SMITH-TAYLOR CABIN:
SHELTER ISLAND, NEW YORK

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview: historical & architectural context

The subject of this report, an authentic log and cabin-sided building situated on Taylor's Island (Shelter Island), New York, is listed on the National Register and is significant for two primary reasons: for its association with individuals who contributed to the history of both Long Island and the nation; and for its distinctive architectural features and methods of construction. The building preserves a high degree of architectural integrity and is preserved on its original site. Dating originally from c. 1900, it was built in the Rustic or "Adirondack" style as a small recreational structure, but was later enlarged for use as a habitable dwelling c. 1937.[1] The later additions remain clearly discernable and were evidently constructed to be stylistically compatible with the original log technology which remains visually distinct within the overall massing and composition. Each of the two primary architectural phases embodied by the building is associated with an individual who contributed not only to the history of the locality, but to that of New York State and the nation.

The property, formerly known as Cedar Island, is a small island located in Coecles Harbor measuring 1.188 acres in size. It is situated in the southeasterly section of the Town of Shelter Island, and is owned by the town and maintained as an integral part of the Coecles Harbor Marine Water Trail. It is accessible at low tide from the mainland, where a row of private homes (Mashomack-Coecles Harbor Association) is situated along the harbor's edge. The island faces the large and environmentally significant 2100-acre Mashomack Preserve (The Nature Conservancy). The island rises approximately eight feet above sea level and is surrounded by cast concrete sea walls and bulkheads. It preserves not only the "Adirondack" style log and cabin-sided building, but also a contemporary, rustic rubble-stone well head. Other historic improvements on the island, now lost but preserved in archival photographs, included an original log-built well head and two cabin-sided guest cottages, one of which contained a generator.

The one-story building that remains is irregular in massing and measures approximately 52 feet by 46 feet overall. It is distinguished by a central tower measuring approximately seven feet square in section that rises three stories to a narrow, two-sided balcony overlooking Coecles Harbor. The ground floor of the building incorporates three distinct living areas, the largest of which is a prominent, multi-purpose living space constructed of logs and dating to c. 1900. The adjoining areas, which preserve cabin siding that simulates the appearance of the original authentic log building and later, non-

[1] Although S. Gregory Taylor did not take possession of the island until 1940, it appears that he had begun to make improvements on the building several years before this date, perhaps under a lease agreement with the island's owner(s).

historic vertical planking on some exterior walls, incorporate an entryway, two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a kitchen. These spaces are contemporary in construction and date from when the original building was enlarged, winterized and transformed into both a seasonal and year-round dwelling.

The architectural integrity of the entire building is high, both inside and out, despite the renewal of roofing material, conversion of two banks of windows, and the replacement of cabin siding on the south and west facades with vertical wood siding. Ample physical and photographic evidence is preserved that documents the historic appearances of these facades, and investigation of the interior of the rooms confirms that their architectural detailing is virtually unaltered.

1.2 Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee

Two and a half years ago, on December 6, 2005, the Shelter Island Town Board held a Work Session to discuss funding a plan, outlined in a 30-page document, to demolish the cabin on Taylor's Island and build a *faux* structure. The meeting room was packed with people upset that for a second time there were plans to destroy this historic landmark. (Five years earlier, in response to a less formal proposal to raze the building, the community rallied to save the structure by attending Town Board meetings, writing letters to the Editor of the *Shelter Island Reporter* and circulating petitions.) This time Councilwoman Christine Lewis suggested forming a committee, to be called the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee, to champion the concern and vision the citizens had for the building. Her suggestion was followed by Supervisor-Elect Alfred J. Kilb, Jr. recommending Richie Surozenski and P.A.T. Hunt as Co-Chairs.

By January 17, 2006 the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee was complete with members Barbara "Buzz" Clark, Keith Clark, Roni King, Michael Laspia and Town Board liaison Alfred Kilb, Jr. joining Co-Chairs Richie Surozenski and P.A.T. Hunt. The Committee met twice a month through August 2006, and since then meets monthly at the Shelter Island Town Hall with a Town employee, Clerk to the Committees, recording the minutes.

On June 23, 2006 the Town Board designated the Committee as the lead agency to regulate the use, management and reconstruction of Taylor's Island, succeeding The Nature Conservancy with whom the Town had a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (2001-2006). On August 28, 2007 the Town received a grant to complete an historic structure report funded by "Preserve New York," a grant program of the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts. By the end of September, 2007, the Committee's work with Virginia Bartos of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Presentation was complete with the Smith-Taylor Cabin being listed with the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. With that designation, the Town established eligibility for an Environmental Protection Fund grant administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Such an application was submitted on June 30, 2008.

While concentrating on the restoration of the historic Smith-Taylor Cabin, the Town, assisted by the Committee, has also applied for a permit with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to stabilize the perimeter of Taylor's Island, as well as create a kayak landing area.

Some members of the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee established the Taylor's Island Foundation in 2006 to assist the Town of Shelter Island in restoring, maintaining, and providing public access to Taylor's Island. This tax-exempt corporation has held yearly fundraisers on Taylor's Island, as well as other benefits, and has entered into a long-term lease with the Town of Shelter Island. The Taylor's Island Foundation was incorporated on May 30th, 2006 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Its mission "… is to assist the Town of Shelter Island in fostering,

supporting, and carrying out the restoration, maintenance, and safeguarding of Taylor's Island, its buildings and improvements, the investigation and publication of the history of Taylor's Island, its residents, caretakers and their families, and of its flora, fauna, and ecosystems and the development and provision of educational and recreational programs and services for the public."

The citizens of Shelter Island with the Town Board, the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee and the Taylor's Island Foundation are working together to fulfill the wishes of S. Gregory Taylor that Taylor's Island be "for the use and enjoyment of the general public."

1.3 Smith-Taylor Cabin: interpretive plan

The Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee began gathering suggested uses for the Smith-Taylor Cabin and Taylor's Island in December 2005, mostly from personal conversations. At the yearly August fundraisers on Taylor's Island a clipboard is passed around with a sheet of paper asking guests to "Please contribute your suggestions, comments, and vision for Taylor's Island." An additional source of input this year, 2008, is from kayakers and others in shallow draft boats who come ashore and are welcomed into the cabin for docent tours, one day each weekend, May through October. One person who summers on Shelter Island sent a letter from his winter home in Washington, DC telling the Committee about the Potomac/Appalachian Trail Club as a possible model.

The Committee reviewed a list of past and present uses gathered from archival photos, newspapers, reminiscences and local knowledge. With a sense of the past and present, the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee reviewed a two page list of suggested uses at their June 10th meeting. Some suggestions appear frequently on the list. One of those is to offer the cabin for an overnight stay, in a manner similar to the Rose Island Lighthouse in Newport, Rhode Island.

In going through the list line by line, Committee members were easily in agreement. The necessity to limit the number of people and the number of yearly events was apparent. Also it was evident that certain activities required monitoring while others needed the development of a suitable plan. The Committee also considered complementary daytime and nighttime use, accommodating a wide range of visitors, and producing income for the maintenance of the cabin and its environment.

Current uses of Taylor's Island and the Smith-Taylor Cabin include: a landing place on the Coecles Harbor Marine Water Trail, field trip destination for East End schools and a local summer camp, yearly fundraising event, landing place for yacht clubs and cruising clubs anchored nearby, weekly docent tours, May-November.

The future suggested uses the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee and the Taylor's Island Foundation are considering include: overnight stays, meeting and workshop place, retreat place, campsite, wedding ceremony and/or reception. People who would benefit from these uses would include residents of Shelter Island and the East End of Long Island, tourists, community groups, environmentalists, historians, outdoor enthusiasts and to quote from Mr. Taylor's will: "the general public."

2.0 HISTORICAL DATA

2.1 Shelter Island: settlement history

Benjamin F. Thompson, the eminent 19th century Long Island historian, described Shelter Island as:

> … a fine island which constitutes a town of the same name, [which] lies between the northern and southern branches of Long Island, at the eastern termination or outlet of Peconic Bay, by which it is bounded on the north, south, and west, and on the east by Gardiner's Bay. The width of the strait on the north, is one mile, and that on the south half a mile, the current being very rapid in the narrower parts. The island is about six miles long, and four broad, but of a very irregular shape. It contains over eight thousand acres, divided into several valuable farms, some of which are quite large; the number of families is about eighty, and the population nearly four hundred. The general surface is undulating, the soil of a good quality, and the shores are indented with coves and small bays, covered with salt grass. There are some fine ponds of fresh water, one of which, Fresh Pond, occupies an area of more than thirty acres. Peat exists in considerable quantity, but owing to the abundance of fine timber on the island, it has been hitherto little used. There are many beautiful sites for building, possessing both variety and picturesqueness. [Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 1843]

In this brief description Thompson captured the island's enduring geographical qualities, significantly those that would attract later waves of settlement: its irregular and protected coastline, its relatively remote but accessible location, and its naturalistic beauty. Shelter Island was settled in the mid-17th century by a handful of wealthy New England merchants who appreciated its unique advantages, and the island's later history reflected the fact that its "valuable farms" were held by one of their descendants until well into the 19th century.

What Thompson didn't reveal in his description – a fact that may have been overlooked or even misunderstood when he wrote his *History of Long Island* – is that Shelter Island was acquired in 1651 as a provisioning plantation for the Barbadian sugar interests of four New Englanders: Captain Thomas Middleton, Thomas Rous, and two Sylvester brothers, Constant and Captain Nathaniel. As historian Mac Griswold has recently written:

> The New England shipping picture of the 1640s makes it clear that

> [this] Shelter Island consortium got an early start both in sugar planting, and on the West Indies provisioning trade… [and] though New Englanders had sporadically exchanged goods throughout the early 1640s, large-scale West Indian shipping only began in earnest in 1647, when planters had become 'so intent upon planting sugar that they had rather buy foode at very deare rates than produce it by labour.'"
> [Griswold, "The Sugar Connection: Barbados and Shelter Island," Ms., 2001]

In fact, the island's geography and deep harbor were especially favorable for the early sugar trade, in part "… because of its convenience as a stopping-off place between the West Indies and New England… with forty miles of coastline and many harbors that were only nominally part of the New Haven Colony across the Sound." Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, the island provided its owners with an opportunity for circumventing new tariffs which had been imposed on the sugar trade in the 1650s. While the origins of its name remain obscure, the "shelter" may well refer to the island's intended role in protecting its investors from these tariffs! Of the original four, however, only Nathaniel made his permanent residence on the island; as a result, the sugar venture established the Sylvester family as major land owners on Shelter Island for centuries to come.

The interrelationship of the Sylvester family members in this early period sheds light on the complexities of 17th century settlement practices and the skills that were needed for success. In addition to Capt. Nathaniel and Constant, there were three other Sylvester brothers (Joshua, Peter and Giles) who settled on the island or in nearby Southold, and each was involved to some extent in the mercantile interests of the family. As Griswold points out:

> The Sylvesters' broad trade network followed a pattern typical of early transatlantic mercantile activity. Family links connected New England ports with Amsterdam, England, Madeira and the Azores, as well as with the West Indies. Members of the family moved around the Atlantic littorals as it suited their political and religious as well as mercantile purposes: Constant [Sylvester], for example, was fined for his Parliamentary sympathies when the Royalists took over Barbados in 1651 and may have left for sanctuary on the newly-purchased Shelter Island…
>
> Another asset that the Sylvester brothers undoubtedly contributed to the partnership was their knowledge of Dutch language and society, useful in the mixed Dutch-English environment of the Atlantic world. The Sylvesters of the charter generation were born in the Netherlands… and may have been quite well-integrated into Dutch society.
> [Griswold, "The Sugar Connection: Barbados and Shelter Island," 2001]

Nathaniel Sylvester gained possession of the entire island in 1674 after its elevation to the status of "Manor" in 1666, and title to portions of Shelter Island would pass to Sylvester descendants and their heirs through marriage after Nathaniel's death in 1680. Chief among these were the Nicolls, Havens and Dering families; by 1730, when the town was incorporated, it is said that only about twenty families inhabited the island. Intermarriage with the residents of neighboring Southold Town, where Shelter Islanders worshipped until the construction of their own Presbyterian meetinghouse in 1743, would introduce new names into the island's history; the Case, Conkling, Tuthill and King families represented this 18th century development. Descendants of the original settlers remained prominent, however, and all of the island's inhabitants would suffer alike from the effects of the Revolutionary War, described by Thompson as follows:

> This town was almost entirely deprived of its timber during the war of the Revolution, it being taken for the use of the British army and navy. Extensive depredations were also committed upon other property of the inhabitants, who were wholly exposed to the ravages of the enemy. The partiality of the people for the cause of independence left them no reasonable expectation of favor or even forbearance from the opposers of liberty.
> [Thompson, *History of Long Island*, Vol. II, p. 221, 1843]

Recovery from the effects of war was slow, as it was elsewhere throughout Long Island, although Thompson points out "… [that] the wood grew again rapidly and has been abundant ever since, and great quantities have been cut and transported to other places." The economy of Shelter Island also prospered in part because of local whaling and other seafaring trades. Nearby Sag Harbor, named in 1789 as one of New York State's two official Ports of Entry by the new United States Congress, emerged in the period as a major whaling port and center for coastal and international trade. Its success was felt and shared by the residents of Shelter Island, where ship-building and related enterprises were also pursued. Numerous prominent ships' captains emerged in the island's history, among them Captain Smith Baldwin, a whaling captain who purchased the local windmill in his retirement in 1850, and Captain Benjamin Cartwright, who followed in Baldwin's footsteps by acquiring the same mill twenty years later! Farming and harvesting cordwood remained an essential occupation and source of income, however, and the coming of the railroad to "mainland" Greenport in 1844 expanded the market for selling island produce.

The economic and social fabric of Shelter Island changed dramatically in the 1870s with the establishment of the Shelter Island Grove and Camp Meeting Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the northwesterly section of the island. Previously bought and named "Prospect" by land speculator Frederick Chase, the 300-acre "Heights" property was acquired in 1871 by a group of Brooklyn clergymen and laymen who coordinated or encouraged construction of over one hundred private "cottages" between 1872 and 1890. The chief architect for the plan, Robert Morris Copeland, also designed Union Chapel in 1875 as the focal and social hub of the community. Following the success of the enterprise, larger summer homes were also built in the 1890s and after

the turn-of-the-century, thus mirroring a trend of summer home and estate-building that encompassed Long Island's Sound and Ocean shorelines as well as both of its easterly "flukes."

Anticipating this trend, a consortium of Boston investors had purchased the area then known as Locust Point (now the Village of Dering Harbor) in 1872 from the Horsford family, descendants of the Sylvester family of Sylvester Manor. The Manhanset House, later known throughout the Eastern seaboard as an elegant hotel and desirable vacation spot, opened its doors in 1873. Private cottages were also built in the area that took on an entirely different feeling from those located elsewhere on the island. The hotel guests and property owners were wealthy yachtsmen who could safely moor their yachts in the secluded harbor. The New York Yacht Club established a station in the harbor, and the Shelter Island Yacht Club was founded in 1886. The first Manhanset House burned in 1896 and its replacement in 1910, never to be rebuilt.

Also typical of the period, both for Shelter Island and Long Island in general, was the creation of "Presdeleau" in the 1890s by Francis M. Smith, who assembled smaller tracts of land into an extensive country estate [see: **2.3.1 Francis Marion Smith (1846–1931)**]. The arrival of Smith, his family and other wealthy land-owners would signal a new era in Shelter Island's history. The trend was also reflected in the history of the Nicoll family, whose extensive holdings are preserved today as Mashomack Preserve.

2.2 Nicoll family & Mashomack Preserve

The Nicoll family on Shelter Island, descendants of William Nicoll the patentee of Islip, came into possession of a large portion of the island by purchase from Giles Sylvester, Nathaniel's eldest son. Giles had inherited the bulk of his father's estate in 1680 and acquired additional land on the island after the deaths of his brothers Benjamin (1689), Constant (1696) and Peter (1696) who had all died without issue. Giles sold approximately 2,000 acres, or one quarter of the island to William Nicoll in 1695. The tract included the area known as "Sachem's Neck," which would later become Mashomack Preserve. As explained by Thompson:

> *Sachem's Neck*, and lands adjoining, were devised by the first *William Nicoll*, to his son *William*, commonly called *Speaker Nicoll*, but as he died without issue in 1768, the lands descended to William, commonly called *Lawyer*, or *Clerk Nicoll*, son of his brother Benjamin. He by his will of 1778, devised the same for life to his son, the late *Samuel Benjamin Nicoll*, with remainder in fee to said Samuel's eldest son in tail. On the death of said Samuel, and by the act abolishing entails, the lands descended to his oldest son, Richard F. Nicoll, in fee. He afterwards sold Sachem's Neck entire to his brother, Samuel B. Nicoll, Esq., by whom it is now held [1843], he being the fifth possessor of the Shelter Island Nicoll estate, reckoning from William the patentee in 1702.
> [Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 1843]

Sachem's Neck remained exclusively in Nicoll family ownership from the late 17th century until after the beginning of the 20th century, at which time several non-resident descendants began to sell off their inheritances. One of the first buyers was Francis M. Smith, who had already established his summer home on Shelter Island and is thought to have constructed what serves today as a Visitor Center at Mashomack. Part of Smith's purchase was Cedar Island, a small peninsula stretching off the main shoreline of Sachem's Neck, and future site of Smith's picnic shelter [see: **2.3.1 Francis Marion Smith (1846–1931)**].

Other buyers of the Nicoll land included Otto H. Kahn, a wealthy German financier and philanthropist, who bought Nicoll family holdings and other parcels that had been previously sold, thereby reestablishing the boundaries of the Sachem's Neck tract in 1925 for real estate investment. Due to the Stock Market Crash of 1929, however, Kahn's development scheme never materialized; in 1934, the Gerard real estate interests purchased Mashomack from Kahn's estate. The property was subsequently leased to several private hunting clubs, of which the most well remembered is the Mashomack Fish and Game Club. Most members of this exclusive club were wealthy Long Island or New York City residents who joined to hunt pheasant, duck and deer. An occasional fox hunt, complete with hounds and horses, was also held. The two fields in the center of the Preserve were converted into a skeet range and tennis court. The well appointed Manor House served as the Lodge. During the club's tenure a scheme emerged

to develop Mashomack into an exclusive housing area; a golf course, marina, and waterfront homes were planned, and investors for the project were secured. Luckily for the future preservation of this undeveloped property, the development scheme folded in 1979. It was at this point, after years of careful planning, that The Nature Conservancy stepped in and was able to secure Mashomack. Since the 1950's, the Conservancy had expressed hopes of preserving Mashomack because of its population of endangered osprey and rare plants. The Gerard family (Aeon Realty) and The Nature Conservancy came to a purchase agreement in 1979. On January 14, 1980, The Nature Conservancy took title to Mashomack with the support of local Shelter Island residents and Nature Conservancy members, foundations, and corporations nationwide.

2.3 Smith-Taylor Cabin: history of ownership

The island and its historic structure are associated primarily with the lives of two individuals who were prominent in local, state and national affairs. These two owner/occupants – Francis M. Smith and S. Gregory Taylor – were both associated with the preservation and conservation of Cedar (later Taylor's) Island, as well as with the creation of the structure itself: first with the construction of a recreational picnic shelter (c. 1900) and later with the transformation of the original building into a habitable dwelling or "cabin" (c. 1940). A third occupant, Andrew Arkin, leased the property for over two decades (1957-1980) and is significant in the history of care and stewardship that he provided. Title to the property passed to the Town of Shelter Island in 1997 as a provision of S. Gregory Taylor's will.

Francis Marion Smith (1846–1931), the first of the two property owners responsible for building the structure, was better known as "Frank" or by his colorful nickname, "Borax," Smith. F. M. Smith was a leader in the mining and marketing of borax, a whitening agent that was popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He acquired Cedar Island, as it was then known, in 1899 while assembling contiguous tracts of land for his Shelter Island summer estate, "Presdeleau." Smith's property would grow to encompass over 500 acres and was the largest land holding of its kind on Shelter Island in that period, comparable in size and setting to many of the renowned, turn-of-the-century country estates created elsewhere on Long Island's scenic north and south shores. Cedar Island provided him with a picturesque location for constructing the original log structure, which served as a rustic shelter and destination for family clambakes, picnics and other outdoor excursions. Smith lost title to Cedar Island and much of his Shelter Island estate due to business reverses in the 1920s, however, and ownership later passed to a bank and several investors before its acquisition by a second owner who expanded the structure in the late 1930s for overnight use.[2]

The second owner of the property, S. Gregory Taylor (1888–1948), was born Soterios Gregorios Tavoulares. Taylor purchased the island in 1940. He was a prominent New York City hotel operator of Greek descent; born on the Island of Prikonnesos, Marmara, Taylor had immigrated to America in 1908 at the age of twenty. He started as a bellhop in the Manger hotel chain and learned the hotel business, rising to the position of manager prior to the demise of William Manger in 1928. Taylor's career in hotel management and ownership began with *The Buckingham*, which he leased in 1925 from Manhattan developers Harris and Percy Uris. For over two decades, Taylor leased, owned, managed or developed a succession of important hotel properties in New York City while contributing his time and resources to Greco-American national and international affairs and many other civic causes.

Taylor's introduction to Cedar Island is thought to have begun with his friendship with the Foultes family, who were also New Yorkers of Greek descent. The Foultes operated a seafood restaurant in Manhattan and owned a summer house on nearby Ram

[2] As stated previously, it appears that the island's second owner had acquired use of the property prior to his acquisition in 1940, as revealed by first-hand reminiscences surrounding the Hurricane of 1938.

