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Olmsted Center
for Landscape Preservation

Cultural Landscape Report for the William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore



"I must write to you before it shall be too late."
Cornelia Floyd Nichols

Cultural Landscape Report for the William Floyd Estate Part 1

Fire Island National Seashore

Mastic, Long Island, New York

Site History

Existing Conditions

Analysis and Evaluation

Prepared by John W. Hammond

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
National Park Service, Boston, Massachusetts, 2021

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Cover Photo: Drawing of Old Mastic House in 1856 by Kate Floyd Delafield. (FIIS Collections)

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Foreword

Modern life has transformed the historic William Floyd Estate into a forested island surrounded by suburban development. This is a special place, but it has not been "nature" for hundreds of years. The property has been forevermore altered by the actions of human beings. And, it is important to remember that these changes did not begin with the arrival of European settlers, but with the Native American Unkechaug people who managed and altered the landscape to sustain both life and culture.

Time marches on, and the process of change will certainly continue at the William Floyd Estate as elsewhere. The theme of change will surely reach into National Park Service programming that aims to explain and interpret this complex landscape history to the public. This cultural landscape report is an important tool to help the National Park Service plan an appropriate future for this historic place, as these pages document the tangible evolution of the property from the past to the present.

Fire Island National Seashore is beginning to consider new approaches for interpreting the natural and cultural resources of the William Floyd Estate to new generations of park visitors. Until now, the greatest portion of the visitor experience has been centered on the historic buildings and the objects within those buildings. Looking forward, we anticipate an exciting new role for landscape resources and how the structures fit into the landscape in defining the visitor experience. Our ability to move in this new direction has been facilitated in a fundamental way by the completion of this report. I am sure that future stewards of the William Floyd Estate will share my appreciation for the careful work of the author John Hammond, and for the work of the staff of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation in attending to the many facets of this project.

Alexcy Romero

Superintendent, Fire Island National Seashore

I go-a-gunning, but take no gun;
I fish without a pole;
And I bag good game and catch such fish
As suits a sportsman's soul;
For the choicest game that the forest holds,
And the best fish of the brook,
Are never brought down by a rifle shot
And are never caught with a hook.

I bob for fish by the forest brook,
I hunt for game in trees;
For bigger birds than wing the air
Or fish that swim the seas.
A rodless Walton of the brooks,
A bloodless sportsman I —
I hunt for the thoughts that throng the woods,
And dreams that haunt the sky.

The woods are made for the hunter of dreams,
the brooks for the fishers of song;
To the hunters who hunt for the gunless game
The streams and the woods belong.
There are thoughts that moan from the soul of the pines,
And thoughts in the flower bell curled;
And the thoughts that are blown with the scent of the fern,
Are as new and as old as the world.

The Bloodless Sportsman
by Sam Walter Foss



Old Mastic House. (FIIS Collections)

Introduction

> As you know yesterday I returned to Mastic. That is a classic beginning for a novel in which the place is the protagonist, the people really incidental. But then you can't separate them because the place and the people are all part of the experience, the romantic attachment that if it started almost before birth and lasted for sixty or more years is a very deep seated part of one's personality.
>
> Theodora DuBois Paul, August 1982

The Old Mastic House sits, as it has for nearly three hundred years, at the heart of the Floyd family homeland on the south shore of Long Island. From its vantage point a mile from Narrow Bay, which separates Mastic Neck from the barrier island to the south, the house presides over the estate landscape laid out before it like an apron. Defined on each side by spring-fed streams and at its foot by the tidal waters of the bay, the apron is decorated by a patchwork of fields and tangled forest, crossed by a network of winding drives, and fringed along the bay with scruffy salt marsh and wet meadow.

The white two-story house, with its porticoed entrance and dark green shutters, is at once dignified and unpretentious, the formality of its façade softened by the asymmetry of the chimneys and the one-and-a-half-story east wing. The front of the house looks south across a broad lawn and a meadow, referred to by the family as the pightle (or pikel), an archaic term that derives directly from the family's roots in Wales. A narrow vista cut through the forest affords views of the bay from the front windows, maintaining the house's connection with the water. The house is flanked by towering trees, including the two-hundred-year-old linden tree at the southwest corner, whose heavy branches sweep the ground in a diameter of more than fifty feet.

Behind the house, to the north and west, is the enclosed yard that was the garden, which once featured exuberant beds of lilacs, roses, daffodils, and lilies, flowering fruit trees, and rows of tall boxwoods. Today the beds of flowers are gone, but garden remnants include boxwood, lilac, quince, and other shrubs, as well as a variety of trees, some of which have stood over the house since the early nineteenth century. A collection of red outbuildings is clustered north of the house, a vestige of the working farm landscape, which depended on slavery and indentured servitude well into the nineteenth century.



Figure 0.1. Old Mastic House in 2019. (OCLP)

The William Floyd Estate, known historically as Mastic, is preserved today as the birthplace and home of William Floyd, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Floyd, the son of a wealthy landowner and enslaver, was born in the house in 1734 and rose to social and political prominence, eventually serving as a member of the First and Second Continental Congresses and the New York Senate. He counted among his prominent friends Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, the latter of whom courted Floyd's daughter Catherine. Throughout his illustrious career, William Floyd, exploiting enslaved labor, continued to own a working farm at the Mastic estate until 1803, when he left Mastic in the charge of his son Nicoll and moved with his family and at least seven enslaved people to Oneida County, New York.

The half-century that William Floyd was at Mastic was but a chapter in a long continuum of Floyd family ownership. The large estate, originally encompassing 4,400 acres, was incrementally leveraged from the Unkechaug people through uninformed purchases or debt payment before it was purchased in 1718 by William's grandfather Richard Floyd. However, it was William's father, Nicoll Floyd, who built the first increment of the house and established a farm across the level upland and meadows of Mastic Neck, beginning around 1729. Upon Nicoll's death in 1755, the estate passed to William Floyd and then through four more generations of his descendants. Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Mastic grew to a productive enterprise of farming, ranching, and shipping, with grain, fruit, produce, meat, wool, and other farm products traded along the Long Island coast to New York and beyond. Farm production began to decline in the second half of the nineteenth century, and by the turn of the twentieth century, the estate was primarily used as a hunting and pleasure retreat by the family, who generally lived at Mastic only in the summer.

Scores of individuals are counted in the immediate and extended Floyd family that had connection to Mastic over the generations. But the family itself is only a part of the story of Mastic, which began well before the first Floyds arrived in North America. For thousands of years, American Indians lived off the land and waters of Long Island, hunting game in the forests, fishing in the creeks and bays, and cultivating corn, beans, and squash. At the time that Europeans began to settle on Long Island, Mastic Neck was part of the Unkechaug territory, which included a large section of the south shore of the island across what is today Brookhaven, Moriches, and Westhampton. The fact that Richard Floyd was able to purchase the Mastic land was the result of decades of social and economic change that had left the Unkechaugs and other tribes dispossessed of their ancestral lands and dependent on the Europeans for subsistence.

Completing the early, arduous work of clearing fields, constructing ditches, planting and tending crops, and doing the innumerable agricultural and domestic jobs that were required to establish and operate a farm of the scale of Mastic depended in large part on slavery, which remained prevalent at Mastic into the nineteenth century. By 1790, the Federal Census counted fourteen enslaved people belonging to William Floyd, making him the most prolific enslaver in Brookhaven.[1] Enslaved Africans often labored alongside Unkechaug people and others subjected to indentured servitude. Altogether, the first three owners of Mastic enslaved an unknown number of people before slavery was abolished in New York in 1827. After that, work on the farm and in the house was done by a combination of indentured and wage labor. African American and Indian families lived on and around the Mastic estate throughout the historic period. Many of the locations and features at Mastic bore the names of people who once lived on the property.

The Floyd family lived at Mastic through much of the twentieth century, finally passing management of the estate to the National Park Service in 1976. Since then, the Park Service has managed the house and property both as a means to commemorate and interpret the life and career of William Floyd and as a living record of two and a half centuries of continuous use by the Floyd family and the many people who were enslaved, indentured, or paid to work there. The house in particular reflects the continuum of change, featuring design elements and furnishings from all periods of its history. The items on display in the house today range from important paintings and furniture from William Floyd's time to small personal items and natural objects collected by the Floyd children through the years. As one Floyd family member put it upon visiting the house in the 1980s after it was open to the public, "What I expected was some kind of a colonial or revolutionary reconstruction and what I came into was as familiar as my room at home."[2]

The history of a property like Mastic is often told through a chronology of biographies, deed transfers, construction dates, and agricultural production. While such information is essential to conveying the evolution of the property, a deeper un-

derstanding of the spirit of Mastic is found in the words of those who lived there. The Floyd family in general were prolific and eloquent writers, and the park collections contain many remarkable pieces penned by Mastic residents, from poems and letters to comprehensive family histories. What is striking about the writings is the extent to which they focus on the place. The house and landscape are more than settings for the family's intimate stories and personal memories, they are the principal means of conveying the connection between family and the land they called home. The barns and sheds, fields and forests, creeks and ponds, bay and beach, roads, gardens, orchards, lopped trees, forest flowers, and clear springs are all characters that bring the landscape to life.

The Floyd family descriptions of life at Mastic are rich and personal, as likely to include the "smell of sea-damp and wood fires" as field acreage and construction dates. They are imbued with joy and pleasure, nostalgia and affection. Through it all is a sense that the house and landscape of Mastic were as much a part of the family as any person.

Today, as the sprawl of suburban development and all of its implications press in on Mastic from the north and west, the house continues to turn its back on the modern world, looking instead toward the landscape and the bay beyond. Hidden beneath the cover of second growth forest lies the latent image of the landscape that was so familiar to the Floyds for generations. Ditches and mounds likely dug by the enslaved before the Revolution still demarcate the original field boundaries; woodland roads still follow historic routes down to the salt meadows; remnants of the dam that formed the pond at the head of Home Creek can still be seen beneath the tangle of brush and catbrier; and the occasional twisted oak trunk, a vestige of the lopped-tree fences that once delineated the landscape, can still be found standing amongst the new growth forest.

Cornelia Floyd Nicolls, reflecting on the march of modern progress in the 1930s, recognized the precarious hold that Mastic had on the features and qualities that had endeared it to so many. As she sat down to memorialize the family stories, memories, and spirit of Mastic in what she called a one-sided correspondence with future generations, she seemed to acknowledge both its timelessness and its fragility. "The heart of Mastic with its water life, its shady rambling roads, pastures, grain fields, orchards and gardens; its intimacy, its brooding nurture of its children was still untouched. And it is from this heart that I must write to you before it shall be too late."[3]

PROJECT SCOPE AND METHODS

The National Park Service uses cultural landscape reports as the primary document guiding landscape and long-term management. Cultural landscape reports provide treatment guidance within the context of the site's history and significance, extant features and historic character, and current planning objectives and management goals. Treatment guidelines and recommendations developed in the cultural landscape report are grounded in research, inventory documentation, and analysis and evaluation of the landscape characteristics and features that contribute to the site's historic character.

The methodology used in this report follows *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (1998). Methodology includes primary and secondary historical research to develop a narrative site history; surveys of existing documentation, including historic photographs, plan drawings, and narrative descriptions, to determine historic site conditions; and documentation of existing conditions through direct site observations, photography, and surveys of current and recent site plans and aerial photographs.

This volume, the *Cultural Landscape Report for the William Floyd Estate, Part 1*, includes a site history, documentation of existing conditions, and analysis and evaluation of the site's significance, integrity, and contributing landscape characteristics and features. The introduction chapter also includes a preliminary discussion of treatment, which identifies relevant considerations and outlines a general treatment approach for the William Floyd Estate landscape. This volume should be followed by a second volume, *Part 2*, which will further develop the treatment philosophy and offer recommended treatment tasks.



Figure 0.2. Outbuildings at the William Floyd Estate in 2019. (OCLP)



Figure 0.3. The mown lawn extends in front of the Old Mastic House, with the meadow pightle beyond that. The narrow vista provides water views from the house. (OCLP)

PROJECT SETTING AND STUDY AREA

The William Floyd Estate is located on the south shore of Long Island, in the town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York. Although not physically located on Fire Island, it is one of two cultural landscapes that have been identified within the boundaries of Fire Island National Seashore. The original Estate extended seven miles north from the shore of Narrow Bay and was a mile wide. Today, the size of the Estate is greatly reduced, but it remains one of the largest tracts of open space in an otherwise densely developed and heavily populated region.

The 613-acre William Floyd Estate is the remnant of a larger 4,400-acre historic plantation that was occupied and used by a single family for over 240 years for agriculture and recreation. The Floyd family established an elaborate arrangement of lots that were utilized continuously until early in the 20th century for crops and grazing, and afterwards for recreational hunting and conservation. By the time of its donation to the National Park Service in 1965, the historic organization of field lots had been obscured by woody succession, but the family was regularly maintaining eleven small fields and five constructed ponds.

The estate's agricultural fields and wooded areas surround a 33.8-acre domestic core near the northwest boundary of the property. This is the location of the primary structure on the property, the Floyd family house known as "Old Mastic House." The house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places under this name in 1980 for its significance as the home of William Floyd, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Old Mastic House is a forty-room, two-story, white frame structure built around 1729, with alterations and additions completed during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The park currently interprets twenty-five of the house's rooms. The house is surrounded by an informal landscape of lawn, large shade trees, and shrubs, and overlooks a large field that



Figure 0.4. Salt marsh along the southern portion of the William Floyd Estate property, along the shoreline of Narrow Bay. (OCLP)

the Floyd family referred to as the pightle, a traditional English term for a small meadow. On the southwestern edge of the pightle, a narrow vista cut through the woods provides a view of the bay from the house.

North of Old Mastic House is a cluster of historic outbuildings that were used to manage the plantation. A small dirt road leads from the house to the Floyd family graveyard, located in the northeast corner of the current property. Surrounded by a white wooden fence, the one-and-a-half-acre graveyard has been the burial ground for fifty Floyd family members and three other individuals associated with the estate. Adjacent to the family graveyard is a small clearing containing seven simple white crosses marking the graves of slaves and servants who worked for the family.

The woods around the property extend down to the salt marsh, enclosing a system of open fields and dirt or grass roads. Large hedgerows of autumn olive, black locust, pine, and cedar trees planted by the Floyd family divide the fields, which are in various stages of natural succession. Throughout the woods are a series of ditches and mounds that once delineated the estate lots, providing tangible evidence of the former field system.

A quarter of the area of the property is salt marsh bordering Narrow Bay. The salt marsh is bisected by the Great Ditch, which was built in the eighteenth century to drain the upper marsh. Just within the inner bounds of the Great Ditch are four constructed ponds and one natural pond. A system of mosquito ditches was constructed during the twentieth century to drain the marsh.

EXISTING DOCUMENTATION AND CONSULTED SOURCES

Historical documentation used to complete the site history and period plans for the William Floyd Estate include both primary and secondary sources. As the home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the historical significance of the William Floyd house has long been recognized, and as a consequence, it has been relatively well documented. Much of the early documentation for the house and family history was accomplished by the Floyd family themselves, who kept numerous documents containing valuable information about the social and economic history of the estate. Several family members also wrote accounts that document the family history and the conditions of the house and landscape during the historic period. These items provide an invaluable first-hand account of life at Mastic.

Cultural Resource Documentation

A number of reports documenting the cultural resources of the William Floyd Estate have been produced by the National Park Service since it assumed management of the property in 1976. Initial documentation included a Historic Resource Study completed by Ricardo Torres-Reyes in 1974 and a Historic Structure Report on the William Floyd house by John Dickey in 1977. These two documents began the work of assembling the primary sources of information and documenting the history of the property, its ownership and use, and the chronology of the construction and alterations of the house.

The William Floyd Estate was documented for the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The nomination form provides a summary of the property's significance and history and lists the contributing structures present at the time, including the house and ten outbuildings.[4]

The William Floyd Estate landscape was documented in 2006 for the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI). The CLI summarized the history of the landscape and evaluated the contributing landscape characteristics and features. This Cultural Landscape Report expands on the CLI documentation, providing a more comprehensive site history and updating the existing conditions and analysis and evaluation conducted at the time.

Other cultural resource documentation includes a Vegetation and Land Use Study by James S. Clark in 1984, and Archeology Overview and Assessment in 2005, and a Historic Furnishings Report by Janice Hodson in 2011. The Historic Furnishings Report includes a particularly thorough social history of the family and house. Finally, a new Historic Resource Study for the William Floyd Estate is currently underway (as of summer 2020). The study focuses on developing a more complete social and contextual history of William Floyd, the Floyd family, and the William

Floyd Estate. A draft of this study was consulted to inform the site history and significance of the property.

Family Writings

Much of what is known about the landscape during the nineteenth century is derived from a number of primary sources, most valuably the recollections of people who lived and worked at Mastic. Sarah Floyd, known as Sadie, was the daughter of John Gelston Floyd, granddaughter of Nicoll Floyd, whom she called Grandpa, and great-granddaughter of William Floyd, whom she called Grandpa William. In 1886, Sadie wrote "Sunny Memories of Mastic," a collection of short pieces that include memories and anecdotes that describe the house, landscape, and people of Mastic. Sadie was born 1837 and came to Mastic for the first time "before [she] was six years old," when her brother, who was born in 1841, was called "Baby John." The writings in general describe Sadie's childhood, taking place during the 1840s and 1850s.

The second source that provides information about the landscape is a letter written by Charles Ross, the caretaker of Mastic from 1876 to 1913. The letter describes the estate at the time Mr. Ross arrived in 1876, and includes information about farm operations, outbuildings, and some of the people who lived on the estate in the late nineteenth century.

Cornelia Floyd Nichols provided the most comprehensive picture of Mastic through a combination of her own personal recollections and information gleaned from the family papers that had been stored in the attic of the house since the eighteenth century. Cornelia was born in 1882, taking over primary management of Mastic when her father died in 1903 and managing the estate until it was donated to the National Park Service. Beginning in the 1930s, she assembled her recollections in what she imagined as a series of letters to her future great-great-granddaughter. These letters primarily describe Mastic during Cornelia's childhood in the 1880s, as well as its evolution in the years after that, and include information about the house, outbuildings, landscape, garden, and the surrounding area. Cornelia contributed to this piece, which she titled "Letters to my Great-Great-Granddaughter," over the course of six years, from 1934 to 1940. In 1952, she compiled a second manuscript, titled "As Told by the Attic Letters," that focused on assembling and synthesizing the historical data contained in receipts, letters, deeds, and other documents.

Finally, Cornelia's sister, Rosalie Delafield Floyd, wrote a piece called "The Backwoods Book" in the late 1910s or early 1920s.[5] The manuscript is a collection of loosely connected chapters that describe the landscape and garden of Mastic as it was at the beginning of the twentieth century. The work, filled with literary references and whimsical stories, also contained numerous photographs of Mastic,



Figure 0.5. The first hand survey of Mastic, completed in the late nineteenth century (south is up). The survey is not to scale, but shows the relative position of the house, creeks, lots, roads, and other features. On the map, trees are represented by Xs, roads are double lines, and lots are bounded by single lines with the letter F designating fences. The map may have been completed around 1881 around the time John Gelston Floyd died. (FIIS Collections)

including several of the garden. Unlike Cornelia and Sadie, who wrote a great deal about their childhood experiences, Rosalie focused on life at Mastic at the time she was writing.

Historic Photographs and Drawings

The archives at the William Floyd Estate contain hundreds of photographs of the Floyd family and the Mastic house and landscape taken from the late nineteenth century through the 1960s. The oldest of these photographs are primarily portraits of family members, beginning at the time of the Civil War with a photo of John G. Floyd Jr. in his Union Army uniform.

In the 1880s and 1890s, numerous photos depict scenes from the childhood and young adulthood of Cornelia, Rosalie, and William Floyd. Many of these were taken in the landscape and show the house, outbuildings, and other landscape features in the background.



Figure 0.6. The second hand survey (south is up) is similar to the first, but appears to have been completed at a later date. Where the first survey indicates lot names on John Wood's Neck (lower left corner of map), the second survey labels the area as "Land of Augustus Floyd." Other details, such as the label "Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue" for the road leading to Indian Point, suggest a later date. (FIIS Collections)

Several photographs were taken in and around the garden of the house, as well as other locations in the Mastic landscape. These photos, included in Rosalie's manuscript "The Backwoods Book," appear to have been taken around 1914 based on the apparent ages of Cornelia's children at the time. The photos show many details of the garden, including trees, walkways, garden ornaments, and other features, as well as the type of flowers planted in the garden beds.

In addition to the photographs, a number of drawings provide visual information about Mastic from the mid-nineteenth century. One of Sadie Floyd's cousins, Kate Floyd Delafield, was an artist who made sketches of the house and other buildings. These include two drawings showing the south façade of the house made in 1856 and 1859 and drawings of the hen house and blacksmith shop.

The oldest visual record of the Mastic estate is the 1792 portrait of William Floyd by Ralph Earl. In the portrait, Floyd appears to be posing near the southeast end of the pightle with his house in the background. The painting depicts the house following a number of additions and alterations that were made in the second half of the eighteenth century, including the expanded central core and symmetrical east and west wings. Three outbuildings are also visible in the portrait, including a large white barn and what looks like a storage crib behind the house and a smaller structure of unknown use to the west of the house.



Figure 0.7. 1911 scale survey showing lot arrangement and names, roads, trees and hedgerows, orchards, and buildings. (FIIS Collections)

Historic Maps and Aerial Photos

Important information about the physical layout of the Mastic landscape comes from two undated hand-drawn surveys of the estate. Neither map is drawn to scale, but they both depict the relative position of the estate's lots, lot boundaries, roads, water bodies, forested areas, and other features. By conforming the surveys to a base map using the lot boundaries, a scale map of conditions in the late nineteenth century can be constructed.

