

THE FORTUNATE ISLAND OF MONHEGAN<sup>1</sup>

BY CHARLES FRANCIS JENNEY

ON FRIDAY, May 17, 1605, a ship, "supposed to have been called the Archangel"<sup>2</sup> and commanded by Capt. George Weymouth, neared the main. The narrator, James Rosier, who is stated to have been a gentleman employed in the voyage, thus describes the landfall:

" . . . about sixe a clocke at night we descried the land, which bare from vs North-North-East; but because it blew a great gale of winde, the sea very high and neere night, not fit to come upon an unknowen coast, we stood off till two a clocke in the morning, being Saturday; then standing in with it againe, we descried it by eight a clocke in the morning bearing North-East from us. It appeared a meane high land, as we after found it, being but an Iland of some six miles in compasse, but I hope the most fortunate euer yet discourd. About twelve a clocke that day, we came to an anker on the North side of this Iland, about a legue from the shore. About two a clocke our Captaine with twelue men rowed in his ship boat to the shore, where we made no long stay, but laded our boat with dry wood of olde trees upon the shore-side and returned to our ship, where we rode that night.

"This Iland is woody, grouen with Firre, Birch, Oke, and Beech, as farre as we saw along the shore; and so

<sup>1</sup>At the outset, acknowledgment is made of great indebtedness to Henry S. Burrage, D.D., State Historian of Maine, whose recent work entitled "The Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 1602-1658, is so full of matters of historical interest relating to this locality. It has been used freely. In most cases, however, the sources of information have been verified and sometimes supplemented by examination of other sources.

<sup>2</sup>1 Me. Hist. Collections, VI, 294. Rosier, "Relation of Weymouth's Voyage," (Gorges Society) viii.

likely to be within. On the verge grow Gooseberries, Strawberries, Wild pease, and Wild rose bushes. The water issued forth down the Rocky cliffs in many places: and much fowl of divers kinds breed upon the shore and rocks."<sup>3</sup>

The island on which the landing was made, although named St. Georges in the relation, has always been identified as Monhegan. Its history warrants, in part at least, Rosier's hope that it would be a most fortunate island. It is the purpose of this essay to describe the fulfilment of his prophecy.

In July of the year of Waymouth's voyage, Champlain saw Monhegan and christened it *La Nef*, "for, at a distance, it had the appearance of a ship."<sup>4</sup>

Monhegan is the most prominent landmark on the central and westerly coast of Maine, and is the westernmost of the outlying islands off Penobscot Bay. Situated in latitude 43° 46' N., and longitude 69° 18' W, it is said to contain 655 acres, and the adjacent island of Manana, 77 acres.<sup>5</sup> It is about one and five-eighths miles in length, and almost five-eighths of a mile in width. In nautical miles, it is distant from Cape Ann 87 miles, from Highland Light on Cape Cod, 108, and from Boston Light, about 110. Its rocky shores rise boldly from the sea in two places to the height of 160 feet. Not being encompassed by other islands, it is visible for a considerable distance. Westerly and southerly there is, north of the Gulf of Mexico, no other western Atlantic island of equal elevation.

The statement, often made, that Waymouth set up a cross on Monhegan is now discredited, and is only referred to because so frequently and carelessly repeated by those who have made no careful examination. The cross undoubtedly was upon Allen's Island, about seven miles to the north of Monhegan.

---

<sup>3</sup>Rosier's Relation (Gorges Society) 93.

<sup>4</sup>Champlain's Voyages (Prince Society) II, 91.

<sup>5</sup>Bangor Historical Magazine (Feb. 1888) III, 141.

The name, Monhegan, has many spellings, some of which are given by Goss in "Something about Monhegan."<sup>6</sup> At my request, Mr. Lincoln N. Kinnicutt has made a careful examination concerning its derivation and meaning. He writes:

"In my opinion the exact English equivalents of many of the Indian place names are never possible to obtain on account of the various shades of meaning which could be expressed by the Indian pronunciation or by the accentuation. All that we have to rely upon is how that pronunciation was expressed in writing by the white man who heard it. However, I do believe we can come near the meaning in most cases.

"The generally accepted translation of Monhegan is, I believe, 'Great Island' or 'Grand Island.' In my analysis of the word I can find no trace of the adjective. The root of the name is undoubtedly Munnoh or Munnohan—an island. The same root is found with slight variations in the Indian names of Long Island, Shelter Island, Block Island, Grand Menan and many others. We have the name in Massachusetts near Middleborough with almost the same spelling—Monhiggin—and probably it was the name originally given to an island in Quitticas Pond.

"The Micmac Indians, inhabiting a country further north, and having a different language, although the roots of many of their words were the same, evidently knew the Maine coast well, and we know they gave their own names to several of the islands. In their language 'Munegoo' was the word for an island, and certainly this comes very near to the present name. They also had the word 'Munegoogwaach' meaning an islander.

"I think we must accept 'The Island' as the interpretation, and there is a strong probability that to all the Indians on the Maine coast it was *the* island where the white men came year after year in 'their big

---

<sup>6</sup>Magazine of American History (Sept. 1884) XII, 267.

canoes with the white wings,' for it seems to have been the island most often mentioned by the early voyagers. In this same way, Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull thought that the Indian name Manati, for Long Island, meant *The Island* to all the Indians living in that vicinity.

"Quite possibly the original Indian name Monahigan, as John Smith wrote it, in 1615, or Munhiggen—Monhiggon—Menehighon, as written in other early records, was in some way more descriptive; but if so, I am unable to interpret it.

"There is no doubt but that Monanis means 'The little island'—'es' or 'is' is always the Indian diminutive."

Mr. J. Hammond Trumbull was of like opinion. Goss quotes him as follows: "Probably a corruption of the Algonkin general name for 'island'—*Men-ahan* in the Abnaki language, but hardened to *Mun-egoo* in the Micmac, through which, probably, the name came first to French and English fishermen."<sup>7</sup> The concurrence of these eminent authorities seems to conclude the question of the meaning of the word.<sup>8</sup>

Smith designated the island as "Barties Isles," but the name never was of general acceptance.<sup>9</sup> In addition to its Indian name, it is entitled "I. Schip," on a map engraved, probably in 1631, by Lucini, an

<sup>7</sup>Ms. letter quoted in *Mag. Am. History*, XII, 266. See also Willis, "Language of the Abnaquies," *1 Me. Hist. Soc. Collections*, IV, 101, 106, 190. Eaton, "Annals of Warren," 14.

<sup>8</sup>"MENAN, from *menahan*, *island*, by emphasis here, *The Island*, as being the largest, and on the maps 'Grand Menan.' In the Jesuit Relations it is called *Menano*, perhaps *Menanoke*."

"MENANA, from the same word with a suffix thought to denote separation, as *The Island*, separated from Monhegan. Smith wrote it "*Monanis*, suggesting a diminutive, *Small Island*."

"MONHEGAN. There is difficulty in translating the name of this island, called St. George by Captain George Popham in 1607. Comparing it with the definition of Michigan, given by Schoolcraft, from a dialect of the language that reached to Maine, a clue may be found for its interpretation. *Mona* and *munnoh* mean *island*. *Monahigan*, changed by use to *Monhegan*, may perhaps mean 'The Island of the Sea.' Its position, if not this explanation, well entitled it to this distinction." Ballard, "Geographical Names on the Coast of Maine," *U. S. Coast Survey Rep.* (1868) 243, 253.

<sup>9</sup>"Travels and Works of Capt. John Smith (Arber's Ed.) I, 232. II, 700, 766. All references to Smith's works are to this edition.

Italian.<sup>10</sup> This name is based on that of Champlain.

It is not within the scope of this essay to consider the history of this locality prior to the voyage of Waymouth. Sebastian Cabot's second voyage, in 1498, it is believed, extended along the northern coast of the United States; if so, Cabot must have seen the rugged outlines of our island.<sup>11</sup> Soon afterward, the bold fishermen of the west of England, Normandy, Brittany, and Portugal resorted to the banks of Newfoundland; but how far they went to the westward, we do not know. However, there are found traces of voyages to the coast of Maine, prior to that of Waymouth.<sup>12</sup> The narratives of Gosnold's voyage of 1602 set out with particularity that, near a rock called by the voyagers, "Savage Rock," there came toward Gosnold's ship a Biscayan shallop, with sail and oars and manned by savages. One wore a black waistcoat and breeches of serge, made after the sea fashion, hose, shoes, hat and band; one or two more had a few things of Christian origin; the shallop also had an iron grapple and a copper kettle. The Indians, with a piece of chalk, described the coast thereabouts; named Placentia in Newfoundland; and "spoke divers Christian words." "It seemed by some words and signs they made that some Basks or of S. John de Luz . . . [had] fished or traded in this place, being in the latitude of 43 degrees." Savage Rock has been identified as Cape Neddock on the southerly coast of Maine. It is clear that it was as far west as that locality.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>This map is reproduced in the "Documentary History of N. Y." (1849) I, frontispiece.

<sup>11</sup>The weather-worn markings upon Manana are not discussed. Those curious as to these will find a bibliographical note in the Narrative and Critical History of America, I, 102. See also Williamson, "The Northmen in Maine" The Historical Magazine, (Jan. 1869) 2nd Series, V, 31.

<sup>12</sup>See Baxter, "The Avant Couriers of Colonization," 3 Me. Hist. Soc. Collections, II, 1-2D. Thayer, "The Sagadahoc Colony," (Gorges Society) 71, 75.

<sup>13</sup>Archer, "Relation of Gosnold's Voyage," 3 Mass. Hist. Collections, VIII, 73. Brereton, "Brief and True Relation of Gosnold's Voyage," *Ib.* 85. Livingston's Facsimile Reprint of Brereton, 4. Burrage, "Early English and French Voyages," 323, 330. DeCosta, "Plymouth before the Pilgrims," Magazine Am. Hist. (Dec. 1882) VIII, 808.

In 1603, Martin Pring voyaged to the coast of Maine, employing two vessels, the "Speedwell" and the "Discoverer." In his company were at least two of Gosnold's men. He explored the coast from Penobscot Bay to Cape Cod. While the narrative of his voyage was not printed until 1625, Pring was sent by the "inducements and persuasions" of Richard Hakluyt, by the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol and "most of the merchants" of that city; consequently the results of his explorations must have been well disseminated.<sup>14</sup>

Those who described the lands and seas visited by Gosnold, Pring and Waymouth did so in glowing terms—and with much emphasis on the bountiful supply of fish. Wrote Brereton, ". . . in five or six hours' absence we had pestered our ship so with cod-fish, that we threw numbers of them over-board againe; and surely, I am persuaded that in the months of March, April, and May, there is upon this coast, better fishing, and in as great plentie, as in Newfoundland; . . . and besides, the places where we tooke these cods (and might in a few daies have laden our ship) were but in seven faddome water, and within lesse than a league of the shore; where in Newfoundland they fish in fortie or fiftie fadome water, and farre off." Pring's narrator says: "And as the land is full of Gods good blessings, so is the sea replenished with great abundance of excellent fish, as Cods sufficient to lade many ships . . ." Rosier proclaims "the great plenty of fish which we found afterward wheresoever we went vpon the coast," gives details of their wonderful abundance, and assures a "more profitable returne from hence than from Newfoundland, the fish being so much greater, better fed,

---

<sup>14</sup>Purchas, "Pilgrimes," IV, 1654. Smith, "Travels and Works", I, 336. Magazine of Am. Hist. (Dec. 1882) VIII, 840. Winship, "Sailor's Narratives of New England Voyages," 53-63. Burrage, "Early English Voyages," 341-352. Dennis, "Capt. Martin Pring, Last of the Elizabethan Seamen," 3 Me. Hist. Collections, 2E-50. The last citation contains bibliographical notes.

and abundant with traine." In 1630, the author of *New England's Plantation* describes in detail and with emphasis the abundance and kinds of fish.<sup>15</sup>

In 1606, came the expedition fitted out by Sir John Popham under the command of Thomas Hanham, with whom was Pring as master. The central part of the coast of Maine was visited, but no record of this voyage is known.<sup>16</sup> Sir Ferdinando Gorges, however, declares the importance of this expedition. Writing in 1658, he says that Pring returned with "the most exact discovery of that coast that ever came to my hands since, . . . which with his relation of the Country, wrought such an impression on the Lord Chiefe Justice [Popham], and us all that were his associates, . . . we set up our resolutions to follow it with effect."<sup>17</sup>

May 31, 1607, the "Gift of God" and the "Mary and John" bearing the ill-fated Popham colonists, left Plymouth, England. There is no evidence that they anchored at Monhegan, as sometimes has been stated. They were at or near Weymouth's anchorage, where "they found a cross set up, the which we suppose was set up by George Wayman."<sup>18</sup> It therefore follows that it was not at Monhegan, but probably on Allen's Island that Rev. Richard Seymour on August 9, 1607, delivered his memorable sermon; but the Popham colonists certainly saw rugged Monhegan, even if they did not land upon it.<sup>19</sup>

While it has been claimed that, upon the abandonment in the early fall of 1608 of the colony at the

<sup>15</sup>Reprinted in Force's "Tracts."

<sup>16</sup>Thayer, "The Sagadahoc Colony," (Gorges Society) 11. "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 58-60.

<sup>17</sup>Baxter, "Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his Province of Maine", (Prince Society) I, 204; II, 11.

<sup>18</sup>"Sir Ferdinando Gorges," I, 77. "The Sagadahoc Colony," 50-54-58. "Early English Voyages," 397, 406, 407. Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings. XVIII.—Strachey, "The History of Travels into Virginia, Brittania," 4 Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections, III, 219. 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Collections, III, 296, 297. Brown, "Genesis of the U. S." II, 562, 567, 1024.

