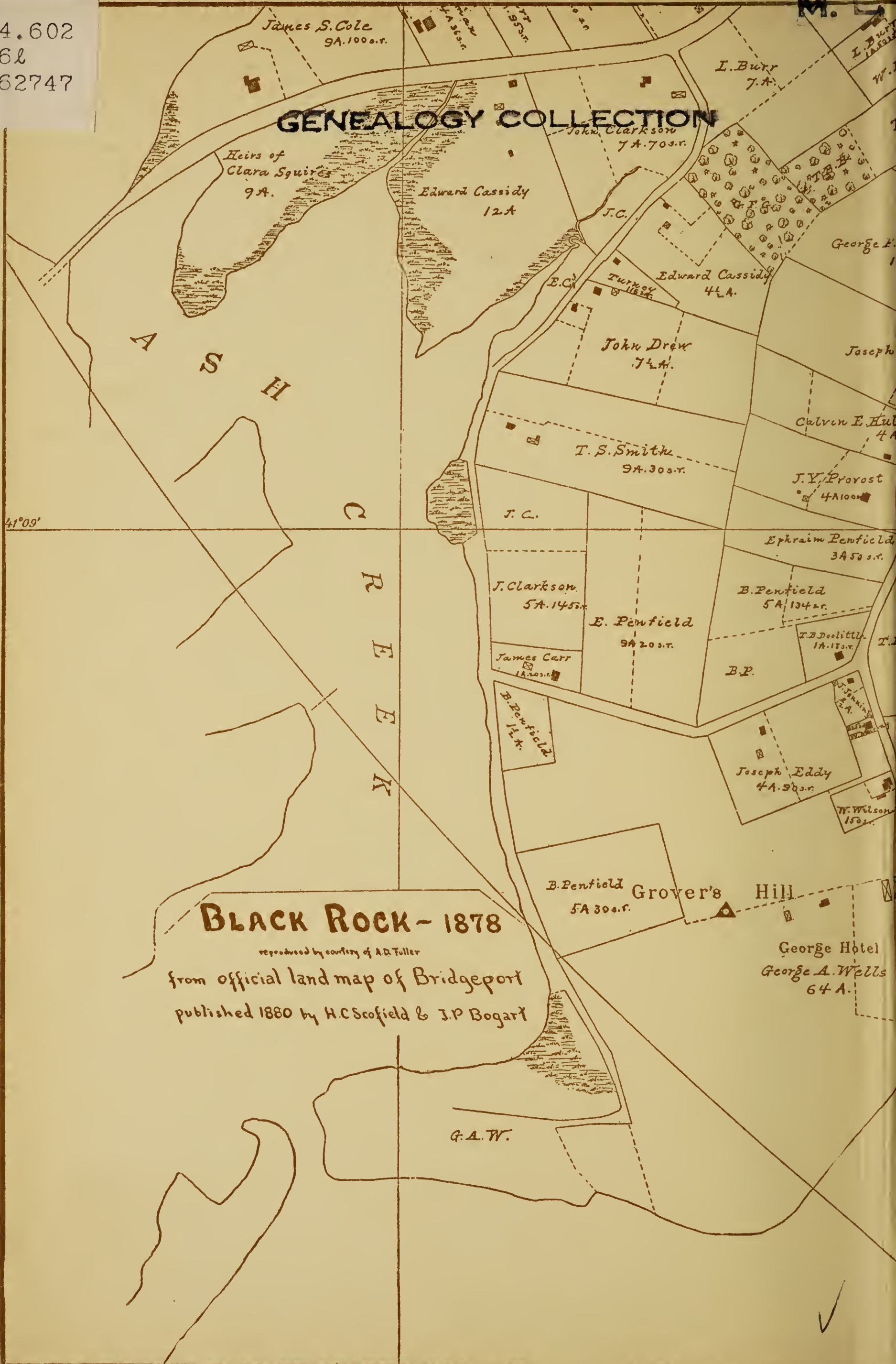


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M.L.

# GENEALOGY COLLECTION



## BLACK ROCK - 1878

reproduced by courtesy of A.D. Fuller  
from official land map of Bridgeport  
published 1880 by H.C. Scofield & J.P. Bogart





3 1833 01068 5177



T.B. Bartram  
3A. 1400r.

Cram  
6000r.

Tanc Perry  
42 1/4 A.

75r.

Calvin E. Hull  
4A.

Bartram  
9A. 200r.