Island. Taylor's ownership of the island ended with his demise on February 21, 1948, and he was buried on the island the following day. As a provision of his will, the use of the island was bequeathed to his nephew Stephen Stephano, with title passing to the Town of Shelter Island after Stephano's death.

For over two decades after Taylor's death (1958–1980), the island was leased from his nephew and maintained by Andrew Arkin, who occupied the cabin as well as two guest cottages that Taylor had constructed in the 1930s. Arkin's contribution as long-time steward of the island is especially noteworthy due to the vulnerability of the buildings and their island setting. The island and the cabin became the property of the Town of Shelter Island in 1997.

Historic Maps

1815. Damerum, William. ***Map of the Southern Part of the State of New York, including Long Island, the Sound, and the State of Connecticut.*** **New York.**

1815. Damerum, William (detail).

1829. Burr, David H. ***Map of the County of Suffolk.*** **New York (detail).**

1836. Colton. ***Map of Long Island*** **(detail).**

1838. U.S. Coast Survey. ***Map No. 69. Shelter Island.*** **T.A. Jenkins, surveyor (detail).**

1842. Mather, W.W. ***Geological Map of Long Island.*** **Endicott, New York (detail).**

1852. Colton, J.H. ***Travellers Map of Long Island.*** **New York (detail).**

1858. Chace, J. ***Map of Suffolk Co., L.I. New York.*** **(detail).**

1873. Beers, F.W. ***Atlas of Long Island, New York, Southold and Shelter Island.*** **Beers, Comstock & Cline, New York.**

1873. Beers, F.W. (detail).

1815. Damerum, William. ***Map of the Southern Part of the State of New York, including Long Island, the Sound, and the State of Connecticut.*** **New York.**

Damerum, William.
Map of the Southern Part of the State of New York, including Long Island, the Sound, and the State of Connecticut.
1815.

Detail.

Map of the Southern part
of the STATE of NEW YORK including
Long Island, the Sound, the State of
CONNECTICUT
part of the
and Islands adjacent.
Compiled from actual late Surveys
Designed Drawn and Published 1815 by
Wm. DAMERUM
General Surveyor New York.

KENNEDY MAP COLLECTION
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
AT STONY BROOK
STONY BROOK, NEW YORK 11794-3396
JUN 24 1990

Map OF THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

By David H. Burr

Published by the SURVEYOR GENERAL pursuant to an Act of the Legislature.

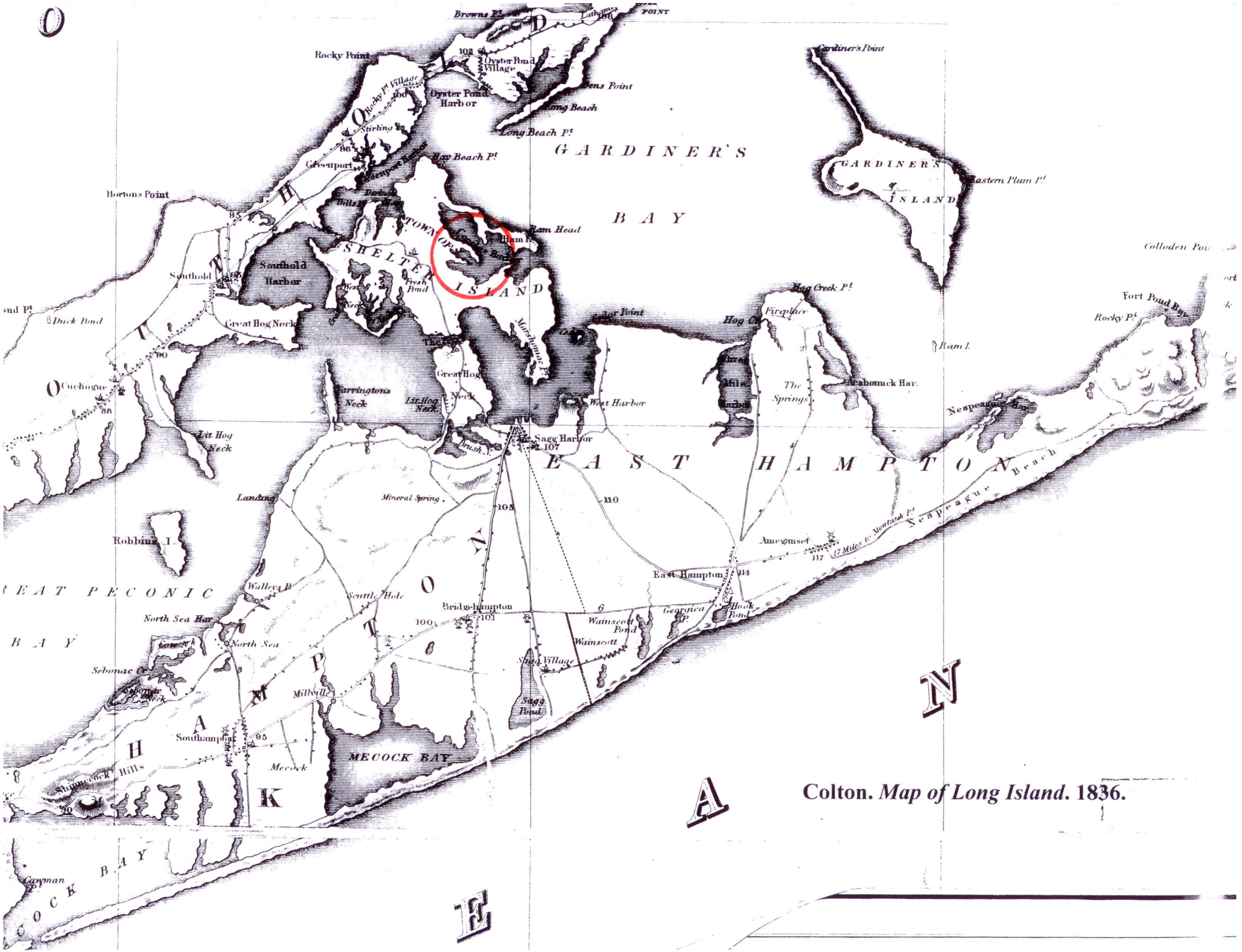
EXPLANATIONS.

Town lines distinguished by Colours
State Roads thus
County Roads
Villages
Flouring Mills
Manufactories
Ferries
Saw Mills
Churches

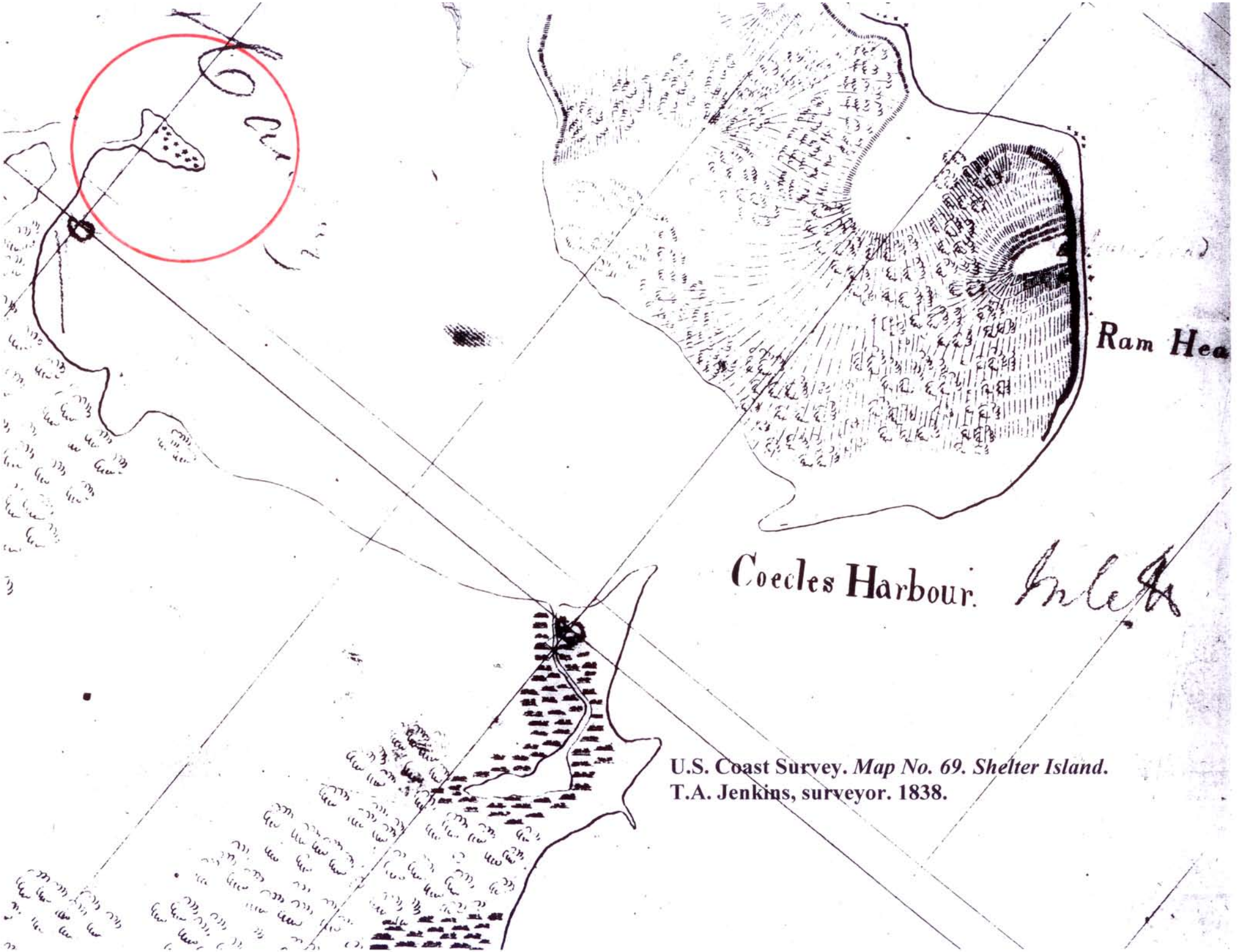
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5

Burr, David H. *Map of the County of Suffolk*. 1829.
Detail.

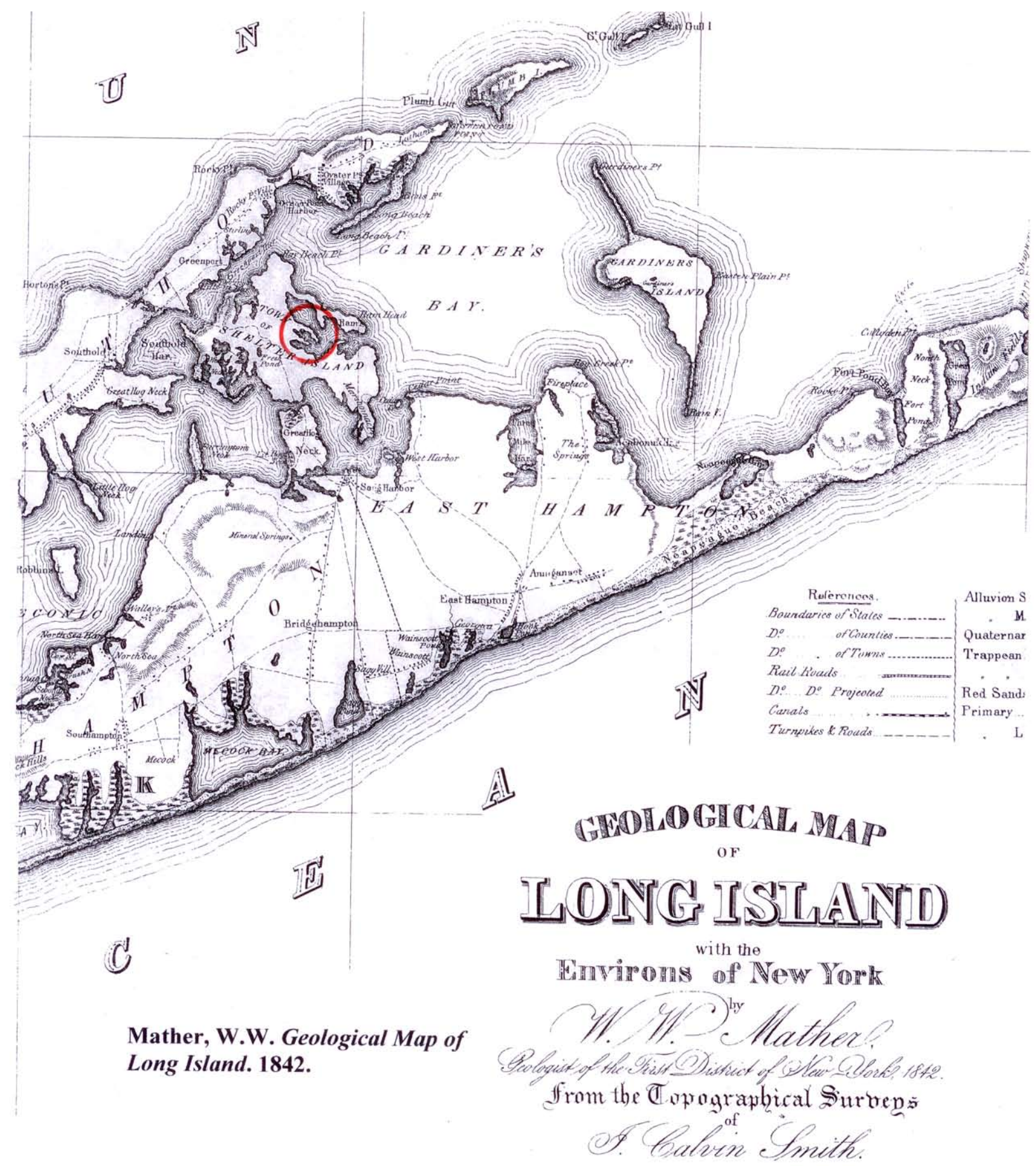
Engd by Rawdon Clark & Co. Albany & Rawdon, Wright & Co. N. York



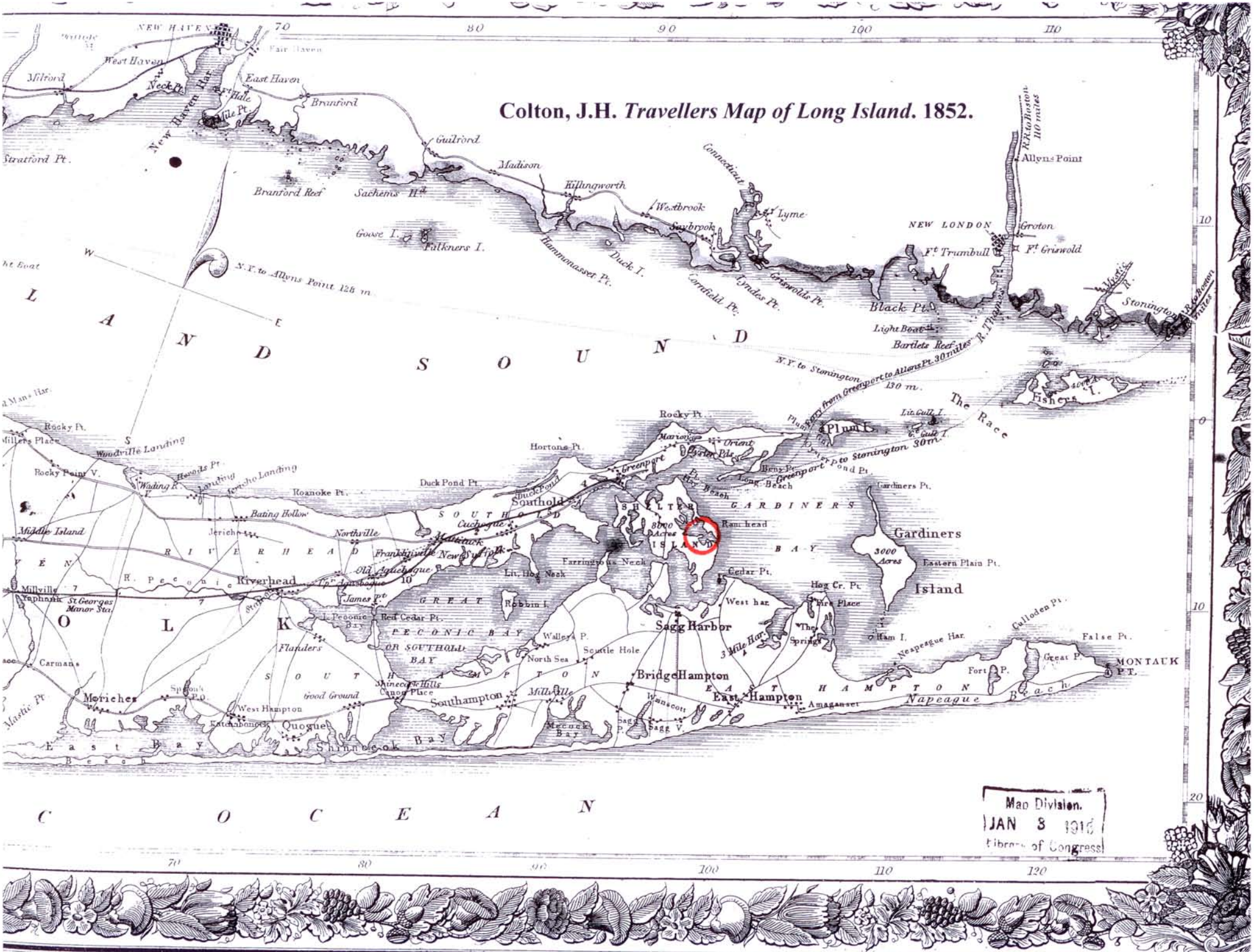
Colton. ***Map of Long Island.*** **1836.**



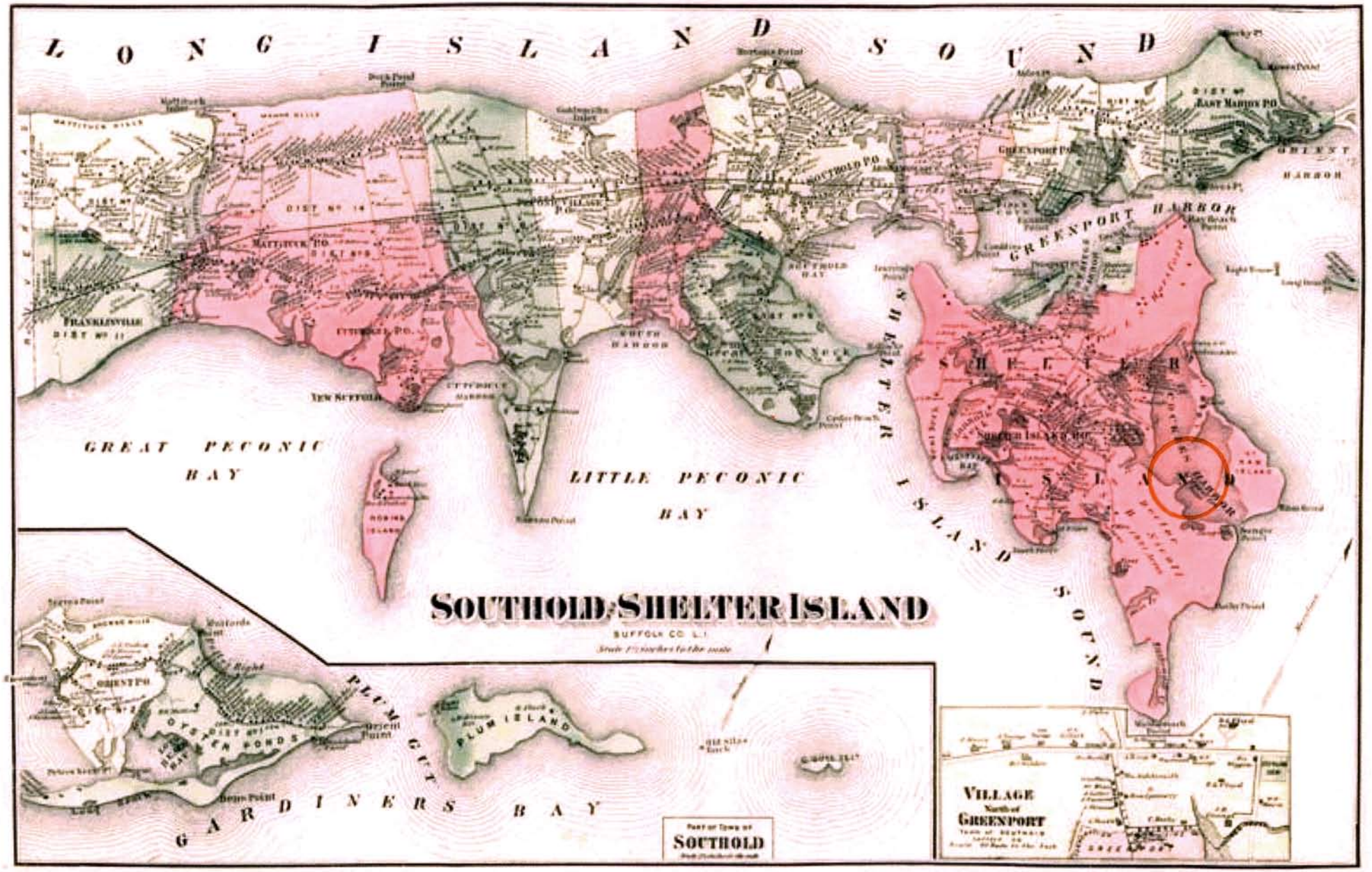
U.S. Coast Survey. *Map No. 69. Shelter Island.*
T.A. Jenkins, surveyor. 1838.