<sup>19</sup>Smith, "Travels & Works," II, 696. "The Sagadahoc Colony," 93.

mouth of the Kennebec, some of the inhabitants remained on the coast and settled on the peninsula of Pemaquid and at Monhegan, no substantial evidence exists to that effect and there is strong reason for coming to the contrary conclusion. But Sir Francis Popham, son of Sir John, sent vessels to the coast for "trading and fishing."<sup>20</sup> Upon a map made in 1610, Monhegan appears as "I. St. George."<sup>21</sup>

In 1611, Biencourt, leaving Port Royal, (now Annapolis, N. S.) also visited the coast as far west as the Kennebec. Father Biard states that the English from Virginia have the habit of coming every year to the islands of Pemcuit (Pemaquid) to get fish for food for the winter.<sup>22</sup> A French settlement was begun on Mt. Desert in 1613, but the same year Capt. Samuel Argall, who came to the Maine Coast for fish, destroyed that colony. In this year also, Capt. Edward Harley or Harlow was on the New England coast, and is said to have been at Monhegan.<sup>23</sup>

Capt. John Smith's memorable voyage was in 1614. In his narrative first appears the name "Monhegan," or as Smith wrote it "Monahigan." He described that island as a "round, high Ile, and close by it [is] *Monanis* betwixt which is a small harbor where we rid."<sup>24</sup> In his "Description of New England," Smith says: "Yet I made a garden upon the top of a Rockie Ile in 43½, 4 leagues from the Main, in May, that grew so well, as it served us for sallets in June and July."<sup>25</sup> While Smith explored the coast with eight

<sup>20</sup>See "The Sagadahoc Colony," 217; Thayer, "Ancient Pemaquid," 3 Me. Hist. Soc. Collections, II, 374, *passim*.

<sup>21</sup>This map was first reproduced in 1891 in Brown's "Genesis of the U. S." I, 457. This most valuable work gives its interesting history.

<sup>22</sup>The Jesuit Relations (ed. by Thwaites), II, 253, 285. "Me. Hist. & Gen. Recorder," II, 212. The Sagadahoc Colony, 228. "Narrative and Critical History of America," III, 178, 193.

<sup>23</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 118, 121. 2 Me. Hist. Soc. Collections, II, 6, 64. "The Sagadahoc Colony," 217, 219. "Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his Province of Maine," I, 207. Smith, "Travels and Works," II, 696.

<sup>24</sup>Smith, "Travels and Works," II, 720.

<sup>25</sup>*Ib.* I, 193.



of his crew, thirty-seven remaining "did fish," using seven boats which they constructed on the island.

Truly it was a busy spring, and the shores of the little harbor must have been well occupied by the hardy English fishermen, who between the last of April and eighth of July made "fortie thousand of dry fish."<sup>26</sup> In his advertisements for "Unexperienced Planters" (1631) he states the matter somewhat differently, and says that he took "by hookes and lines with fifteene or eighteene men at most, more than 60,000 Cod in lesse than a moneth."<sup>27</sup>

Smith also tells us that right against him "in the Main was a Ship of Sir *Francis Poppames*, that had there such acquaintance, having many yeares used onely that porte, that the most parte there, was had by him. And forty leagues westwards were two French Ships, that had made there a great voyage by trade."<sup>28</sup>

In his writings, published from time to time after his voyage to New England, Smith gives much information concerning the progress of the fisheries. He says that, in 1615, "foure good shippes" came, in which were some of the men who were with him in the previous year. From March to the "halfe June" these fishermen freighted a ship of three hundred tons with fish designed for the Spanish market, but which did not reach there on account of the capture of the vessel by the Turks. Another of these vessels took its cargo to Virginia and the remaining two returned to England within six months.<sup>29</sup> There were undoubtedly other vessels in this year, and among the persons on the coast was Richard Hawkins of the Plymouth company.<sup>30</sup>

In 1616, four more ships sailed from London, and a like a number from Plymouth. Smith records

<sup>26</sup>Ib. I, 187, 240.

<sup>27</sup>Ib. II, 936.

<sup>28</sup>Ib. I, 188.

<sup>29</sup>"Narrative and Critical Hist. of America," III, 181. Smith, "Travels and Works," I, 240.

<sup>30</sup>"Sir Ferdinando Gorges and His Province of Maine," II, 25, 26.

voyages in 1618, 1619 and 1620. In the latter year there were "six or seuen sayle from the west Countrey onely to fish." In the edition of Smith's "New England's Trials," published in 1622, "Declaring the successe of 80 Ships employed thither within these eight yeares," details of these and other voyages are given.<sup>31</sup> One of these voyages is noteworthy, as it relates to the first owner of Monhegan. Smith says: "For the 26 saile of ships, the most I can yet understand is, Master Ambrose Jennens of London, and Master Abraham Jennens of Plimmoth sent (their Abraham) a ship of 220 Tuns, and the Nightingale of Porchmouth of 100; whose fish at the first penie came to 3,150 pounds; in all they were 35 saile: and where in Newfoundland they shared six or seven pounds for a common man, in New England they shared fourteen pounds; besides, six Dutch and French ships made wonderfull returnes in fures."<sup>32</sup>

It thus appears that at this time trade flourished in the Gulf of Maine and undoubtedly the best fishing stations, like Monhegan, Damariscove and Pemaquid, were full of stages, that the little harbors were well occupied by boats, and that on the shores were groups of rollicking fishermen. Concerning the social phase of their life, we shall see something hereafter. All of these ships according to Smith "till this last yeare (1621) have bin fished within a square of two or three leagues."<sup>33</sup> This fixes definitely the locality. We can hardly think of these fishermen as living in the crowded quarters of their small vessels while pursuing their fishing; undoubtedly rude huts arose near the shore.

Capt. Edward Brawnde, leaving England in March, is said to have reached Monhegan April 20, 1616, where he met Sir Richard Hawkins, with whom he had some trouble. Dr. Burrage, with much reason,

---

<sup>31</sup>Smith, "Travels and Works," I, 249, 259.

<sup>32</sup>Ib. I, 264.

<sup>33</sup>Ib. I, 244, 268.

believes that the latter may have passed the winter of 1615-1616 at Monhegan.<sup>34</sup>

Among other persons who were, as Smith says, upon a "voyage of profit" only, was Richard Vines, who with his companions spent the winter of 1616-1617 in the wigwams of the savages near the mouth of the Saco.<sup>35</sup>

Capt. Edward Rocroft, intending to remain on the coast during the winter of 1618-1619, changed his mind by reason of a threatened mutiny and leaving the conspirators at Saco to take care of themselves, sailed for Virginia, but was wrecked on his way thither. The men left by him made their way to Monhegan where they spent the winter with "bad lodging and worse fare, yet came all safe home saue one sickly man which dyed there." These men made their return to England the next year in a vessel of Gorges which came to the coast.<sup>36</sup>

In 1619, Dermer was one of those who made the voyage from Plymouth; and there was also a vessel fishing from Virginia. Dermer again visited the island in 1620.<sup>37</sup> In 1622, Thomas Weston, so well known in connection with the settlement of Weymouth, Massachusetts, had a ship at Monhegan. The same year some of the Weymouth colonists went there "hoping to get passage and return with the fishing ships."<sup>38</sup>

Let us pause for a minute to consider why this rocky island became the centre of the great fishing industry and the rendezvous of fishermen from London and the west of England. The reasons are not hard to discover. The island was so far to sea as

---

<sup>34</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 135.

<sup>35</sup>Ib. 134.

<sup>36</sup>"Sir Ferdinando Gorges and His Province of Maine," I, 212, 214. Banks, "Early Settlements in Maine Prior to 1620." *Me. Hist. & Gen. Recorder*, II, 215.

<sup>37</sup>Neill, "Thomas Jones, Captain of the Discovery." *The Historical Magazine*, (Jan. 1869) 2nd Series, V. 31. "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 138, 141. Prince, "Chronological History of New England," (Drake's Ed.) 151, 153.

<sup>38</sup>*Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.* VIII, 271.

to be as now, in the midst of the fishing grounds. ". . . a good fishing place . . . [was] a great advantage . . . , wher the boats may goe quickly in and out to sea at all times of the tide, and well stoed with fish neer at hand, and convenient places to make it and build stages in."<sup>39</sup> Its position made it safe from any sudden attack by the Indians, perhaps not a great danger. The striking appearance of the island made it a good landmark, and it had become well known to all who resorted to the coast. It is true that it was not well situated as a centre of the trade with the Indians, and for that reason it later was abandoned as a trading station. As to this, hereafter. The frail Indian canoes were not well adapted for these waters, uneasy then as now, and somewhat vexing to the inexperienced. But the Indians were not confined to canoes. The letter of William Bradford and Isaac Allerton, dated September 8, 1623, after describing the trade of the French with the Indians, states—"the french doe store them with biskay shalopes fited both with sails and ores, with which they can either row or saile as well as we."<sup>40</sup>

While Indian relics have been occasionally found at Monhegan, they are uncommon. No supply of clams ever existed for the aboriginal feasts. No animals but those of the vast deep and the fowls of the water or air supplied clothing or food. All of the fish and fowl needed for food of the scattered Indian population was conveniently at hand upon or near the mainland. Therefore we cannot picture Monhegan as the home of the Indian, but only as a place visited from time to time, first from curiosity or accident, and later for the purpose of barter with the fishermen.

The grant to Abraham Jennens or Jennings, Merchant, of Plymouth, England, is now considered. As early as 1622, so Smith tells us, Ambrose and

---

<sup>39</sup>Letter of William Bradford and Isaac Allerton, Sept. 8, 1623, *Am. Hist. Review*, (Jan. 1903) VIII, 297, 299.

<sup>40</sup>*Ib.* 295.

Abraham Jennens sent ships, the "Abraham" and the "Nightingale" to the coast. Ambrose was of London and Abraham of Plymouth. Abraham was the son of William Jennens of Birmingham, who married Joanne Elliott, and who died late in 1602 or early in 1603. His widow died in June, 1612. Abraham was probably born in that city.<sup>41</sup> Dr. Burrage, with most painstaking care, has gathered most of what is known concerning him, but his family history was not known to that most careful investigator.<sup>42</sup> He was one of the patentees named in the patent of King James dated May 2, 1610, for the establishment of a colony in Newfoundland.<sup>43</sup> From various sources it appears that he was widely engaged in trade and that he was living in 1641.<sup>44</sup> In 1628, letters of marque were issued to him as one of the owners of the ship "Little Ambrose" of 60 tons, and owner of the ship, "Thomas Discovery" of 30 tons.

On July 12, 1622, he was asked to become a member of the Council for New England, but desired his "answers might be respited until some other time." This council was established November 3, 1620, under the name of "The Council established at Plymouth in the County of Devon, for the planting, ruling, ordering, and governing of New England in America."<sup>45</sup> It was known as the "Great Patent of New England" and was a reincorporation of the "Adventurers of the Northern Colony of Virginia" established April 10, 1606.<sup>46</sup>

This council ordered on November 27, 1622, that a receipt for 110 pounds be given for his partnership,

---

<sup>41</sup>"The Great Jennens Case: Being an Epitome of the History of the Jennens Family, Sheffield, 1879." Copies of wills and other detailed information as to the family are there given.

<sup>42</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 164.

<sup>43</sup>Brown, "Genesis of the U. S.," I, 391.

<sup>44</sup>Many references to him are found in the Calendars of State Papers, edited by W. Noel Sainsbury. See *passim*, Colonial Series, (1574-1660); Domestic Series, (1623-8).

<sup>45</sup>2 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc., VII, 20, (The Farnham Papers) where other sources of information are referred to.

<sup>46</sup>"Genesis of the United States," I, 52.

and three days later it was "sealed" to him "with Covenant for his devident in ye maine Land of New England." Apparently he was one of six merchants who were to be admitted for the "service and speciall Employ<sup>ts</sup>" of the council.

In a proposal for a dividend of lands, which, however, was never consummated, dated July 24, 1622, Monhegan was allotted to the Earl of Arundel. Under date of January 28, 1623, the record of the Council states that the "Com<sup>s</sup>. for seizing of ye Island of Mannahigan is this day sealed and signed." Dr. Burrage construes this as an authorization of the seizure of the island, but there is no evidence of any such action or reason therefor. The word intended most likely was "seizin", in which case this commission was the foundation of the grant to Jennings hereinafter referred to.<sup>47</sup>

The arms of Jennings may be seen in the Church of St. Andrews in Plymouth. Changing the heraldic terms used in the technical description thereof,<sup>48</sup> they may be described as consisting of a shield bearing a red chevron (two broad bands of red meeting at the apex like rafters) between three plummets, which in this connection denote pieces of lead attached to lines, and used in sounding the depths of the sea.<sup>49</sup> Plummetts are found in nearly all coats of arms of this family. Concerning them an ancient writer says: "The plummet may aptly serve as an Hieroglyphic of Prudence, in respect that Mariners, by the Help of this Instrument, fastned to some line of many Fathoms do sound the Depth of the Seas, when by some tempestu-

<sup>47</sup>Proc. Am. Antiq. Soc., April 24, 1867, Oct. 21, 1875; Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, (1574-1660). The word "seizin" is written "season" in the patent to Thomas Cammock in 1631; and "seizing" in the Laconia patent of 1629. 2 Me. Hist. Coll., VII, 107, 140.

<sup>48</sup>Argent, a chevron gules, between three piummets, sable.

