

**Description of the Town of Islip  
in Suffolk County  
January 11, 1798**



**Nathaniel Conklin,  
Supervisor Town of Islip**

Islip was one of the last Towns that was settled in the County of Suffolk; it was purchased of the native Indians by individual persons; who took separate Patents for the same: And on the 25th day of November 1710 by a Law of the Province; The Inhabitants of the District, and Precincts of Islip in the County of Suffolk, on the South side of Long Island; from the Westernmost limits of the land of Thomas Willet; to the Easternmost Part of the Lands of William Nicoll near Blue Point, were empowered and required annually to chuse among them, two Assessors, and one Collector to Assess and collect Taxes; and one Constable, and Supervisor to keep the peace, and to audit the County accounts. — And by a Law of the State passed 7th of March 1788. the Bounds of Islip were; Bounded South — only by the Atlantick Ocean, Westerly by Huntington, Northerly by — Smithtown and Winc Commack, and Easterly by the East Bounds of the Lands formerly William Nicolls near Blue Point. — And by a Law of the State passed 8th of March 1790 some part of the Bay and Beach within the limits of Islip, were declared to be a part of the Town of Brookhaven — The Settlements and improvements in this Town are mostly on the <sup>South</sup> part of it; as Nature has formed the South part of this Town very convenient for farms, and for keeping large Stocks of Cattle: As the lands and meadows are divided in farms or necks (as they are called) by Creeks and Brooks mostly about half a mile apart. — The creeks begin at the Bay and run Northerly ~~mostly~~ about half a mile then they become Brooks and extend Northward mostly from one to two miles in length — One Brook ~~on~~ the West side of this Town, and ~~which~~ which makes a part of the west line of this Town is about four miles in length and another, <sup>called</sup> Conquest, or Connecticut River with the Creek is about six miles in length — The main Country Road running through this Town, across the said Necks, is about a mile from the Bay and the houses and other buildings are mostly set on the North side of the said Road facing the Road, the Bay, and the Ocean; and as the Land is flat, and is mostly cleared on the South side of the said Road, it gives the farmer an agreeable prospect, as he may from a door or window of his house see nearly over all the improved part of his farm; together with a prospect of the Bay, and Ocean — and in the Summer season almost every day in the afternoon there is a cool

refreshing breeze from the Sea — The south end of the said farms and the cleared and improved upland of the several farms — And Northward of said road lies the woodlands of the several farms; which is mostly white, red, and black Oak; with some walnut, chestnut and Sassafras; and in the Swamps, maple and poplar; said woodlands extend back Northward from said road from one to two miles; until it comes to what is called the Brush and Pine Plain; this Plain extends not only through <sup>this</sup> town, but from the Westernmost limits of this County, to the place called the Corner place, about six miles west of the Town of Southampton; this ~~Plain~~ is supposed to be more than fifty miles in length, and upon a medium five or six miles wide; — It is supposed that within half a century this plain will be very useful and valuable — that when the rest of the Country is settled and the timber mostly cut off; as the pines propagate themselves, and as there are a number of valuable streams of water, on which Forges, or Iron works may be erected; adjoining the plain, from which they may be supplied with pine Coals; it is probable to the end of time Fires are burning over some part of this Plain every year which kills and prevents the growth of the Pines and other timber very much: On this plain there are many Deer, and Grouse a very delicious bird; Laws have been passed for the preservation of these birds and the Deer; It is supposed that about four fifths of the land in this Town is of the above described — Brush and pine Plains. — There are some Settlements on the North side of this Town — mostly near the head of Hesseguag river, a place called by the native Indians Hoppauger, which in their language is pleasant Spring and near a Pond called Rockonkoma — which in the Indian language is Sand Pond — This Pond is near three miles in circumference with a Sandy Shore around it; this Pond has been found by observation to rise gradually for several years, until arrived to a certain height, and then to fall more rapidly to its lowest bed, and thus it is continually ebbing and flowing; The cause of this curious phenomenon has never been investigated; about two miles to the Southward of this Pond is the beginning or head of the stream or river Connecticut above mentioned — there is a small stream of water that runs into this Pond; and it is supposed by some that there is some passage under ground (as the land



is something high around this Pond) by which the water passes from this pond, to the head of said river; and that from some cause the passage gets obstructed, until the water rising to a certain height, does force the passage open again; there has been many fish caught in this Pond, which are called by some yellow perch. The Bay on the south part of this Town is supposed to be between three and four miles wide; and the Beach which separates it from the Atlantic Ocean is about eighty rods wide; through this Beach, nearly opposite the middle of this Town is a large Gut or Inlet, which has been commonly called the great Gut, and Nicolls Gut, and the five Island Inlet. In the late war, in the year 1776 there were three American Privateers lay within this Inlet, and went out, as opportunity offered; and captured a number of British Vessels, and brought <sup>them</sup> through this Inlet into the Bay; among which was a Transport Ship of about three hundred Tons burthen. In this Bay with in the limits of this Town are a number of Islands of Sandy land and marsh, and Sedge meadow. The largest of which are the Five Islands, Exp Tree Island, and Oak Island. In this Bay and within the limits of this Town, are some Oysters, plenty of Clams; and in the season for them plenty of wild Geese, Brant, and Ducks, of almost every kind, and Snipes also Fish of various kinds, the most esteemed of which is the Sheep head and many of them are sent to the New York Market; and many Ells are also in the winter time sent to said market. Clams also are carried by water to New York and up the North River, and to the State of Connecticut. And in some of the mill ponds and brooks in this Town are fine Trout, there are also in this Town many partridges, and quails, and some wood Cocks, and Plover, There are also some red, and gray Foxes, Raccoons wood Chucks, Rabbits, Skunks, and Squirrels, The grey and mouse kind. For the purpose of catching Trout, and shooting the grouse and other Birds; induces, a number of Gentlemen from New York, to visit this Town every year. The Soil in this Town is mostly light and sandy and free from Stones; but calculated for raising grain especially Indian Corn; the main dependance of the farmers in this Town is on their Stocks of Cattle; which the large Tracts of Salt, and Sedge meadows enable them to keep; a considerable part of the Indian Corn raised in this Town is made up, in fattening Cattle, Sheep, Hogs, and poultry, for New York market. The labour done on the several farms, with Teams, is mostly

