

EAST OF ISLIP

An Early History

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INTRODUCTION

This History of East Islip has been written by the Friends of the Library in response to the many requests made by newcomers, long-time residents, and students searching for early history of the hamlets. After receiving repeated inquiries for this type of information, a local history project was commenced by a nucleus group of the Friends of the Library.

How does a small number of interested novices embark upon a project of such ambitious proportions? George Lewis Weeks, Jr., Town Historian, was invited to address our group at which time he furnished us with an "Outline of History", which proved to be the most useful and reliable guide in our research. We learned that when writing a local history the most essential requisite is the source material. This was obtained from family records, interviews with old-time residents who contributed old photographs and recollections of the past, numerous excursions to libraries, museums, the Islip Town Hall and the local newspaper office.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank Mr. Stanley Horan, Mr. Joseph Bouse, and Mrs. Etta A. Tuttle, who were program speakers at our library meetings. They provided us with information that we couldn't have gleaned from any other sources.

We are deeply grateful to: Gertrude Schweibish, librarian extraordinaire, for her inspiration and encouragement; to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Guastella who arranged for the typing of the manuscript; to George Lewis Weeks, Jr., for his unfailing interest and guidance; to Florence Gelfer, Frieda Munn, Betty Kuss and Alexis Viren of the Adelpia Historical Society in Oakdale, Mrs. Robert Hollins, the late Grace Skidmore, Barbara Falk, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Griffiths, and the many others too numerous to mention who supplied us with the background material needed in our research.

Anne Counihan
Gloria Hedge
Beatrice Weil

JUNE, 1968

THE NAMING OF ISLIP

Islip is a singular name of dual extraction. William Nicoll, first patentee in Islip named our town for his ancestral home in Northamptonshire, England. There is another village called Islip in Oxfordshire, England.

It is presumed that these English villages were christened "Islip" to honor either one of two English ecclesiastics of the Middle Ages. Simon Islip was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1349 to 1366. John Islip was Abbot of Westminster Abbey from 1500 to 1532. It was John who built the chantry chapel in which he is buried. Today one can see the unusual frieze of the Islip Chapel of Westminster Abbey. The curious carvings are in two forms representing the Abbot's name. One is an eye with a hand holding a branch or slip — I-slip. Another is an eye with a hand slipping from the branch of a tree—



ISLIP TOWN SEAL

George Lewis Weeks, Jr. tells us in his book "Some of Town of Islip's Early History" that in 1883 Dr. Abraham Gardiner Thompson designed a Town Seal for Islip and wrote a letter of explanation to the Town Fathers. The Eye on the Town Seal is the mark of vigilance and refers to a remark by Colonel Tredwell Scudder who was supervisor in 1795, 1796, 1804, 1815, 1824, 1833, that it was an "Eyeslip" on the part of Brookhaven and Huntington in not including in their patents the territory now called Islip. Brookhaven and Huntington were patented in 1666-1686 and are represented on the Town Seal by creeping vines with rootlets on two sides of the seal. Islip was purchased in 1683 by William Nicoll. The grapes in the center of the seal represent subsequent patents and necks of land in the territory called Islip. The branch on the top seal represents Smithtown, patented in 1665. Fide, sed cui vide is the family motto of William Nicoll, the patentee of Islip. It means "Trust, but look out in whom". In his letter, dated October 12, 1883 to Selah R. Clock, Esq., Clerk of the Town of Islip, Dr. Thompson wrote: "The latin motto "Fide, sed cui vide" is from armorial bearings of the Nicoll family. It signifies "Trust but look out in whom", or more fully translated 'Have confidence but be careful in whom you confide.' This motto should ever guide in the choice of town officers."

The village of Islip, acquired by Andrew Gibb in 1692 was not part of the Nicoll patent. It is important to remember that when William Nicoll purchased his first patent for land in 1683 and called his property Islip Grange (soon shortened to Islip) the name Islip encompassed by 1697 most of the present township of Islip extending as far as Lake Ronkonkoma.

Subsequent landowners named the property they purchased from William Nicoll Oakdale, Sayville and Hauppauge, but Islip Village retained the original name. East Islip was known as "east of Islip" until 1890 when the Post Office was established and East Islip received an official name.

We have included some facts of interest about Islip Terrace and Great River since these hamlets are incorporated in the East Islip School district.

LONG ISLAND INDIANS

*"Thirteen tribes, Algonquin stock,
Peopled this isle called Paumonak
Before the white man came along
And took it over for a song."*

(PAUL BAILEY "HISTORICAL LONG ISLAND")

Long Island was first inhabited by thirteen Indian tribes, with a population of about six thousand five hundred. Each tribe had a leader, or Sachem, with a Grand Sachem as the head of all the tribes. These Indians were friendly to the white men and accepted the laws passed by the towns. Some of these laws prohibited the sale of guns and ammunition and the sale of rum. The historian, Prime records that in 1658 a period of pestilence invaded the Indians and within a few years nearly two-thirds of their number were swept into the grave.

The Secatogue Indians lived on the south side of Long Island and claimed the land from Massapequa to Patchogue. West Islip—or Secatogue (Sequit-auke, "black or dark-colored land") was the headquarters of the Sachem of the Secatogue tribe. The Conottguut tribe was a branch of the Secatogues. It was Winnaquaheagh, Indian Sachem Proprietor of Conottquut* who sold William Nicoll his first patent for land in Islip on November 29, 1683. In the deed he stated: "And the said William Nicolls doth covenant and grant to and with the said Winnaquaheagh that hee the said Winnaquaheagh and his heirs shall and may plant, hunt, reside, fowl and fish on any part of the said Land not farmed and improved by the said William Nicolls his heirs or Assigns att all times hereafter freely and without any Molestation". Again, on February 18, 1702, William Nicoll drew up a legal document granting permission to the Indians to plant and dwell on his property.

Disease, war and inter-marriage with the Negro slaves left the Island almost devoid of Indians by the end of the 18th Century. Today the only remaining Indians on Long Island are the Shinnecock Indians on the reservation at Southampton. No known facts have been recorded about the Secatogue and Conetquot Indians in the Islip area, however evidence of their habitation, such as arrowheads and utensils have been unearthed from time to time.

**Conottquut is the Indian spelling found in old deeds. Today Conetquot or Connetquot is the common usage.*

THE EARLY LANDOWNERS

The Nicoll Dynasty

"Fide, sed cui vide" (Trust but look out in whom) is the motto on the Nicoll coat of arms and crest. This was bestowed in 1467 and confirmed in 1601 in the "raigne of souveraigne Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith" . . . The Nicoll family was of English ancestry, influential men who participated in the early Colonial history of New York. Mathias Nicoll was the first Secretary of the Province of New York, lawyer, judge and compiler of the famous "Duke's Laws" of the Province of New York. The Duke's Laws governed the Colony until the first Provincial Assembly convened by Governor Dongan in 1683. Mathias was the Mayor of New York City in 1671. His only surviving son, William Nicoll was granted the first patent for land within the town of Islip in 1683.

William Nicoll as a child accompanied Mathias, his father, to America, and after serving in the English Army returned to America to practice law. He was a successful lawyer who entered a career in public service when he was appointed Register of the Court of Admiralty in 1683. In 1687 he was commissioned Attorney General of New York by Governor Dongan.

For two hundred and twenty-three years the Nicoll family owned property in the Islip area. By 1849 the Nicoll property encompassed 40,000 acres and by 1906 the executors of Mr. Nicoll's estate sold the last 1100 acres. This terminated the entailment of seven generations of a family outstanding for their service to their country, to their town and to their church.



FROM TRAILS TO TRAINS

Since the Indians traveled in a single file, they cut their footpaths through the forests of Long Island no more than two feet wide. These trails were the forerunners of our present highway system. There were only thirty-one freeholders at the first meeting of the Islip precinct in 1710, so it is obvious that our town was sparsely settled. The freeholders enlarged the Indian trails for passing from one farm to another, and for access to the bay to fish and clam. From the shore sailing vessels carried mail, lumber and farm produce to the ports of New York and Brooklyn.

