Henry Cooke
By Janet Porter, 2007

Henry Cooke first appeared in a record on 29 October 1638 and was admitted as an inhabitant of Salem.[1] He was known as a "proprietor," a Puritan and owner of 25 acres of land at Jeffrey's Creek. He was also a butcher or "slaughterer" and owned property in town.[2] Although the early history of Salem is of interest because it is a part of our history, nothing exists in Salem to see except court records and land records to prove Henry was there. However, Washington Street where he lived is still there.

In 1645 Henry Cooke bought the house and land of Edmond Thompson on Washington Street.[3] He lived there until his death in 1665. The land passed through a dozen owners and was eventually taken down. At present, a Masonic Temple is on that spot, the southeasterly corner of the temple being the precise spot where Henry Cooke lived.[4] Washington Street was organized in 1656, and was first named in 1666 "Street from the meetinghouse to North River." The name changed several times in the next 200 years: Broad Street, Town-house Street, Schoolhouse Street, Old Town-house Street, and Main Street (1731) because the town-school-court house stood in the middle of the street in early times.[5] By 1815 it became Washington Street, by which it is known at present.

Attached to this paper is a map of this part of Salem in 1700. Henry Cooke lived in the house labeled on this map as Nicholas Noyes. "The southern part of (Noyes') lot was the eastern end of the original lot of Henry Cook of Salem, butcher, on which stood his house in 1649, the original lot running through to Williams' (later Weld's) lane.[6] The northern half of this property had been the original site of the old fort.

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1 Salem Town Records, printed, a:73, 76

2 *Founders of Early American Families (1607-1657),* Meredith B. Colket, Jr. and others. Published by the General Court of the Order of Founders and Patriots of America, Cleveland, Ohio, 1985. P. 78.

3 Essex Co. Deeds, Vol 8, p. 70.

4 *History of Salem, Massachusetts Vol 2 1638-1670,* by Sidney Perley: Salem Mass, Sidney Perley, 1926. Pp. 44-46.

5 "Part of Salem in 1700,) by Sidney Perley. *The Essex Antiquarian, Vol II No. 2,* Salem, Mass: The Essex Antiquarian, 1898.

6 *The Essex Antiquarian,* p. 172-173.

The Reverend Noyes bought the house and land on the current Washington Street April 14, 1684 and was there during the witchcraft period of Salem.[7] In 1830 the old house was taken down. Originally Henry owned the land from Washington Street through to Weld's Lane, the two halves of the property taking on different identities after he died. "The northern half of this lot (down to the dashes on the map) was the western portion of the original lot of Henry Cook in 1649."[8] In 1700 Daniel Weld owned the house and property on this west end of the original Cooke plot. In 1772 the land was 'conveyed to the proprietors of the North Church...The house was immediately taken down and the land added to the church lot."[9] Weld, however, continued to hold the house and property adjoining for a number of years. John Cook, the son of Henry, bought a town lot just across Main Street from his father's house on the northeast corner. Purchasing the home of the well-known Quaker Thomas Maule, he built his blacksmith shop at the front next to the street and home in the rear. He died there in 1716.

In the early history of these towns, land was given to each farmer in the town for his house and farther out in the fields for his farm. Therefore, Henry also had 40 acres "beyond the river." As time went on and farms were farther away, travel to and from the farms became so time-consuming this method of organizing towns was discontinued, resulting in the plantation system in the South. But in early Salem, the town was the center of life. It was on the town lot that the house and barns were built, the garden planted, and the essential social life conducted.

Henry's town lot was on the same piece of land originally used for the fort which was later taken down when Indian troubles didn't materialize. It was on that block, next to Henry's land, that the first Salem church was built, at first just a box-shaped wooden building with backless benches and a pulpit. By 1638 the building became insufficient for the constant influx of new settlers, and the town "Agreed that there should forthwith an addition to the meeting house be builded and that there should be a rate made and levied for the payment thereof."[10] This addition was made by lengthening the building by 25 feet. The old building had galleries in which church-goers also sat, and the galleries were extended into the new addition with stairs leading to them. Unusual for New England churches, a large fireplace was built in the new part for heating the building. Most churches were not heated in this period.[11]

"In 1640 Henry Cooke and Edward Ingram were appointed to keep the swine for six shillings for each animal. As these men walked through the town on their way to the pasture in the morning, they blew their horn and the owners of the swine brought them

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7 *History of Salem, Massachusetts,* Vol 2, p. 46.