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an produce of Indian Corn is about -

twenty five bushels to an Acre; and of Wheat and Rye on a medium  
about eight or ten bushels to an Acre; and of Oats, from fifteen to twenty  
bushels to an Acre — Oats and flax seed, is commonly sowed from  
the first to the tenth of April, and is fit to cut and pull between the ten-  
-tenth and twenty fifth of July; Corn is commonly planted from the first to  
the tenth of May, and is fit to gather from the twentieth to the last of Octo-  
-ber. — Wheat and Rye commonly sowed the last of August and first part  
of September, and fit to cut from the fifteenth to the twentieth of July —  
Peach Trees, and Cherry Trees in blossom from the first to tenth of May. — and Ap-  
-ple Trees from the tenth to the twentieth of May — There are in this about  
one hundred and twenty dwelling houses twenty five of which <sup>Indians</sup> Indians  
musters and free Negroes live in — Of Religious denominations in this  
Town there are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and Quakers  
upon making some calculations it is supposed, that the Presbyterians are  
more in number, than of all the other denominations put together —  
There is but one house in this Town built for <sup>and that, of small size</sup> public worship, and that stands  
on the North side of the South County Road, and belongs to the Episcopalians, but  
they have no settled minister, nor stated preaching in it — The Presbyterians  
on the north part of this Town, are united with the Church and Congrega-  
-tion of Smith Town, and those on the Southwest part are united  
with the Church and Congregation of the South part of Huntington, and are styled  
Smith Town, and the other half in the main. —  
Those on the Southeast part of this Town are united with the Presbyte-  
-rians of the Southwest part of Brookhaven, and attend public worship  
at a meeting house standing on the north side of the South County Road  
within the limits of Brookhaven; but they have no settled minister —  
The Methodists, meet and attend public worship at a meeting house  
standing near the northwest corner of the Patent of Winne Comstock —  
just within the limits of Huntington — And the Quakers meet for public  
worship at a Friends house, at a place called half hallow hills within the  
limits of Huntington — There are five small houses built for school houses  
as in this Town, but the School masters, are commonly hired by the  
quarter of the year, and Schools kept in either of them the whole of the year  
from the first of March 1796 to first of March 1797 there were twelve masters had

been employed in making  
of the day instructed were eleven thousand eight hundred and fourteen  
There are two grist mills, and six Sawmills in this Town —  
At present there is not any poor person that is supported at the  
expense of this Town; and for several years past the money  
received for granting permit to retail Spiritual Liquors  
has been sufficient to Support the Poor of this Town — There  
are five Taverns in this Town, and all on the South Country Road  
There is but one Prison in this Town; but this Town is so heartily  
a part of the Country that there is but little practice for a Pri-  
son —

Whereas we have been informed that the Surveyors of the Town of  
Huntington have taken on the Chart of the Town of Huntington some  
parts of this Town — the parts <sup>that</sup> we are informed they have taken on  
their Chart as being part of their Town: is about four miles Square of  
the Northwest corner of this Town — and the other part is about four  
miles Square of the Southwest corner of this Town: it being part of  
the Bay, Beach and Islands: that by a Law of this State <sup>above men-</sup>  
tioned is made a part of this Town — But to give the Surveyor gene-  
ral full Satisfaction in this matter that he may see that they have  
no Right to any part of this Town we have thought it best to mention  
the bounds of their three Patents, which they have for said Town —  
Bounds of Huntington first Patent Dated 30th of November 1686 and  
Recorded Lib. Patents No. 1 page 99 &c —

" From a certain River on the West commonly called by the Indians by  
the name of Nackoquatch and by the English Cold Spring, to stretch  
Eastward to Hesaquagh River, on the North to be bounded on the  
South running <sup>between</sup> Long Island and the Maine, on the South  
by the Sea, including there nine several necks of meadow <sup>ground</sup>  
all which tracts of Land together with the said Necks thereunto  
belonging within the bounds and limits aforesaid, and also any plan-  
tation thereupon are to belong to the said Town of Huntington "

Huntington second Patent we believe was Dated 1686 it recites the  
first Patent; and the bounds are exactly the same with it, and saves  
to his majesties use the unpurchased Tracts, and Necks, that lie to  
the Southward, and the Land to the Northward of the same —



As the two mentioned Patents had no lines mentioned, them, and the said Patents covered or took in but nine Necks; on the fifth day of October 1694 The people of Huntington took out a third Patent which is called their second Confirmation Patent - in which they pray that the Bounds of their Town may not be as mentioned in their former Patents but as hereafter expressed to wit "Bounded on the West by a River called and known by the name of Cold Spring, a line running South from the head of the said Cold Spring to the South Sea and on the North by the Sound that runs between our said Island of Napaun and the main Continent; and on the East by a line running from the West side of a Pond called and known by the name of Fresh Pond, to the West side of Whitmans Dale or hollow; and from thence to a River on the South side of our said Island of Napaun, on the East side of a Neck called Sumpawms; and from the said River running South to the said South Sea" by this last mentioned Patent, the Neck Sumpawms above mentioned was confirmed to Huntington, which makes their tenth Neck of Land and meadow.

From what is above written we suppose it will clearly appear that we have been the line between Huntington and Ipswich as the Law above mentioned has bounded this Town, and also agreeable to the Patent line of Huntington.

Ipswich in the County of Suffolk  
January the 11<sup>th</sup> 1798.

Wm. L. Conklyn, Esq. Sheriff  
Suffolk County

Descriptive of  
Town of Ipswich  
Suffolk County  
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Islip<sup>i</sup> was one of the last Towns that was settled in the county of Suffolk it was purchased of the native Indians by individual persons; who took separate patents for the same and on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of November A.D. 1710<sup>ii</sup> by a law of the Province; the inhabitants of the districts, and Precincts of Islip in the County of Suffolk, on the Southside of Long Island; from the westernmost limits of the land of Thomas Willets; to the easternmost part of the Lands of William Nicoll near Blue Point, were empowered and required annually to have among them, two assessors, and one collector to assess and collect taxes, and one Constable, and Supervisor to keep the peace, and to audit the County accounts. And by a law of the state passed 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1788. The bounds of Islip were, Bounded South only by the Atlantic Ocean, westerly by Huntington, northerly by Smithtown and Winnie Commack<sup>iii</sup>, and Easterly by the East Bounds of the lands formerly William Nicolls near Blue Point. And by a law of the State passed 8<sup>th</sup> of March 1790 Some part of the Bay and Beach within the limits of Islip, were declared to be a part of the town of Brookhaven.<sup>iv</sup> The Settlements and improvements in this town are mostly on the South part of it, as nature has formed the South part of this Town very convenient for farms, and for keeping large Stocks of Cattle; as the lands and meadows are divided in farms or necks (as they are called) by Creeks and Brooks mostly about half of a mile apart.<sup>v</sup> The Creeks begin at the bay and run northerly about half a mile then they become brooks and extend northward mostly from one to two miles in length. One brook on the West side of this Town, and which makes apart of the west line of this Town is about four miles in length<sup>vi</sup> and another called Consequint, or Connecticut River with the creek is about six miles in length.<sup>vii</sup> The main County Road running through this Town, Across the said Necks, is about a mile from the Bay and the houses and other buildings are mostly set on the North side of the said road facing the Road, the Bay, and the Ocean; and as the land is flat, and is mostly cleared on the Southside of the said Road. It gives the farmer an agreeable prospect, as he may from a door or window of his house see nearly over all the improved part of his farm; together with a prospect of the bay, and ocean and in the summer season almost every day in the afternoon there is a cool



