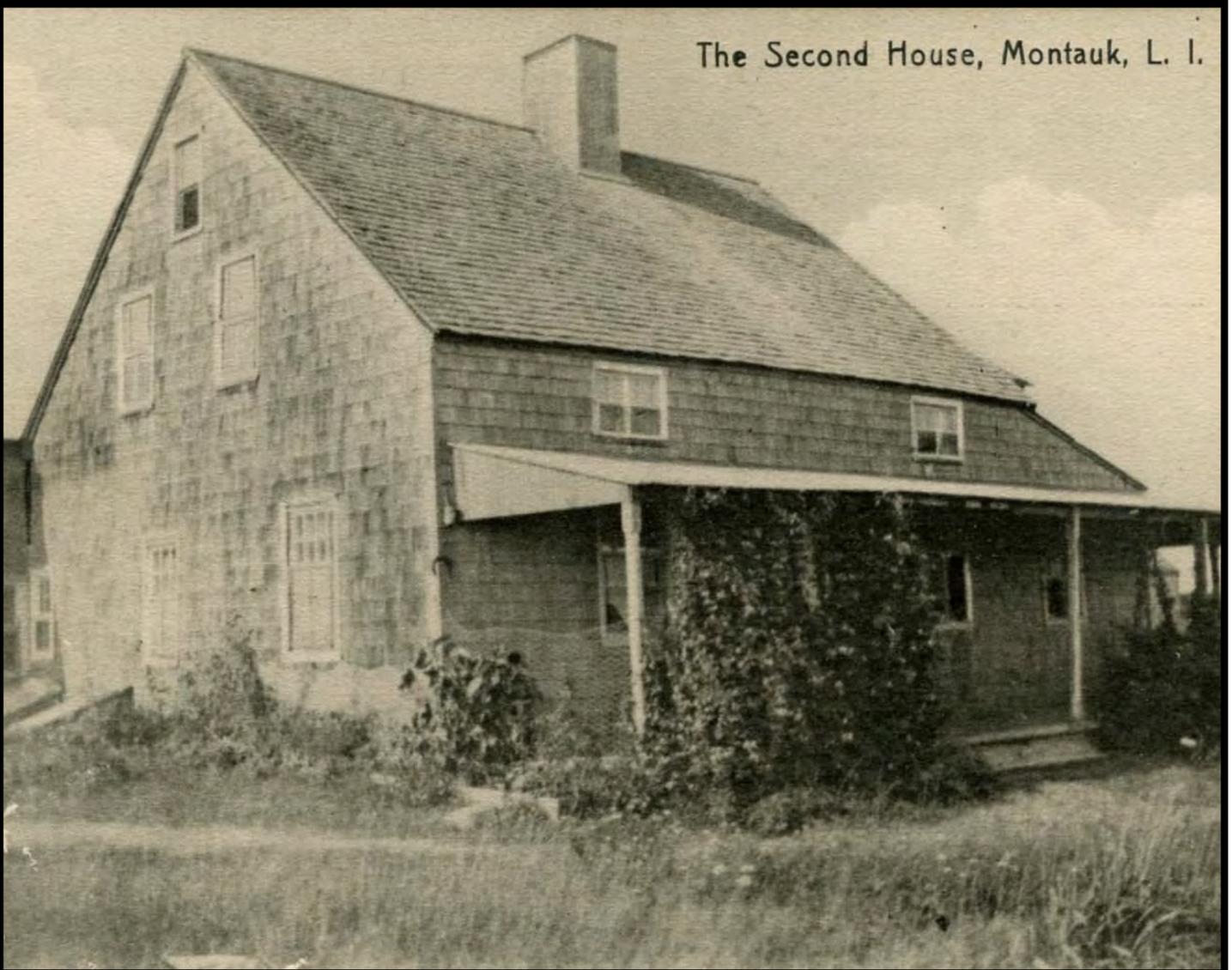


# THE SECOND HOUSE

MONTAUK, NEW YORK

The Second House, Montauk, L. I.



HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

# THE SECOND HOUSE

Montauk Highway, Montauk, N. Y.

## HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

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Town Board

Town of East Hampton

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# HISTORY OF THE MONTAUK PASTURE

## **The role of the Montauk pasture in East Hampton's agrarian economy, 1661-1895**

Soon after settling East Hampton, the proprietors became interested in the rolling plains and fresh water ponds of the Montauk peninsula for pasturing their livestock. In 1661 a company of East Hampton residents acquired title from the Montaukett Indians for the land from Napeague to Fort Pond and in 1670 another group took title to the tract between Fort Pond and Great Pond (Lake Montauk). The remainder of Montauk, from Great Pond to the Point, was purchased by twenty-nine proprietors in 1687. The Montaukett Indians retained certain rights to Montauk and continued to live at Indian Field, east of Great Pond. The Town Records make reference to cattle going on Montauk as early as 1661.<sup>1</sup>

The 9,000 acres of pasture at Montauk comprised the primary resource for East Hampton's farmers from the 1660s into the 1890s. John Lyon Gardiner, the seventh proprietor of Gardiner's Island, summed up East Hampton's agrarian economy as it was in 1798:

The people are more properly Graziers than farmers, they raise large droves of cattle & sheep for sale; but very little else except flaxseed and cord wood...The Droves of cattle and flocks of sheep are during the Summer season pastured on Montock; which contains about 8,000 acres of good land. This land is owned by a number of persons; and the pasturing of stock is according to the shares that Individuals hold and is under good regulations which are carried into effect by three hired keepers of the stock. Besides a fattening field for 500 head of cattle there are in this tract of land \_\_\_ sheep \_\_\_stock cattle and about \_\_\_ horses. It is one of the largest tracts of land in the United States that is pastured by \_\_\_\_ . ...The land on Montock is more hilly than in the other parts of the town. There are no flies to trouble the stock while grazing on the land. The use of this tract of land is a very great advantage to the Inhabitants of E. Hampton.<sup>2</sup>

This agrarian economy based on raising cattle and sheep and dependent upon the Montauk pastures was to persist for another hundred years.

## **Management of the Montauk pasture, 1661-1879**

As noted by John Lyon Gardiner, the Montauk lands were always held privately in shares derived from the original purchasers. In 1748 the 127 shareholders in the three separate purchases agreed to equalize shares so that all shares from that time forward applied to the entire peninsula.<sup>3</sup> Each proprietor had the right to pasture a certain number of livestock in proportion to the shares he owned. These proprietors owned Montauk as tenants in common who agreed with trustees to manage the land for them. Until 1851 the Town

Trustees managed Montauk for the proprietors. In 1852 the proprietors of Montauk formally organized, elected their own board of seven trustees, and took over management of the property. From 1852 to 1879, when Montauk was sold to Arthur Benson, the large shareholders and principal livestock owners of the town were continually elected trustees of the proprietors of Montauk.

The Town Trustees, and later the trustees of the proprietors of Montauk, managed the Montauk pasture by: establishing the grazing rights of each share to ensure that the pastures were not overgrazed; deciding when livestock would go on Montauk in the spring and come off in the fall; preventing livestock from going on without right; negotiating with the Montaukett Indians each year for the Indian Field pasture; inspecting pasture conditions; deciding when to move livestock from one field to another; employing shepherds or keepers to look after the livestock on Montauk; providing housing for the keepers; building and maintaining fences and walls to confine livestock in their intended pasture; improving the quality of pastures by burning, purposefully overgrazing to destroy native grass and planting English grasses; clearing woodland to expand pastureland; and maintaining fresh water ponds and access to them by keeping saltwater out and removing noxious vegetation from around them.

### The sheep pasture at Hither Plain

Natural barriers of the ocean, bay and ponds supplemented by fences and walls confined the livestock to particular pastures. A fence running from Napeague Bay to Fresh Pond and another fence from the southeast side of Fresh Pond to the ocean marked the beginning of the Montauk pasture. The First House was just east of this fence, and it was the duty of the keeper there to keep a list of all cattle, horses and sheep entering through his gate (see illustrations 8-11.)

Sheep were pastured on Hither Plain extending from this fence to Fort Pond where the second major fence divided the peninsula (see illustration 14). A fence running from the south end of Fort Pond into the ocean surf and a fence from the north end of Fort Pond into the bay established the eastern boundary of the sheep pasture. It was the responsibility of the keeper living at the Second House to maintain this fence. Sidney Stratton, keeper from 1850 to 1860, built a new fence there in 1857: "Mr. Stratton is authorized to put up a four rail fence with a gate between the Fort pond and the surf."<sup>4</sup> Sheep grazing on Hither Plain found fresh water at Fresh Pond and at Fort Pond.

In 1822 the Trustees decided to construct a stone wall between Fort Pond and the ocean to prevent storm surf from flowing into the pond making it unsuitable for the livestock to drink. At their meeting of October 21, 1822 it was "agreed for the Whole board to go to Montauk on Friday the 25<sup>th</sup> and work

on the Stone wall at fort pond beach.”<sup>5</sup> A sand bank was built against the south side of the wall and the whole covered with brush to stabilize the sand.

Each year sheep were allowed to be turned on Montauk in early March, brought up to East Hampton in late May for shearing and then driven back to Montauk. On May 24, 1852 the trustees of the proprietors “Agreed to have the sheep brought off for washing and shearing on Tuesday the 1<sup>st</sup> day of June next and to allow them to go on again on Friday the 4<sup>th</sup>. Also that no sheep be allowed to go to the east of the first house on Montauk without being duly entered and listed on proprietor’s rights.”<sup>6</sup> Sheep were driven off Montauk in late November or early December. The Town Trustees at their meeting on November 22, 1813 “appointed Jonathan H. Stratton and Isaac Barns to go to Montauk and assist the keepers in bringing up the sheep the first snow that may hereafter come.”<sup>7</sup>

### Cattle pastures east of Fort Pond

There were two categories of grazing rights for cattle: “field” rights and “outside” rights. North Neck, Indian Field and Point Field were maintained to have the best quality grass, were closed to grazing until conditions were optimal and had fewer cattle per acre than the common pastures (see illustrations 9, 12 and 13). Each year two of these fields were selected as the “fattening fields” and cattle were put in one in August and then the other in September. The common stock remained on the “outside” pastures.

A fence running from near the southern end of Fort Pond eastward to Great Pond at Stepping Stones separated the North Neck field. A major project to replace the fence with a stone wall began in the 1820s. On November 3, 1823 the Town Trustees “Agreed with Jonathan Barns to make 30 rods of stone wall on Montauk beginning at the fort pond, and running on a line with the fence that encloses the north neck the wall to be 3 feet wide at the base and at the height of 4 feet to be 2 feet wide and rounded off six inches higher.”<sup>8</sup> Each year the stone wall was extended to replace more of the post-and-rail fence. A fence from the north end of Great Pond to Block Island Sound fully isolated the cattle in the North Neck field.

Indian Field became a separate pasture as early as 1703 with a fence running from the southeast end of Great Pond east to Oyster Pond.<sup>9</sup> Another fence from Oyster Pond south to the ocean divided off Point Field. The land south of the North Neck and Indian Field fences and west of the Point Field fence was the “outside” pasture for the common stock. In some years the “outside” cattle also grazed in Point Field or North Neck.

## Duties of the keepers

Houses for shepherds to live in were built in the first years of the proprietor's use of Montauk for pasture. The Town Records of 1663 contain the resolution: "12 men ordered to go to meantaquit to make a yard for cattle and to build a shelter for the keeper."<sup>10</sup> In 1703 the Town Records include "An account of boards and labor to the building the house at Montauk" and in 1713 there are "charges for house at Montauk built this year."<sup>11</sup> In 1739 there was a charge for "Rebuilding the chimney to the house at the fattening field".<sup>12</sup> In April 1739 the Trustees notified "those inclined to settle at the hither end of Montauk to appear at the Town House on the 10<sup>th</sup>."<sup>13</sup> On April 10, 1739 the Town Trustees "agreed with Samll Hedges to keep at the hither end of Montauk for year ensuing. Agreed with Cornel Miller to go keep the fattening field for the year ensuing."<sup>14</sup> These early houses were at the hither end (site of the First House) and the further end (site of the Third House) with the keeper at the hither end controlling access to the Montauk pastures and the keeper at the further end controlling access to the "fattening fields."

A house built at Fort Pond in 1746 was the first at this location. At their meeting on April 3, 1746 the trustees "Agreed for to build a house sixteen foot square by the fort pond for a shepherd to live in" and on April 22<sup>nd</sup> they "Agreed to send 6 men to Meantoke to build a house at the foart pond" and in May they hired John Huntting to "cart some boards and brick for the sheep house at the foart pond."<sup>15</sup> At their meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> they "agreed with Nathaniel Talmage to keep the sheep this side of the fort pond until the 15 day of October and for his service he is for to live in ye house built for that purpose at the fort pond beach." <sup>16</sup>

With construction of the house at Fort Pond in 1746, a system for managing the Montauk pasture was in place that would last until 1879. Annual agreements with the keepers at the hither end (the First House) Fort Pond (the Second House) and the further end (the Third House) were renewed each year by the Town Trustees and then by the trustees of the proprietors of Montauk with little variation in the description of duties from year to year. The shepherd's house that was at the hither end by 1739 was replaced with a new house in 1798 (the First House). The 1746 house at Fort Pond was replaced with the present Second House in 1797. The house that was at the further end by 1739 was replaced with the present Third House in 1806. It was not until the 1850s that the trustees of the proprietors of Montauk referred to these houses as the first house, the second house and the third house.