While the two surveys look similar, comparison suggest that they were made at different times, possibly twenty to thirty years apart. What appears to be the earlier map shows the arrangement of the lots on John Wood's Neck marked with lot names. The second map does not show the lots on John Wood's Neck, indicating instead that the area is the "Land of Augustus Floyd." It is likely that the earlier map was created around the time of John G. Floyd's death in 1881, just before the estate was divided among his heirs. The second map was made after that date, possibly in preparation for the survey of the property in 1911.

In 1911, a scale survey of Mastic was completed by Nicoll Floyd and W.E. Baker. The colorized map shows much of the same information as the two earlier surveys, but is drawn to scale with clear graphic conventions and neat lettering. The wealth of information provided by the survey includes lot arrangement, their



Figure 0.8. Aerial photograph of Mastic taken in 1930.

relative size, and names; forested areas and the location of hedgerows along lot boundaries; fences, roads, orchards and other features; and unlike the earlier surveys, the location of outbuildings. This survey paints a detailed picture of what the Mastic landscape looked like in the early twentieth century and how the landscape was beginning to change as agricultural activity declined.

Several older maps of the area exist, dating as far back as the end of the eighteenth century, but these typically show less detail about the Mastic landscape proper. Of note are an 1838 coast survey and a 1797 map of Brookhaven, both of which show the location of roads, fields, and homesteads of Brookhaven, Mastic, and Moriches.

Aerial Photography

During the twentieth century, the Mastic landscape began to be documented in aerial photographs. The earliest, and arguably most valuable for the purposes of discerning historic site conditions, are aerial photos taken in 1930. The photographs are consistent with the 1911 survey, showing the lot arrangement, roads, outbuildings, and vegetation patterns. Evident in the photos is the increase in

vegetation along lot boundaries, as well as the beginning of reforestation within the lot fields.

Aerial photography of Mastic from the 1950s through the 1970s and to the present continued to document the changes in the landscape during the twentieth century. Photographs taken in 1977 document the conditions of the landscape at the time the National Park Service took over management of the William Floyd Estate.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF TREATMENT

This volume comprises *Part 1* of the *Cultural Landscape Report for the William Floyd Estate*, including documentation of the site history, existing conditions, and analysis and evaluation of the William Floyd Estate landscape. Although this volume should be followed by a second volume, *Part 2*, which would develop a comprehensive treatment approach and offer recommended treatment tasks, initial considerations for treatment based on the findings of this report are offered here.

Following the acquisition of the William Floyd Estate by the National Park Service in 1976, the park established the management objective "to interpret the history and to preserve the historical resources of the estate as a continuum of the William Floyd family." Rather than restricting interpretation to the life of William Floyd and the period of time he lived at Mastic, the park's goal has been to preserve and interpret the full continuum of family history at Mastic, from its first settlement in the early eighteenth century until it was relinquished by the Floyd/Nichols family in 1976. To this end, the management strategy has been to preserve the features and character of the property as it was at the time it came to the National Park Service. Additions, alterations, and furnishings from later in the family's ownership have been retained and are displayed alongside older historic features, and elements from the full span of the historic period are given equal emphasis. No attempt is made to return the property to earlier time or to portray a character other than what it achieved in the mid- to late twentieth century.

For the house and its contents, this management approach is appropriate, effectively achieving the objective of presenting the continuum of family history. From its initial construction, the house evolved slowly over time, with incremental additions and alterations that retained much of the previous structure. While architectural elements were periodically modernized to meet changing styles, the character of the "Old House" always remained firmly rooted in a previous era. Furniture, art, and other household items were retained across generations and gradually supplemented with more modern furnishings. By the time the National Park Service acquired the house, it represented a physical manifestation of the

continuum of use by the family, containing architectural elements and furnishings from all periods of its history and from all generations of its occupants.

The same is true for the landscape through most of the property's history. The overall structure of the farm landscape, with its irregularly shaped lots divided by ditches and mounds, lopped tree fences, and hedgerows, accommodated evolving uses over the property's long history with little need for significant alteration. Outbuildings, fences, and other landscape features were replaced or moved as needed but were present over long periods of time. Even as agriculture declined and the use of the property transitioned to pleasure and sport, the landscape continued to exhibit a character that had defined it throughout its history.

Beginning in the twentieth century, however, the landscape began to change more rapidly, and the succession that occurred between about 1930 and 1976 represents a discontinuous change that significantly altered the layout and character of the Mastic landscape. Maintenance of the open lots ceased, and they were soon filled with trees. Forest overtook the orchard as well, and the fruit trees, clearly visible in a 1930 aerial image, were indiscernible twenty years later. When the family had fields cut through the forest in the 1950s to accommodate hunting, the new fields did not follow the original lot configuration, with some fields cutting across historic lot boundaries. By the time the National Park Service acquired the property, the organization that had defined the landscape for two centuries was no longer legible, and the landscape as a whole exhibited a much more closed, forested character.





Figure 0.9. Photographs of the pightle and vista (top) and the view to Spring Lot from the house (bottom) from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The images demonstrate the qulity of views from the house and the visual permeability of the lot boundaries. (FIIS Collections)

While using 1976 as a reference point for treatment of the house and collections successfully portrays the full span of family history, landscape conditions at that time did not adequately reflect those that would have been known to most of the family generations. Treatment of the cultural landscape is an opportunity to reinstate and enhance the qualities that defined the landscape during the majority of the family's tenure, more effectively convey its agricultural and domestic character, and help facilitate interpretation of the site's relevant stories.

TREATMENT OBJECTIVES

In order to better reflect the landscape character that the Floyd family knew for over two hundred years, the following treatment objectives should be considered.



Figure 0.10. Diagram demonstrating potential areas to be cleared (hatched areas) for the enhancement of views and limited reestablishment of lot arrangement. As depicted, the total area to be converted from forest to field is less than fifteen acres. (OCLP)

Enhance the open character and views from the house

The historic landscape character as experienced from the house was largely defined by the open landscape and the broad and long views from the house and south lawn. Today, the lawn and pightle provide these qualities to a degree, but views are limited by the solid wall of trees along the edge of the pightle. During the historic period, the edge of the pightle allowed views into adjoining lots, including the Ball Room Lot, Lot before the Door, and Spring Lot. Because of the current arrangement of fields, these views could be reclaimed with minimal clearing, essentially connecting extant fields and restoring a small portion of the historic lot layout.

- Clear portions of Ball Room Lot and Lot before the Door and maintain a visually permeable boundary into these lots from the pightle.
- Clear Spring Lot and restore views across home creek.
- Reduce tree encroachment along the margin of the pightle.
- Maintain vista as a view corridor.

Figure 0.11. Detail of the 1930 aerial image showing a gridwork of fruit trees in the orchard.



Reestablish orchard and provide appropriate setting for the cemetery

From the time it was established in the mid eighteenth century, the cemetery was located in the back corner of the orchard. The orchard, with its open gridwork of trees, fragrant blossoms in the spring, and fruit-laden branches through the summer, created a bucolic setting for the cemetery. The orchard was also a prominent feature of the Mastic landscape, appearing repeatedly in descriptions and recollections by Floyd family members and Mastic guests. The primary entrance to the property, Squirrel Lane, passed through the orchard, as did the footpaths to John Woods Neck and Taupeonk, which family members took to visit aunts and uncles and the homes of family servants who lived there.



Figure 0.12. Images from the 1980s (top) and today (bottom) showing changes to the character of vegetation aound the house and outbuildings. (top: NPS; bottom: OCLP)

The orchard remained until around 1930, when it was still clearly visible on aerial photographs, but shortly thereafter it was enveloped by forest. Today the cemetery is enclosed in dense forest vegetation, with no discernible connection to its historic orchard setting. In order to reestablish this important feature and enhance the historic setting for the cemetery:

- Survey the orchard lot to determine whether any fruit trees remain.
- Clear the forest vegetation from the orchard lot, retaining any extant fruit trees.
- Reestablish the orchard with apple trees.

Enhance the domestic character of vegetation around the house

From at least the early nineteenth century onward, ornamental plantings were maintained around the house and in the garden. These ranged from large specimen shade trees to ornamental shrubs, roses, vines, and flowering perennials. The garden reached the height of its character in the early twentieth century, when mature boxwoods, lilacs, quince, and fruit trees combined with geometric beds overflowing with roses, irises, and other flowering plants. Even as the high-maintenance planting beds declined during the twentieth century, shrubs, vines, and other flowering vegetation persisted through the remainder of the historic period. This vegetation lent a character of domesticity and care to the house and its surrounding landscape.

Since the end of the period of significance, damage from browsing deer and maintenance challenges have led to a significant decline in the amount of ornamental vegetation around the house and in the condition of that which remains. Flowering shrubs, roses, and vines that once grew along building foundations, fences, and other features have died or been removed. The few shrubs in the garden area, including boxwood, lilac, spirea, and quince, are rangy and encroached by weeds, with heavy browse damage around the base and poor growth. Many of the trees are in need of structural and rejuvenative pruning to maintain their health and form. In order to better reflect the domestic character that the landscape around the house exhibited during the historic period, the ornamental vegetation should be rehabilitated.

- Protect vegetation from browsing deer by reducing deer populations, creating an exclusion zone around the domestic core, or installing an exclusion fence around the entire park unit. Reduction of deer population also benefits the natural growth of maritime forest vegetation communities throughout the site.[6]
- Rehabilitate existing vegetation to improve condition and support healthy growth. Actions may include weed control, rejuvenative pruning, fertilization and irrigation, and treatment for pests and diseases as needed.
- Plant additional ornamental vegetation around the house, in the garden, and along fences and other outbuildings, using historic photographs as guidance on species and placement.

Preserve the latent features of the landscape

Present within the landscape today are features and patterns that are a physical record of the historic organization and use of the landscape during the historic period. Moreover, the image that these patterns form represents a crucial aspect of how the landscape was perceived and how it was understood by the generations that lived there. Many of these features and patterns are hidden beneath dense forest growth, are inaccessible, or are otherwise invisible to the average observer. In order to ensure that this image is preserved and made available for interpretation, efforts should be made to develop a full understanding of what features remain and how they relate to historic landscape conditions, to preserve extant features, and to make them accessible and visible to visitors.

- Preserve the topographic features of the landscape, including the ditch and mound system, the Great Ditch, meadow ground path, and the dam on Home Creek. Employ established best practices for the management of earthworks to ensure the protection of these features.
- Inventory remnant cultural vegetation features. These may include lopped trees, fruit trees, ornamental vegetation, or other planted vegetation that is growing within the matrix of the forests, fields, and marshes. This may also include pat-

terns of older trees that predate twentieth-century reforestation growing along former lot boundaries and in areas that were wooded during the period of field cultivation. Take steps to preserve remnant cultural vegetation identified in the landscape.

- Create a comprehensive inventory of archeological projects that have previously been completed and summarize their findings to inform decisions about future landscape treatment and management.
- Conduct program of new archeological investigations to improve understanding of historic landscape organization, locate former structures, sites, and other features, and identify future treatment opportunities.
- Make landscape features accessible and visible in the landscape. This may include improving access to the lower acreage of the property, highlighting select features for access and interpretation, and placing landscape features within the context of their history and significance.

Interpret change

The one quality that has most defined the Mastic landscape over the past hundred years is change. The mid twentieth century saw the rapid evolution from an aged agricultural landscape to a closed, forested retreat, with changes coming, as Cornelia Floyd put it, "like a comic film run at double quick." Landscape changes have continued through the NPS period to today, when a warming climate and rising sea levels are driving further evolution and making stasis impossible. While arresting the processes of change is not an option, opportunities exists to make these changes visible and put them within the context of the site's history and future.

One such opportunity is to highlight the juxtaposition between past and present by finding the places where change is most evident. Examples include field lots once bearing names like "Red's Orchard" and "Sheep Pasture" that are now wetland or salt marsh; mounds that once formed field edges, now enveloped by dense forest; or open fields that are the perennial site of quixotic battles against invasive vegetation and forest succession. Interpretation would rely on effectively conveying historic conditions while focusing on the natural processes that are driving the changes, the systems that may benefit from evolving conditions, and the ways the park is managing the change and preparing for the future.

Additional considerations

In addition to the objectives outlined above, other treatment actions may be considered for future development. These may include:

- Conduct geophysical and archeological investigation within the garden to better understand its historic layout and inform limited restoration or the establishment of interpretive garden elements. This may include the reconstruction of

brick walks, benches, arbors, and other garden features; the reestablishment of missing shrubs and trees; or the establishment of rose and perennial beds based on nineteenth and twentieth century conditions.

- Restore missing segments of the ditch and mound system and create a demonstration exhibit of a living lopped tree fence.
- Construct interpretive structures, building foundations, or footprint outlines to convey the location, scale, and character of missing structures.
- Utilize livestock, such as sheep, horses, cattle, or pigs, for interpretive programs and for maintenance of fields.
- Rehabilitate the meadow ground path or construct a boardwalk to provide visitor access to the salt marsh area.

ENDNOTES

1 United States Federal Census of 1790, cited in Jennifer L. Anderson, "William Floyd Estate Historic Resource Study" (unpublished NPS draft report, May 6, 2020).

2 Letter to Steve Kesselman from Theodora DuBois Paul, second cousin to Cornelia Floyd Nichols, August 1982 (on file at FIIS archives).

3 Cornelia Floyd Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," June 1934-June 1940, Parts 1 and 2, unpublished manuscript, on file at FIIS archives.

4 The ten outbuildings listed in the National Register nomination include the Old Sheep Barn, which was destroyed by fire in 1979.

5 Rosalie Delafield Floyd, "The Backwoods Book," unpublished manuscript on file at the FIIS archives. The piece can be approximately dated based on the photographs contained in the book, the age of Cornelia's children in the photographs, and by some of the literary references Rosalie makes.

6 The issue of deer populations within the park and options for mitigating their impacts are addressed in the *Fire Island National Seashore Final White-tailed Deer Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* (National Park Service, 2015).



Meadow grounds. (FIIS Collections)

Site History

PRE-COLONIAL AND EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT (BEFORE 1718)

The geology of Long Island is the result of the Wisconsin glaciation, which covered northern North America with deep ice sheets until about 20,000 years ago. At that time, the terminus of the great Laurentide ice sheet reached as far south as the New York coast. As the glacier receded, it left a deep depression that filled with water, forming a sound separating Long Island from the mainland. Melting snow and ice deposited rock and gravel in parallel terminal moraines, long ridges of hills that extended east and west the length of the island. Successive glacial maxima created two primary moraines on the island: Harbor Hills Moraine, which runs along the north shore of the island along the sound, and the Ronkonkoma Moraine, which runs along the center of the island. South of these moraines, the island is composed largely of glacial outwash, characterized by sandy plains sloping gently southward to the tidal bays.

As the glaciers receded and the climate warmed, the evergreen tundra landscape transitioned to a rich and diverse environment that was more favorable to human habitation. Deciduous forest was interspersed with large swaths of meadow that spanned the island, and the abundant water and low elevation created numerous freshwater wetlands and salt marshes. This environment provided for an abundance of plant and animal resources to support early Indian populations. Oak, hickory, chestnuts, black walnut, black cherry, tulip trees, maple, elms, and pine provided nuts, fruits, and seeds for food, while the understory contained a variety of nutritious plants. Edible understory plants included blueberries, strawberries, huckleberries, cranberries, grapes, and beach plums, as well as edible roots like groundnut, pond lily, cattail, Indian cucumber, sunflower, and arrowhead.

When Europeans arrived, Long Island was populated by a number of Indian tribes, composed of related kinship groups defined by familial relationships, political alliances, and traditional territories.[1] Tribal names, based primarily on geographic location, included the Matinnecocks, Nissequogues, Unkechaugs, Secatogues, Massapequas, Setaukets, Corchaugs, Shinnecocks, and Montauketts. The area that would become the William Floyd Estate was part of the Unkechaug territory, which stretched along the south shore of the island across what is today

Brookhaven, Mastic, and Moriches, extending north to about the middle of the island. They lived in villages spread across the territory, often located on the banks of inland ponds and streams. One early village location was on the bank of Poospatuck Creek, which enters the Forge River before flowing into the bay. Archeological evidence indicates that Poospatuck has been a village site for at least four thousand years.[2]

The Unkechaugs and other Long Island Indians maintained a close relationship to the water and its resources, which provided both material and spiritual subsistence. The tidal creeks and bays provided a wide variety of fish and shellfish for food. Seals and porpoises, important sources of meat, oil, and fur, were hunted along the coast and in the bay in dugout canoes. Whales that beached themselves, or became stranded in shallow water, were particularly valuable finds, providing large quantities of meat, oil, and bone for tools. Because of the windfall of resources they represented, stranded whales and other sea animals were viewed as gifts from the ocean, and their arrivals were sacred events. Accounts by seventeenth century explorers describe Long Island Indians hunting whales in open waters using "a multitude of their boats" and a harpoon fashioned from a bone and a bark rope.[3] This experience hunting whales was later exploited by European settlers, including Nicoll Floyd in the early eighteenth century, who used Indian servants in their own whaling enterprises.

Another important resource provided by the sea was Wampum, highly valued decorative beads carved from seashells. Wampum was made by carving tubular or disk-shaped beads from whelk or quahog shells. Whelk shells produced white beads, while quahog shells yielded the more valuable purple beads. Strings and loose beads were worn on clothing, in the hair, and in the ears and were often



Figure 1.1. Map of Long Island showing the approximate territories of Indian tribes and the locations of early European settlements in around 1665. (OCLP)

strung or sewn into jewelry, clothing, and ceremonial items. These items, and the wampum itself, were imbued with spiritual and ceremonial meaning. Clothing and belts with large amounts of wampum indicated high status in the tribe and were used to broker treaties and alliances, offered as gifts of atonement, and used to record important events in tribal history. Wampum was an integral part of the regional trade network of the northeast Indians. Coastal Indians used wampum to trade with interior tribes from central New York, New Jersey, the Delaware Valley, and beyond, acquiring items and materials not available in their own territory, including pottery and stone tools.[4]

Eastern Long Island was known as a source for high-quality wampum. Both whelk and quahog shells were abundant on the beaches and in the bays along the south side of the island. The Unkechaugs, Shinnecocks, and other tribes on the south shore became skilled wampum craftsmen, operating workshops where men carved, drilled and polished the shells into beads. Women then used the beads to craft clothing, belts, and jewelry. The abundant supply of shells and the skilled craftsmanship of the Unkechaug artisans were a source of wealth and pride, and the tradition of creating high quality wampum continues to be an important part of Unkechaug cultural identity today.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

When Europeans arrived in New York in the early seventeenth century, they found abundant resources, including fish, game, and timber. Early exploration and settlement of the coastal and interior areas was driven primarily by the profitable fur trade. The superior felting properties of beaver fur and the fashion of beaver felt hats in Europe drove an enormous demand for their pelts. Early Dutch traders purchased beaver pelts from the Indians for inexpensive trade goods and then sold them in Europe for significant profit. As the high demand quickly decimated the beaver populations in coastal areas, traders established relationships with interior tribes, who were eager to exchange furs for wampum.

Europeans initially traded with Long Island and coastal New England tribes, exchanging manufactured goods such as coats and other clothing, blankets, metal tools, and alcohol for wampum, which they would then use to acquire beaver pelts from the interior tribes. It soon became apparent, however, that the real wealth lay in the land itself, and both the Dutch and the English became eager to acquire rights to it. Because the Indians did not recognize individual land ownership, Europeans negotiated with tribal leaders, or Sachems, to purchase large tracts of traditional tribal land. The purchases were generally made for long lists of trade items. In 1655, a small group of English entrepreneurs negotiated with the Setauket Sachem Warawakmy for the purchase of thirty-two square miles of land on the north shore of Long Island. In exchange, the Setaukets received ten coats, twelve hoes, twelve hatchets, fifty axes, one hundred needles, six kettles, ten

fathoms of wampum, seven chests of powder, one pair of children's stockings, ten pounds of lead, and twelve knives. Such a price must have seemed very valuable to the Indians but was a trifle to the English in exchange for such a vast tract of land.[5]

Beginning in 1640 the rich hunting territories of the Long Island tribes were increasingly portioned out to English landholders through similar purchases and agreements. In the twenty-five years between 1640 and 1665, English towns were established at Southhold, Southhampton, Hempstead, East Hampton, Huntington, Brookhaven, and Smithtown. As English settlement accelerated through the end of the century, the woodlands that had supported the traditional Indian lifeways were replaced with cultivated fields of grain, pasture, meadow, and private tracts of forest. Tribes like the Unkechaugs were forced to subsist on ever-shrinking land reserved for their use, often placing them into further debt with the arriving Europeans.

MANOR OF ST. GEORGE

Col. William "Tangier" Smith came to New York in 1686, settling in Setauket by 1689. Beginning about that time, Smith began assembling large tracts of land within the Unkechaug territory on Mastic peninsula. In 1689, Smith negotiated with Unkechaug Sachem Tobacus and others to purchase a neck of land on the east bank of the Connecticut River (Carmans River). Over the next four years, he made six similar purchases, eventually acquiring several thousand acres comprising much of the Mastic peninsula northward to the middle of the island.These transfers were largely motivated by the Unkechaug's increasing debt, which was exacerbated by the diminishment of their traditional territory. In 1693 and 1697, Smith secured patents from Governor Benjamin Fletcher establishing the Manor of St. George. These patents not only formalized Smith's dominion over the lands he had already purchased, it granted him exclusive rights to buy any Indian land within the manor boundaries that had not yet been purchased. The manor also overlapped previous patents and infringed on lands already owned by the town of Brookhaven and its residents, including several parcels of salt meadow along the south edge of Mastic purchased by Brookhaven from the Unkechaugs in 1657 and 1674.[6]

After a shift in the political climate that led to Governor Fletcher being removed from office and being replaced with Richard Coote, the Earl of Bellomont, Smith found his manorial grant in increasing jeopardy. Governor Bellomont was aligned with a populist sentiment that favored small landowners over the colonial upper class. He objected to large land grants like the Manor of St. George, arguing that such large consolidation of land discouraged settlement and economic development of the colony. Bellomont began to challenge many of Fletcher's grants, claiming that they were not legal and should be nullified.[7]

Smith's Manor of St. George was particularly vulnerable to such challenges. The extravagant size of the manor, which encompassed nearly half of Brookhaven's 16,000 acres, was unpopular with town residents, who believed their own land rights were threatened by the manor. Furthermore, the boundaries of the deeds for the purchase of Indian lands were often imprecise, and the authority of the individuals to sell the land was often challenged. Smith sought to perfect his rights to his lands and approached a group of Unkechaug Indians generally recognized as having the authority to speak for the tribe. Smith asked them to reaffirm his previous purchases, and in exchange he offered to grant them rights to 175 acres of land on Mastic peninsula. Smith recorded the deed for this land in 1700, stating that the Unkechaugs, "their children and the posterity of their children for ever...without any molestation from me my heirs or assigns, shall and may plant, sow [the land] forever."[8] The deed included fifty acres at Poospatuck Creek, one hundred acres on Mastic Neck at the head of Home Creek, fifteen acres on Constables Neck (later called Lane's Neck) on the south bank of Poospatuck Creek, and ten acres at Qualiecan, an old name for John Wood's Neck just north of Home Creek.