refreshing breeze from the sea.<sup>viii</sup>

The south end of the said farms and necks adjoining the bay, and mostly salt, sedge, and black grass meadows; and between the meadows and the said county road, lies mostly the cleared and improved upland of the several farms.<sup>ix</sup> And Northward of said road lies the woodlands of the several farms; which is mostly white, red, and black oak; with some walnut, chestnut and sassafras; and in the Swamps; maple and Peparage [Pepperidge];<sup>x</sup> said woodlands extend back northward from said road from one to two miles; until it comes to what is called the Brush and Pine Plains; this plain extends not only through this Town, but from the Westernmost limits of this County, to the place called the Connue Place<sup>xi</sup>, about six miles West of the town of Southampton; this plain is supposed to be more than fifty miles in length, and upon a medium five or six miles wide, it is supposed that within half a century this plain will be very useful and valuable, that when the rest of the Country is Settled<sup>xii</sup> and the timber mostly cut off; as the pines propagate themselves, and as there are a number of valuable Steams of water, on which Forges or Iron Works may be erected adjoining the plains, from which they may be supplied with pine Coals, it is probable to the end of time-Fires are burning over some part of this Plain every year which kills and prevents the growth of the pines and other timber very much.<sup>xiii</sup> On this plain there are many Deer, and Growse [Grouse] a very delicious Bird; Laws have been placed for the Preservation of these Birds and the Deer<sup>xiv</sup>; It is supposed that about four fifths of the land in this Town is of the above described brush and pine Plains, There are some Settlements on the North side of this Town mostly near the head of Nesequag River<sup>xv</sup>, a place called by the native Indians Hoppauges, which in their language is pleasant Spring<sup>xvi</sup>, and near a pond called Rockonkama, which in the Indian language is Sand Pond. This pond is near three miles in circumference with a Sandy Shore around it, this pond has been found by observation to rise gradually for several years, until arrived to a certain height, and then to fall more rapidly to its lowest bed, and thus it is continually ebbing and flowing; the cause of this curious phenomenon has never been investigated; about two miles to the Southward of this Pond is the beginning or head of the Stream or River Connecticut<sup>xvii</sup> above mentioned-there is a small stream of water that runs into this Pond; and it is supposed by some that there is some passage underground (as the land

is something high around this Pond) by which the water passes from this pond, to the head of said River; and that from some cause the passage gets obstructed, until the water rising to a certain height, does force the passage open again;<sup>xviii</sup> there has been many fish caught in this Pond, which are called by some yellow Perch.<sup>xix</sup> The Bay on the south part of this town is supposed to be between three and four miles wide<sup>xx</sup>; and the Beach which separates it from the Atlantic Ocean is about eighty rods wide;<sup>xxi</sup> Through this Beach, nearly opposite the middle of this town is a large Gut or Inlet, which has been commonly called the great Gut, and Nicolls Gut, and the fire Island Inlet<sup>xxii</sup>-In the late war in the year 1776 there were three American privateers lay within this Inlet, and went out, as opportunity offered; and captured a number of British Vessels, and brought them through this Inlet into the Bay; among which was a Transport ship of about three hundred Tons burthen<sup>xxiii</sup>-In this Bay within the limits of this town are a number of islands of Sandy land and marsh, and Sedge meadows the largest of which are the Fire Islands, Cap-tree Island, and Oak Island<sup>xxiv</sup>-In this bay and within the limits of this Town<sup>xxv</sup>, are some Oysters, plenty of Clams; and in the season for them plenty of wild Geese, Brant, and Ducks, of almost every kind, and Snipes also Fish of various kinds, the most esteemed of which is the Sheepshead<sup>xxvi</sup> and many of them are sent to the New York market, and many Elles [eels] are also in the winter time sent to said market-Clams also are carried by water to New York and up the North River, and to the State of Connecticut<sup>xxvii</sup> and in some millponds and Brooks in this town are fine Trout, those are also in this town many patriages [partridges], and quails, and some woodcocks, and Plover, There are also some red and gray Foxes, Raccoons Wood Chucks, Rabits [Rabbits], Skunks and Squirrels, of the grey and mouse kind<sup>xxviii</sup>. For the purpose of ketching [catching] trout, and Shooting the growse and other birds; induces, a number of gentlemen from New York, to visit this Town every year<sup>xxix</sup>. The soil in this Town is mostly light and Sandy and free from stones; but calculated for raising grain especially Indian corn, the main dependance [dependence] of the farmers in this Town is on their Stocks of Cattle; which the large Tracts of Salt, and Sedge meadows ennables [enables] them to keep; a considerable part of the Indian Corn raised in this Town is made use of, in fating [fattening] Cattle, Sheep, Hogs, and poultry, for New York market-the labour [labor] done on the Several farms, with Teams, is mostly done with oxen-the common produce of Indian corn is about

