

East Hampton's Heritage

An Illustrated Architectural Record



Lancaster/Stern/Hefner

East Hampton's Heritage

An Illustrated Architectural Record

East Hampton's Heritage

An Illustrated Architectural Record

EDITED BY
Robert J. Hefner

ESSAYS BY
Clay Lancaster—Robert A.M. Stern

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
Harvey A. Weber

DESIGNED BY
Edward P. Diehl

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY

NEW YORK • LONDON

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

THE EAST HAMPTON LADIES VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
MARINA BRANCH

Copyright © 1982 by the Ladies Village Improvement Society

Published simultaneously in Canada by George J. McLeod Limited,
Toronto.

Printed in the United States of America

All Rights Reserved

FIRST EDITION

The text of this book is composed in Bembo.
Manufacturing by Murray Printing Company.

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10110
W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., 37 Great Russell Street, London
WC1B 3NU

ISBN 0 393 01572 6 cloth edition
ISBN 0 393 30058 7 paper edition

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	7
EAST HAMPTON'S EARLY ARCHITECTURE: 1680–1860	
<i>Clay Lancaster</i>	9
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF RESORT ARCHITECTURE IN EAST HAMPTON: THE POWER OF THE PROVINCIAL	
<i>Robert A.M. Stern</i>	55
INVENTORY	
Domestic Architecture 1680–1860	133
Domestic Architecture 1860–1981	156
Public, Religious, and Commercial Buildings	207
INDEX	219

Acknowledgments

Many individuals and organizations have shared in the preparation of this book. Most important has been the unfailing support of the Ladies Village Improvement Society and its president, Mrs. John Kennedy. The LVIS, founded in 1895, has played a leading role in maintaining the landscape and preserving the character and beauty of East Hampton. Averill D. Geus, Chairman of the LVIS Landmarks Committee, was instrumental throughout the project. Without her persistent advocacy and hard work this book would not have been possible. We are also thankful for the support of the members of the Landmarks Committee, with a special thanks to Mrs. Frederick Owen.

We are grateful to Joan K. Davidson, president of the J.M. Kaplan Fund, Inc., and to her fellow trustees for their generous support. Mrs. Davidson's early interest and guidance throughout the project added immeasurably to this book. We are also thankful for the interest and support of the Rock Foundation, Inc. Dean F. Failey and Everett T. Rattray also gave valuable advice during the planning of this book.

The present effort of the Ladies Village Improvement Society to document East Hampton's architecture began in 1978 with an architectural survey and resulted in the nomination of twelve historic districts in the village to the National Register of Historic Places. This survey was cosponsored by the Incorporated Village of East Hampton. It was conducted by Robert Hefner and Alison Hoagland with the assistance of Clare Callaghan and Gretchen Luxenberg. The inventory section of this book is based on that survey. The inventory of early houses also incorporates the findings of Clay Lancaster's investigations, and the inventory of resort houses is informed by the research of Robert A.M. Stern. Susan Klaffky provided invaluable assistance preparing and editing the inventory section of the book.

We were fortunate to have Harvey Weber as the photographer for the book. Harvey also did most of the copy work and printed most of the glass negatives for the book. Oscar Shamamian and José Sanabria executed most of the measured drawings reproduced here.

For much of the information on the Mulford House we owe credit to Daniel M.C. Hopping, who is currently conducting an investigation of that important early house. Anne Weber has done a full set of measured drawings of the house for Mr. Hopping's study.

Some local individuals and organizations gave specially valuable assistance during the preparation of the book. The Long Island Collection of the East Hampton Free Library is one of the finest collections of local history on Long Island and was a major resource for the book. Dorothy King, the librarian, went out of her way to be of assistance. The archives of the *East Hampton Star* contain a wealth of negatives and photographs of local houses and we are grateful to Helen S. Rattray for being so generous with these as well as allowing us to examine the old volumes of the *Star* in their collection. C. Frank Dayton helped in many ways: by sharing his collection of old East Hampton photographs, by contributing his wealth of knowledge of the houses, and by generously providing office space for the editor. The East Hampton Historical Society gave us access to their collections and buildings and also provided office space for the project. Mrs. James Griffiths and Kathrine Parsons allowed us to borrow from their large collections of original architectural plans of East Hampton houses. The Griffiths Collection is now in the East Hampton Free Library.