The deed stipulates that the rights are given in perpetuity and that the Unkechaugs were forbidden to sell or lease their rights to the land. This became an issue later, as all four parcels set aside in the 1700 deed were included in a 4,400-acre parcel purchased by Richard Floyd from Tangier Smith's heir William Henry Smith. While Nicoll Floyd would eventually acquire three of the four reserved parcels, including the parcel at the head of Home Creek that likely included the site of the Mastic House, the fifty acres set aside at Poospatuck Creek was ultimately the only land retained by the Unkechaugs, later becoming the present-day Poospatuck reservation.

Within two generations of landing on Long Island, European settlers had fundamentally transformed the landscape and irreversibly altered the lifeways of the Native peoples. Through a series of land transactions, purchases, trades, and treaties, they had accumulated vast areas of land that had sustained the Indians for thousands of years. Suddenly, traditional hunting, gathering, and planting grounds were off limits, making the Indians dependent on the English and the new economy. The introduction of alcohol created profound health and social problems within the Indian communities, forcing them further into poverty and dependence.

LABOR SYSTEM

By the late seventeenth century, the Unkechaugs continued to derive a portion of their subsistence through hunting and farming small plots of land, but they were increasingly reliant on agricultural and domestic work on the farms and estates that were propagating across the island, often through indentureships for themselves of their children. Beginning around 1650, English companies orga-

nized to hunt the right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*) in the shallow coastal waters of Long Island. The skill and experience of the Unkechaugs in fishing, whaling, and coastal navigation made them valuable assets for the whaling companies, who hired them for the dangerous job of hunting whales and for processing the whales to extract oil and baleen for export. Indian whalers were often paid in-kind with material goods, including coats and other clothing, tools, rum, cider, and tobacco, but they were also charged for supplies, putting them into a continued cycle of debt. Whaling in Brookhaven peaked in the 1680s and continued through the early eighteenth century, before the declining whale populations pushed whalers to the open seas.

While some earned wages as day laborers, the English settlers often used indentured servitude to lock Indians, as well as free African Americans and poor Whites, into a labor system that was close to slavery. Indentured servants, while not legally enslaved, were contractually bound to their master for a period of time, forced to provide labor in exchange for basic subsistence. Poor families frequently indentured their children to wealthier households in exchange for a one-time payment, as well as basic food, clothing, and housing for the child. The child would usually serve in the household until they reached adulthood, gaining their freedom at the age of eighteen.

Debt was another common path to indenture. Unable to prevail in the new economy, many Indians found themselves trapped in a cycle of debt that they had no way of repaying. Some employers allowed workers to carry debt over from season to season, ensuring their continued service year after year. A person arrested for debt could be forced into a period of indenture to the creditor, a penalty often grossly disproportionate to the amount owed.

Throughout the eighteenth century, indentured servants worked in the homes and farms of Long Island alongside enslaved Africans and wage-earning free workers. Their status in legal bondage, though not indefinite, blurred the lines between slavery and indentured servitude. The rights of indenture could be sold or traded prior to their expiration and were often passed down to heirs as slaves were. The imprecision of the word “servant” used in wills and other documents further clouded the distinction. The use of indentured servants on Long Island continued well into the nineteenth century, past the final abolition of slavery in New York in 1827.

1718 TO 1803

The first Floyds on Long Island were Richard and Susanna Floyd, who arrived from Wales in 1656 and settled in Setauket, a settlement on the island’s north shore. Richard quickly began to build his wealth by systematically acquiring land

while diversifying into a number of business ventures, most prominently whaling. Ledger books that contain records of the business dealings of Richard Floyd and his son Richard Floyd II indicate extensive involvement of the Floyds in coastal whaling from at least the 1680s through the early eighteenth century.[9] In 1672, Richard Floyd I enslaved a man named Antony, the first documented case of African bondage in Setauket.[10]

Floyd soon recognized the value of the lands on the south shore of Long Island and sought to expand his holdings there. The south side of the island offered easy access to the south beaches, where whale boats could be launched, and whale carcasses processed. The shore along the southern bays was also edged with extensive meadow grounds that produced salt hay, a productive and nutritious fodder for livestock. In 1684, Richard Floyd purchased five hundred acres of upland on Pattersquash Neck, later called Floyd Neck, on Mastic Peninsula. This parcel had been mortgaged in 1682 by the Unkechaugs to secure the debt of an Unkechaug named Mahaine. When the Unkechaugs were unable to pay the debt, the county foreclosed on the property in 1683 and took possession. Richard Floyd purchased the property a year later for only nineteen pounds.[11]

Upon his death in 1700, Richard Floyd passed his estate to his son Richard II, who later became both a judge and a colonel in the county. Richard II married Margaret Nicoll, daughter of the first English secretary of the colony. They had seven children, of whom the final two were boys, Richard III and Nicoll. As the older of the two, Richard III received the primary estate in Setauket from his father. Little is known about this portion of the Floyd property, but as Richard II left his second son more than four thousand acres, it can be assumed that Richard III's portion was of comparable or greater size. Richard III's son Richard IV would later be forced to surrender his property for siding with the loyalists during the Revolutionary War.

NICOLL FLOYD

In 1718, Richard II purchased "a large tract of wilderness" in the Manor of St. George from William Henry Smith, son of Tangier Smith. The 4,400-acre property included the eastern half of the Mastic peninsula, extending north from the bay to the middle of the island and west from the Forge River to Pattersquash Creek. The property, which was likely intended for Richard II's second son Nicoll, contained diverse resources needed to operate a self-sustaining plantation estate, including marsh and meadow land, upland, forest, springs, rivers and creeks, and access to the bay. The numerous springs and accessible ground water provided ample fresh drinking water for people and livestock. The rivers offered water power for grist mills and an iron forge, which gave Forge River its name. River and bay access was critical at a time when the road system was incomplete and traveling by land was

difficult. Several landings located along the bay shore and on Forge River were used to load grain, farm products, and cordwood for shipment to New York City.

Nicoll Floyd's new estate included the 175 acres that Tangier Smith had reserved for the Unkechaugs in 1700. The largest of the four parcels in that deed, comprising 100 acres, appears to have been located at the head of Home Creek and likely included Nicoll's chosen home site. The site may have been occupied, or at least seasonally utilized, by the Unkechaugs in 1700 when Smith's deed was written, accounting for its inclusion in the reservation, but there is no indication that it was still occupied in 1730. Nicoll sought to acquire the parcel, despite language in the 1700 deed prohibiting the Indians from selling it, and in 1730 he approached a group of Unkechaugs to negotiate a purchase. The Indians ultimately agreed to sell the land, and the transaction was completed for the price of twenty Dutch blankets, four barrels of cider, and three pounds current money of New York.[12]

Having acquired what would become the heart of his estate, Nicoll set about carving a productive farm from the forest and marsh. He built the first increment of what would become the Floyd house at Mastic at the head of Home Creek, about a mile from the bay. The site offered fresh water, small-boat access to the bay, and hundreds of acres of fertile land suitable for farming. The site also featured an open field or meadow that had likely been cleared earlier by Unkechaug Indians for a planting ground or village site. [13] The original house was twenty-five feet by thirty feet with a full second story, having three rooms on each floor. While not large by later standards, the house was a respectable first home for the son of a wealthy landholder.

Details of the evolution of the farm property as it grew to its eventual size are not known, but it is plausible that Nicoll Floyd oversaw the establishment of much or all of the farm extent on Mastic Neck. The farm was divided into an irregular arrangement of fields, pastures, meadows, and marsh, delineated by a system of ditches and mounds along the field boundaries. At least a portion of the field boundary mounds were topped with hedgerows made by pleaching young trees to create dense living fences, locally called lopped-tree fences.

Much of the work of clearing forests, digging ditches, and cultivating fields would have been accomplished by enslaved people. A wealthy, landowning family like the Floyds would have enslaved a number of people across its various properties. Nicoll's will left his son William "all my Negro or Indian Servants on the Farm at South [Mastic] whether male or female that shall not be otherwise disposed of by me." In leaving his Smithtown farm to his other son Charles, Nicoll bequeathed "all my servants there (belonging to the place) whether Negro or Indian male or female." The will also left each of his six daughters a "Negro girl."[14]

Other details about Nicoll Floyd's estate can be gained from his will. At Mastic, he had created a prosperous farm, producing wheat, rye, corn, and flax and raising



Figure 1.2. Map of the town of Brookhaven made in 1797 showing the extents of the Floyd property (in orange). (FIIS Collections)

cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses. Personal items included farm utensils, blacksmith tools, and household furniture. Livestock and other items Nicoll left to Charles as part of his Smithtown farm indicates it was of similar scale as the Mastic farm. During his time at Mastic, Nicoll continued his father's and grandfather's involvement in whaling. His will left William "all my whaling tackling with all my Indians for that design."

Around 1750, Nicoll undertook the first expansion of the Floyd house, adding fourteen feet to the west side of the house. The addition added more living space to the house, including one or two rooms on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor. Completed only twenty years after the house was built, the addition indicated that Nicoll had achieved a prosperity that allowed him to enjoy a higher quality of life and to better accommodate a family that included eight children between the ages of two and eighteen. Despite the extra space, with ten people in the house sharing five rooms upstairs, plus enslaved and indentured servants

living and working in and around the house, the Mastic house would have been a crowded and lively place.

In just two and a half decades, Nicoll and Tabitha Floyd had accumulated thousands of acres across Brookhaven, creating two productive farms while raising a sizable family. Any hope of enjoying that success through a long old age, however, were tragically dashed when Nicoll and Tabitha died within a month of each other in the spring of 1755 during a typhoid epidemic. They were buried in the back corner of the orchard, the first two graves in what would become the Floyd family cemetery.

William, only twenty years old at the time, suddenly became master of the Mastic estate, inheriting all its "Negro or Indian servants", livestock, furnishings, and agricultural implements. He also acted as executor of his father's considerable estate and assumed primary responsibility for the care of his six younger siblings. This new position would have bestowed upon young William a great deal of prestige as well as responsibility.[15]

WILLIAM FLOYD

William Floyd was born in the Mastic house in 1734. The wooden cradle that he purportedly slept in as a baby remains in the house today. Little direct information is known about William's early life, but as the oldest son of a wealthy and respectable landowner who was active in local politics, he would have received an informal, but well-rounded education in the fields of politics, finance, and liberal arts. He was active in society, and engaged in pastimes such as hunting, an activity he was particularly fond of. The Mastic house became the "perpetual resort of an extensive acquaintance, and the frequent scene of social festivity."[16] William's status and wealth afforded him the luxury of being a gentleman farmer, largely spared the hard labor of operating the farm. The real work of cultivating the fields, tending the livestock, and running the household would have been accomplished by at least one dozen enslaved individuals as well as an unknown number of indentured servants and hired laborers.

In 1760, William married Hannah Jones, and together they had three children: Nicoll in 1762, Mary in 1764, and Catharine, nicknamed Kitty, in 1767. For the next fifteen years, their life was focused primarily on raising a family and running the farm. Numerous receipts, bills, and other records preserved in the Mastic house attic reveal the daily concerns of the household and farm. Many of the items purchased during this time were textiles: linen and cotton cloth, damask, purple chintz, silk, and ribbon, as well as finished items like gloves and handkerchiefs. Other items include staples like sugar, salt, and rum, as well as products that would have been luxuries at the time, like spices, nutmeg, raisins, and chocolate. There are no receipts for products that could be grown at Mastic, suggesting the

farm was self-sufficient with regard to grain, vegetables, meat, and wool. William also continued his father's and grandfather's pursuit of whaling, as there are receipts from outfitting the whaleboat *Gazette*.

It appears that William may have undertaken the second substantial alterations to the house (following his father's addition in 1750) in around 1767 or 1768. His purchase of five thousand shingles and brown paint may have been for the construction of the east wing, or possibly a detached kitchen that was later connected to the house to form the east wing.[17]

William's high status and social activity led to his participation in local offices and civic administration, which in turn connected him with ever more influential circle of people. In the early 1770s, he became increasingly engaged in the growing conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies. In 1775, he was appointed to the command of the Suffolk County militia as a Colonel. The most notable event during his service was leading a force that prevented the landing of British forces assembled in Gardiner's Bay at the east end of Long Island. Accomplished entirely through a demonstration of force without any fighting, the confrontation appears to be the most direct action the Colonel saw, and he would spend the rest of the war serving his country in Philadelphia as a delegate to Congress.

In the fall of 1774, Floyd participated in the First Continental Congress as a delegate from New York representing Suffolk County. He was chosen again the following spring to represent his county in the Second Continental Congress, and it was during this session he participated in the critical work of preparing the country for war and laying the foundation of a new nation. By the summer of 1776, after a year of fighting between the colonists and the British, it was clear that a line had been crossed. William Floyd joined fifty-five other delegates in declaring the United States free and independent from Great Britain.

Revolutionary War

By affixing his name to the Declaration of Independence, William Floyd helped set in motion events that would extract a bitter personal price from him and his family. Less than a month after the document was signed, British General William Howe's forces landed at Brooklyn, easily defeating General George Washington and his Continental Army and driving them across the East River to Manhattan, and eventually to Pennsylvania. William was still in Philadelphia, but his family were at Mastic. As the British approached, Hannah and the three children were hastily evacuated, and with the help of friends, reached the relative safety of Middletown, Connecticut. Some sense of the hardship, fear, and uncertainty faced by those in exile, and particularly those who remained behind, can be felt in a letter Hannah wrote to William from Middletown in 1779.

> I have just received your kind letter of June 3rd informing me of your safe

> arrival at Philadelphia, which gave me great pleasure for many have been my fears about you since you first left the fishkill. Since that I have not heard from you til now but thanks be to Heaven that kept you from falling into the hands of your Enemies. I have been very unwell since you left home but am now in pretty good health and our family are comfortable as to the [illegible] of life. . . . We have disagreeable news from the East end of Long Island. Our friends are very much [illegible], their house filled with soldiers, their bread taken from them, their cattle killed ten a day to support them, and it is the opinion of many should they continue there all winter many of the inhabitants will perish for want of bread. Many of them have come off and left their families at the mercy of the enemy. . . . Happy are we that are not there and what a kind providence that has kept us out of their power.[18]

During their absence, Mastic was subject to the same treatment as other properties on Long Island. The overseer, William Phillips, remained behind and tried to protect the farm from pillage and continue operations as best he could. He was caught selling produce from Mastic in New York and sending the money to Floyd. Phillips was ordered to swear an oath of allegiance to the king, promise neither to leave the island nor transmit information or cash to the rebels, and give an annual accounting of the farm to the royal government. Shortly after this, he did leave Mastic and Long Island, traveling across the sound to Connecticut. He returned in 1779 in an attempt to "bring off effects of Col. Floyd and his own" but was captured by the British.[19] William Floyd described the situation in 1780:

> . . . Some time after the enemy got possession of New York and Long Island, two persons (and as I am told Tories) who fled to the enemy from this state, obtained a permit of Governor Tryon to take possession of My Estate which they did, and turned off the steward that I had on it — who was obliged to leave the island and come to this state for safety.
>
> The above persons took on my estate a considerable quantity of stock of different kinds the greatest part of my household furniture, and all my farming utensils, with some beds, and bedding with other clothing.[20]

In Phillips' absence, the house was occupied by British cavalry, who reportedly stabled their horses in the hall. All of the produce, livestock, and stored provisions were seized for the use of the army, and the tools, weapons, and household valuables were stolen, either by the British or by local loyalists. Fences were dismantled and trees were cut down for fuel, and the fields were left to fallow. At the end of the war, William returned to Mastic to find the house ruined, its contents plundered, and the estate despoiled.[21]

Rebuilding Mastic

Hannah never returned to Mastic; she died at Middletown in 1781, leaving son Nicoll, age 19, and daughters Mary and Kitty, age 17 and 14. The children joined their father at the ruined estate in the spring of 1783 and began the process of rebuilding their lives. Despite the damage to his property and the financial toll of seven years of lost income, William was still wealthy enough to spend what was needed, not only to repair but to enlarge the house and return the farm to produc-

tivity. Over the next few years, he made numerous purchases of household items, tools, and building materials, including a broad axe, adze, auger, gimlet, chisel, and mallet purchased in 1783. Further renovations were undertaken in around 1790, evidenced by purchases of more building materials, including an iron door knocker, six knob locks, six knob latches, eight bolts, and twelve hinge, lumber, shingles, glass, lead, sash line, sash weights, sheets of iron, paint, oil, and white and red lead. The purchase of an eight-foot hearthstone "2 Setts of Chimney pieces" indicates the construction, or renovation, of the kitchen.[22]

In 1792 William Floyd commissioned a portrait of himself by popular Revolutionary portraitist Ralph Earl.[23] Floyd posed for the painting at Mastic in a fine green suit with coat and waistcoat, standing with walking cane at the south end of the broad lawn in front of the house. Visible in the background, the grand house is a far cry from the twenty-five-by-thirty-foot structure his father built some sixty years earlier. The central core of the house now measured sixty feet across and included a formal parlor and study on the west end, as well as additional rooms upstairs. This addition would have allowed Floyd to entertain guests in a style befitting someone of his stature, including Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who stayed at Mastic during their visit to Long Island in 1791.

On each end of this central core was a smaller wing, painted brown. The one-and-a-half-story east wing, which may have been constructed before the war, featured dormers on the second story, two doors on its south façade, and a small porch covering the entrance door on the east end. The west wing was only one story but was similar in size and design to the east wing.[24]

The background of the 1792 Floyd portrait features three small, black figures near the side door of the stately house, a detail that calls attention to the enslaved and indentured individuals whose labor was exploited at Mastic. By the end of the eighteenth century, William Floyd enslaved more people than any other landowner in Brookhaven. The Federal Census shows fourteen enslaved individuals at Mastic in 1790 and ten in 1800. As Floyd rebuilt Mastic following the war, he likely relied substantially on the labor of this enslaved workforce.[25]

By 1785 the farm was producing a surplus that could be bartered for goods and supplies purchased in New York. For a purchase of pots, wrapping paper, indigo and copperas (a dye), turpentine, salt, sugar, snuff, chocolate, rum, molasses, and wool cards the Floyds traded 28 pounds of cheese, 30 pounds of butter, five hams, and hog's lard. A similar purchase was made with 304 pounds of cheese, 124 pounds butter, 68 pounds of hog's lard, and 45 gallons of rum. Livestock hides, primarily cow but also sheep and horses, were cured and tanned, and used to make shoes on the premises. One of the outbuildings was devoted to the cobbler, who paid yearly visits to provide shoes for the family as well as for the servants. While the primary crop produced at Mastic at this time appears to be flaxseed, whatever income the farm was bringing in was predominantly from livestock.

Receipts in the years following the war included purchases of apples and cider, suggesting the farm's orchards had been destroyed during the occupation and had not yet returned to productivity.

Social Life

Following the Floyds' return to Mastic in the spring of 1783, William was committed to engaging his daughters in society, with trips to New York and social engagements. Receipts during this time include several purchases of fine textiles and clothing, including scarlet broadcloth, velvet, linen, muslin, tiffany gauze, satin, ribbon, buttons, lace, shoes, and gloves, (always bought along with powder, shot, and rum). The efforts, and money spent, must have been effective, because the spring of 1784 saw the weddings of Mary, to Benjamin Tallmadge, and William Floyd, to his second wife Joanna Strong. Benjamin Tallmadge wrote of his wedding in March, "General Floyd gave a most sumptuous entertainment to a great number of invited guests."

Kitty Floyd returned to Mastic with her own romantic dilemma. In the fall of 1782, while staying with her father in Philadelphia, fifteen-year-old Kitty met thirty-one-year-old James Madison, who fell in love with her. Romance blossomed over the winter, with the two exchanging miniature portraits, Madison's containing a braided lock of his hair, and by spring they were engaged. In correspondence to his friend Thomas Jefferson, the staid statesman expressed his happiness at the arrangement. "Before you left I had sufficiently ascertained her sentiments. Since your departure the affair has been pursued. Most preliminary arrangements, although definitive, will be postponed until the end of the year in Congress."