Each keeper had a primary purpose that corresponded to the location of his house. The keeper at the First House maintained a list of all livestock coming through the gate seeing that the cattle, horses and sheep were in accordance with

the rights of their owners. The keeper at the Second House was in charge of sheep and was required to ride through the sheep pasture two half days each week. The keeper at the Third House was responsible for cattle and spent two half days a week riding among them. He kept a list of all cattle and horses put into the fattening field and kept a tally of the fattening field rights of each owner. The keepers at the First House and the Third House had a book depicting the earmarks of each owner, so that they could properly assign each beast to its owner's grazing rights.

The keepers were responsible for maintaining the fences and walls in the vicinity of their house. The keeper at the First House maintained the gate and fence across the peninsula at the western boundary. The keeper at the Second House was responsible for the fence from Fort Pond to the ocean, for the gate that opened the sheep pasture to the cattle pastures and for the fence from the north end of Fort Pond to the bay. The keeper at the Third House maintained the greatest amount of fencing and received special assistance from the trustees. He was responsible for the wall at the North Neck Field and the fences that separated Indian Field and Point Field.

The keepers at the First House and the Second House were responsible for driving the sheep on and off Montauk. These two keepers assisted the keeper at the Third House in driving the cattle on and off Montauk and in moving them from one field to another.

### **The Montauk pasture during the Benson era, 1879-1895**

Beginning in 1873, businessmen from New York, particularly Washington Tyson and Robert M. Grinnel, began to purchase shares from Montauk proprietors and by 1877 had a controlling interest in the property. Robert M. Grinnel applied to Supreme Court for an order of partition which resulted in an auction held in East Hampton on October 22, 1879. On that day Arthur M. Benson of Brooklyn purchased all of Montauk from the proprietors for \$151,000.<sup>23</sup>

Arthur Benson had made a fortune in shipping at South Street and was able to retire in 1849 at the age of 37. He was president of Brooklyn Light Gas Company from 1862 to 1882. In 1880 Benson and his sporting friends formed the Montauk Association where he and seven others built cottages and a clubhouse. Benson saw Montauk as a sportsman's paradise and had no plans to develop it. His obituary in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* describes his personal enjoyment of Montauk:

Some years ago he purchased Montauk Point, and was in the habit of going there every Spring, remaining until the swallows turned Southward in the Fall. His holdings there were greatly coveted by capitalists. Mr. Corbin wanted to get the land

so as to carry out his scheme for a short course to Europe. But Mr. Benson could never be prevailed upon to sell. He let a great portion of the land for grazing purposes and realized a large income from it. Large herds of cattle were always to be found upon it. People, when very advantageous offers had been refused, used to speculate as to what Mr. Benson intended to do with the property but could never reach a satisfactory conclusion. One time when Mr. Corbin was talking of his plans for converting Montauk Point into a great shipping center Mr. Benson quietly remarked: "I guess I'll have something to do about that."

Mr. Benson lived almost the life of a recluse when he retired to the property. He was an enthusiastic striped bass fisherman and used to spend nearly all his days on the water. He was in the habit of rising early and eating a simple breakfast. Then he would go off in a boat by himself and not be seen until evening. He kept an iron pot in the woods in which he used to cook lobsters for his dinner.<sup>24</sup>

An article of 1881 describes the scene at Third House as if the purchase by Benson had not changed the traditional practice of pasturing livestock on Montauk:

Montauk – On Thursday, June 16, the cattle on Montauk were driven together and yarded at Mr. Stratton's. Selections were made by the owners of cattle. Those intended for slaughtering for beef were put in the fattening field. The "Indian Field and North Neck" are usually reserved for fattening fields. There are about 1,200 cattle and horses on Montauk for the season pasturage, with several hundred sheep.<sup>25</sup>

Arthur Benson died in 1889 and left Montauk to his children, Frank Sherman Benson and Mary Benson. After obtaining a clear title they sold a large tract, from Fort Pond to Oyster Pond, to Austin Corbin of the Long Island Rail Road and Charles M. Pratt of Standard Oil. The Corbin and Pratt land contained the two best pastures: North Neck and Indian Field. *The Daily Brooklyn Eagle* reported the concern of East Hampton's farmers over the possible loss of these pastures:

The purchase by Austin Corbin and C. M. Pratt of 5,500 acres of the Montauk lands at Fort Pond Bay has had the effect of very much disturbing the farmers of this town, who for more than two centuries have used the lands included in the sale as pasture land, and now they are in a quandary as to what they are to do with the herds that have been accustomed to graze there. Horses, cattle and sheep are driven on in the spring and brought off in the autumn... Estimates vary as to the number of cattle at present on the point; some estimate the number at 1,200, others at half that figure. There are probably thirty or more horses turned loose there and 300 to 500 sheep. The railroad people are reported to have decided that no cattle can remain on their land... To remove the stock at this season of the year would entail serious loss for the farmers... The farmers pay \$3 a head for the pasture privileges for cattle and \$6 a head for horses. There are from seventy-five to one hundred separate owners. Among the largest ones are David J. Gardiner, Edward Dayton, David Hunting and Wm. Hedges; but it is within bounds to say that every farmer and most of the

merchants in the town are interested in the question. The owners have based their calculations for the season's crops on the expectation that the Montauk pastures could be used this summer. To return the stock to the farms now would result in short supply of hay for the winter season, and would entail serious loss to some of the farmers. It is hoped that when the matter is clearly put before the railroad people that an arrangement can be made for the present season. But this will be the last year probably that East Hampton will see cattle driven on Montauk.<sup>26</sup>

Negotiations were not successful and the *Eagle* reported a few weeks later that "Little hope of using Montauk as a grazing field for the cattle of Long Island is held by the farmers, and the beautiful grazing territory which has been in use as such for nearly two and a half centuries will have to be relinquished."<sup>27</sup>

### **Descriptions of the Montauk pasture**

With such numbers of cattle and sheep on the exposed peninsula, the pastures of Montauk would attract the attention of armies and navies at wartime. It is no surprise that the first description of the Montauk pastures is in regard to provisioning General Washington's army. The earliest account of a sight-seeing trip to Montauk is from 1782, when the British still occupied New York City, and is the first of many accounts by travelers to Montauk.

Connecticut Colony Governor Johnathan Trumbull to General George Washington, July 6, 1776:

I hear from Captain Niles that there are four thousand head of neat cattle on Montauk Point, on Long Island, great part of them good beef cattle, fit for slaughter. We have ordered the stock of cattle, sheep and swine, from Fisher's Island. Is it not best that you procure those at Montauk likewise, and prevent their being used to feed the enemy?<sup>28</sup>

Mrs. Hannah Punderson of Norwich, Connecticut, wrote from East Hampton to her granddaughter, Miss Hannah Mott, after an excursion to Montauk:

East Hampton 1782

I cannot fail giving you a sketch of the particulars accruing to a little excursion on a party of Pleasure which we enjoyed on montauck Point last Friday & Saturday. This Neck is about 10 miles in length, the natives still hold right here, it is clear of fence, except now & then there is a garden spot enclosed, there are only three families of White people inhabited on this tract of land, which are shepherds for the flocks which graze here from East Hampton: about 2000 Cattle & Horses besides sheep in proportion to the above.<sup>29</sup>

Horatio Gates Spafford, *A Gazetteer of the State of New York*, 1813:

Montauk contains about 9000 acres of excellent land for pasture, and it is owned by 120 farmers as tenants in common. It is all occupied as a pasture by them, and from the first of April to the first of December, there are kept upon it about 1500 cattle, 1400 sheep and 200 horses.<sup>30</sup>

Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, *Scenes in My Native Land*, 1845:

The peninsula of Montauk is connected with the island by a neck of land called Napeag Beach...Leaving this beach and entering upon the upland peninsula, we find an uneven surface which is covered with a soil that yields excellent grass for cattle. The land is a vast common, belonging to the people of East Hampton; and here, during the summer, large herds and flocks are fed. There is perhaps no part of our country where the traveler will find such an extent of cleared land, without bounds or fences, or such herds of cattle promiscuously scattered over the hills and plains. There are no woods or groves upon the peninsula, and but very few scattered trees...There are but three or four families on the point, and their houses are miles apart, so that in the wintry season they just lead the lives of hermits. In summer many strangers resort hither, some to fish and hunt, some to breathe the invigorating sea-breeze, and not a few attracted by the solitary grandeur of the spot.<sup>31</sup>

*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 24, 1853:

Letter to *Eagle* from Montauk Point. The Highlands, stretching from the point some ten miles West contain about 9,000 acres of undivided lands, owned by many citizens of Easthampton and applied to pasturage. The keepers of the flock, or shepherds, reside in three houses, located about three and a half miles apart, the first being at the approach to the pasturage grounds. Division fences are run across the Island to separate the sheep from the cattle, as also for change of grazing. At present there are on the point 2,000 sheep and 1,500 cattle, beside some one or two hundred horses. We saw collected together this A. M. about 500 lean cattle for change of fields.

J. H. French, *Gazetter of the State of New York*, 1860, description of East Hampton:

Stock raising forms the leading occupation, and to that pursuit Gardiner's Island and Montauk Point are exclusively devoted. A tract of about 9,000 acres embracing the entire E. portion of the town, is devoted wholly to pasturage. It is owned by a company, as tenants in common, whose affairs are managed by a board of seven trustees elected annually.<sup>33</sup>

Richard M. Bayles, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Suffolk County*, 1874:

The peninsula of Montauk, containing about nine thousand acres occupies the eastern extremity of the south branch of Long Island. The greater part of it is bare of timber, and covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, affording excellent pasturage for stock, and to this purpose it is almost exclusively devoted. To the richness of its feeding add the abundant supply of pure wholesome water afforded by numerous springs and ponds which are scattered over the surface; the cool and refreshing sea breeze; and the entire absence of annoying insects; and we find this spot peculiarly favored for the purpose to which it has been appropriated for more than two hundred years. The shareholders in these Montauk lands are represented by a board of seven trustees in whom the management of the common property is vested. Three keepers are employed to look after the animals that are turned on here to pasture, and change them from one enclosure to another as occasion requires. Each keeper has the use of a house and as much land as he wishes to cultivate, also the privilege of pasturing a certain number of cattle. The houses are located about four miles apart. The cattle of different owners turned together upon this common pasture are identified by certain slits, nicks, punctures, and cuts, made upon the animal's ears. About fifteen hundred cattle, one hundred horses, and eight hundred sheep are turned on here during the season. The days for driving on and bringing off the animals are designated by the trustees, according to the exigencies of the season and the consequent state of the pasture. The season for sheep generally lasts from about the latter part of March to the first of December and for cattle and horses from the first of May to the middle of November.<sup>34</sup>

## HISTORY OF THE SECOND HOUSE

### Construction in 1797 and alterations to 1879

In 1797 the Town Trustees, acting for the proprietors of Montauk, began a program of replacing the three keeper's houses with new dwellings. Prosperity had returned after the Revolutionary War. The agricultural economy was thriving and the proprietors saw fit to invest in the Montauk pastures. Purchase of the lighthouse reservation by the Federal government in January 1796 also provided some cash to reinvest in the pasture system. At their meeting in July 1797 the Trustees "Agreed that the House to be built at the Fort pond at Montauk be 27 feet by 27 feet one story high." In September the trustees "Agreed to alter the Plan of the House that is to be built at the fort pond by raising it 3 feet above the first story."<sup>35</sup>

The Town Trustees account with the proprietors of Montauk lists the material purchased in 1797 for building the Second House. From William Albertson's brickyard in Southold the trustees purchased 5,500 brick. From Sag Harbor merchants they purchased: 5,050 shingles from William Parker; 2,500 lineal feet of boards and 2,000 lineal feet of lath from Peleg Latham; 1,000 lineal feet of boards from Payne & Ripley; 3 casks of lime and plaster-lath nails from Dering & Hedges; and 66 panes of 7" x 9" glass, 36 panes of 6" x 8" glass and 3 gallons of Rum "To Raise Montauk House" from Charles Dayton. The brick and lumber were delivered by boat to Fort Pond Bay. Nails, hinges, latches and iron mantel tree pieces for the fireplaces were obtained from East Hampton blacksmiths David Barns and William Hedges. Benjamin Baker built the chimney. Jonathan Conklin, Jeremiah Huntting, David Baker, Jonathan Baker and David Sherrill were the carpenters who built the Second House in 1797.<sup>36</sup>

The Second House had a form and floor plan typical of a medium-sized East Hampton farmhouse of the period (see illustrations 1, 2 and 15-17). The trustees' decision to raise the plate three feet above the first story, creating a knee wall at the second floor, gave the house an appearance associated with the first half of the nineteenth century and makes it an early example of this form. The front door in the south wall opened to an entrance hall that originally had no stairway, not unusual for a house in the East Hampton countryside. To the west of the entrance was a parlor with a fireplace. The parlor had a wainscot of wide pine boards beneath a chair rail that ran along under the windows. Two adjacent doors in the north wall opened to a small bedroom and to the kitchen. The kitchen had a wide cooking hearth and a bake oven in the back wall of the fireplace. The only stairs in the house led from the kitchen to the second floor. A door in the west wall of the

kitchen opened to a small pantry. The front room east of the chimney was a small bedroom that was later enlarged with a lean-to addition to the east. On the second floor were two small rooms to the west. Each room was finished with plaster walls and ceiling and each had a window. The remainder of the second floor was open to the studs and sheathing of the walls and to the joists and attic flooring above.