In 1704 the New York Legislature passed a law to lay out a highway from Brooklyn Ferry to East Hampton. This was the Old Country Road, the King's Highway. Eventually it was completed and about two miles of it crossed the northern part of Islip. In 1732 the Colonial Assembly passed an enabling act to have a road put through the precinct of Islip. Islip was not patented as a town until 1788. This road was known as the South Country Road, now the Montauk Highway. George Washington travelled on this road when he visited Long Island in 1789. At this time the people in Islip numbered about six hundred. Many of these settlers were tenant farmers on land owned by the Nicoll family, probably by Lawyer Nicoll, grandson of the original patentee, William Nicoll.

By 1764, weather permitting, mail was delivered about twice a month along the South Country Road. From mud, to wooden planks and oyster shells the road surface was generally poor. Even in 1853 it took three days to travel from Brooklyn to East Hampton by stage coach.

The increase of population on the south shore and the inconvenience of driving to the center of the Island for rail service were the major factors in the building of the Southside Railroad which reached Islip in 1868. Some years later, all the railroads on Long Island were brought under the control of the present Long Island Railroad system. It is an interesting fact that in 1905 commutation tickets on the Long Island Railroad cost only \$10.00 monthly.

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On November 29, 1683, William Nicoll purchased from Winnequaheagh, Sachem of Conetquot, his first patent which was confirmed by Governor Dongan, December 5, 1684. The quit rent specified that each year on the 25th of March, Nicoll must pay to the government five bushels of good winter wheat or twenty-five shillings in money. Altogether William Nicoll acquired four patents for land—the last purchased on 20 September 1697, issued by Governor Fletcher. He built his estate, Islip Grange, named for the Nicoll ancestral home in Northampshire, England, when he was denied a seat as a non-resident representative of Suffolk County to the Colonial Assembly in 1701. From October 20, 1702, until his death about 1722, he represented Suffolk County in the Colonial Assembly, serving as speaker of the house for many years. It is probable that the earliest Nicoll residence stood on the point of land known as Nicolls Neck on the grounds of Heckscher State Park.

The original Nicoll grant was about 51,000 acres and was larger than any of the patents on Long Island. It was situated on the south side of Long Island between Islip and Patchogue and extended inland to the center of the Island embracing Lake Ronkonkoma and the present hamlets of Bayport, Sayville, Oakdale, Great River and East Islip, but not the village of Islip. Andrew Gibb, a gentleman and originally a tenant farmer and friend of William Nicoll became patentee of the present village of Islip on March 26, 1692. Perhaps their friendship developed when Andrew Gibb succeeded William Nicoll as Clerk of Queens County—Nicoll was Clerk in 1683. On February 17, 1701 William Nicoll and Andrew Gibb drew up an agreement concerning their equal ownership and expense in a grist mill and fulling mill (a fulling mill shrinks and cleanses wool for cloth) that they had built on the Winganhappauge River (on Gibb's side) each being entitled to buy out the other for 200 pounds.

Benjamin Nicoll, second owner of Islip Grange, survived his father William Nicoll by only a year. He was, however, Supervisor of the first town meeting in Islip in 1710. His wife was Charity Floyd, a first cousin. After Benjamin's death she married Dr. Samuel Johnson, the first president of Kings College (now Columbia University). Dr. Johnson sent his stepsons, William, third owner of Islip Grange, and Benjamin Nicoll, to Yale. They both studied law and William lived in Brookhaven before moving to Islip Grange. He was known as Lawyer Nicoll, and it was he who erected St. John's Episcopal Church in Oakdale. He served as Clerk of Suffolk County from 1749 until his death in 1780. In the troubled days of the Revolution, Lawyer Nicoll must have "straddled the fence" as one who tried to prevent the break with England, yet finally espoused the American cause. His lands were not confiscated as were those of other Loyalists, but raids were made upon his property and reported in the Loyalist newspapers. In 1776 he owned fifteen slaves, so we presume that he was wealthy.

William Nicoll, the fourth owner of Islip Grange lived only thirty-nine years. During his lifetime the estate dwindled to forty thousand acres. No doubt post war inflation caused him to petition the state legislature for legal relief, at least we know that the trustees of the Nicoll estate made numerous sales.

Two more generations of Nicolls lived at Islip Grange, then William Nicoll seventh, and his sister Frances Louisa Nicoll, wife of General William Ludlow, divided the remaining land between them. The Conetquot River formed the line of division. Several homes had replaced the original mansion, but all the Nicoll residences were built close to the original site of Islip Grange. William Nicoll, the seventh and last owner of Islip Grange, served as Warden of Emmanuel Church in Great River for twenty-two years and ministered to the small Cemetery there in which he is buried. For many years he was School Commissioner of East Islip and donated part of the land on which the present East Islip Junior High School now stands. He gave potatoes and vegetables to the needy, filled the ice house at Trinity Seaside Home for children in Great River, and carted coal to fill the coal bins at Emmanuel Church in Great River. In the winter he had his men scatter bushels of grain for the birds. He lived almost eighty years and when he died the Rector of St. Marks said in his memorial sermon "The Community is infinitely the poorer for his passing".

CHURCHES

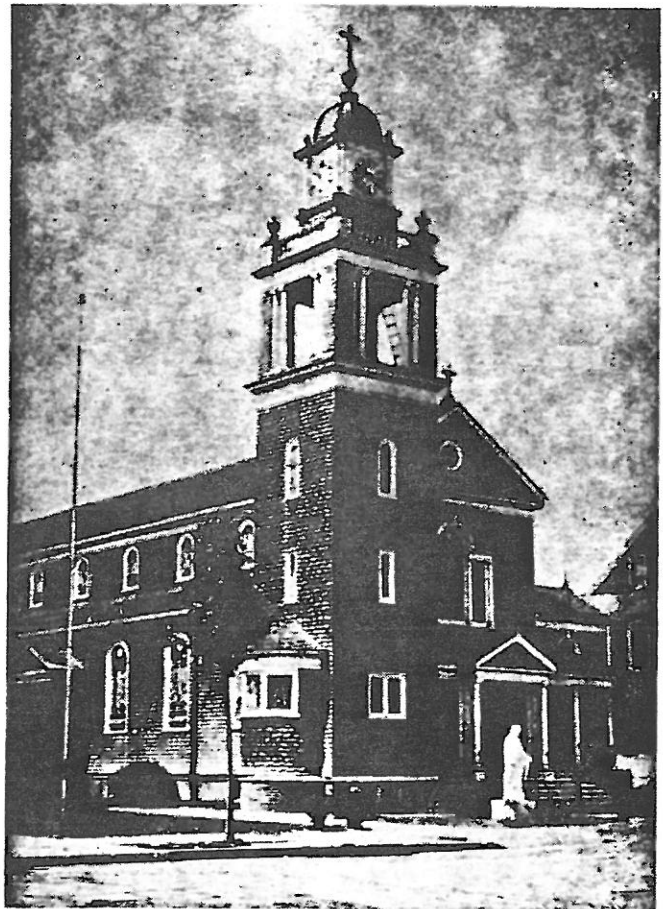
In December 1965, St. John's Episcopal Church in Oakdale, the oldest church on the South Shore of Long Island, celebrated its 200th anniversary. The simple colonial structure alongside Montauk Highway was built in 1765 on the property of William Nicoll as a chapel. Nicoll's grandfather had purchased the land from the Chief Sachem of the Conottquot Indians.

While the churches established by St. John grew in other communities, the membership of St. John's remained static and, as time passed, slowly declined. Then as the building boom of the 1950's brought families into Oakdale, a new life began for St. John's.

The structure has been rebuilt; however, the slave gallery with its rough plank benches, which overlooks the narrow closed pews in the nave of the church, was retained. While it has a small congregation, it is the parent church of several parishes in the area, including St. Paul's in Patchogue and St. Mark's in Islip.

St. Mary's Catholic Church

During the middle of the last century, the Catholic families who lived in the Islips attended Mass, when possible, at Huntington. In 1863, Bay Shore and the Islips became a mission of Huntington. On alternate Saturdays the pioneer priest, Rev. Jeremiah Crowley, came to Bay Shore and heard confessions and said an early Mass. On November 5, 1879, a small group of East Islip and Islip Catholics purchased the old St. Mark's Episcopal Church building for \$510 and moved it to its present site. This is now St. Mary's hall. The cornerstone of the St. Mary's Church was laid on March 25, 1901, and was completed for public worship the summer of 1902. There are 3,500 families in the St. Mary's parish. The St. Mary's Academy has a twenty-four classroom parochial school with 1100 students enrolled.