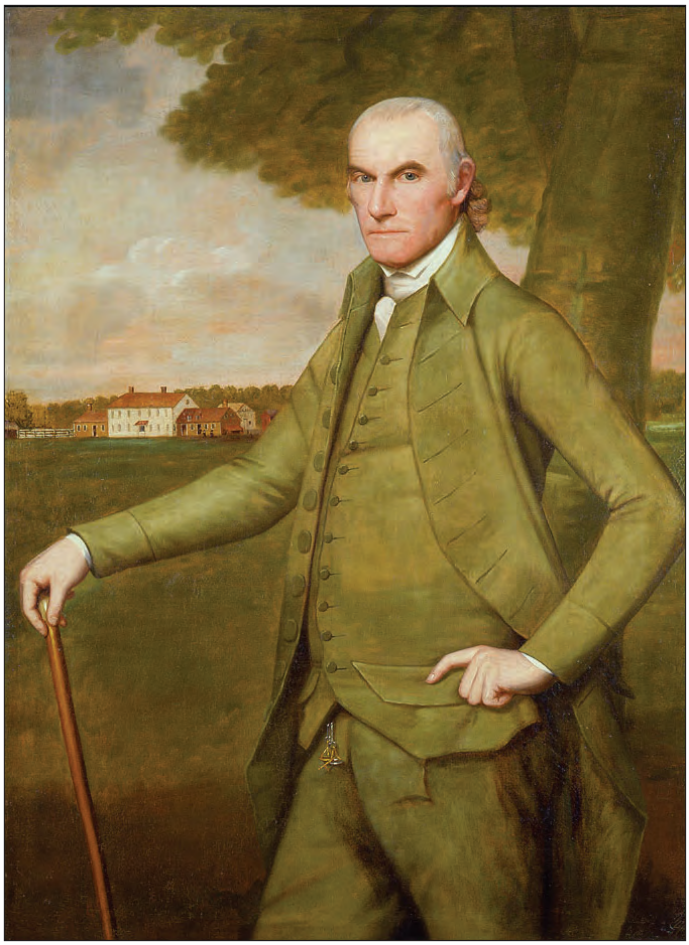


Figure 1.3. Portrait of William Floyd by Ralph Earl, painted at Mastic in 1792. The Mastic House and outbuildings are visible in the background of the painting. (FIIS Collections)

While in Philadelphia, Kitty had also met a nineteen-year-old medical student named William Clarkson who apparently captured her heart in a way Madison could not. After saying goodbye to both of them and returning to Mastic, Kitty decided that she loved William more than James. That summer, she sent her fiancé a letter of rejection, sealed, according to family tradition, with a lump of rye dough. Madison was heartbroken, not only at the rejection, but at Kitty's "profession of indifference at what has happened."[26] Kitty married William Clarkson upon his graduation in 1785 and later moved with him to North Carolina.

Slavery at Mastic

William Floyd served in the New York Senate during the time when the state's legislature made its first attempts to address the issue of slavery. Many New Yorkers saw inconsistency of fighting a war for independence, freedom, and personal rights while allowing a whole race of people to be held in servitude. In 1785, a bill was introduced in the Senate that would have provided for the gradual abolition of slavery. The House of Assembly passed the bill with a number of amendments, notably that free Black persons could not serve on juries, vote, or intermarry with Whites. After a conference between the two houses, the Assembly receded from two of the amendments, but would not budge on the right to vote. The Senate relented and passed the bill with the disenfranchisement amendment intact and sent it to the Council of Reconciliation for approval. The Council objected to the disenfranchisement amendment for a number of reasons, including that it was "repugnant to the principle on which the United States justify their separation from Great Britain." The Council asserted that the State could not create a class of citizens who did not have the benefit of participating in or being represented in their own governance. While the Senate overrode the objections with a two-thirds majority vote, with William Floyd voting in the affirmative to pass the bill with the amendment, the Assembly failed to muster a two-thirds majority and the bill died.[27]

Despite voting to end slavery in New York, William Floyd did not voluntarily manumit his own slaves. He received a number of slaves in his father's will as part of the Mastic estate and utilized their labor to keep the house and farm running throughout his time there. Information about the people enslaved at Mastic is scattered throughout the historical record, in the form of records of purchases, registry of births, and receipts for shoes, clothing, medical treatment, and other items and services. These records present an incomplete picture of the scale and nature of slavery at Mastic, but they do

Figure 1.4. (below) Portrait of Mary Floyd (Polly) by Ralph Earl. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 1.5. (below right) Minatures of Kitty Floyd and James Madison, which they exchanged during their courtship in the spring of 1883. Madison's miniature was set in a gold locket, which contained a braided lock of his hair. (Library of Congress)







begin to reveal information about some of the individuals who lived and worked on the property.

In 1758 William purchased one half interest in an enslaved man named Philip. Prior to that, Philip, who had been described as a boy in 1751, had been owned jointly between Nicoll Floyd and his neighbor Henry Smith. In 1774, Philip was among the six enslaved men for whom William Floyd bought guns, an apparent effort to equip them to serve in the county militia. In 1786 William bought a "Negro girl," presumably to help in the house following the birth of his daughter Anna the same year.[28]

Receipts of items purchased in quantity indicate that William was outfitting his slaves with shoes and clothes. In 1883, he bought thirty-six pairs of trousers, twenty-four drab jackets, twelve pairs of overalls, twelve split shirts with red capes, seven coats, and seven waistcoats. In 1790 he paid a cobbler to make thirty-four pairs of shoes, and six more pairs in 1800, with the names of the recipients listed as Gin, Hagar, Jack, Harry, Rachel, and Rachel Powel.

In 1799, the state Senate finally passed a law providing for the gradual abolition of slavery in New York. According to the new law, those bound in slavery prior to 1799 would remain enslaved, while their children born after that date would be born free, subject to a term of indenture: twenty-five years for girls and twenty-eight years for boys.[29] In 1817, the law was amended such that enslaved people born before 1799 would be free on July 4, 1827; children of enslaved mothers born between 1799 and 1817 would still serve their twenty-five or twenty-eight-year indenture, but children born between 1817 and 1827 would be free at the age of twenty-one.[30]

Move to Western

As the end of the century approached, life at Mastic became lively—and crowded—again. William, who was now over fifty years old, and Joanna had two daughters together: Anna in 1786 and Eliza in 1789. William's oldest son, Nicoll was married in 1789 to Phebe Gelston, and the two began their family, with five children born before 1803. Also living with the family at Mastic was Joanna's niece Nancy Strong.

During this time William continued to participate in government, serving in the New York Senate from 1777 to 1788. He maintained a high rank in the Senate, often presiding when the lieutenant governor was absent. He served three times as a presidential elector, voting for George Washington in 1792 and Thomas Jefferson in 1800 and 1804. Nicoll was now of age and likely began to take on more of the management of the farm during his father's frequent absences.

In 1803, William Floyd moved to Western, New York (Westernville today) with Joanna, their two daughters, Nancy Strong, and a small number of enslaved servants. He had purchased this land in 1784 and had been traveling there periodically, working to establish a new estate in what was at the time a wilderness frontier. By the end of the eighteenth century, the house and land were ready and the family packed their belongings and booked passage up the Hudson River to Albany, before making the long stage ride to Western. William lived the remainder of his life there, in a house that bore close resemblance to the Mastic house. He died in 1821 and was buried in the Westernville cemetery.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION: 1718–1803

The Mastic House, as it was at the time William Floyd left in 1803, is visible in his portrait painted a decade earlier. What had started out as a twenty-five-by-thirty-foot house with four rooms now stretched nearly 130 feet across the front, with a stately, two-story central façade and a wing on each side. The central portion, which had developed over at least three increments was now nearly perfectly symmetrical, with two chimneys, seven bays, and a central door with a small covered stoop. The wings, smaller in profile and painted brown, were likely dedicated to utilitarian uses, such as the kitchen (east wing), and the plantation office (west wing). In contrast to the more formal central portion, the smaller wings had an informal character, with smaller windows and numerous doors leading outside.

Three outbuildings are visible in the portrait. Behind the house is a large white barn and what looks like a storage crib, tall and narrow and painted red. West of the house is a smaller structure of unknown use. The barn appears to be in the same general location and orientation, and of similar scale and design as the large horse barn that was present later in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. It is certainly plausible that a barn present during William Floyd's time was still standing a century and a half later. Utilitarian outbuildings were often altered to meet changing uses, moved about the property, or repurposed as needed over time, and it was not uncommon for these structures to persist in the landscape for a long time. The landscape would have undoubtedly contained a number of other outbuildings to support the agricultural and domestic needs of the plantation. A blacksmith shop, smokehouse, granary, workshops, and henhouse would have joined the barns, sheds, and storage cribs to create a cluttered and active farm core.

In addition to utilitarian outbuildings, the landscape would have contained a number of cabin homes for the enslaved families at Mastic. By 1800, there were at least a dozen enslaved families living and working on the plantation, with possibly twice that many or more.[31] It is not known whether these cabins were located in close proximity to the house or if they were dispersed throughout the property.



Figure 1.6. Map of the Town of Brookhaven from a survey completed in 1797 by Isaac Hulse, Surveyor of Brookhaven. Mastic peninsula is in the lower center of the map. (New York State Archives)

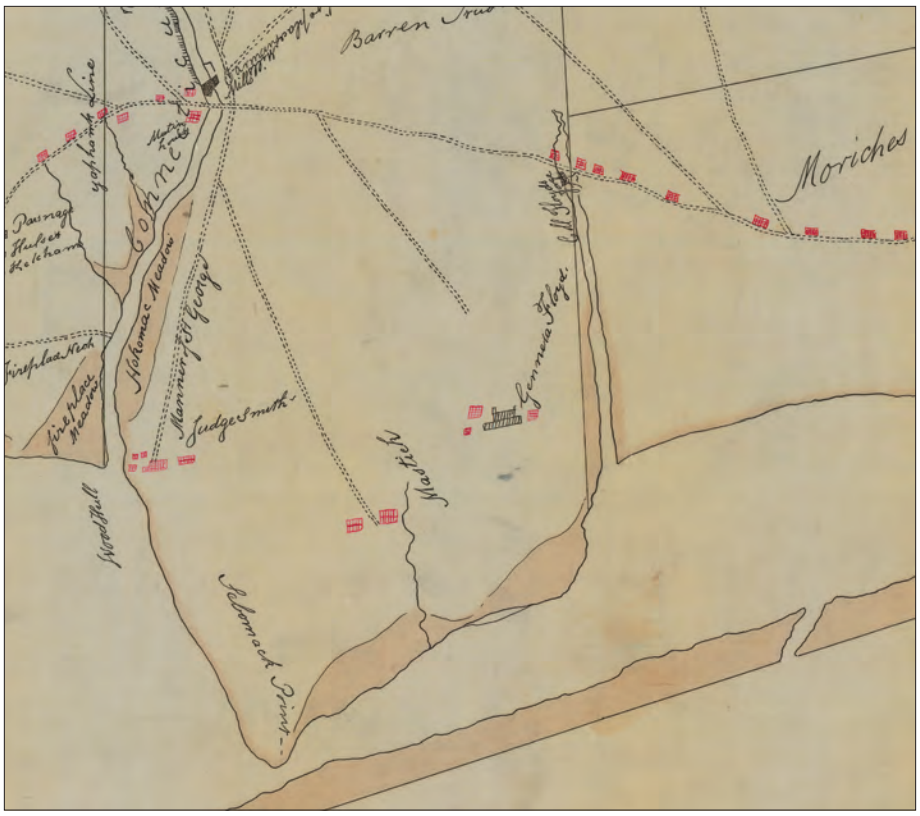


Figure 1.7. Nineteenth century tracing of the 1797 map of Brookhaven (detail) showing Mastic peninsula. The Mastic house is labeled "Gennera Floyd," with at least three outbuildings indicated on the map. William Floyd's forge is indicated at the north end of Forge River. (New York State Archives)

Also visible in the portrait is a substantial board fence, extending west from the west wing of the house and enclosing the west and probably north portions of the yard. The size and style of the fence appears to be designed to either enclose or exclude livestock from the enclosed yard, although it is more likely to be intended for the latter. A yard so close to the house would have been the primary outdoor utility area and would have contained a kitchen garden that provided produce for the house. While the pastures in the farm landscape would have featured fences and hedges to contain livestock, it was not unusual to have cattle, sheep, or pigs ranging freely around the house. Describing the farm as it was later in the nineteenth century, Charles Ross, the caretaker at Mastic from 1876 to 1911, mentioned that the horses were pastured on the lawn and that it was "fenced all around."[32]

The area immediately around the house, including the front lawn, house yard, and the area between the house and barn, are free of tall shade trees. This would have been in keeping with the utilitarian character of the area and would have provided ample sunlight for a kitchen garden. This is also consistent with family tradition, which indicates that the linden tree, boxwoods, and other ornamental vegetation were planted by Catharine Floyd during the first half of the nineteenth century. There is no documentation of an ornamental garden at Mastic during the eighteenth century.



Figure 1.8. Detail of the portrait of William Floyd by Ralph Earl, showing the house and outbuildings at Mastic in 1792. (FIIS Collections)

Farm Organization

It was during this initial period that the overall organization of the Mastic farm landscape was established. This organization consisted of an assemblage of irregularly shaped and sized lots that spread out southward from the house to the bay. Lots ranged in size from a few acres to about thirty acres and were separated from each other by ditches and mounds, fences, and lopped-tree hedges. Lot use was arranged according to individual conditions, with the upland fields closer to the house used for cultivating grain and flax and the lower areas used to pasture livestock or to cut hay.

When Nicoll Floyd first began to build the Mastic farm in the 1730s, a significant portion of the landscape was open meadow. The large stretches of meadow that lined the bay were highly valuable to early European settlers, as they provided nutritious fodder for livestock on land that did not need to be cleared. Mastic included about two hundred acres of meadows, often referred to as meadow grounds. These meadows were in addition to upland areas that were kept clear by the land use practices of the Unkechaugs prior to the arrival of Europeans, possibly including former Unkechaug domestic sites. An additional three hundred or more acres had to be cleared to create the farm lots. It is likely that by the late eighteenth century Mastic Neck was nearly free of forest cover from the house down to the bay, except for hedgerows that divided the lots.

To drain the salt marsh and improve its value as meadow land, a 6,000-foot-long ditch, referred to as the great ditch, was dug along the bay from Odell's Creek to Home Creek. The great ditch was the largest of a system of ditches and mounds that defined the lot borders throughout the estate. The use of ditches and mounds served multiple purposes of draining wet areas, containing livestock, and marking boundaries. The ditch-and-mound system was well adapted to the landscape and agricultural practices of Long Island and quickly became common on the island. To create the structures, a ditch, typically three or four feet wide and two to three feet deep, was dug and the spoils mounded alongside it.

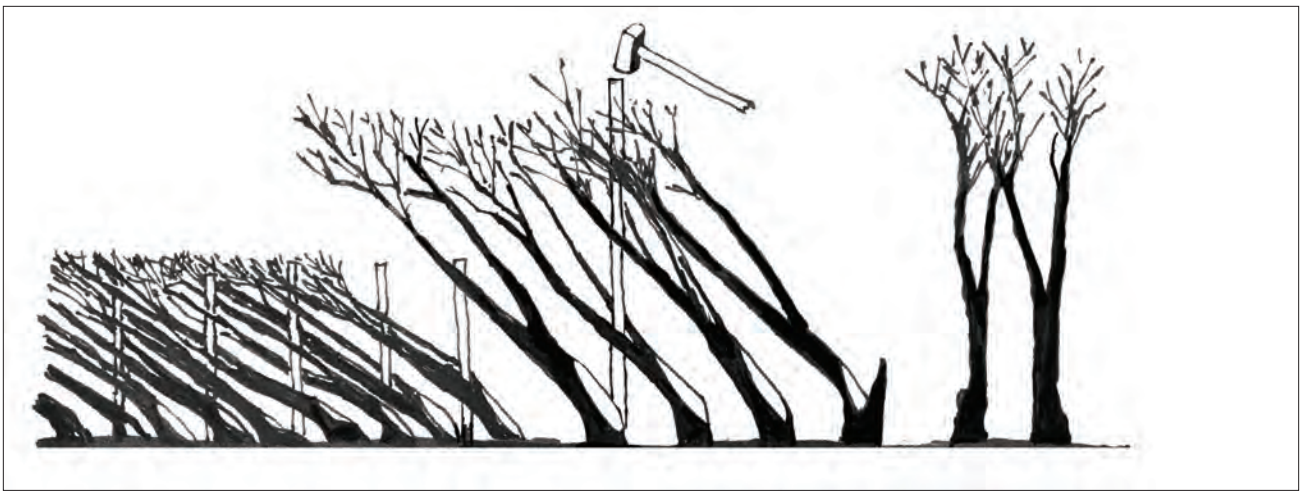


Figure 1.9. Diagram showing the process of hedge laying according to English tradition. The practice is related to lopped tree fences used on Long Island during the eighteenth century. (OCLP)

The ditch and mound system was often used in conjunction with a hedgerow practice locally called lopped tree fences. Lopped tree fences are a form of living field boundary created by cutting and bending young trees so that they grow into a dense, intertwined hedge. Typically, a young tree was cut partially through at the base of the trunk so that it could be bent over horizontally. Cutting and bending the tree would stimulate the growth of new sprouts, filling in the hedge. After repeated treatments, the entwined branches would form a dense barrier, sufficient to enclose livestock. Lopped tree fences are closely related to the traditional English practice of hedge laying, or pleaching, in which hedge vegetation, such as privet or hawthorn, is cut part-way through, bent over, and woven together with stakes.

Lopped tree fences were used extensively at Mastic in association with the ditch and mound system to mark the borders of the lots and provide livestock-proof barriers. It is unknown whether lopped tree fences were created along all of the ditches or used selectively on a portion of them.

The hedges were likely created during the first half of the eighteenth century by Nicoll Floyd, when the land was first being cleared and the structure of the fields was being created. It was during this period that the practice of lopped tree fences was becoming prevalent on Long Island. In 1750, Benjamin Franklin made a trip to Southold on the northeast side of Long Island, noting "a new kind of Fence … which consists of a Bank and Hedge." While the practice appears to have been new in Southold at the time, Franklin was told it "had been long practis'd with success at Southampton and other places on the south side of the island."[33] By the late nineteenth century, the many references to lopped trees describe large old and solitary trees that had long since taken the peculiar form for which they were known, indicating it had been many years since they had been maintained. It may be that by the time William Floyd left Mastic, the lopped tree fences were no longer maintained and had grown into ordinary hedgerows.



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1718 to 1803 Period Plan Overview

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1838
2. Map of Brookhaven, 1797

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Marsh/swamp
- Hedgerows/lopped tree fences
- Roads
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 0.6 1.2 MILES

Drawing 1



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1718 to 1803 Period Plan

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LEGEND
- Field/open ground
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- Hedgerows/lopped tree fences
- Roads
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 750 1500 FEET

Drawing 2

1803 TO 1881

After William Floyd moved to Western in 1803, his son Nicoll took over full management of the farm. Mastic entered its most productive period during this time, producing corn, oats, potatoes, wheat, flax, rye, and hay, as well as livestock and its products and timber for cordwood and lumber. Nicoll was a shrewd businessman, and during his time managing the estate, he diversified his business interests beyond agriculture, investing in shipping, whaling, trade, and finance.

NICOLL FLOYD

Nicoll and Phebe had eight children: four sons and four daughters. William (b. 1790), moved to Western when William Floyd the signer became too old to adequately run his estate there. The elder William had wished for his son Nicoll to take over at Western, but Nicoll preferred to stay at Mastic, and William the younger would go on to inherit the estate at Western. Nicoll lived at Mastic his whole life until the late 1840s, when he moved to the house at Taupeonk on Lane's Neck, less than a mile away.

Nicoll's second son, Augustus (b. 1795), became a lawyer and moved to New York City, where he helped conduct the commercial business of the farm and facilitate his father's various other enterprises. The two wrote frequently, trading news and advice on cattle sales, wool quality, crop and timber selections, shipping and trade, and purchases for the house and farm. David Gelston (b. 1802) married Lydia Smith and lived at Brecknock Point in Greenport. John Gelston (b. 1806) was the youngest son, but he was the one who would ultimately inherit Mastic.

Nicoll's daughters included Kitty (b. 1792), who drowned while playing in the surf on the beach on Fire Island when she was just eight years old; Mary (b. 1789), who married John Lawrence Ireland; Catherine (b. 1804), who never married and lived at Mastic her whole life; and Julia (b. 1808), who married Dr. Delafield and was an artist who drew a number of scenes of Mastic in the mid nineteenth century.

The Business of Mastic

Despite the large variety of crops grown at Mastic, the marginal soils of the region meant that livestock remained the primary product of the farm. Augustus wrote to Nicoll that in Suffolk County as a whole, "the cattle range is more extensive than the crop land." Cattle prices were depressed during the early nineteenth century. According to one letter, "there is no pasture around Brooklyn, the New York butchers are overstocked," and there were no buyers for Mastic beef. Nicoll was urged to increase his sheep flock, which, according to Augustus, "is the only stock with which you can come in competition with farmers who have better land." Nicoll bought forty Merino sheep in 1819 in an effort to improve the quality of



Figure 1.10. Portraits of Nicoll Floyd (left) and Phoebe Gelston Floyd (right) in 1830. (FIIS Collections)

his wool. By 1861 there were 130 head of cattle and 500 sheep pastured on John Wood's Neck and across the lower lots of Mastic.

In addition to livestock, forestry products were increasingly important to the profitability of the farm. The large forested areas of the estate provided hickory, oak, and roughage that was sold as fuel wood. Several cordwood docks were located on the estate, including at least three on the Forge River and one at the south end of Mastic Neck near Odell's Creek. The latter was accessed via a corduroy road that utilized logs to span the wet ground. In one year, Nicoll shipped nineteen and a half loads of oak and seven loads of hickory.

Nicoll, with encouragement from Augustus, recognized the importance of managing these forest resources to ensure their continued contribution to the farm produce. In 1827, Augustus wrote to Nicoll, "I will attend to the hawthornes although I do not think they will be as profitable as walnut or oak." He followed up a month later, "These [hawthorne quicks] are three years old from the seed. They seem to be so mortal slow in growing that it will require a century to make anything of them. ... Try some of your locust seed in the woods when you cut off the cordwood; the ground is soft, etc."

