

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF MAMARONECK

(Up to the Incorporation of the Villages of Larchmont and Mamaroneck)

1661

John Richbell, an English merchant living at Oyster Bay on Long Island, purchases three necks of land from the local Siwanoy Indians (Orienta, Larchmont Manor, and Premium Point).

One month later, another English merchant at Oyster Bay, Thomas Revell, purchases two of the same necks of land (Orienta and Larchmont Manor) from the same Indians. (His claim will not stand.)

A month after that, John Budd, an Englishman living in Greenwich, purchases a neck of land on the other side of the Mamaroneck River (Rye Neck).

1664

An English fleet captures New Amsterdam from the Dutch, New Netherland becomes the colony of New York.

The Mamaroneck River is designated as the eastern boundary of the colony of New York.

1665

Richbell moves from Oyster Bay to live permanently at Mamaroneck.

1668

The British governor of the colony of New York gives Richbell legal title for his land purchase.

1669

Richbell creates eight lots from his property stretching inland from the Westchester Path (Old Post Road), and begins parcelling them out (some gifted, some sold) to settlers.

1671

Richbell and John Pell appointed by the Governor to lay out a new road from New York City to New England in place of the old Indian trail (Westchester Path).

1673

The first round trip post ride between New York City and Boston is made. It takes about one month.

The Dutch fleet captures New York City and Henry Disbrow rides almost 100 miles along the Indian Trails to Hartford, Connecticut, spreading the alarm to English settlers.

1674

The Dutch surrender New York City.

1677

The much disputed boundary line between Pell's property and Richbell's property (Premium Point) is settled. (That line is now the boundary between the Town of Mamaroneck and the City of New Rochelle.)

Henry Disbrow builds a house on the lot he purchased the previous year from Richbell.

1683

King William III ratifies the agreement by the colonies of New York and Connecticut to move the border between the two colonies north from Mamaroneck River to the Byram River (although in subsequent years, both sides will continually bicker over this agreement).

New York is officially divided into 12 counties, Mamaroneck being in Westchester County.

1686

The Society of Friends (Quakers) hold their first meeting in Mamaroneck at the home of Samuel Palmer.

1689 -96

King William's War rages as the French and English struggle for control of New York. In 1693 as the French push into the upper Hudson River valley the English recruit Wappinger federation warriors to fight with them.

1697

The first Mamaroneck town meeting of the 'freeholders' (settlers) takes place and the first recorded elections.

1698

A town census records seventy seven residents, four were slaves (black).

Caleb Heathcote, an Englishman who is making a name for himself in New York, purchases 1000 acres of land (Orienta) from Richbell's widow.

1701

Heathcote receives a royal patent for what he called the 'Manor of Scarsdale' which included most of the town of Mamaroneck, all of what is now Scarsdale, and more.

1704

Heathcote is instrumental in bringing the first school master in Mamaroneck. The teacher teaches four months in Mamaroneck, four in Rye and four in Bedford.

Heathcote holds Anglican services at his manor house.

1732

The first regular stage coach route is established along the (Old) Boston Post Road.

1733 (or before)

There is a (private) school house on the north side of what is now the Old Boston Post Road and Orienta Avenue. It is also used for town meetings.

1739 (about)

The first Quaker Meeting House in Mamaroneck is built.

1771

Francis Ashbury, itinerant Methodist circuit rider, who is traveling and preaching throughout the American colonies preaches for the first time in Mamaroneck.

1774

The colony of New York sends a Commissioner to Mamaroneck to sort out the tremendous property mix ups in the town. Between Heathcote and his daughters, the parcelling out of property lots resulted in a tremendous amount of confusion. The boundaries of various pieces were often unclear and contradictory.

The people of Mamaroneck oppose the action of the revolutionary Committee of Correspondence.

1775

Mamaroneck farmers bring their cattle to William Sutton's house in Orienta where they are slaughtered, dressed, salted and placed in barrels. These were loaded onto a sloop as a contribution to the besieged British troops in Boston. The sloop left Indian Point but crashed on the Scotch Caps.

1776 - 1783

The loyalties of the residents of Mamaroneck during the revolutionary war are divided, but Westchester County declares itself neutral. Loyalists are typically tenant farmers, older towns folk, and the middle class.

From 1776 to 1782, the town has no civil government.

Irregular forces, both those nominally loyal to the colonial forces headquartered north of Peekskill (the 'skimmers'), and irregulars with the British headquartered in New York City (the cow boys) pillage freely in what is called 'the Neutral Ground.'

While in theory these forces were meant to provide supplies for their respective sides and root out active enemies, in practice they are often lawless bandits who terrorized the area, killing, raping, looting, and destroying property.

In August of 1776, William Lounsberry, Mamaroneck resident and loyalist becomes the first American killed in Westchester County during the Revolution.

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In October of 1776, Robert Rogers, a hero of the French and Indian war, comes to Mamaroneck with his corps of loyalists, the Queen's American Rangers. They camp on Heathcote Hill and weather an attack by American troops.

1788

New York State organizes townships and Mamaroneck is officially designated a town.