8 *The Essex Antiquarian, p. 171.*

9 *The Essex Antiquarian, p. 171-172.*

10 Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. 27, p. 183.

11 *History of Salem, Massachusetts,* Vol 2, by Sidney Perley, 1926: Anundsen Publishing Company. Pp. 62-63.

out to the drove, which was thus constantly increased in numbers. The swine were returned at sunset. The keepers were responsible for any swine that were lost, but for those which were killed by wild beasts they were excused if they brought home a part of the flesh as evidence.[12]

Henry Cook died 25 December, 1661 in Salem. Judith was living in North Fields, Salem in 1667. Her exact death date is given as 11 Sept 1689 in Salem.[13] His inventory included £60 in dwelling house and land; other house and plots of land £70, farm lots and meadows £39. His cattle and horses equaled £44. A cart, sled, household goods, books and clothing totaled £255.,[14] which was considerable for an early settler who was compelled to forsake his homeland for religious freedom.

The inventory of her estate is as follows: "Inventory of estate of Judith Cook the relick (widow) of Henry Cooke taken Nov. 28, 1689 by Corp. Isaac Cook (their oldest son) amounting to 19 lb. 18s 6d. 'An acctt of Debts due to Isach Cook out of this estate since the midle of June 1687 until this time 1690 in maintainance of the said Judith Cook deceased for her board with mee.' amounting to £19 16s 1d returned by Isaac Cook who is appointed administrator in 1689 (25 years 9 months)."

While she apparently boarded with her son Isaac, her son Joseph moved to New Haven, later to Wallingford. Another son, Henry, was a soldier in the King Philip's War with the Indians in 1676,[15] and later went to Wallingford. Isaac may also have served in one of the Indian wars because he was known as Corp. Isaac Cook.

Henry and Judith were buried in Salem near the other original settlers. However, the early grave markers were made of wood and no longer exist. "Following the English custom, graves were marked with what were called 'coffin rails' or 'leaping boards.' These were formed by placing a log or squared beam upright into the earth at each end of the coffin and joining these with one, or sometimes two, connecting rails, the whole resembling a section of fencing. The rails may have been painted or carved. None of these rails exists today, but there are descriptions of them in early letters and probate records."[16]

By the 1660's, just about the time of Henry's death, slate was being quarried nearby and was being used as gravestones, but apparently not soon enough for his grave

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12 *History of Salem, Massachusetts Vol 2, p. 99.*

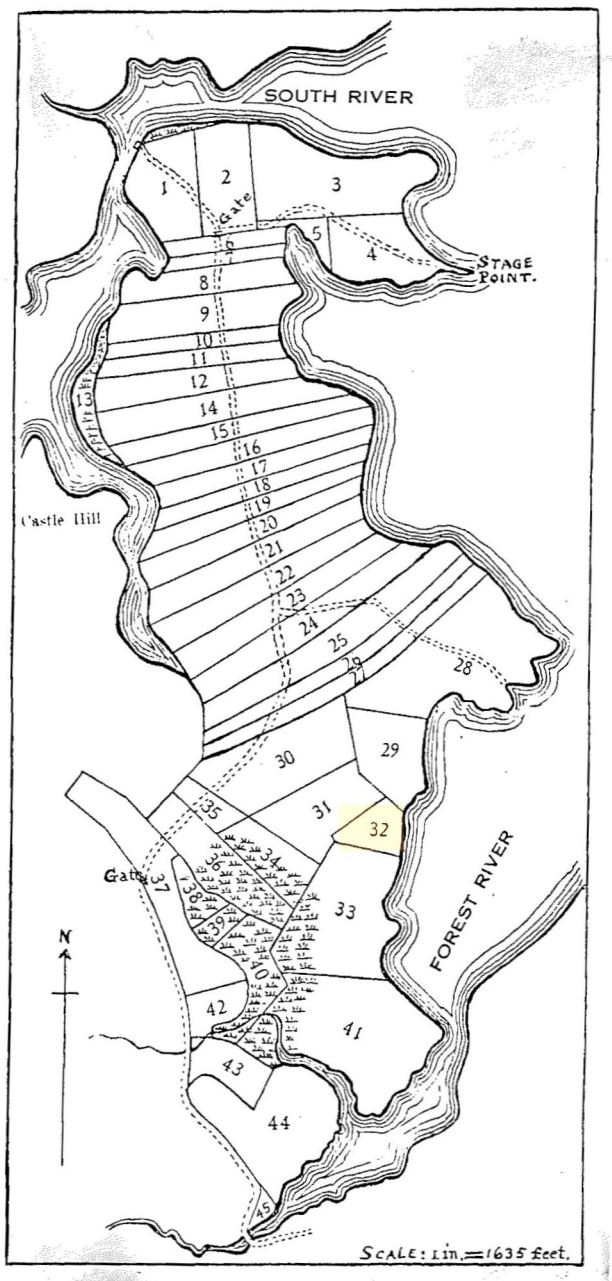
13 *Ancestors of Robert Harry McIntire and Helen Annette McIntire* by R. H. Mcintire, Gateway Press, Inc, Baltimore, 1980. P. 37. Several earlier sources gave no date.