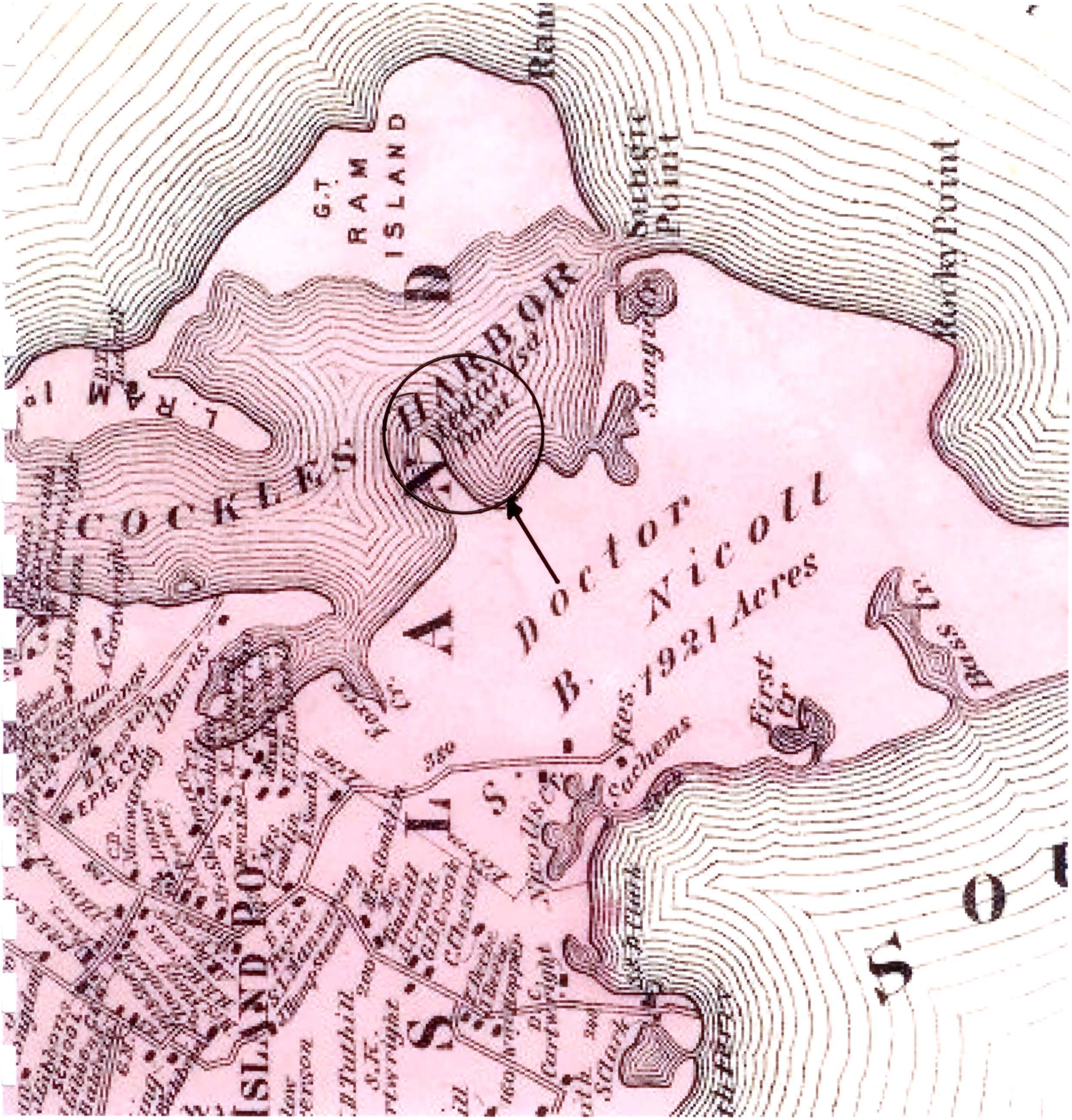
Mather, W.W. *Geological Map of Long Island*. 1842.


Colton, J.H. *Travellers Map of Long Island*. 1852.
NEW HAVEN
West Haven
Milford
Neck Pt.
East Haven
Branford
Guilford
Madison
Killingworth
Westbrook
Saybrook
Lyme
Connecticut
Stratford Pt.
Branford Reef
Sachems Hd.
Goose I.
Falkners I.
Hammonasset Pt.
Duck I.
Cornfield Pt.
Sndes Pt.
Griswolds Pt.
N.Y. to Allyns Point 125 m.
L A N D
S O U N D
NEW LONDON
Ft Trumbull
Ft Griswold
Groton
Allyns Point
R.I. to Boston 110 miles
Black Pt.
Light Boat
Bartletts Reef
N.Y. to Stonington 130 m.
R. Thames
Stonington
Watch Hill
R.I. to Boston 95 miles
The Race
Fishers I.
Lit. Gull I.
Gt. Gull I.
Plum I.
Plumb Gut
Orient
Oysters Pts.
Greenport
Hortons Pt.
Rocky Pt.
Millers Place
Woodville Landing
Rocky Point V.
Wading R.
Landing
Jerusha Landing
Roanoke Pt.
Duck Pond Pt.
Southold
Bating Hollow
Middle Island
Jericho
Northville
Cutchogue
Mattituck
Franklinville
New Suffolk
Old Aquebogue
Aquebogue
Riverhead
R. Peconic
Millville
Yaphank
St Georges Manor Sta.
Peconic Bay
James Pt.
Red Cedar Pt.
Robbin I.
Lit. Hog Neck
Farrington's Neck
Cedar Pt.
Ram head
SHELTER ISLAND
8700 Acres
GARDINERS BAY
Gardiners
3000 Acres
Island
Eastern Plain Pt.
Hog Cr. Pt.
Fire Place
West har
Sag Harbor
Wallers P.
North Sea
Seattle Hole
3 Mile Har.
The Springs
Oram I.
Neapeague Har.
Gulloden Pt.
False Pt.
Great P.
MONTAUK PT.
Fort P.
Napeague Beach
Amagansett
East Hampton
Wainscott
Sagg P.
Sagg V.
Bridgehampton
Millville
Mecox Bay
Southampton
Canoe Place
Good Ground
West Hampton
Eastchaboque
Quogue
Shinnecock Bay
East Bay
Beach
Moriches
Spoon's P.O.
Mastic Pt.
Carmans
Flanders
Mineola Hills
SOUTHAMPTON
EAST HAMPTON
OR SOUTHOLD BAY
PECONIC BAY
OCEAN
Map Division.
JAN 8 1916
Library of Congress

Chace, J. Map of Suffolk Co., L.I. New York. 1858.



1873 Beers, Comstock & Cline. ***Atlas of Long Island, Southold and Shelter Island.***



G.T. RAM ISLAND
L. RAM Id.
COCKLES
HARBOR
Doctor
B. Nicoll
Res. 1921 Acres
Rocky Point
First Cr.
Sachems
ISLAND PO.
EPIS. CH.

2.3.1 Francis Marion Smith (1846–1931)

Francis Marion Smith was a figure of considerable state and national significance. In the development of Shelter Island, he was also one of the most influential figures of his time. He represents the lasting impact that wealthy, urban, non-native inhabitants had on patterns of local land ownership and lifestyle at the turn of the 20th century, a phenomenon that swept Long Island from the 1880s through the Great Depression of the early 1930s. Estate-building in this period left an indelible mark on the Long Island landscape, not only in the form of major country houses and outbuildings set on extensive grounds, but also in a change in the socio-economic composition of the population as a whole. Smith's impact on Shelter Island was felt both as a result of his re-assembling numerous parcels of land and transforming a pre-existing 19th century dwelling into a country estate – in effect, reversing the contemporary evolution of land ownership which typically saw the subdivision of land holdings into smaller and smaller parcels – as well as in activities such as introducing exotic deer to create a private deer park and sponsoring charitable events to benefit local civic causes. His wife, Mary Rebecca (Thompson) Smith, for example, organized the annual harvest festivals that benefited the public library – social events that brought the local population and "summer people" together.

Smith had made his fortune elsewhere, however, by mining the mineral borax, which he processed and marketed nationwide under the "20 Mule Team Borax" brand that remained the industry leader for many decades. His influence on state and national history stemmed from his business interests and stretched over many decades, beginning with his prospecting adventures near Candelaria, Nevada, in 1872. Smith was born on February 2, 1846, on a farm in Richmond, Wisconsin, and left home after graduating from Milton College in 1867. He prospected for five years in Montana, Idaho, and Nevada before discovering what became the largest known deposit of borax and the source of his fortune:

> "… looking to the northwest, he was able to glimpse the gleaming white surface of a place called Teel's Marsh... It soon turned out that Smith had found the richest borax deposit in western Nevada. By speedily filing his locations, he gained title to the marsh and before the end of the year had a small refinery in operation. This was the true dawn of the borax industry in the United States… During those years he pioneered borax mining in Death Valley, switched ore recovery to underground mining, and made himself a multi-millionaire." [Hildebrand, Borax Pioneer, p. 6]

Smith was quick to secure his claim and begin mining the mineral, he was also innovative in promoting and marketing his product. In 1875, during a national depression, he opened a retail store and office at 185 Wall Street in New York City to expand the borax market. His advertising claims that borax would "clean black cashmere, cameos and coral," "keep milk and cream sweet" and prevent "diphtheria, lung fever and kidney trouble" may have been exaggerated, but they helped to popularize the cleaning additive in a prime market and in a period when sales were slumping

nationwide. Smith's Pacific Coast Borax Company, having emerged as the industry leader in the 1890s as the result of such entrepreneurial instincts, would dominate both national and worldwide markets for the product until well into the 20th century.

To expand the processing of raw minerals that formed the borax product, Smith worked with the renowned engineer and reinforced concrete innovator Ernest L. Ransome, who designed two refineries for him in West Alameda, California, and Bayonne, New Jersey. Ransome's California refinery was built in 1889 and is recognized for being the first structure of its kind to be built with reinforced concrete. It was followed in 1896 by the concrete Ferry Building in San Francisco, an integral part of Smith's transportation system (described below). Soon after, the two men formed the Ransome Concrete Machinery Company of Dunellen, New Jersey. Having secured numerous patents for manufacturing and applying reinforced concrete in the construction industry, Ransome finally perfected and patented a novel system of concrete construction in 1902 that paved the way for modern-day, concrete-framed factory construction.

Ransome holds the distinction of being the designer and builder of the first two reinforced concrete buildings in the world and each was a borax refinery built for F. M. Smith: the first in 1889 and the second in 1897-98. The later of the two was Smith's Pacific Coast Borax Refinery in Bayonne, New Jersey, which employed Ransome's latest innovations in reinforced concrete technology:

> "The time is so recent and reinforced concrete buildings are now so common [1912] that it is difficult to appreciate the boldness of the conception to construct a 4-story building, to sustain actual working loads of 400 pounds per square foot besides heavy machinery even on the top floor, out of a material until recently used almost exclusively for foundations, and considered capable of resisting only compressive loads."
> [Atlas Portland Cement Co., Reinforced Concrete in Factory Construction, 1912, p. 181]

Its inside gutted by fire in 1902, the reinforced concrete walls of the 1898 factory survived and were later retained in the reconstruction, thereby validating Ransome's innovative construction methods. Smith's association with the engineer extended to the domestic sphere as well; Ransome designed a graceful reinforced concrete, Japanese-inspired bridge on the grounds of Smith's Shelter Island estate, and it is thought that he also contributed his advice in constructing several outbuildings at "Presdeleau" and may have designed the first concrete sea wall that reinforced the elevated ground on Cedar (Taylor's) Island.

Great national and international success in the borax industry gave Smith the time and means to pursue other interests, including the creation of an integrated transportation infrastructure serving Oakland, California. He and his wife had built a mansion on 25 acres in Oakland known as "Arbor Villa" in 1893. Over a period of twenty years, he oversaw the creation of a multi-layered public transportation system linking Oakland with the neighboring metropolis of San Francisco by utilizing rail lines, electric streetcars

and improved ferry service that exploited the natural topography of the area.

"Borax" Smith and his wife, Mary, came to Shelter Island for the first time in the early 1890s, at about the same time they were planning their Oakland, California, estate "Arbor Villa." Their introduction to the area was probably due to Frank Colton Havens, a business partner in Oakland, California, whose father Wickham Havens was a Sag Harbor resident and whose family had lived on Shelter Island for many generations. By the 1890s, Shelter Island had become a popular summer destination for urban dwellers, and Frank and Mary first stayed at the Manhansett House on Dering Harbor in 1892. Not content to remain as tourists, they soon bought property and began assembling the "Presdeleau" estate. Their first purchase was a 42-acre tract in the southwesterly area of the island that included a late 18th century house overlooking the water, then owned by Hannah W. Cartwright, the widow of Captain Maltby P. Cartwright. A sequence of acquisitions followed in the 1890s: a stretch of adjoining Nicoll family land, giving them control of the entire cove; and multiple parcels from the Clark, Cartwright, Rogers, Griffing, Conklin and Havens families, all descendants of longtime Shelter Islanders and many of whom had moved to Riverhead, Brooklyn and elsewhere. By 1906, Frank and Mary Smith had assembled nearly 500 acres: the "Presdeleau" estate, encompassing 260 acres on Clark's Cove, and an additional 235 acres to the north of the highway on Sachem's Neck. The latter was acquired in 1899 from the estate of Charlotte Nicoll and included Cedar (later Taylor's) Island.

Frequent news reporting in the *Suffolk Times* during the late 1890s and after the turn-of-the-century reveals that Frank, his family and entourage traveled cross-country to occupy "Presdeleau" on Shelter Island during the summer months every year (June-October). Tragically, however, Mary died of a stroke in 1905. Frank, then aged 59, remarried his secretary, Evelyn Kate Ellis, and had four children with her between 1907 and 1913. Although life continued as before, Smith suffered severe business reverses in 1913 due to overextended loans and tightened banking regulations that caused the loss of his borax mines as well as land investments and transportation infrastructure in California. While the family continued to visit "Presdeleau," it was not until the 1920s that Smith regained his fortune through the discovery of another borax mine in Nevada. But having parlayed his business connections and acumen once again into a controlling interest in the newly formed West End Mining Company, Smith suffered a series of strokes and left the firm in 1926, having amassed a second fortune by the age of eighty. He died five years later, in 1931.

Frank had already lost title to Cedar (Taylor's) Island, however, which was only a small portion of the 235-acre, Sachem's Neck property acquired in 1899. As part of a 1921 court settlement, the Central National Bank of Oakland (California) forced the sale of his real estate holdings in Suffolk County to resolve outstanding indebtedness dating back to 1913. The large Sachem's Neck parcel was auctioned to satisfy Frank's obligations to the California bank, although "Presdeleau" was held in his wife's name and therefore remained beyond the reach of the courts. Title to Sachem's Neck, including Cedar Island, was transferred to Ernest A. Bigelow of Oyster Bay who was acting on behalf of a land developer, Avalon Incorporated. The large parcel was then acquired by

Otto Kahn, the noted financier and philanthropist whose country estate, "Oheka," was located in Cold Spring Harbor. There is no evidence to suggest, however, that Kahn ever improved the property. Much of the Sachem's Neck parcel remained undeveloped throughout the 20th century and is preserved today as the Mashomack Preserve. Cedar Island, having been partitioned from the larger holding, remained unaltered until its acquisition in 1940.

2.3.2 S. Gregory Taylor (1888–1948)

S. Gregory Taylor, who enlarged and converted Francis M. Smith's log picnic shelter into a habitable dwelling, is significant primarily as a successful New York City *hotelier* who became prominent in the years leading up to World War II. Unlike his predecessor Smith, however, who traced his ancestral roots to an early American family, Taylor was a Greek emigrant who came to New York City in search of a fortune and found it in the hotel industry. Like Smith, however, Taylor found opportunity in the New World and through hard work and an entrepreneurial spirit, developed considerable personal wealth.

Taylor emigrated in 1908 at the age of twenty, worked his way up in the hotel business from bellhop to manager, and in 1925 leased a fifteen-story residential hotel named *The Buckingham* located at 57th Street and Sixth Avenue. It was the first of several New York hotels that Taylor would later own or manage; in 1928, he opened *The Montclair* on Lexington Avenue between 49th and 50th Streets. Following these business ventures, Taylor opened the *Hotel Dixie* on Broadway between 42nd and 43rd Streets (1930) and the fashionable new *Hotel St. Moritz* on Central Park South and Sixth Avenue (1930), which boasted numerous terrace apartments, penthouses and a dancing salon on the 31st floor. The *Hotel St. Moritz* was one of the most advertised hotels of the period, appearing often in the *New York Times*' notices as having a fashionable nightclub (the *Café de la Paix*) and magnificent views of Central Park (the so-called *Sky Garden*). Taylor's European background evidently led to his inspiration to transform Sixth Avenue into New York City's "*Champs Elysees*." In 1940, he sponsored the planting of 292 trees along Sixth Avenue from 59th Street to 8th Street; his vision, although never fully realized, included construction of an arch patterned on the *Arc de Triomphe* at the Sixth Avenue entrance to Central Park.

Taylor's civic interests and influence focused on national and international levels. As a successful Greek-American, he expressed concern for his fellow countrymen both in the United States and in his home country. In November 1940, he led the American effort to raise aid for Greece during World War II and organized employees of the *St. Moritz* to join the effort. He also founded the Greek War Relief Association that year, and in 1941 raised funds for Greek air-raid shelters with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's assistance. In 1942, Taylor was honored at a luncheon at the *St. Moritz* attended by King George II of Greece and the Archbishop Athenagoras for his contributions to the war effort; at the time, he was serving as president of the Hellenic Cathedral and Federation of Hellenic Churches of the City of New York. Taylor continued to distinguish himself in civic affairs after the war by dedicating time to the Greek War Relief Association of which he remained chairman, and in service to the Greek Mariners Club, of which he was also chairman of the Board of Directors.

S. Gregory Taylor acquired Cedar Island from Shelter Island Developments, Inc., on April 21, 1940. His address on the deed was given as the St. Moritz Hotel in Manhattan. It is speculated that Taylor learned of the island through his friendship with fellow Greeks, the Foultes, who summered on nearby Ram Island and operated a

restaurant in New York City. Taylor died of a heart attack on February 22, 1948, at the age of fifty nine. He was buried on his island overlooking the harbor. In 1944, as a stipulation of his will, he had left a life interest in Taylor's Island to his nephew, Stephen Stephano, with the condition that title would ultimately pass to the Town of Shelter Island. It would seem that the young Stephano, a resident of Philadelphia and only fifteen years of age at the time of his uncle's death, had little use for Taylor's Island. The property was essentially abandoned for a decade, until its chance discovery by its next occupant, Andrew Arkin.

2.3.3 Andrew Arkin

For many years following Taylor's death, the island was occupied and maintained by Andrew Arkin (1958 – 1980). Arkin was a New York City dress manufacturer and business executive who discovered Taylor's Island in the late 1950s while searching Shelter Island by air for a summer place [see: **6. Appendices**]. Arkin recalls the circumstances as follows:

> I found Greg Price, [a] capable, blind realtor, assisted by his wife. He researched and reported the Island's status: It had long been owned by J. Gregory Taylor, a Greek-American who had built the St. Moritz Hotel in New York. He owned the Island for many years, loved it, and planned to be buried there. He had willed it upon his demise to his young nephew, Steve Stephano, his sister's son, for Steve's lifetime and then to Shelter Island. He had arranged a trust fund to keep up his grave, but a few months before his death had moved the funds into a share of a Greek tanker and never replaced them. During the ensuing years the Island had fallen into severe disrepair.
> [Arkin, manuscript, n.d.]

Arkin's timely intervention in the repair and maintenance of the island and the little cabin that occupied the site may well be the reason that the building remains standing today. As Arkin explains:

> Through Greg Price, I contacted nephew, Steve, from a well-known Philadelphia specialty cigarette making family. I secured a five year lease on the property for zero dollars--with two provisos: I would restore the Cape Cod house and the small generator house- also, Steve's mother, Taylor's sister, could visit the her brother's grave when she wished. Thus began my twenty-two years of stewardship…
> [Arkin, manuscript, n.d.]

The family of Constantine and Stephen Stephano, makers of the popular *Rameses*, *Stephana* and *Smiles* cigarette brands, had emigrated from Epirus, Greece, in the late 19th century. The Stephano brothers first sold cigarettes on the streets of New York, worked in tobacco shops, and then settled in Philadelphia to build their own business. They became one of the most prosperous private cigarette manufacturers in America. S. Gregory Taylor's sister Martha married Stephen Stefano's son, Constantine, in 1932; their son, also named Stephen, was Taylor's nephew and it was he who inherited a life interest in Taylor's Island with his uncle's death in 1948. The young man evidently had no use for the property, however, and left it unimproved or maintained for a decade before Andrew Arkin's arrival in 1958.

Arkin terminated his lease in 1980, and after the death of Stephen Stephano, title to the island reverted to the Town of Shelter Island in 1997. The Taylor's Island

Preservation and Management Committee was then formed to provide the Town with direction and support in the future preservation of the island.