Nicoll did indeed plant the hawthorns, and as Augustus predicted, they did not thrive at Mastic. By the early twentieth century there were only a handful remaining.[34] Locust, however, did well and found many uses, both utilitarian and orna-

mental. They were fast growing and quickly reforested areas cut for cordwood, and the wood's resistance to decay made it ideal as a durable building material. Over the next century, locust poles were used extensively for fence posts and for ornamental structures in the garden like arbors and a small gazebo. In the early nineteenth century, two locust trees were planted flanking the small entry stoop to the house, but they appear to have been removed when the porch was enlarged in 1857.[35] These were replaced with four locust trees planted in a row across the front of the house, which grew to substantial size before being toppled by hurricanes in the twentieth century. In letters to his father, Augustus referred to a number of fruit trees at Mastic, including Early May Duke Cherry, Blackheart Cherry, Dr. Coopers Early Peach, and other peach varieties.[36]

Nicoll Floyd expanded the family's involvement in the shipping industry, investing in a number of vessels through the late eighteenth can early twentieth centuries. In 1787, when he was just 25 years old, he bought half share of the brig *Eagle* in exchange for land in an unknown location. In 1803, he bought three quarters of the schooner *Four Friends*, which was built at Marshfield, Massachusetts, for the price of $168. *Four Friends* was outfitted at Mastic, with bills for boats used as lighters, board and wages of workmen, and "expense and trouble of getting her through the bay and attending her at Blue Point." In 1807 Nicoll purchases and outfitted a new brig named *Three Friends,* which was likely a salvage from a wreck near William Smith's place, as the receipt lists the hull and spars of the ship, as well as blocking, a table, doors, and "old junk on board the brig."[37]

The sloop *Huntress* appears to have been built at Mastic, presumably at the lot named Great Boat Place along Home Creek. There are records for cutting the timber, transportation and milling the wood into planks, and the purchase of rigging,



Figure 1.11. Drawing by Kate Floyd Dana depicting a shipwreck on the beach on Fire Island, 1857. (FIIS Collections)

main shrouds, topping lift, tackles and runners, mainsail, foresail, and jib, boat, oars, pump, cable, slush-tub, and anchor. *Huntress* voyaged up and down the east coast, visiting Fredericksburg, Washington, Savannah, Beaufort, Boston, and Cape Cod.[38]

JOHN GELSTON FLOYD

Nicoll remained at Mastic and continued active management of his estate well into his seventies, but as his ninth decade approached, he began to consider who would succeed him. Nicoll ultimately passed over his three older sons and left Mastic to his youngest son John Gelston Floyd. William had long since moved to Oneida County and was well established there, as was David Gelston at Brecknock Point. Augustus, despite his deep involvement in the management of Mastic, was occupied with his business in New York City and perhaps had little interest in running an estate directly. But perhaps, it was that John had expressed an affection for Mastic that went beyond business, and that would come to characterize the sentiments of many of its inhabitants. In 1835, describing his disappointment with a visit to Detroit, John wrote to Nicoll:

> After all, there is something wanting here to a Long Islander. I am inclined to doubt whether any man born and brought up on Long Island was ever really contented above tide-water. The dark forests and rich soil and luxuriant growth of grass and grain which western New York and this more western country exhibit do not present the attraction to me which I find in the sound of the surf and smell of salt water which are found on dear Long Island, albeit her oaks are somewhat stunted and her plains sterile.[39]

John Gelston Floyd was raised at Mastic, receiving his early education with his siblings and other neighborhood children in a small schoolhouse west of the Estate. When he was about fourteen, he left Mastic to pursue his education in Bridgehampton, before attending Hamilton College in Utica. Following his graduation, he began to practice law and became active in local politics in Utica, where he also met his wife Sarah Kirkland and began a family. Nicoll, the third of that name in the family, was born in 1831; Katherine, who went by the family nickname Kitty, was born in 1835; Sarah Kirkland, or Sadie, was born in 1837; and John Gelston Jr. was born in 1841. Two more children were born after the family moved to Mastic: Augustus in 1845 and Richard in 1851, the latter whom did not survive childhood.

His affection for Mastic notwithstanding, John Gelston did not take naturally to farming, preferring instead to follow his grandfather into public life and politics. He was elected to Congress three times, serving two terms as representative from Oneida County from 1939 to 1843 and a third term from Suffolk County in 1851, and he was elected to the New York State Senate in 1848. Throughout this time, he continued his law practice and served as a Suffolk County judge. He suffered a stroke during the 1850s that significantly impaired his ability to work, both in his civic pursuits and in his involvement in the affairs of Mastic.[40]

John Gelston moved his family from Utica to Mastic in 1843. His daughter Sadie, five years old at the time, would later give a vivid account of the stage ride to Patchogue. “Grind, grind, grind went the wheels in the deep sand, the flies and mosquitoes buzzing and biting, the scrub-oaks striking the spokes of the wheels, the passengers grumbling, the driver urging the tired horses, the air hot and close, and the hours long and tiresome.”[41] At the time the house was occupied by Nicoll and Phoebe and by John’s sister Catherine, who was known to the children and to succeeding generations as Aunt Kate.

Despite John Gelston’s apparent disinterest in agriculture, Mastic continued to be productive through the middle of the nineteenth century. The 1850 Federal Agricultural Census shows John G. Floyd as owner of a 3,000-acre farm with a value of $30,000. The seven hundred cultivated acres accommodated livestock, orchards and crops. In 1860 when the Agricultural Census showed John Gelston as owner of a 2,500-acre farm with a value of $45,000. The crop output was comparable to that of the 1850 census, but the value of livestock had tripled. Corn remained a major crop through the 1850’s with mention of 5,000 bushels in 1860.[42]

At this time several changes to the Old Mastic House occurred, including the addition of the northeast kitchen ell, the changing of the windows, the addition of the front porch and the Greek revival architectural details. Additionally, a water closet was installed in the east wing, which was serviced by a cistern and ram pump.[43]

The 1870 Agricultural Census still showed John G. Floyd as owner of a 4,400-acre farm with a value of $30,000 matching the value as 1850. Five hundred acres were “improved,” and the value of the livestock was half what it was in 1860. Produce values had declined slightly but forest products appear as a category of income for the first time. By this time, the farm was in decline and wheat was no longer grown on the estate. Around 1877, two hundred cords of wood, the last to be cut, was shipped from the estate in the winter. The estate’s livestock had been reduced to six yoke of oxen, eighty head of cattle and three hundred sheep.

By 1876, John Gelston was seventy years old and in poor health. He lived alone at Mastic year-round, with his son Nicoll coming out to stay for the summer. To help with the upkeep and operations of what remained of the agricultural operation, Charles Ross was hired as caretaker. He lived on the property in a cottage north of the house known as Briarpatch. The 1880 Federal Agricultural Census listed Charles Ross in lieu of an owner, stating that he “rent(ed) for share of products.” The census described the property as 600 tilled acres, 800 acres of meadows, orchards, etc. and 1,500 acres of woodland with a value of $40,000. Production values in all categories were down from the 1870 census.

People of Mastic

The first three decades of the nineteenth century were a period of transition with regard to slavery in New York. The emancipation law passed in 1799 meant that indentured children of enslaved mothers began to gain their freedom by around 1825. On July 4, 1827, the amendment to grant freedom to people born before 1799 went into effect, ending legal slavery in New York and freeing anyone over the age of 28. Indentured servitude for those born of enslaved mothers between 1799 and 1827 continued until they reached the statutory age of freedom, with the last people indentured under the gradual emancipation law gaining their freedom by 1848. One stipulation of the 1799 law was that slave owners had to register the births of babies born to enslaved mothers with the town. Before he left for Western, William Floyd registered two births in Brookhaven, while Nicoll registered seventeen.[44]

Following emancipation, many of the former slaves and their families remained at Mastic or lived nearby, often continuing to work for the Floyd family in a variety of capacities. Although little detail is known about these families and their lives, some information about individuals associated with Mastic and the Floyd family can be derived from the family records, recollections, and anecdotes.

Harry Howard came to Mastic at the age of fourteen, sometime before 1774. In that year, William Floyd purchased two guns for himself and one each for six of his slaves, including Harry, to outfit them for the militia.[45] Harry lived at Mastic as a slave through the early nineteenth century, at which point he started earning wages for labor for the Floyd family. His work included outfitting Nicoll Floyd's ships and transporting goods for sale, although he likely performed a wide range of tasks. By the 1840s, Harry was living with his wife Tempy near Peaspunk.[46] He died sometime in the mid nineteenth century and was buried next to the Floyd family cemetery, his grave marked with a white wooden cross with only his first name inscribed on it.

Other former slaves and servants buried next to the cemetery include Charles, Pompey, and Isaac—whose births were registered by Nicoll in 1804, 1805, and 1806 respectively—London, Caesar, and Sam. A man named Stephen was enslaved at Mastic before the Revolutionary War and into the nineteenth century. While Stephen does not have a marker in the burial ground, his presence at Mastic is marked on a nineteenth-century survey of the property, which labels a small wooded area at the center of the estate "Uncle Steve's Garden." Other former Mastic residents that are commemorated with lot names include London (or Lon), Red, Jeeme (or James), and Unchus.

Indentured servitude continued to be utilized as a source of labor at Mastic, even after slavery had been abolished in the state. About the time that John Gelston Floyd moved to Mastic in the early 1840s, the Floyds paid an Unkechaug family

fifty dollars in exchange for the service of their daughter, who was then bound to the family until she reached the age of eighteen. The girl, named Martha, worked in the household beginning at the age of ten, cooking, cleaning, and watching the younger children. The end of her indenture was noted by Sarah Floyd in around 1850, when she wrote to her son Nicoll, "The black folks are beginning their New Years. Mart is free next week and is going to celebrate the event by passing a week with Sally at Bellport."[47] Martha continued to work at Mastic after her indenture and remained connected to the family for the rest of her life.

Another young person who worked in the house around that time was Sam, who Sadie Floyd referred to as "Grandpa's factotum," indicating that he performed a number of jobs around the house and farm. Sam was about the same age as Martha, and although there is no information about his employment status, it is likely that he worked under a similar arrangement.

Other people who have appeared in Floyd family stories include Hannah and London Smith, who were both born enslaved and gained their freedom in the nineteenth century, continuing to live within the Mastic estate and work for the Floyd family until the mid- to late nineteenth century. Hannah's daughter-in-law Hannah Ben Edwards, her husband Benjamin, and their family also lived at Mastic through much of the nineteenth century. Hannah Ben's son Ben was either indentured to the family or employed periodically at the Mastic house. Another of her sons, Edward Edwards, was deacon of the Poospatuck reservation church and served in the Civil War.

According to Charles Ross, Elijah and Charity Carmen and their children lived in the kitchen of the old house when he arrived in 1876. Charity was the family cook, and Elijah did chores around the house and helped at the farm. Owen Hart, a shepherd, and his three daughters lived at Peaspunk in the 1860s, and Sidney and Charlotte Hawkins worked at the farm during the 1860s and 1870s.

Sadie Floyd related a story of the wedding of Phil and Hagar. The wedding, which likely took place around 1850, was held in the Mastic house kitchen. John Gelston Floyd exercised his duties as judge and officiated the wedding, while the Floyd family provided food and helped decorate the kitchen for the occasion. The story is one example that illustrates the close relationship between the Floyd family and the people who worked and lived at Mastic. The fact that the wedding was held in the kitchen rather than the hall or the front lawn also highlights the limits of these relationships, and of the hospitality extended to Black and Indian workers, servants, and former slaves.



Figure 1.12. One of the earliest known photographs of the Floyd house, circa 1860. (FIIS Collections)

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION: 1803–1881

House and Outbuildings

In recalling her first impressions of Mastic, Sadie Floyd describes the house with a "row of tall poplars in front, Honeysuckle trailing over the porch, tangling with an acacia tree on either side." Elsewhere she mentions a poplar by the front door, which may be in reference to the linden tree. The acacia trees she mentions likely refer to black locusts. The house itself was described as "a rambling house, with a long unbroken front, seven windows in a row beneath the eaves, and seven windows below them on the ground floor. A small porch in the middle, about eight by six feet square. Under the porch a door divided in half, on the lower part an iron knocker that boomed through the house when struck. . . . Two tall chimneys on a mossy roof, a storm-beaten weather-cock, clattering sociably on the eastern gable."[48]

One of Sadie's cousins, Kate Floyd Delafield, was an artist who made a number of sketches of the house and other buildings at Mastic in the mid nineteenth century. One sketch, dated 1856, depicts the front of the house, showing a row of trees across the façade, including the pair of locust trees flanking the house stoop and the linden at the corner. The small covered stoop appears as it did before it was converted to the larger porch around 1857.[49] The board fence depicted in the 1792 Ralph Earl portrait extending west of the house has been replaced with a picket fence, consistent with Sadie's descriptions, and a board fence encloses an area on the east side of the east wing, a gate swung open for access to this area. Visible behind the house is a small unidentified outbuilding that bears resemblance to the henhouse Kate features in another sketch.

Another of Kate's drawings, dated 1859, depicts a lively scene on the lawn in front of the house, suggesting that livestock roamed somewhat freely around the house. A steer spars with a dog while chickens, geese, and turkeys mill about in what she playfully titled "The 'Silent Dawn' of Mastic." Also visible in the drawing are the linden tree, what appear to be a poplar and a conifer tree, a staked shrub that may be roses, and climbing vines on the front of the house, which may be the honeysuckle that Sadie mentions. The picket fence encloses the west yard of the house, and the porch, which had been reconstructed by this time, reflects its current,



Figure 1.13. Drawing by Kate Floyd Delafield showing the Mastic house in 1856, with a row of trees across its south facade. A vertical board or picket fence extends from the left (west) corner of the house, while a horizontal rail fence encloses the east yard. A small structure is visible behind the house. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.14. Drawing by Kate Floyd Delafield showing the Mastic house in 1859. The small front stoop depicted in the 1856 drawing has been replaced with the larger porch with Greek revival columns. (FIIS Collections)

larger configuration with Greek-style columns. The pair of locust trees appear to have been removed when the porch was rebuilt.

A row of smaller outbuildings defined the north border of the house yard and garden. A blacksmith shop was located where the icehouse would later be, over hung by a large pear tree Sadie called "Old Moll's pear." The tree had a hollow trunk, which held a collection of iron items awaiting repair. It is unclear who "Old Moll" was, but Molly was a family nickname for Mary. West of the blacksmith shop was the weaving-house, where fishnets and other tackle were stored and repaired. After that was the carpenter's shop and the wagon house. A large black walnut tree overshadowed the group of buildings.[50] By the late nineteenth century, this row of buildings would include a shop that had been converted from a granary, two storage cribs, and at least one shed. The ice house would replace the blacksmith shop by the 1880s.

Larger barns and sheds were located north of the garden in a cluster roughly enclosing a barn yard. The largest of these were Robinson's barn on the east side of the entrance road, a horse barn just south of that, and a cow barn on the west side of the entrance road. After the horse barn "came down" around 1876, the cow barn would be converted to house the horses, as well as the cows and oxen.[51] A number of other barns, sheds, and wagon houses were located in the barnyard as well.

Garden

Within the house yard, enclosed on its north and west sides, was an ornamental garden. Sadie does not describe the garden in detail, but she does provide a few pieces of information about its features. The garden contained "long lines of box wood, behind a white picket fence, and an arbor covered with honey-suckle, separating the paths midway." Other details include Old Moll's pear, hedges, alder

Figure 1.15. Drawings by Kate Floyd Delafield, circa 1850s, showing the hen house (below) and the blacksmith shop (right). The henhouse may be the same structure that Charles Ross referred to as the goose house. According to Mr. Ross, the blacksmith shop was located where the icehouse was later. (FIIS Collections)





bushes, and several mentions of roses. "The soft sea-breeze, full of sweet scented grass, ferns, and barbary leaves, always filled the air; wild roses clambered in profusion, filling nooks and corners, and the old "lopped" trees offered inviting sofas and lounging-places near by." Rain barrels were located under the corner pipes of the house to collect water from the roof.[52]

Cornelia, writing in the 1930s, indicated that many of the garden elements were planted by Sadie's aunt Catharine Floyd during the first half of the nineteenth century. "She it was who planted the box bushes under which we walk, and the linden tree at the west corner of the house whose trunk now measures ten feet in circumference at my shoulder height. I conceive of her as a sweet lady whose tenderness went out to her garden, an outlet for her personality during those years that she was maiden aunt in her brother's household, until at the age of fifty she retired to God's Acre in the orchard."[53]

Pightle

Extending south from the front of the house was an open area of about five acres, of which about an acre was maintained as mowed lawn with the remainder covered in tall grass. The Floyd family referred to this area alternately as the lawn or the pightle, with some references seeming to differentiate between short mowed lawn and the taller grass of the pightle.

Pightle is an English term from at least the sixteenth century for a smaller open field of about a single to a few acres. The term was often used to refer to a close, or a small, enclosed area around a house or cottage. Use of the term declined after the eighteenth century, surviving primarily in English place names. Likely due to its prominence before spelling and pronunciation were standardized, the term has numerous variations, including pikel, pytle, pingle, and piddle.

The Floyd family made numerous references to both the *lawn* and the *pightle* in their writings. Sadie Floyd in "Sunny Memories of Mastic" mentions that the lawn had short grass, and in describing the location of the pond at the head of Home Creek she says that it is "at the east end of the Pightle (father's name for the lawn) ...". This places the use (and spelling) of the word at least to the middle of the nineteenth century, although it was likely used from the earliest times of the estate. Rosalie mentions the new-mown lawn as well as the "pikel," seeming to draw a distinction between them. In describing the lower fields, she says "There is always a special autumn lure in the old bauk-bounded fields, once farmed by slaves, beyond the pikel, bordering on the creek." Cornelia also uses the spelling pikel, defining it as "the field of long grass beyond the lawn." Charles Ross does not use the term pightle, but he says that he pastured the horses on "the lawn," which was fenced all around.



Figure 1.16. Photograph taken in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing Squirrel Lane as it passes through the orchard. Fruit trees are visible along the right side of the road, and the horizontal board fence stands with its gate open. (FIIS Collections)

Orchards

There were several orchards at Mastic throughout the historic period, including Red's orchard at the southern end of the estate and Lane's orchard on Constable's Neck. A small lot northwest of the house was labeled Peach Orchard in a nineteenth-century hand survey, although there is no indication on other maps. The primary orchard, generally referred to as *the orchard*, occupied a five-acre lot located northeast of the house. The orchard was part of the primary route from the house to Constable's Neck, and both Sadie and Cornelia recall the walk through the orchard to John Wood's Neck to go to the beach, and across Lon's Creek to Aunt Hannah's, Lane's Orchard, and Taupeonk.

The orchard contained apples, pears, and cherries, and possibly other fruits, but it was likely composed mostly of apple trees. By the end of the nineteenth century, the orchard was old enough that descriptions included mentions of old trees, suggesting that it was established in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

Deep in the orchard was an old, hollow apple tree that Cornelia called "the cottage." The children nailed boards to its branches to facilitate climbing and spent long afternoons in the upper branches playing or reading, "the Guernseys snuffling in the grass" nearby.[54]

At the southern edge of the orchard, on the line between it and the Spring Lot, was a sunken "grass grown hollow" about forty feet in diameter that Sadie believed to have once been a cellar hole. She describes a hollow pear tree "bent half double brooding" over the place, and "a line of cherry trees rising along the orchard hedge from a jungle of blackberry briars and alders white with blossoms, piggies grunting dreamily in their pen beyond, corn waving its leaves and making a pleasant rustling, the orchard trees borne down with half ripe apples, crickets chirping, fire-flies flashing over the sweet flag swamp. . . ."[55] In Cornelia's childhood, the hollow was used as a pig pen, and later it was used as a refuse dump.[56]

The cart path that passed through the orchard, called Squirrel Lane, was the primary entrance drive to the estate from the train station. The drive is labeled on a second hand survey made in the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century and on the 1911 survey, and it is mentioned by Cornelia, but Sadie does not mention it by name, nor does it appear on the earlier hand survey.

In the northeast corner of the orchard was the Floyd family cemetery. The cemetery had been established in 1755 when Nicoll and Tabitha Floyd died, and had been the site of family burials since. Just outside of the fenced graveyard were the graves of former slaves and indentured servants.

Spring Lot and Pond

Spring Lot was a three-acre lot east of the house, just across Home Creek. In the earlier hand survey, it is labeled Hog Lot. The pig pen was located in Spring Lot or its vicinity. Cornelia remembered that the pigs were kept in the sunken hollow on the boundary between Spring Lot and the Orchard. Sadie, on the other hand, remembered playing in the hollow, but that the pigs were located nearby.

The water of the spring, which was the source of Home Creek, was used to water livestock, including cows and pigs. During the nineteenth century, a dam was built across the creek at the south end of Spring Lot to create a small pond, which made watering the livestock easier and also supplied ice to be stored in the ice house. Cornelia claimed that her father, John G. Floyd Jr., built the dam. "Father, who loved play, had built a dam across the thin stream where Home Creek rises, and set a little waterwheel, just as he did when he was a boy." Sadie describes the pond in 1840s and 1850s as well, suggesting the pond may have been transient, draining when the dam was breached and reappearing when the it was rebuilt.