Emanuel Episcopal Church. Great River

William Nicoll, the seventh and last owner of Islip Grange, donated a piece of land backing the Connetquot River for the location of Emanuel Episcopal Church which was founded in 1862. He was warden there for twenty-two years and was buried in the cemetery close to the church in 1900. The first service was conducted in this church on November 18, 1862. This church today holds services and gives religious instruction to children.

Christ-Lutheran Church

In February, 1915, twenty persons signed the charter which established the Christ-Lutheran Church in Islip Terrace. Services were held Sunday afternoons on Fairview Avenue, in a converted chicken coop on the property of Richard Wolpert, who had donated the land for the use of the congregation. The Sunday School was started in the same year.

For the first two winters, Andrew and Richard Wolpert brought the scrap wood that was burned in the pot-bellied stove to heat the church.

Once again a generous citizen donated the property on which a church building was erected in 1917. Today, the new church is situated just south of the former building on Carleton Avenue and Nassau Street.



* * *

There are now four additional places of worship in the East Islip area. They are: The East Islip Christian Reformed Church, the Full Gospel Assembly, the Congregation of Jehovah's Witness and the B'nai Israel Reform Temple.

HOTELS

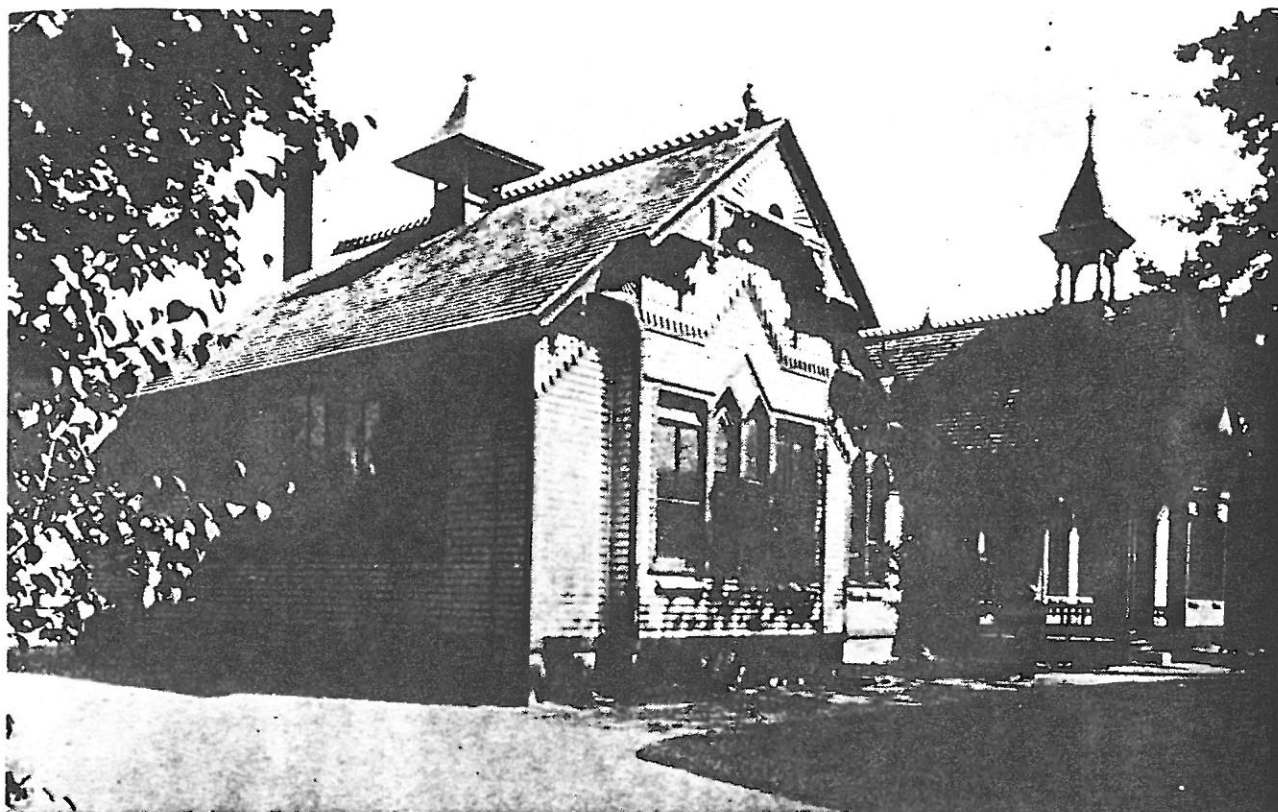
In the mid 1800's the summer boarders swarmed to the South Shores of Long Island. Although the Southside Railroad Company did not reach Islip until 1868, rail service had been available from Suffolk Station (Brentwood) in 1841, and from Thompson Station (Brentwood) since June 24, 1842. Horses and the stage coach were the principal means of transportation.

Three large hotels flourished on the Main Street of East Islip at that time. The three story Pavilion Hotel on the corner of Suffolk Avenue and Main Street could accommodate over one hundred guests, and had stables for fifty horses. The Somerset House on Main Street was a smaller hostelry. One of the cottages from Somerset House was moved to Irish Lane where it still stands. The Lake House on Knapp's Lake was opened in 1856. It had bath houses on the Lake and was known for its excellent cuisine. Amos Stellenwerf, the proprietor was the father-in-law of Thomas Worth, a noted artist for Currier & Ives.

In 1882 the Long Island Railroad Company advertised the following hotel rates:

Pavilion Hotel.....	100 guests, rates \$4.00 a day
	\$20.00 per week and upwards
Lake House.....	100 guests, \$12.00 to \$14.00 per week
Somerset House.....	30 guests, \$8.00 to \$10.00 per week

These hotels were often the meeting places for the annual Town Meetings, held on the first Tuesday in April. It was the custom to vote one year in advance on the location of the next annual town meeting. On April 4, 1843, at the home of Peter R. Crandell, it was resolved that the next annual town meeting would be held at the Inn of Eliphalet Snedecor. This Inn later became the Southside Sportsmen's Club.



Old school located on Main Street, site of the present Junior High School

SCHOOLS

The history of the East Islip School District begins before 1857. At that time there was a one-room building.

East Islip's one-room school was situated on land given by the Nicoll Estate and was located at a point near the southern end of the present Timber Point Elementary School property.

In 1858, a two-story building was erected which had only two rooms. In January 1885, \$8100 was appropriated for a three room building and \$500 for two acres of land on South Country Road (today's Main Street). Between 1892 and 1902 additional rooms were added so that by 1905 it had grown to a nine-room school.

As time went on, the enrollment of the district increased. Through the generosity of Mrs. W. Bayard Cutting, the playground area was increased to ten acres. In 1924 the taxpayers of the district approved the construction of the present three story building. The cornerstone was laid on October 12, 1925.

It was with the opening of these new facilities that East Islip began to offer a full four-year high school program.

The district escaped the early blows of the post-war building boom, however, the impact of home development eventually caught up with East Islip. By 1950 the need for added space was obvious. A proposal for renting temporary quarters was approved. This was only a stop-gap means of solving the growth in enrollment, and an appropriation for a new addition was voted upon.

This addition was no sooner occupied when it became apparent that the pressure of Long Island's population growth was making itself felt in East Islip. Land was purchased in Islip Terrace for the construction of an elementary school, and in 1957 this school was opened with a capacity for 935 students.

Once again the high school and elementary schools were crowded, and plans were made for the construction of the Timber Point Elementary School which was opened in 1959.

The district at present consists of a Senior High School, a Junior High School, and five elementary schools. This includes the new Ruth C. Kinney Elementary School which opened in September 1967.

The registration in all the schools as of September 1966 was 6,142.

THE HEWLETT SCHOOL

The original Hewlett School was established in Hewlett Park, Long Island, in October 1915. The purpose of the school was to educate young ladies to take their place in society. In the first year of the school, sixteen young ladies, each with her own personal maid and horse, were enrolled.

