

GLOUCESTER'S COLONIAL-ERA MILLS: Norman's Woe, Kettle & Fresh Water Coves

Jeffrey Parsons, Sr., Samuel Sargent, and Jacob Coit were given privileges of a stream in the Town common between Kettle and Fresh Water Coves at a town meeting held the 15th of December, 1685. A saw mill was to be constructed within two years of the grant. In addition to the stream privilege, the gentlemen were given the right to saw enough logs on the town common to make 15,000 feet of boards if the residents didn't bring enough wood to be sawn to keep the mill working. Town residents had the right to cut enough to make 3,000 feet of boards for their own use. Lumber sold out of town by the mill owners or by residents was subject to a fine of one shilling per thousand feet of boards.

The Early Settlers map and the Mason map show a small un-named stream running into Fresh Water Cove. The Early Settlers map shows Jeffrey Parsons at Fisherman's Field above what is now Stage Fort. The Mason map does not show either Parsons or a mill in this location, but it does identify Sawyer's Hill and a road to Manchester at the site identified as Parsons' on the Early Settlers map.

Babson writes that Parsons, et al, forfeited their stream privilege to Joseph Allen and others in 1693.

By 1703, John Sargent, John Parsons, Richard Dolliver, and Nathanael Parsons had constructed a saw mill at Norman's Oh (now Norman's Woe) and were given permission to cut old wood that is "in" the upper pond above their mill.

Neither the Early Settlers map nor the Mason map show a pond or a mill near Norman's Woe or Fresh Water Cove, however the Early Settlers map locates a Samuel Dolliver on the stream going into Fresh Water Cove, and both Mason and modern maps identify the land on the east side of Fresh Water Cove as Dolliver's Neck.

1682

Jeffrey Parsons, sen., Samuel Sargent, and Jacob Coit have liberty of a stream, or brook, between Fresh-water Cove and Kettle Cove to set up a sawmill. (Babson footnote, p. 202)

1685

Att a Towne meeting held in gloster the 15:12mo 1685

Jephrey Parsons sen. Samuel Sargaent Jobe Coyte have Liberty of a stream or brooke in the Townes common between fresh water cove and Kettle Cove with half an acre of ground wher they sett up the mill provided they sett up the saw mill in Two years or els the grant is forfeited the next day being the 16 day of the same month of February 1685
Jephery parsons ser Samuell Sargaent and Jobe Coyl had Liberty given them to cut as many Logs upon the Towne common as would make fifteen Thousand foot of bords a year provided the Inhabitants of the Town doe not bring Logs enough to saw to halves to keep the

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mille a worke and every householder hath Liberty to cuto as many Logs as will make Three Thousand foot of bords for ther owne share and all the bords that is Transported out of the Towne either by the owners of the mill or those that bring logs to be sawen to halves is to pay one shilling p Thousand to the use of the Towne for every Thousand foot of bord that is Transported out of Towne (Town Records, Vol 1, p. 131)

1693

Joseph Allen and others had a grant of a stream formerly granted to Jeffrey Parsons and others, “that they forfeited.” (Babson footnote, p. 203)

1703

At a town meeting of the commons March ye 29 ot 1703 [...] granted to John Sargent John Parsons Richard dolever nathanaell parsons Liberty to cut the old wood that is in the upper pond above there saw mill att Normans oh (Town Records vol 2 p. 460)

Remnants of Gloucester’s grist and sawing mills can be seen in this 1878 survey of Gloucester, available at Gloucester City Archives:

Numbers of the Dwellings, Buildings, & Lots of Vacant Land of the Avenues, Streets & Courts in the City of Gloucester. Designated & Established by Order of the Board of Aldermen 1878. Vol. 1 & 2. Available at Gloucester City Archives

1878

East Main Street – left. Commencing at the junction of Main St. with Eastern Av. Running Southeasterly to the Eastern Point Light. See Rogers Report 1883. 216-218 East Main Street. Structure – Lumer Yard. Owner – A.E. Story. (Streets 1878)

1878

East Main Street – left. Commencing at the junction of Main St. with Eastern Av. Running Southeasterly to the Eastern Point Light. See Rogers Report 1883. 220-224 East Main Street. Structure – Lumber Yard. Owner – Amos A. Story. (Streets 1878)

1878

Wharf Street – right. From Junction with Duncan Easterly to wharves beyond Pearce. 15-17 Wharf Street. Structure – Planing Mill. Owner -- Burnham Bros. (Streets 1878)

1878

Wharf Street – right. From Junction with Duncan Easterly to wharves beyond Pearce. 19 Wharf Street. Structure – Grist mill. Owner – Burnham Bros. (Streets 1878)

1878

Maplewood Av. – right. From Prospect Street between Nos. 50 & 52 Northerly to Poplar Street. Engineers Report 1885. Structure – Lumber Yard. Owner – Bennet Griffin. (Streets 1878)

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1878

Maplewood Av. – right. From Prospect Street between Nos. 50 & 52 Northerly to Poplar Street. Engineers Report 1885. 33-35 Maplewood Av. Structure – Grain Elevator. Owner – Albert Dodge. Note: Cedar Street. (Streets 1878)

1878

Railroad Avenue – left. From Maplewood Avenue to No. 89 Washington. 16 Railroad Avenue. Structure – Grain Store. Owner – Eastern Railroad Co. (Streets 1878)

Maps

1831

***Map of Gloucester, Cape Ann.* Created by: John Mason. Publisher: Senefelder Lithographic Co., Boston**

Undated

Map of Gloucester, Cape Ann showing the location of Early Settlers. The base map is Mason's 1831 map of Gloucester. The location of early settlers is variously attributed to John Babson, James Pringle, and unknown.