According to Sadie, "at the east end of the Pightle (father's name for the lawn) a pond was dammed across by a soft green bank where sweet flag, daisies, cowslips and buttercups dotted the grass. Minnows darted in and out among the reeds and flags, turtles sunned themselves on logs just out of the water or slip with a flup! into the wind when footsteps warned them of approaching danger."[57]

The pond was an enchanted place to the children of Mastic, the imagined home of fairies, elvish creatures, and mysterious spirits. Cornelia described a mechanical toy created by a cousin that included a "blacksmith shop with forge, bellows, horse, and men. As the water-wheel turned, the arm of the boy with bellows worked up and down and the blacksmith raised his hammer, which fell on an anvil giving out the ringing sound."[58] This story mirrors one told by Sadie, however, Sadie's version implies that the "tink-a-tink" sound was created by a bird or some other unidentified source. The sound was attributed to the "fairy blacksmith" that resided in the sweet flag swamp around the pond. Another spirit believed by the Mastic children to inhabit the area around the pond was the Tarkey Root, which

gave a "plaintive peep, peep, peep, from the moist sod by the weeping willow. . . . The sad peep! peep! after dark would make the children quake with fear and scamper like field mice to join the familiar voices up at the house."[59]

The writings of Rosalie and Cornelia suggest that by the early twentieth century, Spring Lot was vegetated, at least in part, with tall shrubs, vines, and dense underbrush. Rosalie tells a story about a wine made from elder flowers collected in Spring Lot. The "compact creamy blossoms" were collected from tall, tree-like shrubs, amid the "delectable fragrances of bay, mint, sweet-fern, early wild rose, grape blossom, new-mown grass, and sweet flag."[60] Cornelia described picking wild grapes at Spring Lot and entering the "thicket at the edge of the creek, pushing through little paths made by the cows going down to drink." To reach the grapes "high overhead" they had to navigate an "impenetrable mass of cat-briar" by climbing the alders.[61]

A photograph taken in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century depicts the view from the house's front porch eastward toward Home Creek and Spring Lot. The vegetation along the creek is low enough that Spring Lot is clearly visible.

Great Lot

The twenty-three-acre Great Lot is a large, roughly triangular lot that is bordered on the west by the Lane and on the south by a small wooded area known as Uncle Steve's Garden. In the earlier nineteenth-century hand survey, this lot is labeled Lane Lot.

Great Boat Place

Great Boat Place and Little Boat Place were named either for their use as small boat landings from Home Creek, or because boats and ships were built and/or outfitted there. Cornelia believed that the sloop Huntress was constructed at Great Boat Place in the 1840s. Charles Ross wrote that a barn was located at the south end of Great Boat Place prior to 1861 but was gone by the time he got there in 1876.

Indian Point

According to Cornelia, Indian Point got its name because it was believed to have been the site of an Indian burial ground. Indian Point was one of the primary access points to the water, over which the Floyd family would sail or row out of Home Creek and around Sand Point to the small sand beach on John Wood's Neck near Augustus Floyd's house, or across the bay to the front beach on Fire Island. The route down from the house was via a cart path that at the end of the nineteenth century was labeled Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue. The 1911 survey



Figure 1.17. Photo of a small boat on the shore of the bay near Indian Point. (FIIS Collections)

indicates an unknown structure, possibly a boathouse, at the western shoreline of Indian Point.

Uncle Steve's Garden

Uncle Steve's Garden was a small wooded area toward the south end of the Lane where several lots come together. Although the area is only labeled on one of the early hand surveys, it is represented in all three maps as a wooded area through which the Lane passes before it reaches the lower pastures and meadow grounds. Even the 1838 map of Mastic, although it lacks much detail, shows a wooded area in the vicinity of Uncle Steve's Garden, suggesting that it may have never been cleared. Uncle Steve's Garden was named after Stephen, a man enslaved by William Floyd from before the Revolutionary War until the early nineteenth century. What association he had with that particular place that would warrant it being named after him is unknown.

West Lots

Although both the Wood Lot and the Pine Lot were cleared by the late eighteenth century, the retention of their descriptive names suggest that the clearing was recently done. Prior to that, they were likely used for cordwood production. By the early twentieth century, their names had changed from Wood Lot to West Lot and from Pine Lot to Ball Room Lot, the latter of which seems to mirror the overall shift in the use of Mastic from agriculture to pleasure.

Ball Room Lot and Grape Vine Lot played an important role in providing views from the house. There were few trees at the southwest edge of the pightle separat-

ing it from Ball Room Lot, allowing filtered views from the house into that lot. Trees in the middle of the Grape Vine Lot were cleared to maintain a vista toward the bay. These two characteristics of the view from the house are illustrated in a photograph taken in the early twentieth century. As the lots filled with trees later in the twentieth century, the narrow vista was maintained to keep a visual connection to the bay.

Lower Pastures and Meadow Grounds

Meadow grounds is a term that was used since early in the Colonial period to describe wet meadow area along the bay shore. Because these areas were naturally treeless and grew nutritious hay for livestock fodder, they were valuable to the European settlers and were often the first parcels purchased from the Indians. The waterlogged and salty soil made these places suitable for little else besides hay mowing. Above the meadow grounds, however, the dryer soil made the land ideal for livestock pasturing. Mastic contained several hundred acres of meadow grounds and dry pasture along the lower third of Mastic Neck, separated from the salt marsh by the great ditch.

Livestock was particularly important at Mastic, providing much of the income of the farm. Charles Ross said that there were eighty head of cattle and three hundred sheep when he arrived in 1876. Some of the features located in this area likely functioned in support of livestock husbandry. The 1911 survey shows three small fenced enclosures in Red's Orchard, Sheep Pasture, and Upper Unstias and a small area of unknown function labeled "The Cramp." Livestock were contained in these lots with a combination of fencing, ditches, and lopped tree fences.

The origin of the names of the lots are unknown. The lots labeled Unstias and Lower Unstias are spelled Unchus in the first hand survey. These names may be anglicized spellings of and Indian name. Jeeme's Ground is labeled James Ground in the first hand survey. The identity of Jeeme or James is unknown, as is the identity of Red of Red's Orchard. The location of Red's Orchard on the lower portion of the property, near the meadow grounds and the brackish water of the bay, along with its distance from the house, make it an unlikely place for an orchard. The orchard itself may have been short-lived, with the lot retaining the moniker long after the orchard was gone.

The lower lots also provided important access to the bay for shipping farm products to markets in New York and beyond. While many of these docks were located on dryer land along the rivers, at least one was located on the marshy shoreline of the bay at the south end of the estate. This dock was accessed by a road along the east side of Odell's Creek, which provided a direct link to the woodlots west of the house. The last portion of this road traversed wet marshy ground, which required

that logs be placed perpendicular to the road to create a buoyant track that supported loaded wagons, creating what is known as a corduroy road.

John Woods Neck and Taupeonk

Prior to 1881, the land of John Wood's Neck, defined by Home Creek on the south and Lon's Creek on the north, was a part of the Mastic estate. Closest to the house, just north of the orchard, was Brick Kiln Lot or Bricky Lot. This lot, as the name suggests, once held a brick kiln. According to family tradition, it was there



Figure 1.18. Photo taken in the late nineteenth century showing Hannah Ben sitting in front of her house near Lon's Creek. (FIIS Collections)

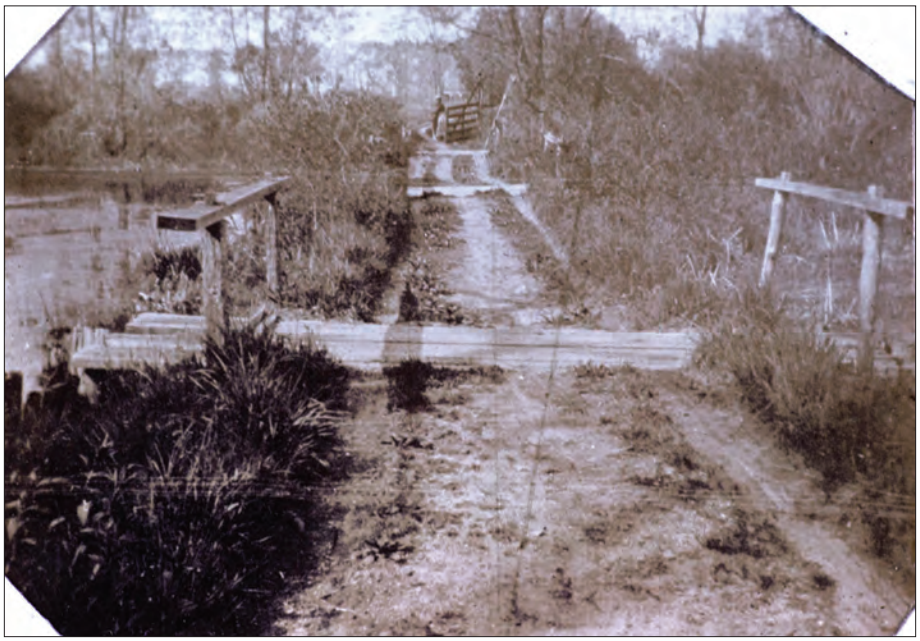


Figure 1.19. Photo from the late nineteenth century of Lon's Bridge connecting John Wood's Neck and Constable's Neck over Lon's Creek. (FIIS Collections)

that all of the bricks used in the house were fired. Other lots on John Wood's Neck include Uncle Lon's Lot, Lot below Uncle Lon's Lot, Great Lot, Creek Lot, and Point Lot. These were likely used primarily as pasture, although crops may have been grown in them at one time.

Across Lon's Creek on Constable's Neck was Taupeonk. Nicoll Floyd II, son of William Floyd, was listed as the owner of Taupeonk in 1799, but he did not move there until his later years in the late 1840s. Following the death of John Gelston in 1881, Taupeonk was inherited by his son Nicoll Floyd III. Little is known about the landscape of Taupeonk, either before or after it was separated from Mastic. Cornelia does describe an orchard she refers to as Lane's Orchard, which was located somewhere near the north bank of Lon's Creek. By the late nineteenth century, Lane's Orchard had been overgrown with forest, but there were still "gnarled old apple trees" persisting among the cedar and pine.[62]

The north bank of Lon's Creek was home to a number of people who worked for and were associated with the Floyd family. Hannah Ben lived under tall trees near Lane's Orchard and a pasture. The path to her house went through the orchard on Squirrel Lane and then diagonally across Brick Kiln Lot and Lon's Lot to Lon's Bridge. According to Cornelia, "scent of hot sweetfern belonged to this path. As you approached the brook, sassafras, spice bush and wild azalea closed over your head and brushed even grown-up's faces, and you could only follow the path with your feet. . . .The path became a moss-grown log across the stream, then passed an old lopped tree with bark worn smooth because of its invitation to sit down could never be refused."[63] Sadie also described the path to Hannah Ben's. "At the north east corner of the Bricky Lot, (Brick-Kiln-Lot) where the sandy slope leads down to the brook, and the branches close across the path, those toppling logs just below the slime, are the continuation of the foot path across lots, from Eagle's barn, where the sheep are folded in the winter, to Aunt Hannah Ben's."[64]

Hannah Ben's mother-in-law, referred to as Old Aunt Hannah in Sadie's writings, was enslaved at Mastic during William Floyd's time, and possibly from his father's time. She lived with her husband London in a cabin on Lon's Creek downstream from Hannah Ben's home. Several features in the area, including Lon's Creek, Lon's Lot, and Lon's Bridge were named after London. According to Sadie, Hannah cooked at the Mastic house and washed clothes for the Floyd family, and also led Sunday religious services in the house for Black and Indian families. London fished for crabs, eels, and fish in a scow on the creek and did other jobs at the farm.

It is not known whether Uncle Lon's Lot was provided to London for his use, or whether it was named such due to its proximity to his home. By the early twentieth century, the lot was no longer cultivated and had reverted to forest, as shown in the later hand survey and in its labeling as a balk (wooded area).



Figure 1.20. Detail of the 1911 survey of Mastic showing the location of Peaspunk west of the house. (FIIS Collections)

Peaspunk

Situated in the woods about a half mile west of the house was a small clearing that the Floyd family called Peaspunk. The name was a variation of pesapunck, an Algonquin word for a hot house or sweat lodge, which according to local tradition once occupied the site.

By the nineteenth century, the clearing had been the site of one, and possibly a series, of homesites, occupied by families associated with the Floyd estate. Harry and Tempy Howard lived west of Mastic, "out of the woods gate" in the vicinity of Peaspunk. They lived there with their son Stephen, who's legs were not formed correctly and could not walk, their daughter Julie Howard, and Julie's daughter Susan. During Sadie's childhood in the 1840s, she would visit the Howards with her mother. Susan, who was about nine years old at the time, would go with Sadie to "gather wintergreen plums in the clearing near by," likely a reference to Peaspunk.

Charles Ross recalled a house at the site when he arrived in 1776, which in the 1860s had been home to Owen Hart, a shepherd, and his three daughters. Cornelia said that in her father's time (mid-nineteenth century) the cabin was home to someone named Charity and her husband. These two references may be to the same family. By the time of Cornelia's childhood, the house was gone, its location marked by a depression and a mound topped by the ruins of a brick chimney. A well covered by a large flat stone, tall scraggly lilac bushes, and naturalized strawberries marked the yard and garden. Cornelia and Rosalie would visit Peaspunk every summer to pick strawberries. By the 1890s, the clearing was covered with long grass, which yielded a load of hay every summer.

Peaspunk appears regularly in the Mastic maps and writings, indicating that it was a significant landmark for the family. A variety of spellings are used, including Peace Punk (first hand survey), Peaspunk (second hand survey and 1911 survey, as well as Rosalie's writings), Pece-punk (Cornelia), and Peecepunk (Charles Ross). The clearing is visible in aerial photos from 1930 but was soon thereafter swallowed by housing development. Today, the site of Peaspunk is outside of the park boundary.



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1803 to 1881 Period Plan

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Marsh/swamp
- Fences
- Ditch and mound earthworks
- Ditch and mound with hedgerow/ lopped tree fence
- Roads/drives
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 750 1500 FEET

Drawing 3



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1803 to 1881 Period Plan Detail

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Aerial photograph, 1930
4. Historic photographs

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Fence
- Road/drive
- Buildings and structures

* Extant feature
** Extant feature that has since been moved

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 50 100 FEET

Drawing 4

1881 TO 1930

By the time John Gelston Floyd died in 1881, the Mastic estate was a fraction of its former scale, both in size and in output. Lack of profitability lead to mortgages on the property, and by 1881 more than two thousand acres had been sold. The remaining land was divided among his five children, with four of them establishing estates of their own. His oldest son Nicoll inherited Taupeonk on the south half of Constable's Neck, where his grandfather Nicoll II had lived in his old age. Katherine married William B. Dana and moved to the north point of Constable's Neck, called Moss Lots, which was located across Poospatuck Creek from the Unkechaug reservation. Augustus received the land of John Wood's Neck, while John Gelston Jr. received the house and the core of the estate on Mastic Neck, now containing 687 acres.

JOHN GELSTON FLOYD JR.

John Gelston Floyd Jr. was born in 1841, less than two years before his father moved the family to Mastic. He spent his early childhood there, playing in the fields and barns with his siblings and cousins, which imprinted upon him a lifelong love of the place. At the age of eight, he was sent to boarding school in Utica and then to Rutgers College, where he graduated at eighteen. He would later recall his misery and homesickness during that time. In 1862, John Jr. heeded the call of his country, enlisting with the Union Army at a time when Mastic was still home to people who had once been enslaved there. He fought at the battles of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville, and the terrors he saw there haunted him the rest of his life.[65]





Figure 1.21. (left) John Gelston Floyd Jr. in his Union Army uniform. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 1.22. (right) Julia Delafield Floyd. (FIIS Collections)

John Jr. married Julia Floyd Dubois and they had three children: William (1871), Rosalie (1877), and Cornelia (1882). By this time, Mastic was his, but John Jr. still chose to spend eight months out of the year in New York City, living at Mastic only during the summer. In this, he established his as the first generation of the family not to live at Mastic full time. The family would make the journey down Long Island from the city by train in the spring, with Charles Ross meeting them at the station in a light wagon for the three-mile ride to Mastic. There they would spend the summer largely in pursuit of adventure, leisure, sport, and amusement.

This was the period when agriculture as a primary activity at Mastic was phased out. John Jr. had little interest in being a farmer, going instead into partnership with his brother-in-law William B. Dana, who published the New York newspaper *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. What remained of agricultural production was overseen by Charles Ross, the caretaker hired during the last years of John Gelston Floyd's ownership. Mr. Ross saw to the cattle, sheep, and pigs that were still kept on the property through the end of the nineteenth century and kept a vegetable garden. The lower acreage was leased to a farmer for cattle pasturage into the 1920s.

With the decline of agriculture and the growing emphasis on hunting, pleasure, and recreation, and the estate landscape began to change. Fields that had been cultivated for grain, flax, hay, and other crops were managed for game habitat. These fields remained open for several decades, but the hedgerows between the lots began to encroach upon them. John Jr. began to maintain a clear corridor across the fields to the south of the house, creating a vista from the pightle to the bay. Access to the lower meadow grounds, prime habitat for waterfowl and other game birds, was provided with the establishment of the meadow ground path, a route down the west side of the estate property that utilized existing mounds connected with footbridges and planks to cross wet areas.

The house was remodeled and expanded during the 1890s to provide better accommodations for the family and their frequent guests. A two-story northwest ell was constructed, which added two more bedrooms and bathrooms. Another bathroom was added to the east wing, and architectural details throughout the house were modernized. Water was provided by a windmill installed on the barn, which pumped water from a nearby well up to a tank. The windmill was originally installed to provide water for livestock in the barn in 1885, but in 1898 it was converted to provide water to the house for the new bathrooms. The large windmill on the roof of the tall barn was a conspicuous feature in the landscape and visible in several photographs taken during that time.[66]

John Jr. was an avid sportsman and used the property and the waters around it for sailing, camping, and hunting. His daughter Cornelia recalled seeing him and her brother William "emptying their game bags in the East hall, naming each species as it was laid out; oxeye, dowitcher, krieker, yellowlegs, Jack curlew, and so

on; sixty-two birds in all."[67] The house was filled with a wide variety of outdoor finds, from turtle shells and feathers to stuffed animals and birds, with a separate room dedicated to storing and displaying such treasures along with racks of guns, racquets, and other sporting equipment.

Hunting was the primary pursuit of the men—John Jr., his son William, and male relatives and guests. For those who didn't hunt, there was no shortage of entertainment at Mastic, indoors and out. Upon arriving at Mastic in the spring, the first activity was often hunting woodpinks, or trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*) flowers. These delicate pink flowers with an exquisite fragrance were sought among the fallen leaves in early spring in the woodlots west of the house or in what had been Lane's orchard, where the "gnarled old apple trees had lost the





Figure 1.24. (left) William Floyd with a bicycle, c. 1890. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 1.23. (right) Rosalie Delafield Floyd at Mastic, c. 1905. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.25. Photo, c. 1890, of Rosalie (left) and Cornelia Floyd (right) with their dog Jock on the lawn in front of the house. (FIIS Collections)

fight against cedar and pine."[68] The flowers were bundled up and shipped to friends as gifts. Other quarry included wintergreen berries (*Gaultheria procumbens*), partridge berries (*Mitchella repens*), ground pine (*Ajuga reptans*), pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellate*), ghostly Indian pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*), and deer moss lichens.

The woods beyond the Woods Gate west of the house were crossed by a network of roads and drives. "Little roads made by wood-hauling in winter and in summer grown into green bowers ran here and there, leading only to that strange place where children in fairy tales got lost—further into the woods. They were unpredictable little roads, never twice alike, one running into another and making four green vistas of mysterious chiaroscuro."[69]

There were a number of small boats about the property in which to ply the waters of the creeks and bay. Trips to the front beach on Fire Island were launched from Home Creek in catboats, or small single-sailed boats. The family would spend the day playing in the surf or exploring the dunes and finish with a bonfire and a feast of clams, meats and cheeses, vegetable salad, and ginger pop. The trip home was made by starlight, with Charles Ross meeting the party at the little dock on the creek, lantern in hand, to take them back to the house in the wagon.

Games were plentiful. John Jr. contrived a game he called "lawn hustling" that involved two teams arranged in opposing lines, trying to guide a ball along a canvas track with sticks. While superficially resembling croquet, the more raucous lawn hustling was "always accompanied by a bottle of Pond's extract for bruises."[70] With the passing of agriculture in the 1890s, some of the outbuildings were repurposed for recreation. "The whole dim, hay-scented interior of Robinson's barn was swept away and replaced by a hardwood floor where college boys and debutantes played badminton on summer week-ends."[71]



Figure 1.26. Photo from the late nineteenth century of the Floyd family and guests playing "Lawn Hustling." (FIIS Collections)

Many in the Floyd family were natural writers, penning poems, songs, plays, and reams of letters. William wrote an unpublished manuscript for an autobiography, while Rosalie and Cornelia each wrote pieces that focused on Mastic. "The Backwoods Book," written by Rosalie in the late 1910s or early 1920s, is a collection of loosely connected chapters that describe the landscape and garden of Mastic as it was at the beginning of the twentieth century. Cornelia wrote two important pieces. "As Told by the Attic Letters" is a presentation and analysis of the Floyd family history based on receipts, letters, and other documents retained over the years. "Letters to my Great-Great-Granddaughter" offers a more personal depiction of Mastic, focusing on Cornelia's childhood in the late nineteenth century. Together, these writings paint a rich picture of life at Mastic.

WILLIAM, ROSALIE, AND CORNELIA FLOYD

John Gelston Floyd Jr. died at the relatively young age of sixty-two in 1903, leaving Mastic to his three children in equal shares. William Rosalie, and Cornelian continued to use the house as a seasonal retreat, but it was Cornelia who took a more personal responsibility for running the estate, despite being only twenty-one when her father died. She became the de facto house manager and host, regularly entertaining large numbers of guests. She would later say, "Having been mistress of the house since I was 21, I was greedily possessive."[72]

In 1910, Cornelia married John Treadwell Nichols, a noted scientist and Curator of Fishes at the American Museum of Natural History specializing in ichthyology, ornithology, and herpetology. The abundant wildlife in the woods, fields, and waters of Mastic offered him endless subject matter for his curiosity toward the natural world. The wedding was held at Mastic, with the one hundred guests crowding into the house when the ceremony was moved indoors due to rain. They lived at Mastic continuously from June 1 until Labor Day, but their winter home in Garden City, New York, fifty miles from Mastic, made frequent weekend visits during the off-season possible.

