

September 2012

## 1850s Landscape

Miscellaneous notes taken from looking over the 1850 Whiting map

### Roads

1850 Coastal and Geodetic Survey Map

#### I. Major through roads.

- (1) Edgartown to West Tisbury – cross plain. With a few connectors to south shore – not many down to the necks, only to the head of the coves where houses and cultivated fields were. Exceptions: Quansoo, Oyster, Watcha - southwest and southeast. Jobs Neck, Katama - southwest.  
Longest shot – Dyke to Lambert's Cove.

#### II. Major arteries – Katama; Herring Creek and SE; East Chop and Eastville, Vineyard Haven; Pohogonot; New Lane/Scrubby Neck; Quansoo.

- (1) Daniel Fisher Road – Why separate road? Not direct. Accurate. No even direct to the ponds and mills. Edgartown-West Tisbury shouldn't have lots of gates? Freight road, not multiple use?

(2) Edgartown to Head of Lagoon

(3) West Tisbury to Holmes Hole Road

#### III. Short spurs to points – Menemsha both sides, Cape Higgon, Mink Meadow, Rhoda Pond, Trapp Pond, Sengekontacket Pond.

#### IV. Other Patterns

- (1) Chilmark – West Tisbury – from Priester's Pond Corner to Chilmark modern center. Network of large, open polygons that include roads that no longer exist (road from Agricultural Society across Woods to North Road; road from Agricultural Society square, northwest corner to Middle Road; Kings Highway) and polygons that aren't closed.

(2) Aquinnah – network of small largely closed polygons. All interior.

(3) Chappaquiddick – Main road to dike, Cross Road, Littlefield Road.

### Fences

Create polygons of different areas according to patterns.

Aquinnah – unique; small, rather haphazard combination of enclosed and open; great assortment – lines; many small, some intertwined and connected two or three large

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polygons – central rectangle; large open to Menemsha Pond; large open to Squib Pond; smaller open to southwest coast and Gay Head Cliffs. Similar to hydrography as spreading to the coast. Also confined to west-northwest to east-southeast axis – none to the north shore – broad beach and wetland and dunes/Moshup Trail/south exposed coast.

Chilmark – Rural, pastoral, agrarian – small to very large closed to open interconnected fences. Many small enclosed concentrated separated by larger polygons. Independent of political boundary – cross Chilmark/West Tisbury boundary and similar in C, WT, E. Chappy; independent of fence type and geomorphology as similar in C/WT and E/Chappy. Within region – broad orientation.

Chappaquiddick – WNW-ESE, Katama – NW-SE, NWT – NW-SE, NC – NW-SE, SC – more mix NW-SE.

Agrarian – fairly dense, open to closed, small rectangular outskirts of town, coastal cultivated fields. Multiple orientations – overall and within. Squib – dense and variable, flowing from northwest to east; Chilmark Pond – mixed orientation on pond; Indian Hill; Merry Farm ?; Head of Lagoon, East Chop; East Center - S; King point.

Village Center – West Tisbury – small, open, reflect proprietors, axis north-south, east-west, northeast-southwest of roads.

Vineyard Haven – coastal and harbor; no agriculture use; E oriented to water and SW-NE doesn't wrap around the harbor; wharf area free.

Other

Neck fences – Wasque, North Neck, SE Katama, east side, Edgartown Great Pond (multiple fences) East Chop, Felix Neck, South Shore-Jobs Neck, Paqua Pond, Long Point, much of Tisbury Great Pond, Black Point Pond.

Coastal division fences – straight down to the coast to break into a series of fields – stonewall beach to head of Chilmark Pond; much of northwest shore from Menemsha; Katama Bay both sides; Harbor side of East Chop.

Almost no fences along roads. Why not? Not indicated? Not present, but roads offer properties boundaries.

### **1850s Martha's Vineyard Landscape**

Further miscellaneous notes taken while examining the ca 1850 map

**South of Lagoon** – Tilled fields run along lowland with forest to N and S.

Ancient Paths run through woods – Stony Hill Path/Rd; Head of Pond Rd; Chicama Path to Little Pd Rd, which connects Duarte Pd and Little Pd.

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**Around Lagoon** – mix of pastures and woodlots

**Lambert's Cove Loop** – Chappaquonsett to James Pond – Hilly morainal landscape of extensive continuous forest broken by pastures with few tilled fields. Larger farms in S – Nip n' Tuck, Reeve; N – towards Makonnikey and towards Chappaquonsett. Few roads. Substantial topography and wetlands in interior. Ancient Ways – Red Coat Hill Rd, Beaten Path, Merry Farm Rd

**James Pond to Harlock Pond** – Cedar Tree Neck, Indian Hill, Etc.  
Mosaic landscape of pastures and woodlots interspersed. Few tilled fields shown. Largest woodland is just inland from Cedar Tree Neck – Daggett's Pond area of sanctuary.

Where is Middletown?

**North Tisbury to West Tisbury**

Outlying area is central plain woodland or expansive pastures with large woodlands at Quansoo to Kings Highway over to the Tiasquam and then centered on Tea Lane at the head of the Tiasquam – bounded to south by long stonewall. Along Mill stream wetlands and tilled fields in detailed pattern. Roaring Brook Valley is a continuation to N and W of the woodland.

**Prospect Hill to Chilmark Pond**

Other than scattered very small woodlots entire area is open pasture. Large pastures delimited by walls. Prospect Hill area – one large pasture as almost no walls.

**Aquinnah**

Scattered woodlands throughout center. Open from Squibnocket along beach and Moshup's Trail. Quitsa Hills clear and pastureland. Very few small fields or tilled land (lack of ability to recognize recognize Indian farming or more communal approach of Native land tenure). Large fields on Squibnocket Ridge-north, Quitsa. Extensive small wetlands. One SW-NE fence cutting across Squibnocket Beach.

**West Tisbury Center to Quansoo towards Chilmark**

Small tilled fields predominate in center of town, along Chilmark Road and in scattered locations around houses.

**Tisbury Great Pond to WT-E Road to Oyster Pond**

Small fields at tips of some points – Quansoo, Tyres (Tiah's) Cove, Deep Bottom Cove, Long Cove, Oyster Cove; Otherwise mostly large open fields on Necks. Small fields and some tillage around few scattered houses. On necks various woodlands

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– scattered trees, bounded rectangular woodland, isolated groves, strings of trees, continuation of larger expanse that covers great plain.

Appears to be field – cranberry bog – at top of Long Cove, N of path.

Forest extensions come down center of necks with bottoms as open. Bottoms don't have fences in them indicating broad open pasture, not fenced. What else in bottoms?

**Muddy Cove** – Nothing, until field at NW beyond WT-E Road.

**Tyre's (Tiah's)** – Nothing, runs up to Whiting Place; only continues beyond road in the Whiting field. Fence across base of neck to W

**Deep Bottom** – Wetland, which still exists and runs between houses extending up into horse field and pond. Topography including tributary shown extending up into the plain N of road but no real indication of open vegetation in the bottom itself.

Fences across base of necks to W

**Thumb Cove** – Area clear between it and Deep Bottom

**Middle Point Cove** – Fence across top extends to Thumb Cove. Short one at base of neck to W

**Long Cove** – Extensive wetland at head south of road and open field/cranberry bog open to north.

**Homers Pond** – Field off to E of bottom;

**Watcha Pond** – House and field with interesting patterns to investigate – road to E paralleling the pond with tilled field at head. Large open pastures towards upper third of the pond.