14 Essex County Probate, printed, 1:383, 384.

15 *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol. 10, 1856. Boston: Samuel G. Drake Pub.,

16 This and other references to the graves of Salem is found in *Our Silent Neighbors: A Study of Gravestones in the Old Salem Area*, by Betty J. Bouchard, 1991. Pp. 1-9

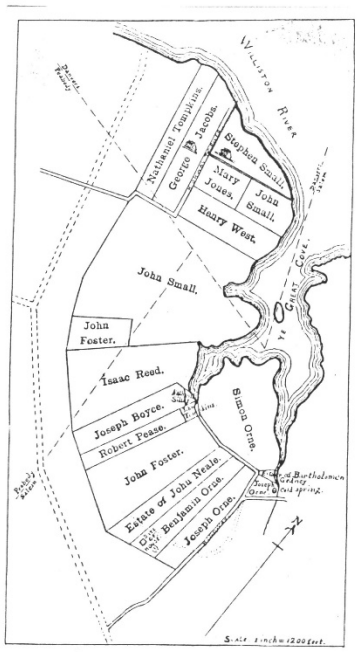
marker. Marble was not discovered until the end of the century. Stone markers were carved not by professionals but by blacksmiths, carpenters and stonemasons. However, the earliest stone markers still survive, and many are still in a fascinating graveyard not far from Henry's home on Washington Street. The earliest graves were beside the church. Later many were buried at Burying Point.



DIVISION OF SOUTH FIELD.

Henry Cooke's Lot 1652 #32

Hist. of Salem, Mass. by Perley Vol. 1

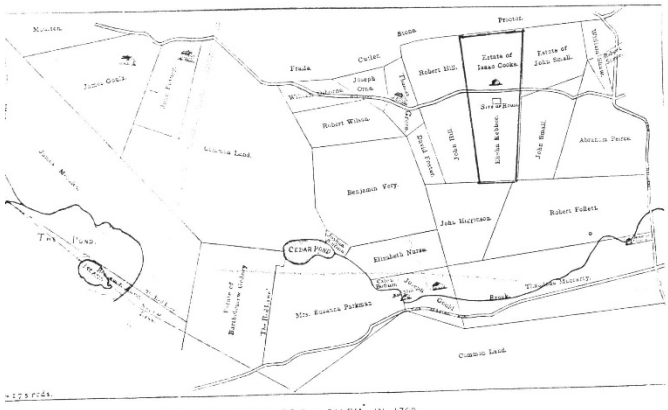


PLAN OF NORTH SALEM IN THE YEAR 1700. NO 3



History of Salem, Mass. by Perley Vol. 1
95 Henry Cook's Lot 1680

Stephen Small's House - William Towne of Salem gardener owned this lot very early and for o li conveyed it to Harry Bulluck of Salem 19 Nov. 1652 - he died 1657 and his widow Alice, with consent of her father William Flint conveyed to Henry Cooke of Salem all land in Northfield in Salem which belonged to Henry Bullock jr. late deceased 22 Aug. 1657. Mr. Cook died 14 Jan. 1661/2 and his widow conveyed the lot to John Small of Salem 17 May 1667. Mr. Small conveyed it to his son Stephen Small of Salem.
Essex Inst. Hist. Col. Vol. 48