<sup>49</sup>While this Church contains no inscription in memory of Jennings, the arms are found in connection with a memorial tablet of the Goodyear family, one of whom, Moses Goodyear, was a son-in-law of Abraham Jennings. Rowe, "Ecclesiastical History of Old Plymouth" (1876) III, 61, 62. Jewitt, "Plymouth," 513; "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 213. 1 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc., V, 170. 2 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc., III, 1, 386.

ous Storm, or other Accident, they are forced upon an unknown Coast; that so, if Necessity require, they may betake themselves to their Anchor-Hold, or divert their course some other Way; Whereby we are admonished to sound the Depth of our Intentions before we put them in Practice, lest we hazard our Fortunes or Lives (through the Want of Foresight) upon the shoals of Destruction."<sup>50</sup>

How fitting for an owner of Monhegan! When that plantation selects a seal, the coat of arms of Abraham Jennings should either be adopted or included.

June 29, 1623, Jenning's share was one of twenty then drawn, but this allotment like that of the previous July, was never consummated. The records of allotments now known to be in existence are most incomplete. Many grants of which the evidence is plenary are not mentioned therein, and the omission therefrom of a specific grant is not of significance.

What evidence is there concerning a grant of this island? Dr. Burrage says: "It seems probable, therefore, that he (Jennings) acquired possession of the island about the time he became a member of the council, and it may be that he accepted membership in this languishing enterprise in order to open the way for its possession. It certainly was of value to him because of the advantages it would secure to those who had the management of his fishing and trading interests on that part of the New England coast."<sup>51</sup>

Abraham Shurt, in a deposition made December 25, 1662, recites that he was sent to this country with authority to buy Monhegan, "which then belonged to Mr. Abraham Jennings of Plimouth," and that the patent was to be delivered up.<sup>52</sup> Governor Bradford

<sup>50</sup>Guillim, "Display of Heraldry," (1724), 304.

<sup>51</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 166.

<sup>52</sup>"York Deeds," Lib. 24, fol. 256; "Order of both branches of the Legislature of Massachusetts to appoint Commissioners to investigate the Causes of Difficulties in the County of Lincoln, and the report of the Commissioners thereon, with the Documents in support thereof," (Boston, 1811) 40, hereinafter cited as "Lincoln Land Report"; Trans. Col. Society of Mass., VI, 50.

of New Plymouth records, "Ther were allso this year (1623) some scatering beginnings made in other places, as at Paskataway, by Mr. David Thomson, at Monhigen, and some other places by sundrie others."<sup>53</sup>

Samuel Maverick in his "Briefe Discription" (1660)<sup>54</sup> speaking of the Pemaquid Patent states "by vertue of that Patent they hold the Islands of Monahegan and Damerell's Coue, and other small ones adjacent Commodious for fishing." As will be seen, the title to Monhegan had been vested prior to 1660 in the persons who then owned the Pemaquid Patent, but that patent did not include Monhegan as it expressly excluded all islands more than three leagues from the shore.<sup>55</sup> Maverick also, when referring to the settlement of Plymouth in New England, says, "Plymouth merchants settled Plantations about that time at Monhegan and Pascattaway by whom they (i. e. the Pilgrim Fathers) were supplied." Prince refers to a plantation of Sir Ferdinando Gorges as in existence at Monhegan in 1623.<sup>56</sup>

Christopher Levett, narrating his voyage of 1623-4, says, "I had heard that Pemoquid and Capmanwagen, and Monhiggon were granted to others."<sup>57</sup>

These statements taken in connection with the occupation by Jennings, and the contemporaneous claim of title solely on the theory of his ownership, conclusively prove more than a mere permissive and transitory occupation. They are consistent only with a well-known and authenticated grant.

Jennings, who is not supposed to have ever visited his island domain, established there a station for fishing and trading, by far the most extensive then in New England.

---

<sup>53</sup>Bradford, "History of Plymouth Plantation," (Ed. 1912) I, 340.

<sup>54</sup>N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg., Jan. 1885; 2 Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc., I, 231.

<sup>55</sup>2 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc., VII, 165, 168.

<sup>56</sup>Prince, "Chronological History of New England." (Drakes' Ed.) 209.

<sup>57</sup>1 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc., II, 88; Baxter, "Christopher Levett of York," (Gorges Soc.) 104.



Most interesting is the connection of Monhegan, and the nearby fishing stations, with the Pilgrims. We read in Bradford<sup>58</sup> that on March 16, 1621, "a certaine Indian came bouldly amongst them and spoke to them in broken English, which they could well understand, but marvelled at it. At length they understood by discourse with him, that he was not of these parts, but belonged to the eastrene parts, wher some English-ships came to ffish, with whom he was aquainted and could name sundrie of them by their names, amongst whom he had gott his language. He became profi(t)able to them . . . His name was Samasett."<sup>59</sup>

Mourt's Relation tells us "He bad us Wellcome;" that he had acquired his knowledge of English from the fishermen that came to Monchiggon; and that he was of Moratiggon, and was one of the "Sagamores or Lords" thereof.<sup>59</sup> "Monchiggon" is undoubtedly "Monhegan," but the other place-name "Moratiggon," used in such close connection, cannot well be construed as referring to the same place, although it has been so stated frequently. Other reasons might be given for this conclusion if space permitted. The reference is undoubtedly to some nearby locality. Samoset, as the name is most commonly given, in 1625 deeded land at New Harbor and on Muscongus Island.<sup>60</sup>

By Phineas Pratt's narrative, we are informed that in May, 1622, the fishermen had newly set up a may-pole at Damariscove, and "weare very merry." Both he and Gov. Bradford report many ships there and at Monhegan.<sup>61</sup> Doubtless there also were rollicking

<sup>58</sup>Bradford, "Hist," I, 199.

<sup>59</sup>"Mourt's Relation" (1622) 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 39.

<sup>60</sup>Trans. Colonial Soc. of Mass., VI, 59; Gen. Adv., (Greenlaw) I, 100; "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 172, 177; "Bangor Hist. Mag.," IV, 81. Sewall, "Samoset and New England Colonization," Mag. of Am. Hist. Soc. (1882) VIII, 820.

<sup>61</sup>Trans. Colonial Soc. of Mass. VI, 59; Gen. Adv. (Greenlaw) I, 100; "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 172, 177; Bangor Hist. Mag. IV, 81. 4 Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 478. Bradford, "History," I, 256. Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc. XX, 65.

May-day celebrations at Monhegan. Perhaps Bradford's account of Morton's famous maypole festivities at Merrymount (1628) may be appropriately given as a description of those six years earlier on the Maine coast. "They allso set up a May-pole, drinking and dancing aboute it many days togeather, inviting the Indean women, for their consorts, dancing and frisking together."<sup>62</sup>

In the same year, a boat "from the eastward" sent by Capt. Huddleston, who was on a fishing voyage from Virginia, visited Plymouth, and this year, Winslow was sent from that place to procure provisions from the fishermen.<sup>63</sup> Maverick's reference (hitherto quoted) is undoubtedly to the aid then extended to the struggling colony by those at Monhegan and vicinity.<sup>64</sup> How timely and great was the assistance rendered, we learn from Winslow's own account. He tells us that the fishermen gave freely and without price all that they could spare, and "supplied our necessities, for which they sorrowed; provoking one another to the utmost of their abilities. Which, although it were not much, amongst so many people as were at the Plantation; yet through the provident and discreet care of the Governors, (it) recovered and preserved strength till our own crop on the ground was ready."<sup>65</sup> Winslow also informs us that about thirty sail of ships fished about Damariscove.

In the year following, in February, the improvident colonists at Weymouth (Massachusetts) sent their shallop to Monhegan to secure food from the fishermen who arrived from England either in that or the following month; and later in the year some of the discouraged inhabitants of that place went to Monhegan, hoping to return to England with the fishing

---

<sup>62</sup>Bradford, "History," II, 48.

<sup>63</sup>Ib. I, 272.

<sup>64</sup>Ib. I, 273.

<sup>65</sup>Winslow, "Good Newes from New England," (1624) 11.

ships;<sup>66</sup> Standish also went to Monhegan for supplies. In the beginning of March, 1624, the Pilgrims sent their pinnace to Damariscove on a fishing voyage, and found ships "already arived out of England."<sup>67</sup>

In 1626, Jennings determined to sell his stock of goods at Monhegan and to part with his interests there. Why he came to this conclusion we can only conjecture, but certain conditions are known to have been in existence. In the Great Patent of 1620, establishing the Plymouth company,<sup>68</sup> besides land, is granted "Fishings . . . within the . . . seas adjoining," and also "Sea Waters, Fishings," etc. Under this grant, the council claimed and exercised the right to control the fishery, and exacted on fishing vessels a tax of eighty-three cents a ton. This caused intense feeling, and a long parliamentary struggle ensued which ended in the abandonment by the council of the claim of control. Sabine says that "during the five years embraced in the struggle the number of English fishing-vessels on the whole extent of our coast diminished much more than one-half, or from four hundred to one hundred and fifty; while it is certain that in the alarm which prevailed, the merchants who had purchased the island of Monhegan, and had provided there ample accommodations for the prosecution of their adventures, sold their property and retired from the business."<sup>69</sup>

The extent and importance of the fishery to England and New England at this period is a subject of much interest. The temptation is strong to enlarge, because it is the key to much that is otherwise obscure; but time forbids. It was the corner-stone of early

---

<sup>66</sup>Bradford, "History," I, 259. Letter of Bradford and Allerton, dated Sept. 8, 1623, *Am. Hist. Rev.* (Jan. 1903) VIII, 299. Bradford, "History," I, 296.

<sup>67</sup>Bradford, "History," I, 350.

<sup>68</sup>2 *Coll. Me. Hist. Soc.* VII, 20, 33, 34, 37.

<sup>69</sup>Sabine, "Principal Fisheries of the American Seas," (1853) 43-45. This subject is fully discussed with ample citation of authorities in the chapter on "Free Fishing" in the "Beginnings of Colonial Me." 144-159 and in Bradford, "History of Plymouth Plantation," I, 310-313.

colonial prosperity, because fish was a staple product largely in demand in the West Indies and in Europe.<sup>70</sup> At one time it was the "stay and support" of the west counties of England.<sup>71</sup> Thomas Morton proclaimed that the cod "is a commodity better than the golden mines of the Spanish Indies."<sup>72</sup> The settlement of Massachusetts has been said to be directly traceable to the fisheries.<sup>73</sup> According to Bradford and Allerton, "fishing must be the cheefe, if not the only means to doe us [the Plymouth colonists] good."<sup>74</sup> Hubbard, writing shortly after 1680, affirms that "it [fishing] was the first improvement that ever was made of this coast, soe it [fish] is still the most certaine and stable com-  
moditie the country affordeth."<sup>75</sup>

Governor Bradford comes to our assistance relative to the sale by Jennings: ". . . and wanting trading goods, they understoode that a plantation which was at Monhigen, and belonged to some marchants of Plimoth was to breake up, and diverse usefull goods was ther to be sould; the Gove (rno) r and Mr. Winslow tooke a boat and some hands and went thither. But Mr. David Thomson, who lived at Pascataway, understanding their purpose, tooke oportunitie to goe with them, which was some hinderance to them both; for they perceiveing their joynt desires to buy, held their goods at higher rates; and not only so, but would not sell a parcell of their trading goods, excepte they sould all. So, lest they should further prejudice one an other, they agreed to buy all, and devid them equally between them. They bought

---

<sup>70</sup>Weeden, "Economic and Social Hist. of N. E.," I, 91, 129, 132, 139. Gillespie, "Influence of Over-sea Expansion on England to 1700," 102-105. McFarland, "History of the N. E. Fisheries," 35, 36, 38.

<sup>71</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 16, 141, 148.

<sup>72</sup>Morton, "New English Canaan." (Prince Soc.) 221. See also White, "The Planters Plea"; Sabine, "Report on American Fisheries."

<sup>73</sup>Sabine, "Report on American Fisheries," 117.

<sup>74</sup>Bradford and Allerton, Letter dated Sept. 8, 1623. *Am. Hist. Rev.* (Jan. 1903) VIII, 296.

<sup>75</sup>Hubbard, "History of New England." (ed. 1815) 25.

also a parcell of goats, which they distributed at home as they saw neede and occasion, and tooke corne for them of the people, which gave them good content. Their moyety of the goods came to above 400 *li* starling. Ther was also that spring a French ship cast away at Sacadahock, in which were many Biscaie ruggs and other commodities, which were falen into these mens hands, and some other fishermen at Damarins-cove, which were also bought in partnership and made their parte arise to above 500 *li*. This they made shift to pay for, for the most part, with the beaver and comodities they had gott the winter before, and what they had gathered up that somer. Mr. Thomson having some thing overcharged him selfe, desired they would take some of his, but they refused except he would let them have his French goods only; and the marchant (who was one of Bristol) would take their bill for to be paid the next year. They were both willing, so they became ingaged for them and tooke them. By which means they became very well furnished for trade. . . .<sup>76</sup>

The eight hundred pounds so paid represented a much greater purchasing power than a like sum would now. The stock of goods has never been equalled in value on this island. Would that we could have an inventory of it! Captain John Smith says that the things most needed were "salt, nettes, hookes, lines, knives, Irish rugges, course cloth, beads, hatchets, glasse, and such trash, onely for fishing and trade with the Salvages."<sup>77</sup> An inventory of goods at Richmond Island in 1634, given in the Trelawney papers, includes two hogsheads of "aqua vitae," and eight barrels of "Malaga sacke" (a sweet wine); and such articles as bread, peas, beans, prunes, tobacco, kettles, hatchets, iron arrow points, awls, puncheons, cloaks, and blankets were in demand.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup>Bradford, "History," I, 447, 448, 449.

<sup>77</sup>"Travels and Works" I, 244.

<sup>78</sup>Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. III, 37, 332; Bradford, "History," 448n.