The first school director was Miss Eugenia Coope, and in 1928 Miss Jeanette M. Sullivan joined the staff as business manager and assistant to Miss Coope. In 1955, after Miss Coope's death, Miss Sullivan became the second school director.

In 1941 the school moved from Hewlett Park to "Woodland" the Aymar Johnson estate in East Islip.

Today the Hewlett School is a well-known college preparatory school. Students from pre-school through high school are educated there; boys are accepted through the sixth grade.

The Hewlett School on Suffolk Lane in East Islip is housed on land rich with history. A plaque presented to Miss Eugenia G. Coope on October 22, 1954, traces this history:



First grade, East Islip School 1901

WOODLAND

East Islip, Long Island, New York

Secatogue Tribe of Indians	1683
Nicoll, William & Descendants from Nicoll patent granted by Governor Dongan of New York	December 5, 1684—April 15, 1846
Nicoll, William and wife Sarah	April 15, 1846—June 12, 1851
Johnson, Edwin A. and wife Ellen A.	June 12, 1851—December 23, 1859
Rce, William J. and wife Anna L.	December 23, 1859—December 9, 1880
Johnston, James B.	December 9, 1880—December 21, 1892
Harbeck, Charles T. and wife Sophia	June 2, 1886—December 1, 1888
Cutting, R. Fulton and wife (Sarah Suydam) (rented from Charles R. Harbeck)	December 21, 1892—July 21, 1918
Johnson, Bradish	November 1906
Old house burned down	November 1909
New house rebuilt and refinished	July 21, 1918—December 9, 1929
Johnson, Mrs. Bradish (Aimee Gaillard)	
Aymar Johnson	December 9, 1929—April 6, 1942
Coope, Eugenia Gilbert	July 1941
(rented from Mrs. Aymar Johnson for the Hewlett School)	
Purchased from Mrs. Aymar Johnson for the Hewlett School	October 1946

MAIL

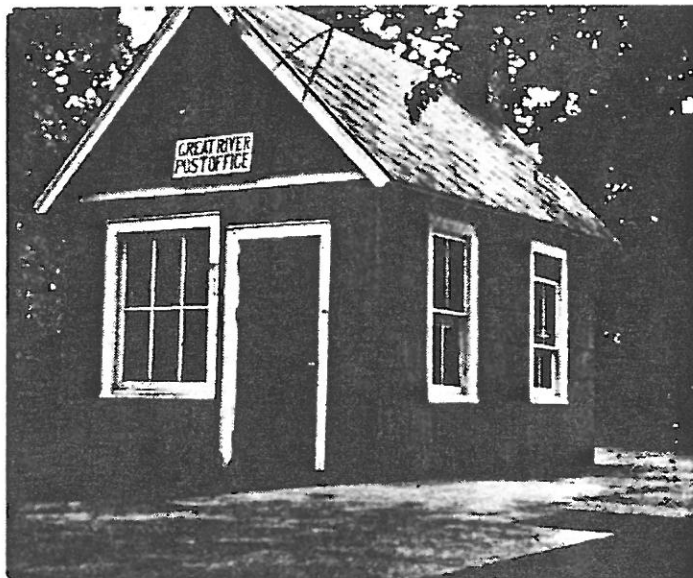
Benjamin Franklin, who was Postmaster General of our country in 1764, initiated a system of post delivery in the Colonies.

Twice a month a mail carrier on horseback traversed the South Country Road on Long Island. In winter the roads were, of course, impassable. Historians tell us that the service did not flourish and was withdrawn before the Revolution. There is a story that during the Revolution and for some years afterwards, an old Scot named Dunbar was in the habit of riding a voluntary post between the city of New York along the south road to Babylon and from thence a few miles to the east and then across the Island, to Brookhaven. He brought mail and newspapers to the inhabitants once or twice a month depending on the state of the weather. It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that there was a Post Office on Long Island. People had their mail brought from New York or Connecticut by trading vessels.

On November 26, 1889, a Post Office was established in Great River. Some of the early postmasters (and postmistresses) were:

James T. DeMilt	November 26, 1889
Joseph H. Monfort	June 20, 1893
William H. Peterson	June 9, 1897
William A. Campbell	July 27, 1905
Mary E. Burr	September 17, 1914

Great River Postoffice about 1894



The East Islip Post Office, established on January 16, 1890, gave East Islip its official name. Formerly it had been called "East of Islip." Former postmasters were:

George Hanford	January 16, 1890
John N. Frazer	January 20, 1890
Frank Parker	February 16, 1894
John N. Frazer	February 13, 1899
George W. Stanley	February 21, 1910
Alfred Hanford	February 2, 1911



East Islip Postoffice 1911, located at 57 West Main Street

On December 16, 1922, the Islip Terrace Post Office was established. Former postmasters and postmistresses included:

Henry H. Meinkin	December 16, 1922
Ella Meinkin	December 10, 1928
Kurt Hoenig	April 1, 1929
Arnold S. Munn	August 1, 1929

COMMUNICATIONS

Before the convenience of telephone communication came to our area, news was carried from place to place by travelers and the mails. Telephone service first came to this section about 1886. A small central office with ten customer lines was opened in Islip (also serving some Bay Shore customers.) In 1891 the small number of telephones were serviced from a new Babylon office. According to the records, the Babylon office continued to serve Bay Shore and Islip until February 4, 1898, when a local office with forty lines was established in the McDonald drug store on Main Street.

By 1907, the instrument which had been regarded as a business device and a luxury was fast becoming a necessity and commonplace in the home, the store, the bank and the doctor's office. In April 1914, the Islip office was closed and the company moved to Bay Shore. The total number of telephones in use at that time was 622. In 1955 fast efficient dial service was introduced to this section of Long Island.

HECKSCHER PARK

The beautiful tract of land that we know today as Heckscher Park, surely had a picturesque beginning. The man who originally assembled this large tract of land was George C. Taylor. He built a large home on the grounds in 1886, which was very ornate. Also erected on the property were about thirty other buildings such as, carriage houses, stables, dairy barns, greenhouses, and quarters for the employees. Much of the land was left in its wild and natural state, and the wooded areas were stocked with deer and game birds. Peacocks and elk were also kept on the grounds of the estate.

George C. Taylor was an eccentric man of considerable means who isolated himself in his spacious mansion. He and his wife had a daughter who was tutored in her studies right on the estate and was rarely seen off the private grounds. Her father, agitated as a result of his daughter's elopement with her bicycle tutor, became even more eccentric and inclined to intoxication. George Taylor and his wife died in 1908, within a few days of each other.

The estate went to three of Mr. Taylor's sisters and several kin, but for the next sixteen years remained unoccupied.

The Long Island State Park Commission newly formed in 1924, sought to relocate their headquarters and also find new areas for state parks. The Taylor estate was suitable for both these purposes and was known to be for sale. Robert Moses, Chairman of the Commission, and the officers of the Deer Range Corporation, agreed to give an option to the state to purchase the property. The new Park was to be called Deer Range State Park.

However, when word of this became known, several of the local residents became concerned lest the creation of a park at this location would be detrimental to the neighborhood.

Many years of controversy followed between influential local residents and the Park Commission. On November 24, 1924 the Park Bond Issue Act was approved by the voters allotting one million dollars for park development on Long Island. The Park Commission resolved then to take the Taylor Estate by eminent domain. The necessary documents were prepared and were to be signed by Governor Alfred E. Smith.

Before the papers could be signed a hearing was held, during which time a local millionaire was heard to remark that the proposed park would be overrun with rabble from the city. The Governor, upon hearing this remark, retorted, "Why, that's me," and he immediately signed the papers.

However, matters did not go smoothly. An intensive campaign followed to prevent the establishment of the Park. In December 1924, a suit was brought against the Commission claiming that the taking of the land by this method (of eminent domain) known as entry and appropriation, had been illegal because the legislature had not yet made available to the Park Commission any of the funds authorized by the Park Bond Issue Referendum. Counsel was sent to Albany to urge the legislature not to release any funds to be used on Long Island. At the same time, pamphlets were printed and articles appeared in newspapers denouncing the position taken by the Commission. Judge George H. Fulman of Patchogue was the first of a long list of judges to hear the law suit. He granted an order declaring seizure of land by entry and appropriation to be illegal. All of this litigation resulted in delaying the state-wide program.