Historic Maps

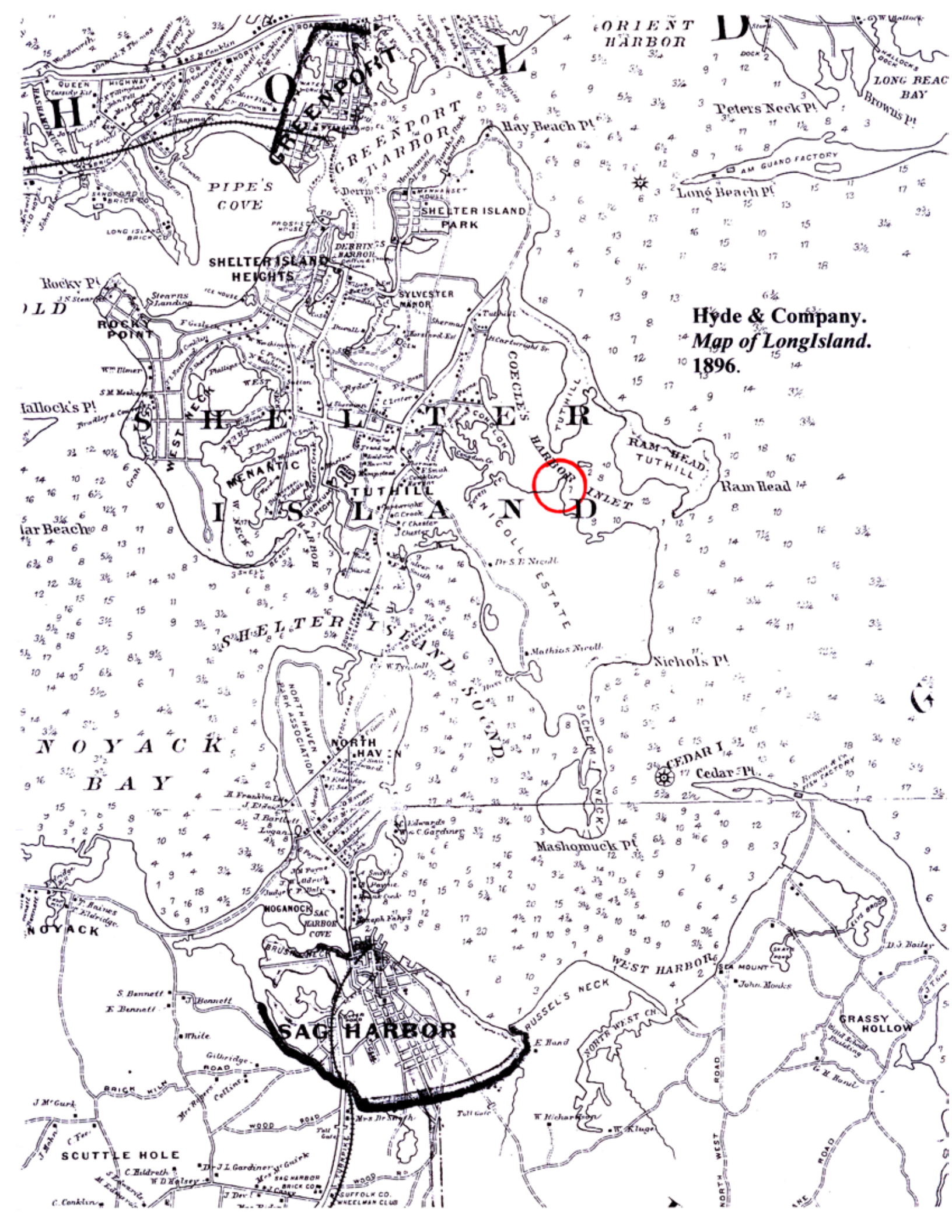
1896. Hyde & Company. *Map of Long Island*. Brooklyn (detail).

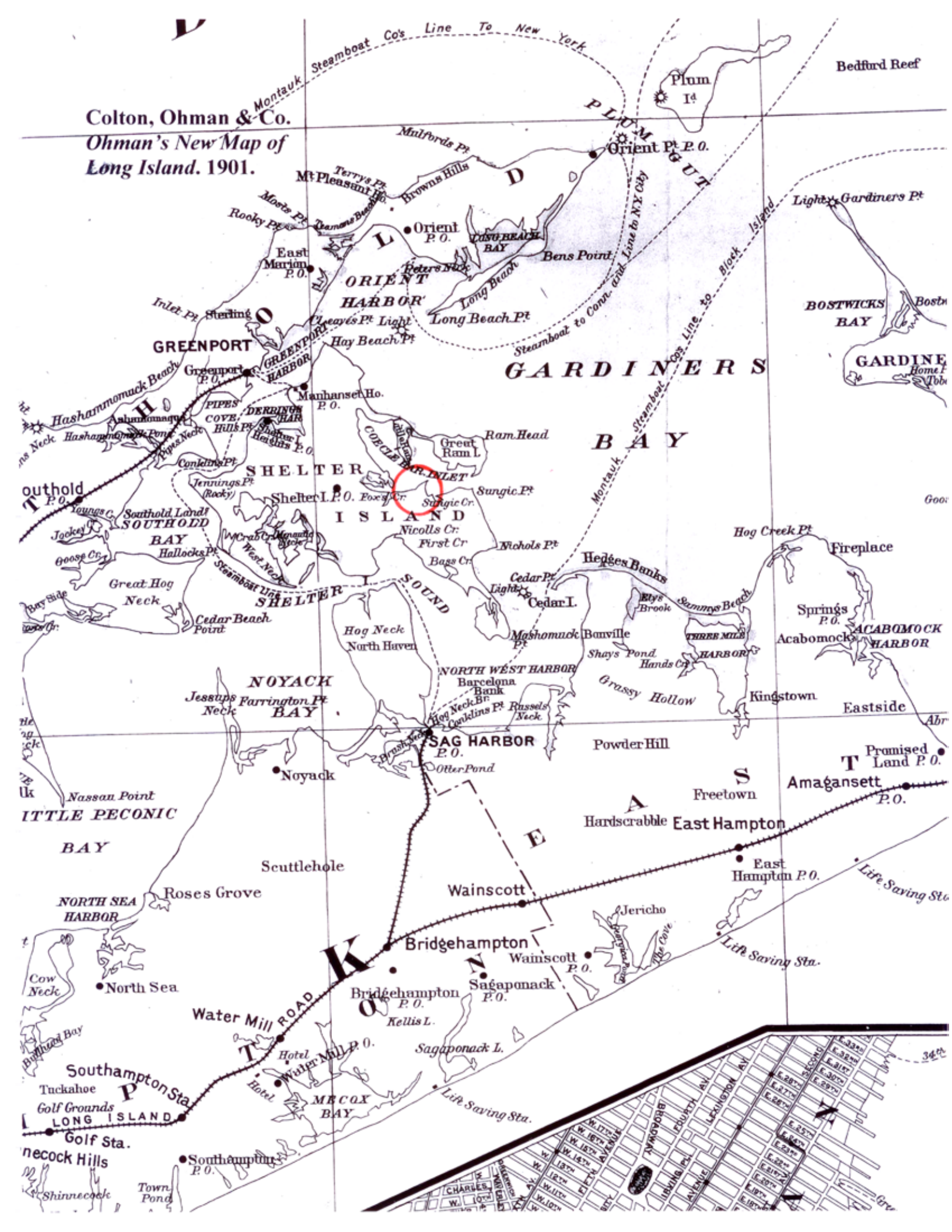
1901. Colton, Ohman & Co. *Ohman's New Map of Long Island*. New York (detail).

1904. U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. *Shelter Island Quadrangle*. 1904 (detail).

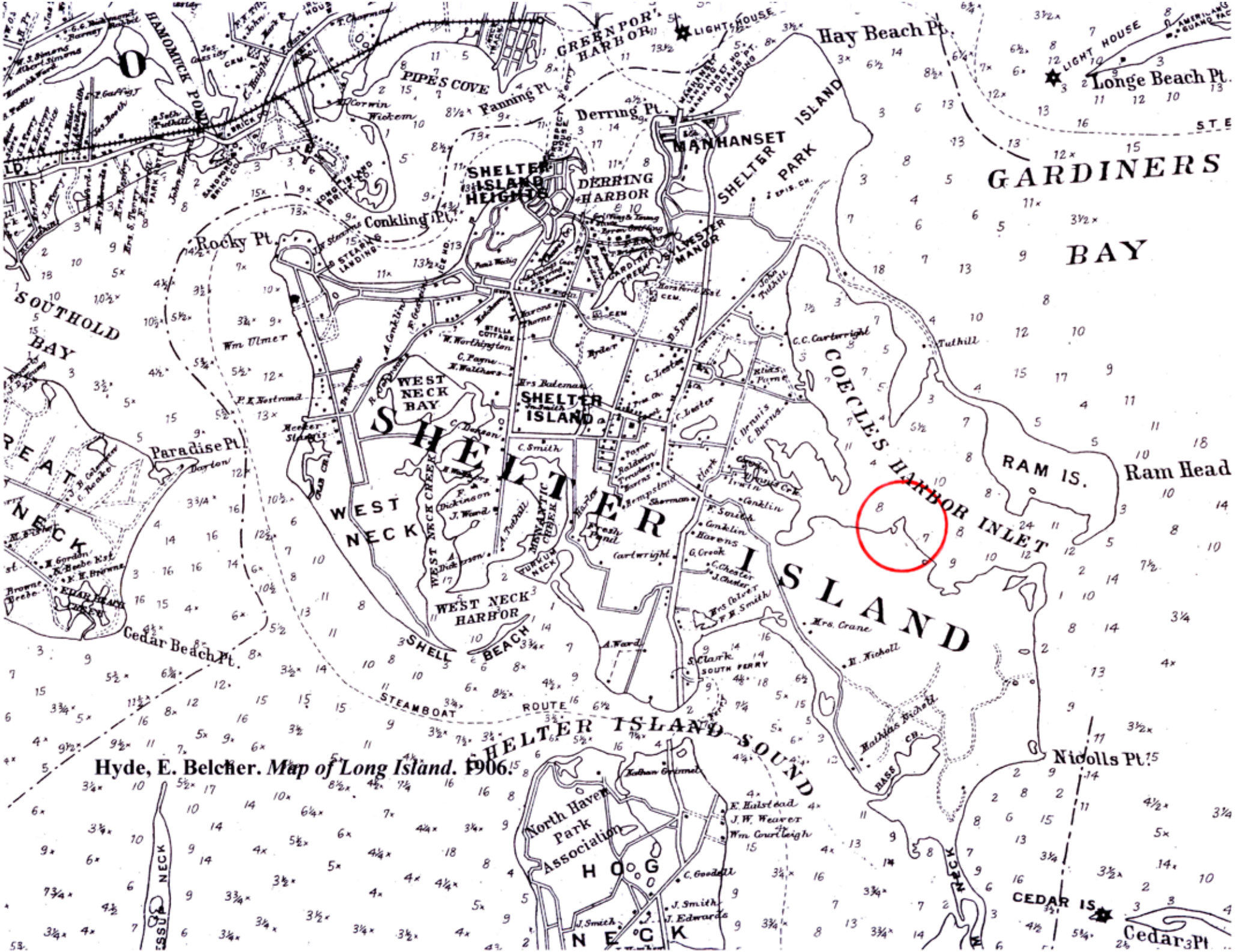
1906. Hyde, E. Belcher. *Map of Long Island*. Brooklyn (detail).

1916. Hyde, E. Belcher. *Atlas of Suffolk County*. Vol. Two. Brooklyn & New York (detail).

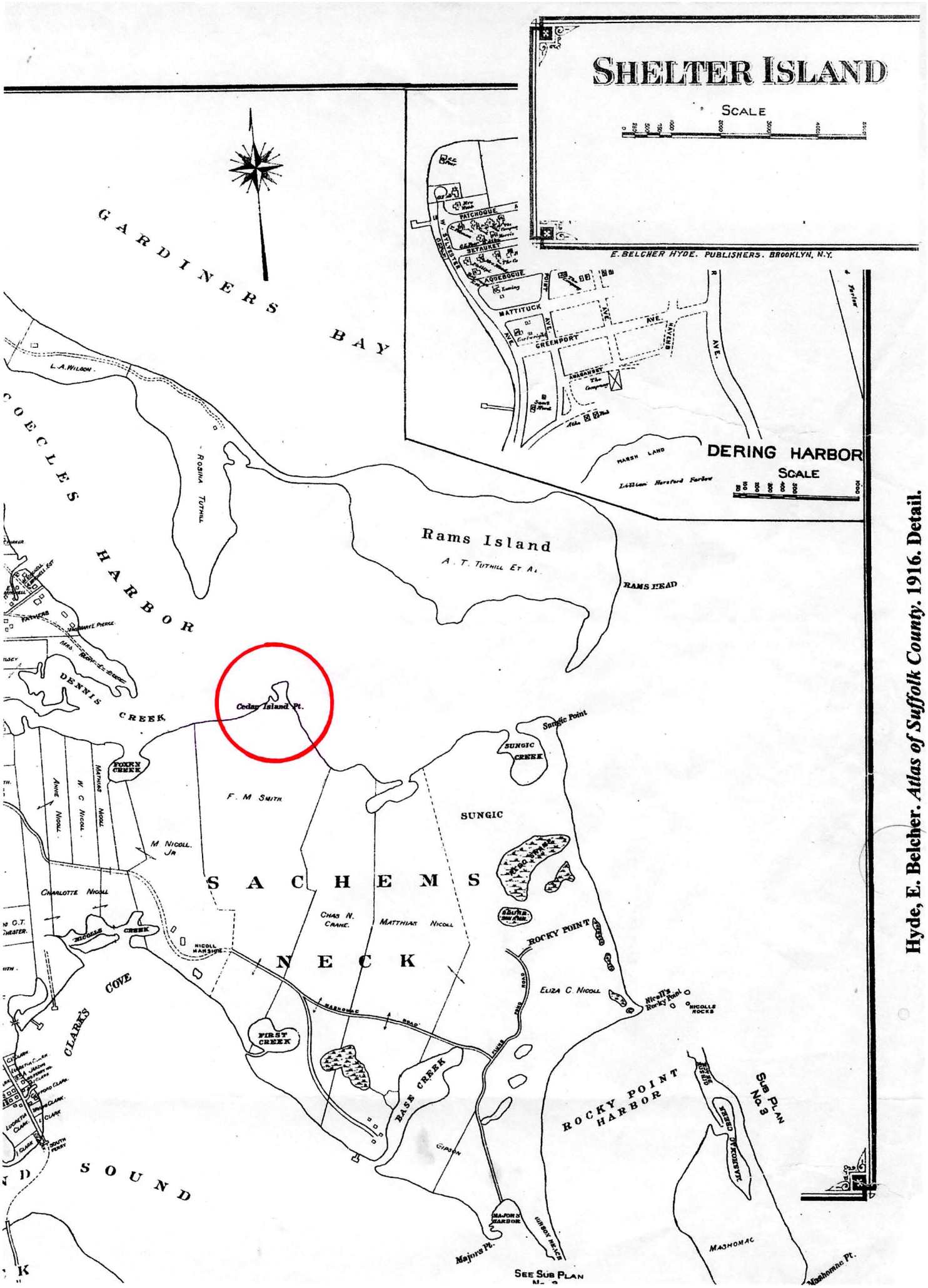

Hyde & Company.
Map of LongIsland.
1896.
GREENPORT
GREENPORT HARBOR
ORIENT HARBOR
Peters Neck Pt
Hay Beach Pt
Long Beach Pt
LONG BEACH BAY
Browns Pt
AM GUANO FACTORY
PIPE'S COVE
SHELTER ISLAND PARK
SHELTER ISLAND HEIGHTS
DERRIMS HARBOR
SYLVESTER MANOR
Rocky Pt
ROCKY POINT
Stearns Landing
Hallock's Pt
SHELTER ISLAND
WEST NECK
MENANTIC
TUTHILL
COECLE'S HARBOR
TUTHILL INLET
RAM HEAD
Ram Head
NICOLL ESTATE
Dr S.B. Nicoll
Mathias Nicoll
Nichols Pt
SHELTER ISLAND SOUND
NOYACK BAY
NORTH HAVEN
NORTH HAVEN PARK ASSOCIATION
SACHEM NECK
CEDAR I
Cedar Pt
Mashomuck Pt
NOYACK
MOGANOCK
SAG HARBOR COVE
SAG HARBOR
WEST HARBOR
RUSSELS NECK
NORTH WEST CH
GRASSY HOLLOW
SCUTTLE HOLE
BRICK MILL
Gilbridge ROAD
WOOD ROAD
NORTH WEST ROAD
SEA MOUNT
John Monks
E Bond
W Richardson
W Kluge
S Bennett
E Bennett
J Bennett
White
J McGurk
C Tee
Mrs Rogers
Collins
Mrs Dr Storch
Toll Gate
C Baldreth
W D Halsey
Dr J L Gardiner
Mrs McGurk
SAG HARBOR BRICK CO
SUFFOLK CO. WHEELMAN CLUB
C Conklin
D J Bailey
G M Hand
Wild Rose Publishing


Colton, Ohman & Co.
Ohman's New Map of Long Island. 1901.
Montauk Steamboat Co's Line To New York
Bedford Reef
Plum Id
PLUM GUT
Mulfords Pt
Orient Pt P.O.
Mt Pleasant Ho.
Terry's Pt
Browns Hills
Moors Pt
Rocky Pt
Orient P.O.
East Marion P.O.
ORIENT HARBOR
Peters Nk
Long Beach
Cozy Beach Bay
Bens Point
Light Gardiners Pt
Steamboat to Conn. and Line to N.Y. city
Block Island
Inlet Pt
Sterling
Cleaves Pt Light
Long Beach Pt
BOSTWICKS BAY
GREENPORT
GREENPORT HARBOR
Hay Beach Pt
Greenport P.O.
Hashamomuck Beach
Manhanset Ho. P.O.
GARDINERS BAY
Steamboat Cos Line to
Montauk
PIPES COVE
DERRINGS HAR
Hills Pt
Shelter I Heights P.O.
Hashamomuck Pond
Pipes Neck
Conkelins Pt
Great Ram I.
Ram Head
COECLES HAR. INLET
SHELTER ISLAND
Jennings Pt (Rocky)
Shelter I. P.O.
Fox Cr
Sungic Cr
Sungic Pt
Southold T P.O.
Youngs C
Southold Landing
SOUTHOLD BAY
Jockey C
Crab C
Meeting House Neck
West Neck
Hallocks Pt
Goose Cr
Nicolls Cr
First Cr
Bass Cr
Nichols Pt
Hog Creek Pt
Fireplace
Hedges Banks
Steamboat Line
Great Hog Neck
Bay Side
Cedar Beach Point
SHELTER ISLAND SOUND
Cedar Pt Light
Cedar I.
Ely's Brook
Sammys Beach
Springs P.O.
ACABOMOCK HARBOR
Acabomock
Hog Neck
North Haven
Mashomuck Pt
Bonville
THREE MILE HARBOR
Shays Pond
Hands Cr
NORTH WEST HARBOR
Barcelona Bank
Grassy Hollow
Kingstown
Eastside
NOYACK BAY
Jessups Neck
Farrington Pt
Hog Neck Bar
Conklins Pt
Russels Neck
SAG HARBOR P.O.
Powder Hill
Brush Neck
Otter Pond
Promised Land P.O.
Noyack
Nassan Point
LITTLE PECONIC BAY
Freetown
Amagansett P.O.
Hardscrabble
East Hampton
Scuttlehole
East Hampton P.O.
Life Saving Sta
Roses Grove
Wainscott
NORTH SEA HARBOR
Jericho
Bridgehampton
Wainscott P.O.
Cow Neck
North Sea
Bridgehampton P.O.
Sagaponack P.O.
Water Mill ROAD
Kellis L.
Sagaponack L.
Hotel
Water Mill P.O.
Southampton Sta
Tuckahoe
Golf Grounds
LONG ISLAND
MECOX BAY
Life Saving Sta.
Golf Sta.
Southampton P.O.
Shinnecock Hills
Town Pond
Shinnecock

1904 *USGS Shelter Island Quadrangle*, detail.



Hyde, E. Belcher. *Map of Long Island.* 1906.



Hyde, E. Belcher. *Atlas of Suffolk County*. 1916. Detail.

2.4 Cabins & shelters: 19th & 20th century context

The structure on Taylor's Island, which originated as a simple log shelter assembled c. 1900, was enlarged c. 1940 into a 2-bedroom cottage or "cabin" with a central heating system, electricity, indoor plumbing and a 3-story tower. It was conceived only as a rustic retreat for picnicking and entertainment, however, and in its original form embodied the characteristics of the Rustic or Adirondack style that was popular immediately before and after the turn of the 20th century. Distinctive features of the style typically included: authentic log wall construction; unfinished cedar poles employed as porch posts, beams and rafters; an over-scaled stone chimney and hearth; and architectural details that incorporated bark-faced twigs and branches.

As first built, the single story structure incorporated no amenities other than that of providing shelter from the elements. Four decades later, however, with its original architectural features intact, the shelter lent itself to the needs of a new owner and was enlarged as a cabin with bedrooms, bathrooms and a kitchen with running water and a heating system. The original space was preserved and saw continued use as an all-purpose living and dining room. The c. 1940 program transformed the building into a habitable dwelling, and the architectural elements associated with the additions are characteristic of the later period of construction. Notable features include the simulated log walls that employ rustic cabin siding, a contemporary form of exterior cladding that was not only sympathetic in design to the original building but also characteristic of its construction period. Other architectural details that are characteristic of the period are the reproduction 18th century style door hinges and thumb latches, brass lighting fixtures and diamond-paned casement windows. A design feature that is also indicative of the period is the stylized profile of the balusters which are cut in the form of fish silhouettes. These are preserved in both the interior tower stair and on the exterior balcony railing. Like the original c. 1900 shelter, the c. 1940 expanded cabin preserves architectural fabric that is characteristic and expressive of its construction period.

