, and it has thus far proved a complete success. This year has added much wealth, and one fine noble structure — the Club House.— Marblehead Town can well afford to cherish and protect this growing portion of her “ancient domains.”

Thos. Pearson.

The following year, 1881, visitors from the Essex County Natural History Society came again, and after crossing the harbor “by the steam ferry, “Escort,” Captain E. A. Pitman, by the kindness of Mr. Frank R. Kimball, a member of the Field Meeting Committee, his new house was placed at the disposal of the institute for the lunch.” After a meeting in the hall: “We notice today a great change; a pleasant and attractive village by the sea has sprung up, as it were in a day, with its many beautiful cottages.” Also “a hall has been erected by the Marblehead Neck association for religious services on Sundays and for social gatherings on other days. A post office has been established.”

Many of us who are residents or visitors at the Neck little realize what a long independent career it has had. Up to this time, no attempt has been made to collate from the original records the facts which have been summarized in this essay. It is perhaps not too much to hope that a student may some time set himself to the task of writing a comprehensive and detailed history of the Neck.