Cornelia and John Nichols quickly began a family of their own, with William (known to the family as Floyd) born in 1911, Mary (Molly) in 1913, John in 1914, and David in 1916. These years at Mastic were lively and active. Cornelia often had as many as twenty-five to thirty people staying for a weekend. "Each summer Cornelia administered the household. . . . There were countless guests of all ages. Many of the children would be allowed out of bed for a last frolic on the lawn after dark, and on rainy days there might be parades through the house of small folk dressed in the costumes found in the attic." More alterations to the property were made to enhance the enjoyment of the relatives and their numerous guests during their stay at the estate, including a modern kitchen behind the new dining room in the western half of the house, added in 1928.

Beginning in the 1920s pressures of urbanization and changing socio-economic forces began to drive changes in the landscape of central Long Island. "The J.B. Lawrence place [just west of Mastic] has been sold to the 'Brooklyn Citizen,' and the tractors are now ploughing streets through it," Cornelia wrote in April 1926. In May she wrote "We have sold 76 acres of woodland lying west of the road which is the boundary between us and Mastic Beach, the first acre of Mastic ever relinquished by the present generation."[73] By 1930, the area west of Mastic was overlaid with a grid of streets awaiting the construction of houses. In 1934, as the Great Depression gripped the nation, Cornelia noted the need for 'No Trespassing' signs and lamented that "the old order is changing. Social evolution is speeded up like a comic film run at double quick. Taxes increase by leaps and bounds; incomes sicken and die."[74]

In 1924, Rosalie relinquished her share of the property, and William and Cornelia split her share equally. A few years later, William and Cornelia sold seventy-six acres of woodland west of the house, including Peaspunk. This sale reduced the estate to 611 acres, which is the present size of the estate. In 1935, William, gave up his interest in the house as "the discomfort of changing conditions loomed larger and the call of the city prevailed."[75] Rather than asking for a division of the property, William gave his interest to Cornelia's children, ensuring that the estate would



Figure 1.27. Cornelia Floyd Nichols and Mary Blake Nichols, c. 1920. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.28. Photo of the Floyd house in the late nineteenth century. (FIIS Collections)

remain intact and that the next generation could continue to use it as a family retreat.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION: 1881 TO 1930

The nineteenth-century surveys of Mastic depict a landscape that had likely changed very little since it was first established in the early eighteenth century. Both surveys include indications of tree cover in larger wooded areas to the north and west of the house, as well as in hedgerows along lot lines and in small unplowed areas called "balks." These carefully made indications, which largely agree between the two maps, are sparse across most of the surveys, suggesting that the landscape was predominantly open, with visibility between most of the lots.

Even as the use of the estate shifted from agriculture to hunting and pleasure, the lots continued to be maintained as open fields. Cattle and sheep were pastured in the fields into the twentieth century, both resident herds maintained by Charles Ross and tenant herds that were pastured on the lower acreage. Fields were also actively managed with clearing and burning for game habitat.

By the early twentieth century, the organization of the lots that had defined the landscape since its earliest years was still evident, and despite the decline in farm production, the estate retained its agricultural character, with open fields bordered by ditches and mounds and lined with hedgerows and former lopped tree fences. The hedgerows had grown considerably, however, and the landscape took on a much more enclosed character. Despite this growth, the fields themselves were still open, and approximately three hundred acres of the estate remained open field or pasture. Around the estate, the land remained rural, occupied by other pleasure estates and working farms.

The Garden

The garden in the north and west yards of the house was rehabilitated in the early twentieth century, when "the new old-fashioned garden was started."[76] Before that, Rosalie described it as a "rank and hummocky waste." In reality, the garden contained several elements from earlier times, many of which had likely been in place for more than fifty years at that point. These included numerous large boxwoods at the south end of the garden near the west porch, which arched over the brick walks. There were also lilacs that reached the attic window, a small orchard of apple trees aligned in a grid near the shop, pear trees, quince, and several large shade trees.

Of the garden rehabilitation, Rosalie said, "The garden making proceeded along imagine lines of the rows of yesteryear… deep tangled wildwood gradually became trim perspectives, beds, borders, lawns, and definite shrubbery."[77] The

mature vegetation was retained, and new flower beds were added in linear or rectangular arrangements and filled with flowering perennials. The garden took on a lush and exuberant character, with the beds spilling over with roses, irises, tiger lilies, foxglove, daisies, and daffodils. Cornelia describe the garden, as viewed from the doorstep of the shop:

> You sat on the sagging doorsill, your feet in long, warm grass and looked out upon apple trees, japonica and lilac, the pear tree with a seat around its trunk, a distant gable of the house above the box bushes, and the great linden tree. A sweet disorder reigned in the garden. Shrubs of bygone generations flowered in unpruned grace, and bulbs in unexpected places. There were patches of phlox in the long grass, though mostly in that horrible magenta color with which nature punishes cultivated things that slip back. Honeysuckle clambered everywhere and rose vines on the wall of the shop.[78]



Figure 1.29. (Photo Key 1) Image of the garden before its rehabilitation in the early twentieth century, showing the shop and storage crib. The window and door configuration in the shop is evident in the photo. A line of irises is planted through the midground of the photo, and the apple orchard is on the left. A fruit tree, possibly a cherry, grows in front of the shop, and a line of arborvitaes and one pine grow along the north border of the garden in front of the storage crib. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.30. (Photo Key 2) Closeup image of the shop (left) and storage crib (right) in the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. What appears to be a cherry tree grows in front of the gap between the two structures, and a row of evergreens (likely Thuja occidentalis) and a pine grow in front of the storage crib. In the background on the right, behind the storage crib, is the gable end of the extant barn, which served as a workshop at the time, and behind that, the roof of the horse/cow barn with the windmill. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.32. (Photo Key 4) View of the garden looking north after its rehabilitation, c. 1914, showing the pear tree seat and rectangular garden with vine-covered arbor. On the right side of the photo is a brick walk that extends northward from the house toward the back of the garden, where it makes a left-hand turn before terminating at the shop. The walk is six courses wide with bricks laid in running bond. In the background are the structures (from left to right) the shop, storage crib, and barn. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.31. (Photo Key 3) Photo taken in 1914 of Cornelia Floyd Nichols and her son John seated in front of the shop. In the foreground is the end of the brick walk that begins at the west door of the house. The walk is six courses wide laid in running bond. A climbing rose grows on the shop, and at the far right of the photo is the gate between the shop and the storage crib. (FIIS Collections)

Roses grew in great numbers throughout the garden and are mentioned repeatedly in descriptions of it. To the west of the house was a rectangular arrangement of beds with irises and roses surrounding a turf panel. At the east end of the panel was a sundial. "The sun dial was placed level at the end of the rose plot with due precision, God wot, near the Factotum's cedar arbor at the end of the box grove where the brick path begins. You could wish its, 'I only count the sunny hours'—like countless others—would read 'Between the showers I count the hours' (like r. Milne's)."[79] The varieties of hybrid perpetual roses, including Paul Neyron, Charles Margottin, General Jacqueminot, Margaret Dickson, Baron de Bonstettin, Baroness Rothschild, and Earl of Dufferin, were selected for their fragrance, and their petals were collected and mixed with other flowers and herbs to make potpourri.[80]

At the back (north side) of the garden, a cherry tree or similar fruit tree grew near the door of the shop. In front of the storage crib and extending eastward was a line of trees, including a pine and several columnar evergreens, likely *Thuja occidentalis*. These were planted in the 1880s or 1890s. A large walnut tree (*Juglans nigra*) and more arborvitaes stood near the icehouse. Near the center of the garden was a large pear tree with a wooden bench constructed around the trunk. Referred to by the family as the pear tree seat, this was a favorite place for afternoon tea. Other wooden features in the garden included a variety of other benches and arbors, constructed in a rustic style out of twisted cedar or black locust branches. A gazebo of similar style was located at the northeast corner of the garden, just outside the fence.

Lon's Creek
Lon's Bridge
Bricky Lot
SEE DRAWING 6
Cemetery
Orchard
LAND OF AUGUSTUS FLOYD
Peach Orchard
Spring Lot
Pightle
Moriches Bay
Home Creek
Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue
Lot Before The Door
Pecepunk
West Lot
Ball Room Lot
Little Boat Place
Great Boat Place
Indian Point
Vista
The Lane
Lot 6
Meadow Ground
Lot 4
Lot 7
Unstias
Lower Unstias
Lot 8
Lot 5
Long Lot
The Great Ditch
MARSH
Lot 3
Lot 1
Three Square Meadow Ground
Vista
Sheep Pasture
Lot North of Red's Orchard
Jeeme's Ground
Odell's Creek
Red's Orchard
Meadow Ground
The Great Ditch
SALT
Corduroy Road
Narrow Bay

Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1881 to 1930 Period Plan

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Aerial photograph, 1930

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Marsh/swamp
- Fences
- Ditch and mound earthworks
- Roads/drives
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 750 1500 FEET

Drawing 5

PHOTO KEY FIGURE REFERENCES

1. Figure 1.33
2. Figure 1.34
3. Figure 1.36
4. Figure 1.35
5. Figure 3.63
6. Figure 3.34
7. Figure 3.35
8. Figure 3.43
9. Figure 3.65
10. Figure 3.45
11. Figure 3.46
12. Figure 3.48
13. Figure 3.42
14. Figure 3.47
15. Figure 3.64
16. Figure 3.13
17. Figure 3.17
18. Figure 3.18



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1881 to 1930 Period Plan Detail

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Aerial photograph, 1930
4. Historic photographs

DRAWN BY:

John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND

- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Planting bed
- Brick path
- Fence
- Road/drive
- Buildings and structures
- Photo key and direction

* Extant feature
** Extant feature that has since been moved

NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.
2. Garden layout represents conditions c. 1910 to 1920, based on historic photographs.
3. Photo key numbers refer to historic photographs in the Site History and Analysis and Evaluation (Chapter 3).

NORTH

0 50 100 FEET

Drawing 6

1930 TO 1965

By the 1930s, development pressures on Mastic were beginning to grow. The value of the property climbed steeply as the land around it was turned into suburban residential neighborhoods. In 1926, the Floyd siblings sold seventy-six acres of the western portion of the estate to what would become the Mastic Beach development, which was "the first acre of Mastic ever relinquished by the present generation."[81] In 1933, taxes on the property totaled more than $1,500, the equivalent of nearly $30,000 in 2020 dollars. The property was not generating any substantial income, with the exception of summer rentals of one of the outbuildings, and the cessation of farming use meant that the landscape was no longer receiving the routine maintenance that went along with such activity. Cornelia blamed the burden of maintaining the old house for her brother's decision to relinquish his share of interest in Mastic in 1935.

Despite the financial trials, the family continued to use Mastic extensively through the middle decades of the twentieth century. Cornelia and William's children began bringing their families to Mastic in the 1940s, and their grandchildren's families began coming in the 1960s. There were also cousins and friends who came to stay, and the old house was frequently full of people during the summers. Much as earlier generations had done, the family continued to find creative inspiration

Figure 1.33. The Floyd Family at Mastic on Thanksgiving, 1954. (FIIS Collections)





Figure 1.34. Old Mastic House in 1954. Two black locust trees remain in front of the house after the other two were destroyed in a hurricane in 1938. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.35. Later in 1954, one of the remaining black locust trees was blown over during Hurricane Carol. (FIIS Collections)

in Mastic, using it as a venue for plays and stories, games and sports, trips to the beach, swimming, fishing, and hunting.

Interest in conservation grew during this time as well. Cornelia's husband, John Treadwell Nichols, was an avid naturalist, passing his fascination of the wildlife of Mastic on to his children and subsequent generations. The interest in, and protection of, the natural assets of Mastic were perhaps intensified by the understanding that its six-hundred-plus acres represented one of the largest undeveloped parcels of land on that part of Long Island. Hunting continued to be a primary pursuit of the family, and management of the landscape was increasingly focused on improving game habitat.

Cornelia continued to honor what she saw as her duty to protect the property and the legacy of her great-great-grandfather through the twentieth century. This became increasingly difficult as the taxes and maintenance costs of the buildings and grounds became unmanageable and as development pressure from outside grew. This came to a head in 1964, when the state New York proposed the construction of a nuclear power plant on the Floyd property. Its proximity to densely populated areas, its waterfront location, and the fact that it was one of the largest remaining parcels of open land in the area made it an ideal site.[82]

The proposal was opposed, not only by the family, but by several conservation and preservation groups in the area. Even if the plan for the power plant was defeated, though, it had become clear that the estate could not long survive in its current state, and Cornelia and her family began to seek outside help to preserve the important landmark. In 1965, the family donated the house and its contents, the outbuildings, and 613 acres of fields, forest, and marshland to the National Park Service, retaining use and rights to the house and land for twenty-five years.



Figure 1.36. The barn in 1964. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 1.37. By the end of the historic period, some of the structures were in poor condition, such as the storage crib, pictured here in the 1970s. (NPS)

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION: 1930 TO 1965

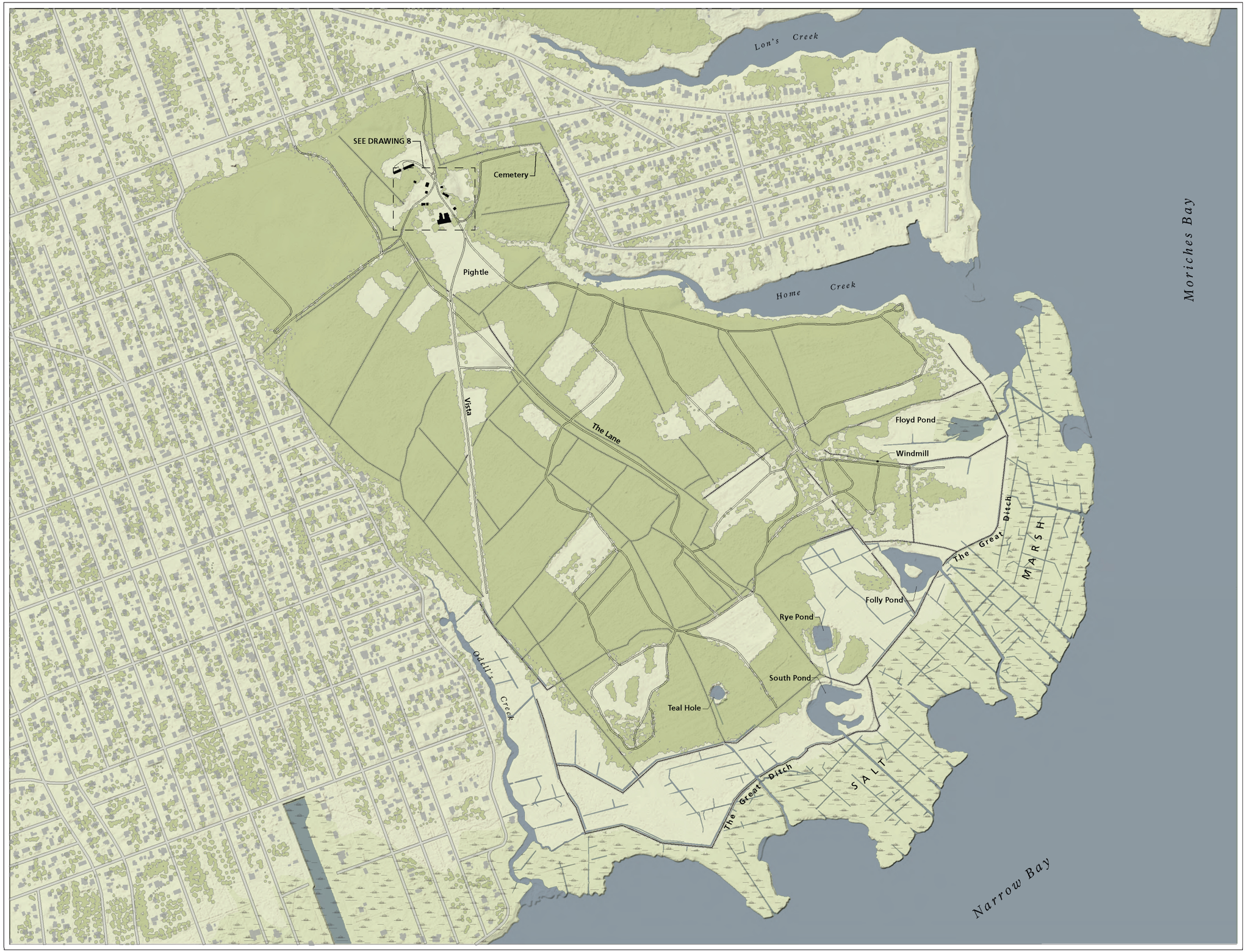
The last herds of livestock to graze the lots of Mastic were gone by the 1930s, and the great expense and effort of keeping the fields open became more than the family could afford. Aerial photos from that year show the lot arrangement still clearly defined, but trees were beginning to spread throughout the lots. The release of the fields to woody succession likely accelerated during World War II, as restrictions on fuel, oil, and rubber products and shortages of unskilled farm labor made maintenance difficult. Without maintenance, it only took twenty years for the fields that had stood open since the days of the first Nicoll Floyd to revert to forest.

To improve hunting habitat and reclaim open space, the Floyd family spent two decades clearing forty acres of forest beginning in 1952. The fields were actively managed through a cycle of regular cultivation, followed by planting rye (*Elymus condensatus*), bush-clover (*Lespedeza* spp.) or vetch (*Cicia* spp.) None of the fields were allowed to grow for more than two growing seasons without mowing or cultivation.[83] The new fields that were cleared did not follow the historic lot layout, with some of the fields straddling historic lots. In these fields, the historic hedgerows were removed, and any traces of the ditches and mounds were obliterated during the maintenance of the fields.

In the 1930s and 1940s, David Weld created four new ponds on the lower portion of the property. These were created by dredging out the basins and piling the excavated material around the edges as a dike. Three of these ponds, Folly Pond, Rye Pond, and South Pond, were constructed within the marsh area, joining the only natural pond on the property, Floyd Pond. The fourth pond, Teal Pond, was constructed in an upland site in what had been the lot called Jeeme's Ground.

In the 1930s, a system of ditches was constructed across the marsh area by the Federal Government in an effort to control mosquitos. The ditches were intended to collect and drain standing water from the marsh, reducing the breeding habitat for mosquitos, as well as to provide access for fish that would feed on mosquito larvae. The ditches, typically one to three feet wide, form an orthogonal grid across the marsh area, in many places connecting to natural drainage channels and historic structures like the great ditch. Efforts to control mosquitos also involved the application of insecticides, including DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), which contaminated marsh soils, concentrating particularly in the sediments of the ponds.

Like the rest of the landscape, the maintenance of the garden became untenable, and the fussy garden beds, quaint furniture, and "trim perspectives" reverted to a more natural state, before being turned under the mower's blade into turf. At some point, even many of the trees and shrubs were removed, including the apple orchard, pear trees, and the "pre-revolutionary boxwood." Some shrubs persisted, as did the ancient shade trees, like the linden and beech. Brick walks were either removed or were buried under turf and forgotten. By the time the family turned the property over to the National Park Service, the garden contained only remnants.



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1930 to 1965 Period Plan

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Aerial photograph, 1930
4. Aerial photograph, 1975

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Marsh/swamp
- Fences
- Ditch and mound earthworks
- Roads/drives
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 750 1500 FEET

Drawing 7

Park Trailers
Sheep Barn
New Barn*
Barn*
Corn Crib*
Woodshed*
Carriage House*
Gazebo*
Incinerator*
High Board Fence*
Ice House*
Shop*
Storage Crib*
Pumphouse*
Caretaker's Workshop*
Brick Walk*
Old Mastic House*

Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

1930 to 1965 Period Plan Detail

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Aerial photograph, 1930
4. Aerial photograph, 1975

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Brick walk
- Fences
- Roads/drives
- Buildings and structures

* Extant feature
** Extant feature that has since been moved

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH
0 50 100 FEET

Drawing 8

1965 TO 2020

In 1965, Public Law 89-244 was enacted, enabling the Secretary of the Interior to accept a donation of the 613-acre parcel of the William Floyd Estate in of Suffolk County, for addition to the Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS) and for other purposes. Just the year before, Public Law 88-587 had established the "Fire Island National Seashore" for the purpose of conserving and preserving it for use by future generations.

With this legislation in place, rights to the property were given to the National Park Service in 1965 to preserve the historic site. In authorizing acceptance of the donation, Congress designated that the estate become a detached unit of Fire Island National Seashore. With this donation, the National Park Service accepted responsibility for the main house and grounds in need of stabilization and maintenance. A twenty-five-year use and occupancy agreement was granted to the Floyd descendants.

The transition from summer home to an active NPS site occurred in increments over several years. The family exercised their rights to the property until the early surrender of 33.8 acres in 1976. They continued to maintain the fields at a limited level, though rigorous field maintenance ceased around 1972 and was restricted to simple annual mowing by the family caretaker. As a result, woody plants quickly began to reclaim the fields, with pioneering species previously planted in the landscape, such as autumn olive and black locust, compounding the problem.

In 1976, fourteen years prior to the agreed end of occupancy, Cornelia Floyd Nichols surrendered the remaining Old Mastic House, its contents and approxi-



Figure 1.38. Old Mastic House in c. 1975. (NPS)



Figure 1.39. The barn (left), sheep barn (center), and new barn (right) as they appear around the time the National Park Service assumed management of the estate, c. 1975. (NPS)



Figure 1.40. Storage crib and old shop in c. 1975, showing the poor condition that many of the outbuildings were in. (NPS)

mately 34 acres immediately surrounding the house along with 11 ancillary buildings and the graveyard area. This 34-acre historic core was opened to the public in 1976 while rehabilitation and cleaning began on the rest of the property including Old Mastic House. A number of environmental and archeological studies were completed and the William Floyd District was divided into two management zones: the thirty-four-acre historic core, and the remainder of the acreage. The Old Mastic House opened for tours in 1983 and the remainder of the property's lower acreage was opened to the public in 1991 after the family's lease-back agreement was completed.

The National Park Service developed a series of plans relevant to the development of the new park unit, including the Assessment of Alternatives and the Descrip-



Figure 1.41. The sheep barn in 1979 after it was damaged by fire. (NPS)

tion of Selected Alternatives also called the Development Concept Plan (DCP) and Interpretive Prospectus (IP) for the site. The Description of Alternatives is the primary reason for the maintenance of the fields and trails as the document specifically states the fields will be maintained to their present (1978) dimensions.