twenty five bushels to an Acre;-and of Wheat and Rye on a medium in about eight or ten bushels to an Acre, and of Oats, from fifteen to twenty bushels to an Acre, Oats and flax seed, is commonly sowed from the first to the tenth of April, and is fit to cut and pull between the twentieth and twenty fifth of July; Corn is commonly planted from the first to the tenth of May and is fit to gather from the twentieth to the last of October-Wheat and Rye commonly Sowed the last of August and first part of September, and fit to out from the fifteenth to the twentieth of July Peach Trees, and Cherry Trees in blossom from the first to the tenth of May, and Apple Trees from the tenth to the twentieth of May.<sup>xxx</sup> There are in this Town about one hundred and twenty dwelling [dwelling] houses twenty-five of which Indians, Mustees and free Negros live in.<sup>xxxi</sup> Of Religious denominations in this Town there are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptist, Methodist, and Quaker upon making some calculations it is supposed, that the Presbyterian are more in number, than of all the other denominations put together-there is but one house in this town built for public worship, and that, a small one and that stands on the north-side of the South County Road, and belongs to the Episcopalians, but they have no Settled minister, nor stated preaching<sup>xxxii</sup> in it-the Presbyterians on the north part of this town are united with the Church and Congregation of Smithtown, and those on the Southwest part are united with the Presbyterians of the South part of Huntington, and are styled the church and congregation of Islip, and Huntington South, they have a convenient meeting house, which stands on the north side of the South County Road, just within the limits of Huntington; these two congregations have a Settled minister, who lives at Smithtown, and preaches statedly one half of the Sabbath in the meeting house at Smith Town, and the other half in the meeting house at Huntington South-those on the Southeast part of this town are united with the Presbyterians of the Southwest part of Brookhaven, and attend public worship at a meeting house standing on the Northside of the South Country Road within the limits of Brookhaven; but they have no Settled ministers. The Methodists, meet and attend public worship at a meeting house standing near the northwest corner of the Patent of Winne Commack, just within the limit of Huntington-and the Quakers meet for public worship at a Friend's house, at a place called half hallow hills-within the limits of Huntington<sup>xxxiii</sup>-there are five Small houses built for Schoolhouses in this town, but the Schoolmasters, are commonly hired by the quarter of the year, and schools not kept in either of them the whole of the year from the first of March 1796 to first of March 1797 there were twelve masters had

they been imployed [employed] in teaching schools in this Town and number of the days instructed were eleven thousand eight hundred and fourteen.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

There are two grist mills, and six Sawmills in this town<sup>xxxv</sup>-At present there is not any poor person that is supported at the expense of this Town-and for several years' past of the money received for granting permit to retail Spiritual Liquors has been sufficient to Support the Poor of this Town- there are five Taverns in this Town and all on the South Country Road<sup>xxxvi</sup> there is but one Physician in this Town; but this Town is so healthy a part of the Country that there is but little practice for a Physician.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

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Whereas we have been informed that the Surveyors of the Town of Huntington have taken on the chart of the Town of Huntington some parts of this Town<sup>xxxviii</sup>-The parts that we are informed they have taken on their Chart as being part of their Town is about four miles Square of the Northwest Corner of this Town and the other part is about four miles Square of the Southwest corner of this Town it being part of the Bay, Beach, and Islands. That by a Law of this State above mentioned is made part of this Town but to give the Surveyor general full Satisfaction in this matter that he may see that have no right to any part of this Town we have thought it best to maintain the bounds of their three patents, which they have for said town. Bounds of Huntington first patent dated 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1666 and Recorded Lib patents No.1 on page 99 & etc.

“From a certain river on the west commonly called by the Indians by the name of Nachoquetuk and by the English Cold Spring, to stretch Eastward to Nesaquagh River, on the north to be bounded on the Sound rising between Long Island and the Maine, on the South by the Sea, including there nine several necks of meadows by all which had land together with the said Necks there unto belonging within the bounds and limits aforesaid, and also any plantation there upon are to belong to the said town of Huntington.”

Huntington second patent we believe was dated 1686 it recites the first Patent; and the Bounds are exactly the same with it, and saves to his majesties use the unpurchased Tracts, and Necks, that lye to the southward and the land to the northward of the same-



On the two mentioned patents had no lines mentioned in them and said patents covered or took in but nine Necks; on the fifth day of October 1694, The people of Huntington took out a third patent which is called their second Confirmation Patent-in which they pray that the Bounds of their Town may not be as mentioned in their former patents but as hereafter expressed to wit. “Bounded on the West by a river called and known by the name of Cold Spring, a line running south from the head of the said Cold Spring to the South Sea and on the North by the Sound that runs between our said Island of Nassau and the main Continent, and on the east by a line running from the west side of a pond called and known by the name of Fresh Pond, to the west side of Whitman’s Dale or hollow; and from thence to a River on the south side of our said island of Nassau, on the East side of a Neck called Sumpawms; and from the said river running South to the said South Sea “by this last mentioned patent, the Neck Sumpawms above mentioned was confirmed to Huntington, which makes their tenth Neck of Land and meadow. From what is above written we suppose it will clearly appear that we have ran the line between Huntington and Islip as the Law above mentioned has bounded this town, and also agreeable to the Patent line of Huntington.

**Islip in the County of Suffolk**

**January the 11<sup>th</sup> 1798**

**Nathl. Conklin, Supervisor<sup>xxxix</sup>**

**Description of Town of Islip Suffolk County**

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Allen Gray, *Islip Northhamphshire – Over 100 Years Recalled in Photographs*, (Allison Printers, Wollaston, Northhamphshire, England, 1993) 3. The Town of Islip is named for Islip, Northhamphshire, England. William Nicoll gave the name “Islip Grange” to his holdings in what now is the Town of Islip, in honor of the place where his family was from in England. Islip or as it was then spelled, Islipe was listed in the Domesday Book of 1086. It has also been spelled Islepe. It is said that in old English the name means “slippery slope,” and this is apropos for the village as it sits on land that steeply slopes towards the River Nene which forms one of the boundaries of the place. There are other thoughts on this name’s meaning and more research remains to be done, but we do know that Abbot Thomas Islip used the symbol of an eye and a slip (cutting) of a grape vine as a rebus to sign his name. This is the same symbol found at the top of the present town seal.

Supervisor Conklin is referring to the original patent holders, William Nicoll, Andrew Gibb, Stephen Van Courtlandt, Richard and Thomas Willets, and John Mowbray. Islip Town’s history is unique in many ways. One example is that Islip was not purchased from the native tribes prior to the surrender of the Dutch government in 1664, so of all the Suffolk County towns, it is the only town whose origin does not predate this event. Also, the original patentees obtained their grants individually, unlike many other grantees in other towns. The Islip patentees came from different backgrounds and religions and ran their holdings with no formal government or even a common religious foundation. There were many close family and business ties among the original patentees, but for the most part as far as the grants are concerned, the only common effort was the effort to ensure that their patents remained independent of the surrounding towns.