About this time, August Heckscher, a champion of public recreation facilities, became interested in the controversy. He offered to contribute the funds needed by the Commission to pay for the property. More court cases followed. One trial heard by Judge Dunne at Riverhead lasted three weeks and was made notable by the appearances of witnesses, such public figures as Governor Smith, August Heckscher, Commissioner Moses, and other dignitaries. Judge Dunne finally held that the state was entitled to the property because of the generous gift given by August Heckscher. However, this still did not solve the problem and more objections and court cases followed. Finally, in 1929, the court handed down a decision in favor of the Park Commission. After five years of legal battles and controversy over the acquisition of the Taylor estate, the case was closed. On June 2, 1929, the name of the park was changed from Deer Range State Park to Heckscher State Park at ceremonies attended by August Heckscher, Lt. Governor Herbert H. Lehman, Ex-Governor Smith and other state and local officials. The front porch of the George C. Taylor mansion was the setting for the program. The mansion has since been demolished and now all that remains on the site is a large boulder with a bronze plaque reading:

Heckscher State Park

A gift from August Heckscher to the people of the State of New York.
Attendance in 1967 was 624,500.

Photo of original Taylor mansion shown on page 17.

SOUTH SIDE SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Since the early part of the century, sportsmen have visited Long Island, popular for its abundance of trout, deer and other game. A group of prominent businessmen were in the habit of coming to what was known as "Obe Snedecor's", a resort on the old stage road, for hunting, fishing and social activities.

When the sportsmen learned that the property was for sale, they formed an association to purchase the land. In 1886, a club was formed and chartered under the name of "The South Side Sportsmen's Club of Long Island." The first article of the constitution of the association stated, "This club is established for the protection of game birds and fish and for the promotion of social intercourse among its members."

In 1908 the club owned 2,324 acres and leased additional 1,147 acres from the Breeze family. The Connetquot Brook runs through the property for a distance of about four miles from railroad to railroad. This Brook empties into Great South Bay. Its lower part is known today as "Great River", but on older maps and on the government maps it is shown as the "Connetquot River".

It is to the South Side Club that the public is indebted for many of the laws protecting game not only on Long Island but throughout the State. The Club is no longer in existence, and the property is now owned by the New York State Park Commission.

BAYARD CUTTING ARBORETUM

In 1936 the Long Island Park Commission accepted on behalf of the State of New York a deed of approximately two hundred acres near the northeasterly boundary of Heckscher State Park. This gift was made by Mrs. Bayard James in memory of her father, William Bayard Cutting. Mr. Cutting and his brother, Fulton, had started the sugar beet industry in this country in 1888. He was a builder of railroads, operated the ferries of New York City, and developed a part of the south Brooklyn waterfront.

The development of the property was started in 1887 by Mr. Cutting in accordance with plans made by the well-known landscape architect, Frederick Olmstead and carried forward by Mr. Fred Sparks, a resident of Great River until his death in the summer of 1968.

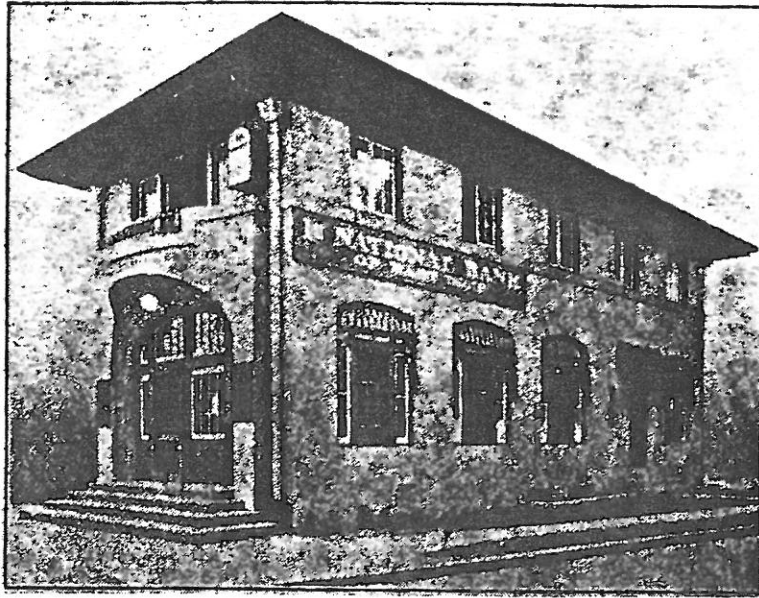
The Great River Estate, known as "Westbrook" originally consisted of over one thousand acres. Only part of this area was deeded to the State of New York. In 1938, Mrs. James donated an additional three hundred eighty-two acres, and her mother, Mrs. William Bayard Cutting, established an endowment of over \$1,000,000 for the maintenance of the arboretum.

Mr. Cutting was a sportsman, lover of nature, and a gardener of great ability. He took a special interest in Westbrook and the unusual variety of plants and pinetum from all parts of the world which are found in the arboretum reflect his taste and discrimination.

The purpose of the arboretum, as expressed in the deed of gift is . . . "to serve as an oasis of beauty and quiet so that said premises may be a source of pleasure, rest and refreshment to those who delight in outdoor beauty and to serve to bring about greater understanding on the part of both the general public and all those professionally concerned with landscape design, of the value and importance of informal planting, and thus to be an influence in preserving the amenities of our native landscape."

Today, residents and visitors alike enjoy the cultivated gardens, trees, plants and shrubs that have been imported from all over the world.

In 1967, the recorded attendance was 196,800.



The First National Bank of East Islip built in 1925

History of First National Bank of East Islip

On October 31, 1908, at a meeting in the Somerset House in East Islip, a famous hunting lodge and hotel of its time, seventy-seven citizens of East Islip and vicinity signed the following statement: "Each of us subscribes for shares of the proposed First National Bank of East Islip at \$125 per share and have paid our first installment of five dollars to the First National Bank of Farmingdale. . . ."

On January 20, 1909, the Comptroller of the Currency issued charter No. 9322. The bank commenced operations with two officers and one bookkeeper in a small rented store, since demolished, on the southwest corner of Merrick Road and Harrison Avenue, the former Baumgartner Building, now part of the St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church property.

The bank prospered, and, in 1925, moved to a building on the corner of Harrison Avenue and Main Street, the building that housed the East Islip Public Library from June 1961 to June 1967.

The bank owned approximately six acres of land, formerly known as the Silver Fox Farm, in East Islip. In 1960 this property became the site of the present bank building. The bank has grown, not only in physical size but in number of employees: from three in 1909 to seventy-six in 1967. The number and variety of services have also increased. Today the bank is one of the fastest growing independent country banks in the vicinity.

WATER

It is presumed that the Great South Bay Water Company laid a main from Patchogue to and including Bay Shore. They put up a tank in East Islip in conjunction with the plan to have water on the South Shore. The tank had a capacity of 200,000 gallons.

Under Contract No. 5195, the Chicago Bridge & Iron Works contracted with the Great South Bay Water Company on Long Island for the old East Islip elevated tank. Drawings for the foundation are dated March 21, 1911.

On January 11, 1911, the Islip Herald printed the new contract. Some of the Rates per annum are quoted below:

1. Family rate with one faucet or sink, 2 faucets, hot and cold	\$8.00
2. For more than one faucet, each additional	\$1.00
3. Wash bowls, 2 faucets (hot and cold) each additional	\$1.00
4. Sinks, kitchen, 2 faucets (hot and cold) each additional	\$1.00
5. For first bathtub, 2 faucets	\$4.00
6. For more than 1 bathtub	\$2.00
7. For first water closet	\$4.00
8. For more than one	\$2.00

The minimum charge for water supply through a meter for domestic consumption shall be \$10.00 per annum, payable in advance for which sum the water taker shall be entitled to use 25,000 gallons.

The charge for meter rental ranged from two dollars to twelve dollars depending on size.

STATE POLICE

State Police made their appearance on Long Island in April, 1917, on horseback.

The first state troopers caused some resentment among the residents. However, it was not long before the young organization proved its value especially in rural and suburban areas outside the jurisdiction of village and city police. From the very beginning it became the policy of the state police to operate only where there were no local police departments, unless called upon. That policy remains in force today, but there were many instances when villages and cities had to call upon the well-disciplined state force. In 1932 a troop was organized with headquarters at Belmont State Park.