In 1837 the Town Trustees voted to “build a kitchen at the house at fort pond on Montauk 14 ft by 12.”<sup>37</sup> This would be the north lean-to seen in the 1870s photographs. Sylvanus Jones and David Lester were paid for carpentry work and Samuel King was paid for mason work on the kitchen addition. The new kitchen was fitted with a cast-iron cook stove.

### **Alterations made by Arthur Benson, c. 1880**

Soon after acquiring Montauk, Arthur Benson had additions built onto the Second House and the Third House to expand and upgrade accommodations at Montauk for his family and friends as well as for the designers and builders of the Montauk Association. The addition to the Third House was described in a July 1883 newspaper article: “Stratton’s is a great, roomy farmhouse, its original proportions considerably increased by a large L, added for the accommodation of summer boarders. The view from its open porch is simply superb – traveled men say unequaled in novelty and attractiveness by anything in the Old World.”<sup>38</sup> The east addition and porch built on the Second House by Arthur Benson had the same characteristics as the wing and porch he built at the Third House (see illustrations 3, 4, 18 and 19). These changes to the Second House and the Third House have the attributed date of c. 1880.

Benson’s addition expanded the dining room and provided two new bedrooms on the first floor. Four new bedrooms were in the second floor of the addition and new windows in the south and north walls allowed three new bedrooms within the previously-unfinished area of the 1797 house. The stairway in the front entrance hall was also added at this time. Arthur Benson enlarged the service wing as well, expanding the kitchen to the west and attaching a laundry wing to the north wall of the lean-to kitchen.

## **The lives of the keepers at the Second House**

From 1797 to 1879 the Second House was home to eight keepers: Christopher Hedges; John Parsons; Uriah Miller; Jonathan Fithian; Aaron Fithian; Sidney H. Stratton; George L. Lester and George A. Osborne. What is known of each and of their tenancy at the Second House is enumerated below. This section summarizes the common experiences of these keepers at the Second House.

The Federal census records show that the keeper lived with his family at the Second House. Most of the keepers were young and some had recently married. Seven of the keepers at the Second House lived there with their wives and children. The agricultural schedules of the 1850 to 1880 Federal censuses show that these men operated farms on the land provided them by the trustees and took advantage of the pasturage rights granted them. Their livestock varied from the 6 cattle and 11 sheep owned by George L. Lester to the 16 cattle and 149 sheep owned by Aaron Fithian. These farmers grew wheat, corn, oats and potatoes in fields by the Second House and on Shepherd's Neck.

The keeper at the Second House was always on duty to see that the gate to the cattle pasture to the east was kept closed, that the cattle stayed to the east and the sheep to the west of Fort Pond and to immediately repair any breach of the fence south or north of the pond. The keeper's regular duties driving cattle and sheep on and off Montauk, moving livestock from one field to another and riding through the pastures two half-days a week left him time for other work. In addition to working on the stone wall and fences for pay and to his own farming chores, the keepers at the Second House spent significant time cutting cord wood for sale. Each year the trustees allotted an area of Hither Woods for the keeper of the Second House to cut cordwood (from 50 to 70 cords) that he could sell with half the proceeds going to the trustees. In 1838 Aaron Fithian paid the trustees \$200 as half of his profit for the year. This was a system that provided cash for the keeper, cash for the trustees to offset their costs and cleared more land for pasture.

The three dwellings of the keepers always served as boarding houses. Men hired to assist with driving the livestock on and off Montauk or to help when changing pastures, trustees traveling to Montauk to inspect fences, pastures and woodlots and men hired to build fences and walls all required room and board, for which the keepers were compensated by the trustees. During the grazing season, the monthly meetings of the trustees of the proprietors of Montauk rotated among the three dwellings. It was to the advantage of the trustees that the keepers and their families be set up to provide lodging and meals to visitors. The trustees did not discourage the keepers from earning extra money by boarding sportsmen and tourists.

Most of the keepers at the Second House had deep commitments to Montauk and all but one had a grandparent, father, son or brother who was also a Montauk keeper. Five of the keepers of the Second House also lived for a period at either the First House or the Third House. The first keeper at the Second House, Christopher Hedges, lived on Montauk for 53 years; George A. Osborne lived there for 40 years; and Aaron Fithian, Sidney H. Stratton and George S. Conklin each lived on Montauk for 25 years.

### **Keepers of the Second House, 1797-1909**

#### Christopher Hedges, 1797 – 1807

Christopher Hedges (1753-1839) was born in the shepherd's house at the hither end of Montauk (the First House) in 1753 and lived there and at Fort Pond (the Second House) for 53 years. In 1739 his grandfather, Samuel Hedges (1685-1755), was appointed the first keeper at the hither end of Montauk. Samuel's sons, Jonathan (1706-1763) and Benjamin (1713-1812), took over in 1743 and continued together until Jonathan died in 1763 leaving Benjamin as the sole keeper. Christopher Hedges, the son of Benjamin, lived at the First House and assisted his father until he married in 1778 and moved three miles east to become keeper at Fort Pond. He and his family lived in the 16' x 16' house built there in 1746 for eighteen years and then continued to live in the new Second House, built in 1797, for another ten years. The 1800 Federal census lists Christopher living at the Second House with his wife and six children. His neighbors were Benjamin and Phillip Hedges at the First House, Jared Hand at the Third House and Jacob Hand at the lighthouse.<sup>39</sup> Christopher Hedges moved to Tioga County in 1807 and died there in 1839.

#### John Parsons, 1808-1814

John Parsons (1742-1824) was keeper at the Second House from 1808 to 1814 when he moved to the Third House with his son, Elisha Parsons, who had been appointed keeper there that year. The 1820 Federal census lists John Parsons as the head of the household at the Third House living with Elisha Parsons and his wife Harriet.<sup>40</sup> John Parsons died in 1824 and is buried at Nominick Hills Burial Ground (near the site of the First House).

### Uriah Miller, 1814-1826

Uriah Miller (1784-1859) brought his wife and one-year-old son Nathan to the Second House in March 1814 and remained keeper there until 1826. The 1820 Federal census lists him living at the Second House with his wife Betsey and three children. At the age of 42 he moved back to the family home on North Main Street.

### Jonathan Fithian, 1827-1836, and Aaron Fithian, 1837-1853

Captain Jonathan Fithian (1768-1814) and then his son, Aaron Fithian (1801-1853), were keepers at the Second House for a period of 26 years from 1827 to 1853. Jonathan Fithian became keeper in 1827 when he was 59 years old and Aaron was 26. The 1830 Federal census indicates that Aaron was living at Fort Pond assisting his father on the farm and with his duties as keeper. In 1837 Jonathan Fithian returned to the family home on Main Street and Aaron became keeper at the Second House. The 1850 Federal census lists Aaron and Mary Fithian with their four children at the Second House. Their neighbors were George Osborne at First House, Patrick Gould at the Third House and John Hobart, keeper at the lighthouse. The agricultural schedule of the 1850 Federal Census provides the first picture of the farm at the Second House. Aaron Fithian farmed 40 acres and owned 3 horses, 4 milch cows, 2 oxen, 14 other cattle, 149 sheep and 9 swine. He had on hand at the Second House 100 bushels of Indian Corn, 75 bushels of oats, 350 pounds of wool, 112 bushels of potatoes, 240 pounds of butter and 20 tons of hay.<sup>41</sup> Aaron Fithian died in October 1853, at the age of 52, having lived at the Second House for 26 years.

### Sidney H. Stratton, 1853-1858

Sidney Havens Stratton (1812-1878) became keeper in 1853 at the age of 41 and lived on Montauk until he died, unmarried, in 1878. In 1859 he became keeper at the Third House. When his younger brother, Samuel T. Stratton, became keeper at the Third House in 1864, Sidney continued to live there, assisting on the farm.

### George L. Lester, 1859-1865

George L. Lester was born in Amagansett in 1831. He married Harriet Osborne in 1853 and in 1859, at the age of 28, he became keeper at the Second House. The 1860 Federal census lists George and Harriet Lester living at the Second House with their two daughters. The 1860 Federal census agricultural schedule indicates that George L. Lester farmed 40 acres and owned 5 milch cows, 6 other cattle, 11 sheep and had at the farm 150 bushels of Indian Corn, 40 bushels of potatoes, 6 tons of hay and 260 pounds of butter.<sup>42</sup> George L. Lester died at the Second House of typhoid fever in July 1865.

### George A. Osborne 1866 – 1886

George Alexander Osborne (1824-1899) grew up on Newtown Lane in the home of his parents, Harvey and Mary Osborne. George Osborne lived at Montauk for forty years from 1846 to 1886. He was keeper at the First House from 1846 to 1865 and lived at the Second House from 1866 to 1886. Growing up, he became familiar with life at Montauk visiting his grandfather, Captain Jonathan Fithian, keeper at the Second House from 1827-1836 and his uncle, Aaron Fithian, keeper at the Second House from 1837 to 1851. Jonathan Fithian was Mary Osborne's father and Aaron was her brother.

George A. Osborne became keeper at the First House in 1846 at the age of 22. He married Florence Fithian in 1851 and began to raise a family at the First House. George Osborne became the keeper at the Second House in 1866 following the death of George L. Lester. The 1870 Federal census lists George and Florence Osborne at the Second House with their children Alexander, 16 years old, Alice, 13 years old, Elizabeth, 10 years old, and Emmett, one year old. The 1880 Federal census lists George Osborne's family with the other Montauk residents: George S. Conklin at the First House; Samuel T. Stratton at the Third House; Henry A. Babcock at the lighthouse; and the families of Maria Pharoah and William Fowler at Indian Field.

The agricultural schedule of the 1880 Federal census provides the best documentation of the small farm operated by George A. Osborne to provide for his family and for Florence to set the table for guests of the inn. Osborne's farm contained 25 acres of tilled land and 20 acres of pasture. The census lists this land as being "rented" indicating that Osborne now had an arrangement with Arthur Benson to farm the land which he previously had by contract with the proprietors of Montauk. Osborne had 15 acres of grassland that he mowed, yielding four tons of hay. He owned three horses, seven cows, five calves and four swine. From his seventy sheep he sheared 200 pounds of wool that year. Of his 30 lambs, he sold four and slaughtered ten. In the barnyard were 40 poultry. Four acres of Indian

corn yielded 100 bushels, three acres of oats gave 80 bushels, two acres of wheat yielded 30 bushels and Osborne harvested 60 bushels of potatoes from a half-acre planting. The farm made 250 pounds of butter in 1880.<sup>43</sup>

George and Florence Osborne kept an inn at the Second House where they boarded many who traveled to Montauk for hunting, fishing, berry-picking, bathing and sight-seeing. The journey described in “Montauk Point, Long Island” in the September 1871 *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* includes visits to the First House and the Second House:

Gradually the land began to rise out of the broken, sandy dunes, and to grow into irregular bluffs. Here we began to look out for the first house, and about two o’clock caught sight of it from the bluff, close to the shore, and were soon refreshing ourselves in the comfortable parlor with some home-made blackberry wine, and cool water from the well. We obtained from Mr. Lawrence [at the First House] a sketch of some of the “ear-marks” now in use in marking cattle. During the past season fifteen hundred head of these, one hundred horses, and seven hundred sheep had been pastured on the downs east of this house, at a charge per head for common stock of \$2 50 and of \$5 for the field or fattening pasture. There are three keepers, living about four miles apart, whose duty it is to shift the cattle from point to point, as the water or pasture may require. They are furnished with a comfortable house, and as much land as they may require for farming purposes, with the privilege of keeping a certain number of cattle, sheep, etc., with every opportunity to raise chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys...

After dinner we continued our walk, following the coast till sundown; then on over the downs...until we reached Mr. Osborne’s [the Second House], near the beach, after dark. Soon we were comfortably seated in his cozy parlor, chatting with the family like old friends. An examination of the “register” revealed a very different record from the books of this kind usually found in hotels. Here we have a description of a successful day’s sport – ducks, wild-geese, snipe. On another page regrets at leaving such home-like quarters....But it is growing late. Our hostess asks if we will sleep on feathers or straw. Sleepy voices echo, “Straw! Straw! Straw!” Three snowy beds. We drew lots for the choice, and were soon fast asleep....We were shown a beautiful wood-duck that had been shot the night before. Breakfast over, we pushed for the water’s edge...

Two guest registers kept at “Osborne’s” document the inn-keeping that was a major part of life at the Second House (illustration 20).<sup>44</sup> Guests arrived by stage from Sag Harbor or by yacht, anchoring in Fort Pond Bay. The guest books record visitors from South Fork villages as well as from New York, Brooklyn, Hartford, New Haven, Norwalk, Newport, Westerly, Philadelphia, Lancaster, Washington, D. C. and Grand Rapids. Following are some sample entries in the registers:

In September 1867, a party of eight from Westerly, Rhode Island, arrived on the yacht *Triumph* and after an afternoon of shooting “came into supper (all in tip-top order – broiled blue fish smoking hot).”