William Nicoll made the first purchase on November 29, 1683 of what were shown on the maps of the time as “Indian Lands” south of the Smithtown grants. The first deeded land, the birth of what the patentee would name “Islip Grange,” which would be a parcel that today includes what we know as East Islip, Great River and Islip Terrace as well as portions of other surrounding hamlets. The deed transferring the land from Winnaquaheagh, Sachem of the Secatogue tribe, the native American band whose lands contained the area that would become the Town of Islip. The deed read as follows:

“All that neck, tract, piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being on the South Side of Long Island bounded on the East by a certaine River called Conattquitt, on the south by the Sound, on the west by a certaine River called Cantasquutab, and on the North by a right line from the head of the said River called Conattquitt to the beforementioned River called Cantasquutab.” Rosalie Bailey, *The Nicoll Family and Islip Grange*. (New York, 1940). 45-46.

The Royal Governor, Thomas Dongan, confirmed the purchase of this first tract by issuing a royal patent, that had been confirmed by the consent of King Charles II, to William Nicoll on December 5, 1684. This patent repeated the description and required that William Nicoll pay as a “quitt rent” yearly to the Crown five bushels of “good winter wheat or Five and Twenty Shillings.” This was due to be paid before the 25<sup>th</sup> of March each year. *Ibid.* 42.

The Conattquot is the Connetquot, the Sound is what we today call the Great South Bay and the Contasquutab is Quintuck Creek. The second purchase extended this to what is known today as Champlin Creek, the present boundary between East Islip and Islip Hamlets. The first purchase of the land on November 29, 1683 was the founding of Islip Grange and the beginning of Islip Town.

<sup>ii</sup> Charles Z. Lincoln, et. Al., *New York State Commissioners of Statutory Revision, the Colonial Laws of New York from the year 1664 to the Revolution: including the charters to the Duke of York, the commissioners and instructions to colonial governors, the Duke’s laws, the laws of The Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the charters of Albany and New York and the acts of the colonial legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive*, (State Printer 1894) 722-723 “An Act to enable the Precincts of Islip, in the County of Suffolk, to elect two Assessors, a Collector, Constable and Supervisor. [Passed, November 25, 1710.] Be

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it enacted by the Governour, Councill and Assembly, and by Authority of the same, That from and after the publication of this Act, it shall and may be lawful for the Inhabitants of the Districts & Precincts of Islip, in the County of Suffolk, on the South side of Long Island, from the Westernmost Limits of the Land of Thomas Willets, the Easternmost part of the Lands of William Nicoll, near Blew Point, and they are hereby Impower'd & required Annually to Elect & Chose, among them, two Assessors and a Collector, to Assess and Collect such Taxes as shall be now or hereafter laid or Impos'd on them & a Constable and Supervisor, for keeping the Peace & Auditing their Publick Accounts, at the usual time the County of Suffolk hath or shall do." This act can be considered the founding document of the government of the Town of Islip. It established five elected positions for the purpose of "... keeping the Peace and Auditing their Publick Accounts, ..." This group was to collect taxes to both run the town and the county. Note also, the act makes it lawful to have a government recognized by the Governor, council and Assembly and, therefore, the Crown, the word "may" seem to leave that actual formation up to the inhabitants of "the precinct of Islip." The voters (at that time only property owners or people with a certain amount of personal wealth) did meet and read that as they had the option, so they opted not to form a government at that time. Since most of the property was owned by a few landholders a town government would mean they would be taxing themselves on large tracts so this was a perfectly logical step. William Nicoll, the major landowner, was well connected both by his own abilities and offices but also by his and his children's marriages into the most influential families of the colony, both English and Dutch. He served in the General Assembly as Speaker from 1702-1718 and would have had a great deal to do with the writing of this law. The act "empowers" them to elect officials, and it "requires" them to do this annually (which they did not do until 1720). This act does one more thing – it describes the boundaries of Islip, thus frustrating the claims of the surrounding Towns of Huntington, Smithtown and Brookhaven (note: Babylon is not mentioned as it is formed out of South Huntington in 1872). This wording for the boundaries will cause difficulties when the state sets up towns in 1788 (See IV below).

iii The Secatogue tribe gave this name to their northern lands in the center of the island. Winnecomac, means "pleasant lands," and it was, as it is flat and fertile land and at that time covered with oak woods and abundant edible plants and wildlife. It is today located on the border of Huntington and Smithtown and includes the Hamlet of Commack

iv \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of the State of New York comprising the Constitution and the Acts of the Legislature Since the Revolution, from the First to the Fifteenth Session, Inclusive in Two Volumes – Volume II (Thomas Greenleaf, New York, MDCCXCII), 152 & 299. From the very beginning the boundaries of Islip were subject to controversy. This was not uncommon throughout the state where royal patents and Dutch land grants often overlapped which just compounded the issues caused by the difficulties of surveying a wilderness. On March 7, 1788, in the Eleventh Session of the New York State Legislature held in Poughkeepsie, a law entitled "An Act for dividing the counties of this state into Towns" was passed (11th Session Chapter LXIV). This provided the following boundaries for Islip Town – "And all that part of the said County of Suffolk, bounded southerly by the Atlantic-Ocean, westerly by Huntington, and northerly by Smith-Town and Winnecommack, and easterly by the east bounds of the lands formerly belonging to William Nicoll, near Blue-Point, shall be, and hereby is erected into a town by the name of Islip." While the act gave very definite borders that included all of the bay and beach to the south of Islip, and was confirmed by the boundaries assigned by the State to Brookhaven in the same act – "And all that part of the County of Suffolk, bounded westerly by Smith-Town and Islip, northerly by the Sound, easterly by Southold and South-Hampton, and southerly by the Atlantic-Ocean, shall be, and hereby is erected into a town by the name of Brookhaven." The problem was that this conflicted with the Smith Patent as William Nicoll's patent for the eastern part of Islip did not include the waters of the bay nor the beach. The Thirteenth Session of the Legislature held in New York City passed an act on March 8, 1790, entitled, "An Act for dividing the Town of Watervliet and the Town of Coxsackie each into two Towns; and for altering the limits of the Town of Brookhaven." In paragraph IV it recognizes and corrects the error made two years before, "Part of the town of Brookhaven by mistake annexed to the Town of Islip, declared to be part of the former town. And whereas it has been represented to the legislature, that by the act entitled, "An Act for dividing the counties of this state into towns, passed the seventh day of March 1788, part of the town of Brookhaven, in the County of Suffolk, held in common, was by mistake annexed to the Town of Islip; Therefore be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all the beach and bay within the present limits of the Town of Islip, which is included in the patent of Brookhaven, shall be, and is hereby declared to be a part of the town of

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Brookhaven; anything in the before mentioned act to the contrary notwithstanding.” Thus, as far as Islip’s possession of the bay and the beach is concerned the boundary of the Town of Islip is a line drawn southerly from Nicolls Point in East Islip.