WHEELER

BARTRAM AVE.

T.B. Bartram  
3A. 1000r.

Leirs of  
1A. 1500r.

A.A. Allen  
470r. 700r.

T. Zansow  
1000r.

T. Zansow  
1A. 1500r.

A.A. Howe  
2A. 550r.

E.T. Row  
135r.

B. Penfield  
137r.

B. Penfield  
3A. 250r.

Aaron Smith  
1A. 900r.

ELM ST.

ELM ST.

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C.B.H.

C.B. Hackley  
3A. 1400r.

W. Morrison  
2A. 300r.

Joseph Bartram  
3A. 1100r.

H. Nichols  
1A. 300r.

W.B. Thompson  
500r.

J.N. Saylor  
500r.

L. Buger  
500r.

A.A. H.

G.A. Wells  
1000r.

ST.

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ST.

Acid Works  
1A. 1400r.

C. Moore  
1150r.

FAYERWEATHER

BLACK ROCK HARBOR

ISLAND

Black Rock Light

41°09





YALE COLLEGE IN 1786

—as described by William Wheeler (page 38), with the students saluting President Stiles as he enters Chapel.

(From an old print reproduced by courtesy of the Yale University Library)

# BLACK ROCK

Seaport of Old Fairfield

CONNECTICUT

1644-1870

Pages of History Gathered by

CORNELIA PENFIELD LATHROP

Member, Eunice Dennie Burr Chapter, D. A. R., of Fairfield  
& The New England Historic Genealogical Society of Boston

Including the

JOURNAL of WILLIAM WHEELER

Graduate of Yale in 1785; resident in Black Rock, 1762-1845

With Maps, Illustrations & Genealogies  
Fully Indexed



THE TUTTLE, MOREHOUSE & TAYLOR COMPANY

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

1930

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First Edition  
Published June, 1930  
Printed in the United States of America



‡

1162747

*In appreciation  
of the glorious pages of  
our history  
written by the lives  
of  
Colonel Abraham Gold  
Thaddeus Burr  
and other devoted patriots of her family  
this volume  
concerning the seaport  
of their beloved Fairfield  
is dedicated to  
Annie Burr Jennings*

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‡

*Southern Book Co. - \$10.00*

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## PREFACE

Beginning with a paper contributed to a meeting of the Eunice Dennie Burr Chapter of the D. A. R. in Fairfield, the contents of this book have evolved into an entire volume of history, much to the credit of William Wheeler, whose manuscript furnished the compiler with amusement, inspiration, enthusiasm, and much information, as well as the principal substance.

The casual reader will doubtless prefer to meet, forthwith, William Wheeler and not to ponder too long over the preceding and subsequent pages which are meant for the specialized interest of local historians and genealogists.

The Journal is presented precisely as it is written, with no effort to gloss over the spontaneous expression of the original manuscript. There is no discrimination made between the entries contributed by William Wheeler and by his daughter Eliza, although these are obvious in the Journal. There have been interpolated occasional quotations from other writings and essays which amplify short notes. These interpolations are indicated by the smaller type and indention. Spelling and punctuation have been followed in the copy, except that "the" has replaced "y<sup>e</sup>" throughout (in all but the few instances in which the older form flavors the content), and a few of the original dashes have been exchanged for other marks.

The genealogical footnotes and after-notes have been arranged to supplement the very complete "First Families of Old Fairfield" now in course of publication. Black Rock families are carried back to a Fairfield ancestor, and continued, insofar as has been practicable, from 1800 to 1850, during the period in which it is so difficult to trace genealogical data. A few families have been given special attention, since their several branches were most closely associated with the development of Black Rock for more than a century.

So many have been the sources and so generous the coöperation, that it is difficult to make due acknowledgment to everyone who has assisted in the compilation. Especially am I indebted to George Seymour Godard, Librarian, and the staff, of the Connecticut State Library; to Loretta Brundige Perry, Regent, and to other members of the Eunice Dennie Burr Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; to Aubrey D. Fuller, whose file of maps and surveys since 1835 has been of great service; to Kenneth Hall Kiefer, for the sketched chapter headings; to Henry Monroe Lathrop, for many constructive ideas in the presentation of the material; and to Helen Clingan Penfield, for very valuable editorial assistance.