In August 1868, Aner and Nancy Sperry took the steamer *Sunshine* from Hartford to Sag Harbor and then continued by stage: “three hours on the road from East Hampton arrived at 11 ½ O'clock AM found a fatted calf in waiting for dinner went in & had a good bath. After partaking of one of Mrs. Osborn's best suppers retired for the night in the northwest chamber.”

On July 15, 1870, after E. L. Fuller, Hamilton Hutchins and Clifford J. Boush signed the register, Mrs. Osborne noted: “Distinguished Arrivals. US Navy all of the USS Constellation.”

Following the sale of Montauk to Arthur Benson in 1879, George A. Osborne no longer worked for the proprietors of Montauk. From newspaper accounts, it appears that Arthur Benson continued to allow East Hampton farmers to pasture cattle, horses and sheep on Montauk and that the keepers at the First House, the Second House and the Third House continued to play a role in managing the livestock. A newspaper article of 1883 suggests that the residents of the three houses continued their traditional roles at Montauk:

If the walk over the sands is interesting, that of four miles from Conklin's to Osborne's along the high cliffs of Montauk is still more so. The pedestrian follows sheep paths that wind along the verge of the cliffs, with the ocean breaking fifty and a hundred feet below. A tumbled mass of hills in every conceivable form rises beside him on the north, and stretches far away eastward, in places showing ragged, red erosions cut by the rainfall, but in general covered with short crisp grass of the most vivid green. There are hollows at intervals, and some three miles eastward the hills sweep around and enclose a basin of about two miles in diameter, in which one finds life-saving station No. 8 and the picturesque little brown farm-house known to all visitors to Montauk as “Osborne's.” This part of the peninsula is devoted to sheep grazing, and twenty-two hundred of the innocents are about you as you walk, disposed in pretty groups on the hillside, standing in bas-relief on their summits, or scampering away in confused masses at your approach. Sheep and nothing else have grazed here for more than two hundred years...At Osborne's a post and rail fence a few yards in length separates the sheep pastures from the cattle range on the east, the peninsula being almost cut in twain at this point by Fort Pond, a sheet of water a mile in length, and separated from the ocean and from Fort Pond Bay on the Sound only by narrow sand bars. At Conklin's [the First House] there is a similar fence, intended to prevent the flocks from straying in to the plain westward. It is the latter's duty to see that this does not occur. Osborne keeps the sheep from encroaching on the cattle pastures, and the cattle out of the sheep preserves, while Stratton [at the Third House], the chief herdsman, three miles further east, has the care of the fattening field and the general oversight of the herds.<sup>45</sup>

The United States Life-Saving Service built stations at Hither Plain and Ditch Plain in 1872. George A. Osborne became keeper of the Hither Plain station and Samuel T. Stratton, keeper at Third House, was put in charge of the Ditch Plain station. George A. Osborne's son, George A. Osborne, Jr. (known as Alexander) was one of the surfmen at Hither Plain Life-Saving Station. On December 19, 1873, Alexander and two others from that station "went off in a boat codfishing in the morning" and were lost at sea, George A. Osborne finding the empty boat on the beach.<sup>46</sup>

The Osborne's two daughters were married at the Second House. In December 1881 Alice Osborne married Abraham Dayton and in November 1882 Reverend John Stokes came from East Hampton to marry Elizabeth Osborne and David Green Mulford.<sup>47</sup>

In 1886 when George was 62 and Florence was 50 they moved back to East Hampton where they ran a boarding house on Newtown Lane, where the Dreesen's Building is now.<sup>48</sup> George A. Osborne died in 1899. In 1902 Florence Osborne, his widow, engaged the prominent builder George Eldredge to construct a large house on the corner of Main Street and Buell Lane next to "Congress Hall", the home of her daughter Elizabeth, wife of David Green Mulford. This substantial residence demonstrates the prosperity enjoyed by George and Florence Osborne from many years as livestock keepers and inn keepers.

#### George Strong Conklin, 1886-1899

George Strong Conklin (1825-1905) became keeper of the First House in 1873, toward the end of the era of the proprietors of Montauk. Following the purchase of Montauk by Benson in 1879, George Conklin continued his role in managing the livestock and running an inn with his wife, Melissa, as did George and Florence Osborne at the Second House. When George Osborne left the Second House in 1886, George S. Conklin moved to that larger house from the First House. At the same time, George Conklin's sons, William and Isaac, moved to the Third House to take over from Samuel T. Stratton. *The Southside Signal* reported this shuffle of keepers:

Samuel T. Stratton, who has for over 30 years kept the "third house" on Montauk, has decided to remove to East Hampton. The house will hereafter be kept by William H. and Isaac E. Conklin, who will doubtless so direct affairs as to retain for the house the high reputation it has always enjoyed under Mr. Stratton's regime. The second house is now occupied by Mr. George Conklin, while Elias Payne will on March 1 take up his abode in the first house, vacated by Mr. Conklin. Visitors to Montauk are assured of excellent accommodations at all of the houses.<sup>49</sup>

The popularity of The Second House was described in an 1892 article in the *Sag Harbor Express*:

George S. Conklin, keeper of the second house on Montauk, has been a resident of Montauk for nearly twenty years – the first thirteen years as keeper of the first house, and the past six years and over as keeper of the second house. This house is considered a favorite for the pleasure seekers over and amid the ever memorable and romantic hills, causing it to be well filled throughout the season, to say nothing of the many, going to and from the Point, who stop for a passing meal.<sup>50</sup>

A school for the children of Hither Plain Village, which had grown up around the life-saving station, opened at the Second House in 1896 and continued there for three years until a schoolhouse was built near the station in 1899. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported in 1896 that “A school has been opened at the Second House on Montauk, with Miss Osborne as teacher” and that “Miss Youngs of Catskill and Miss Alice Osborne of Wainscot were guests of Miss Martha Osborne, teacher at the second house, over Sunday.”<sup>51</sup>

George and Melissa Conklin were in residence when more than 20,000 soldiers returning from Cuba and Puerto Rico were quartered at Camp Wikoff from August through November of 1898. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported that the Second House and the Third House were full with “officers and newspaper men” during this period.<sup>52</sup> Mrs. Lorenzo G. Woodhouse and other organizers of The Easthampton Relief Committee used the Second House as a staging area for distributing food and supplies to the soldiers at Camp Wikoff. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported on August 31, 1898 that “Mrs. L. G. Woodhouse of East Hampton was at the camp yesterday and after a consultation with General Wheeler hired a room at the Second House for the reception of the supplies which are sent daily from this place for the soldiers...The supplies now being taken to Camp Wikoff for distribution among the soldiers from Easthampton average about two large wagon loads each day.”

In 1899, at the age of 74, George S. Conklin moved back to East Hampton after 26 years on Montauk.

#### Ulysses Tillinghast Payne, 1899 – 1909

Ulysses T. Payne (1867-1939), and his wife Nellie, accompanied his father Elias Payne to the First House in 1886. In 1899 Ulysses, Nellie and Elias moved to the Second House. They followed in the footsteps of George A. Osborne and George S. Conklin who also left the First House for the Second House, which was a larger inn and closer to the choice spots for hunting and fishing and closer to the beach for bathing. The 1900 Federal census lists Ulysses as a farmer, Nellie as running a

boarding house and their daughter Betsey as a waitress. Also living in the Second House in 1900 was Ellen Hall, a servant and laundress from Denmark.

In 1909 Ulysses and Nellie Payne moved to a home they had built on the shore of Fort Pond north of the Second House.<sup>53</sup> Their departure marked the end of the era of farming and inn keeping at the Second House.

### **Ownership by the family of David E. Kennedy, 1909-1968**

In 1905 Frank Sherman Benson and Mary Benson, children of Arthur Benson, engaged the Olmsted Brothers to draw up a subdivision plan for their land west of Fort Pond. The Olmsted plan for “Hither Hills, Montauk, L. I.” was filed with the Suffolk County Clerk on December 12, 1905.<sup>54</sup> Advertisements for available lots in “Hither Hills” began to appear in *The East Hampton Star* in February 1906.<sup>55</sup> After boarding with Ulysses and Nellie Payne over a few summers, David E. and Claire Kennedy decided to make the Second House their summer home. David E. Kennedy acquired three lots as depicted on the 1905 Olmsted map: Second House lot, lot number 23 adjoining to the east and Boat House lot number 1, which gave access to Fort Pond. His company, David E. Kennedy, Inc., manufactured asphalt, vinyl, cork, rubber and vinyl asbestos tile flooring. In 1909 David and Claire Kennedy, with their three-year-old son David and two-year-old daughter Carolyn moved into the Second House for the summer (illustrations 23 and 24).

In 1912 David Kennedy made major changes to the Second House giving it a new appearance. The east lean-to was taken down and replaced with a two-story addition that extended the 1797 house fifteen feet to the east. The south roof slope was extended down over a new porch that crossed the front wall. Three new dormer windows provided more head-room and light to the second floor bedrooms (illustrations 5, 6, 26, 28 and 30).

Carolyn Kennedy Tyson recalled the family traveling to Montauk each summer and the simple life of swimming, fishing, hunting, boating, gardening and riding that they enjoyed at the Second House.<sup>57</sup> The family continued to summer at the Second House with Mrs. Kennedy entertaining friends and family there into the 1960s. Claire Kennedy died in 1965, leaving the Second House to her daughter-in-law Phyllis Kennedy.

The East Hampton Town Board appreciated the historic value of the Second House and its critical location at the entrance to downtown Montauk and adjacent to Kirk Memorial Park. In June of 1968 the Town of East Hampton acquired the Second House for \$75,000, with half the amount being paid by the New York State Historical Trust, to be operated as a museum by the Montauk Historical Society.<sup>58</sup>

Supervisor Bruce Collins said of the purchase: "I think it is a significant step by the Town Board to preserve, rather than let deteriorate, the historical sites we are blessed with out here."<sup>59</sup> The Montauk Historical Society opened Second House Museum on June 28, 1969 and has maintained it ever since.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AT THE SECOND HOUSE

Today, the exterior appearance of the Second House is that given it by the 1912 additions and alterations by David E. Kennedy. The removal of the east lean-to, the expansion to the east, the new porch and the dormer windows give the Second House the appearance of a summer cottage of the early twentieth century.

Significant interior spaces remain intact from the pre-1912. The front entrance hall retains the vertical-board partitions and the c. 1880 stairway (illustration 34). The southwest parlor retains early wide-board wainscoting, door and window trim, fireplace and mantel (illustration 33). The early window trim documents the historic sash (all window sash in the house are later replacements). The small bedroom north of the parlor is similarly intact. The kitchen retains the early cooking hearth and bake oven (illustration 31). The stairway and the board partition and door that enclose it are original (illustration 32). The c. 1880 addition by Arthur Benson expanded the 1797 kitchen to the east creating a large dining room. Wainscoting in this dining room appears to be from the c.1880 expansion. Intact window trim documents the original sash. The small pantry off the kitchen is now a bathroom. The north lean-to kitchen and the north laundry addition retain framing from the 1837 and c.1880 periods, but have interiors dating from the twentieth century. The character of the front room east of the entrance hall dates from the 1912 expansion.

On the second floor, the two small west rooms are intact from the original construction except for the dormer window in the south room (illustration 35). They retain the vertical-board and plaster partitions. The passage to the attic stairs is a space that remains intact from the c. 1880 renovation (illustration 36). The two small rooms to the east on the north side of the hall may also date from the c.1880 renovation although early fabric was covered over when they were remodeled as bathrooms. All features of the front room east of the front stairway dates from the 1912 expansion. The second floor of the c.1880 addition was remodeled in 1912.

## THE SECOND HOUSE BARN

At their meeting on January 9, 1809 the Town Trustees “agreed to build a Barn at the Fortpond and appointed Huntting Miller, David Hedges, and Abraham Miller a Committee to Contract for Building the same” and in February they “agreed to let Merrey Parsons Jun. get timber in the hither woods for plank for the barn floor.<sup>60</sup> The 1809 barn at the Second House is the typical three-bay English barn constructed on East Hampton’s farms during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The barn measures 26’ x 28’ in plan and has twelve-foot posts giving it a form nearly identical to the 1797 Second House which measured 27’ x 28’ in plan and had 11 ½ foot posts. The Second House barn is among the smaller of East Hampton’s early English barns having a ten-foot-wide center wagon bay with a nine-foot bay to either side.

The barn retains its original exterior form and much of the oak timber frame remains intact (illustrations 38 and 39). The barn was converted into a garage by the family of David E. Kennedy, possibly in the 1930s, with garage doors replacing the barn door in the north wall and a concrete floor replacing the plank floor (illustration 37). The conversion to a garage entailed some compromises to the barn frame. The wagon-bay post in the north wall was cut off to allow a wider doorway. The wagon-bay girt, which was then left hanging in air, had to be suspended from the roof rafters (illustration 41). Interior posts were removed to provide room for vehicles. The door in the south wall was removed and the opening shingled over. Over the years the timber frame was repaired with more braces installed and planks nailed to the timbers as reinforcement (illustrations 40 and 42).

