

LONG ISLAND TOWNS.

THE ANTIQUITIES OF EAST HAMPTON

HISTORY—NAMES—THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST-HAMPTON—LONGEVITY OF ITS FOUNDERS—CURIOUS OLD RECORDS—THE OLD GRAVEYARD, AND ITS NOTABLE MONUMENTS.

EAST HAMPTON, Saturday, July 24, 1875.

I was not very reluctant to leave Sag Harbor. There was nothing to relieve the oppressive monotony of its dullness after I had done the churches and the old cooper shops, and had waded over toward Shelter Island, picking huckleberries by the way. So, when I started on the tramp to East Hampton and got once more between two long, shady lines of dark-green trees, and heard the birds sing and saw the glimmering heat dancing over the grain fields, I enjoyed a glimpse of life again, and trudged on comfortably. The distance to East Hampton is something over six miles, and the road, although heavy for a mile or so, is a pleasant one. "What place is this?" I asked of a farmer's boy leaning over the fence of the second farm-house I passed. "This here's Hardscrabble Farm," said the boy; "and right down yonder, a mile or so, you come to Toilsome. Then you follow the telegraph and you come to East Hampton." I had an instinctive feeling when the queer names of these farms struck my ear, that there were stories connected with them, and the impression was afterward confirmed. Hardscrabble was the name given to the ground selected by one of the earliest Daytons, because, as his neighbors thought and predicted, it would not yield him a living. Now, after two centuries of great fertility, it stands as the best farm about East Hampton, but the old name, incongruous as it is, clings to it still, and the farmer Dayton of to-day would no more think of changing it than of sowing his broad acres with thistle-seed. But in regard to Toilsome, which is within a short mile of the town, I can learn nothing except that it was so christened many generations ago for reasons which have long since passed out of the memory of man.

East Hampton is a pretty village, built, like South Hampton, mainly on one long, broad street, delightfully shaded, and stretching off to the seashore a mile away. The first thing you notice, as you enter the town from the north, is one of those odd little wind-mills so common in certain sections of the east end of Long Island; and, as you look south, the big sails of another are seen whirling around in the hearty breeze as though trying to carry the little mill off into infinite space. Then, strolling down through the long street, under the broad-spreading branches of such beeches as Tityrus would delight to whistle under, you pass cosy cottages and old houses with shingled roofs and sides all overgrown with gray moss, and here and there a modern dwelling with high stoop and broad veranda and vine-clad porch, looking so cool and pleasant and homely in this hot day that you wonder why everybody don't move right down to East Hampton, and live there in comfort the rest of his days. Then you ask for a hotel, and, lo! there is none; but Capt. William S. Gardiner keeps a house of entertainment, you are told, and, making your wants known to his comely wife, you find yourself at home among as genial a set of people, old and young, as you ever met. Then, when you have rested and refreshed, you are ready to go forth with me and study the beauties and the oddities and the curiosities of one of the oldest towns on Long Island.

The township was purchased as far eastward as Montauk in 1648, by Theophilus Eaton, Governor of the New-Haven Colony, and Edward Hopkins, Governor of the Connecticut Colony, and was assigned to the original settlers in 1651, in consideration of the sum of £30 4s. 8d. These first settlers were John Hand, John Stratton, Thomas Talmadge, Daniel Howe, Thomas Thompson, Joshua Barnes, John Mulford, Robert Bond, and Robert Rose, who were soon joined by the progenitors of the present widely-diffused families of Osborn, Bishop, Gardiner, Dayton, Conklin, and a dozen others. Many of these, as well as many of their descendants, lived to a grand old age. Look at this very meagre list:

William Barnes, died 1814, aged 91.
Jemima, wife of the fourth William Barnes, 1823, aged 98.
Joseph, her son, died at 88.
Another William Barnes, died 1823, aged 98.
Joseph Barnes, the sixth, died 1847, aged 88.
Alice, wife of Nathaniel Baker, second, 1768, at 88.
Jerusha Gardiner, wife of Lewis Osborn, at 93.
Mary, wife of Lewis Conklin, 1727, aged 89.
Deacon Dan Dayton, 1815, aged 92.
Capt. John Dayton, 1825, aged 98.
Steven Hedges, died 1734, aged 100.
Matthew Mulford, 1774, aged 85.
Capt. Ezekiel Mulford, of the Revolution, died at 95.
Thomas Osborn, died 1712, at 90.
Joseph Osborn, died in church, 1743, aged 83.
John Talmadge, 1764, aged 86.
Recompense Sherrill, 1839, aged 98.
Joshua Garlick, 1700, aged 100.