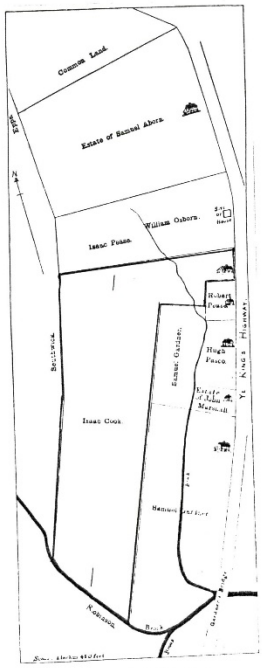


THE CEDAR POND REGION, SALEM, IN 1700.

Elisha Kebbee Lot. This was a part of the lot granted to Henry Cooke of Salem, slaughterer, at a meeting of the selectmen of Salem Nov. 27, 1658;‖ and he died on Christmas day, 1661. The whole lot was appraised at six pounds. The widow of the deceased, Judith Cooke, or Elisha Kebbee, the husband of her daughter Rachel, built a house on this part of the lot a few years later; and Mrs. Cooke, for love, conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Kebbee this part of the lot on which the house stood, being her daughter's portion, Dec. 29, 1680, though it had been long in the possession of the grantees.* They owned it in 1700, when the house was apparently gone.

Estate of Isaac Cooke House. This lot was a part of the lot granted to Henry Cooke of Salem, slaughterer, at a meeting of the selectmen of Salem Nov. 27, 1658;† and he died on Christmas day, 1661. Elisha Kebbee, a joiner, who had married Rachel Cooke, daughter of the deceased, released to Isaac Cooke of Salem, husbandman, son of the deceased, this part of the lot and the dwelling house thereon, Feb. 22, 1671.‡ Isaac Cooke died in the autumn of 1692; and the house and lot belonged to his estate in 1700.

Essex Inst. Hist. Col. Vol. 51



THE WEST FIELD SALEM

Isaac Cook House. This lot early belonged to Thomas Bullock, then to Henry Bullock. The latter conveyed it to his son Henry Bullock, jr. and the latter died in 1656, possessed of the dwelling house and outhouses and the land on which they stood. His widow and administratrix, Alice Bullock, conveyed the estate to Henry Cooke of Salem 22 Aug. 1657. Mr Cooke lived inthis house and was a slaughterer by trade. He died Jan. 1661/2; and the house and land were then appraised at sixty pounds. The quarterly court ordered, June 24, 1662, that, after his mother Judith's decease, the house and lot should belong to the deceased's son Isaac Cook, the father having orally requested it three or four hours before he died. Mr. Cook's widow, Judith Cook, conveyed that part of this lot lying easterly of the dashes to her son Isaac Cook Oct. 26, 1680.

The eastern part of John Southwick lot is said to have belonged to Henry Cook in 1659.

Essex Inst. Hist. Col. Vol. 50

Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626-2001

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Jo^n Collens & Mahetabell Giles were maried by Major Hathorne y^e 9: 1^mo 1658/59

Humphrey Coombs maried to Bathsheaba Raymnt by Cap^t Marshall y^e 27: 5: 1659.

Henry Cooke maried to Judith Birdsale, June 1639. theire son Isaack borne ye 3: 2^mo 1640. — Son Samuell bo. 30: 7: 1641. da. Judith, bo. 15: 7: 43. Rachell bo. 25: 7: 1645. John bo. 6: 7: 1647. — Mary & Martha, bo. 15: 7: 50. Henry born 30: 10: 1652. Eliza bo. September 54 & deceased. & Hannah bo. Sept

Salem 9

1658. — Henry Cooke deceased 25 December. 1661. (wiz y^e father.)