Concerning the sale of the island itself, let Abraham Shurt who acted for the purchasers speak: ". . . in the year 1626, Alderman Alsworth, and Mr. Gyles Elbridge of Bristol, Merchants, sent over this Deponent for their Agent, and gave Power to him to buy Monhegan, which then belonged to Mr. Abraham Jennings of Plimouth, who they understood was willing to sell it, and having Conference with his Agent, about the Price thereof, agreed for fifty Pounds, and the Pattent to be delivered up; and gave him a bill upon Alderman Alsworth; which bill being presented, was paid as the Aforesaid wrote me."<sup>79</sup> Capt. Sylvanus Davis, a man of much prominence, who in 1701<sup>80</sup> gave an account of the settlements to the eastward of the Kennebec, "some 70 and some 40 years since" (about 1630 to 1660) and who had been a resident in those parts gives the date of the sale as March, 1626.<sup>81</sup> The purchasers soon after established a trading station at Pemaquid, and the famous Pemaquid patent was made to them on February 29, 1631.<sup>82</sup> This included all the islands within three leagues of the mainland. For the purpose of locating the grant, it refers to the "lands where the people or servants of the said Robert Alsworth and Gyles Elbridge are now settled, or have inhabited for the space of three years last past," near the Pemaquid River. Thereby the occupation of Pemaquid in their behalf is established at or about the beginning of 1629. Formal possession was delivered to Shurt on May 27, 1633.<sup>83</sup>

The status of Monhegan as a settlement at and prior to the time of abandonment of the trading

<sup>79</sup>Trans. Colonial Soc. of Mass. VI, 50; Lincoln Land Report, 40; Johnston, "Bristol Bremen and Pemaquid," 57.

<sup>80</sup>See concerning him 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. X, 73, and the volumes of said collections there referred to.

<sup>81</sup>Trans. Col. Soc. of Mass., VI, 26.

<sup>82</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VII, 165, 168, where reference is made to the many places where this patent has been printed.

<sup>83</sup>Lincoln Land Report, 35. Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 51.

station is not easy to define. Bradford (1623) refers to what was then in existence as "scatering beginnings; Maverick refers to it as a "plantation." While the trading station was in existence, there must have been buildings commensurate with the enterprise, and the occupation must have continued throughout the year, if not for purposes of trade, at least for the protection of the property. Yet one cannot, except by the exercise of a lively imagination, picture it as a place of homes. Prior to 1623, at least as early as 1614 as we have seen, and probably earlier, the harbor must have been well occupied by the small vessels and the smaller boats used in fishing. The more level places around the harbor must have been well filled with flakes, and near them the rude dwellings which sheltered the fishermen.

Rocroft's men spent the winter of 1619-20 on the island, and although they found only "bad lodging and worse fare" the fact that they made their way so far out to sea, away from all possibility of a supply of provisions except what could be drawn from the sea, indicates more than a possibility that the winter fishing, afterwards so profitable,<sup>84</sup> was even then pursued, or that men were left to care for the boats and other property remaining from year to year.<sup>85</sup> But we can hardly believe that the presence of women and children brightened life or made the plantation in truth a settlement, until some years later.

Inasmuch as the most of the fishing was done in the late winter and in the spring,<sup>86</sup> there must have been something more than huts of boughs. From tradition, as well as more tangible evidence, it is known that the island afforded trees large enough for the construction

<sup>84</sup> Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. III, 26, 59; 1 Ib. II, 24. Banks, "Early Settlements in Maine Prior to 1620," 215.

<sup>85</sup> Mention has already been made of the voyage of Brawnde and his meeting with Hawkins at Monhegan in April as an indication that the latter there spent the winter of 1615-16. "Beginnings of Colonial Maine." 135.

<sup>86</sup> Smith, "Travels and Works," 256, 257. Baxter, "Christopher Levett of New York," 64.

of buildings and vessels. Manana did not as now, gladden the eye of the artist by its everchanging display of color, but was then and long afterward covered with a heavy growth of timber.

Why Monhegan was abandoned as a trading station can well be understood. Reference has already been made to the decline in the fisheries. Pemaquid offered far greater attractions for trade with the Indians and was also well situated for such business as was likely to be done in supplying the needs of the fishermen. The new patentees of Pemaquid, by the terms of their grant, were under an obligation to nurture a settlement there. Alsworth (Aldworth), and Elbridge made Pemaquid the seat of all their endeavors.

For nearly 120 years after the sale by Jennings in 1626, the title to Monhegan was vested in those who claimed title under the Pemaquid Patent. No deed from Jennings is known. In the course of time, the fact that Monhegan was held under an independent title was forgotten, and it was treated as a part of the lands included in the grant of Pemaquid.

Before considering other things, the title is now traced to the time it ceased to be associated with that of Pemaquid.

Robert Aldworth, one of the owners, by will dated August 30, 1634, and proved January 12, 1635, devised his interest to the other owner, Gyles Elbridge, his nephew by marriage. Elbridge, who died February 4, 1644, devised the island to his son John; and on the death of John, by his will dated September 11, 1646 and proved October 16, 1646, it passed to his brother Thomas.<sup>87</sup> On September 11, 1650, Thomas Elbridge, then of Pemaquid, mortgaged the island to Abraham Shurt, hereinbefore mentioned,<sup>88</sup> and on

---

<sup>87</sup>Waters, "Genealogical Gleanings in England," I, 632-637, 660, 665, 735. II, 1009. Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 21, 57, 70, 76, 78, 85, 95, 96; Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 17; Suffolk Deeds, III, 57.

<sup>88</sup>Suffolk Deeds, I, 131.



November 5, 1650, again mortgaged Monhegan and also Damariscove to Richard Russell of Charlestown for one hundred pounds payable in money, beaver or merchantable dry codfish.<sup>89</sup>

Thomas Elbridge by two deeds, one dated April 14, 1657, the other dated September 3, 1657, conveyed the island to Nicholas Davison, a merchant of Charlestown, who about the same time, July 21, 1657, took an assignment of the mortgage to Richard Russell. The consideration of these deeds was eighty-five pounds, but the conveyance included a moiety of the entire Pemaquid Patent.<sup>90</sup>

The deed of Elbridge to Captain Paul White, (February 1, 1652), and from White to Richard Russell and Nicholas Davison (April 27, 1653), and from Russell to Davison (July 21, 1657), properly construed, do not include the island; but in any event, the title thereby conveyed became the property of Davison who also held title by direct conveyance, as hereinbefore given.<sup>91</sup>

Nicholas Davison remained the sole owner from 1657 to his death, which probably occurred early in 1665, as his will was proven February 5, 1665.<sup>92</sup> From this time the title may be traced through the heirs of Davison, and those of David Anderson, also of Charlestown, who acquired an undivided share from some of the heirs of Davison. To do this requires painstaking research and the detailed results would be of interest only to the antiquary or the conveyancer.<sup>93</sup> The result may be summarily stated. The Pemaquid patent and Monhegan became the property of the Pemaquid proprietors. There was much confusion and doubt as to the validity of the patent, all of which

<sup>89</sup>Suffolk Deeds, III, 49.

<sup>90</sup>Suffolk Deeds, III, 49, 50, 57. York Deeds XVIII, 114. Lincoln Land Report, 49.

<sup>91</sup>Suffolk Deeds, II, 68, 69, III, 49. York Deeds, XVIII, 116, 118. XVII, 331. Lincoln Land Report, 41, 45, 47.

<sup>92</sup>Lincoln Land Report, 52; Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 38.

<sup>93</sup>Those interested in the matter may find assistance in Lincoln County Land Report, *passim*; Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 11-70 *passim*, but particularly pages 23, 37-48.

resulted in considerable litigation, much turmoil, and finally in legislative action leading to a compromise of conflicting claims. It is an interesting subject but far afield from our text.<sup>94</sup> Suffice it to say, that as the title to Monhegan was not involved in the validity of that of Pemaquid, these troubles had no effect upon it.

On June 14, 1749, at a meeting of the Pemaquid Proprietors held in the Sun tavern in Boston, it was "Voted that all The Islands belonging to The Proprietors of the Pemaquid Patent be sold to Mr. Shem Drowne For Eighteen hundred Pounds Old Tenor Including his Twenty Five Ninetyths. To be paid in Twelve months without Interest."<sup>95</sup>

No record of the deed given under the vote has been found. It included Monhegan, and the evidence as to its existence is conclusive.<sup>96</sup> Thus rapidly has been outlined the history of the title from 1626 to 1749.

Many events happening between these dates remain for consideration. Concerning the various owners, there is little of general interest. Robert Aldworth and Gyles Elbridge were merchants of Bristol, England, and the former was an alderman of that city. Aldworth, who died on November 6, 1634, was a "furtherer of the voyage of [Captain Martin Pring in 1603] as well with his purse as with his travail."<sup>97</sup> He was most prominent in Bristol, not only as a merchant, but in the civic life of the city. His mansion, a fine specimen of the timber and plaster house of the period, adorned with rich wood carvings, is still standing, and the dining-room, completely panelled in dark oak, with a high sculptured marble fireplace is still shown to visitors. His monument, in St. Peter's Church in Bristol, is more than eighteen feet high, and bears the effigies of Aldworth and his

---

<sup>94</sup>See references under last note, and also Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid."

<sup>95</sup>Pemaquid Proprietors' Records I, 16. (Manuscript in possession of the Am. Antiq. Soc.) See also Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 52.

<sup>96</sup>York Deeds, XXXIII, 34.

<sup>97</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine" 26, 142.

wife. Concerning Aldworth, an inscription in Latin, freely translated, says:

"Although this statue of the venerable man is silent  
Learn, O reader and beholder who he was—  
A famous merchant, a successful voyager through  
Many seas, seeking rather the glory of his country  
And the relief of the poor than thirsting for  
The accumulation of hoards of wealth.  
And, therefore, by the will of God,  
He became richer, an exemplary magistrate of the city,  
Full of honor and fidelity, serving Christ and God  
According to the teaching of the Church of England  
(Which was dear to his heart); he closed his life in peace  
And now enjoys eternal peace beyond the stars."<sup>98</sup>

Gyles Elbridge, his nephew by marriage, who with Aldworth owned Monhegan, was also a leading merchant of Bristol, and prominent in civic affairs.<sup>99</sup> On his death in February, 1644, the title vested in his eldest surviving son, John, who died either in September or October, 1646, devising all his property in New England, and also considerable real estate in England, to his brother Thomas. In his will, dated September 11, 1646, he states that Thomas was then "beyond the seas and still in his minority."

Thomas Elbridge, who became the owner in 1646, came to Pemaquid prior to September 11, 1650, when he mortgaged the island to Abraham Shurt. As we have seen he was not of age in the early fall of 1646, and was then somewhere in America. In 1672 he was one of the petitioners to Massachusetts to be taken under its government and protection.<sup>100</sup> After he came to Pemaquid, where he was a merchant, he "called a Court unto which Divers of the then In-

<sup>98</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 181, where Dr. Burrage has gathered much information concerning Aldworth, and has given a picture of his monument. A detailed description of the memorial, written by the clerk of St. Peters is in the possession of the writer.

<sup>99</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 180, 182, 284. His monument adjoins that of Aldworth in St. Peters Church.

<sup>100</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 110, 112. 1 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc. V, 237-241; 1 Me. Hist. Soc. X, 83 and references there given.

habitants of Monhegan, and Damariscove repaired, and continued there fishing, paying a certain Acknowledgement."<sup>101</sup>

It must not be inferred that this was a court in the sense in which the word is now used, but rather a gathering of the people, called by Elbridge for the purpose of establishing his rights as proprietor.

Why Elbridge left his home in old Bristol and came to the then new Bristol, we know not. It is certain that he was in financial difficulties while in Pemaquid. His property in England apparently was not available. To exploit his patent required not only energy and foresight, but capital, and he seemingly had none of these qualifications.

On December 10, 1650, Abraham Shurt bound himself to Thomas Elbridge in the sum of 7000£ to abide the order of any court at Boston, or any arbitration "in an action of the case upon Accounts taken out" between him and Gyles Elbridge and John Elbridge his executor.<sup>102</sup> In 1651, he had leave to bring an "action of review" for the hearing of a suit between himself and the administrator of the estate of Richard Saltonstall.<sup>103</sup> In 1659, Thomas Elbridge was in litigation with George Cleeve. There were cross actions for debt, and suits by Elbridge for assault and for defamation.<sup>104</sup> He disposed of the last of his interests in lands at Pemaquid and Monhegan in 1657, and thereafter was not an important factor in the history of either Monhegan or Pemaquid. He resided in Pemaquid until 1672 and probably some time longer. In June 1677, he was of Marblehead and was licensed to "draw liquor, beer and cider to sell out of doors at retail, but not within doors."<sup>105</sup> Two years

---

<sup>101</sup>Trans. Col. Soc. of Mass. VI, 51; Lincoln Land Report, 40; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 57; 1 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc. V, 226, 237.

<sup>102</sup>Aspinwall Notarial Records, (Boston Record Comm'r's Reports), XXXII, 357.

<sup>103</sup>Mass. Colonial Rec. III, 226; IV, Pt. I, 44.

<sup>104</sup>Baxter, "George Cleeve and His Times" (Gorges Society) 178. York County Court Records (Mass.)