1789

George Washington rides in a carriage from New York City (the capital at the time) through Mamaroneck along the Old Boston Post Road.

John Peter Delancey, the grandson of Caleb Heathcote, inherits Heathcote Hill and returns from England to Mamaroneck.

1790

There are 428 residents of whom 57 are slaves.

1792

Delancey builds a wooden house on the site of his grandfather's brick house which had burnt down shortly before the Revolution. (Delancey's house still exists, but is now situated at the corner of Fenimore and the Post Road.)

1799

New York State passes a law that from this time on any children born to slaves will become free after an 'apprenticeship,' males at age 28, females at age 25. Mamaroneck Town records started to include the names of new born slaves.

1800

John Peter Delancey and other prominent citizens form The Westchester Turnpike Corporation, chartered by New York State to lay out a toll road, basically along the Post Road, from New York City to the Connecticut border. The road path is straighter and wider and a wooden bridge is built over the Mamaroneck River (where Post Road Bridge is today).

Toll gates are set up every ten miles to charge a fee to pay for the improvements and upkeep of the road. (The Tollgate House, 974 East Boston Post Road - most recently housing a restaurant, Limoncello - was the location of one.)

The population of Mamaroneck is 503 (33 were slaves).

1801

New York State passes a law that any slave born before 1799 would become free in 1827

1807 (or 1808)

The first public school house is built. Town meetings are now held there.

(It still exists, in the same location, 84 Weaver Street, but was stuccoed and converted to a residence in 1925)

1811

John Peter Delancey's daughter, Susan, marries the author (LAST OF THE MOHICANS) James Fenimore Cooper at a ceremony in the house on Heathcote Hill.

1812 (about)

America is at war with Britain. A British man-of-war in the harbor fires a cannon at Mamaroneck.

1813

Methodist Episcopalian Church in Mamaroneck Incorporates.

1814

First Methodist church built on High Street (Prospect Avenue).
St. Thomas Episcopal Church is incorporated on June 9.

1816 (or 1819)

A second public school house is constructed on the triangular piece of property where Mamaroneck Avenue meets Mt. Pleasant. (After 1848, when a train depot was established nearby, the school was referred to as the 'Depot School.')

The Depot school serves School District #1 and the Weaver Street school serves School District #2. Rockland Avenue is the dividing line for the two school districts.

Town meetings now alternate between the two schools. (The Depot school house still exists, moved and restored, in Harbor Island Park, on the Post Road east of Fenimore.)

1823

St. Thomas Episcopal Church, a wooden frame building with pointed windows and a low tower, is erected.

1827

New York State abolishes slavery in the state.

1843

The wooden Post Road Bridge collapses and is replaced by an iron pipe bridge.

1845

The Methodist Church on High Street (Prospect Avenue) burnt down and was rebuilt. (It still exists, same location, and is the American Legion Hall.)

1848

The first train on the single track New York & New Haven Railroad arrives at Mamaroneck's depot. The tracks cross Mamaroneck Avenue at ground level.

1852

The Mamaroneck AME Zion Church is organized by Robert Purdy

1853

A small depot is built in Larchmont. You have to flag down the train to get it to stop.

1854

The dam at the Mamaroneck River waterfall is torn down. It had been built to service a factory and had been a chronic public nuisance that encouraged the breeding of mosquitoes and frequent flooding.

1859

The Methodists build a Gothic Revival Church on the Post Road. (It still exists in the same location.)

1863

The federal government requires each town in New York state to provide men for the Union Army. Mamaroneck provides 33 recruits (only 6, possibly 7, had been born in Mamaroneck). The town is split on loyalties, Westchester leaned towards the Democrats, and against Lincoln.

1867

The end of tolls on the Boston Post Road

1880 (or before)

The Larchmont depot is serving as Larchmont's first post office.

1882

The first newspaper, The Mamaroneck Register, established by William E. Peters. It is a four page paper, of six columns to a page, issued every Wednesday.

1884

First Fire Department, Union Hook and Ladder Company, #1 of Mamaroneck and Rye Neck.

Mamaroneck Water Company, a private venture, formed. Pipes laid through the village supplied water from the Mamaroneck River to residents the following year.

1886

The current St. Thomas Episcopal, Early English Gothic style, is constructed and consecrated.

1887

Mamaroneck's two school districts are consolidated into the Union Free School District. 'Union Free' is not a labor reference. It means that two or more districts have formed a 'union' and are now 'free' of the state regulations that previously prevented them from having a high school.

1888

The railroad is now a four track system.

1889

The new school building at the Boston Post Road and Rockland Avenue, later referred to as the Central School, opens. It not only serves elementary grades but also includes a high school. Central has a librarian and music teachers and 250 students. (By the turn of the century that number would double.)

1891

Larchmont Manor becomes incorporated as a Village.

1895

The area of the town of Mamaroneck and the town of Rye that cluster near the harbor on both sides of the river, incorporate as the Village of Mamaroneck.

The Post Road Bridge is replaced with the present stone bridge.

St. John's Episcopal Church on Fountain Square in Larchmont celebrates its first service.