Few American architectural forms are as iconic as the log cabin. In a country that is dominated historically by wood-framed construction, the log cabin symbolizes the most rudimentary – and often heroic – of all structural forms, having associations with northern European settlers who transported their building traditions and technologies as they spread out across the western frontier. It has been said that "no other architectural form has so captured the imagination of the American people as the log cabin." By the mid-19th century, the form took on even greater social significance:

> Political supporters of 1840 presidential candidate William Henry Harrison appropriated the log cabin as a campaign symbol. The log cabin was birthplace and home to young Abe Lincoln, as well as other national figures, and assumed by many 19th century historians to be the very first type of house constructed by English colonists.
> [Bomberger, *The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings*, 1991, p. 2]

Although the mythic origins of log cabins and log construction were proven

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11 feet. The floor is of narrow pitch pine boards, and the seats along each side of narrow chestnut boards bordered with cedar. Both of

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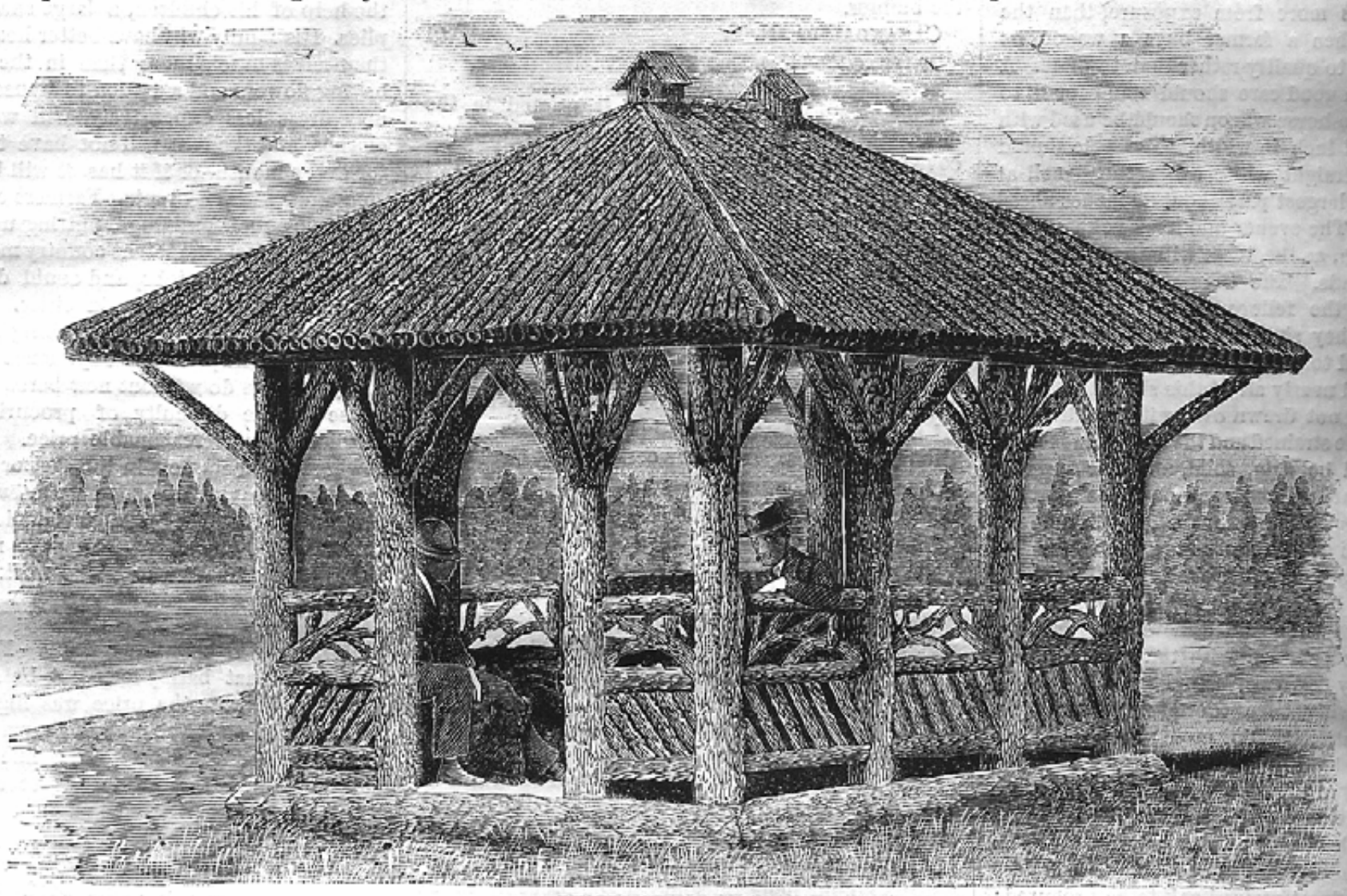
forgotten, and now we must at thi
peat for the benefit of our eastern



RUSTIC SUMMER-HOUSE.

(Manufactured by James King, New Haven, Conn., and sent in sections to the residence of Mr. Orange Judd. Mr. King retains the copyright of the photograph and engraving.)

ses, arbors, and bridges, the Red Cedar
or it is not only very durable, but the
f its branches are useful, and the color

these woods and the red cedar which makes up all the rest, are almost imperishable, so that the structure may stand fifty or a hundred years

and shape shown in the engrav
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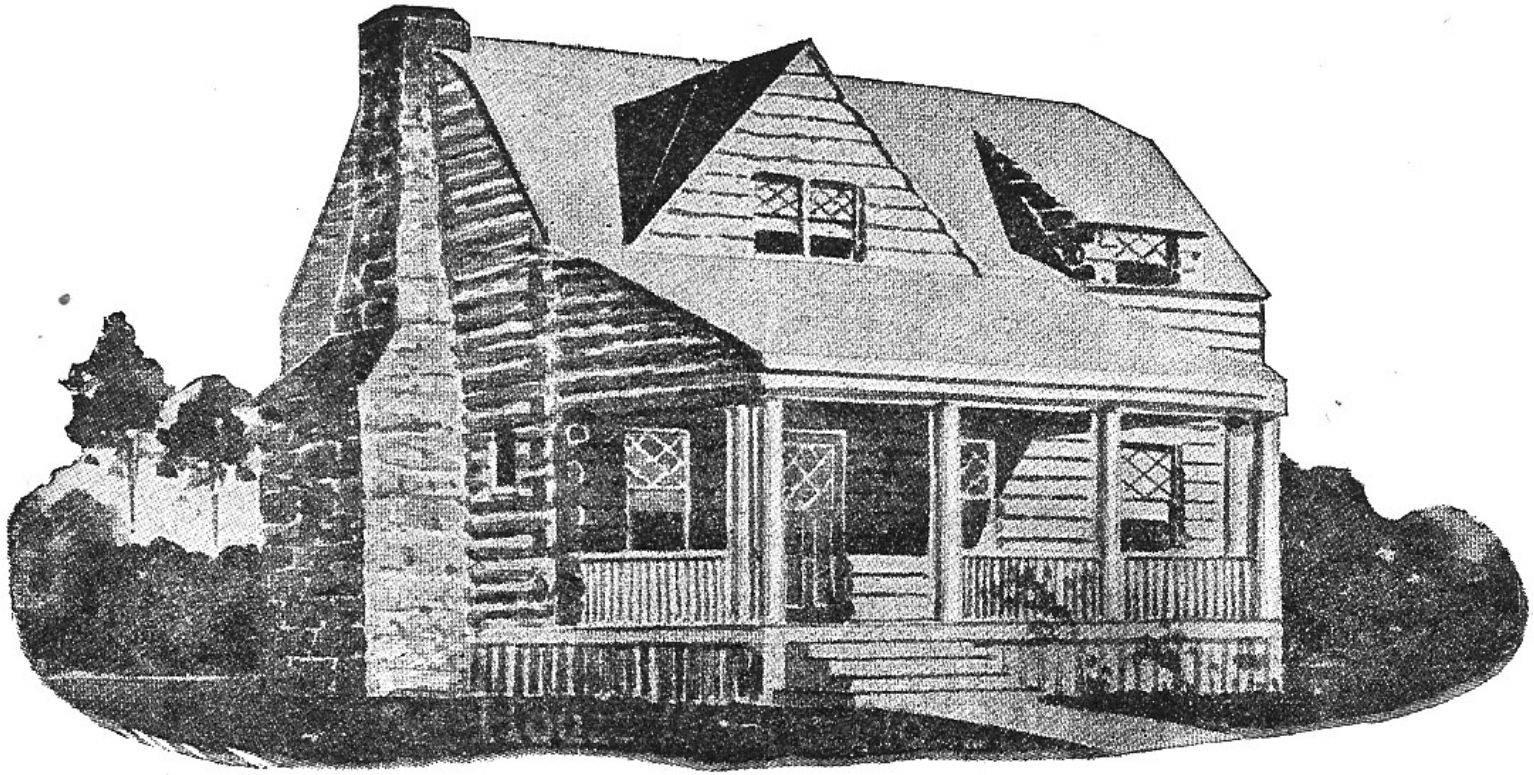
A little later orange colored corr

untrue by 20th century historians, the misconceptions persisted. The rustic form was revived in the late 19th century as Americans in greater numbers began to enjoy the great outdoors, in particular the State and National Parks, which consciously employed the building form for visitor centers, cabins and even large hotels:

> In the 1870s, wealthy Americans initiated the Great Camp Movement for rustic vacation retreats in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York. Developers such as William Durant, who mused natural materials, including wood shingles, stone, and log – often with its bark retained to emphasize the Rustic style – designed comfortable summer houses and lodges that blended with the natural setting…
>
> From the turn of the century through the 1920s, Gustav Stickley and other leaders of the Craftsman Movement promoted exposed log construction. During the 1930s and 40s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) used log construction extensively in many of the country's Federal and State parks to build cabins, lean-tos, visitor centers, and maintenance and support buildings that are still in service. [Bomberger, *The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings*, 1991, p. 3]

It was against this historical backdrop and in this period that Francis and Mary Smith built their log shelter on Cedar Island. They had vacationed in the Adirondacks in the 1890s prior to their first visit to eastern Long Island, where they evidently drew inspiration for the structure. The great camps and other "rustic" architecture that they saw in upstate New York would have provided ample precedent for the small recreational building that they later constructed in the naturalistic setting of their Long Island estate. The building may have even conjured up memories of Smith's own rustic, hand-built cabin that he and Mary had lived in while prospecting borax in Death Valley, California, a facsimile of which he had reconstructed on their Oakland estate in the 1890s. The log shelter constructed at "Presdeleau" c. 1900 was therefore not only architecturally suited to its time, place and purpose, but also a highly personal expression of Francis M. Smith's own frontier experience.

S. Gregory Taylor preserved the log shelter that his predecessor, Francis M. Smith, had created c. 1900 by incorporating it into a larger dwelling to serve as a rustic, naturalistic retreat from the glamour of metropolitan New York City. By 1940, when Taylor acquired the property, he was at the height of his career; owner and manager of the *Hotel Dixie* on Broadway and the fashionable *Hotel St. Moritz* on Central Park South, he enjoyed an affluent, urban lifestyle that rewarded him for nearly three decades of hard work in the hotel industry. The tiny island off the shore of Shelter Island, which was surrounded by Coecles Harbor, views of intermittent land masses and other bodies of water, and a largely undeveloped cedar forest was likely a "paradise" of a different sort for Taylor. While his business affairs immersed him in an urban lifestyle – which included many friends, family and business associates – his modest country property, set as it was in a seemingly remote landscape, was the perfect complement to urban living and enabled him to leave city life behind.



House Design No. 2078

Hodgson, Fred T. ***Practical Bungalows and Cottages for Town and Country*****. 1916.**

The cabin coincides with the beginning of the vacation or second home market on Long Island, a phenomenon that has steadily grown over the last half century and now constitutes the region's second largest "industry" (after tourism). While the preceding half-century (1880s-1930s) had witnessed the profound architectural impact of the Great Estates (of which Smith's "Presdeleau" was a prime example), the balance of the 20th century saw the construction of a highway network (e.g., the "Sunrise Trail") that not only facilitated access from suburban houses to metropolitan work places, but the "reverse" commute of seasonal vacationers and second home-owners. The trend continues unabated today. Taylor's converted dwelling is as expressive and characteristic of its decade as the original log building was of the earlier time period. The converted dwelling dates from the outset of the vacation home trend, whose owners sought to exploit what they discovered of Long Island's naturalistic features – its bays and ocean frontage, its woodlands and farms, and its "quaint" historic villages.

The circumstances surrounding the date of Taylor's addition to the log structure c. 1940 were recorded by Jim Nestor, whose father Alex served as its first caretaker:

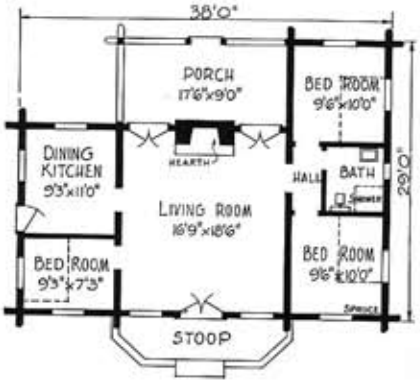
> … my parents and I enjoyed several summers (on the island) in the late 1940s. My father was a Greek employee, and I believe a distant relative of Gregory Taylor, who gave my father his first job in the USA working in the kitchen of the St. Moritz Hotel during the 1930s. During the late 1930s and into the 1940s my father worked summers on the island for Gregory Taylor, which included helping to build the sea wall. My father had put his initials, "AN" for Alex Nestor, on the top of the seawall using either pebbles or seashells, I don't recall which.
>
> In the big hurricane of 1938, when the island was badly flooded and heavily damaged, my father was alone on the island and very nearly had to use one of the doors in the main house as a raft to survive... Fortunately, the storm subsided before that was necessary. If I recall his story correctly, the water flooded the whole island, including the main house.
>
> [Jim Nestor, ms., collection of Taylor's Island Committee]

Through this account, it is known that the additions to the c. 1900 log structure were completed soon after Taylor's acquisition on the island in 1940.

As an urbanite of European origins, S. Gregory Taylor may have regarded the remote and rustic log structure on Cedar (Taylor's) Island as an especially evocative, "American" creation. As originally built, however, the log shelter was inadequate to function for overnight use. Lacking systems of any kind, it was a simple structure that had transformed the island into a picturesque destination while serving visitors only as a protection against the sun or rain. To inhabit the structure, Taylor enlarged it and installed plumbing, heating and electricity. Realizing the potential of its remarkable site, he also constructed a narrow, three-story tower that exploited commanding views of the surrounding bays and land masses. Despite these alterations, Taylor preserved the original building by attaching his new additions to the back; further, he finished the exterior of the new additions with cabin siding that simulated the appearance of the original log shelter, thus maintaining its rustic charm. He drew upon contemporary design

THE SPRUCE

FIVE ROOMS AND PORCH

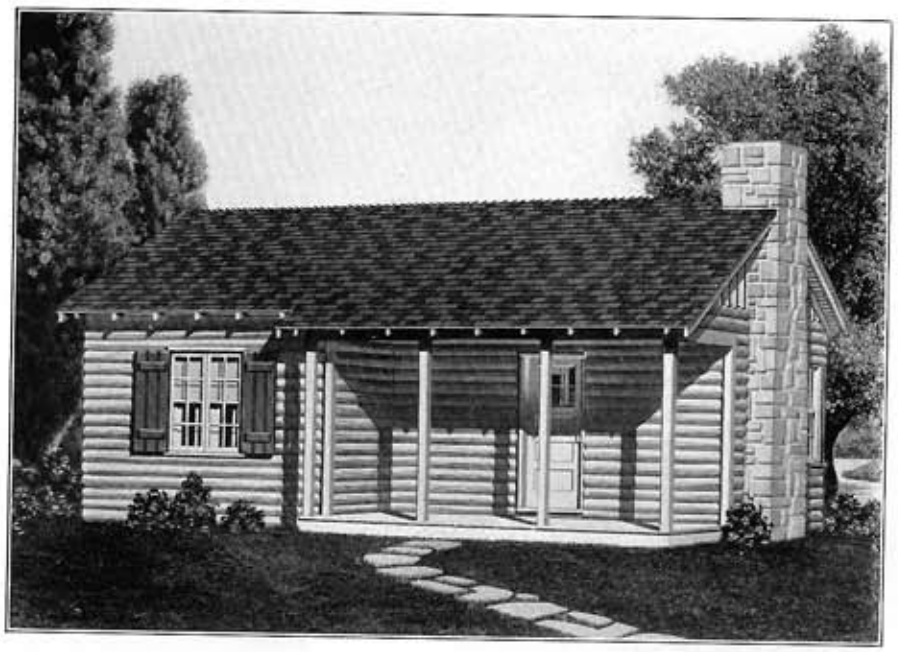


FLOOR PLAN

★ To spend the week-end or vacations in this attractive, rustic and efficient log cottage, will prove the theory that mental serenity and physical relaxation are coincidental with one's immediate environment or surroundings.

THE BOXWOOD

THREE ROOMS AND PORCH



FLOOR PLAN

★ Complete rest, and the delight of carefree vacationing is the purpose for which the charming Boxwood was designed. The lay-out, while being attractive, features efficiency. Unnecessary footsteps are eliminated in the floor plan design and enables the assurance of a real rest for the occupant.

c. 1937. *Summer Cottages and Camps*. Southampton Lumber Corporation, Southampton, N.Y.

prototypes such as those illustrated in the Southampton Lumber Company's "Summer Cottages and Camps" [c. 1937] to expand the existing log shelter into something suitable for overnight stays, and by doing so, followed the precedent of countless other Americans in this pre-war period. Taylor's cabin typifies the private camp movement of the time and remains an archetypal example of its form.

3.0 ARCHITECTURAL DATA

3.1 General remarks

3.1.1 Taylor's Island

The Smith-Taylor Cabin is located on Taylor's Island, formerly known as Cedar Island, which is a small land body situated in Coecles Harbor (Shelter Island, NY) that measures 1.188 acres in size. The island (Section 20/Block 02/Lot 01) is located in the southeasterly section of the Town of Shelter Island, and is owned and maintained by the town as an integral part of the Coecles Harbor Marine Water Trail. It is accessible at low tide from the main land, where a row of private homes (Mashomack-Coecles Harbor Association) fronts the harbor's edge. The island is surrounded by the large and environmentally significant, 2100-acre Mashomack Preserve (The Nature Conservancy).

Taylor's Island rises approximately eight feet above sea level and is surrounded by cast concrete sea walls and bulkheads. It preserves an authentic, "Adirondack" style log and cabin-sided building as well as a rustic, rubble stone wellhead. Other former improvements to the island, now lost but preserved in archival photographs, included a log-built wellhead and two cabin-sided guest cottages, one of which is believed to have contained a generator.

3.1.2 Smith-Taylor Cabin

The one-story, Smith-Taylor Cabin is the only habitable structure that remains standing on Taylor's Island today. It is irregular in massing and measures approximately 50 feet by 43 feet overall. It is distinguished by a central tower measuring approximately 7 feet square in section that rises three stories to a narrow, two-sided balcony overlooking Coecles Harbor. The ground floor of the building incorporates two distinct living areas, the largest of which is a rectangular, multi-purpose space constructed of logs dating c. 1900. The adjoining rooms extend to the east and south of this room – including a new "front" entryway on the west façade, two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a kitchen dating c. 1940 – and preserve exterior "cabin siding" that simulates the appearance of the original, authentic log building. (Non-historic vertical planking is employed in areas where the siding has been repaired.) The rooms that were added c. 1940 appear to have been built at the same time and correspond to the date in which the original building was enlarged, winterized and transformed into both a seasonal and year-round dwelling.

The architectural integrity of the entire building is high, both inside and out, despite the renewal of roofing material, conversion of two banks of windows, and the replacement of cabin siding on the south and west façades with vertical wood siding.

Ample physical and photographic evidence is preserved that documents the historic appearance of these façades, and investigation of the interior of the rooms confirms that their architectural detailing is virtually unaltered.

The transformation of the original log recreational building into a dwelling included the construction of an observation tower that took advantage of the island's spectacular site. It also introduced a small cellar to contain the boiler for a heating system, necessitated in part by the existence of running water and plumbing that were included in the expansion of the building. The additional rooms greatly increased the inside dimensions of the building; the cabin, which had measured only about 480 square feet, was increased in size by over 610 square feet to a total of 1,090 square feet, or more than double its original footprint. In addition, the construction of the three-story tower introduced an architectural feature that enabled its occupants to enjoy more extensive views of Coecles Harbor and the surrounding landscape.

The additions of c. 1940 converted a simple, unheated building into a dwelling that could be occupied overnight for extended periods of time. The additions were undertaken in such a way that the original building retained much of its integrity and overall appearance, and considerable effort was made to ensure that the new work blended with the old, or detracted as little as possible, in terms of both scale and architectural detailing. Thus, where authentic logs had been used in the original building, cabin siding was employed in the new work to simulate the effect of the old. Similarly, diamond-paned lights were used in doors and windows, emulating the original design. In short, the additions were relatively modest in scope and scaled in such a way that the original picnic shelter remained the predominant element in the massing of the cabin.

3.2 Description

The Smith-Taylor Cabin, which preserves features dating from two primary stages of construction (c. 1900 and c. 1940), is an unusual building that combines architectural fabric associated with the turn-of-the-20th-century, rustic Adirondack style with additions that were designed to harmonize with the original design. In its present configuration, it incorporates a wealth of surviving detail from each of its construction periods. The c. 1900 log building, conceived essentially as a recreational structure, remains largely intact as built, incorporating both exterior and interior features significant of its style and date of construction. These include its authentic log wall construction, cedar pole and branch porch components, three "twig" style doors, and an over-scaled stone fireplace. The c. 1940 additions, which respected the architectural style of the original building while enlarging it and changing its use into that of a habitable dwelling, employed cabin siding that simulated the original log walls and other details typical of the construction period. These include knotty pine paneling, diamond-paned windows and batten doors, and simulated 18th century style hardware and lighting devices. Non-historic fabric such as the replacement vertical board siding on sections of the later additions, and the remodeling of several windows, does not detract from the overall integrity of the building.