For photographs, general information, and Bible records, the book owes much to Virginia Elizabeth Penfield, Henry F. Bunce, Hattie E. Noren, Capt. Charles H. Fancher, Susan Howes, Frances Howes, Mary Bartram Woodruff, Alice A. Bartram, Joseph Percy Bartram, Rensselaer W. Bartram, Ella Perry Allen, Mary Nichols Barber, Joseph Smith, Sarah Allen Smith, Lilian Gould Allen, Helen Lockwood Mansfield, Viola Smith Hurlburt, Fannie Sturges Rodgers, M. Alice Gould, Helen Turney Sharps, Nellie Silliman Wilson, **Bessie Smith Hubbell**, Louie Hall Schneider, and Lida Burr,—also to the records deposited with the Fairfield Historical Society, to the notebook of Donald Lines Jacobus and to the courtesy of the Yale University Library.

Another valued contributor is the unfortunately anonymous photographer (or photographers) who, in the late sixties and early seventies, recorded sympathetically so many of the old homesteads now forgotten or remodeled.

Bibliographical reference should be made to various genealogies printed and in manuscript, especially that of the Wheeler Family, "The Wakeman Genealogy" and "The Burr Family," which have supplied data for comparison with the original records and with new sources; "The Old Burying Ground of Fairfield, Conn.," by Kate W. Perry; "History of Fairfield, Conn.," by Elizabeth Hubbell Schenck; "**An Old New England Town**" and "**A Country Parish**," by Dr. Frank Samuel Child; "History and Genealogy of the Families of Old Fairfield," by Donald Lines Jacobus; "History of Stratford and Bridgeport, Conn.," by Samuel F. Orcutt; "History of Maritime Connecticut During the American Revolution," by Louis F. Middlebrook, published by The Essex Institute.

The chief sources of information, however, have been the probate and land records at the Fairfield Town Hall, and whatever accuracy and definiteness may give the ring of authority to topographical and genealogical statements must be attributed to the meticulous town clerks of the past, and to those who have indexed the records so efficiently.

It must be borne in mind that a Journal is not wholly dependable in fixing facts and dates. I have endeavored to check important statements and to add footnotes wherever William Wheeler's memoranda differ from the church or land records. Should other divergences be discovered, it might be well to consider that many of the entries were made a day, a week, or in some instances a few years, after the occurrence noted, or from inadequate information. The Journal is not presented as a didactic authority on contemporary names and dates: and after reading the first few pages, only the most captious statistician can question the occasional poetic and philosophic license in which William Wheeler indulged.



The many changes during three centuries that have come to Black Rock may appear to be over-emphasized in the maps and notations: but to the editor it has been most interesting to trace the "lost villages" that were once also Black Rock. The vanished route across the creek from Fairfield is referred to in one deed as the "old Boston Road"—! and the Revolutionary village is so strange to modern readers that possibly they, like the editor, may enjoy comparing the ancient with the modern.

Concerning these notes and the maps, the editor, like William Wheeler, claims occasional indulgence. The authority of elder and more experienced historians and genealogists should be preferred in any question of accuracy. Concerning all names, dates, and relationships, editorial statements are one and all "subject to correction if in error."