We also wish to thank the following for providing photographs for the book: the Brooklyn Public Library; the Queens Borough Public Library; the Avery Memorial Library, Columbia University; the Suffolk County Historical Society; the New York Public Library; the Long Island Historical Society; the New York Historical Society; the Nassau County Historical Museum; the East Hampton Town Clerk's Office; The Hunting Inn; the Historic American Building Survey; the Old Print Shop, New York; Mayers and Schiff Associates, P.C.; Neski Associates, Architects; Robert A.M. Stern; Elizabeth Bogert; Elizabeth Burroughs Kelley; Averill D. Geus; Mrs. Doris Schleisner; Mr. and Mrs. William M. Donnelley; Adele Hedges Townsend; Ormand de Kay; Donald M. Halsey; Richard Wood; Aldredo de Vido; Norman Jaffe; Richard Meier; Jaquelin T. Robertson.

Robert Hefner

East Hampton's
Early Architecture:
1680–1860
Clay Lancaster

East Hampton's
Early Architecture:
1680–1860
Clay Lancaster

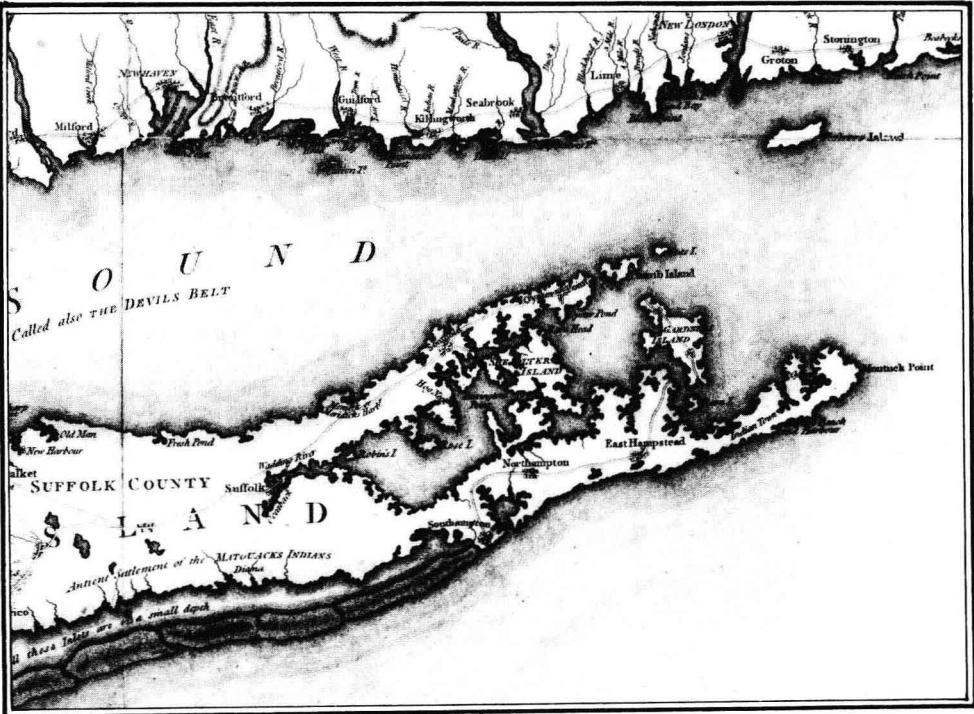


Plate 1. Detail of eastern Long Island and the Connecticut coast from *A Chorographical Map of the Province of New-York*, 1779 by Claude Joseph Sauthier. The New York Historical Society.

The Seventeenth Century

On 29 April 1648 the governors of the New Haven and Connecticut colonies purchased some 31,000 acres on Long Island from the Montauk Indians. The territory acquired was the South Fork from the east boundary of Southampton to Nether Hills, the near side of present Montauk. Payment included twenty coats, two dozen each of hoes, hatchets, knives, and looking glasses, as well as a hundred muxes, or tools used for drilling clam and periwinkle shells for making wampum.¹ In 1651, for the sum of thirty pounds, four shillings, and six pence, the two governors deeded the tract to English emigrants, some of whom had been here a decade and had established a settlement called Maidstone. The name was changed to East Hampton in 1662, two years before New Netherland surrendered to the British. New Netherland had included the west end of Long Island and although all of the island became part of New York, the eastern colonists retained their close commercial and cultural ties with New England for over a century.