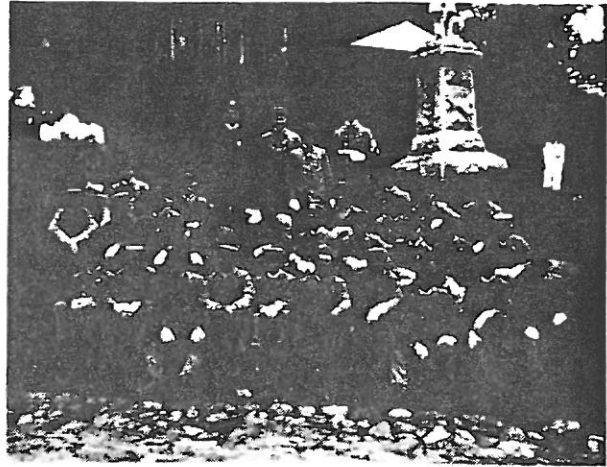
First law enforcement of record in Suffolk County was under Sheriff Hugh Gray in 1702. Suffolk County was then part of the sovereign state of Connecticut and the sheriff's office was located in Hartford.

Early Suffolk County justice was somewhat stern. Available records indicate from 1791 to 1854 capital punishment was metered out to at least six persons convicted of offenses ranging from horse stealing to murder.

EAST ISLIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

There were thirty-one members of the original East Islip Hook and Ladder Company, organized on April 5, 1889. In the 1890's the population of East Islip was in the hundreds and these men were alerted by one bell. The first firehouse in 1890 cost less than \$1000, and the first ladder truck in 1889 cost \$450. Most fires were fought with water from pitcher pumps, each delivering less than five gallons a minute.

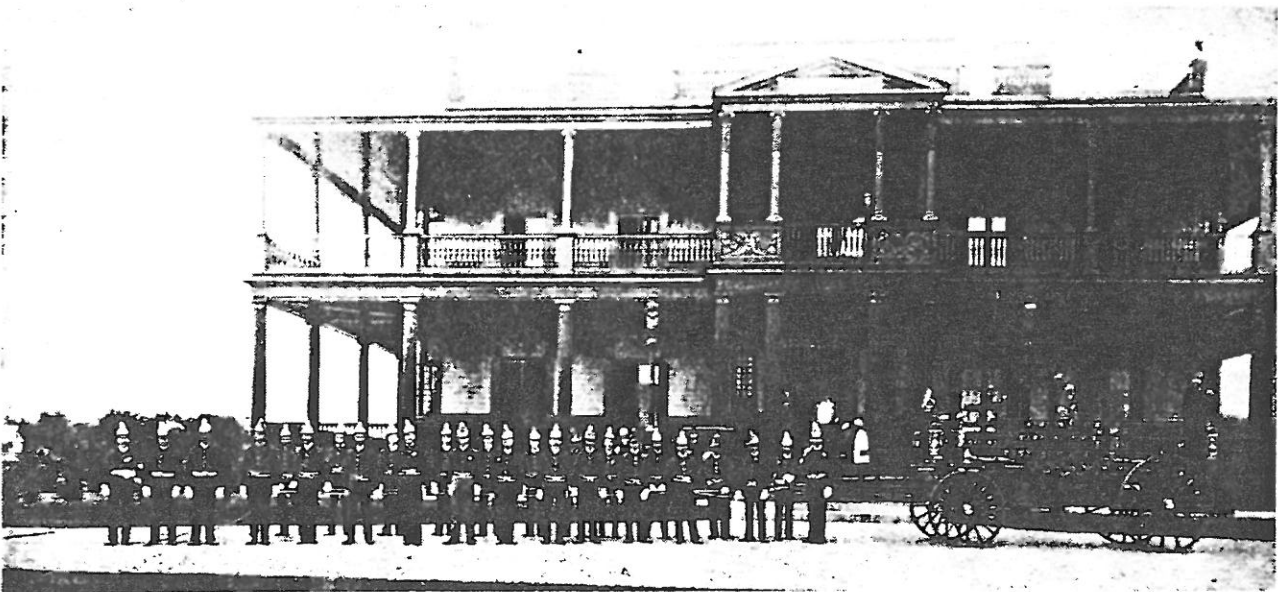
By 1912 the budget of the East Islip Fire Department District was only \$600. In 1964 the budget exceeded \$6,000.



*East Islip Fire Department at tournament.
Taken in front of old library in Huntington.*

The fine firehouse built in 1928 had the old bell given in 1891 by George Taylor, former owner of the Heckscher State Park property. This firehouse was dedicated on August 3, 1928 and still stands on Montauk Highway near Carleton Avenue. Edward Newman of East Islip was the Fire Chief when the new firehouse was erected. In February 1964 Mr. Newman dedicated a history of the East Islip Fire Department to Frank A. Nowak, only surviving member of the first gallant thirty-one.

The one-hand drawn ladder and bucket truck have been replaced by nine pieces of modern apparatus. Today four sirens and over one hundred radios alert over one hundred men, and these brave men may be called to serve more than one hundred times a year, on a volunteer basis.



East Islip Fire Department—in front of Taylor Mansion (now Heckscher State Park)

THE WARS

Long before the Revolutionary War, Long Island had struggled for political liberty. The dark days which preceded the war for freedom were met in Suffolk County by special meetings and resolutions. The "Committees of Correspondence" met at Riverhead and again at Smithtown in 1774 and 1775. Two companies of troops were raised at the east end of the island to guard the stock at Montauk and Gardiner's and Fisher's Islands. The militia of Suffolk numbered about two thousand. There were three regiments from Suffolk County and a regiment of Minutemen. Captain Benjah Strong led the Islip division formed from the east part of Smithtown and the west part of Southampton. Since the total population of Islip in 1790—after the Revolution—was 609, some Islip men must have been part of this war. We know that the Nicoll estate, Islip Grange, was plundered several times and that the British occupation of Long Island made these times miserable for the townspeople.

The War of 1812 gave Suffolk County little trouble. The danger of attack seemed greatest at Sag Harbor and the militia served at that point.

The Civil War is recorded in the town records. At a special town meeting held August 19, 1862, it was resolved that the sum of \$20,000 or such other sum as might be found necessary should be raised to be expended in paying to each volunteer for three years of the war, a bounty of \$100 and a weekly allowance of \$2.00 to the wives of such volunteers and \$2.00 to each of their children between the ages of one and fourteen years during the term of service of the husband or father. At another meeting held Christmas Eve, 1863, it was resolved to raise the sum of \$12,000 to procure 39 volunteers to fill the quota of the town. Again in 1864 it was resolved that the town raise \$6000 by tax to pay bounties to the volunteers necessary under the last call of the President for 200,000 men. In anticipation of further calls for drafts, more sums of money were resolved by the town to be raised by taxes, until in 1865 it was found that only two men were required to fill the town quota and no further action was taken.

The Long Islanders served in Companies E, H, I and K. It was sometimes customary in those days to appoint officers for their recruiting effort and non-commissioned officers were often voted to officer rank by their friends in the outfit. 126 men from Islip served in the Civil War.

The Spanish-American War was short, and it was disease, more than bullets that harmed our troops. Hundreds of soldiers were attacked by yellow fever and a camp and hospital were opened at Montauk Point to care for the men. Altogether twenty-five thousand men were cared for at Montauk and only one hundred and twenty-six lost. Many of the sick men were cared for at the Bayard Cutting home, now the Arboretum.

In World War I, 900 Islip men and seven women, served their country. The excellent "War Record of the Town of Islip", compiled by Perry S. Wicks, gives us not only the photographs of many men still prominent in our community, but articles on the Red Cross and other innumerable patriotic services rendered by Islip during the war years, 1917-1918.

NOTE: World War I—101 men and 1 woman (Hattie Vollbracht) from East Islip served in World War I.

WORLD WAR II

In 1948 Nathaniel R. Howell, Islip Town' Historian, compiled and edited the history of "Islip Town's World War II Effort". Five thousand five hundred copies of this book were presented to the residents of the Township who served our Country during World War II. This book was a gift from the Town Board in grateful appreciation and as a memorial for the sacrifices our men and women made for their Country and Community.

