

Early History and Personal Recollections of Northeast Harbor.

by Cora Savage Phillips.

The first permanent settler at Northeast Harbor, as far as I can learn, was John Manchester, who settled at Manchester Point as early as 1775. His son, John Manchester 2nd., was my mother's grandfather he often told his grandchildren stories of the hardship and privation the family suffered in those early years here. Those were Revolutionary times. One story I remember hearing from my mother; an English ship was anchored near the mouth of the sound for some time, and one day a boat load of men came ashore and made a raid on the Manchester home. Mr. Manchester had gone hunting, so was not at home to remonstrate. They took the oxen and cows, drove them down on the beach, and there killed and quartered them, hide and all, and took them away to their ship. Then not being satisfied with that, they took all of their potatoes and other stores which they had provided for their winter use. And to complete their cruelty they wantonly destroyed all their cooking utensils and told them they could starve. However, there was one young cow which had strayed away that the men did not get, and Mr. Manchester was fortunate in having his gun with him, which served him to good purpose later, when a moose came out of the woods one day and started to swim across the sound. He, with his good wife, ran for their canoe and started in pursuit, she with the paddle and he with his trusty flint lock ready. They came back victorious and their larder was replenished. So, with the help of the milk from the cow, with fish and clams and with game from the forest, they lived through the long winter. I cannot give the exact year of this occurrence. We have record that Mr. Manchester served in Machias four months in Capt. Stephen Smiths Company, and he no doubt took part in the capture of the Margareta at Machias June 12, 1775, as he was of the petitioners to the general Court from that settlement May 25th. He also

served in Co.^{1st} Benjamin Foster's Regiment in 1777.

I have a printed obituary ~~an~~ Capt. John Manchester 2nd., which my mother found in an old paper at her father's house many years ago. The obituary reads, " In Mount Desert, on the 14th inst. Capt John Manchester, aged 84 years, he was born in Machias but came to Mt. Desert with his father as early as 1775, when there were but three families ~~in~~ Mt. Desert. If he has not lived to see ~~the~~ desert blossom as the rose literally, he has lived to see great changes. The inhabitants have increased from some twenty to more than one hundred times that number. He was an industrious and honest man, and posses the good will of all who knew him."

I have no record of who the second family was to settle at Northeast Harbor.

Mr. John Savage was born ~~in~~ Glasgow, Scotland, in the year 1756. He came to this country at the age of fourteen and landed at Salem, Mass. According to records, he enlisted from Marblehead in May 1775. He fought in the battle of Bunker Hill and resigned in 1781 as Lieutenant. After the close of the war he married Sarah Dolliver and settled at Marblehead, Mass. Mr. Savage moved to Mt. Desert and landed at Harbor Brook in 1798. I think the Roberts family settled here at about the same time, also several other families followed; Stanley, Davis, Wasgatt, Richardson, and others.

Seal Harbor was first settled in 1809 by John Clement, whose ancestors came from Warwickshire, England, and settled in Haverhill, Mass. in 1640. Mr. Clement was a cooper by trade, and also engaged in the fishing business. He built a house on the east side of Seal Harbor, where the Campbell cottage now stands.

Many of the early settlers came to this vicinity owing to the good fishing grounds, and for the wood and lumber which could be marketed by their coasting vessels. Their first homes were, of course, crude and rough,

but as years went by and the settlers had cleared the land and made some progress in farming and fishing and taking their supplies of wood and lumber, fish and farming products to the westward markets, bringing back supplies in return for their labor. They were able to build better houses and to have more comforts.

The early settlers of Mt. Desert seem to have been of good hardy stock, law abiding, and industrious. Their social and religious privileges were not what they are today, but they were more faithful to remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy, than many of their descendants at the present time.

I remember my grandmother Savage telling me that she, with her sisters and others in their younger days had gone to religious meetings from Northeast Harbor to the Center many times, they would go in a boat across to Norwood's Cove, thence by a blazed trail through the woods. Also that they were so careful of their shoes and stockings that they would take them in their hands, and put them on when nearly to the church. In my mother's girlhood days Southwest Harbor was the center for religious services, which were held at the old white church at Manset, many of the inhabitants of Northeast Harbor owned pews in the church there and in summer time it was customary for everyone who could to go over by boat to meeting. I remember having been in the church only once. I was very young, but can remember the cunning little doors which led into the pews and also remember the music, the choir sat in a balcony at the back of the church and Mr. Butler, my aunt's husband played on a big bass viol. I think there were other instruments but he was the center of attraction for me as I knew him so well. *I do not remember the preacher or the text, and I think my mother found it difficult to have her face the pulpit on a Sunday morning.*

Looking back on my early life at the time of the civil war, and now at the present time, I see great changes. In my young days we knew everyone in Northeast Harbor and I think also in Seal Harbor. It was customary to visit back and forth and to neighbor together more closely than we do at the present time. I sometimes think we were more

like one big family.

