

MARBLEHEAD in 1649

An excerpt from History of Salem

By Sidney Perley

From the earliest settlement of Marblehead, that territory and the people who lived there seem to have been in some degree and manner independent of Salem. The colonial tax was sometimes assessed upon the residents of that part of Salem as though Marblehead was a town by itself.

At a general town meeting in Salem, March 12, 1648-9, it was "ordered that Marble Head, with the allowance of the general court, shall be a town, and the bounds to be the utmost extent of the land which was Mr. Humphrey's farm and sold to Marble Head, and so all the neck to the sea, reserving the disposing of the ferry and appointing of the ferry man to Salem."¹

¹Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, volume V, page 270.

May 2, 1649, the general court, "Upon the petition of the inhabitants of Marble Head, for them to be a town of themselves; Salem having granted them to be a town of themselves, and appointed them the bounds of their towne, which the Court doth grant."

Francis Johnson, who transcribed the earliest records of the town of Marblehead, stated, before 1674, that when he copied them the old book was not whole, several leaves having been torn out.¹ The existing records give scanty information of the doings of the town and of the people who then constituted it.

The first board of seven men, or selectmen, consisted of Moses Maverick, Samuel Doliber, Francis Johnson, Nicholas Merritt, John Peach, sr., John Deverox, and John Bartoll. Francis, Simison was the first constable, and lived there until 1666 when he removed to Rhode Island, having become a Quaker. He was born about 1610, and had a sister who was twice married.

Felt says that when Marblehead became a town it contained forty-four families. A list of the grantees of the common lands in Marblehead probably gives a fair representation of the freeholders at that time. The following names are given: James Smith, Richard Rowland, Samuel Doliber, John Gatchell, Edmund Nicholson, William Barber, David Thomas John Legg, Peter Pittford, Erasmus James, Thomas Bowing, John Stacy, George Chin, John Northey, Nicholas Merritt, Thomas Pitman, Timothy Allen, Thomas Lane, Arthur Sanden, Isaac Allerton, Moses Maverick, William Walton, John Lion, Henry Stacy, William Chichester, Samuel Carwithen, David Carwithen, Thomas Gray, Richard Norman, John Peach, jr., Richard Curtice, John Hart, William Charles, John Deverox, Abraham Whiteare, John Peach, sr., John Bartoll, Joseph Doliber, Robert Knight, John Bennet, Francis Johnson, Walsingham Chilson, John Norman and John Goyt.

Robert Knight moved from Salem to Marblehead, where he lived from 1644 to 1653. He then removed to Manchester. He had a daughter Marie. Mary Hill lived in Marblehead, 1643-1645. Timothy Allen lived there from 1645 to 1654²; and removed to Lynn before 1660. George Pollard died in Marblehead in 1646. In his will, he mentioned no relatives.³ Henry Pease lived there from 1646 to 1653; and had wife Gertrude in 1651. Mathew Gillett (Jellett) was a boy servant of George Williams in Salem in 1641; and lived in Marblehead in 1646. Henry Trevett lived in Marblehead from 1646 to 1654. He was born about 1623; and had a wife in 1664. George Tucker was of Marblehead in 1647, and removed to the settlement at Gloucester about 1650.

The map of Marblehead as it was when the town was set off from Salem has been made from the records of grants and conveyances, and is as nearly correct and complete as it can be made. The following is a list of the owners of the tracts of land which are numbered. Those portions of the town which are not numbered constituted the common and undivided land, being very ledgy and rough and unsuitable for planting or other improvement.

²Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, volume I, page 91.

³Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, volume I, page 106.