East Islip was represented in the war effort by two hundred and ninety-three men and women and one dog, Velvet O'Toole. Eight of these men gave their lives for their country. One hundred and seventy-nine men and two women from Islip Terrace and thirty-two men from Great River entered the Armed Forces. Rudolph Kasper and Almar Voge of Islip Terrace, and Joseph Maragioglio and Karsten Hall of Great River were killed in action.

On the home front, the Town of Islip organized in 1941, a Civilian Protection office divided into six areas, with a corps of 2,400 people. The Emergency Medical Service established sixteen First Aid Units and recruited and trained over 500 persons. The South Suffolk Chapter of the American Red Cross, under the leadership of Mrs. Harry T. Peters set up an extensive program of invaluable services. Salvage drives, Aircraft Warning Service, Selective Service Boards, War Price and Rationing Board and a U.S.O. made far reaching contributions to the civilian war effort.



OUR BOYS IN THE SERVICE

November 6. 1917

ADAMS, WM.
BALCH, WM.
BEHOUNEK, JOHN
BARBANES, J.
BLEICHER, FR.
BRADY, CHARLES
BYRNS, DR. G.
BROWN, ED.
BESTAK, F.
CIHLARS, L.
CUNNINGHAM, WM.
CARR, G.
CERVENY, T.
CERVENY, C.
CONKLING, H.
CUTTING, -
DRAB, WM.
DRAB, FR.
FISHER, JOS.
GRIFFITHS, A. JR.
GILL, J. H.
HOPPIN, B. C.
HERBA, F.
HERBA, P.
HERBA, L.
HOULIK, WM.
HOLLINS, J.
HOLLINS, MCK.
HRUBES, WM.
HRUBES, -
HAWKINS, H.
HENSHAW, J. P.
HAUCK, L.
JAMES, H.

JOHNSON, A.
JOHNSON, W.
JEDLICKA, ED.
JEDLICKA, C.
KADANE, JOS.
KADANE, WM.
KNAPP, THEO.
KNAPP, H.
KOVARIK, J.
KING, ED.
KUCKAKA, ED.
KRENICKY, WM.
KAEGNEAR, H.
KRISTAN, P.
KRENICKY, WH.
KADANE, CHAS.
KONCELIK, WM.
LOUCKA, WM.
LOUCKA, J.
LOCKHART, A.
LEVY, D. B.
LEVY, S.
LEE, H. J.
LINDSELL, H.
MASSICK, P.
MULFORD, L.
MILLER, H.
McBURNEY, M.
McMORMACK, R.
McGUINNESS, J. G.
NADVORNIK, A.
NOWAK, WM.
OPALECKY, A.
PODLAHA, F.

PODLAHA, J.
PETERSON, B.
PETRLAK, G.
RHODES, H.
ROBBINS, C.
ROGERS, WM.
RUMPLIK, CHAS.
RICCIARDELLI, L.
SUDA, L. J.
SAVAGE, WM.
SAVAGE, P.
SOUHRADA, J.
SOUHRADA, C.
STRANSKY, J.
STRANSKY, H.
SLAVIK, A.
SLANEC, WM. JR.
STRNAD, M.
SILHAN, G.
SOUKUP, W.
TOOKER, WM.
THATCHER, A.
TUMA, F. JR.
VOLLBRACHT, H.
VAN ORDEN, J.
VOLLBRACHT, H.
VANIK, WM.
VORAC, F.
VERITY, H.
WILLRICH, J.
WEBBE, H.
WCELA, A.
WOLPERT, A.
BEHOUNEK, A.



MEDICINE

Suffolk County was fifty years without a physician after the settlement of Southold in 1640. The early settlers of Suffolk County kept no record of their treatment of the sick. Families doctored their ailments with a materia medica of herbs—including catnip, sassafras, mother-wort and horehound. Skunk cabbage was used for rheumatism, but never cured it. The first practicing physician of the County was Rev. Joseph Hobart, second pastor of the Southold Presbyterian Church. He was also the first of a number of ministers of the Gospel to combine preaching with the practice of medicine. Students in England studied medicine as well as theology at Cambridge and Oxford for service in the Colonies.

The first physician to practice medicine in Islip was Dr. Richard Udall. He was born in Islip in 1751 and was graduated from New York Medical College. He practiced in Antigua, an island in the West Indies, but returned to Islip around 1800. Dr. Abraham Gardiner Thompson came to Islip in 1851. He practiced medicine and pharmacy in the town until he died in 1887.

In 1740 the Province of New York required judges of the courts to examine applicants in medicine and surgery, and to license those who seemed qualified. A law was passed on April 4, 1806 to reduce quackery, and directed the physicians of each county to organize County Medical Societies, for the purpose of examining and licensing practitioners. Accordingly the Suffolk County Medical Society was formed on July 22, 1806.

HOSPITALS

When Dr. George S. King came to Bay Shore in 1902 there were no hospitals in Suffolk County. Dr. King and his associate, Dr. Gardner, performed their surgery in their patients homes until about 1911. At that time Dr. Daniel Wynkoop rented a frame house in Babylon and converted it into a small hospital, known as Babylon Hospital and later as Southside Hospital. A few years later Dr. King opened his own hospital on Maple Avenue in Bay Shore, enlarging and expanding the building as the need arose. Dr. King's Hospital became a nursing home after his death in 1966.

The Babylon Hospital had been formed by Dr. Daniel Wynkoop and a group of local physicians in the old Cooper family mansion in Babylon around 1911. On April 9, 1913 the hospital was chartered by the State as Southside Hospital, a voluntary, non-profit hospital. The present property on the Montauk Highway in Bay Shore was purchased for \$10,000 in 1919, to project the new, centrally-located modern building the community required. Many fetes were held on the Bay Shore property to help raise the necessary funds to equip and construct the new hospital. In July 1923, a 50 bed building was opened, and by 1926 a two story nurses residence was added. In the past fifty-four years Southside has grown from a small, fifty bed building to a large 250 bed hospital, still servicing the community with high quality medical care.

GREAT RIVER

The hamlet of Great River was formerly known as Youngsport. Here, Erastus Youngs built and repaired boats which he launched in the Conetquot River. The Youngs family lived, in the 1840's, about one and a half miles south of the Montauk Highway on Great River Road. It is known that Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt purchased the Youngs home and donated the property to the Trinity Parish in Brooklyn, New York to be used as a summer camp for city children. It was known as "Seaside Camp".

About the year 1870, the name Youngsport was changed to Great River. The two-hundred and ninety acre Timber Point Farm owned by William Lawrence Breeze (purchased in 1883 from William Nicoll) was on the west side of the Conetquot River. Some of the wool taken from sheep raised on this farm was spun into yarn and used to make a bedspread which still covers the bed in the Borning Room at the Walt Whitman home in Huntington. This weaving was done by Sarah C. Seaman who married James Whitman, brother of Walt Whitman, on June 15, 1835, in Islip.

The Cutting Estate, located on the east side of the Conetquot River, was purchased in 1880 from Pierre Lorillard, by the Cutting family and in 1886 the mansion was built. The cottage on the estate that is situated near the southwest corner of Great River Road and Montauk Highway, originally had a thatched roof made from Scotch Heather, brought over from Scotland every few years. These shipments were no longer possible with the onset of the first World War. The thatched roof could be seen from the railroad station, called Club House Station because of the South Side Sportsman Club located nearby.

ISLIP TERRACE

The land that is Islip Terrace today remained largely uninhabited during the early settlement of the rest of East Islip. No doubt, Indians hunted and fished there, the woodlands were filled with deer and the streams with fish.

All the area was known as East Islip. Then, for a time a few blocks in the north-west section were known as New East Islip. Later the Islip Terrace area was called Germantown. When the Post Office was established in December, 1922, Islip Terrace became the official name. The original Post Office was located in what had been the Wagner Hotel on Carleton Avenue.