## SETTING OF THE SECOND HOUSE

Historic photographs document the wide-open setting of the Second House that was maintained into the 1920s.<sup>1</sup> David E. and Claire Kennedy began to plant privet hedges at some later period. Today, an overgrown privet hedge along the east boundary of the property cuts off a view of Fort Pond from the Second House (illustration 38).

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<sup>1</sup> 1926 photographs of The Second House by Eugene L. Armbruster, The Eugene L. Armbruster Collection, 1894-1939, New York Historical Society Museum and Library.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Second House is historically significant for its associations with the Montauk pasture from 1797, when it was built, to 1895, when the traditional use of the pasture by East Hampton's farmers came to an end. From the 1660s to 1895 the Montauk pasture was the primary resource for East Hampton's farmers and determined the predominant agricultural practice of raising livestock. From 1746, when the first keeper's house at Fort Pond was built, the pasture was managed by the three keepers who lived at the hither end (the First House), Fort Pond (the Second House) and the further end (the Third House). The Second House is primarily significant as the dwelling of the keepers who lived there: Christopher Hedges; John Parsons; Uriah Miller; Jonathan Fithian; Aaron Fithian; Sidney H. Stratton; George L. Lester; George A. Osborne and George S. Conklin.

The changes made by David E. Kennedy in 1912 gave the Second House the character of a summer cottage. The extension to the east which lengthened the ridge by fifteen feet, the dormer windows and the roof extending over the 1912 porch obscure the form of the 1797 farmhouse (see illustrations 7 and 25-30). The Second House does not possess the integrity to express its historic significance as the residence of the livestock keepers from 1797 to 1895. The basic integrity test applied for National Register consideration is whether the keepers who lived there would recognize the Second House as it exists today. The Second House today provides only a hint of its nineteenth-century exterior appearance and the keepers would not likely recognize the farmhouse they lived in. Even George A. Osborne, who lived in the house after Benson's east addition and porch were built, would not likely recognize the house today as his home.

The Second House is at a crossroads. An infestation of raccoons and other animals in the attic and cellar has made the cellar inaccessible and has tainted the air to make the interior inhospitable to visitors. The timber frame, especially the sills and first-floor frame, has significant deterioration. Electrical wiring and plumbing are obsolete. A minimal work program would include: cleaning up from the animal infestation; testing for and removing material (possibly floor tiles) containing asbestos; repairing the timber frame; and installing new plumbing, electrical and possibly an HVAC system. Since this work would disturb so much of the exterior shingles, framing, foundation, interior plaster and interior floors, now is the time to carefully consider the future of the Second House. Although the Second House has become familiar in its present form, it is more the summer home of the David E. Kennedy family than the farmhouse of the livestock keepers. Before planning the needed work, the Town should decide whether to continue to invest in the house as it is today or whether to restore the Second House to represent the period of the livestock keepers and its associations with the Montauk pasture from 1797 to 1895.

It is the recommendation of this report that the Second House be restored to its appearance in 1886 when George A. Osborne, the last keeper employed by the proprietors of Montauk, departed. George A. Osborne lived at the Second House when Arthur Benson built his east addition and added a porch. As described earlier in this report, the Benson additions left the earlier form of the 1797 farmhouse visible and left the important interior spaces intact. Ample physical evidence and good historic photographs can substantiate an accurate restoration to this period. The essential work would be removing the 1912 east addition, dormers and porch and reconstructing the early east lean-to (of which some framing remains) and reconstructing the c.1880 porch.

The barn needs a complete restoration of the timber frame to its original configuration and structural integrity. To accomplish this, most of the wall and roof shingles and sheathing would be removed. Damaged members of the timber frame would be repaired using traditional scarf joints or would be replaced. The original barn doors in the north and south walls would be restored.

The setting would be enhanced by removing the overgrown privet hedge along the east property line. The Second House was referred to until the late-nineteenth century as the house at Fort Pond. It was built there for the keeper to maintain the fence that ran from Fort Pond to the ocean and because of the fresh water at Fort Pond for the sheep when they were yarded near the house. The historic relationship with Fort Pond can be enhanced by clearing a vista from the house and barn to the pond. The goal of maintaining an open setting should govern future decisions about the property and careful consideration should be given before adding any trees, shrubs or structures to the property.

A restored Second House, along with a restored barn and a restored visual connection to Fort Pond, would greatly enhance the ability of this property to convey its historic significance. The Second House retains significant interior fabric from the nineteenth century. There is the potential for an accurate restoration of the exterior and interior to recall the lives of the keepers at the Second House and their role in managing the Montauk pasture, the primary resource of East Hampton's agrarian economy for over two hundred years.

## NOTES

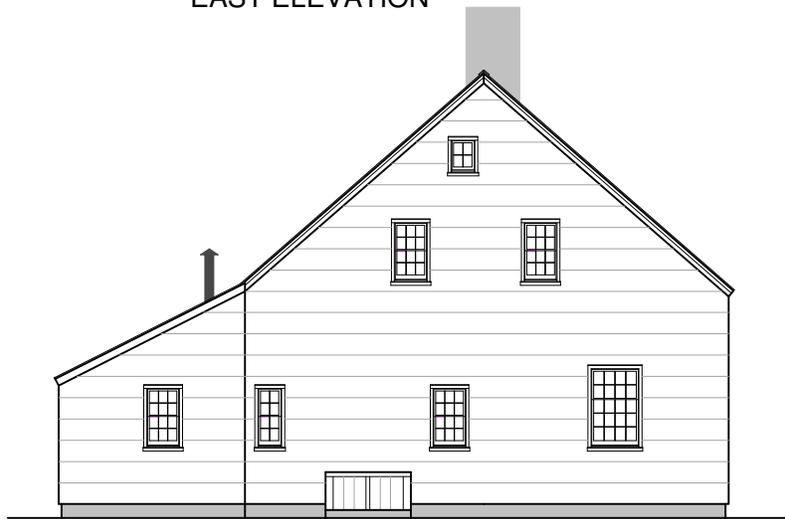
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- <sup>1</sup> *Trustees Record East Hampton, Montauk*, H. D. Sleight, ed., (Town of East Hampton, 1926), p. 12.
- <sup>2</sup> John Lyon Gardiner, "Notes and Observations on the Town of East Hampton at the East End of Long Island," 1798, in *Exploring the Past*, Tom Twomey, ed., (New York: Newmarket Press, 2000), pp. 24-27.
- <sup>3</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1725-1772*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1926, p. 453.
- <sup>4</sup> Account Book of the Proprietors of Montauk, N. Y., 1812-1836, Brooklyn Historical Society, available on East Hampton Library's Digital Long Island Collection.
- <sup>5</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1807-1826*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1926, p. 175.
- <sup>6</sup> "Journal of proceedings of Committee in Managing Montauk, 1851-1870," Brooklyn Historical Society.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.
- <sup>9</sup> *Records of the Town of East Hampton, Volume III*, (Sag Harbor: John H. Hunt, 1889), p.88.
- <sup>10</sup> Referenced in *The East Hampton Star*, November 7, 1968.
- <sup>11</sup> *Records of the Town of East Hampton, Volume III*, (Sag Harbor: John H. Hunt, 1889), pp. 55,296.
- <sup>12</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1725-1772*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1926, p. 88.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101,102.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- <sup>23</sup> David Goddard, "On Montauk," in *Origins of the Past*, Tom Twomey, ed.(Bridgehampton: East End Press, 2012) pp.271-378 provides a careful analysis of the sale of Montauk and of Arthur Benson's negotiations with the Montaukett Indians at Indian Field.
- <sup>24</sup> *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 28, 1889.
- <sup>25</sup> *South Side Signal* (Babylon), July 2, 1881.
- <sup>26</sup> *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 9, 1895.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 21, 1895.
- <sup>28</sup> Governor Jonathan Trumbull to General Washington, July 6, 1776, American Archives, Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, 1774-1776.
- <sup>29</sup> Hannah Punderson to Hannah Mott, 1872, copy at the East Hampton Historical Society.
- <sup>30</sup> Horatio Gates Spafford, *A Gazetteer of the State of New York*. (Albany: H. C. Southwick, 1813).
- <sup>31</sup> Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, *Scenes in My Native Land*, (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1845) pp 44-46.
- <sup>33</sup> J. H. French, *Gazetter of the State of New York*, (Syracuse: R. Pearsall Smith, 1860).
- <sup>34</sup> Richard M. Bayles, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Suffolk County*, (privately printed, 1874), p. 415.
- <sup>35</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1772-1807*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1927, pp. 144-147.
- <sup>36</sup> Trustees Journal, 1772-1807, manuscript, Town Clerk, Town of East Hampton.
- <sup>37</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1826-1845*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1927, p. 219.
- <sup>38</sup> *The Signal*, (Babylon, N.Y.) July 21, 1883.
- <sup>39</sup> 1800 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com.
- <sup>40</sup> 1820 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com.
- <sup>41</sup> 1850 United States Federal Census, Schedule 4 – Productions of Agriculture, Ancestry.com.
- <sup>42</sup> 1860 United States Federal Census, Schedule 4 – Productions of Agriculture, Ancestry.com.

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- <sup>43</sup> 1880 United States Federal Census, Schedule 4 – Productions of Agriculture, Ancestry.com.
- <sup>44</sup> Mrs. George A. Osborne, Guest Registry, 1863-1872 (XCJ9) and Osborne’s Guest Register and Scrapbook, 1872-1896 (XCJ10), Long Island Collection, East Hampton Library.
- <sup>45</sup> *The Southside Signal*, (Babylon, N.Y.) July 21, 1883.
- <sup>46</sup> *The Corrector* (Sag Harbor), December 27, 1873.
- <sup>47</sup> Rattray, *History*, p. 277; *The East Hampton Star*, January 29, 1932; *The Corrector*, November 18, 1882.
- <sup>48</sup> Rattray, *Up and Down Main Street*, 82, 90.
- <sup>49</sup> *South Side Signal* (Babylon, N.Y.) February 20, 1886.
- <sup>50</sup> *Sag Harbor Express*, September 15, 1892.
- <sup>51</sup> *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 21, 1896 and October 23, 1896.
- <sup>52</sup> *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 16, 1898.
- <sup>53</sup> *The East Hampton Star*, March 9, 1939.
- <sup>54</sup> “Hither Hills, Montauk, L.I.”, Olmsted Brothers, Brookline, Ma., December 1904, map no. 496, filed December 12, 1905, Suffolk County Clerk’s Office.
- <sup>55</sup> *The East Hampton Star*, February 9, 1906.
- <sup>57</sup> Interview with Carolyn Kennedy Tyson, conducted in Amagansett by Philip Keyes and Christine Lyons, February 6, 1988. Tape of interview in collection of Montauk Historical Society.
- <sup>58</sup> Phyllis Kennedy to Town of East Hampton, June 25, 1968, Deed Liber 6370 page 568, Suffolk County Clerk’s Office.
- <sup>59</sup> *The East Hampton Star*, June 25, 1968.
- <sup>60</sup> *Journal of the Trustees for the Freeholders and Commonalty of East Hampton Town, 1807-1826*, H. D. Sleight, ed., Town of East Hampton, 1926, p. 84.



EAST ELEVATION



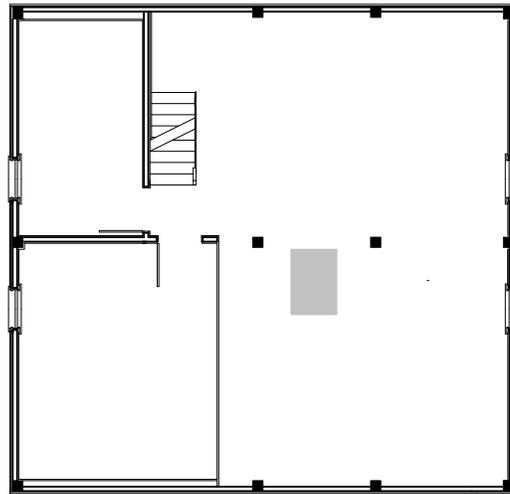
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

ILLUSTRATION 1.  
THE SECOND HOUSE IN 1879  
SCALE: 3/32" = 1' - 0"