<sup>105</sup>Essex Court Records, VI, 296.

afterward, he again petitioned reciting, "what condition it had 'pleased the lord by meanes of the cruell heathen,' to bring him, he having lost his all," and having "a wife and five children to maintain with no way to earn a living"; that he had been granted "a license to sell drink out of doors, but living out of the way in a poor house could not make a living, but ran in debt;" and that he had "now moved to a house near the town for which he is to pay a great rent," and asked for a license to sell within doors.<sup>106</sup> The following year the selectmen of Marblehead represented to the court the low and necessitous condition of Elbridge's family, and asked that his daughter Elizabeth be licensed to sell "liquor beer and syder" "till such time as she can have reliefe from him . . . now necessarily absent in Jaimaica," so that she may be able to provide for and maintain the "four small children left with hir."<sup>107</sup> On Nov. 28, 1682, the selectmen again petitioned reciting the needy state of Elbridge's family, left with his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, which had depended for its subsistence upon a license to the daughter issued on the petition hereinbefore referred to, and representing that the daughter named had "kept good orders," and "hath still two of the children with her."<sup>108</sup>

Elbridge died at "Spring Plantation, Liguanee" in the parish of St. Andrew, Jamaica. The dilapidated stone over his grave gave the date as 1682, but it was so defaced or broken that the month and day did not appear. Rebecca, his wife, died in Jamaica in October, 1684.<sup>109</sup> An examination of the old burial ground recently made in 1915 at the writer's request failed to find the stone. His will, dated June 9, 1682, recites that he is "very sick and weak of body;" it indicates that he possessed considerable property.

<sup>106</sup>Ib. VII, 242.

<sup>107</sup>Ib., VII, 416, 417.

<sup>108</sup>Ib. VIII, 444.

<sup>109</sup>Carribeana, I, 342. The will is recorded in Spanishtown, Jamaica; a copy is in the writer's possession; it never has been printed.

The inscription gives the age of Thomas as 63. This is inconsistent with the statement in the will of his uncle that he was a minor in 1646.

The cause of the penniless condition of Thomas Elbridge of Bristol, England, Pemaquid and Jamaica remains a mystery. While he had abundant property in old England, for more than a quarter of a century both he and his family were in destitute circumstances in New England.

On the death of Thomas, his son John became the possessor of the combined Elbridge and Aldworth estates, and was a man of great wealth. The money bequests in his will exceeded £52,000. He was founder of, and a great benefactor to, numerous important charities and schools in Bristol, England. With him the male line became extinct.

Prof. Edward Elbridge Salisbury, with great outlay of time and money gathered nearly all that is known concerning the family and reference must be made to his monumental work for further details.<sup>110</sup> But many of the references to Thomas Elbridge and his family have come to light since its publication, and the date of Thomas Elbridge's death and the existence of his will were discovered by the writer by merest chance.

One of the reasons for this outline of family history is the relationship of the Elbridge family to Worcester. In the female line, he was an ancestor of Stephen Salisbury, Daniel Waldo, and Levi Lincoln. Elbridge Gerry, signer of the Declaration of Independence and Vice-President of the United States, also was a descendant of Thomas Elbridge.<sup>111</sup> Shurt, the trusted servant of Gyles and John Elbridge, who purchased Monhegan in their behalf, was not only a

---

<sup>110</sup>"Family Memorials, A Series of Genealogical and Biographical Monographs," including among others, the family of Aldworth-Elbridge (1885-Privately printed in an Edition of 200) I, 103, 143. "Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 180-182, 217-219, 284, 306, 308. Report of State Historian (Me.) 1913-1914, 7-10, 14016. N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg. (Oct. 1900), LIV, 410-413.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

man of great influence, but the leading resident of Pemaquid, and its neighborhood.<sup>112</sup>

Nicholas Davison was a mariner of Charlestown and left considerable property. Although his estate was settled in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, he became a resident of Pemaquid, died and was there buried.<sup>113</sup>

Time permits a reference to only one more of the owners hereinbefore referred to. Deacon Shem Drowne, agent for the Pemaquid Proprietors and the one most active in their behalf, was a coppersmith of Boston, and the first tinplate worker that ever came to that place. He was the artisan of the grasshopper vane that still remains on Faneuil Hall.<sup>114</sup>

The progress of events on the island is now reviewed. Sylvanus Davis's report, made in 1701, states that the island was "improved ever since [from 1626] till the Warr, in 1688."<sup>115</sup> Although this is not literally true, undoubtedly it is substantially correct. Richard Mather, in the journal of his voyage from Bristol, England, to Massachusetts, states that on August 8, 1635, land was made at Monhegan, "an Iland without inhabitants."<sup>116</sup> Everything indicates that shortly after the sale by Jennings, the island ceased for a time to be a place of importance.

The day of the explorer had ended. A voyage to the Maine coast was no more momentous than one of like character would be to-day, and such voyages were not heralded or recorded. The centre of events had moved to Massachusetts Bay, and, by the greater growth there taking place, that of the fishing isles of Maine was shadowed. But the fishery was still of

---

<sup>112</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 56, 59. *New England Hist. and Gen. Reg.* XXV, 131. *Trans. Col. Soc. Mass.* VI, 49, and references there given.

<sup>113</sup>*Trans. Col. Soc. Mass.* VI, 37-44. *York Deeds*, XVII, 331.

<sup>114</sup>*Trans. Col. Soc. Mass.* VI, 23, 30-32; *Lincoln Land Report*, 7-11, 59, 62, 76, 146; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 466.

<sup>115</sup>*Trans. Col. Soc. Mass.* VI, 27.

<sup>116</sup>*Journal of Richard Mather*, 26.

great importance, and the fishermen continued to pull up from the sea "two pence, six pence and twelve pence," as Smith quaintly phrased it.<sup>117</sup> While the evidence for some considerable time after 1626 is against a continuous settlement, there can be no doubt that, in the spring and early summer, the island was a place of resort for fishermen from across the sea, and from Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth.

In 1629, one John Parker was there engaged in fishing.<sup>118</sup> Dixey Bull, the first pirate of the New England Coast, vexed this vicinity, taking several vessels at sea, rifling the fort at Pemaquid, and plundering the settlers.<sup>119</sup> Governor Winthrop records (1641) the sorrowful adventures of eight men, who in the fall "about the beginning of the frost," started from Piscataqua for Pemaquid, and who were driven out to sea, and after fourteen days of suffering reached Monhegan. Four died, and the others were discovered and rescued by a fisherman.<sup>120</sup> In an account rendered in 1647, is this entry: "It to Monhigan men 04:00:00."<sup>121</sup> In 1648, shallops from Ipswich, Mass., fished at Monhegan all summer.<sup>122</sup> Valentine Hill made a voyage to this place from Essex County in 1650, and had litigation about it with one of his men. At least one of them remained on the island, and the same year John Devoux left there two swine.<sup>123</sup> Edward Hilliard, in 1654, brought suit against John Ridgaway for "freight of fish from Munhegin to Charlestowne."<sup>124</sup> Apparently he met with success in his suit, or other creditors pursued Ridgaway, for, in the next year, he tendered to his creditors among other things "two bills with men's

<sup>117</sup>Smith, "Travels and Works," I, 213. II, 727.

<sup>118</sup>1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. II, 192.

<sup>119</sup>1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll., V, 204; Me. Gen. Recorder, I, 57.

<sup>120</sup>Mag. Am. Hist. (Sept. '84) 270; 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 224.

<sup>121</sup>Suffolk Deeds, III, 100.

<sup>122</sup>Hubbard, "General History of New England," 532.

<sup>123</sup>Essex Court Records, I, 214-216, 325.

<sup>124</sup>Ib. I, 325.



hands to them y<sup>t</sup> then (as It seemed to them) did liue at Monhegan."<sup>125</sup> In 1661, William Shackerly of Plymouth, England, fished here.<sup>126</sup> Andrew Woodbery recovered a verdict against Paul Mansfield in 1652, for freight of fish from Monhegan to Marblehead some eight years before.<sup>127</sup> In 1669, Thomas Elbridge, described in the conveyance as Gentleman, and as of "Aldertown in New England," in consideration of "Three gallons of strong liquor," granted land at Round Pond to John Dollen, fisherman of Monhegan, or as the deed gives it "Mount Hegan." Of Dollen, more hereafter.<sup>128</sup> In March, 1672, Francis Johnson of Marblehead sued Richard Bedford for "damage on a fishing voyage at Monhegan, claiming that the defendant, a shoreman, by his drunkenness and neglect caused injury to fish to about 30£. The plaintiff's verdict was "Damages to be paid in fish at Munhegan." Bedford sued Johnson and one Grant for injury caused by his loss of his "share and craft" in said voyage, and also had a verdict. There was evidence that Bedford refused to leave the island with the company, "would make himself drunk, . . . would lie under the flakes or in one house or another and let the fish lie 'upon spoiles.' He would also get others to drink it with him, with the bottle in the knees of his breeches."<sup>129</sup> In the same year, William Browne, Sr., bought fish at the island and Anthony Peadell and John Palmer were residents.<sup>130</sup> These are trivial incidents, but are all that have come to the writer's attention. They are important as showing occupation during this period, and are only glimpses of the activities that must have existed.

Reference has been made to the report of Captain Sylvanus Davis in 1701. The report gives much more

<sup>125</sup>Suffolk Deeds, II, 144.

<sup>126</sup>Essex Court Records, II, 313.

<sup>127</sup>Ib. III, 14.

<sup>128</sup>Suffolk Deeds, LVII, 241. York Deeds, XXI, 57.

<sup>129</sup>Essex Court Records, V, 6.

<sup>130</sup>Ib. V, 12, 108, 109.

information than that afforded by any other source. Davis died in 1703, and, assuming that he was an aged man, could hardly have known in detail from personal recollection what was in existence in 1630 or 1631. His prominent activities which continued to 1690, do not indicate a man of years. He purchased of the Indians in 1659 land near Damariscotta, and removed subsequently to Arrowsic Island (Georgetown).<sup>131</sup> It may fairly be assumed that he was in these parts some years prior to this purchase. His statement, however, relates to "the several settlements that he hath known" between the Kennebec and Matineus, and it may be considered as representing with substantial correctness the population during the latter part of the period (1631 to 1661) referred to by him. This report states that at Monhegan were "near" twenty fishing vessels, a number only equalled by Matineus. Pemaquid and New Harbor together had eleven only. The number of farmers at various places is given, but we should not look for farmers at Monhegan at that time. Davis' statement that Monhegan was "improved ever since" the sale by Jennings in 1626 to the war in 1688 has been referred to already.<sup>132</sup> According to this report, there then were within the limits specified, one hundred and fifty-five families, which number has been estimated to indicate a population of 775.<sup>133</sup>

But this estimate includes only "Farmers Eastward," and makes no allowance for the fishermen. A few years later (1676) one Downing wrote an account of "The Maner of Catching and makeing drie fishe in New England." In it he states: "In each boate goeth 3 men with fore sayles and mayn sayle in both 30 yards of Canvace 1 Roade of 60 fathom. 4 oares made in

---

<sup>131</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 98, 125, 134; 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. (first edition) I, 168, 209.

<sup>132</sup>Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 26; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 97.

<sup>133</sup>"Beginnings of Colonial Maine," 250; Sullivan, "History of the District of Maine," 390, 391.

the Country . . . Wee have 2 men A shoare to spilt [split] and drie the fishe A shoare for each boate."<sup>134</sup> Another writer says "to every Shallop belong four fishermen, A Master or Steersman, a mid-shipman, and a Foremastman, and a shoreman who washes it out of the salt, and dries it . . . and tends their Cookery."<sup>135</sup> On the basis of these statements, the "near" twenty boats indicates about one hundred men directly engaged in fishing, but undoubtedly not throughout the year.

Before 1665, no regularly constituted civil authority was recognized to any practical extent east of the Kennebec. Whatever semblance of authority Thomas Elbridge had exercised under the Pemaquid Patent must have ended on the termination of his ownership in 1657. Several writers have drawn a disparaging picture of social conditions, based on reports of later years.<sup>136</sup> Government, if any there was, must have been organized directly by the people.

On February 3, 1635, at a meeting of the Council for New England, an agreement was made for the division of the coast of New England. Under this, William Alexander, the first Earl of Stirling,<sup>137</sup> was granted all the land between the St. Croix River and Pemaquid, and up the River of Pemaquid "to the furthest head of ye same," and from thence to the Kennebec, "Saving & reserving . . . to every one that hath any Lawfull grant of Lands or plantations lawfully settled in ye same, ye freeholding & enjoying of his right with ye libertyes thereunto appertaining, laying down his *Jura regalia* (if he have any) to ye Proprietors of this division, wherein his Land lyeth, & paying some small acknowledgment for yt

<sup>134</sup>2 Coll. Me. Hist. Soc. IV, 372, 374.

<sup>135</sup>Josselyn (1671-2) Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. XXIII, 348-352; 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 234.

<sup>136</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 96; 1 Me. Hist. Coll. V, 232, 238. Adams, "Sir Christopher Gardiner," XX Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.

<sup>137</sup>See "Proceedings of Town Meeting of Sterling," (Mass.), held July 14, 1919, 19. This contains a bibliography.

he is now to hold his said Land anew of the proprietor of this division." The patent for this grant was dated April 22, 1635.<sup>138</sup> Three days later the "Great charter" of New England was surrendered by the council. The grant as issued included all islands within five leagues of main land included therein and "opposite." The Earl of Clarendon, on behalf of James, Duke of York, purchased of the then Duke of Sterling the rights above mentioned.<sup>139</sup> On March 12, 1665, the King made a grant to the Duke of the part of New England between the St. Croix and Pemaquid, and also of New York, Marthas Vineyard and Nantucket, upon covenant by the grantee to give to the King each year forty beaver skins. The Duke and his representatives were given "full & absolute power & Authority to correct punish pardon governe and rule."<sup>140</sup> This was known as the Duke of York's Patent. In the year it was issued (1665), three royal commissioners visited Pemaquid, and at the request of Col. Richard Nicholls, who was Governor of New York, under the Duke and also one of the Commissioners, but who did not accompany the others, "appointed some to governe them for the present, as there was great need." The commissioners found much opposition to the exercise of their authority "for that they [referring to the inhabitants] intend to maintain the bounds of their patent as far as they have stretch't them."<sup>141</sup> The commissioners erected a county which they named Cornwall, appointed officers, made proclamation for the inhabitants to appear and take a prescribed oath of allegiance, but only twenty-nine obeyed. Of this number, but five were from Pemaquid and Winnegance which were

<sup>138</sup>Proc. of Am. Antiq. Soc. cited ante, 118, 122, 131. 2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VII, 183, 188, 189, 196-205. 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VII, 143.