The East Hampton settlers federated themselves into a proprietary, whereby they acted in unison, divided land and other resources in equal portions, and shared privileges alike. Roadways and outlying woods as well as pastures for grazing stock were owned jointly. The proprietors laid out home sites to either side of a road bordered by an oblong green or common. Beginning above the west end of Hook Pond, where a bog was dug out to become Town Pond, for watering animals, the common extended northeastwardly about a mile. Its axis corresponded to present Main Street in the village of East Hampton (Plate 2).



Plate 2. The original settlement pattern of East Hampton remained distinct when this map was published in 1858. Detail from a *Map of Suffolk Co., L.I. New York*, 1858 by J. Chace, Jr. Courtesy of the Suffolk County Historical Society.

Fences were erected to prevent one man's livestock from damaging another's property. One type of fence was made of "logg" or upright poles called "palasadas," another was the zigzag type called "worme," and lastly there were "rayle" fences. Rail fences at least forty-six inches high and with no more than five inches between the three lower rails were declared standard in 1655. Four years later, each man was required to set his initials on the inside of the post at each end of his fence to facilitate enforcing penalties should he allow the fence to deteriorate.

The settlers had erected shelters for themselves first thing after their arrival. The earliest record of constructing a community building dates from 1656, and it was for a meeting house to serve both secular and religious gatherings.² The building was to be "26 foote longe, 20 foot broade and 8 foote stooode" or tall. It was to have a thatch roof and be enclosed by a fence. Building expenses were defrayed by tithes set in proportion to the value of holdings belonging to the community's twenty-seven yeomen. The first meeting house is thought to have stood east of the burying ground adjoining Town Pond at the end of the common. It was enlarged in 1682 by the addition of a gallery, which probably necessitated the raising of the roof, as there was installed new "sideing up the Gable End." The town records list sums paid for such materials as "bords," "nayles," and glass, and remuneration to carpenters. The meeting house again was repaired in October of 1696.

Two years later, on 23 May 1698, the question was raised whether to repair or build a new meeting house. The first vote was in favor of rebuilding, but at the next session the decision was reversed and refurbishing the old building carried. But the extent of the repair work amounted to fabricating a virtually new building. Thatching was replaced by wood shingles on the roof, and the forging of a wrought-iron vane implies that there was a superstructure or steeple on which it was mounted.

Mills for grinding the townspeople's grain were a necessity. The earliest were sponsored by the proprietors. In late November of 1653 they contracted with Vinson Meigs to replace their ox-powered grist mill with a tide mill to be built on "the Creeke yt [that] runes Down into our harbor." The citizens agreed to furnish and move structural timbers and millstones to the mill site, pay Meigs fifty pounds in four installments, and let him have twenty acres of adjoining land. Meigs was to keep the mill in working order and grind the communitarians' grain without additional charge. If he contemplated selling the mill, the town was to have the first refusal on its purchase. There are references during the 1660s of expenditures for repairs and rules for the use of mills, as the people ground their own corn and wheat. Whether tide or wind mills is not stated, but whichever they were, they had disappeared by the summer of 1678, when twenty-five persons banded together to erect a horse mill to "suply of our families with meale."

The next community building was ordered on 23 May 1654, when it was recorded that the house that "stands in the Comon agst Joshua Galickes shalbe brought to some Convenient place in the midel of the towne for a prison." This may have been a hut built for shepherds or cowherds. The transplanted building probably was used mostly for brief incarceration of criminals pending trial or execution of their sentences, as confinement meant the expense of

their board. It was replaced in 1698, when sixteen pounds were paid to William Schellinx for building and furnishing a new prison.

In November of 1654, it was agreed that Thomas Baker would use his house for an inn or tavern. Having previously been chosen as the place for religious meetings, the building must have been among the more ample at East Hampton. By custom there was but one hostel in each town for the reception of strangers, and Baker's served East Hampton many years. The house stood directly opposite present St. Luke's Church on Main Street.

The first recorded school here was held in 1655 at Samuel Parson's house. By 1682 a special building had been set aside for a schoolhouse, as the town paid five shillings for "puting up ye Schoolhouse windo," six shillings and six pence for "bords," and three shillings for a pane of glass.

A town house was built during the last year of the seventeenth century. That its construction occurred a year after the renovation of the meeting house signifies a step forward in the separation of church and state. The Reverend Thomas James had apparently reflected the sentiments of his flock by combining the two in his sermons and practices, which were declared seditious to the Crown. One assumes that the old meeting house and new town house were on common land and close to one another, constituting the religious and temporal nucleus of the community.