C. P. L.

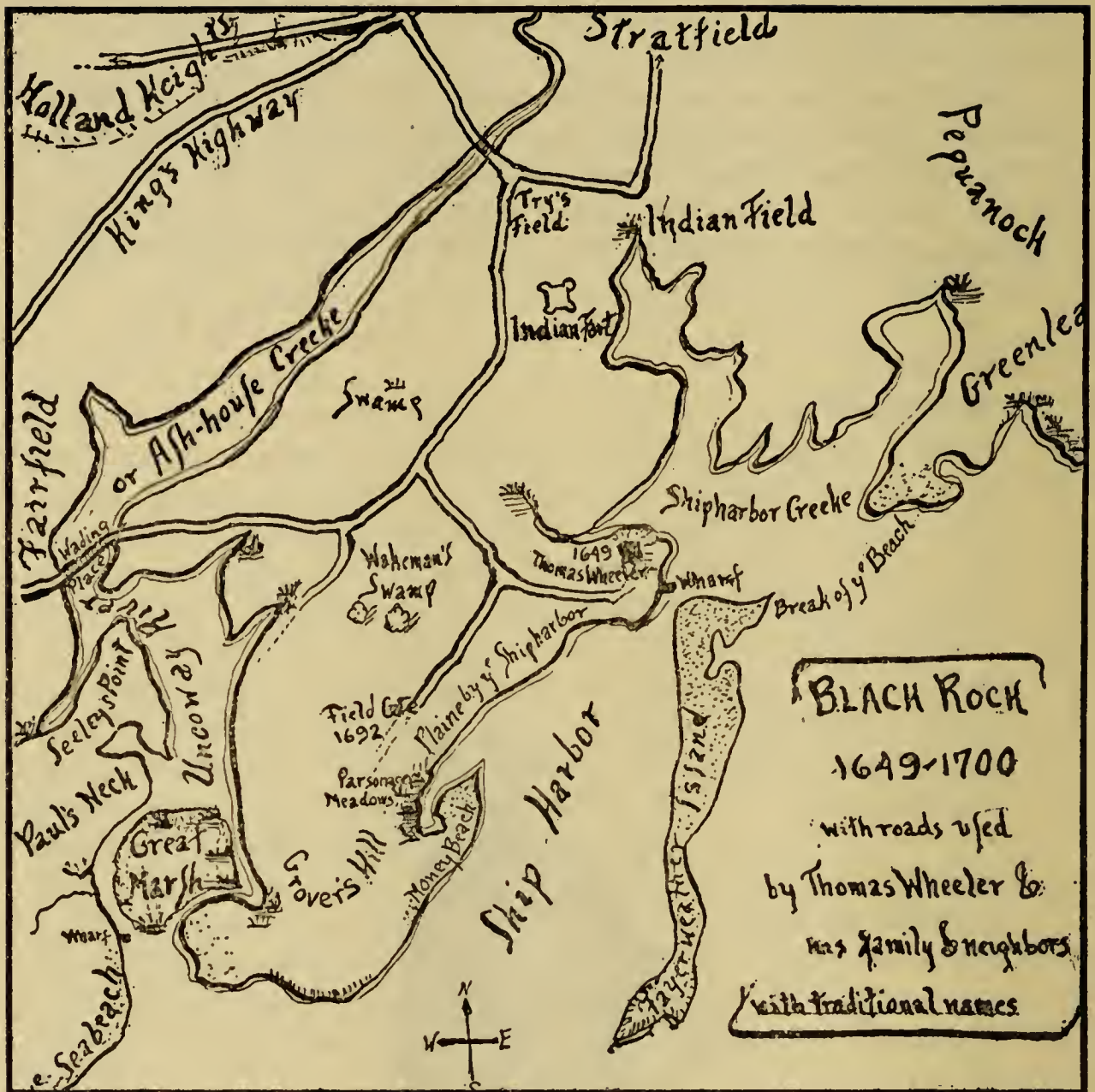
*Black Rock*  
*January 1930*





# BLACK ROCK

In the Pioneer Days



Black Rock was until 1720 an undeveloped wooded peninsula, with many swamps, ending in a remote hill, used for pasturage. The very roads shown on the map are unfamiliar nowadays. Neither north Brewster nor south Ellsworth Streets existed. The Fairfield road coincided with the present Post Road for only a short distance before branching north to the upper creek, where a long-forgotten route led north-west to King's Highway and Holland Heights, while another fork of the road led more directly to Stratfield. Along these rough roads lay a few scattered homesteads.



GROVER'S HILL - 1820

## BLACK ROCK

### Seaport of Old Fairfield

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Fairfield owed much of its financial and political prestige to an excellent seaport. The seaport of Fairfield was old Black Rock.

To-day Black Rock is merely a section of Bridgeport. Airplanes zoom overhead; real estate booms underfoot; and we must sketch our historical picture against a background of modern monuments.

Between the Orphan Asylum and the Socony filling station is the site of the Indian fort. Near the automobile graveyard and the city dump stood the mills that anciently ground out flour for the colonial countryside. Fire, careless remodeling, or neglect have ruined many of the old houses. The one survival of sea-trade is a rough sign: "Live lobsters for sale"—nailed, ironically enough, where the forgotten shipyard once launched a hundred ships, and where on the nearby wharves the rich cargoes of those same ships, returning, were welcomed by the busy pulleys and creaking windlasses of a dozen stores and warehouses.

The flotsam and jetsam of historical incident have been scattered across three centuries, yet we may still salvage stray anecdotes concerning the salty days when every house in the village was the home of a sea-captain.

Fortunately there lived in Black Rock for eighty-two years—from 1762 to 1845—a sympathetic historian. The record of harbor happenings during those bustling days was jotted down by William Wheeler briefly but delightfully, together with the pioneer legends of his family, and sage comment upon political, social, and personal matters.