<sup>139</sup>Pemaquid Papers, 2. 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, Pt. 1, 2, 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VII, 144.

<sup>140</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 192; VII, 305. 1 Ib. V, Pt. 1, 5. Pemaquid Papers, 5.

<sup>141</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 258-264. 1 Ib. 1, 109 (original ed). 1 Ib. V, 3; Hubbard, "History of New England," 584-586.

listed together, one of whom was Thomas Elbridge. None were from Monhegan.<sup>142</sup> Evidently the new government was unpopular. It had nearly ceased to exist three years later.<sup>143</sup>

In 1671, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which in 1668 a second time had exercised control over the original province of Gorges, with the intent to extend its jurisdiction authorized a new survey of its northerly boundary line. The next year, the surveyor reported that "Monhegan, Muntinicas [Matinicus] and Munte-nock [Metinic] wth some part of Pemequid, & most of St. Georges Island," as well as other places named, were included in that Colony. The report ended with the naive suggestion: "If the honoured Court were pleased to goe twenty minitts more northerly in Merrimack Riuer it would take in all the inhabitants and places east along & they seeme much to desire it."<sup>144</sup>

And the inhabitants did *seem to desire* to be under the government of Massachusetts, for under date of May 18, 1672, eighteen residents of Monhegan, twenty-one of Kennebec, fifteen of Sheepscot, sixteen of Cape Newagen, fifteen of Damariscove, and eleven of Pemaquid, in all ninety-six persons whose names are still preserved, petitioned the general court of that colony. In their petition they represented that for several years they had had no government, and requested Massachusetts "so farr to favour us as to take us under your Government and protection."<sup>145</sup>

While action was taken on this petition May 28, 1672, the Governor and assistants of Massachusetts did not consent thereto, and nothing was then done. But on October 15, 1673, and again on May 6, 1674, commissioners were empowered to proceed to Pema-

---

<sup>142</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 104. Thornton, "Ancient Pemaquid," 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 233.

<sup>143</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 106.

<sup>144</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 109. Mass. Colonial Records, IV, Pt II, 519.

<sup>145</sup>1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 239; 2 *Ib.*, IV, 331; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 109.

quid, Cape Newagen, or Kennebec, and to establish county and commissioners courts, to appoint officers, to establish militia, and to exercise still other authority.<sup>146</sup> In 1673, John Dillon [Dollen] was appointed constable at Monhegan.<sup>147</sup>

On July 22, 1674, the commissioners met at Pemaquid, and established a county called Devon. The inhabitants of the several places were warned of the meeting, and a "considerable company" appeared. Of the officers appointed many were residents of Monhegan. They were as follows: Richard Oliver, recorder and clerk of courts for the county and also clerk of the writs locally; John Dolling,<sup>148</sup> constable; George Bickford and Reynold Kelly, grand jurymen; John Dolling, sergeant, "he to choose his Corporall there;" and John Palmer, Sr., one of the commissioners to hold court for the "ending of small causes according to law," with jurisdiction as to crimes, and authority to marry. Administration was also granted on the estate of John Walter, a fisherman of Monhegan, to George Burnett, also there resident. A county tax of twenty pounds was levied as follows: Monhegan, 5 pounds, 10s; Damariscove and Hyppocras, 5 pounds; Sagadahock and Kennebec, 4 pounds; Cape Newagen, 3 pounds, 10s; and Pemaquid, 2 pounds.<sup>149</sup>

Of special interest is the license to the first known inn-holder of Monhegan. John Dolling was one of those authorized "to keepe houses of publike intertaynmente" and to "retayle beere, wyne, and liquors in ye severall places for the yeare Ensuyng according to law."<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 110; 2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 344; 1 Ib., V, 249.

<sup>147</sup>Records of Court of Assistants (Mass.), I, 12.

<sup>148</sup>The name is sometimes spelled Dollen.

<sup>149</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 344; 1 Ib., V, 249; Mass. Col. Rec. V, 1719; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 110; Sullivan "History of the District of Maine," 162; Mass. Colonial Records, VI, 18-20.

<sup>150</sup>See references last cited.

The colonial records of Massachusetts give accounts of proceedings in the next two years.<sup>151</sup> In 1674, eighty took the oaths of fidelity. While their names are given, the residences do not appear.<sup>152</sup>

These records show that Monhegan had a prosperous settlement, apparently the most so of any place named. Its residents were men of influence; its taxable property was not only nearly three times that of Pemaquid, but more than that of any other part of the county. Josselyn records that it was filled with dwelling houses and stages for fishing; but as to the former, the statement must not be taken too literally.<sup>153</sup>

In the year last named, Charles II renewed his grant to the Duke of York, and Gov. Edmund Andros, then of New York, took measures to re-establish the authority of the duke.<sup>154</sup>

Before this had been accomplished, grievous misfortune had befallen. On the death of King Philip, August 12, 1676, the Indian War, so far as Massachusetts was concerned, ended, but it broke out in Maine with renewed energy. Monhegan residents did not pour oil on the troubled waters when they offered "*five Pound* for every Indian that should be brought," evidently with the intent of selling the captives as slaves.<sup>155</sup> The smouldering embers of hostility burst out into flame in August, 1676. Attacks were made upon Casco (Portland) and Georgetown. Some were killed and many were taken captives. Warning being given, settlers fled from every quarter seeking a haven of safety. Let William Hubbard, who wrote but a few years later, tell the story.

---

<sup>151</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 115.

<sup>152</sup>Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 345.

<sup>153</sup>Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. III, 347; 1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VIII, 310.

<sup>154</sup>Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 190, where the date is erroneously given as 1664; 2 *Ib.*, VII, 323; 1 *Ib.*, VIII, 183.

<sup>155</sup>Hubbard's "Indian Wars," (Drakes Ed.) II, 149; New England Hist. Gen. Reg. (April 1871), 37; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 118-120.

“Upon the report of this sad Disaster, all the Plantations of the English in those Parts, were soon after left, and forsaken by Degrees. All the Rest of the Inhabitants of Kennibeck River, Shipscot River, Sagadahock, Damanicottee, fearing to be served in the same kind, fled to the Islands of Cape Bonawagan & Damorils Cove.

“On the *second Day at Night* a Post was sent to *Pemmaquid* to inform them of what had hapned, who being but *eight or ten Men*, were minded to go to the Island called *Monhiggon*, having secured the *best of their Goods*, but the Wind taking them short, they were forced to turn into *Damorils Cove*, where they found *Mr. Wiswal & Mr. Colicot*. There they laboured *two Days* to settle a *Garrison*; But partly by the *Mutinousness* of the People, and partly by the *Want of Provision* nothing could be done to *secure the Island*, so that it was presently deserted: From thence they went to *Monhiggon*, resolving there to tarry till they had heard from *Boston*, from whence *Mr. Colicot & Mr. Wiswal* promised to do their *utmost Endeavour* to send help. There they settled *three Gaurds*, and appointed *five & twenty to Watch every Night*, not knowing but that the Indians might come every Hour. But continuing there a *Fort-night*, and finding no Relief like to come; & seeing all the Country *burned round about* (for after they had gotten all that could be saved from *Pemaquid*, they saw all the other Islands *Windgins, Corbins Sound, New Harbor, Pemaquid*, all on fire in two Hours Time) then considering what was best to be done, they found no boats could be *sent to Sea* for fear of *weakning the Island*, & the most of those that were upon the Island, were *Strangers, Coasters*, & such as came from the *Mayne*, and were ready to be gone upon every Occasion, they laid an *Imbargo* for one Weeks Time; after which a Letter was received from Major *Clark*, desiring their *Assistance* for enquiring after *Capt. Lake if alive*, saving what could be had at *Kennibeck, &c.* but intimating nothing of any Help



like to come, besides those that *brought the Letter* told them, it was in *vain to expect* any Help from *Boston*. It being questioned there, what they had to do with those Parts, upon which the Inhabitants considered, that if they should tarry there, and spend all their *Provision*, & neither be able to go to sea, nor yet to live, or to be safe ashore for want of Help. it were better for them to remove, while they had something to live upon & seek Employment elsewhere; so by Consent they resolved forthwith to transport themselves, and what they had saved of their Goods to some Place of Security, so they took this first Opportunity to set sayle, some for Piscataqua, some for *Boston*, and some for *Salem*, at one of which three Places they all safely arrived."<sup>156</sup> While the date is not given, the flight to Monhegan must have been about August 20.

From another source we learn that about three hundred persons were collected at Damariscove, before the departure to Monhegan.<sup>157</sup> Forty of the people of Monhegan were without guns, and there was not a sufficient supply of ammunition.<sup>158</sup> How many there were can only be conjectured, but the number must have been much larger than at Damariscove.

What a sight the island must have presented! The small and rude homes were crowded to overflowing with those who were happy to endure hardship, because they had escaped captivity or death, but who were nevertheless subdued by sorrow because of their losses as they saw in the distance flames arising from homes upon the main, or sadly pondered what the future had in store for them. Some scanned the face of the waters to guard against further disaster to the anxious assemblage. Perchance some were there whose brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers or children had been struck down by the tomahawk, or dragged

---

<sup>156</sup>Hubbard, "Indian Wars," (Drake's Ed.) II, 164-166.

<sup>157</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 126. The Giles Memorial, 116.

<sup>158</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VI, 91, 118, 127. Mass Archives, LXIX, 51.

into captivity. If so, words cannot picture their grief.

Troubles with the Indians continued for many years with but slight intermissions. In 1677, Governor Andros reasserted the jurisdiction of the Duke of York. A garrison was established and fortifications again erected at Pemaquid.<sup>159</sup> Regulations were made as to the construction of stages for drying fish on the "fishing islands" of which Monhegan was the most important, and that Indians should not go to said islands.<sup>160</sup> In this year the Indians captured many fishing vessels, but were unsuccessful in navigating them.<sup>161</sup>

To some extent the former inhabitants returned to their homes. While the government under the Duke of York continued, here and there are found evidences of occupation of the island. For example, about the middle of August, 1682, one Richard Bass, being in debt, ran away with the shallop of his master John Dalton [Dollen] of Monhegan with a servant of the owner and another fellow "a liver in the place."<sup>162</sup> In 1688, Dollen was a justice of the peace there.<sup>163</sup>

M. LaMothe Cadillac, a competent observer, with access to original sources of information and with a wide personal knowledge, writing shortly after, says that there were "about twenty families employed in fishing around this island."<sup>164</sup> In June, 1699, Captain Ward, in the ship "Sampson" came from Virginia to Monhegan and returned "home with a good quantity of fish to relieve the colony."<sup>165</sup>

During this period, leases were given of land. One of these dated September 18, 1686, upon a yearly

<sup>159</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 141.

<sup>160</sup>1 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 15, 19, 21, 22.

<sup>161</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 135; 2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VI, 179, 184.

<sup>162</sup>Dukes County (Mass.) Deeds, I, 283; New England Hist. & Gen. Reg. LII, 27. See also 2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV, 343.

<sup>163</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VI, 448.

<sup>164</sup>1 Me. Hist. Coll. VI, 283.

<sup>165</sup>N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg. XXXI, 397.

rental of "three bushells of Merchantable Wheate, or y<sup>e</sup> Vallue thereof in money," demised to Richard Patteshall "a third part of a parcell of meadow which is in Company with John Dallen & John Palmer on ye Island of Monhegon. Also a Swamp lying on a hill above y<sup>e</sup> sd Meadow Next to ye highway."<sup>166</sup> Pateshall also claimed a stage and flake privilege.<sup>167</sup> A lease to Dollen in the same year is of premises whereon he "now dwelleth," and includes "several other parcels of land" "there now fenced in or inclosed" by him "for planting of Indian corn; with a full third part of a certain marsh or meadow, on the said island, and the stage and back room for the fishery there."<sup>168</sup> Throughout many years conveyances are found of rights under these leases. In one, reference is made to land of Renold Kelly adjoining that of Dollen.<sup>169</sup> When the Duke of York became King James II, by royal order dated September 9, 1686, the "Ffort & Country of Pemaquid" were joined with New England, over which Andros was appointed governor, as a part thereof.<sup>170</sup> Thereafter Monhegan was a part of Massachusetts until Maine became a sovereign state.

The Indian troubles broke out with renewed severity in 1689, when the fort at Pemaquid was captured and destroyed. For many years thereafter this entire region was subsantially abandoned. In 1692, the fort at Pemaquid was rebuilt of stone, and occupied by a garrison. But it was in a troubled country. Again and again bands of Indians, sometimes with French allies, ravaged its vicinity, and harassed the garrison. In 1696, the fort was again captured, this time by the French and Indians.

---

<sup>166</sup>York Deeds, IX, 230; Sullivan, "History of Maine," 162; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 153.

<sup>167</sup>By deed dated August 3, 1683. Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 235. "Book of Eastern Claims," (Mass. Archives) 65.

<sup>168</sup>Sullivan, "History of the District of Maine," 162.

<sup>169</sup>York Deeds, XVIII, 259. This deed dated May 7, 1717, recites that Joanna Mandor, widow of James, of Boston, was the daughter of Dollen, and also wife of Reynold Kelly. See also York deeds, XIX, 67.

<sup>170</sup>2 Me. Hist. Soc. Coll. VII, 369, 372, 379; 1 *Ib.*, V, 4.