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

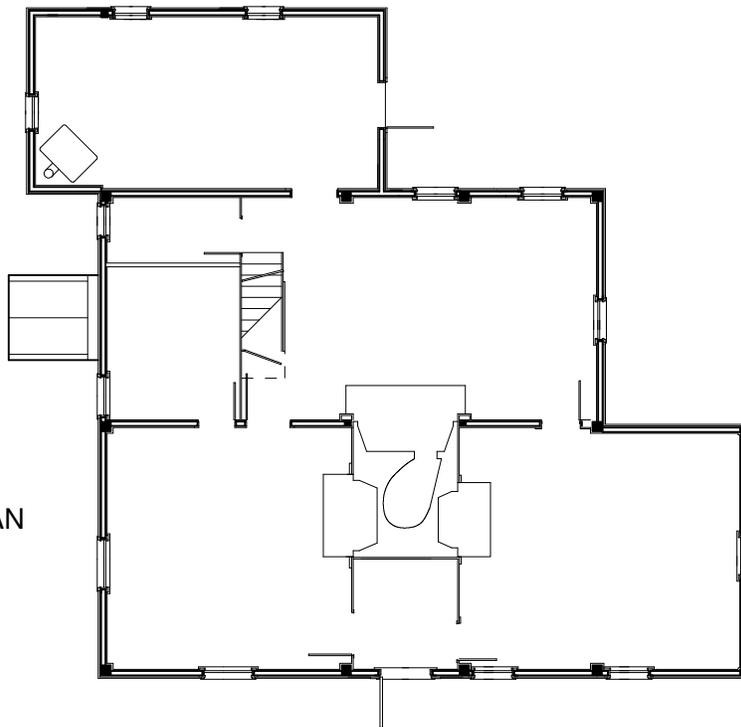


ILLUSTRATION 2.  
THE SECOND HOUSE IN 1879  
SCALE:  $\frac{3}{32}'' = 1' - 0''$



EAST ELEVATION



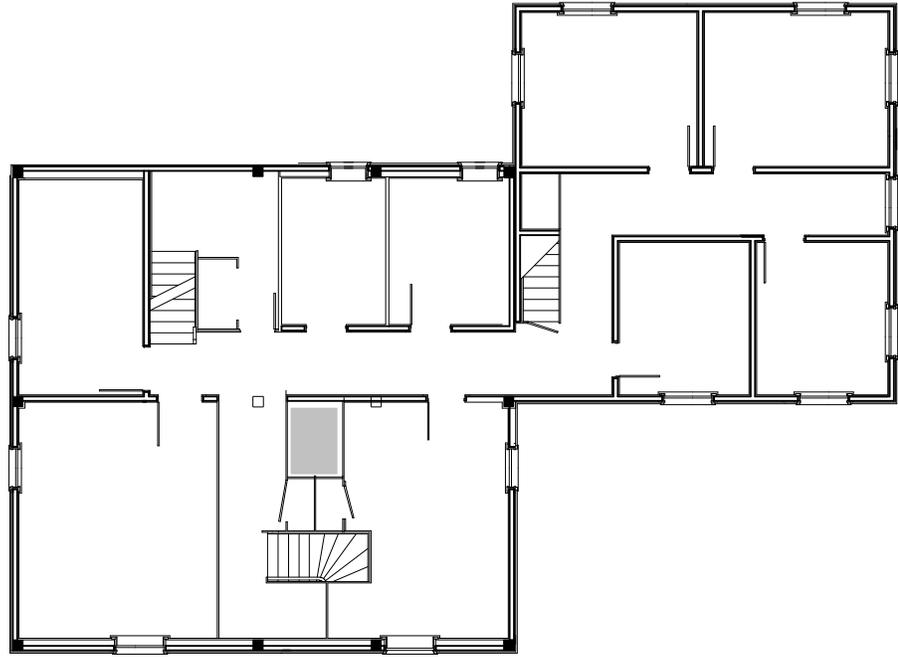
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

ILLUSTRATION 3.  
THE SECOND HOUSE FOLLOWING THE c. 1880 ALTERATIONS BY ARTHUR BENSON  
SCALE:  $\frac{3}{32}'' = 1' - 0''$

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



LAUNDRY

KITCHEN

DINING ROOM

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

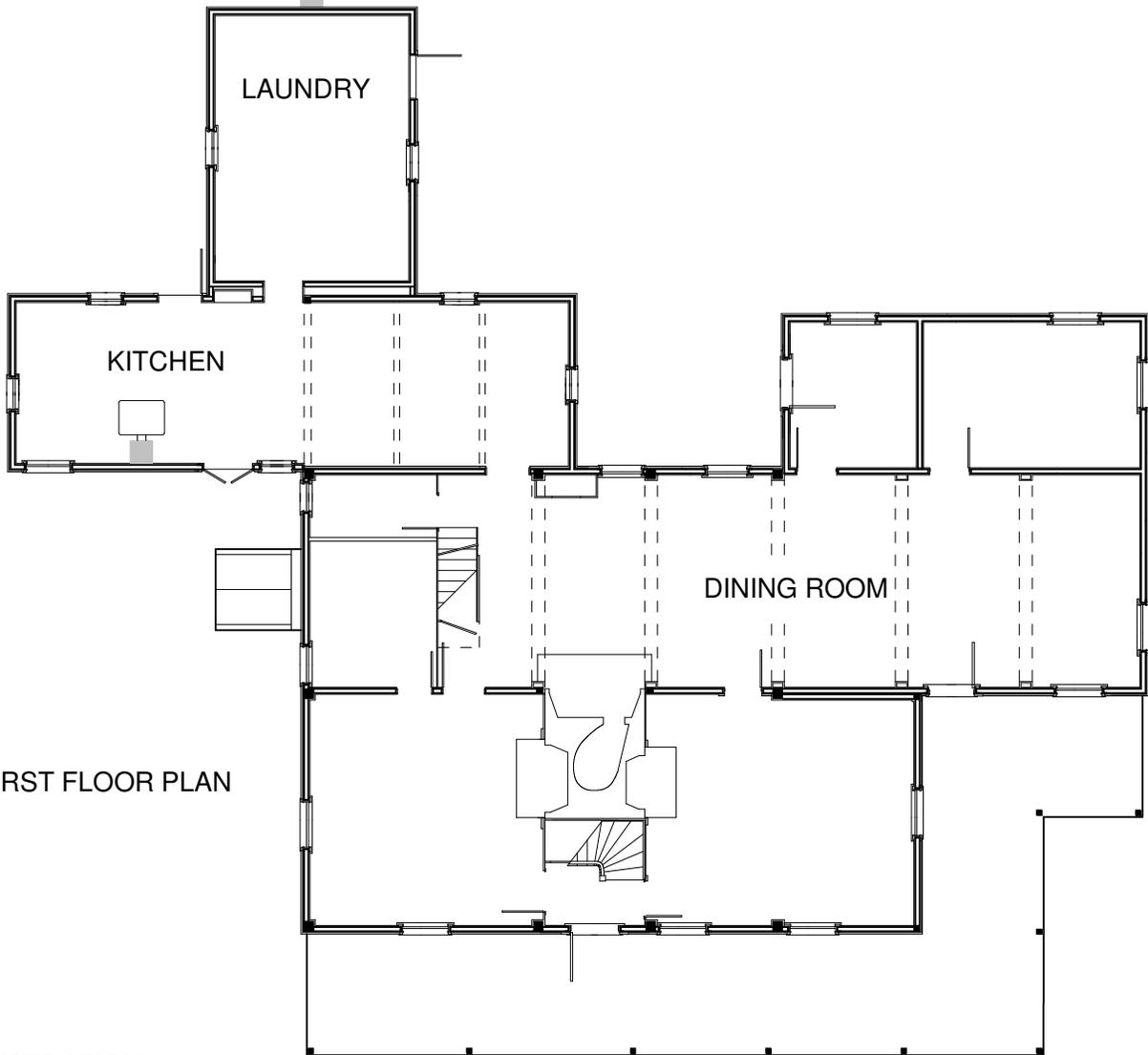


ILLUSTRATION 4.  
THE SECOND HOUSE FOLLOWING THE c. 1880 ALTERATIONS BY ARTHUR BENSON  
SCALE: 3/32" = 1' - 0"



EAST ELEVATION



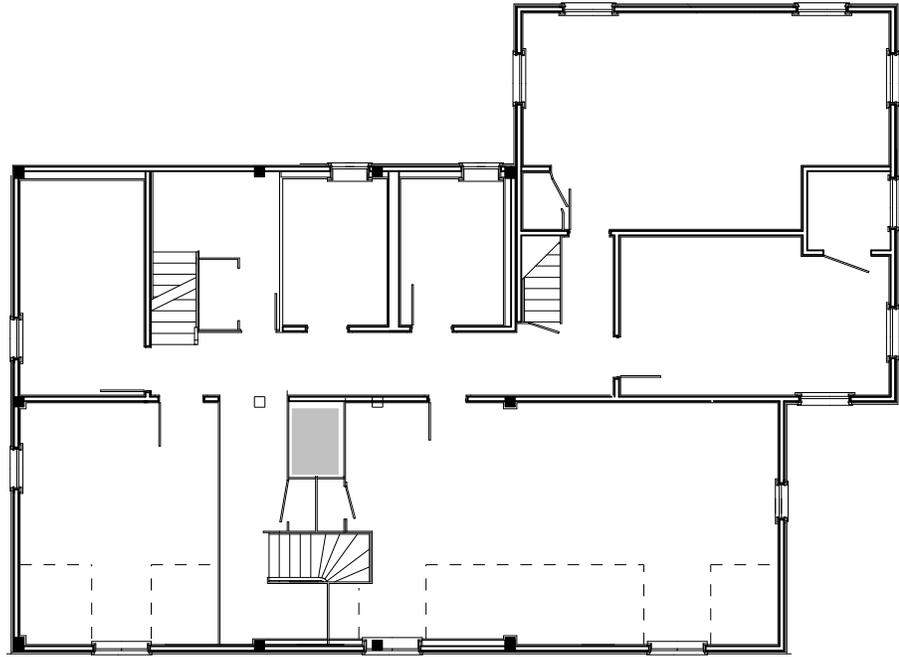
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

ILLUSTRATION 5.  
THE SECOND HOUSE FOLLOWING THE 1912 ALTERATIONS BY DAVID E. KENNEDY  
SCALE:  $\frac{3}{32}'' = 1' - 0''$

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

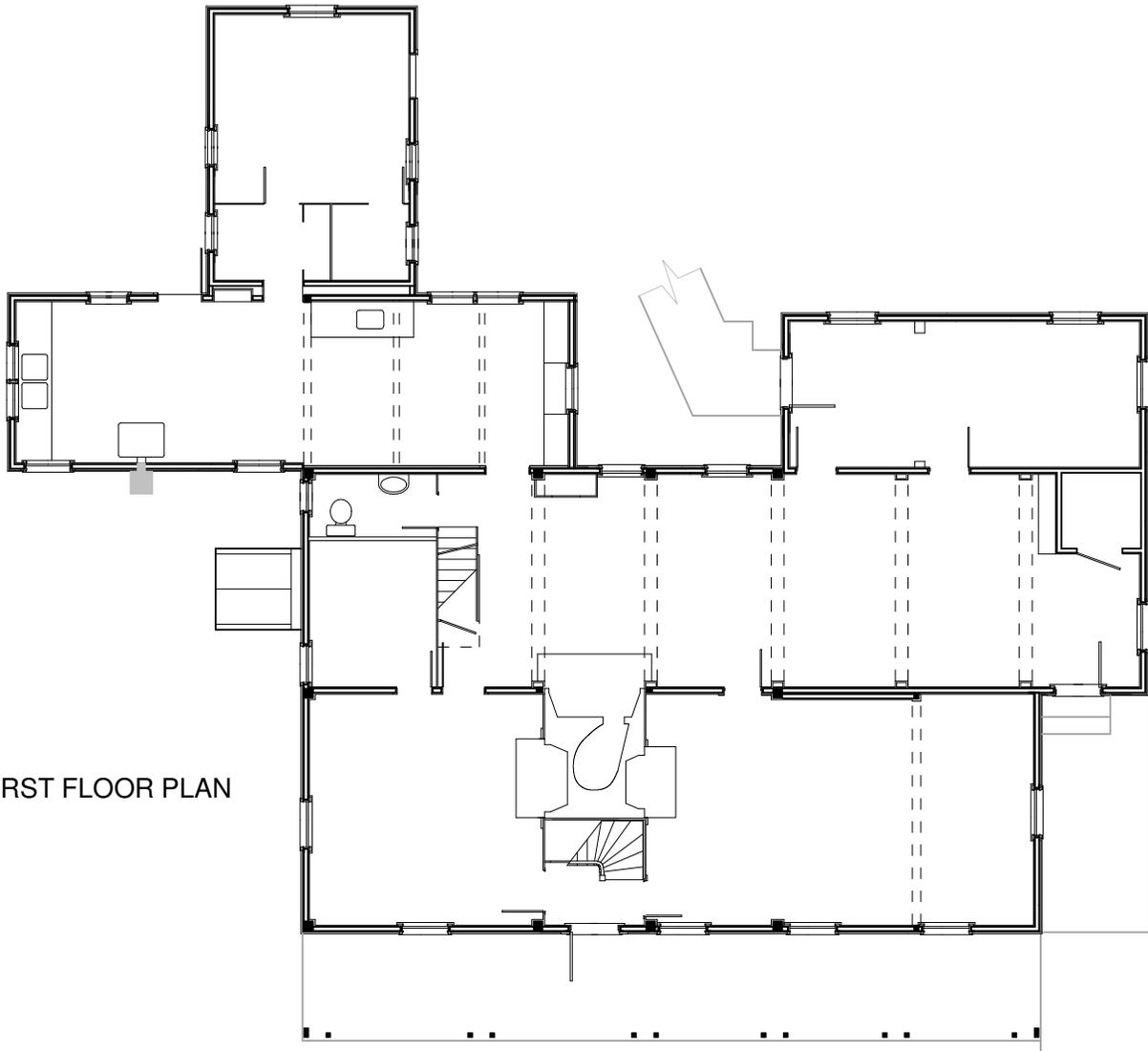


ILLUSTRATION 6.  
THE SECOND HOUSE FOLLOWING THE 1912 ALTERATIONS BY DAVID E. KENNEDY  
SCALE: 3/32" = 1' - 0"