I will name the families who lived in Northeast Harbor in my early school days, beginning at the North End of the village near the present golf links: Mr. and Mrs. James Corson, living with her father and mother; Mr. and Mrs. Davis Wasgatt; Capt. and Mrs. Asa Smallidge and family, living with her parents Capt. and Mrs. Joseph Stanley; Maj. and Mrs. John Manchester and family; Mr. and Mrs. John Manchester who lived in the place now owned by Mr. Thomas Fennelley; Capt. and Mrs. Thomas Manchester and family; Capt. Sans. Whitmore and family; Capt. Nathan Smallidge and family; ^{Mr. and Mrs. S. Smallidge lived with his father's parents on the North End} Mr. James Gilpatrick, whose home was on the spot where the Rock End now stands; Capt. Thomas Smallidge and family, later the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Smallidge which is now the summer home of Mrs. Lincoln Godfrey, next Esquire Daniel Kimball and family whose house was on the site where the Kimball House is now situated.

Josiah Smallidge and family house where the brick school house is located. Coming back down the hill and toward the head of the harbor, we pass Mrs. William Stanleys house, where Capt. and Mrs. Frazier lived with her mother, the father being dead before my remembrance. So we keep on up around the head of the harbor till we come to Capt. Frank Roberts house where Mr. Mopre now lives; next the Roberts place now owned by Mr. Kimball where Mr. and Mrs. William Roberts lived, also Capt. and Mrs. Horace Roberts; next Capt and Mrs. John Savage house where the Asticou Inn now stands and the last house on the road was the home of A.C. Savage. There was still another house in the village near where Mrs. Edward Stanleys bungalow is located where I remember ^{Mr. Thomas Fennelley's Mother} visiting Mrs. Fennelly, with my mother when I was very young. There was but one store in Northeast Harbor in those days, owned by Esquire Kimball near where the Clifton house is located. The supplies were mostly groceries and hardware. In those days we had to send away for many things in the line of dry goods and wearing apparel. It was

customary for the fathers and brothers as they were coasting back and forth to bring home many nice things to their families.

I have heard my father say he had even been intrusted with the selection of a spring bonnet. The village school house was located a short distance north of the present brick school house. The school building was used for religious meetings and all public gatherings, such as singing school, spelling schools, lyceums and dramatic entertainments. We were fortunate in having some good teachers in those days, and others that were the reverse. I remember one incident of correction which I received from one of my teachers. My seat was in front of two of the oldest scholars in school, young ladies - I was about twelve years old at the time. One of the young women in question took a notion to rearrange her hair in school - it was the day of the Chignon or waterfall and she conceived the idea of pinning it on to my head; so deftly pinning up my braids she added the Chignon. *of course by the time this was accomplished, the whole school was in a tizzy* With the exception of the two girls in question who were diligently studying their lessons, I was called out to stand in the floor, that the whole school might see and admire. The young ladies who did all the hair dressing were not reprimanded. I wondered if I was wholly to blame that time.

My earliest recollection of the Post Office was located on the place now owned by ^{Mr.} J.H.Curtis, Thomas Wasgatt postmaster. *on the Seaboard of N.E. Harbor.* From there it was moved to the head of the harbor now called Asticou, with Frank Roberts as postmaster. This was the only post office for both Northeast and Seal Harbor's. From Mr. Roberts house the office was moved to Mr. S.N. Gilpatrick's, Mrs. Gilpatrick being post mistress for some years till Stephen Smallidge was appointed post master, and from that time the post office has been located on Main Street.

In my school days there was but one town road in Northeast Harbor, the same that connects with the Seal Harbor and Somesville roads at

Pedders corner so-called, and extending over practically the same route along past main street and on up around the corner and over the present main road to Jonas Corsons near the Golf Links. There were four private ways leading from this road; one to Mr. Kimballs; one to Mr. Gilpatrick's; one to Mr. John Manchesters and one to Mr. Asa Smallidge's. When I reflect on the changes that have taken place in Northeast Harbor in my remembrance, I wonder if the next sixty years will bring as many or greater changes.