3.2.1 Exterior

The cabin's hipped roof incorporates two triangular windows facing east and west and set at opposite ends of the upper ridge line, thus forming the effect of clerestory lighting when viewed from inside. The roof is covered with composite tabbed shingles. The logs that make up the wall construction measure approximately 10" in circumference and are joined with vertical pegs chinked with mortar. Corner joints employ a technique of half-notching or coping that locks the logs into successive courses, allowing approximately one foot of each log to project beyond the corners. The condition of the log construction is relatively good; one small area at the north end of the east façade has deteriorated from exposure to water, however, revealing its internal system of assembly.

The porch incorporates a system of rustic cedar posts and braces, cedar rafters, and wood plank roof and floor boards. The cedar posts have been cleaned of their bark and are left undressed, preserving their irregular contours and the stumps of branches. The smaller braces that support the roof plate are also cedar branches that retain their rough, irregular surfaces. Several of these appear to have been replaced, although the present configuration of the roof frame is essentially identical to the original, as-built condition. The shed roof is supported on cedar poles that function as rafters, and sections of the roof planking also survive. The floor boards of the porch appear to date from the c. 1940 era.

The fenestration of the log building also dates from its alteration and enlargement as a house c. 1940. While the front door appears to remain as originally built, the windows flanking it were changed and the side entrances on the east and west facades

were widened to incorporate sidelights flanking pairs of glazed, multi-paned doors. Despite these alterations, the rustic character of the original "Adirondack" style structure is preserved and detailing such as the diamond-paned windows seen in the original building was carried into the design of the new additions. The front door, which appears recessed due to the projecting window bays that flank it, is of traditional panel construction although its three lower triangular panels are inset with bark-faced branches that emphasize the rustic design of the building, while its two upper glazed panels incorporate diamond-paned window lights.

The side doors are paired and glazed with twelve lights set above panels that match the narrow flanking sidelights. The original side door or window configuration is undocumented; inasmuch as the log wall construction on either side of the sidelights is undisturbed, it may be concluded that the doorways were widened c. 1940 and that the original openings accommodated single doors. Further confirmation of this hypothesis may be seen in the use of cabin siding set vertically on either side of the door openings, the use of which links the construction of these openings with the alteration of the house itself. Each of the paired multi-paned doors preserves hardware associated with its date of installation, including specialized drop bolts ("cremones") identified by the manufacturer's mark ("Russwin") and further identified as model no. 229.

The bay windows flanking the center door appear to date from the c. 1940 alteration, and provide built-in seating for the interior living-dining area. When compared with the narrower, paired diamond-paned casements that are documented to have been the original window type, it may be concluded that the alteration was prompted by the need to introduce more light into the room. It is interesting to note that parts of the original porch roof frame are incorporated into the construction of the bay windows.

The exterior of the additions now combines fabric that is original to the c. 1940 construction period as well as later repairs and alterations that are not historic. Ample evidence, both architectural and photographic, exists to discern the difference between the two and to ascertain the appearance of the building after its enlargement in the 1930s.

The additions are supported on a poured concrete foundation that encloses both a full cellar and crawlspace. This differs considerably from the original building, which is supported directly on the ground with large rocks. Construction of the additions utilized conventional balloon frame technology, not logs to match the existing building, and the new work was therefore covered with cabin siding to simulate the original. This siding is preserved in several places despite its more recent replacement: on the north wall of the east bedroom, on the third floor of the tower, and on the exterior wall of the new entry foyer. As described above, the siding is also evident on both sides of the multi-paned doors leading to the original building where it was utilized as wall infill. In areas where it has been replaced, on the east and south facades and on the second story of the tower, it is apparent from surviving physical and photographic evidence that it covered these walls as well.

The cabin siding measures 7 ½" wide by 1 ¾" thick and incorporates a ½" rabbet

for overlapping successive courses. This specification conforms to illustrations of the material from trade catalogs of the 1930s and is considered typical of the period.

The three-story tower, constructed when the original one-room log building was enlarged with bedchambers, bathrooms, kitchen and new side entry, provides the building with an observation deck with expansive views of Coecles Harbor, the adjoining "mainland" (now Mashomack Preserve), Little Ram and Big Ram Islands, and beyond. The tower is only roughly seven feet square at each level, and rises to a third story in which a narrow balcony is integrated into its design on two sides. A steep staircase distinguished by fret-sawn balusters resembling fish in profile is intact as built. Other architectural features of note include the hexagonally framed roof structure, diamond-paned windows on the second story and nautical porthole windows on the third story.

The tower preserves its cabin siding on the third story. Physical and photographic evidence supports the fact that this original siding type was also utilized on the second story where it has since been replaced with vertical board planking. Paint evidence observed elsewhere on the site confirms that the c.1940 cabin siding was originally painted red and that the earlier log building was painted red to match the additions.

3.2.2 Interior

The interior of the log building preserves important original detailing, including an imposing rubble stone chimney centered against a long wall opposite the front entry, and a rustic ceiling constructed of cedar log rafters supporting board roof planking. Other features dating from its original, c. 1900 construction period include two interior doors that flank the chimney. These doors incorporate a unique configuration of bark-faced branches that infill the upper and lower panels in a chevron design. While the doors are unquestionably associated with the c. 1900 construction period, close examination of their rails and stiles reveals them to have been reduced in size and re-hung with hardware associated with the c. 1940 alterations, indicating that the original doorways were reconfigured. Inasmuch as the doors are located on the back wall of the building, it may be surmised that they were originally closet doors and required only minimal alteration in the later period to function as entryways to the adjoining rooms.

The large, twenty-four by twenty foot room continues to function as an all-purpose living and dining space consistent with its original design. Its side walls are vertically paneled, perhaps a c. 1940 alteration, and it is still dominated by the colossal rubble stone chimney centered on the long back wall opposite the front door. Tapering as it rises through the roof, the chimney measures nearly six feet in width at its base and its firebox is nearly 4 feet wide. The hearth is flanked by two large, round stones that seem to function as seats, whereas the chimney itself incorporates smaller local fieldstones of various shapes and colors including a quartz stone that is featured as the keystone above the firebox. The floor of the firebox is constructed of fire bricks bearing the maker's mark, "FJD."

The ceiling of the room is the exposed underside of the roof, composed of symmetrically spaced cedar poles functioning as rafters supporting a layer of roof boards that preserve an application of green paint. The upper portion of the ceiling is lit by the triangular windows positioned at each end of the ridge.

The interior of the new additions appears intact as built. The consistent use of knotty pine paneling and the uniformity of the hardware on doors and windows indicate that this fabric is original to the 1940s. In addition, the enameled porcelain kitchen sink, corner bathroom wash basin and enameled steel kitchen cabinet are all intact from this period.

As stated above, the exterior envelope of the original all-purpose building was greatly enlarged to incorporate the spaces considered necessary for weekend or year-round living. Inasmuch as plumbing and heating were introduced into the scheme, a full cellar was dug under the east section of the additions and a poured concrete foundation constructed in which the heating plant was installed. (The second bedroom, bathrooms and kitchen are supported on poured concrete footings above crawl space.) The heating unit is a coal-fired boiler located beneath the east bedroom, situated in such a way that it discharges heat into the base of the tower above it, as well as into the adjoining spaces via ductwork located within the crawlspace. The full cellar is accessed via an outside stair against the south wall of the east bedroom. There is no access into the cellar from inside the building.

Unifying the spaces added in the 1940s is the consistent use of door hardware and lighting devices that are characteristic of the period. The hardware style is intentionally "rustic" or "antique" and reinforces the overall effect of the building and its site. Iron "H" and "H-L" type hinges that simulate the wrought iron hardware of 18th century hand-manufacture are utilized on the interior doors, whereas bolder strap hinges with simulated hammered finishes are employed on the exterior doors. Door latches are consistent with the hinges and are reproduction "Suffolk" type latches inspired by 18th century designs. (Matching door hardware is also utilized on the re-hung interior doors of the original cabin as well as on its front, exterior door.)

Lighting fixtures, primarily sconces, are intended to look "old-fashioned" as well and carry the "rustic/antique" theme to its logical conclusion. These are placed in each of the bedrooms and in the entrance foyer.

3.3 Alterations & repairs

The primary alterations to the building occurred about 1940 when the original picnic shelter was enlarged and transformed for use as an overnight cabin. This major architectural program is treated in this report as a major stage in the building's evolution, however, and not as an alteration. Subsequent to this renovation, the cabin underwent a number of minor alterations and repairs, none sufficient in scope to change the massing of the building or compromise its architectural integrity. The following section outlines these alterations and repairs.

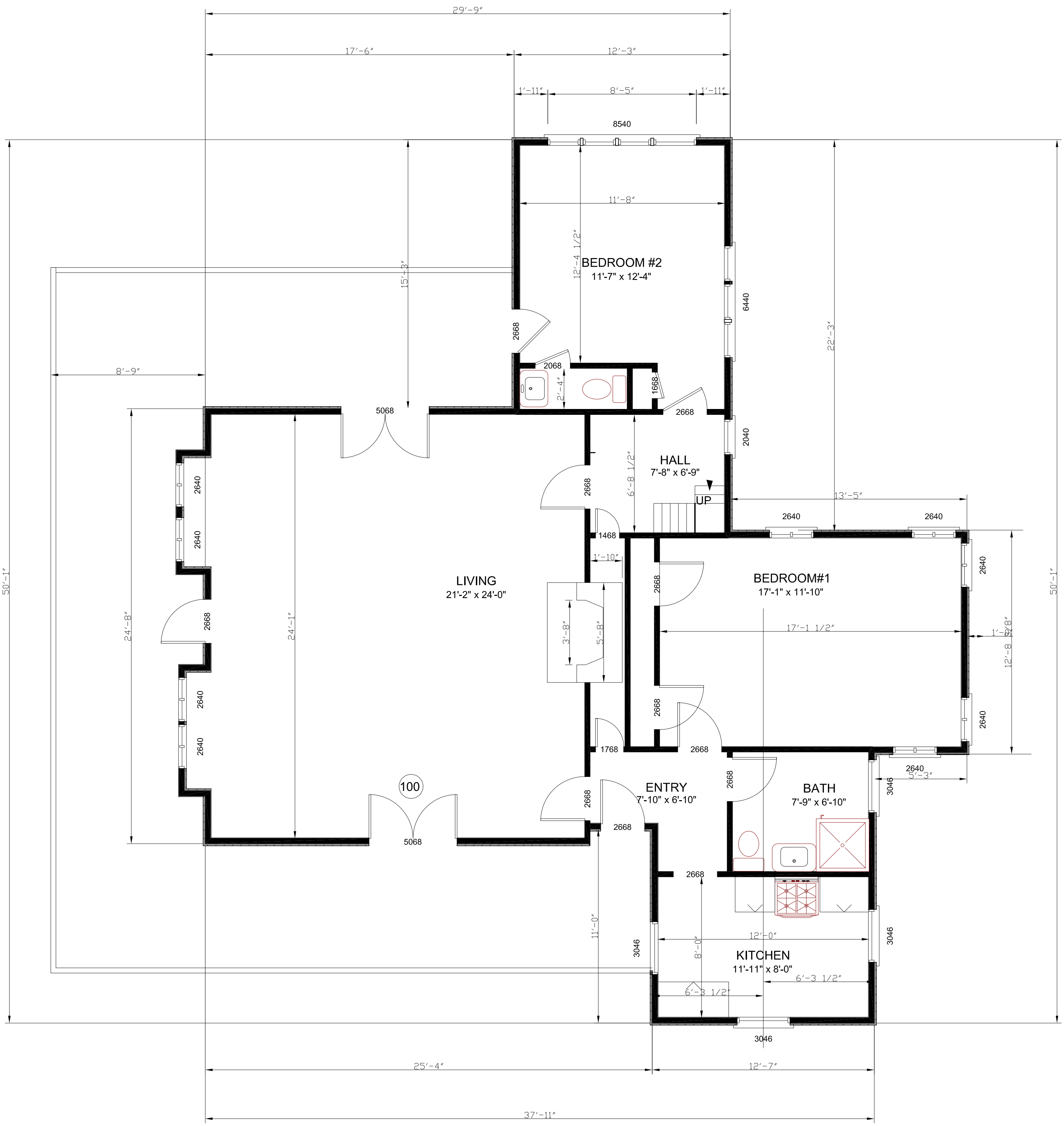
3.4 Doors, windows & hardware

The Smith-Taylor Cabin has eighteen doors (six exterior, twelve interior) and thirty-two windows, a comparatively large number of openings for a building of only about 1,000 square feet in size. Its spectacular setting with commanding views of Coecles Harbor and distant land masses explains its large window area, and its origin as a recreational building retaining a porch that wraps three façades accounts in part for the number of outside entrances. Only one original exterior door (D3) remains, however; two exterior entrances (D2 & D4) were altered and two additional doorways (D1 & D5) were created when the building was enlarged c. 1940. Only two interior doors (D6 & D7) appear to survive from the c. 1900 period; the majority of the interior doors were introduced to serve the new rooms added c. 1940.

Doors D3, D6 and D7 appear to survive from the original structure; their rustic "Adirondack" or stick design is characteristic of the period. The remaining doors are either stock designs of "Colonial" or "Tudor" type or simple batten doors representative of mid-20th century design and construction.

Only the triangular windows at opposite ends of the roof ridge in the large living room survive from the c. 1900 structure. The other doors, including those that flank the original front door (D3), date from the later period. Diamond-paned window sash and casement windows were evidently selected for the expansion of the building because they matched the windows that flanked the original front door. A majority of these second stage windows survive; only those in the east bedroom, now replaced with banks of non-historic sash, and the four tower windows on the second story, have been removed.

The hardware is original to the doors and windows, much of it "Tudor" in style matching the period of the architectural unit.



29'-9"
17'-6"
12'-3"
1'-11"
8'-5"
1'-11"
8540
11'-8"
BEDROOM #2
11'-7" x 12'-4"
12'-4 1/2"
15'-3"
22'-3"
6440
2668
2068
2'-4"
1668
8'-9"
5068
2668
2040
HALL
7'-8" x 6'-9"
6'-8 1/2"
UP
13'-5"
2640
2640
1468
1'-10"
LIVING
21'-2" x 24'-0"
BEDROOM#1
17'-1" x 11'-10"
17'-1 1/2"
3'-8"
5'-8"
24'-8"
24'-1"
50'-1"
50'-1"
12'-8 3/8"
1768
2668
ENTRY
7'-10" x 6'-10"
BATH
7'-9" x 6'-10"
5'-3"
3046
100
5068
11'-0"
12'-0"
KITCHEN
11'-11" x 8'-0"
8'-0"
6'-3 1/2"
6'-3 1/2"
3046
25'-4"
12'-7"
37'-11"

4.0 CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TREATMENT

4.1 General remarks

The overall condition of the cabin is relatively good despite its exposed location and seasonal pattern of use, both of which have evidently resulted in a history of deferred maintenance and repair. While the building is essentially only one story in height, its massing and architectural detailing are relatively complex due to its evolution from a simple, rectilinear picnic pavilion into a habitable cottage with a three-story tower and two bedrooms, kitchen, two bathrooms, and mechanical systems. Close analysis of historical photographs reveals that the conversion of the picnic shelter into a dwelling actually took place in two stages, a fact that further complicates the morphology of the building and, more than likely, affected the present condition of its architectural features [see: **3.3 Alterations & repairs**].

There are two distinct types of conditions that warrant assessment and treatment in the context of the future restoration, interpretation and reuse of the cabin. The first type of condition is attributable to normal wear, rot, loss, damage or breakage of architectural features; these factors are due to the detrimental but natural effects of aging and exposure to the elements. The second type of condition that may warrant treatment has resulted from a variety of alterations or repairs that are not consistent with the historical appearance of the building. The latter "condition" is of special concern to the Taylor's Island Preservation and Management Committee, which plans to restore the building to its period of significance in the Smith-Taylor era [i.e., pre-1958].

The following conditions assessment and recommendations for treatment will help to guide the committee's restoration and adaptive use of the cabin.

4.2 Conditions assessment

4.2.1 Exterior

Foundation

The original structure is supported above grade on large natural pebbles and lacks a true foundation. The poured concrete foundation underlying the additions appears to be in very good condition, and by supporting the building by 2 feet or more above grade, it serves to protect the wood fabric of the walls from contacting the ground and perimeter vegetation, thus minimizing or eliminating opportunities for rot.

The opening for the cellar hatchway, which is continuous with the foundation masonry, has a rebuilt staircase that is in good condition. The hinged batten doors that cover the opening, however, are in need of repair.

(Due to the inaccessibility of the crawlspace beneath the structure, a thorough assessment of the condition of the poured concrete foundation was not undertaken.)

Roof

The “architectural” type asphalt shingle roof covering is relatively new and with one important exception, appears to adequately protect the walls and interior fabric from deterioration. Although the asphalt shingle material is not historically accurate, its simulated wood shingle color and variegated texture approximate the appearance of the cedar shingle roof that once covered the original picnic shelter. It is therefore a satisfactory substitute for the authentic roofing material. The new roof covering appears to have been installed directly on the board under layment, thus preserving the pitch and profile of the original hipped roof.

One important area of roof failure has been identified at the base of the larger chimney. Patches and layers of flashing reveal an attempt to correct the problem, which has resulted in water penetration into Room 102, and staining and bio-growth on the interior chimney. The problem area was originally created when the building was enlarged and the tower constructed; the resulting massing of the building forms a series of complex roof forms and valleys. In short, the expanded building was not engineered for the long term success and functionality of the roof, which has failed because of inadequate water drainage. Periodic patching of the roof in the area of the stone chimney has stabilized the condition, which now warrants a more permanent solution.

The evidence of yellow bio-growth on the roof surfaces matching that on the main chimney is an indication that water does not drain quickly enough from the roof.

Chimneys

The main chimney is associated with the original building. It is constructed of various sized, rounded pebbles and is discernibly out of plumb; furthermore, its concrete cap is cracked. Neither condition appears to jeopardize the essential viability of the chimney or the integrity of the building, and the water penetration that is evident on the interior face of the chimney appears to result from the failure of roof flashing, not from the masonry. The build-up of bio-growth on the concrete cap and on the face of the chimney is an indication of excessive moisture, however, no doubt due in part to the cracks that have appeared on the top of the cap.

The smaller brick chimney is associated with the later period of construction and appears to be in good condition.

Porch and deck

The porch and deck surrounding three sides of the cabin have been rebuilt in the past year for reasons of safety, using existing fabric and historic photographs as a guide in the reconstruction. The structural fabric – cedar posts and rafters, roof boards, deck flooring and supports – is all new and its condition is therefore excellent.

Walls

The most significant area of exterior deterioration is found in the log wall construction at the northeast corner of the original structure. Here, total loss of the log fabric has occurred due to prolonged water penetration and resulting decay. Another, lesser problem is the loss of nogging or fill between the logs. This cementitious material appears to be backed by a green steel wool type material, areas of which have fallen out leaving the inner surfaces of the logs exposed to water penetration.

By contrast, the cabin siding associated with the later additions is in good condition. The vertical board siding attached to the bedroom and kitchen extensions is associated with the non-historic repair of the building and warrants restoration to match the pre-1958 treatment of the exterior walls.

Doors & windows

There are five exterior doors and doorways on the main level: a side door now serving as the principal means of egress (D1), two pairs of “French” type doors leading from the porch to the main living space (D2 & D4), the former front door on the north façade (D3), and another side door that leads from the porch to the east bedroom (D5). Broken window panes and missing hardware were observed in D5. A sixth door (D6) provides access to the tower balcony on the third level. These exterior doors are in

reasonably good condition.

There are thirty-two windows in all, twenty-five on the main floor and seven in the tower. Of these, it appears that none are associated with the original picnic shelter, which appears to have had diamond pane casement type windows flanking the front door (D2). The existing window sash and frames are in good condition overall with several exceptions; the casement window at the base of the tower (W14), for example, is badly deteriorated. There are also examples of window units that have been replaced; several need tightening or gluing, and many of the window panes require reglazing. Three of the tower windows have been removed (second story) and their openings boarded up.

Finishes

The exterior of the building preserves paint finishes on the simulated log siding as well as evidence of paint on the ends of the logs associated with the original structure. Paint finishes – red, green, white and dark grey – are also found on doors, windows and trim. Historically, it appears that the building was painted red prior to its acquisition by S. Gregory Taylor in 1937 and that it continued to be red in color, perhaps with green trim, after his expansion of the building. Currently, much of the exterior fabric is unpainted but preserves traces of finishes, while other areas are painted a dark grey. A majority of the doors and windows are unpainted.

4.2.2 Interior

Floors

Floors throughout the building are of narrow pine or fir; they are in good condition and may require only light sanding and refinishing with a protective clear coating (i.e., varnish). One area of the floor that requires special attention is located at the base of the tower; evidently a heating grille was removed from this location, resulting in a non-historic plywood infill to the floor.

Walls & ceilings

Walls and ceilings are generally in good condition. A majority of the walls and ceilings are lined with V-jointed, knotty pine boards measuring 7 ¼" wide. This material is tongued and grooved, clear-coated for protection, and survives in relatively good condition throughout the cabin. Traces of a "pickled" or pale green wash finish are in evidence as well, and further analysis may be warranted to determine the extent of this wood treatment that was typical of the early 1940s when the building was enlarged.