SOUTH ELEVATION IN 1879

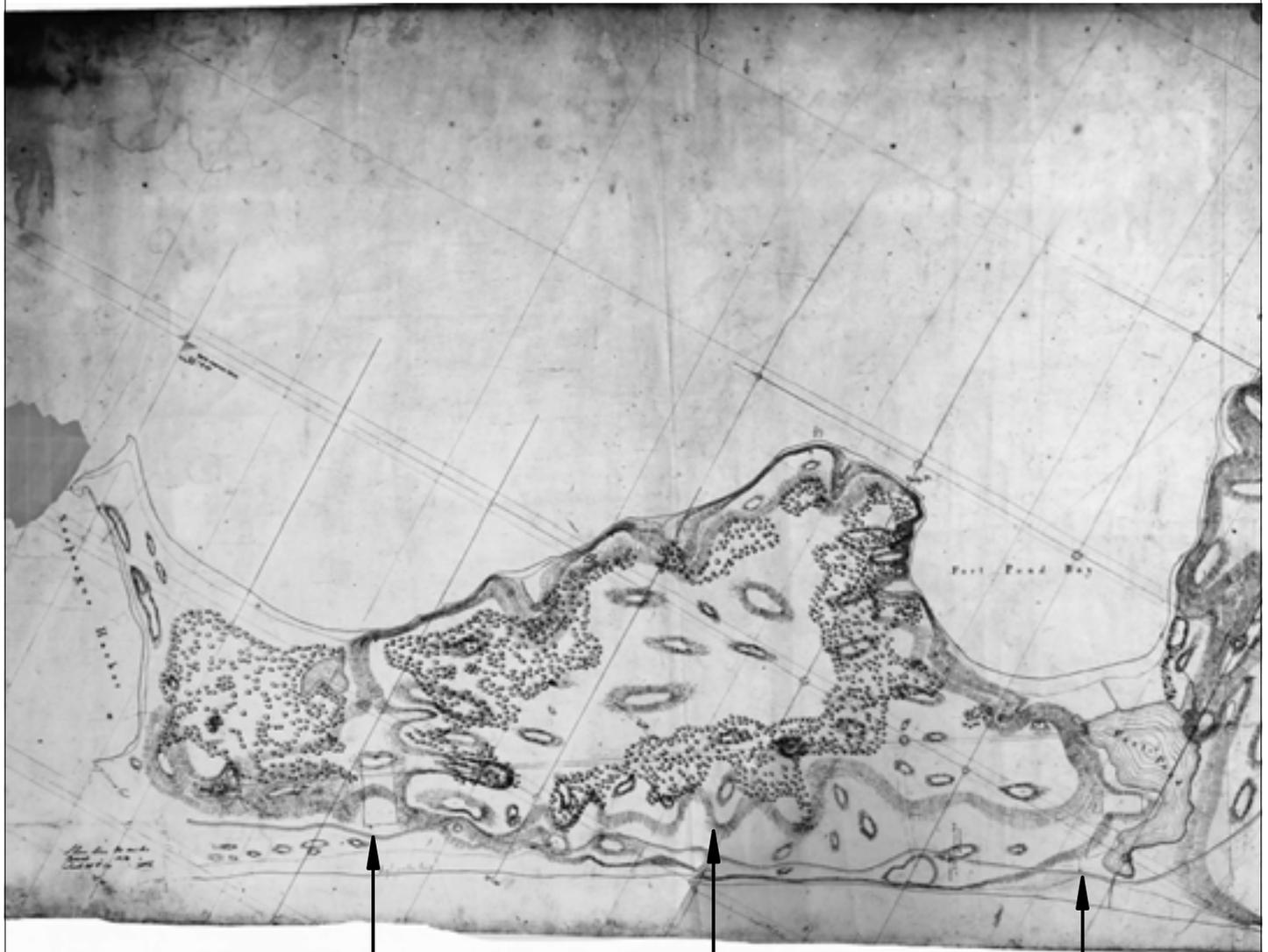


SOUTH ELEVATION FOLLOWING THE c. 1880 ALTERATIONS BY ARTHUR BENSON



SOUTH ELEVATION FOLLOWING THE 1912 ALTERATIONS BY DAVID E. KENNEDY

ILLUSTRATION 7. COMPARISON OF 1879, c. 1880 AND 1912 SOUTH ELEVATIONS



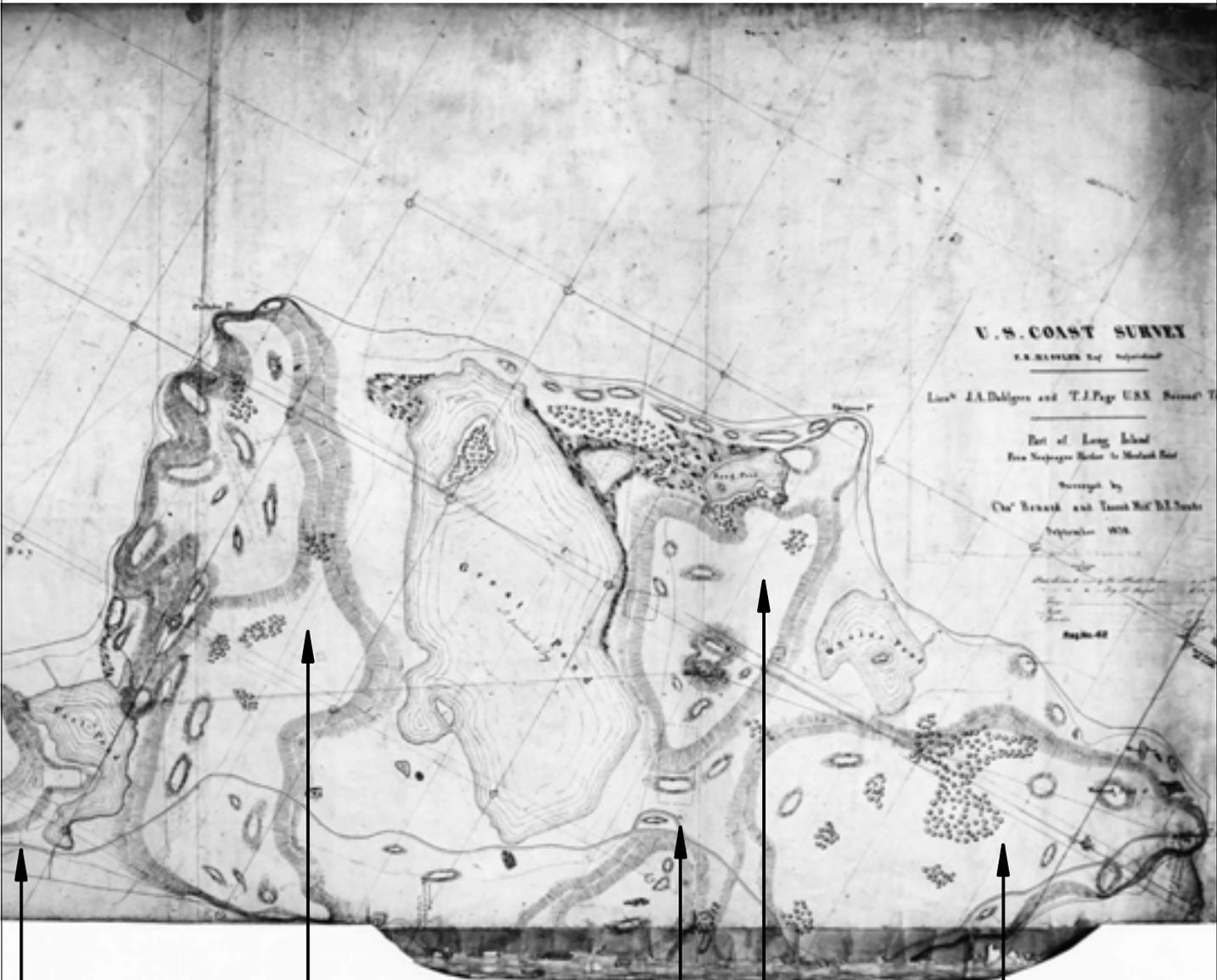
HOUSE AT HITHER END  
(THE FIRST HOUSE)

HITHER PLAIN

HOUSE AT FORT POND  
(THE SECOND HOUSE)

The Montauk pasture from the hither end to Fort Pond

Illustration 8.  
U. S. COAST SURVEY  
Detail of Part of Long Island from Napeague to Montauk Point, 1838  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



NORTH NECK

HOUSE AT FURTHER END  
(THE THIRD HOUSE)

INDIAN FIELD

POINT FIELD

HOUSE AT FORT POND  
(THE SECOND HOUSE)

The Montauk pasture from Fort Pond to Point Field

Illustration 9.  
 U. S. COAST SURVEY  
 Detail of Part of Long Island from Napeague to Montauk Point, 1838  
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



Illustration 10. Gate to the Montauk pasture. The First House is in the distance to the right of the roadway. William Wallace Tooker, October 1887. Photo: East Hampton Library.



Illustration 11. Looking from the Hither Plain sheep pasture west toward the First House in the distance. William Wallace Tooker, c. 1887. Photo: East Hampton Library.



Illustration 12. "Montauk Ponds, Long Island, 1880," etching (reversed) by Thomas Moran. Point Field with cattle at Money Pond and the lighthouse at the far right. Courtesy of Wallace Gallery.



Illustration 13. Cattle grazing in Point Field, c. 1880. Photo: East Hampton Historical Society.

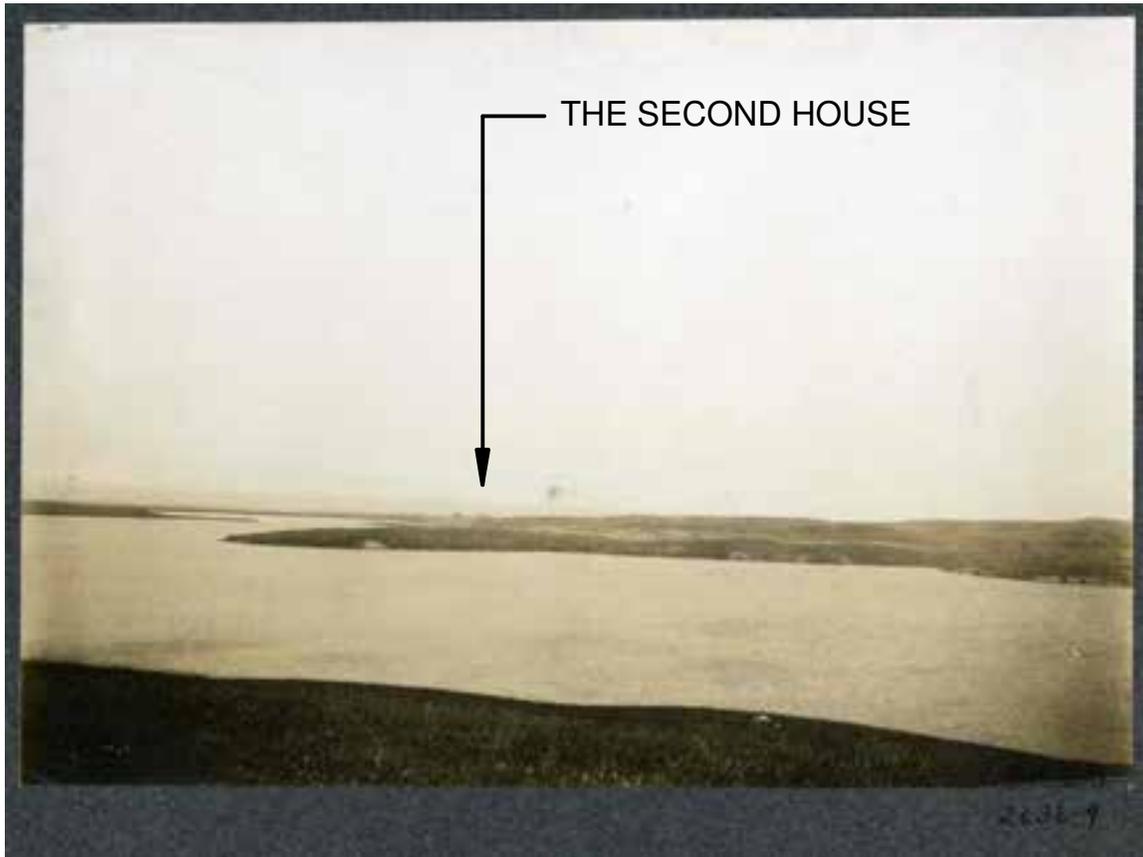


Illustration 14. Looking across Fort Pond from the north toward the Second House, 1904. Photo: Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, Job # 2636, Hither Hills, Montauk, N. Y., National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.



Illustration 15. Illustration of Osborne's (the Second House) from "Montauk Point, Long Island," in Harper's New Monthly Magazine, September, 1871.



Illustration 16. View of the Second House from the west, c. 1875.  
Photo: Montauk Historical Society.