<sup>v</sup> The south shore of Long Island has many streams that cut into the low alluvial plain formed by the run off from the retreating continental ice sheet. The edge of the Great South Bay has many tidal creeks and wetlands created by the streams. These areas are incubators for marine life and supports bay and ocean life. The necks of land in between the streams had some of the best farm land and in the lower lands salt hay provided excellent fodder and bedding. This was a land of bounty for the Secatogues and was the backbone of the economy of Islip Town for years.

<sup>vi</sup> This refers to Sampawams Creek.

<sup>vi</sup> The Connetquot River (and the school district) name has its origin in the Algonquin language that was spoken by the Secatogues. The name is made up from three different words: Quinni – “long”; Tukq – “tidal river”; U – “at.” So, the accepted meaning of the name is “at the long tidal river.” It is from that the hamlet of Great River takes its name and is the origin of the name of the State of Connecticut. Over the years this word has had numerous spellings and misspellings! Supervisor Conklin adds Consequint. For instance, it shows up in various official documents and records as follows: Connetquot, Cunniticut, Conitucutt and there are others! It gives us a glimpse into the actual pronunciation of the name.

<sup>vii</sup> There are still breezes off the bay to cool this portion of Islip Town. The fact that he mentions that the homes along the road are on the north side can be seen in the remaining colonial homes in the town. In that time this would also be considered the healthier place to build as the medical theory of that time thought that disease was caused by miasmas, bad air. The swamps and the tidal flats (combined with their flocks of mosquitoes at the time) made them consider the south side as unhealthy. The South Road, or South County (also called Country) Road is the original colonial road through the southern part of Islip and is now known as Montauk Highway. The portion of the road from Bayard Cutting Arboretum to Sunrise Highway looks much as it might have looked when it was an unpaved road connecting the various developed areas of Islip Town in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The main road through Long Island, known as the “King’s Highway” only traversed two miles of the northern portion of Islip, and the main way down to the shore from the central portion of the island was via paths (we have examples of these roads in the so named “paths” today, i.e., Straight Path and Caleb’s Path). These paths allowed access to the bay and a way to drive stock to and from various meadows along the bay for summer grazing. It was not until the General Assembly passed an act on October 14, 1732, that a road would be built along the shores of the Great South Bay connecting the small settlements that marked the Islip Town of the time. The town minutes record that road was established on April 1, 1735 and the road commissioners were Richard Willets, Ananias Carll and George Phillips. The trip out from the city and the settlements to the west in Kings and Queens County (there was no Nassau until 1898) was still difficult as much of the road was not paved until just before World War I. The waterways of Islip were still the fastest way to travel east and west at that time.

<sup>ix</sup> George Washington, edited by Benson J. Lossing *The Diary Of George Washington, From 1789 To 1791; Embracing The Opening Of The First Congress, And His Tours Through New England, Long Island, And The Southern States. Together With His Journal Of A Tour To The Ohio, In 1753.* (Press Of The Historical Society, Richmond, 1861) 122 – 124 - (From Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup>., 1790) “. . . this House was about 14 miles from South Hempstead & a very neat and decent one.—After dinner we proceeded to a Squire Thompson’s such a House as the last, that is, one that is not public but will receive pay for every thing it furnishes in the same manner as if it was. — The Road in which I passed to day, and the Country here more mixed with sand than yesterday and the soil of inferior quality . . . (From Thursday, 22<sup>d</sup>, 1790) . . . About 8 o’clock we left Mr. Thompson’s—halted awhile at one Greens distant 11 miles and dined Harts Tavern in Brookhaven township, five miles farther. To this place we travelled on what is called the South road described yesterday, but the country through which it passed grew more and more sandy and barren as we travelled Eastward, so as to become exceedingly poor indeed, but a few miles further Eastward the lands took a different complexion we were informed.” The house described as Squire Thompson’s “very neat and decent one” is Sagtikos Manor which still stands on Montauk Highway and is open to the public. The South Road is today’s Montauk Highway and Mr. Green’s house still stands on the northwest corner of Cherry Avenue



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and Montauk Highway in West Sayville. It is not open to the public as it is now an office building. President Washington was of course a farmer at heart, so he noted the agricultural conditions during his tour.

<sup>x</sup>Supervisor Conklin's detailed description of the woodlands of the town gives us a description of the trees common to the town in 1792. While the need for firewood and construction materials in New York City during the Revolution decimated much of the woodland it appears that they had recovered somewhat in the years since. White, Red and Black Oaks are still common. Most of the Chestnut trees have been killed off by the Chestnut Blight. At that time, Chestnut and Oak were prized as building frame timbers. Sassafras was prized for medicinal and beverage purposes. The Maple species mentioned here would have been more tolerant of damp places than many of the Maples that decorate the lawns of suburban Islip Town. The Pepperidge tree is better known by its southern name, Tupelo. It is also called Black Gum and Sour Gum and in 1792 was used for bee hives and for the heads of mallets. In 1792, it would be common agricultural practice to turn stock out to graze in the woods, so the woodlands would have been much more open looking than they appear today.

<sup>xi</sup> Canoe Place

<sup>xii</sup> The Deciduous woods only extended back about one to two miles from the South Road to where the soil became too sandy to support them. Here pines were the predominant species. This area is now known as the Pine Barrens. During his 1790 tour of Long Island George Washington commented on the Pine Barrens as he headed north from Patchogue – "The first five miles of the Road is too poor to admit Inhabitants or cultivation being a low scrubby Oak, not more than 2 feet high intermixed with small and ill thriven Pines." (Op. cit., Lossing, 124) Many people had this view of the Pine Barrens as a waste land, The Long Island Rail Road had some success in developing the area for agriculture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but it would be the construction of the large hospital facilities in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the suburban development of the post-World War II era that would see the land developed.

<sup>xiii</sup> At the time of Supervisor Conklin, these fires were often started by natural causes such as lightning strikes. Many of the plants and trees of the Pine Barrens can only reproduce by the impact of a fire. The fires then (and now) were extensive but at that time less destructive as regular burning kept down the debris on the forest floor. These fires would then produce new green growth that was good for grazing both wild and domestic stock. Supervisor Conklin is also referring to the presence of a substance called bog iron in this passage. Pine charcoal would be valuable in the reduction of this naturally occurring substance to usable iron for working at a forge. Bog iron is created by water leaching the natural iron in the ground out and depositing it out in the open in springs and bogs where it is found as deposits in those areas. Since Long Island surface water is high in iron to begin with this was an important and sought-after resource in those days.