The ceiling of the large, all-purpose room (102) is composed of painted boards that also serve as support for the roof fabric. They are painted a light turquoise. Nails

from the application of roofing material as well as staining from water penetration are evident, but neither condition requires repair. Evidence of a composition board having been used to cover up the ceiling boards – now removed – was observed. This appears to have dated to an interim period, but the original ceiling boards are exposed and only additional cleaning of nails and fragments of the later material is needed.

A condition requiring treatment occurs in the east bedroom, where wallboard is used for the walls and ceiling. Water penetration has occurred in this area, resulting in failure of the ceiling and at the corner joints.

Fireplace

The exposed rubble stone chimney, firebox and hearth are in relatively good condition but show symptoms of water penetration and cracking. The cracking in the mortar joints is most probably due to a natural settling process. Bio-growth is evident in areas associated with water that has seeped in through the chimney column or from the failed flashing on the roof.

Doors, windows & trim

Doors, windows and trim are in good condition throughout the building. The former front door (D3) has been modified with an interior layer of boards that match the wall treatment of the room; this appears to date from the expansion period, and is therefore not a "condition" that requires treatment.

Hardware & fixtures

Much of the hardware and fixtures survive from the 1940s. These include simulated "colonial" thumb latches, surface-mounted strap hinges, and lighting devices designed to look like 18th century style wall sconces. Additionally, there are natural twig hooks that reinforce the rustic "cabin theme" of the original building. Hardware and fixtures are well preserved overall.

Finishes

The interior fabric of the building is either unfinished or treated with clear coatings with a low luster. Very little paint was applied to wood surfaces, which are for the most part left natural, consistent with the rustic style and setting of the building. Traces of a "pickled" finish may be observed on sections of wall and ceiling boards, however, and require further analysis to determine their original appearance. Some of the door hardware is painted black ("japanned"). These finishes show signs of aging, including wear and rust.

4.3 Recommendations for treatment

4.3.1 Exterior

Foundation

Check poured concrete foundations and footings for cracks or other signs of failure in the crawlspace. Repair or reinforce as required.

Roof

The two conditions of the roof – that it was enlarged, resulting in valleys that are not correctly engineered, and that its low pitch encourages bio-growth – require immediate attention. It is recommended that the entire roof covering be removed, that the wood substrate be studied for evidence of its original treatment(s), and that a new roofing system be installed. The new roof structure may require a minimal re-engineering in order to correct the design flaw in the area of the stone chimney where inadequate drainage occurs. The specification for the new roof covering should be based on physical and historical photographic evidence. A system for collecting and carrying water to the ground (i.e., gutters and leaders) may also be considered to ensure the roof's longevity.

Special attention should be given the tower roof and its narrow balcony, which is currently covered with asphalt material as if it's an extension of the roof. While this material may be historically accurate, it is not an appropriate surface and cannot withstand foot traffic. The structure of the balcony requires extensive repair and recovering with a more durable material.

Chimneys

The larger stone chimney requires a new concrete cap and repointing. It may also benefit from the installation of wire screening to prevent the intrusion of birds or small animals. Appropriate flashing at the base of the chimney is a function of the roofing system described above.

The smaller brick chimney appears sound and no treatment is warranted at this time.

Walls

The walls, like the roof, suffer from two "conditions" – the first being that of deterioration due to weathering and rot, and the second being the replacement of original fabric with non-historic materials – and each needs extensive treatment at this time.

The most severe area of loss is the northeast corner in which the log construction

has rotted away due to water penetration. The protective porch roof above this area has now been rebuilt, thus enabling reconstruction of the wall below it. All additional areas of log construction affected by rot will need to be removed. Using the existing log walls as a guide, these areas should be restored using materials and techniques of construction that match the existing. Following reconstruction, rebuilt areas and the remaining sections of log wall require restoration of the cementitious nogging that fills their joints. Care should be taken to match the color and texture of this material.

Areas of surviving cabin siding associated with the 1940s expansion of the building appear to be well preserved. Sections of the building in which the siding has been removed should be restored; these include the bedroom and kitchen wings, as well as the tower. The specification for this siding is readily available (pieces have been saved and stored in the basement). New siding should be milled to match the original, and installed using historic photographs as a guide.

Doors & windows

Doors with window panes need checking for broken glass; hardware requires repair or replacement with equivalent materials, and all locking devices should be made operational. Windows present several conditions warranting treatment; several casement units have been replaced, while others have deteriorated and many window panes lack adequate caulking. Each window unit requires individual assessment; at a minimum, all existing window glass should be removed and the window units restored and primed prior to the reinstallation and caulking of the window panes. Units that are non-historic such as the casements that have been replaced, and those that are significantly deteriorated, require restoration with windows that match the historical evidence.

Finishes

The exterior of the building appears to have been painted red throughout its "period of significance." Paint evidence survives in traces in various locations and on several building elements: on the ends of logs and on the cabin siding, for example, and under the eaves, on window trim and sash, and on the doors. It is recommended that a scientific paint analysis be undertaken to determine the precise shade of red that was utilized as the exterior finish prior to the modern era, and that the building be repainted accordingly.

4.3.2 Interior

Floors

Interior floors require a light sanding and the application of a protective clear

coating. The patched area at the base of the tower should be infilled with an appropriate floor grille.

Walls & ceilings

Walls and ceilings are well preserved, except for the sheetrock in Room 103, where water intrusion has caused staining and failure of seams. This fabric will need to be removed; examination of the substrate should be conducted at this time to see if wood material had been used in this room like that of the other rooms. The walls and ceiling in Room 103 should be restored according to the physical evidence found in this inspection.

The ceiling of Room 102 needs the remnants of later fabric fully removed.

Fireplace

The bio-growth that is evidence of water intrusion can be cleaned from the surfaces of the exposed chimney column (repair of the exterior chimney and associated roof flashing should prevent further water damage). The cracks that have appeared between the large pebbles, in the brick of the firebox and in the cast concrete hearth can be filled, with care being taken to match the color and texture of the existing mortar. Inasmuch as this condition appears to have occurred due to gradual settling, any surface treatment such as tuck pointing is essentially cosmetic in nature and will not be permanent, thus the chimney column will require periodic maintenance.

Doors, windows & trim

Doors, windows and trim are well preserved on the interior. Door D6 between Rooms 101 and 102 requires minor repair of its applied twig decoration, and others may need light carpentry to ensure that they fit properly to their openings.

Windows that require treatment have been noted under exterior treatments, above. The tower window openings of the second story require reconstruction of interior frames and trim.

Hardware & fixtures

Much of the hardware and fixtures remain intact and require little treatment. Door hardware (hinges, thumb latches) needs cleaning and repainting, as required. The drop bolts (“cremones”) on the “French” style doors in Room 102 (D2 & D4) need cleaning and repair. Window hardware has not survived as well as that of the doors; several of the extension arms of the casement windows are broken or have missing parts, all conditions that require appropriate repair or replacement.

Lighting fixtures appear sound, but wiring should be checked or replaced for reasons of safety or code compliance.

Finishes

Interior finishes are minimal. All wood surfaces need cleaning; clear coating, where there is evidence of its historical application, should be restored. The “pickled” finishes found on wall and ceiling woodwork should be analyzed professionally and restored, if consistent with the objectives of the committee.

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6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 "S. Gregory Taylor: Benefactor to Shelter Island"

(Patricia and Edward Shillingburg, 2006)

On April 21, 1937, S. Gregory Taylor purchased Cedar Island and a small adjacent lot at Shelter Island, New York from Shelter Island Developments, Inc. The deed was never recorded in Suffolk County, which was unusual.

Taylor was know as a totally engaging and charming man during the years that he summered on Shelter Island. According to Yuella VanRynback who did not know him, but learned of his legendary reputation a decade later, on the 15th of August every year, the day of Mary's Ascension, he had a very big party at which he entertained everyone he knew, and "he knew everyone." He brought his chefs out from the St. Moritz to feed the crowd.

According to Barbara "Buzz" Clark, whose husband Bucky knew Taylor, he was a lady's man who always arrived on the Island with beautiful young women. He was always known as a thoroughly charming bachelor.

Speculating on how he discovered Cedar Island and made it his own, Buzz suggested that he knew the Foultes, fellow Greeks, who owned a house on Ram Island and were involved in the Ram's Head Inn. They had a seafood restaurant in New York City.

In 1939, Taylor served on Mayor LaGuardia's Committee for Fleet Week, which included many gala affairs including a grand dinner at the World's Fair.

Also, in 1939, the St. Moritz is mentioned at least three times in Theodore Strauss's News of Night Clubs in the New York Times. The Café de la Paix was enlarged and brightened and featured the "competent and presentable young songstress" Peggy Adams and the accordionist Angela Velez. Horatio Zito's orchestra played for dancing and Collette and Barry offered dance lessons. The Sky Garden, with magnificent views of Central Park and all of uptown New York featured Yvonne Bouvier, singer, Basil Fomeen and his orchestra, and Collette and Barry demonstrating and teaching the latest dance steps. In the Fall, the Café de la Paix was featuring Inez Harvot, formerly of the St. Louis Municipal Opera Company, who was "not only good to listen to but good to look at."

In 1940, Taylor led a movement to turn Sixth Avenue into New York's Champs-Elysees. In early March they planted six trees beginning at 59th Street with a plan to plant a total of 292 trees down the avenue to 8th Street. Taylor even imagined an arch at

the Sixth Avenue entrance to Central Park, similar to the Arc de Triomphe.

In November, Spyros Skouras and Taylor led an effort to raise aid for Greece in the war in the form of munitions, medical supplies and food. The 200 Greek and Italian employees of the St. Moritz also joined in the effort, raising $3,000.

According to the Orthodox Observer, Taylor founded the Greek War Relief in 1940 and placed his hotel at the disposal of refuges who left Greece and came to the United States. It further notes that at one time there were 500 Greeks in his employ.

On April 3, 1941 the First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, inspected a model Athenian air-raid shelter and trench at the Greek War Relief headquarters at 730 Fifth Avenue. A large part of the $10,000,000 now being raised would be used to purchase such shelters. Both Skouras and Taylor, along with starlet Judy Garland, had their pictures taken with Mrs. Roosevelt.

Later in April, Mayor LaGuardia presided over the presentation of the first of five mobile surgical operating units to the Greek War Relief Association. The Most Rev. Archbishop Athenagoras, Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church, blessed the vehicles. Taylor attended the ceremony.

On July 1, 1942, King George II of Greece attended a special service at Holy Trinity Cathedral, conducted by Archbishop Athenagoras. Following the service, Taylor hosted a luncheon at the St. Moritz. He was at the time the president of the Hellenic Cathedral and Federation of Hellenic Churches of the City of New York.

On November 7, 1943, the New York Times reported that a score of Greek merchant seamen were being detained at Ellis Island “despite indications of willingness to ship out aboard Greek or other United Nations’ vessels or as members of the Greek Navy.” Christopher S. Stephano, Taylor’s brother-in-law and chairman of the Greek Maritime Welfare Committee, was attempting to “have the matter straightened out.” The men had been detained in Federal hands for several months. In the meantime, it was suggested that “the new Greek Mariner Club, a joint enterprise of the Greek Government and the War Shipping Administration under the directorship of S. Gregory Taylor, would provide an ideal agency for handling custody cases such as these.”

A week later the Greek Mariners Club, located at 208 West 59th Street was dedicated. The chairman of the Board of Directors, Taylor, had invited Simon Diamantopoulos, the Greek Ambassador to the United States, Archbishop Athenagoras, and Mayor LaGuardia.

On January 29, 1944 Taylor signed his last will and testament in which he laid out his wishes for the disposal of Taylor’s Island. His nephew, Stephen Stephano, and Stephen’s son if he had one before Taylor died (Stephen did not; he was no more than 15 when Taylor died.) would have the use of the Island for the remainder of their lives, and thereafter, if accepted, it was to be given to the Town of Shelter Island. He also set up a Trust of $10,000 to maintain the Island. He also directed that his remains be buried on the

Eastern slope of the Island.

In August, the Pequot Club of Southport, Connecticut ran the junior girls' sailing championship, with the S. Gregory Taylor Trophy the award. The award was also given in 1946.

Also, in 1946, Taylor was chairman of the 26th Annual National Boys and Girls Week in late April and early May. That year two Bronx children were named "Typical American Girl" and "Typical American Boy," Joan De Paite and Frank Golden.

On May 12, 1947, Noel Straus of the New York Times, reported on a concert given by the contralto from Greece Sophia Vembo (1912-1978), a symbol of the Greek resistance during the war, at Carnegie Hall on behalf of the Greek War Relief Association. Taylor, as chairman of the relief committee, was the host.

On Sunday, February 22, 1948, while visiting the Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida, Taylor died of a heart attack. He was 59 years old. He was survived by his brother Charles, his wife Ioane (Zographidis), and his sister Martha Taylor Stephano. (The *Suffolk Times* reported at the time that his motor boat was at Hanff's Shipyard in Greenport.) The funeral service was held on Saturday, February 28 at the Hellenic Cathedral, Holy Trinity Church, at 319 East 74th Street. One of the organizations announcing his death was the National Democratic Club.

He was buried at Shelter Island on Taylor's Island. Apparently, the weather was, as one would expect in February, miserable. The South Ferry Company brought his coffin to Taylor's Island from North Haven, but the family was not so fortunate. Along with the Archbishop, they trudged from Miss Annie Nicoll's house on a rustic path to the causeway to the Island.

His estate was estimated at $1,514,361. His brother Charles who was president and managing director of the Hotel Buckingham became the president of St. Moritz-on-the-Park, Inc. on April 14, 1948. Spyros Skouras, president of 20th Century Fox Film Corporation was elected as a director. In recent years, the St. Moritz was gutted and nothing remains of the original 1930 hotel except its façade.

The transfer of Taylor's Island to Shelter Island took place in 1997.

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in America continues to award S. Gregory Taylor Scholarships to individuals doing post-graduate work in religious, theological, and pastoral programs at universities and seminaries in America and Greece. In 2001, it awarded over $250,000 to 30 recipients. The endowment is now valued at over $7,000,000.

6.2 "S. Gregory Taylor: 1888 - 1948 A Greek Patriot and Hotel Magnate"

(Patricia and Edward Shillingburg, 2006)

In 1997, the Shelter Island Town Board accepted the gift of Taylor's Island from the estate of S, Gregory Taylor who had died in 1948, nearly 50 years before. Who was this man for whom there was little local memory?

According to the February 1963 Orthodox Observer, the official periodical of the Greek Orthodox Church in American, Taylor's name at his christening was Soterios Gregorios Tavoulares. He was born in 1888 on the Greek Island of Prikonnesos, Marmara where his family was well known, and where during the Turkish occupation, his grandfather Tavoulares was the ethnic leader of the Greek community. Among the members of his family were the Most Reverend Metropolitan Sophronis and Nicholas Kyriakides, who was a member of the Patriarchal Council and the founder of the local school that bears his name. He attended the local elementary school and went to the gymnasium for high school at Raidestos, Thrace.

Taylor was 20 years old when he came to the United States. He learned the hotel business from bellhop to manager with the Manger chain of hotels, one of the largest in the country in 1928 when the principle of the company, William Manger, died.

In April 1925, Taylor leased a fifteen-story residential hotel, the Buckingham, at the corner of 57th Street and Sixth Avenue from the developers Harris H. and Percy Uris. The lease was for $200,000 a year for 21 years. The building was scheduled to open on September 1. Almost immediately he was in trouble with the law for his flamboyant advertising. He erected a 100-foot long by eight foot high sign on the bridge over the sidewalk advertising the hotel and its room rates. The Bureau of Highways was ordered to remove the sign by Borough President Julius Miller. "I notified the people at the Hotel Buckingham three weeks ago that they were violating the [sign] ordinance by displaying the sign. They changed two or three words in the advertising matter. The gigantic sign was still in front of the hotel Friday night when I passed there, so I instructed the Bureau of Highways to cause its removal." An advertisement appeared in the New York Times on May 17 announcing the residential hotel with 1, 2, 3, or more rooms with a serving pantry and automatic refrigeration in each apartment.

On November 1, 1928, Taylor opened another hotel, the Montclair, between 49th and 50th streets on Lexington Avenue. It was designed by Emory Roth with a façade in Spanish style and built by the Harper organization. Taylor was president, Oscar W. Richardson, resident manager and Gaston Lauryssen, associate manager. Harris H. and Percy Uris were also the developers, and the mortgage was for $2,500,000.

By December, another deal was in the offing. The New York Athletic Club was moving into its new clubhouse, a 21 story structure on the East side of Seventh Avenue between 58th Street and Central Park South (where it remains today), and the Uris brothers contracted to buy the old clubhouse at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Central

Park South for $2,500,000. They planned to build a 35 story 900 room hotel at a cost of $10,000,000. The hotel was to be managed by S. Gregory Taylor, who would now have a chain of three hotels.

In 1930, Taylor was living at the Buckingham Hotel at 101 West 57th Street with his sister Martha, age 21. According to the Census, both were born in Turkey. However, it was actually Greece, as Greece was part of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) before World War I.

On the Fourth of July, at 9 pm on WGBS radio, Taylor spoke on "America's Contribution to Greek Independence."

In August, he announced the new Hotel Dixie between 42nd and 43rd Streets between Broadway and Eighth Avenue. "No Finer Food Anywhere." On October 16, Taylor opened the Hotel St. Moritz, at Central Park South and Sixth Avenue, under construction for two years, with great fanfare. The hotel was 38 stories with 1,000 rooms in units of one room to large suites, with many terrace apartments, and three penthouses. A dinner and dancing salon was on the 31st floor, with Omar Khayyam murals done by David Karfunkel, as well as commanding panoramic views of New York City. Emory Roth was the architect and Laurence Emmons designed the interior. The Rumpelmayer pastry and tea shop was on the 59th Street side of the building.

Of special occasion was the presentation of a huge painting of the city of St. Moritz in Switzerland, to hang in the lobby, a special gift from that city to the hotel named after it. The mayor of St. Moritz, Carl Nater, presented the painting. It was painted by the contemporary Swiss painter Giovanni Giacometti (1868-1933).

Much of Central Park South, as we know it today, was built during this period. In October 1931, the Hotel Dixie and the St. Mortiz, both owned by the Uris brothers, were in receivership. Taylor reassured the public, "The foreclosure will clarify situations which confronted the real estate corporation and the hotels will continue to operate as before." In January 1932, in the Continental Grill the Carltons, in" modern dance interpretations," and Harold Stern's St. Moritz Orchestra were appearing nightly.

On January 13, 1932, the New York Times reported that a company headed by S. Gregory Taylor had taken over the St. Moritz. Philadelphia interests were said to be associated with him in the new company, the Engadine Holding Corporation, which was slated to acquire the property from the Bowery Saving Bank. The sale actually took place in June for about $4,000,000. Partners in the venture included his brother Charles Taylor, Jean G. Venetos, Christopher Stephano, and Spyros Skouras.

Skouras had arrived in the United States in 1910 with his brothers Charles and George. They worked in a large hotel in St. Louis as busboys until they hard scraped together $4,000 to invest in part of a local movie house. Soon they owned all of the movie theaters in St. Louis, which they sold to Warner Brothers in the late 20's and soon Skouras was managing all of their exhibition houses. Between 1930 and 1932, he worked

for Paramount. In 1932, the Skouras brothers took over the management of over 500 Fox-West Coast theaters. He helped merge Fox with 20th Century films in the 1930s and served as President from 1942 until 1962. 20th Century Fox's slogan Movies are Better than Ever was enhanced with the Skouras's introduction of Cinemascope with the film, The Robe, in 1953, which is credited with saving the movie industry from its newly introduced competitor, television.

Charles Taylor remained president and managing director of the Hotel Buckingham. On May 1, Taylor opened the "sky garden," an outdoor terrace, on the 31st floor of the St. Moritz with murals and other decorations under the direction of the American painter Dean Dietrich. On August 7, 1932 the New York Times reported the engagement of Taylor's sister Martha to Constantine S. Stephano of Athens, Greece and Philadelphia. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Stephano of Elkins Park in Philadelphia. She had attended the Constantinople Women's College and Miss Bredlinger's Hillside School in Norwalk, Connecticut and the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts. He was graduated from the Colorado School of Mines and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The wedding took place in December at the St. Moritz with five children of Spyros and George Skouras attending. The couple's wedding trip was to the Orient.

In December, Greece rewarded the Rockefeller Foundation, at 61 Broadway, with a sculptured head of the goddess Hygeia for its service to public health in Greece. The sculpture by Constantin Dimitriadis was a copy in Pentelic marble of an antique head in the Museum of Athens. Taylor attended the ceremony.

In April 1933, Taylor hosted a 49th birthday party at the St. Moritz for Auguste Piccard, the Swiss scientist, who in his studies of the stratosphere has ascended higher than any man in a hot air balloon. The plan was for a dirigible to fly over the hotel after lunch and pick up Piccard and his companions on the roof for a flight over the city. High winds prevented the dangerous adventure.

In January 1934, a new polo club was formed at the St. Moritz, with Taylor as chairman. The St. Moritz Polo Club joined the Indoor Polo Association of America and the United States Polo Association, playing indoors at the 105th Field Artillery Armory on Saturdays, and outdoors on Sundays at Berkshire, where three fields were available.

At the end of March, alterations began at the northwest corner of the St. Moritz for an open-air café in the Parisian style to be known as the Café Continental. In October, Park Commissioner Robert Moses met with a group of men concerned about the poor condition of the bridle paths in Central Park, with Taylor among them.

In November 1936, a gala matinee of the Opera Carmen was held to raise funds for six American colleges in the near east, including the American University of Beirut, Syria; the International College in Beirut; the American College in Sophia, Bulgaria; Athens College in Greece; Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey; and the Istanbul Women's College. Taylor was one of the very distinguished guests who had purchased boxes.