1. Coy- Pond Land. This tract of land is the fifty-acre game preserve of Emanuel Downing, and has ever since been known as the Coy Pond land.¹ This was conveyed by John Humphrey to Mr. Downing Sept. 6, 1638², and the latter died possessed of it about 1657. This was the northwestern end of the grant of five hundred acres made by the town of Salem to John Humphrey May 2, 1636. Mr. Downing granted it to his grandson, Solomon Stoddard of Boston, and he conveyed it to Moses Maverick and Richard Rowland, both of Marblehead, May 1, 1667.³ This tract was later claimed by Salem, and is still a part of it.
¹See chapter two of this volume.
²Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 1.
³See The Essex Antiquarian, volume XIII, page 132; and Historical Collections of the Essex Institute, volume 46, page 1.
2. The Plain Farm. This tract of four hundred and fifty acres of land was the balance of the grant of five hundred acres of land made by the town of Salem to John Humphrey May 2, 1636, after his sale of fifty acres to Emanuel Downing, Sept. 6, 1638. Mr. Humphrey leased both this and the Pond farm to Zacheus Gould for ten years from Sept. 29, 1640. Sept. 6, 1642, in the Boston court, Mrs. Lydia Banks recovered a judgment of one hundred pounds, and probably levied an execution upon the land. Sept. 24, 1645, she conveyed it to Moses Maverick, David Corwithen, Arthur Sandin, William Charles, John Peach, the elder, and "others the inhabitants of Marblehead, all that farm called ye Playnes farme," etc.⁴ It was subsequently divided into fourteen or more parts. Mr. Humphrey had a house on this land, which had been built by Nathaniel Pickman in 1639, and kept servants there; and when he went to England, in the autumn of 1641, he left his son-in-law, Adam Oatly, at the house, which the latter finished. As agent for Mr. Humphrey, Oatly sold the house and land to John Friend of Salem; but this did not stand against the execution of Mrs. Banks, apparently.
⁴Essex Registry of Deeds, book, leaf 29.
3. Hugh Peter Grant. This tract of land, containing three hundred and fifty acres, was granted by the town of Salem to Hugh Peter about 1636; and he conveyed it, by his agent, to John Devereaux of Marblehead, fisherman, July 1, 1659. Mr. Devereaux built a house upon the lot, on or near the site of the Devereaux residence which is now standing, and died possessed of the estate in the spring of 1695. Mr. Peter died as a regicide, and his only daughter and heiress, Mrs. Elizabeth Barker of London, England, claimed the title to the farm sometime after the decease of Mr. Devereaux. She released her interest therein to his son Robert Devereaux June 29, 1704.
4. John Ruck owned this ten-acre lot about the time that Marblehead became a town, and conveyed it to Richard Rowland before 1672.
5. This lot consisted of three ten-acre lots, which were owned very early by Moses Maverick; and he conveyed it to Richard Rowland Aug. 25, 1672. In this lot are the famous dungeons or kettle holes made by the glaciers.
6. Thomas Oliver, a calander, owned this ten-acre lot early, and conveyed it to John Bradstreet of Salem in or before 1658. The ancient Indian circular palisaded fort was located at the extreme southerly end of this lot.⁵
⁵See volume I, pages 27 and 28.
7. James Underwood, a baker, owned this ten-acre lot very early, and conveyed it to John Gatchell, a planter, before 1651.
8. Abraham Williams owned this lot of ten acres very early, and conveyed it to John Gatchell in or before 1651.
9. Richard Temple owned this lot of about thirty acres of land, and conveyed it to Moses Maverick in or before 1650.
10. Richard Hollingworth owned this lot when Marblehead became a town, and he died possessed of it in 1654.
11. William Dixey conveyed this lot of land to Henry Harwood of Salem April 20, 1640⁶; and Mr. Harwood died in the spring of 1664, possessed of it.
⁶Essex Registry of Deeds, book 6, leaf 39.

12. This lot of land was granted by the town of Salem to Henry Harwood, who conveyed it to William Stratton, "master of ship of Bristow that then used this country," July 10, 1649.¹ Captain Stratton sold it to William Payne and Richard Russell, who immediately erected at the brook in the cove the first grist mill in Marblehead. William Beale of Marblehead hired the mill until it was sold to Joseph Jewett of Rowley, and even after Mr. Jewett bought it. Jewett conveyed the property to John Bradstreet of Marblehead June 28, 1658.² The mill was gone in 1674.
¹Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 7.
²Essex Registry of Deeds, book 2, leaf 31.
13. The town of Salem granted this lot of land to Thomas Tuck in or before 1657; and he conveyed it to William Beale Nov. 25, 1657.
14. This lot belonged to William Beale in 1658.³
³Essex Registry of Deeds, book 2, leaf 82.
15. Richard Hide of Salem early owned this lot, and conveyed it to Thomas Pitman of Marblehead, fisherman, Nov. 4, 1657.⁴
⁴Essex Registry of Deeds, book 4, leaf 4.
16. Francis Collins owned this lot in 1657, and died possessed of it in 1689.
17. John Legg early owned this lot and died possessed of it in 1674.
18. The western half of this lot of land early belonged to Richard Hollingworth, and the eastern part to William Hunter of Salem, mariner, in 1658. Mr. Hunter died in 1691, possessed of his part of the lot.
19. Samuel Friend of Manchester, planter, conveyed this lot to John Peach, jr., of Marblehead, a fisherman, Dec. 3, 1658.⁴
⁴Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 43.
20. This lot of land belonged to John Legg of Marblehead in 1658, and he died in 1674, having devised it to his wife Elizabeth.
21. This lot of land belonged to John Peach as early as 1658.
22. The owner of this lot at about the time of the incorporation of Marblehead has not been learned.
23. This lot belonged to Joseph Grafton of Salem, mariner, in 1649; and he conveyed it to Thomas Dixey of Marblehead, the ferryman, Aug. 30, 1658.⁵
⁵Essex Registry of Deeds, book 2, leaf 51.
24. This lot belonged to Thomas Edwards, a shoemaker, very early, and he conveyed it to David Corwithen, sr., July 9, 1649.⁶
⁶Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 6.
25. This lot of land belonged to Joseph Younges of Salem very early, and he conveyed it to David Corwithen Sept. 24, 1649.⁷
⁷Essex Registry of Deeds, book 2, leaf 64.
26. This lot of land and the house thereon belonged to William Luckin of Marblehead in 1643, when the land and houses were in the occupation of William Chichester. The houses were gone a few years later.
27. This was the ten-acre lot of Abraham Whitear of Marblehead, a fisherman, in 1652, when he sold it.
28. Robert Knight of Marblehead owned this lot in 1652. He removed to Manchester, and sold the land to Richard Reith of Marblehead in 1686.
29. This lot is the ancient cemetery among the ledges. In the midst of it stood the meeting house, and at that place marked with a dot on the map was "Walton's Spring," from which water was obtained in later years for church purposes.⁸
⁸Sec volume I, page 297.
30. This minute house lot belonged to John Peach, jr., very early. He sold it to John Norman of Manchester, and the latter conveyed it to Robert Knight of Marblehead Sept. 28, 1651.⁹
⁹Essex Registry of Deeds, book 5, leaf 111.
31. This lot of land belonged to Capt. Isaac Allerton, and he conveyed it to his son-in-law Moses Maverick very early.