In the late 1800's there were just a few scattered farm houses, many built by John F. Heine. It was during the years 1914 to 1922 that the settlement was known as Germantown. This was due to Andrew Wolpert, Sr., a Bavarian by birth, who came here as an agent for the House and Homes Realty of New York. In 1914 he and his sons decided to go into business for themselves. It was their wish to build a community where people of German origin could live, work, and feel at home. This man and his three sons, Richard, Charles, and Andrew, were responsible for the large home development which started this community. Some of the new streets in the development were named after Mr. Wolpert's wife and sons. They remain so named today. One of the sons, Harry, did not follow in the family footsteps, but went into banking.

Islip Terrace was very fortunate to have a circus located there about 1914. This was the Petrom Circus and an old hunting lodge was used for the shows. Many animals were kept for the entertainment such as: monkeys, trained dogs, horses and ponies. There were also tightrope acrobats, along with other performers. Hearsay has it that people brought their own oil lamps to help illuminate the evening shows.

EAST ISLIP

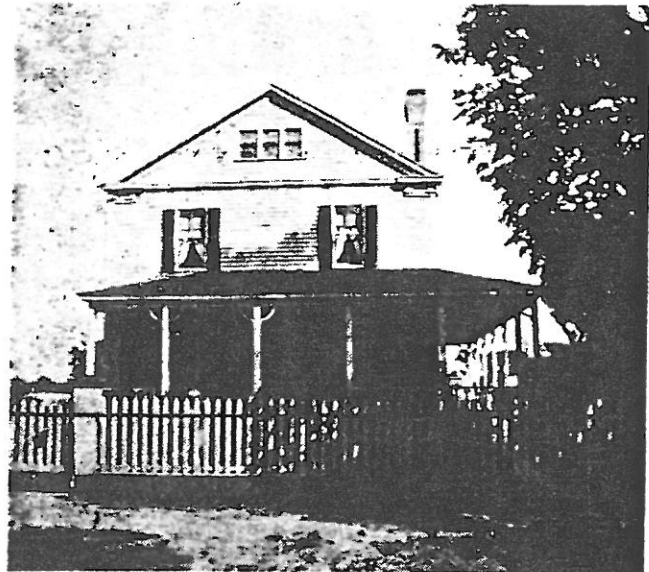
The population growth of the Islip area was very slow. Summer hotels flourished until the early 1900's when the appearance of the automobile caused their decline. Local industries such as boating, farming, shipping and lumbering tapered off after World War I and the Depression of 1929.

During World War II the aircraft and other manufacturing industries provided the impetus for employment and that in turn stimulated the growth of the building industry which provided the homes for the labor force.

Many new industries have developed and have been encouraged to expand by the Town Board to provide additional local employment.

East Islip, Islip Terrace and Great River with a combined population of approximately 29,000 are hamlets in the Town of Islip which is governed by a Town Board.

East Islip with its roots extending far back into our nation's colonial period is today a thriving residential community.



Harwood residence on Irish Lane, formerly the cottage of Somerset Hotel.



EAST ISLIP CLUB

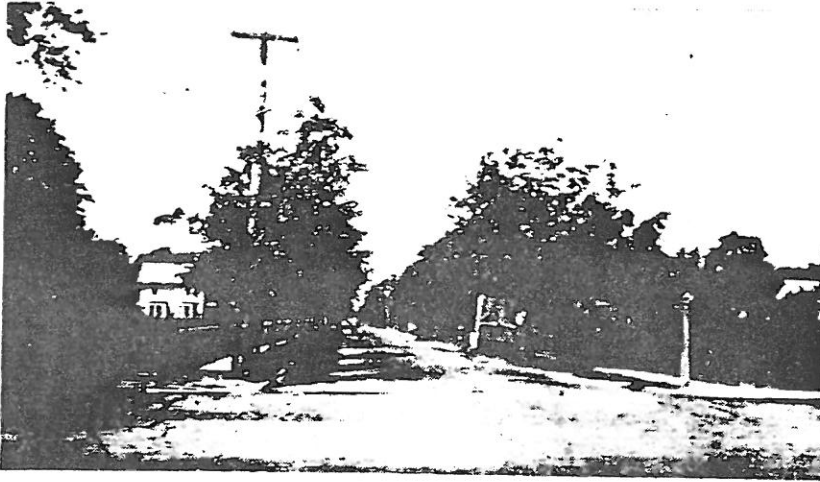
Great-grandfathers and grandfathers of present day East Islipians were members and founding fathers of the "East Islip Club," founded in 1908. In 1927, George Hall, Secretary of the Club for eighteen years, wrote "A Story of East Islip Club". Mr. Hall was 82 years old when he wrote this short history.

In the early 1900's the men of East Islip had no place to meet except in Hanford's little store. They decided to organize a Club in the village and in the latter part of December, 1908, the following citizens met in Hanford's store: Thomas Waters, George B. Howell, George Hall, Thomas J. Harwood, Arthur G. Griffiths, Ernest A. Howard, Henry Vollbracht, LeRoy Hostetter, Otto Reitz and Maitland Hanford. The Treasurer of the club was Joseph F. Rohlicheck. Mr. Hostetter still resides in East Islip.

No sooner had the Club been formed than J. C. Tappen, a summer resident, offered to present a billiard table to the membership. Messers. Hanford, Howard and Markvart were appointed to negotiate with the Foresters, to rent their new hall for Club purposes. The Foresters Hall could be rented for six nights each week for the sum of eight dollars per month, the Club to furnish its own light and heat.

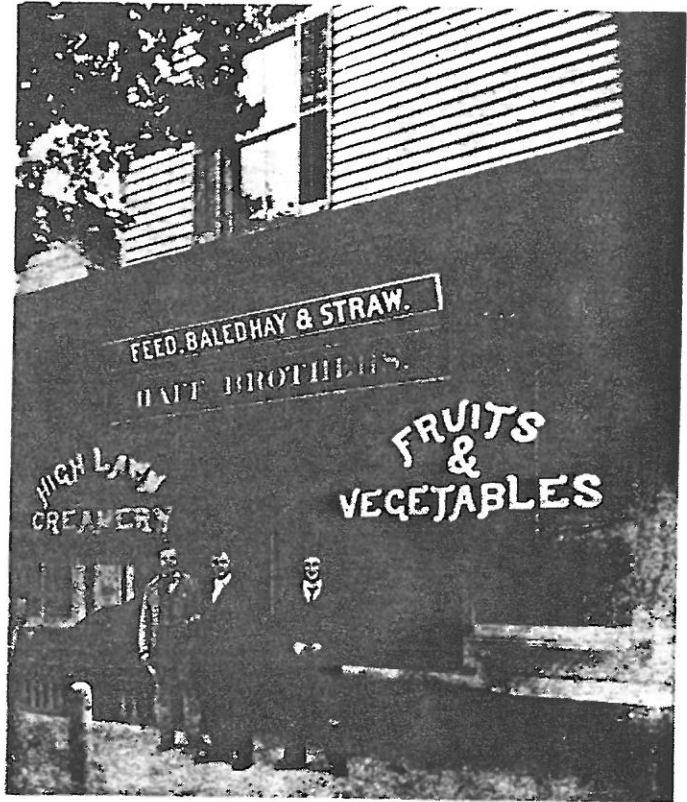
In August 1909, the Club arranged to rent the second story of the new Bank Building at the corner of Harrison Avenue and Main Street. Mr. W. H. Moffitt had originally intended to build a one story bank, but Maitland Hanford suggested that Mr. Moffitt build a two story building and rent the second story to the Club. The Club rented the upstairs rooms and appurtenances at a yearly rental of \$150.00 plus the cost of gas, light and water. Mr. Moffitt remained an ardent friend of the Club and arranged the photograph of all the members who could attend the first meeting in the new location. This photograph is reproduced above. The East Islip Club arranged a dinner party at the East Islip Club to honor Mr. Moffitt. The dinner party at the East Islip Hotel became an annual affair, and each year a Club trip was held at either Fire Island, Ocean Beach or Cherry Grove. Mr. Jabez E. Van Orden, took an active part in planning these social outings.

In conclusion Mr. Hall wrote that "the East Islip Club has been thoroughly cosmopolitan in character. Neither nationality, religion or politics of any applicant for membership have ever been questioned.



Main Street and Carleton Avenue, East Islip, 1914.

Haff Brothers store located on Main Street. Forest Haff,, partner on left, center Fred King, house painter, man on right unknown.



Main Street, East Islip, 1911

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