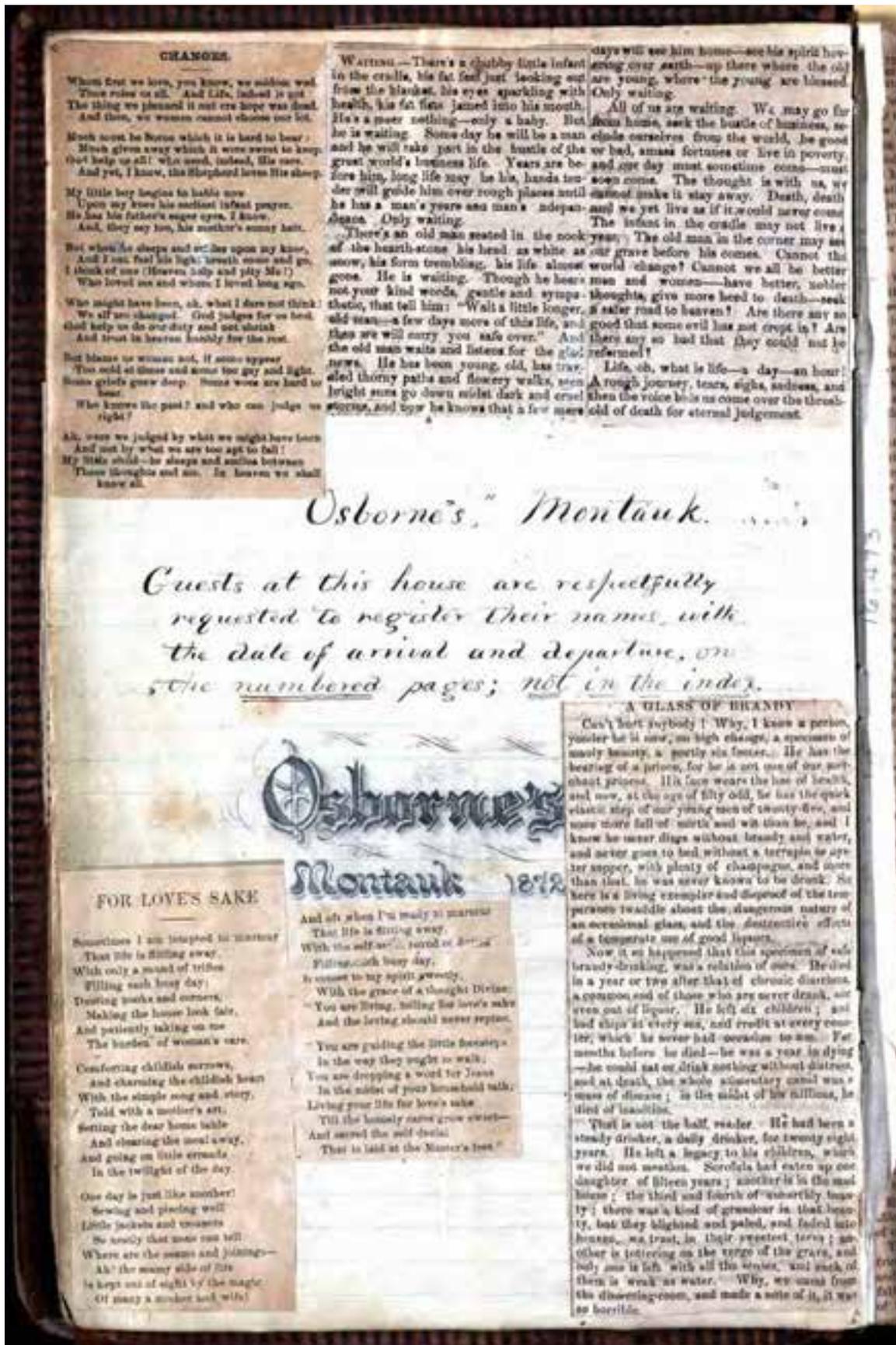
Illustration 17. View of the Second House from the south, c. 1870.  
Photo: East Hampton Historical Society.



Illustration 18. View of the Second House from the southeast showing the c. 1880 east addition and porch, c. 1887. "Mrs. G. S. Conklin" written on back. Photo: East Hampton Historical Society.



Illustration 19. View of the Third House from the southwest showing the c. 1880 west addition and porch having the same characteristics as the addition and porch at the Second House, 1898. Photo: "Gen. Young's Headquarters at Montauk Point," Detroit Photographic Co., National Archives.



**CHANCES.**

When first we love, you know, we seldom wed  
 These rules on all. And life, indeed is not  
 The thing we pleased it not ere hope was dead.  
 And then, we women cannot choose our lot.

Much sorer be borne which it is hard to bear;  
 Much given away which it were sweet to keep;  
 Not help us all! Who need, indeed, His care.  
 And yet, I know, the Shepherd loves His sheep.

My little boy begins to babble now  
 Upon my knee his sweetest infant prayer.  
 He has his father's eager eyes, I know.  
 And, they say too, his mother's sunny hair.

But when he sleeps and settles upon my knee,  
 And I see that his light breath comes and goes,  
 I think of one (Howson baby and pty Me?)  
 Who loved me and whom I loved long ago.

Who might have been, oh, what I dare not think!  
 We all are changed. God judges for us best,  
 And that help us do our duty and not shrink  
 And trust in heaven, loonly for the rest.

But blame no woman not, if some appear  
 Too cold at times and some too gay and light,  
 Some griefs grow deep. Some woes are hard to  
 bear.

Who knows the past? and who can judge us  
 right?

Ah, were we judged by what we might have been  
 And not by what we are too apt to fall?  
 My little child—he sleeps and smiles between  
 These thoughts and me. In heaven we shall  
 know all.

**WAITING.**—There's a chubby little infant  
 in the cradle, his fat feet just looking out  
 from the blanket, his eyes sparkling with  
 health, his fat fists jammed into his mouth.  
 He's a peer nothing—only a baby. But  
 he is waiting. Some day he will be a man  
 and he will take part in the hustle of the  
 great world's business life. Years are be-  
 fore him, long life may be his, hands ten-  
 der will guide him over rough places until  
 he has a man's years and man's indepen-  
 dence. Only waiting.

There's an old man seated in the nook  
 of the hearth-stone, his head as white as  
 snow, his form trembling, his life almost  
 gone. He is waiting. Though he hears men  
 and women—have better, nobler  
 not your kind words, gentle and sympa-  
 thetic, that tell him: "Wait a little longer,  
 a safer road to heaven? Are there any so  
 good that some evil has not crept in? Are  
 there any so bad that they could not be  
 reformed?" And there any so bad that they could not be  
 reformed?

Life, oh, what is life—a day—an hour!  
 A rough journey, tears, sighs, sadness, and  
 when the voice bids us come over the thresh-  
 stone, and *top* he knows that a few more  
 old of death for eternal judgement.

days will see him home—see his spirit hover-  
 ing over earth—up there where the old  
 are young, where the young are blessed.  
 Only waiting.

All of us are waiting. We may go for  
 from home, seek the bustle of business, ac-  
 cipe ourselves from the world, be good  
 or bad, amass fortunes or live in poverty,  
 and one day must sometime come—must  
 soon come. The thought is with us, we  
 cannot make it stay away. Death, death  
 and we yet live as if it would never come.  
 The infant in the cradle may not live a  
 year. The old man in the corner may see  
 our grave before his comes. Cannot this  
 world change? Cannot we all be better  
 world change? Cannot we all be better  
 thoughts, give more heed to death—seek  
 a safer road to heaven? Are there any so  
 good that some evil has not crept in? Are  
 there any so bad that they could not be  
 reformed?

Life, oh, what is life—a day—an hour!  
 A rough journey, tears, sighs, sadness, and  
 when the voice bids us come over the thresh-  
 stone, and *top* he knows that a few more  
 old of death for eternal judgement.

*Osborne's, Montauk.*

*Guests at this house are respectfully  
 requested to register their names with  
 the date of arrival and departure, on  
 the numbered pages; not in the index.*

**Osborne's  
 Montauk 1872**

**FOR LOVE'S SAKE**

Sometimes I am tempted to murmur  
 That life is flitting away,  
 With only a sound of trifles  
 Filling each busy day;  
 Trusting words and corners,  
 Making the house look fair,  
 And patiently taking on me  
 The burden of woman's care.

Comforting childish sorrows,  
 and charing the childish heart  
 With the simple song and story,  
 Told with a mother's art,  
 Setting the dear home table  
 And clearing the meal away,  
 and going on little errands  
 In the twilight of the day.

One day is just like another!  
 Sewing and piecing will  
 Little jockels and trowsers  
 So needy that none can tell  
 Where are the seams and joinings—  
 Ah! the money side of life  
 is kept out of sight by the magic  
 Of many a pocket hole with

And oh, when I'm ready to murmur  
 That life is flitting away,  
 With the self as the word of the Lord  
 Filling each busy day,  
 It comes to my spirit proudly,  
 With the grace of a thought Divine:  
 "You are strong, telling for love's sake  
 And the loving should never repent.

"You are guiding the little ones—  
 in the way they ought to walk,  
 You are dropping a word for Jesus  
 In the midst of your household talk;  
 Living your life for love's sake  
 Till the heavenly name grow sweet—  
 And saved the self divine  
 That is laid at the Master's feet."

**A GLASS OF BRANDY**  
 Can't beat anybody! Why, I know a person,  
 Youder he is now, on high change, a specimen of  
 manly beauty, a portly six footer. He has the  
 bearing of a prince, for he is not one of our port-  
 lant princes. His face wears the line of health,  
 and now, at the age of fifty odd, he has the quick  
 elastic step of our young men of twenty-five, and  
 more more full of mirth and wit than he, and  
 I know he never dips without brandy and water,  
 and never goes to bed without a terrapin or oys-  
 ter supper, with plenty of champagne, and more  
 than that, he was never known to be drunk. He  
 here is a living example and deposit of the tem-  
 perate twaddle about the dangerous nature of  
 an occasional glass, and the detestable effects  
 of a temperate use of good liquor.

Now, it so happened that this specimen of safe  
 brandy-drinking, was a relation of ours. He died  
 in a year or two after that of chronic diarrhea,  
 a common end of those who are never drunk, or  
 even out of liquor. He left six children; and  
 had ships at every port, and credit at every coun-  
 ter, which he never had occasion to use. For  
 months before he died—he was a year in dying  
 —he could not eat or drink nothing without distress,  
 and at death, the whole alimentary canal was a  
 mass of disease; in the night of his illness, he  
 died of inanition.

That is not the half, reader. He had been a  
 steady drinker, a daily drinker, for twenty eight  
 years. He left a legacy to his children, which  
 we did not mention. Scrofula had eaten up one  
 daughter, of fifteen years; another is in the mad  
 house; the third and fourth of unsightly beau-  
 ty; there was a kind of greenness in that beau-  
 ty, but they blighted and paled, and faded into  
 husks, we trust, in their vegetative term; an-  
 other is tottering on the verge of the grave, and  
 only one is left, with all the woe, and much of  
 them is weak as water. Why, we went from  
 the dining-room, and made a note of it, it was  
 so horrid.

Illustration 20. Inside front cover of the guest register kept at the Second House by Mrs. George A. Osborne. This register was later used as a scrapbook. East Hampton Library.



Illustration 21. View of the Second House from the southwest, c. 1890.  
Photo: Montauk Historical Society.



Illustration 22. Postcard view of the the Second House from  
the southwest, postmarked May 7, 1909.  
Collection of the Montauk Library.



Illustration 23. View of the Second House from the southeast with the family of David E. Kennedy in residence, 1909. Photo: Montauk Historical Society.



Illustration 24. View of the Second House and barns from the south, 1909. The structures around the barn came down a few years later. Photo: Montauk Historical Society.



Illustration 25. View of the Second House from the southeast showing the c. 1880 east addition and porch, c. 1887. Photo: East Hampton Historical Society.



Illustration 26. View of the Second House from the southeast, 2016.



Illustration 27. View of the Second House from the south taken when the family of David E. Kennedy was in residence, 1909. Photo: Montauk Historical Society.



Illustration 28. View of the Second House from the south, 2016.



Illustration 29. View of the Second House from the southwest, 1909. Collection of the Montauk Library.



Illustration 30. View of the Second House from the southwest, 2016.



Illustration 31. View of the cooking hearth and bake oven in the original kitchen at the Second House.



Illustration 32. Original kitchen looking west toward the original enclosed stairway.



Illustration 33. View of the original southwest parlor looking east toward the fireplace and doorway to the entrance hall.



Illustration 34. c. 1880 stairway in the entrance hall.



Illustration 35. View of the original southwest bedroom on the second floor with plaster and vertical-board partitions.



Illustration 36. View of the north wall within the hallway to the attic stairs showing a chimney-bay post, wall stud, board sheathing, plate and rafter.



Illustration 37. View of the 1809 barn from the northeast with the Second House in the background to the right. The garage doors date from the 1930s.



Illustration 38. View of the barn from the southwest. The overgrown privet hedge cuts off the view to Fort Pond.



Illustration 39. View of the barn interior showing original framing of the wagon bay posts and girts, the 1930s concrete floor and 1930s floor above.



Illustration 40. View of the barn interior showing a 2 x 8 scab reinforcing a wagon bay girt where a post was sawn off.



Illustration 41. View of the barn interior showing the sawn-off end of a wagon bay girt that is now hung from the rafters.



Illustration 42. View of the barn interior showing braces and scabs reinforcing the timber frame.