The old settlers were men of untiring energy, and in a short time after making the allotments of land, had many hundred acres under cultivation. At first they suffered many inconveniences for the want of mechanics, and had to send to Southold for a weaver, to Huntington for a blacksmith, and to Wethersfield for a carpenter.

The following from the town records is the entry in reference to the weaver:

"February 2nd, 1653.—It is Ordered yt there shall bee an invitation sent to Goodman Morgan, of Southold, if hee will come and live here and weave all the Townswork, he shall come in free from all former charges and the Town will give him 5 & break him up 2 ackres of Land."

Here are some other records which give us a pretty accurate notion of many of the old customs of the town:

"November the 4th, 1651.—It was Ordered that Goodman Mulford shall call out ye town by succession to luke out for whale."

"Feb. 24, 1719.—This day a whaleboat being alone the men struck a whale & she coming under ye boat in part staved it, and tho ye men were not hurt with the whale, yet before any help came to them four men were tired and chilled & fell off ye boat & oars to which they hung & were drowned, yiz.: Henry Parsons, William Schellinger, Junior, Lewis Mulford, Jeremiah Conkling, Jurur."

"19th April, 1659.—It is Ordered that every man shall sett the two letters for his name at each end of his fence in large letters, on the inside of the Post, above the upper Raile, upon penalty."

"Februarie 12th, 1656.—It is Ordered yt whoeever shall rise up as a false witness against any man to testifie yt which is wrong, there shall be done to him as he had thought to have done unto his neighbour, whether it be to the taking away of Life, Limbe, or Goods."

The settlers were limber in their dealings, and, therefore, never had any serious difficulty with the Indians. After the Montauks had become almost exterminated in the fatal battle on Block Island, where they tried conclusions with the Narragansetts, the remnant came to East Hampton, and resided on the parsonage ground at the south end of the Town street, and the remains of their burying-ground are well remembered by many of the oldest inhabitants. It was not until after the Revolution that Gardiner's Island, which up to that time had been an independent Lordship, became a part of the town. I shall tell you more of this interesting island further on. It has had more to do with making history than casual readers are ready to admit.

At the south end of the town is the old graveyard. I have spent many hours studying its ancient tombstones, and I do not regret the time. First, there is a monument erected to the memory of twenty-one sailors lost off Montauk Point, Feb. 20, 1858, in the wreck of the ship John Milton, of New-Bedford. When the bodies were washed ashore the citizens of East Hampton brought them to the town and held four solemn ceremonies over them. Twenty-four old sea Captains acted as pall-bearers, and the occasion was altogether a most memorable one. A little further on is a large white slab, erected by the inhabitants to mark the resting place of John Wallace, who, for twenty-five years, was a living puzzle to the gossips, who could never find out his right name or discover the place of his birth, or get from him any circumstances connected with his life. He died Dec. 30, 1870, and had he lived a day longer he would have been eighty-two years old. The old man always had money, and his agent in New-York was ever prompt in honoring his drafts for whatever amount. He was very devout, took much interest in church matters, and was mainly instrumental in building the little Episcopal Church here. He was always kind, and would never speak of himself, and it was only a little while before his death that to one old

friend he told the story of his life, exacting a solemn pledge that it would remain a secret with him. In the rear of the church is a memorial window dedicated to him, and two others on either side of this were placed there in remembrance of Miss Wagstaff and Miss Buckley, who were lost in the Ville du Havre. The slab over the old man's grave was erected by subscription, as after his death not a cent of money had been remitted to his address. This, I am told, was in accordance with his own request. Near by is a monument to Capt. Reuben Brumley, an old sea Captain who died in 1860, aged eighty-one. He had been an officer of the New-York Savings Bank for Seamen from its foundation in 1829. Another grave-stone attracts attention on account of the particularity with which the pedigree of him who lies under it is set forth. He was a descendant of one of the original settlers, John Mulford, whose grave is unmarked. The bodies of the first three ministers of the old town are here. It is remarkable that these three served fifty years each. The fourth minister was Lyman Beecher, the father of the world-renowned Beecher family. His eccentricities were for several years the cause of much innocent fun in East Hampton.

