

TWO HISTORICAL MAPS

In the Preserves handouts, we have done the conventional - provided current-day maps of the preserves to show their location and nearby roads. However, we have also provided in the Exhibit the locations of the preserves on two historical maps to draw attention to the histories of the preserves. Here is the back-story of the West Neck Farm and Havens Maps.

Map Backgrounds

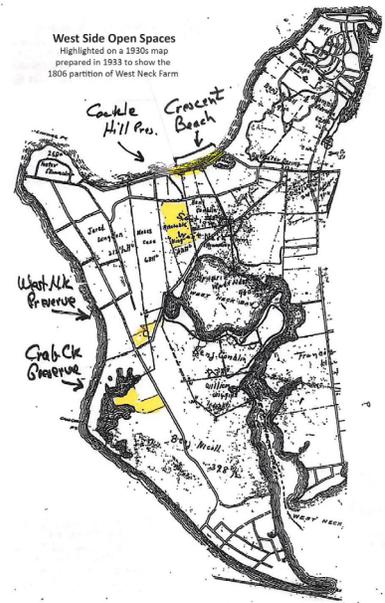
Usually, map information is provided with current street and road information, such as the Open Space map on the Town's website. Here, both historical maps provide their detail on a background of the Island's road network as it existed in the early 1930s. In the early 1930s Suffolk County directed Shelter Island and other Suffolk County tax assessors to map the location, extent and ownership of all land in their Towns. The assessors were provided with large maps on which to sketch that information, on a background of the 1930s road network. For Shelter Island, a committee led by Marvin Shiebler and Artemus Ward developed maps and related information and provided it to the Town's assessors in 1933. Some of their research and resulting material has been donated to the Shelter Island Historical Society. Maps in those materials share the backgrounds of both Maps - thus we are confident of the dating of the road network they display.

West Neck Farm Map

This Map displays information about the 1806 dissolution of the West Neck Farm partnership and the distribution of its land among its partners. William Nicoll II and others formed the partnership in the mid-1730s. Mr. Nicoll was the executor of his father's estate, William Nicoll I, who died owning substantial portions of the Island. The Farm operated until its partition in 1806. The Farm's then 1,336 acres were divided among eleven partners by a commission appointed by the Court, with the division being set out in a report (later adopted by the Court) providing the metes and bounds for each partner's share and the report and Court order were filed with the Clerk of Suffolk County in the same fashion as the Clerk filed deeds and mortgages.

The tax committee had the details of the 1806 partition (outline of the area, partner's name and acreage) set out on a large map and that map is presently on file with the Shelter Island Historical Society as the "1800" map. The West Neck Farm Map is a copy of a portion of the "1800" map, the most detailed portion of that map. A copy of the 1806 handwritten commission report and court order are also on file at the Society, together with a transcription.

For purposes of the Exhibit, we have used the Map to show the locations of the four west side preserves, Crescent Beach & Annex, Cackle Hill, West Neck and Crab Creek.



Havens Map

The Map displays apparently printed information identifying Havens' properties in the late 1700s, as well as a boundary running up West Neck Creek and over to Gardiner's Creek with red arrows to other owners' names. Next, drawn heavy black lines apparently identify the full 1,000 acres George Havens purchased in

1700 from Nathaniel Sylvester II. Then apparently hand-drawn red lines, names, dates and acreage indicate transfers George Havens and his son, George Havens II made to family members in the early 1700s. Noted on the bottom margin in faint handwritten lettering are the words “Copy for Archibald Havens.”



During our research for the Exhibit, in May of 2021 Elke Connor of East Moriches brought the Map to the Society at the suggestion of Bert Seides, president of the Moriches Bay Historical Society. She and Bert had found the Map in going through papers at a house in Center Moriches; the owner had died, the family was clearing the house for sale and the papers included many Coast Guard charts and maps. The mapmakers and preparation date are not presently known.

The Map’s reference to “Archibald Havens” is not to the Shelter Island storeowner and first Island US postmaster, Archibald R. Havens (1816-1894) because the Map’s early 1930s background comes after his death. However, it probably refers to Archibald S. Havens (1868-1951) who lived in Center Moriches and was a long-time researcher of the Havens family on Long Island. George Haven’s son John (1685-1750) moved from Shelter Island in 1744 west to the Moriches Bay area where he became a substantial landowner

and established a large family. The Map’s black lines apparently showing the 1700 purchase comport with the deed for that purchase. The red hand-drawn information compares well with the tax committee’s material. The printed names for the late 1700s are familiar.

While study of the Map is ongoing, we chose to use it to display the seven preserves that are located in the center and east side of the Island to give a sense for the Havens family importance to the Island’s history. Six preserves are in the George Havens purchase area. However, the Map indicated that the Dickerson Creek Overlook Preserve is west of the George Havens purchase and the tax committee’s materials confirmed that.

Southold Town Records, Vol. II, p. 419:

Nathaniel Sylvester of Shelter Island Gent, sends Greeting: Know Yee, that I, ye said Nathaniel Sylvester in consideration of six hundred pounds to me paid by George Havens of Conanicutt Island alias James town in Rhode Island and Providence plantations in New England, yeoman, doe give, grant and sell unto ye said George Havens, one thousand acres of land situate on Shelter Island, and was bequeathed me by my honoured father Nathaniel Sylvester dec’d by his last will and testament: which said thousand acres of land is bounded as followetb, and begineth on ye West at a ditch which was dugg out of ye fresh pond, and on ye East by a Creeke called flyers creeke and soe to continue running a full mile in breadth between ye said boundaries on a North and Westerly line until ye said thousand acres be made good and measured, with all the appurtenances.
Witness my hand and seal this 25th day of March 1699 and 1700.