By 1687 East Hampton had grown to the point where it elected twelve trustees to manage town affairs, reserving the calling of general meetings for special decisions. At this time the population count stood at 502, of which 25 were slaves. Because of the large size of the lots (many of them ten acres or more), houses were widely spaced. Most faced south, rather than toward the road, so that as yet there was no conventional village pattern. However, dwellings had advanced over the first primitive shelters, and there was community control over possible fire hazards. In 1656 two inspectors had been appointed to see that chimneys "be well Daubed & kept cleare of swepinge," and henceforth repaired or newly built chimneys had to be "catted." Cats were rolls of mud bound with straw, which were packed in a timber framework to form the flue. It was fireproof only until the mud dried out and crumbled. Such a chimney was on the outside wall of the house.

By the fourth quarter of the seventeenth century substantial frame residences were built; they were multistoried, with access to the various levels provided by developed stairways, and a number of rooms had fireplaces to a central masonry chimney. Such "English houses" were constructed by specialized joiners, carpenters, masons, plasterers, and glazers. The house frame consisted of posts at the corners of the building and principal room divisions. They were set on horizontal sills, in turn resting on masonry foundations, and they supported girts and beams on which joists were laid, and plates that carried the roof timbers. The framework determined the building form, and its members were heavy and cumbersome. They were cut out and partly assembled on the ground, and their raising was a community project. Young and old gathered together with slender poles to assist in elevating the various sections in sequence, with apprentices stationed on top to drive in the pins that locked the mortice-and-tenon joints together. The professional builders who had fashioned the framework then laid the floors and covered the walls with

clapboards and the roof with shingles. By this time the walls were sometimes shingled, a device introduced by the Dutch or Belgians at the far end of Long Island and first adopted by the English in Connecticut. Interior batten or plastered lath-on-stud walls, and enclosed or open stairways were built within.

Such a house was that of the Reverend Nathaniel Huntting, who succeeded Mr. James after his death in 1696. Early in 1698, the town voted to build a house for Mr. Huntting, but facts pertaining to its construction are obscure. The building stands on the south corner of Main Street and present Huntting Lane. Old photographs show that it was two-and-a-half-storied, its facade was three-bayed, and it had a center door (Plate 3; I-2).^{*} The house had a central chimney and a lean-to at the rear that changed to a lower roof pitch and was presumably a later addition. The inner framing is partly intact in the first- and second-story rooms to the east of the original chimney, both with a summer beam running crosswise with chamfered lower edges. Here also are several chamfered posts with bracket capitals, the one existing in the old parlor having four rows of articulated beads in the head (Plate 4). That in the chamber above is simpler. Chamfers in the summer beams run to the plates and have a rounded center molding. Chamfers on plates and posts are flat and are stopped by lamb's-tongue returns to the square form a few inches short of the timbers' convergence. East Hampton's second minister officiated for half a century, and his family occupied the house for nine generations. The building was later enlarged to become the south pavilion of present Huntting Inn.

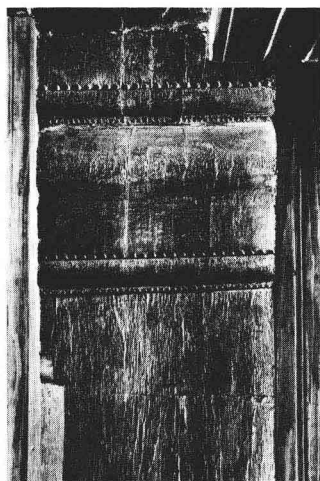


Plate 4. Nathaniel Huntting House. Detail of post in parlor. Photograph by Harvey A. Weber.



Plate 3. Nathaniel Huntting House, 94 Main Street, ca. 1699, with eighteenth-century lean-to addition. Courtesy of the Huntting Inn.

^{*}Reference I refers to Inventory entries at the back of this volume.

A post with bracket capital similar to that in the Hunting house is under the summer beam in the west room of the Mulford–Hunting house. The building originally stood on the east side of Main Street and now is on Hither Lane. Here the summer beam is transverse, rather than crosswise, which is characteristic of Massachusetts houses.³

The best example of a seventeenth-century, English type in East Hampton is the Mulford house (Plates 5,6; I-1), next north of Home, Sweet Home on James Lane near its junction with Main Street. The building has been considerably altered, including the addition of a lean-to at the rear and rebuilding of the east section. It has been suggested that the latter was necessitated because of damage wrought by a hurricane early in the eighteenth century.