With the capture of the fort at Pemaquid in 1689, and the abandonment of the country thereabout, ended the golden age of Monhegan. At first it had been a noted landmark for explorers, and a place of rendezvous for their small ships. Then it had been a noted and prosperous resort of fishermen from across the ocean, a trading station unequalled elsewhere, the succor of the infant settlement at Plymouth. Next, full of fishermen who had there their homes, for a time, it was the most prosperous of all the settlements east of the Kennebec. But all was now changed. Indians and their French allies devastated the shores and dominated the waters; and where there had been happy homes, there was now only a scene of desolation. From time to time, bold fishermen came here for the treasures of the deep; expeditions against the French or Indians passed by and sometimes anchored within the harbor;<sup>171</sup> hardy settlers from the main came here in the summer months when the Indian foe was more active than in the winter. But the pristine glory of Monhegan had departed. It is recorded only in the books of the historians, in the narratives of ancient voyages, in contemporaneous chronicles, and in musty records found here and there from London to New York.

Sullivan, writing in 1795, says "The chimneys, and remains of houses," are in evidence "at this day,"<sup>172</sup> but nothing of substance now remains to recall to us the ancient days. A legend is sometimes told of the capture of the island by the Indians, but it is without foundation. Truly the island was deserted, and undoubtedly its stages, fish and other houses, were destroyed. No trace exists of these, but in the locality of the church, the outlines of small cellars remained until within a few years. One of these was on the westerly side of the road and about one hundred

---

<sup>171</sup>Church, "History of King Philip's War," (Ed. 1843) 222.

<sup>172</sup>Sullivan, "History of the District of Maine," 15.

feet southerly of the church; another, about where the church stands; a third where is now the late residence of Rufus Pierce; a fourth in the rear of the Albee House and near the road to Horn's Hill. Still another was upon that hill. Excavations in this locality have revealed bits of broken pottery, and fragments of clay pipes of antique pattern. A little more than three decades ago, there was found an ancient Dutch spoon of bronze. When the late residence of Rufus Pierce was built, in excavating within the depression marking an ancient cellar, there was found a large iron kettle, and the burnt fragments of a door. Great expectations were aroused when the outlines of the kettle appeared, and the work progressed with care, but alas! Nothing more valuable than mould rewarded the expectant workers. In front of this house, about fifty years ago, bones, pronounced to be human by one who had studied medicine, were ploughed up.

There is not much to record during the fifty years after the fateful one of 1689. What is known may be summarized briefly.

In 1696, Capt. Church there anchored the vessels of his fourth expedition against the eastern Indians.<sup>173</sup>

Mary Cowell, in a deposition taken August 19, 1768, gives testimony that "about Fifty years ago" she lived at a "place called Muscongus at the Eastward about seven or eight years. . . that in the summer season, this Deponent with William Hilton, Richard Pierce, Samuel Annis and their Familys used to go over to Monhegan Island for fear of the Indians and return back in the Fall. . . that said Samuel Martin used to make fish likewise on Monhegan island on account of the Indians."<sup>174</sup> In depositions taken about the same time, Naomi Annis states that about

<sup>173</sup>Eaton, "Thomaston, Rockland and So. Thomaston," I, 29; Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 210.

<sup>174</sup>Suffolk Court Files,—Printed in part in Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 32. Cumberland Deeds, I, 35; Me. Hist. & Gen. Rec. II, 202.

1715 "she with her late husband Samuel Annis went to live at a place called round Pond . . . and there they continued three Years and then moved off for fear of the Indians to Monhegon Island. And moved off and on for the Space of one Year. And after two Years more the(y) moved off to Monhegan Island. Again for about a month for fear of Said Indians, and then returned to said Round Pond."<sup>175</sup>

William Hilton, who is referred to in Mrs. Cowell's deposition, probably removed from these parts about 1718.<sup>176</sup> But better evidence exists as to the date of some of the events referred to in these depositions. Rev. Richard Baxter of Medfield, Massachusetts, a missionary to the Indians, under date of August 13, 1721, made this entry in his journal. ". . . we arrived at Mun-Hegan where we found several fishermen, and some Families yt wereremoved from Muscon-gus for fear of y\* Indians." The next day, Mr. Baxter took with him several of these families and went to the fort on Georges River.<sup>177</sup> By this we not only fix a date of occupation of the island by settlers on the main but learn that the fishermen still came. Patrick Rogers of Bristol, who had been lieutenant at the fort at Pemaquid, also gave testimony that in 1720 or 1721 there was not "one House that he Knew of between Geord Town & Annapolis Royal (except one in Damariseove, an Island to make fish on)"<sup>178</sup> But his deposition is discredited by Mr. Baxter's journal, as well as by other evidence.

In June, 1724, a part of Col. Thomas Westbrook's forces cruising among the islands, visited Monhegan, but no record exists as to what they found here.<sup>179</sup>

On July 6, 1758, Samuel Day and Rufus Stacy were captured by the Indians while fishing there;<sup>180</sup> and in

<sup>175</sup>Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 33-36.

<sup>176</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 246-249, 256.

<sup>177</sup>New Eng. Hist. & Gen. Reg. XXI, 55.

<sup>178</sup>Trans. Col. Soc. Mass. VI, 28.

<sup>179</sup>2 Mo. Hist. Soc. Coll. X, 203.

<sup>180</sup>New Eng. Hist. & Gen. Reg. XIV, 272.

the same month two men and a boy who were fishing "off Mohegan island . . . were killed and their schooner burnt."<sup>181</sup>

The day was at hand when the Indian wars were to end. Almost without intermission from 1676 to 1759, more than eighty years, the warwhoop had resounded along the shores of Maine westward of Penobscot Bay. However, with the fall of Quebec, (September 18, 1759), all was changed. About the middle of October, the glad news reached Pemaquid. The garrison had been removed the year before, but the fort was occupied by families who sought its protection. Indian raids continued as late as 1758.<sup>182</sup> The treaty of peace by which France surrendered Canada was signed in 1763, and the redman was no longer a menace.

The survey of the title closed with the purchase of the island by Shem Drowne in 1749. November 15, 1758, Drowne for the nominal consideration of five shillings conveyed the island to his son Thomas, also a tin-plate worker in Boston. The deed included "the Small Islands adjacent the Menahnahs."<sup>183</sup> February 6, 1770, Thomas Drowne in consideration of one hundred and sixty pounds transferred Monhegan and "Menahnah" to Benjamin Bickford of Beverly, Sailmaker, and to Benjamin Bickford, yeoman, George Bickford and Edmund Bickford, shoremen, and Ebenezer Bickford, merchant, all of Salem. The grantees did not take as equal owners, and their shares are carefully defined in the deed.<sup>184</sup> A few years earlier Benjamin Bickford had purchased other interests or claims. At least one of the conveyances

<sup>181</sup>Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. V, 461.

<sup>182</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 315, 316, 318.

<sup>183</sup>Yerk Deeds, XXXV, 102. The acknowledgment was peculiar. The eyesight of Shem Drowne had failed and the acknowledgment recites that the deed is the act of his "dinsightedness." Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 466.

<sup>184</sup>Lincoln Deeds, VII, 200. The Benjamin first named was a brother of Ebenezer; Edmund and George were brothers; otherwise the only relationship was that of cousins. Essex Antiquarian, VIII, 60.

to him deeded an interest under a grant or lease made by the government under the Duke of York.<sup>185</sup> November 18, 1774, Benjamin Bickford mortgaged his half interest to Francis Cabot of Beverly for one hundred and twenty pounds. This mortgage mentions a dwelling house and barn.<sup>186</sup> Nothing has been found to indicate what caused the Bickfords to purchase the island, or as to any use or occupation by them, but the house and barn are first mentioned during their ownership. In an account of the estate of George Bickford, appears this item, "By 1-6 part of what was recovered for stock on Monhegan Island 1.16.2."<sup>187</sup>

October 2, 1777, the Bickfords made a written agreement with Henry Trefethren of Kittery, cabinet maker, to sell to him the islands, with house and barn on Monhegan. The formal conveyance was neglected, but after the death of George Bickford the deed dated February 16, 1790, was duly given in consideration of three hundred pounds which had been paid by an earlier date. While the deed refers to buildings, it does not describe them.<sup>188</sup>

The deed to Trefethren, or Trefethen, as the name was afterwards written, marks the beginning of a new chapter. From the abandonment of the island at the time of the Indian war, it had been so far as known almost without inhabitants, a resort for fishermen, a place of safety for refugees from the main, and later the residence of at least one family. But with the deed to Trefethren, begins the first page of the history of the present settlement.

Henry Trefethren, if ever he became a resident, did not long remain. In 1790, as has been seen, he was of Kittery. March 26, 1796, he executed a power of attorney to his son Henry Trefethren, Jr., of Mon-

<sup>185</sup>Lincoln Deeds, V, 73; VII, 100.

<sup>186</sup>Ib. XI, 250.

<sup>187</sup>Essex County (Mass.) Probate Records.

<sup>188</sup>Lincoln Deeds, XLI, 176. Mass. Resolves. 1789 c. 87, and petition in Mass. Archives.



hegan, fisherman. In this instrument he describes himself as of Dover, New Hampshire, and as a trader. In it he authorized his son to take possession of any real or personal property belonging to him and situated on Monhegan.<sup>189</sup> Little is known concerning Henry Trefethren, Sr. It has been said that he was a shipwright, and that the family was of Welsh origin,<sup>190</sup> but the name as originally spelled is Trevethan, a family name in Cornwall, and not given in any list of English, Scotch or Welsh surnames. He resided on Dover at the time of his death, October 28, 1797, at the age of 63. His will, dated September 16, 1797, directs his son, Henry, to take part of his share in his estate out of one half of Monhegan and Manana which formerly belonged to him. There are similar provisions as to his daughters, Mary, wife of Josiah Starling, and Sarah, wife of Thomas Horn.<sup>191</sup> Apparently he had conveyed an undivided interest in the island to his son Henry, as in 1795, that son deeded an undivided sixth interest in Monhegan and all the islands belonging thereto to his brother-in-law, Josiah Starling, and a like interest to his brother-in-law, Thomas Horn. The deeds describe all three as of Monhegan and as "mariners," and also include "one sixth part of one yoke of oxen, nine cows, one bull, fifty-four sheep, and all farming utensils and all the Buildings that were built and standing insaid Islands," in 1793.<sup>192</sup> The reference to this date indicates that the joint occupation of the island by these brothers-in-law began as early as 1793.<sup>193</sup> It is probable, however, that there was an earlier occupation. In the little cemetery, the first inscription is in memory of Phebe Starling, who died March 4, 1784, aged one month; the second is in memory of Mary Starling who

<sup>189</sup>Lincoln County Deeds, XLI, 178.

<sup>190</sup>Goold, "History of Peaks and House Islands," 73.

<sup>191</sup>Strafford County (N. H.) Probate Records, V, 121.

<sup>192</sup>Lincoln County Deeds, XLI, 177; XLIV, 32.

<sup>193</sup>In 1790, Henry Trefethen lived in Kittery; Josiah Starling in Cushing; and Thomas Horne in Boothbay. U. S. Census of 1790 for District of Maine, 34, 36, 61.

died October 22, 1790, aged two years and six months. There are no other graves bearing inscriptions of a date earlier than 1805.

Reference has been made to the mortgage given by Benjamin Bickford to Francis Cabot. In 1804, the new owners purchased the interest of the mortgage whose executors had recovered possession thereunder. This entailed an additional expense of twelve hundred and fifty one pounds.<sup>194</sup> Even this did not end their troubles. In 1822, there was a division of the public lands in Maine between that state and Massachusetts, and under this division Massachusetts claimed title to Monhegan. Probably the ancient grant to Jennings was then unknown. The distance of the island from Pemaquid excluded it from the patent of that place, and even if it was claimed to be included therein, its title was subject to the claimed infirmities of that patent. After this division, Trefethren, Starling and Horn on July 23, 1823, for \$200 purchased of Massachusetts all its interest in Monhegan and Manana. The conveyance recites a survey made in 1807 of the larger island, and gives its area as 433 acres, and that of Manana as 25 acres by estimation.<sup>195</sup>

In the year 1807, after the death of Henry Trefethren, Sr., a partition was made. Henry Trefethren became the owner of the northerly end of the island and Thomas Horn of the lot adjoining on the south and extending from Deadman's Cove across the island. The next lot was assigned to Josiah Starling and extended southerly to a line beginning at the road at a bound almost opposite the old island store and across the island to the eastern shore. This lot includes what is known as Cathedral Woods, White Head, and substantially all of the meadow. The house lot of Trefethren was between the road and the harbor, and included the lot on which the old Trefethren Mansion, now known as the "Influence," stands. Thomas

<sup>194</sup>Ib. LV, 102.

<sup>195</sup>Bangor Hist. Mag. III, 145, 207; Lincoln County Deeds, CXXXV, 56.

Horn's house lot was south of the last lot. The southern end of the island was owned by Horn and Trefethren. A right of way was reserved and designated as a "bridle road from Lobster Cove to Green Point."<sup>196</sup> The light-house lot was conveyed to the United States on December 11, 1822.<sup>197</sup>

The sites of the residences of the three owners may be fixed with substantial certainty. Henry Trefethren's first home stood where is now the summer residence of Miss Mary L. C. Barstow; that of Thomas Horn in the present flake-yard, and a little northerly of the store; and that of Josiah Starling, north of the passageway to the bathing beach, on the level spot where Miss Barstow's other cottage now is.

Of the sons of Josiah Starling, John built the house where Daniel M. Davis now resides. The building, much changed, still stands and is said to be the oldest house on the island. The residence of his son, Joseph, was torn down about thirteen years ago, and its site is still indicated by the cellar near the road from the main street to the wharf. The home of Josiah Starling, Jr., stood where now is the Island Inn; a part of it was built into that building, and may still be seen. These houses were built about 1824.