<sup>xiv</sup> A review of the minutes of the early days of the Town of Islip reveal that the issue of who could fish or gather shellfish and later hunt for game, was a major concern. Some of this was related to the various border disputes and the desire to keep the bounty of the town for town residents. There are also notations of fines levied by the Town Board for violations of these restrictions.

<sup>xv</sup> This is a reference to the Nissequogue River which flows for about 8 miles through Smithtown into Long Island Sound. Like the other rivers (or streams) on Long Island it rises from springs of ground water. The springs of the Nissequogue are important to the Town of Islip as they were part of a border dispute with Smithtown that settled on the springs and not a nearby pond as the border between Islip and Smithtown.

<sup>xvi</sup> Hoppauges that today is spelled Hauppauge is named for the springs mentioned earlier that are the source of the Nissequogue river and determine the northwest boundary of the Town of Islip. Again, this was an area that was blessed with game and water and it truly was a "pleasant spring."

<sup>xvii</sup> This is the Connetquot River. See endnote VII.

<sup>xviii</sup> Lake Ronkonkoma is a body of water that is a place of legend and mystery as well as a part of the northern boundary of the Town of Islip. Geologically this lake is a "kettle lake" formed when the continental

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ice sheet retreated north. A block of ice remained behind and was covered by silt from the glacier runoff as the continental ice sheet retreated north. When the trapped ice melted, a round lake was the result. It also touches three towns with portions of the shore in Islip, Brookhaven, and Smithtown but the entire lake is in the Town of Islip in accordance with the royal patents issued to William Nicoll. It is the largest lake on Long Island and one with all sorts of stories and legends. For years, Long Island children were warned that the lake was bottomless, there was a whirlpool that would suck you down, that there were hidden caves or passages, and that there were mysterious underground streams that drained the lake. In this passage Supervisor Conklin discussed some of the popular theories that explained the changes in lake levels and we can see where some of these legends stem. There were stories told of a wagon that sunk in the lake and was found floating in the Great South Bay and of bodies that went into Long Island Sound that washed up on the shores of Lake Ronkonkoma and vice-versa. Great legends but the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation surveys to show that today the lake is 65 feet deep in its deepest part and for the most part 15-feet-deep – the lake has no secret passageways. The most often told legend is of a Native American Princess whose love for a man was forbidden by her father, the tribal sachem. In reaction to this the princess drowns herself and now she returns every year to take the life of a young man. Nice legend, but if one really looks at the various embellishments and the “facts,” including names and dates one realizes that the legend has no basis in fact. Another issue is the meaning of the lake’s name – some have cited the name of the Indian maid who drowned as the person the lake was named for. Others have said that it has to do with fishing or where the four tribes meet, but Supervisor Conklin tells us it means sand pond. Since there were a number of people who spoke the Algonquin dialect still alive and there were still Secatagues alive and living in Islip Town it is reasonable to believe what is in this letter. In his 1911 work entitled *The Indian Place-Names On Long Island and Islands Adjacent With Their Probable Significations*, William Wallace Tooker, wrote that while many interpretations were that the name means “white sand pond” or “sandy pond” he believed that a better translation is “the fence or boundary fishing-place”

<sup>xix</sup>The Yellow Perch is a fish that has a yellow body with olive green vertical triangular stripes. Then fins are light yellow with orange edges.

<sup>xx</sup>The Great South Bay was called a sound in many documents from colonial days. It really fits the definition of a lagoon – “stretch of salt water separated from the sea by a low sandbank or coral reef.”

<sup>xxi</sup>A rod is a surveyor’s measure in regular use up until quite recently and still found in old deeds and surveys. It is 16 ½ feet in length which means what we now call Fire Island was about 1,320 feet (¼ mile) wide in 1792.

<sup>xxii</sup>The Great Gut, or Nicolls Gut was the common name before, as shown here, Fire Island Inlet came to be the agreed upon name. The inlet in 1792 was nothing like what we see today. A good look at how far it has moved west can be obtained by going to Fire Island Lighthouse and looking at the foundation of the original light erected in 1826. That structure was only a few yards from the inlet at that time.

<sup>xxiii</sup>This ton is an older measurement of ship capacity for registration and taxation. This would be a ship of approximately 150 feet long and about 30 feet wide and was the common size for a smaller ocean-going ship during the Revolution and was the size of many of the pirate ships that were used in the Gulf of Mexico and for trading with the islands and coasting.

<sup>xxiv</sup>The type of shellfish that would be predominant at any time in the Great South Bay is dependent on the salinity of the bay. Supervisor Conklin gives us a hint at that with his statement that there were “. . .some Oysters, plenty of clams. . .” which reveals that the bay was higher in salinity in 1798 than in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century when oyster culture was a big part of the economy of Islip Town. In 1798 the oysters were found in the creeks with fresh water where the salinity was lower.

<sup>xxv</sup> The names of the islands remain, but they are not the same now as they were then. Fire Island Inlet was a great deal larger then and the eastern limit of the inlet was near the base of the original Fire Island Light. Some of the islands mentioned were in the inlet itself. The inlet at the time led almost straight out to the ocean and not like today were there is a long channel with Fire Island to one side and Oak Island on the other. The fact is that today’s Oak Island was Oak Island Beach in 1798, and Captree Island was a small island slightly east of the present Captree. Some of what is Captree today was Oak Island back then and the islands were separated by a deep channel . Over the years the changing inlet, State Boat Channel

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construction and natural filling in of many channels that were once part of the larger inlet have greatly change the land that Supervisor Conklin was describing.

xxvi A Sheephead is a fish in the Bream family that feeds on both shellfish and small crustations. They frequently can be found eating mussels and barnacles from pilings. Its gray body with black stripes have gained it a nickname of the Convict Fish. In 1798 these fish could frequently be found in the creeks using its stubby teeth to crush the shells of the crustations found there.

xxvii Up into modern times the bounty of the Great South Bay has been exported. The Blue Pint Oyster was known for its falvor and size and were shipped even overseas. The clam beds of the bay produced clams that were also noted for their flavor. The products of the bay were shipped first by boat and then by railroad express to customers around the country and overseas.

xxviii A mouse squirrel is probably an Eastern Chipmunk.