Captain Josiah Hobart acquired the property in 1676, and probably it was he who then built the dwelling.⁴ It was a double house or one having rooms on both sides of the chimney. It measured approximately twenty-one by forty-one feet in plan and contained two full stories and garret. Its sills were set on stones but remained close to the ground. Outer walls would have been covered with clapboards, which at that time would have been exposed to the weather from three to five inches and were overlapped at the corners of the building. Those remaining on the west flank are considerably wider, have a bead along the lower edge, and abut vertical corner boards, which are later characteristics. The front wall contained a batten door, to right and left of which were leaded casement windows of three lights with transoms, repeated directly above, and there were smaller windows over the door and in twin gables at garret level. Openings in the south facade were a source of solar heat



Plate 5. Front elevation of the Mulford House, 12 James Lane, conjectural restoration, seventeenth century. Drawn by Clay Lancaster from a drawing by Anne Weber.

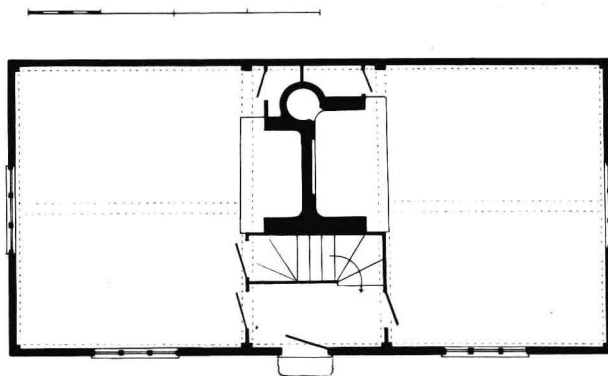


Plate 6. Mulford House. Plan of the first floor, conjectural restoration. Drawn by Clay Lancaster from a plan by Anne Weber.

to rooms in early homes. The fenestration may have had either small rectangular or lozenge-shaped panes of glass.

The layout of the Mulford house is normal for its period, resembling that archetypal example, the Fairbanks house (*ca.* 1638) at Dedham, Massachusetts.⁵ The East Hampton building is about a fourth larger, and summer

beams run crosswise in the first story and west room above. The front door opens into what in the seventeenth century was called a porch. Rather than the present obvious replacement, the Mulford house probably had an enclosed stairway with winders or wedge-shaped steps at base and summit, as in the Fairbanks house. The hall, or general living room, was to the east, and the slightly larger parlor to the west. The fireplace wall in the latter has characteristic molded vertical sheathing of the period, with grooves that continue uninterruptedly down the doors. They are hung on narrow wrought-iron strap hinges with cusped ends, some mounted on surface upright pintles of similar shape, and one on sunken pintles. The present mantel enframes a closed-in fireplace, replacing a larger original. The fireplace back of it in the hall probably was bigger and may have included an oven in the rear corner. The chimney girt in the parlor has short chamfers with lamb's-tongue cuttings near either end, as has that in the chamber above. Attached summer beams, other girts, plates, and posts display the usual long cuts.

The Mulford house garret presents some of its most interesting and revealing features. It is reached by a rebuilt staircase whose first flight rises behind a door centered on the inner side of the second-story passage over the porch; from a square landing, steps branch east and west to the third floor. Old rafters, in the west end, are spaced seven feet nine inches apart and support four purlins front and rear, to which sheathing boards parallel to the rafters are nailed. Collar beams connect each pair of rafters five and a half feet from the floor. A unique refinement is chamfers with lamb's tongues cut into the under edges of the lower section of the rafters and collar beams. The latter have had about six inches deleted from their south ends, which have been reset or newly fastened to the front rafters, indicating that the whole roof structure has been lowered in pitch. Simultaneous with this change the front gables would have been removed, and probably the lean-to was added then as well. The contour of the west front gable can be seen in later nailing boards filling a triangular space in the front roof plane. Only a short section at the near base can be seen of its companion. The east end of the roof has been rebuilt in a different manner. The force of the storm that necessitated this change is indicated by damage to the outer side of the mortise in the rear rafter east of the chimney, where the collar beam was wrenched from its socket. The Mulford house has the only seventeenth-century roof of rafter-and-purlin construction that has come to light in East Hampton.

Josiah Hobart died in 1711, and his executors sold the property to Samuel Mulford the following year. The Mulfords continued to live here until World War II, and their name generally is associated with the building. It was acquired by the East Hampton Historical Society in 1948.