6.3 **“Recollections”**

(Jim Nestor)

“I have been delighted to be able to read a bit about Taylor's Island, where my parents and I enjoyed several summers in the late 1940s. My father was a Greek employee, and I believe a distant relative of Gregory Taylor, who gave my father his first job in the USA working in the kitchen of the St. Moritz Hotel during the 1930s. During the late 1930s and into the 1940s my father worked summers on the island for Gregory Taylor, which included helping to build the sea wall. My father had put his initials, "AN" for Alex Nestor, on the top of the seawall using either pebbles or seashells, I don't recall which.

In the big hurricane of 1938, when the island was badly flooded and heavily damaged, my father was alone on the island and very nearly had to use one of the doors in the main house as a raft to survive... Fortunately, the storm subsided before that was necessary. If I recall his story correctly, the water flooded the whole island, including the main house.

During our summers on the island, we stayed in one of the two bungalows that were on the southwest side of the island, near the dock. Both bungalows are now, of course, gone, although I noticed on an earlier visit to the island, their foundations are still apparent...

I have wonderful memories, and some film, of great fishing in the waters there, and row boats whose bottoms were filled with blue claw crabs when we went crabbing there.

I was saddened to read in an article by Andrew Arkin about the passing of Steve ('Naki', as we knew him) Stefano, whom I knew as a young boy while we were on the island. I also remember his young sister Penny. And, I have a recollection of a young boy nicknamed "Brooks", who used to motor around in the bay there... He lived in a house on the other side of the causeway, opposite Taylor's Island dock...
If anyone knows how I might get in touch with Penny (Penelope) Stefano, Steve's younger sister, please let me know.

Best regards with fond memories… ”

6.4 “Taylor’s Island History”

(Andrew Arkin)

I Seaplaned out to search for a summer house on Dering Harbor side of the Island (about 1958)

I found nothing of interest. On taking off we passed over Taylor's Island (Map Name: Cedar Island) in middle of Coecles Harbor. Intrigued. Gave the pilot a Baron Von Richtoffen signal--down. We pontooned on Island's shore I walked around the house, with its Widow's Walk-- saw all in a state of disorder.

I reached in a broken window, opened the door and entered. Found table set with breakfast dishes and a newspaper from three years before.

I found Greg Price, capable, blind realtor, assisted by his wife. He researched and reported the Island's status: It had long been owned by J. Gregory Taylor, a Greek-American who had built the St. Moritz Hotel in New York. He owned the Island for many years, loved it, and planned to be buried there. He had willed it upon his demise to his young nephew, Steve Stephano, his sister's son, for Steve's lifetime and then to Shelter Island. He had arranged a trust fund to keep up his grave, but a few months before his death had moved the funds into a share of a Greek tanker and never replaced them. During the ensuing years the Island had fallen into severe disrepair.

The story of Taylor's death and burial: The funeral cortege, led by the Greek Orthodox bishop, had started from Philadelphia. The winter's day was waning as they approached Shelter Island. As custom insisted on burial that day the bishop admonished the group: "We must hurry or I'll take him." (and bury him by the side of the road) At twilight, they finally reach the Island where a group of Taylor's friends had prepared the grave-site in the frozen earth and there he rests today.

Through Greg Price, I contacted nephew, Steve, from a well-known Philadelphia specialty cigarette making family. I secured a five year lease on the property for zero dollars--with two provisos: I would restore the Cape Cod house and the small generator house- also, Steve's mother, Taylor's sister, could visit the her brother's grave when she wished. Thus began my twenty-two years of stewardship and warm contact with Steve, his wife and, later, his sons John and Dan.

With the house restored and the Widow's Walk safely reachable, I now became a Shelter Islander.

That first summer, guests and I were lunching outdoors when Mrs. Stephano phoned, asking permission to visit her brother's grave. On this windy day I muscled my Century speed boat to the shore (and my good neighbor Bucky Clark's dock) to carry this elegant woman and her lady friend to the Island. I introduced them to my group and carried two chairs and cups of tea to. graveside for their visit, then ferried them back to

shore and saw them to their car. Next day, Steve called thanking me for his mother's visit. She had told him "That's the man Gregory would have chosen to have the Island"

I enjoyed every bit of Shelter Island and its native Hare-leggers and their hospitality and humor. I joined Gardener's Bay Golf Club the year Bob DeStephano and Anne began their long association.. I made wonderful friends on the Island--my neighbors, the Clarks and their kids, Ray Davis, Sid Beckwith, Johnny Picozzi, Gene Case, Bob Clark and many others. I was then 34 years old. Thus began an important twenty-two year phase of my life with many experiences and stories. A few of these follow:

I had several years as a bachelor on the Island. (Friends claimed I only invited girls who couldn't swim) I played golf with local Hare-leggers, who liked nothing better than to win a couple of bucks from a city fellow--which they usually did. This past summer I saw Sid Beckwith and recalled a story of Gardener's Bay eighth hole: I hit a good drive, an excellent iron across the dog-leg to the back of the green and was putting for a key birdie. What do you think I scored? Well, my long putt for birdie kept rolling, finally into the trap. I left one in the trap, blasted out, then three putted.-- seeking a three I had scored an eight. I took each shot seriously. I walked off the green and then doubled over with laughter at myself. Only then did the courteous opponents permit themselves their laughter. Sid said he tells the story of the" three that became an eight " more often than I do.

A few years later, at 38, I married Joan, much younger than I. I was 46 when we adopted Jason, at 13 days. He grew up on the Island. Running around naked, cutting his feet on the shells of the causeway, fighting to reach the island in stormy weather all kept him from being a sheltered city kid. As Jason began to speak we would use the drive out from the city to practice words: I would point and he would answer: "Dog", "house", "bus" etc. Finally he was stumped I pointed to a bull tethered in a farmer's yard. He struggled to find the word. He finally found his answer- " A moo with sticks." (he's now 32 and a Columbia degreed Social Worker. He has married Lori, a fellow adventurer.)

Last Jason story: We could reach Taylor's Island by jeep across the causeway during a couple of hours of lowest tide. One Friday evening after the (even then) horrors of the LIE we had guests with young twins. We were running late when we reached the shoreline and transferred everyone into my jeep. Water was already lapping over the causeway. My speedboat was moored Island-side and it was beginning to rain. I turned to Jason, six years old, for his advice: "Do you think we can make it across in the jeep?" I asked. He considered it carefully and said "No, too late." But I decided to give it a go. I revved up the jeep, raced along the beach, and turned onto the causeway. With the tide rising I missed the center of the causeway and a few yards from the Island wetted out the jeep (which never recovered) We all waded the last few yards to the Island carrying our luggage. I turned to Jason and said: "You were right and I was wrong. I made a mistake." The six year old considered the events and his father's blunder. His observation: "You did make a mistake. But I still love you."

I was a good water skier. One weekend, I hosted Bono Bonatti, the Mexican water ski champion. He observed the protected stretch from the mouth of Coecles harbor to the Boat Yard. He commented "You could hold the World Championships here."

Another time, I had guests delivered by seaplane. When the plane was leaving I arranged that I would mono water ski with rope attached behind the speeding plane I arranged for my motor boat to try and keep up as the plane reach its takeoff speed of about 65 miles an hour. I then let go of the rope and glided silently for what seemed a long time. When the boat picked me up and returned me to Taylor's Island, my wife said "I think you're too crazy for me." (we were divorced shortly thereafter.)

Ray Davis and I often played golf often with Stanley Blaugrund, a New York physician and an outstanding golfer. I always felt Stanley's attention kept Ray alive longer than his throat condition should have permitted. When he passed, Stanley and I planted a tree on the 17th hole of Gardener's Bay CC in Ray's honor. I had often dropped in on Ray's Irish mother, then in her eighties. On the mantel was a photo of her in her late teens. I remarked how beautiful she was. She responded in her rich Irish brogue: "They never told me."

Of all the parties and gatherings on Taylor's Island the one I remember best was a sit-down outdoor clambake for 60 guests, many from the fancy Hampton villages. All went well until a torrential rain and windstorm hit about 9 p.m. After most had scrambled across the rising causeway we slept 18 on our living room floor that night.

Another time, I was jeeping through the woods to my shore with fancy European Fashion Business guests. Nancy Palmer, who then headed Lanvin, Paris, in the USA, recalls a 30- point buck deer majestically leaping across the rough road just in front of us-- an astounding sight. She quotes me as calling after it "Send the bill to the office Monday."

I'm a great believer in Randomness-- you never know whether a path will end tomorrow or last a lifetime. After 22 years on Shelter Island my road took me elsewhere but islands remained an important part of my life--Martha's Vineyard, off Cape Cod and 100 acre muskingham Island (part of a small oil company I owned) in the Ohio River off West Virginia. My son, Jason and my wife, Amy, a true conservationist, and I had the fun of gifting muskingham to the Fish and Wildlife Service to remain "forever green."

After 22 years it came the moment to vacate Taylor's Island. I had requested permission to remove my belongings on Memorial Day (though my leases were Dec 31 to Dec 31) I especially wanted to hold on to a wonderful batch of antique furniture which Buffy Cobb had presented to me after her Grandfather Irwin S. Cobb and Grandmother,

Moy, had passed. I offered the new, young tenants everything else for $1,000. The response was "My husband says that's not the price for used furniture." (that stuff later sold at auction for 5K.) So I arranged with Jernick, who had moved me onto the Island to move me off. We showed up at the right tide on Memorial day. Now the young couple,

with guests visiting, wanted to renegotiate but I stuck to the evacuation plan. We loaded everything-- lamps, tables, silverware, chairs onto Tom Jernick's truck.

As we left, I called out cheerily to the new Islanders and their guests:" I'll be back next week as a house guest." The glum response: "When you come, bring a chair."

The years to the present have brought some funny coincidences. I became a good friend of a marvelous young woman, Aphrodite Savalas and her husband, Dan Schiff. Aphrodite is the late Telly Savalas' (Kojak) niece, and her paternal grandparents owned and ran the Ram's Head Inn in the 1940's. There are marvelous stories of Grandmother Savalas, a painter, going across to Sag Harbor to visit with Picasso the summer he was there. Aphrodite and Dan are just now finishing the beautiful mansion at the Sag Harbor turnoff onto South Ferry road.

I came out last summer to show them Taylor's Island and talk with the neighboring Mashomack Conservancy. I found Shelter Island as beautiful as ever, although more "fashionable" than in my day.

With Steve Stephano, Taylor's nephew, passing a couple of years ago, Taylor's Island now reverted to Shelter Island. I've been following the transition of the Mashomack Preserve from a private club to the care of the Nature Conservancy. (The Conservancy was lucky enough to get Mike Laspia as part of the deal.)

Now have come the discussions of the Town fathers and the Conservancy on how best to implement Gregory Taylor's will and wishes: the Island will go to the benefit of the people of Shelter Island. Taylor's Island is again in some disrepair and needs much work and constant care to meet Taylor's goal. I am confident the combination of the Nature Conservancy and the officials of Shelter Island will arrive at a practical solution. But boating visitors, beware-Rocky shoals off the Island used to ensnare are many unwary boats a summer.

The realization of Taylor's goal will take some financing for restoration and maintenance. I'm going to help.

Smith-Taylor Cabin:
Shelter Island, NY

7. PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic

1. Francis Marion Smith, wife Mary Rebecca Thompson Smith, and family members posing at the picnic shelter, c. 1900. Log-built well head is visible to the left and open cook pot is to the right.

2. Mary Smith and daughters gather around the cook pot at the picnic shelter, c. 1900. Francis is visible on the beach to the left, below.

3. Francis Smith leaning on log-built well head, c. 1900. Food preparation table is visible at left.

4. Francis Smith and wife Mary leaning on log-built well head, c. 1900. Oriental servant visible at food preparation table, left.

5. Mary Smith, daughters and an unidentified young man gathered at the well head, c. 1900. Pyramidal roofed log-built shed visible in background, center.

6. Oriental cooks and servants preparing a meal on the island *al fresco*, c. 1900. Pyramidal roofed shed in background.

7. Oriental cooks and servants preparing a clambake *al fresco*, c. 1900. Picnic shelter seen in background.

8. Cedar Island from the water, with a view of the picnic shelter and shed, c. 1900.

9. Smith-Taylor Cabin as enlarged during S. Gregory Taylor's ownership, c. 1940.

10. S. Gregory Taylor, family members and friends on steps of guest house, c. 1940.

11. Family members pose on steps of guest house, c. 1940.

12. Aerial view of Taylor's Island during Andrew Arkin's stewardship, c. 1960.

13. View of Smith-Taylor Cabin, c. 1960.

14. View of Smith-Taylor Cabin, c. 1960.

15. View of Taylor's Island from water, Smith-Taylor Cabin and pyramidal roofed shed, c. 1960.

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Contemporary

1. General view facing north across sand bar.
2. Detail of sea wall, access ramp footings, facing southwest.
3. Detail of sea wall, access ramp footings, facing north.
4. Detail of sea wall, east side of island.
5. View of concrete sea wall, facing northeast, with nominated property rising behind the trees in center distance.
6. Exterior, view facing north, kitchen extension in foreground.
7. Exterior, view facing west, bedroom extensions to left and right.
8. Exterior, close-up view of south façade.
9. Exterior, view of west façade with original picnic shelter to left.
10. Exterior, corner log assembly and porch roof support, log rafters.
11. Exterior, porch deck, rustic post and roof detail.
12. Exterior, rubble stone chimney detail.
13. Exterior, porch deck and roof detail.
14. Exterior, “cabin siding” detail, third story of tower.
15. Exterior, tower view facing north, original cabin to left foreground.
16. Exterior, bulkhead detail, west side of island.
17. Exterior, detail of well head, south façade of cabin.
18. Exterior, detail of bay window to left of original cabin front door, west façade.
19. Exterior, west façade of 1930s addition, “cabin siding” detail.
20. Exterior, southwest corner detail, original log construction and joinery.
21. Exterior, south façade of original cabin, 1930s “French” door and sidelight detail.

22. Exterior, front door detail.

23. Interior, view of all-purpose cabin space, north wall, ceiling and clerestory window.

24. Interior, detail of southeast cabin door leading to 1930s addition.

25. Interior, chimney and fireplace detail.

26. Interior, view of first floor tower room.

27. Interior, detail of fish balusters, first floor tower room.

28. Interior, detail of tower roof assembly.

29. Interior, view of first floor tower room facing southeast toward original cabin.

30. Interior, view within tower, looking up from first floor to second floor landing.

31. Interior, detail of “French” door bolt hardware [“cremone”].

32. Interior, detail of “Suffolk” type door latch and rustic branch design, cabin door leading to 1930s addition.

33. Interior, view of 1930s entryway, detail of “chamfered” ceiling beam, knotty pine wall and ceiling treatment, and rustic wall hooks.

34. Interior, detail of “Colonial” style wall sconce.

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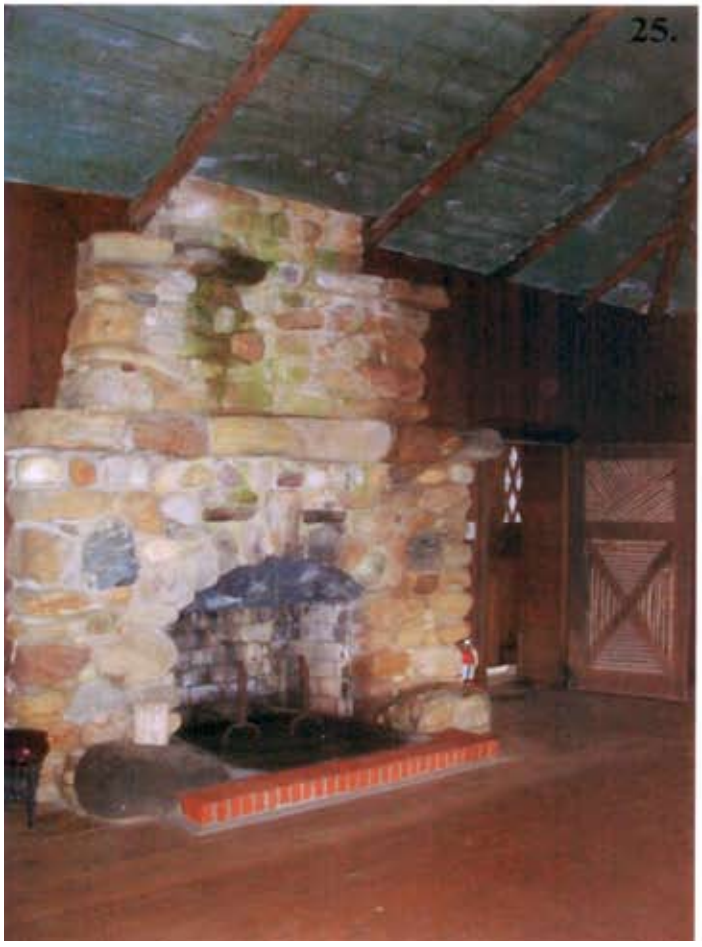
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Conditions

1. Exterior view. Note non-historic board-and-batten siding, window sashes needing paint or restoration [e.g., casement replacement], and overgrown foundation plantings.

2. Exterior, detail of principal stone chimney and tower. Note cracked concrete chimney cap and weathered railing/balcony.

3. Exterior, roof and flashing detail as seen from tower balcony. Note bio-growth on asphalt shingles and paint failure on flashing, resulting from inadequate drainage.

4. Exterior, detail of corner log assembly. Note extensive rot and loss of wood fabric.

5. Interior, cellar detail. Note salvaged pieces of simulated log siding.

6. Interior view, D1. Note loss of exterior stain and finishes on wood fabric and hardware, bio-growth at bottom rail.

7. Interior view, rubble stone fireplace. Water intrusion at roof has caused staining and bio-growth on the surface of the stones; uniform cracking at center may have resulted from settling.

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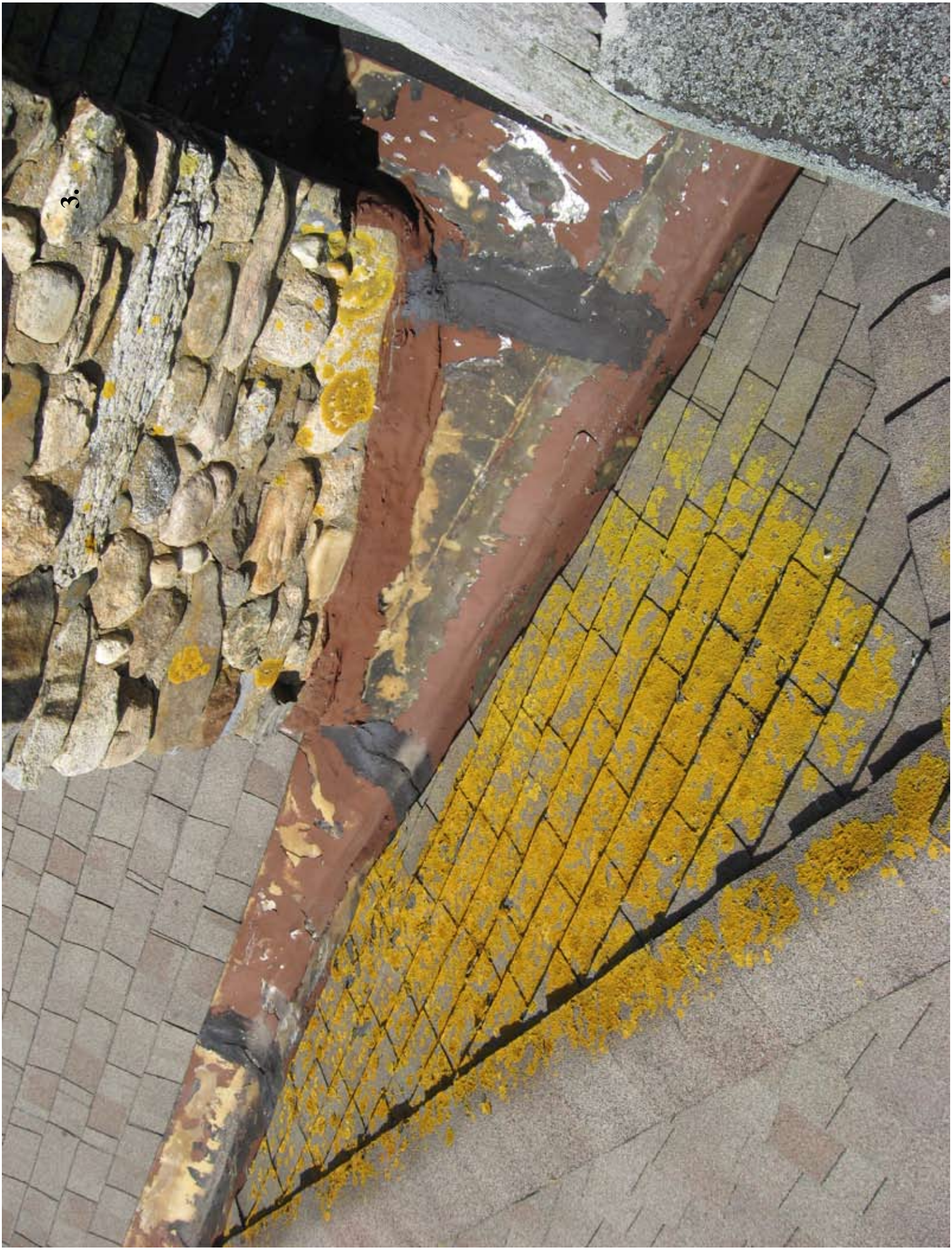

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