xxix This reference to “a number of gentlemen” who traveled to Islip to hunt and fish is an interesting earlier record of the recreational trips to enjoy these sports and to boat on the waters of the town. It is this recreational tourism that would be a major source of income for Town residents in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It would be the visits of these tourists that brought about the building of hotel designed for longer stays such as Stellenwerf’s in East Islip (now the site of Brookwood Hall) and Snedecor’s, that would become the Southside Sportsman’s Club in 1866 (now, Connetquot State Park Preserve). This tourism combined with the large tracts of undeveloped land and the extension of the South Side Railroad of long Island to the Town of Islip in 1868 (later merged into the Long Island Rail Road) brought about the age of “The First Gold Coast.”

xxx Supervisor Conklin gives an in depth look at what crops were grown in Islip in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. When President Washington took his trip through Islip in 1790 he commented on the crops and issues with farming on Long Island - (Op. cit., Lossing, 122-124;126-128) “yet with dung which all the Corn ground receives the land yields on an average 30 bushels to the acre often more. —Of wheat they do not grow much on acct. of the Fly but the crops of Rye are good. . . This Island (as far as I went) from West to East seems to be equally divided between flat, and Hilly land, the former on the South next the Seaboard, & the latter on the No. next the Sound.—The highland they say is best and most productive, but the other is the pleasantest to work, except in wet seasons when from the levelness of them they are sometimes, (but not frequently having a considerable portion of Sand) incommoded by heavy & continual rains. — From a comparative view of their crops they may be averaged as follows. — Indian Corn 25 bushels—Wheat 15 Rye 12—Oats 15 bushels to the acre.—According to their accts. from Lands highly manured they sometimes get 50 of the first, 25 of the 2d & 3d, and more of the latter. Their general mode of Cropping is,—first Indian Corn upon a lay, manured in the hill, half a shovel full in each hole—(some scatter the dung over the field equally)—2d. Oats & Flax—3d. Wheat with what manure they can spare from the Indian Corn land—with the Wheat, or on it, towards close of the Snows, they sow Clover from 4 to 6 lb.; & a quart of Timothy Seed.—This lays from 3 to 6 years according as the grass remains, or as the condition of the ground is, for so soon as they find it beginning to bind, they plow.—Their first plowing (with the Patent, tho’ they call it the Dutch plow) is well executed at the depth of about 3 or at most 4 Inches—the cut being 9 or 10 Inches & the sod neatly & very evenly turned.—With Oxen they plough mostly. They do no more than turn the ground in this manner for Indian Corn before it is planted; making the holes in which it is placed with hoes the rows being marked off by a stick — two or three workings afterwards with the Harrows or Plough is all the cultivation it receives generally.—Their fences, where there is no Stone, are very indifferent ; frequently of plashed trees of any & every kind which have grown by chance ; but it exhibits an evidence that very good fences may be made in this manner either of white Oak or Dogwood which from this mode of treatment grows thickest, and most stubborn.— This however, would be no defence against Hogs.” He refers to one of the common ways of fencing here in Islip where there was not enough large trees to waste on fencing. Plashed, lopped or planched trees are formed by cutting, or splitting a tree to the trunk and then staking it down. Any sprouts that come from this staking are encouraged and eventually blackberries or briars grow up. They often did more than one lopping so that they wound up with an impenetrable hedgerow like those in Normandy in France which is where this originated. The remnants of living fence have been found in Oakdale, in the Sportsman’s Club and Bayport. These are relics of an Islip long gone,

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when they marked the extent of a field or the boundaries of a land purchase.

xxxi A “mustee” is a person of mixed racial heritage. According to the 1790 census the population of Islip Town was 609 and by 1800 that rose to 958. The Supervisor noted that there were only 120 dwellings in the Town and that approximately 21% of these were occupied by people of color. From this reference there were about 128 to 201 people in this category at that time.

xxxii This is St. John’s Episcopal Church in Oakdale. Originally known as “Charlotte Church” in honor of the wife of King George III of England the name was changed after the Revolution. The 1765 building still stands and it is still an active church serving the community on property that was the approximate center of the Nicoll holdings. Its churchyard contains the final resting places of many of the original settlers of this portion of Islip. For additional information see the 335<sup>th</sup> Anniversary publication entitled, St. John’s Episcopal Church – Islip’s Mother of Churches. The details here are details that are rarely found in official documents and original sources. These are valuable in attempting to find family births, deaths and marriage records in the early days of Islip Town.

xxxiv Other than glimpses such as this and comments in contemporary writings there are few surviving records until the formation of the common school district for the Town.

xxxv The two gristmills mentioned here might refer to one that was in Bay Shore and the one built by William Nicoll on the Connetquot River that still exists in Connetquot River State Park Preserve, recently restored.

xxxvi The sale of licenses to sell liquor and beer as well as fines for various offenses were the major source of revenue for the Town. Road repairs and schools were financed by separate taxes. The road tax was charged on a per foot of frontage basis.

xxxvii An interesting claim, but with a population under 1000 and with most medical care being done at home it is not out of the ordinary for America at that time.

xxxviii The entire purpose of this letter is revealed in this portion of the letter. Due to the unique birth of Islip there were several border disputes and law suits against the Town and the patentees as the years went by. This dispute was caused by the Nicoll grant to the bay and the islands of what we call Fire Island Inlet. Huntington (note, this portion was known as South Huntington, which in 1872 became the Town of Babylon) believed that they had a claim to at least some of that area due to their patents. Here the Supervisor is making the case that they do not have a claim. These legal issues continued well into the Nineteenth century and fill many pages of state laws and court filings.

xxxix Nathaniel Conklin served the Town of Islip in several different positions for 33 years, sometimes filling more than one position at a time. The term of office for all positions was one year and the election was held in April of each year at a meeting of the “Freeholders and inhabitants” of the Town. He was Supervisor for a total of four years. He also served as a Fence Viewer, Commissioner of the Schools, Commissioner of the Highways, Overseer of the Highways, member of a commission to negotiate with Huntington over bay rights and islands and a member of a committee to hire out the grass on Captree Island.

**The pamphlet with the letter was the result of a request from Town Clerk Olga Murray to locate the Town’s founding documents. This was found in the New York State Archives by one of their archivists and over the past year Clerk Christopher Albergo and Islip Town Historian George Munkenbeck have transcribed and written the endnotes to interpret the letter. This document, written to defend Islip’s land claims gives us a glimpse through the years of an Islip long lost.**