Josiah Starling, Sr., died December 20, 1832. He was born in New Windham, (then New Marblehead) Maine, January 29, 1762. He was a revolutionary soldier; his grave on the slope of the light-house hill ought to be marked to designate that fact.<sup>198</sup> His wife, Mary (Trefethren), survived him.<sup>199</sup> He conveyed all of his real estate to his three sons in 1824, taking from them a bond conditioned to support him and his wife. The original, still preserved, gives a

<sup>196</sup>Lincoln County Deeds, LXIV, 25-28 (in all 7 deeds)

<sup>197</sup>Ib. CXXIV, 197.

<sup>198</sup>Sterling Genealogy (1909) 1033, *et seq*; Goold, "History of Peaks and House Islands," 69. Lincoln County Probate Records. Inscription in Monhegan Cemetery.

<sup>199</sup>Mary Trefethren Starling was born at New Castle, N.H. Nov. 28. 1763; died at Monhegan, Feb. 12, 1839. See Goold, "History of Peaks and House Islands," 69; and Inscription in Cemetery.

detailed statement of the necessities of life on Monhegan for a man and wife. It provides for the annual supply of fifteen pounds of wool, two hundred and fifty pounds of beef, six pounds of Souchong tea, two pounds of green tea, fifty-six pounds of sugar, two barrels of flour, ten bushels of corn, one half barrel of molasses, sixty pounds of cheese, ten bushels of apples, one barrel of cider, fourteen pounds of coffee, and thirteen dollars. The bond also provided for pasturage for two cows, a sufficient quantity of firewood, and the occupation of a house and barn and also of a schoolhouse.

Henry Trefethren, Jr., died on February 28, 1838 in the seventy-first year of his age. He sold his old dwelling-house to William Studley in 1829;<sup>200</sup> and in 1826, erected his two story mansion, by far the most imposing of all island homes. On June 11, 1829, he conveyed the half thereof next to the road to his son George, and at the same time made a marriage settlement on Ann Baxter, who became his second wife, of the half next to the harbor. About 1840, George became the owner of the entire building, and his ownership continued until his death in 1870.<sup>201</sup>

Thomas Horn removed to Edgcomb, Maine, and his heirs, prior to 1844, conveyed all their property on Monhegan. He built, in 1825 it is said, the house now owned by Frank Winchenbach and Sanford Starling.

The Trefethren and Starling families continued to live on the island, although members of both families over ninety years ago removed to Peak and House Islands in Portland Harbor.<sup>202</sup> The name of Starling is still represented on the island, and the blood of the Trefethrens still runs in the veins of some of the inhabitants. But this is not the place for genealogical details.

---

<sup>200</sup>Lincoln County Deeds.

<sup>201</sup>Ib. CXLVIII, 332, 393.

<sup>202</sup>Goold, "History of Peaks and House Islands," 69-75, 78, 82, 83.

In the spring of 1813, the small British sloops of war, "Rattler" and "Bream," and the privateer, "Liverpool Packet" captured many small vessels between Seguin and the Georges Islands. At one time two vessels were burning in the night, between Monhegan and Pemaquid Point. On April 26, 1813, a hastily manned American vessel captured the privateer "Crown," off Pemaquid. Other privateers, American and English, were on the coast.<sup>203</sup> The famous duel between the "Enterprise" and the "Boxer" occurred quite near Monhegan, between it and Pemaquid. The islanders watched the fight; with them were the surgeon, the captain of the top, and two marines from the English ship who were on shore and unable to return before the engagement.<sup>204</sup> One can readily fancy the differences in feeling that prevailed when the American vessel easily triumphed.

It is natural to conjecture what was the manner of life upon the island during the first half of the last century. As to the first part of this period we have but one source of information. Williamson, writing in 1832, describes the settlement: "The number of people on the Island is between 75 and 100, who inhabit 12 or 14 dwelling houses, and are the owners of the soil, industrious, moral and well informed. They have a school-house where their children are educated, and religious meetings are attended. Fishing and agriculture are the employments of the men; they own several vessels; and while the more able-bodied are engaged in the former business at home, and in the codfishery on the Grand Banks, the old men and boys cultivate the land, raising good crops, keeping cows, swine, and sheep.

"The island, though within the county of Lincoln, belongs to no town. It is a democratic community; it has no officers of any kind, not even a Justice of the

---

<sup>203</sup>Johnston, "Bristol, Bremen and Pemaquid," 400-408.

<sup>204</sup>Goold, "History of Peaks House and Islands," 71.

Peace. The people's affairs are governed and guided by themselves conformably to certain prudential rules and usages which they have mutually established. They have paid one United States' direct tax, otherwise they are strangers to taxation, except that they pay towards the support of their school. The lighthouse was erected on the Island in 1824.<sup>205</sup>

A good picture can be drawn of the years about 1850. In that year, there were seven barns on the island. The Trefethren upper barn stood beyond the house of Mrs. E. P. Underhill where the road turns to go to Burnt Head. The lower barn of that family stood on the westerly side of the road and just southerly of the brook. The Horn barn, then owned by William Studley, was about where the residence of George F. Brackett stands. Hayden Kingsbury resided where Rufus Pierce until recently lived, and his barn was between his residence and the site of the Albee House. Joseph and Josiah Starling had two barns on the westerly side of the road in the rear of George Fairfield Davis's house. George W. Davis had his barn just westerly of his residence (until recently the post-office.) In these barns were stalled four yokes of oxen, about twenty-five cows and young cattle; and about 150 sheep were pastured on the island. The fields were well cleared and substantial walls or fences surrounded them. The usual farm products were cultivated, and enough hay was cut to keep all the cattle through the winter. Butter and cheese were made and marketed in Portland. Staunch fishing schooners were launched, one being built near the wharf, and another near the fish house of Claudin Winchenbach. Three of these vessels sailed from here to the Grand Banks, Gulf of St. Lawrence, or the Labrador. Brick hearths with iron kettles thereon were placed in some fishhouses; and the whale and black-fish were pursued in small boats, and the oil tried

---

<sup>205</sup>Williamson, "History of the State of Maine," 61.

out. The present plantation freight shed has been known until recently as the "try house." Saltworks were situated at the north end of the island.

New families came here. Time forbids even a list of them. Among these were those of George W. Davis, father of William Bainbridge, Daniel Mansfield, and George Fairfield Davis; William Studley; and Simon Winchenbach, more commonly called Wincapaw, who built the house in the cove in the rear of the schoolhouse, and now occupied by his grandson, Ernest Winchenbach. Rufus and Alonzo Pierce came from China, Maine, one in 1854, the other in 1855. In 1852, apart from the residence of the keeper of the light, there were thirteen dwelling-houses, and quite a number of these were occupied by more than one family.

These families did not live in an inconvenient or inaccessible place. They were upon the great highway of the ages. On the mainland, there were but few railroads, or even good highways or bridges. Monhegan was a convenient place in which to live. Its inhabitants not only harvested the bounties of the earth, but the boundless treasures of the deep were theirs.

About the close of this period, the distant fisheries were abandoned, and the practice of fishing from small boats came more into use. Soon after, many of those owning farming lands moved away, and agriculture was neglected. Gradually the barns disappeared. After a time trawl fishing commenced, but it is a comparatively modern method in this locality. The seining of mackerel was also pursued, though not to the extent it now is.

In recent years, the fishery has almost entirely changed. Handlining, instead of being the principal pursuit, is now somewhat neglected. Boats equipped with power are now employed, and the fishery is not limited to the local waters, and is largely confined to seining herring and mackerel, with occasional catches

of other fish. From November 1 to June 25, the island waters are occupied by lobster pots, and most satisfactory results often are achieved.

Of the influx of artists and summer visitors nothing need be said. A chapter of delightful reminiscences might be given, preserving for the future historian matter of much interest if time permitted. Mrs. Sarah E. Albee, who was the pioneer in entertaining visitors at the island, commenced to take summer boarders about 1878, but the "rusticator" did not become common until years after. The island became a resort for artists about the year stated.

Time does not permit any full treatment of the municipal history of the island since it was incorporated as a plantation on September 4, 1839.<sup>206</sup> The first plantation meeting was held on April 27, 1840; and the names of Trefethren, Starling and Horn appear among those of the officers first chosen. The appropriations were \$60 for schools, and \$14 for highways. At the first state election, September 14, 1840, John Fairfield, Democratic candidate for Governor, received 15 votes, and Edward Kent, the Whig candidate, 1; at the presidential election in the same year, 14 votes were polled, all in favor of the Democratic ticket.

Prior to the incorporation of the plantation, a schoolhouse stood on the easterly side of the main road, nearly opposite the place where the road to the wharf begins. Up to that time, a school was maintained by voluntary payments. In 1842, it was voted that the "summer school" commence the first week in June and the "winter school," the first week in December. The amount appropriated for schools in 1844 was "fourty cents per scholer" and \$15 was "rased for privet school." When the present building was erected in 1847, it was voted:

"Voted the House be disposed of in the following manner:

---

<sup>206</sup>Lincoln County Commr's Records, VI, 339; Plantation Records, I, 1.



"To be used for Religious Meetings without distinction of Denomination when not occupied for Plantation purposes."

"Voted whenever any part of said School house shall be cut or marred by unruly persons that the pieces so damaged be taken out and the place repaired at the cost of the individual or their Parent or guardian, the School Agent to Ascertain the damage & forward a bill."

On March 25, 1848, it was voted that "the female School shall commence the first week in June", and "the Man School shall commence the first week in December." The school appropriation in 1855 was \$50, and that for plantation expenses five cents.

As early as 1845, there was a municipal library. Joseph Starling was elected librarian; and the plantation voted to "lend the books from the library to the Inhabitants," and that the "Revised Statutes" be "returned once a week & sooner if called for." Another vote provided that "any book damaged by lending belonging to the Plantation Library . . . be valued by the assessors." While nothing has been found indicating what finally became of the library, it was in existence in 1853, when Joseph Starling, 2nd, was chosen librarian.

Under date of April 12, 1843, we read that "The old Road laid out by the old proprietors, namely Starling, Trefethren & Horn is this day excepted by the Plantation and become the established Road."

The record states in 1846, that "no licens (was) granted to sell ardent Spirit." In 1853, Joseph Starling, 2nd, was a candidate for representative, and George W. Starling was a candidate for the same office the next year. While they carried Monhegan, neither was elected. Moses Starling was chosen "Harbour Master" in 1854.

Prior to the civil war, the plantation generally went Democratic. The vote is of interest and for a few years was as follows:

	Democrat	War Democrat	Republican
1859	28	—	17
1860	31	—	22
1861	3	16	21
1862	4	9	14
1863	21	—	17
1864	20	—	21

Before a post-office and mail route were established, the mail was brought weekly from Port Clyde, the men taking turns in going for it. But this was not always done with regularity. Mail was also directed to Portland in the care of friends, and forwarded to the island in boats coming here for fish. Later by voluntary subscription, William West was hired to make weekly trips to Port Clyde for the mail. In those days when the mail came in, it was frequently dumped, from a bag provided for its reception, upon a splitting table and then distributed without ceremony. A mail route was established in 1883, and on July 2, the first mail was brought from Port Clyde to the newly established post-office by Capt. William S. Humphrey in the sloop "Goldsmith Main." For that service on Tuesdays and Saturdays, Capt. Humphrey under his first contract received \$336 yearly. Lewis L. Lowell was the first postmaster, and the first post-office was in the old island store. The terminus of the mail route was changed to Boothbay Harbor in the spring of 1884, and so remained until June 1, 1913, since which time from June 1 to October 1, there has been a morning mail from Thomaston, and one in the afternoon from Boothbay Harbor. During the other months, the mail still comes from the latter place only. For many years the mail was carried by Capt. Humphrey, in the "Goldsmith Maid" until about 1888, when that vessel was replaced by the schooner "Effort" which remained on the route for many years.

The chapel was built in the spring of 1880, under the direction of Rev. B. C. Wentworth, the pastor of the

Methodist Episcopal Church in Boothbay Harbor, and now or recently of Yarmouthville, Maine. Its construction was suggested and largely promoted by George W. McCreary of Philadelphia, who contributed \$650 of the \$900 which it cost. It was dedicated July 28, 1880, the sermon being by Rev. J. W. Day, Presiding Elder of the Rockland District. In 1886 it was formally deeded to the plantation.

Monhegan has a public wharf, constructed in 1908, and freight house, both the property of the plantation.

Time permits only a few statistics.

Population:

1827	68
1840	77
1850	103
1860	195
1870	145
1880	143
1890	90
1900	94
1910	120
1920	133

Inasmuch as this is a plain, unvarnished, historical essay, it is not in place to speak of the health-giving atmosphere, the grand scenery and the wonderful sunsets of old Monhegan, or of the associations connected with it, which are so dear to many.

The day of the explorer has passed. The keels of the adventurous fishermen of old Devon and Somerset no longer plough the Gulf of Maine. Monhegan has ceased to be a port of import. Ships do not now depart laden with fish for Spanish ports as in times of yore. No longer do those desiring passage to England come from Massachusetts to its harbor to join the homeward bound fishermen. Once a place of first importance, now so far as population and valuation are concerned, it is one of the least of the daughters of Maine.

But the light of other days still gives lustre to it. This most famous island of Maine<sup>207</sup> is one of the earliest land marks, a milestone in the broad highway of our history.

Where in years gone by sheep clambered, easels of artists now stand. From far and wide, seekers for rest and inspiration come, and never in vain. Its beautiful woodlands, waving moors, picturesque buildings, grand headlands, restless, mighty, and eternal sea, interpreted by the genius of the artist, delight thousands the country over. These are now its glory, and as to them it stands pre-eminent. The hope of the ancient chronicler has been realized. In verity it has been and is a fortunate island.

---

<sup>207</sup>Williamson, "History of the State of Maine," I, 61.

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.