32. This was the property of Matthew Cradock, the governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company in England, in 1629. A house stood upon it in 1638, and it was occupied by Rev. William Walton. Mr. Cradock died, and his widow Rebecca, who had married Richard Glover of London, gentleman, conveyed it to Mr. Walton June 6, 1650.¹ He died in 1668, and this became the homestead of his son Samuel Walton, who lived in it. He conveyed it to Ambrose Gale of Marblehead, merchant, Sept. 20, 1686²; and Mr. Gale to Joseph Gallison of Marblehead, a fisherman, Dec. 31, 1706.³ Mr. Gallison died in 1754, and the estate descended to his grandson John Gallison. The old house was gone soon afterward.

¹Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 24.

²Essex Registry of Deeds, book 7, leaf 115.

³Essex Registry of Deeds, book 19, leaf 127.

33. Peter Petford owned and lived upon this lot in 1641, and erected a fishing stage there. He owned the house, stage and land until his death, in 1659.
34. Arthur Sandin was granted land in Marblehead in 1638, and was one of the earliest inhabitants of the town. He lived on this lot, and was the first innkeeper in the town, being first licensed therefor in May, 1640. He died in 1667, possessed of the house and lot.
35. This lot early belonged to Thomas Pitman, and was the property of Francis Johnson in 1655.
36. Walsingham Chillson of Marblehead owned and lived in this lot, and July 13, 1655, conveyed the house and land to Francis Johnson.⁴

At the northwesterly end of this lot stood the town stocks.

⁴Essex Registry of Deeds, book 13, leaf 242.

37. This lot was owned by Timothy Allen in 1648. He removed to Lynn, and conveyed it, with the house thereon, to Elias Hendley of Marblehead Sept. 28, 1660.⁵

⁵Essex Registry of Deeds, book 8, leaf 177.

38. This lot early belonged to John Coit, who lived in the house situated on the extreme eastern point of the land. About 1635, this cove at the foot of State Street was agreed to be a place of public use for the town, and John Coit built a stage on this lot, it being one of the first, if not the first, in the town. Mr. Coit removed to Cape Ann, and conveyed the house, stage, and land to William Pitt Feb. 9, 1647.⁶ When he was of Boston, merchant, Mr. Pitt conveyed the whole estate to his son-in-law Christopher Lattimer of Marblehead, mariner, who was then living upon the premises. Feb. 2, 1659.⁷

⁶Essex Registry of Deeds, book 1, leaf 6.

⁷Essex Registry of Deeds, book 4, leaf 4.

39. Thomas Taynour owned this lot as early as 1661.
40. This lot of land and house thereon belonged to Henry Pease of Marblehead in 1656.
41. This lot belonged to Henry Pease in 1656.
42. John Gatchell of Marblehead, planter, owned and lived on this lot in 1652.
43. This lot belonged to Francis Johnson in 1666.
44. This lot early belonged to Emanuel Clarke, who conveyed it to Joseph Bowd in or before 1664.
45. Erasmus James of Marblehead owned this lot, with the house thereon, very early. He died, and his widow Jane James conveyed the house and lot to James Smith of Marblehead Aug. 6, 1660.⁸

⁸Essex Registry of Deeds, book 4, leaf 130.

46. This was the homestead of Richard Rowland of Marblehead, planter, as early as 1648, and he died, possessed of it in the summer of 1685.
47. William Barber of Marblehead, a fisherman, owned this lot in 1651.
48. Samuel Doliber of Marblehead owned this lot of land, with the house thereon, very early, and conveyed the estate to John Waldron of Marblehead, a fisherman, June 20, 1651.⁹

⁹Essex Registry of Deeds, book 4, leaf 67.

Though William Walton was never ordained to the ministry, he continued to preach to the people of Marblehead until his death, in October, 1668. A meeting house had been built on burying hill, and the usual troubles which arose from seating the people came to the inhabitants. Until a church was organized, in 1684, the members of the Salem church who lived in Marblehead attended the services of the church in Salem on days of the sacraments of the Lord's supper and baptism, and on other Sundays were found in the little meeting house amongst the ledges and the graves on the hill. The members of the Salem church who lived in Marblehead in 1684 numbered fifty-four.