The first minister, Thomas James, died in 1696, at a time when the church was on the east side of the grave-yard. With the exception of his, every tomb-stone faces toward the west. When the aged pastor was dying, he said to those about him: "Bury me with my face toward the east." When asked why he preferred so strange a request, he said: "I would be so buried that when I rise on the resurrection day I shall be facing my congregation as was always my wont." And he lies so buried. The third pastor, Samuel Buell, was well known in his day, far beyond the narrow confines of his little parish. It was through his efforts that Clinton Academy, still in operation, was chartered in 1787. This and Erasmus Hall, Flatbush, were incorporated on the same day, and are the oldest legally organized educational institutions in the State of New-York. Next to the Brumley monument is a rudely marked grave that is probably one of the very oldest in the inclosure. At either end, rising about a foot from the level of the ground, is a cedar post. Between the posts is a cedar rail which connects them and lies even with the top of the mound beneath. The posts and rails are thickly covered with moss, and as cedar is one of the most enduring products of nature, and as it takes moss very slowly, it is no venture to say that these uncouth substitutes for stone were planted more than 200 years ago. Some think that beneath this old rail lies Lion Gardiner. The stranger cannot but be interested in wandering around the dozens of graves that cover generations of deceased Gardiners. A large monument, the most noticeable object in the graveyard at a distance, covers the remains of David Gardiner, who was killed with Secretary Usher and others by the bursting of the great gun on board the steam frigate Princeton, on the Potomac, Feb. 28, 1844. Within a few feet lie the remains of Dr. Nathaniel Gardiner, a surgeon in the Revolutionary war, and afterward a representative from Suffolk County. Near him lie Capt. Abraham Gardiner, Col. Abraham Gardiner, and in a large tomb next to the grave of the last named are the remains of one who, we are told by an inscription on a slab of red marble set into the sandstone slab, was Rachel Gardiner, "wife to his Excellency David Gardiner, Esq., Lord of the Isle of Wight." A monument on the western side bears the names of twelve of the Barnes family, including the only survivor, who is now eighty years old, none of whom ever married.

Just outside of the graveyard is a windmill, erected many long years ago, and still operated with the same machinery that ran it at the beginning. Through the kindness of Mr. Derby, the miller, I was enabled to give it a close examination. It is of a nearly conical shape, about forty feet high, but broad enough at the base to stand the ocean wind for years to come. The power is gained by the spread of sail on the arms, which are about twenty-four feet long. The building is of wood, shingled all over. Internally it is filled up about like any other grist-mill. The cap, or roof, rotates on wheels, or rollers, and is turned by a toothed wheel, working in a toothed rack, so that it may face the wind as it changes. The operation is similar to that by which the feed of the saw-mill carriage is worked. Mr. Derby, who owns the mill, tells me that when the wind is fair he can grind sixty bushels of grain a day, and that his father on one occasion ground 105 bushels in a day. The timbers are nearly all those which were put into the building when it was erected three-quarters of a century ago. Above the mill is the house in which once lived John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," the man who had no home, and who died in a foreign land while his touching song was being sung at thousands of happy firesides all over the earth. South of the Post Office is where Lyman Beecher lived, and nearly opposite, embowered in grand old trees, is the East Hampton residence of Squire Gardiner, present "Lord of the Isle of Wight," and its teeth proprietor. In a neighboring house, up to a short time ago, Jerusha, late Queen of the Montauk Indians, performed daily menial toil at the usual monthly stipend. The present Queen, Maria, wife of King David Pharaoh, is now at Montauk among her sixteen subjects. Time was when the Montauk monarch wore a yellow ribbon in the hair "for grandeur's sake," as the boy said when he straddled his father's walking-stick; but no such mark now distinguishes the last of the Indian Queens, and you cannot tell her from her meanest hand-maid until she furnishes you with the necessary information herself.