Work commenced on the stabilization and restoration of the outbuildings, which by that time were in poor condition, beginning with the reconstruction of the barn in 1979. The old sheep barn was converted to a maintenance garage and storage shed in 1976, but a fire three years later severely damaged the structure and it had to be removed. Stabilization and restoration work on the other structures followed, until all of the remaining outbuildings were in fair to good condition.

In 1981, the Youth Conservation Corp manually cleared portions of the property to prepare for controlled burning of brush piles. Three years later, the Youth Conservation Corp participated in field reclamation efforts by hand removal of locust, sumac and olive trees from some of the fields. Later efforts utilized a front-end loader to remove the extensive root systems in some cases. Ongoing measures have been made to clear saplings from the fields through annual mowing, but the park continues to struggle with woody succession.

Visitor circulation was improved in 1987 with the construction of a new entrance road and parking lot and a boardwalk that extended from the parking lot to the lawn. Further park improvements included the construction of a collection storage building in 1995, a duplex park housing unit in 1996, and a visitor bathroom at the parking lot in 2005.

In 1993, Hurricane Bob uprooted and destroyed two mature historic black locust trees located in front of Old Mastic House. The in-kind replacements were destroyed again during Hurricane Irene in 2011 and were once again replaced.



Figure 1.42. Field restoration in 1979. (NPS)



Figure 1.43. The exhibit garden and young crabapples after they were installed in 1984. (NPS)

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION: 1965 TO 2020

Through the period of its stewardship, the National Park Service has managed the William Floyd Estate "to interpret the history and to preserve the historical resources of the estate as a continuum of the William Floyd family."[84] To this end, the management strategy has been to preserve the features and character of the property as it was at the time it came to the National Park Service. Additions, alterations, and furnishings from later in the family's ownership have been retained and are displayed alongside older historic features, and elements from the full span of the historic period are given equal emphasis. No attempt is made to return the property to earlier time or to portray a character other than what it achieved in the mid- to late twentieth century.



Figure 1.44. Restoration work on the barn in 1979. (NPS)

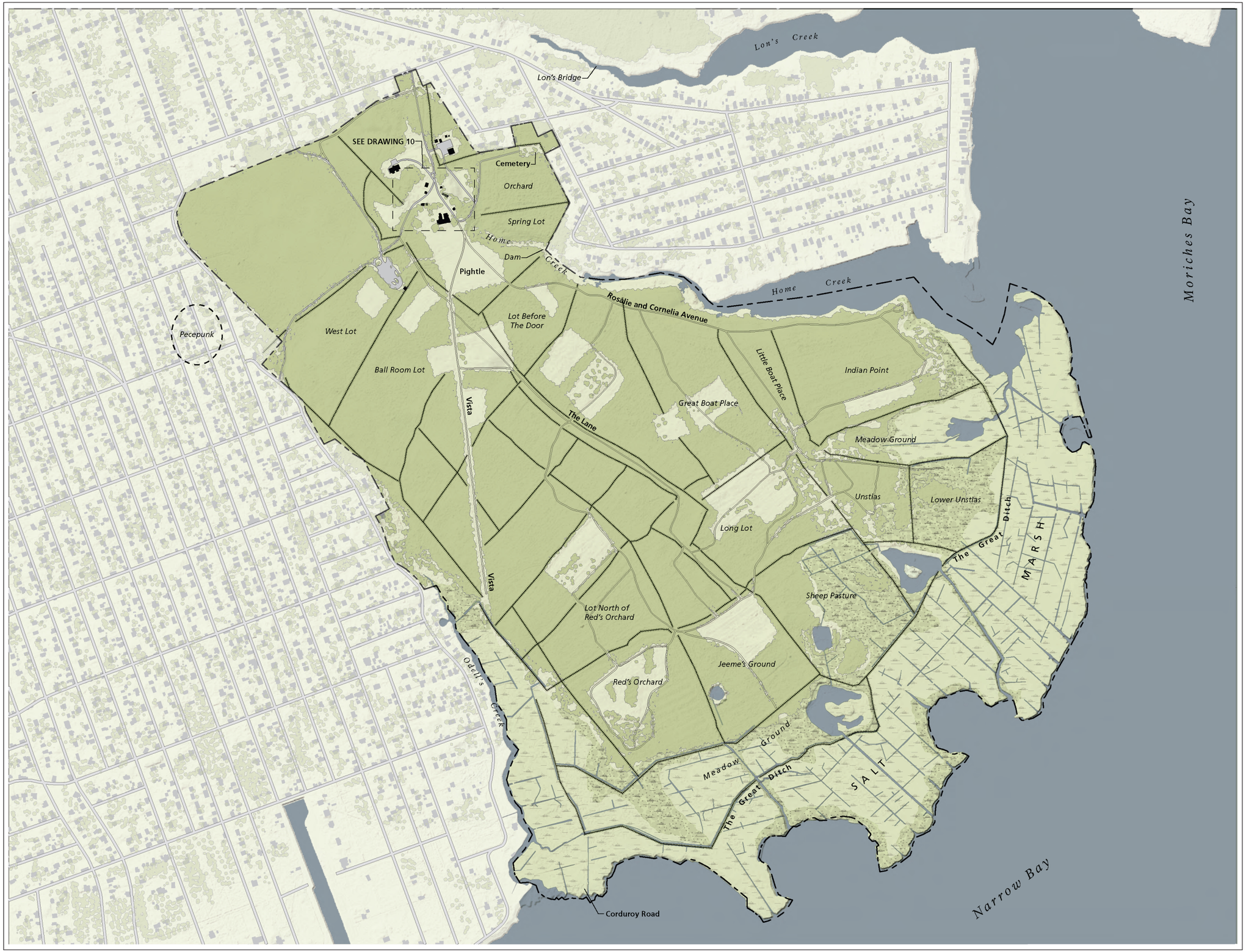
Early activity by the National Park Service focused on stabilizing the extant structures and preparing the property for visitor access. During the 1980s, efforts were made to stabilize and enhance the condition and character of the vegetation around the house and in the garden area. In 1984, an exhibit garden was installed in the garden area west of the house based on a 1913 planting list. Other vegetation that remained around the house was rehabilitated, and a small orchard of crabapple trees was planted near the shop. For nearly a decade, the park maintained the exhibit garden, struggling throughout that time to prevent repeated damage from browsing deer. In 1993, the garden was removed, but the crabapple orchard was retained.

In recent years, damage from browsing deer has only increased, and the condition of the vegetation around the house has declined. Flowering shrubs, roses, and vines that once grew along building foundations, fences, and other features have died or been removed. The few shrubs in the garden area, including boxwood, lilac, spirea, and quince, are rangy and encroached by weeds, with heavy browse damage around the base and poor growth.

Impacts from white-tailed deer are also evident throughout the forest, driving a change in forest composition. Further change in the forest, as well as other vegetation communities, is being driven by sea-level change, which is pushing plant and animal communities northward.[85]

Some features present at the time the National Park Service assumed management of the property have since been lost. In addition to the sheep barn, which was destroyed by fire in 1979, the corduroy road, remnants of which were still visible as late as 2006, is no longer evident. It is unknown whether these remnants were washed away during a storm or if they are still buried beneath the marsh mud. Likewise, remnants of the lopped tree fences are disappearing. The few lopped

trees that remained at the end of the twentieth century were of a highly advanced age and were dying and decaying on the forest floor. It is not known how many of these relics remain today.



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

2020 Existing Conditions

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Field documention, 2018

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Marsh/swamp
- Wet scrub
- Ditches
- Buildings and Structures
- Ditch and mound earthworks
- Roads/drives

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.
2. Italicized labels indicate historic lot names.

NORTH

0 750 1500 FEET

Drawing 9



Cultural Landscape Report

William Floyd Estate

Fire Island National Seashore

2020 Existing Conditions Detail

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES
1. New York State Orthoimagery, 2016
2. William Floyd Estate hand surveys and 1911 survey (FIIS Archives)
3. Field documention, 2018

DRAWN BY:
John W. Hammond, OCLP
2020

LEGEND
- Field/open ground
- Trees/forest
- Brick walk
- Fences
- Roads/drives
- Buildings and structures

NOTES
1. All features shown in approximate scale and locations.

NORTH

0 50 100 FEET

Drawing 10

ENDNOTES

1 John A. Strong, *The Unkechaug Indians of Eastern Long Island, A History* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 10.

2 Ibid., 8; Dana C. Linck, "Archaeological Investigations at the William Floyd Estate," in *The Historical Archaeology of Long Island,* ed. Gaynell Stone and Donna Ottusch-Kianka (Stony Brook, NY: Suffolk County Archeological Association, 1985), 215–217.

3 Strong, 32.

4 Ibid., 24.

5 Ibid., 44.

6 Ibid., 84–89.

7 Ibid.

8 William Smith deed, 1700, copy in the collections of FIIS Archives.

9 John A. Strong and MaryLaura Lamont, "The Richard Floyd Account Book, 1687-1690: A Search for Authorship and Historical Significance," Long Island History Journal 24, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 1-2, 4.

10 Larry Lowenthal, *William Floyd: Long Island Patriot* (Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 2013), 6-24; *Records of the Town of Brookhaven up to 1800* (Patchogue, NY, 1880), 29-30.

11 Ibid., 2.

12 Strong, 116.

13 Strong, 115; Linck, 216.

14 Will of Nicoll Floyd (1705–1755), copy on file at FIIS Archives.

15 Nicoll Floyd's "Last Will and Testament," signed March 5, 1755 and entered into probate Feb. 14, 1757, Early Floyd Papers, Box 1, Folder 22, as quoted in Jennifer L. Anderson, "William Floyd Estate Historic Resource Study" (unpublished NPS draft report, May 6, 2020).

16 *Biography of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence, Volume II*, (Philadelphia: William Brown and Charles Peters, 1828), 110.

17 William Q. Maxwell, *A Portrait of William Floyd, Long Islander* (Setauket, NY: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1956), 9; John M. Dickey, *Historic Structure Report for the William Floyd House, Fire Island National Seashore, Mastic, Long Island, New York*, Volume I, (National Park Service, 1977), 28.

18 Cornelia Floyd Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great granddaughter," June 1934-June 1940 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

19 Maxwell, 24.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid, 8.

23 Ibid, 3. Portrait of William Floyd by Ralph Earl on display at the William Floyd Estate.

24 According to family tradition, the west wing was removed in two sections sometime during the first half of the nineteenth century and repurposed as a workshop and as a small house. Dickey, 28.

25 United States Federal Census of 1790 and 1800, cited in Jennifer L. Anderson, "William Floyd Estate Historic Resource Study" (unpublished NPS draft report, May 6, 2020).

26 James Morton Smith, ed. The Republic of Letters: The Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison 1776–1826, Volume One 1776–1790, (New

York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 262.

27 Records of the Senate

28 Nichols, multiple sources.

29 AN ACT for the gradual abolition of slavery. Enrolled acts of the State Legislature, 1778-2005. Series 13036-78, Laws of 1799, Chapter 62. New York State Archives, New York (State). Dept. of State. Bureau of Miscellaneous Records.

30 An act relative to slaves and servants, 1817. Enrolled acts of the State Legislature, 1778-2005. Series 13036-78, Laws of 1817, Chapter 137, Section 4. New York State Archives, New York (State). Dept. of State. Bureau of Miscellaneous Records.

31 William Floyd was said to have taken twelve enslaved families with him to Western in 1803, and he would have left a number behind to continue working at Mastic. Nichols, "Letters to my Great-Great-Granddaughter," 48.

32 Charles H. Ross, "Mastic Recollections," in Torres-Reyes, 38.

33 From Benjamin Franklin to Jared Eliot, 25 October 1750 (https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-04-02-0018).

34 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 57.

35 Drawings by Kate Floyd Delafield in 1856 and 1859 show the house before and after the porch redesign. See Figures 1.17 and 1.18.

36 National Park Service, William Floyd Estate, Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), 2006.

37 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 53.

38 Ibid.

39 Cornelia Floyd Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters" (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives), 42.

40 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 96.

41 Sarah Floyd Turner, Sunny Memories of Mastic, 1886 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives), 1.

42 CLI.

43 Dickey; CLI.

44 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 45.

45 Ibid.

46 Turner.

47 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter."

48 Turner.

49 Nicoll Floyd, writing in 1858 mentions the stoop "changed as it is," suggesting that it had recently been altered. Nichols, 93.

50 Ibid.

51 Charles H. Ross, "Mastic Memories," 1913 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

52 Turner.

53 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 78.

54 Ibid, 46.

55 Turner, 50.

56 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 28.

57 Turner, 13.

58 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 22.

59 Turner, 14.

60 Rosalie Delafield Floyd, "The Backwoods Book," n.d. (c. 1920) (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

61 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 50.

62 Ibid, 9.

63 Ibid, 15.

64 Turner, 95. John A. Strong, in his book *The Unkechaug Indians of Eastern Long Island, A History,* refers to Hannah Ben as "Hannah Ben Edwards."

65 Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters," 44.

66 Janice Hodson, *William Floyd Estate Historic Furnishings Report, Volume 1: Historical Data*" (Northeast Museum Services Center, National Park Service, 2011), 10.

67 Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters," 45.

68 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 9.

69 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 19.

70 Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters," 45.

71 Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters," 12.

72 Cornelia Floyd Nichols to David G. Nichols, 28 July 1971, David Gelston Nichols and John Thornton Nichols and Cornelia Floyd Nichols Collection, Fire Island National Seashore.

73 Mastic Guest Book, (on file at FIIS Archives).

74 Nichols, 2.

75 Nichols, "As Told by the Attic Letters," 45.

76 Rosalie Delafield Floyd, "The Backwoods Book."

77 Ibid.

78 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 27.

79 Rosalie Delafield Floyd, "The Backwoods Book," 22. Rosalie makes two literary references in this quote. The first, "God wot," is in reference to a poem by Thomas Edward Brown titled "My Garden," first published in 1893 and included in *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse* in 1917. The sundial motto appears to be a reference to A. A. Milne's story *Once on a Time*, which contains the quote and was first published in 1917, dating the writing of "The Backwoods Book" to after that.

80 Ibid, 24.

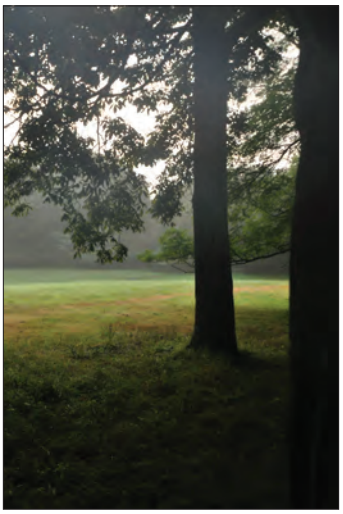
81 Janice Hodson, William Floyd Estate Historic Furnishings Report, Volume 1: Historical Data, (National Park Service, 2011), 57.

82 Hodson, 57.

83 Richard Stavdal and Allan O'Connell, "Field Management Plan, Reclamation of Fields: William Floyd Estate," (National Park Service, 1987).

84 "General Management Plan for the William Floyd Estate, Fire Island National Seashore," (National Park Service, 1977).

85 James S. Clark, "Vegetation and Land Use History of the William Floyd Estate, Fire Island National Seashore, Long Island New York," (University of Massachusetts, 1984),



Open field at William Floyd Estate. (OCLP)

Existing Conditions

The William Floyd Estate is located on the south shore of Long Island, approximately mid-way between the east and west ends of the island. This section of the shoreline is cut into a series of peninsulas, called necks, by creeks and small rivers that flow into the bays separating Long Island proper from its barrier islands. Mastic Neck is bordered on the east by the Forge River, named for the iron forge Nicoll Floyd operated in the early eighteenth century on or near the dam where the Montauk Highway now crosses the river at West Moriches. Carman's River, formerly Fireplace River or Connecticut River, forms the west boundary of the neck, while smaller rivers and creeks, including the Pattersquash River, Home Creek, Lon's Creek, and Lawrence Creek, cut the neck into a number of lobes. The creeks rise from fresh springs and run through narrow sandy channels before widening in the level terrain into brackish estuaries.

Today, the park unit comprises 613 acres of forest, field, marsh, and visitor use/park operations areas. The majority of the upland area, approximately 350 acres, is wooded with second-growth mixed hardwood forest. Twelve open fields are scattered throughout the forest. Another twelve acres constitutes the historic core, house yard, lawn, cemetery, park operations areas, and other cleared areas. The balance of the property, a little over two hundred acres, is covered in salt marsh, shrubland, and open water.

The property is surrounded on the north, east, and west by urban development comprised primarily of a tight gridwork of streets, small businesses, and small residential lots with modest houses. Nearly 75,000 people live within a four-mile radius of the William Floyd Estate in the hamlets of Brookhaven, Mastic, Mastic Beach, Shirley, Moriches, and Center Moriches. Major transportation access from New York City and other parts of Long Island is provided primarily by the Sunrise Highway (NY Route 27), the Long Island Expressway (I-495), and the Long Island Railroad commuter rail, which has a stop in Mastic/Shirley three miles north of the park.



Figure 2.1. Aerial image from 2019 showing the William Floyd Estate (yellow boundary) within the context of Long Island residential development. (Google image, Terrametrics, adapted by OCLP)

House and Outbuildings

The centerpiece of the William Floyd estate is the Old Mastic House, which sits at the northern end of the property, about a mile north of Narrow Bay. The house features a two-story main structure with seven bays, a center entrance under a portico, and two chimneys. On the east is a one-and-a-half-story wing, and on the north are two ells. The house has a fieldstone foundation and is sided primarily with horizontal clapboards, although portions of the exterior are sided with shingles (exposed east wall of the main block) and board-and-batten (shed extension of the northeast ell). All principal roofs are gabled and wood-shingled. There are two large brick chimneys on the main block and a smaller brick chimney on each wing and ell. The house is painted white with dark green shutters.

North of the house is a cluster of nine outbuildings plus two minor structures and a garden gazebo. The outbuildings include the caretaker's workshop, the old shop, storage crib, ice house, barn, new barn, corn crib, woodshed, and carriage house. All of these structures are painted red, with the exception of the caretaker's workshop, which is green. The two smaller twentieth-century structures are the small wooden pumphouse and the concrete incinerator. The old shop, storage crib, and



Figure 2.2. Old Mastic House south facade (looking north) showing the seven-bay main block and east wing. (OCLP)



Figure 2.3. Old shop (left) and storage crib (right), looking north from the garden area. (OCLP)



Figure 2.4. Gazebo (left), barn (center), and new barn (right) looking north. (OCLP)

ice house are in a line just north of the house, and, along with a high-board fence, serve to enclose the garden area, which today contains a variety of shrubs and shade trees that date to the historic period. The barn, new barn, corn crib, woodshed, and carriage house are located north of the garden area, defining what had been the barnyard.

The house contains furniture, art, and other collections items that belonged to the family, which are on display. The house is open seasonally for guided tours. The outbuildings are used primarily for passive interpretation. Many are locked and are intended to be viewed from the outside, or are opened periodically to display their contents, such as the carriage house, which contains historic carriages and other collections items. Other outbuildings are open with no doors, allowing visitors to view the farming equipment and other items displayed within. The caretaker's workshop is used for park operations.

A number of non-historic buildings provide visitor services and park operations facilities. A half-acre maintenance area north of the house contains a maintenance support building, a collections storage building, and a number of smaller sheds and temporary structures. West of the maintenance area is a duplex park housing unit. These non-historic structures are largely tucked into the trees so that they are inconspicuous in the landscape. Southwest of the house is the visitor parking lot and visitor restroom building.

Garden and Ornamental Vegetation

North and west of the house is a partially enclosed area that once held the ornamental garden. Today it contains a number of historic trees and shrubs that remain from the historic period, including large shade trees that date to the early nineteenth century. Most notable among these is the linden tree (*Tilia cordata*) at the southwest corner of the house. Planted by William Floyd's granddaughter



Figure 2.5. The south facade of the Old Mastic House showing the row of black locusts. Only the tree on the far left is large enough to date from the historic period. The other three are recent replacements. (OCLP)



Figure 2.6. The large European beech tree west of the house. (OCLP)



Figure 2.7. Remnant shrubs include two rose-of-sharon trees on the south side of the brick walkway. Deer continue to be an issue in the garden and surrounding forest, as evidenced by the clearly defined browse line seen at the edge of the woodland in the background. (OCLP)

Catharine, the tree features prominently in the family's stories and recollections of Mastic. Across the front of the house are four black locust trees (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), only one of which date to the historic period. The other three are recent replacements for trees that were lost during storms during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

West of the house is a large European beech tree (*Fagus sylvatica*). There is no mention of when this tree was planted, but it is likely that it dates to the early nineteenth century as well. Other significant trees include arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), sycamore (*Platinus occidentallis*), Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Shrubs that were once part of the ornamental garden include lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), spirea (*Spirea* sp.), boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), mock orange (*Philadelphus coronaries*), and rose-of-sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*). A list of trees and shrubs present in the garden area and around the house are listed in Table 2.1.

In the 1980s, an exhibit garden with flowering perennials was installed within the garden area to help facilitate interpretation of the former ornamental garden. Also planted at that time was a small orchard of six crabapple trees designed to approximate the former apple orchard that was part of the ornamental garden. Today the perennials are gone, but the crabapple orchard remains.

The only circulation feature that remains from the Floyd ornamental garden is a thirty-five-foot-long brick walkway that extends westward, roughly in line with the southwest corner of the house. The walkway is composed of bricks laid in running bond, ten courses wide, with a circular terrace at its western terminus. Grass often grows between the bricks and at least partially obscures the walkway.

Aside from the trees and shrubs, the garden area is maintained as turf grass. The remaining shrubs are scattered through the lawn in large, overgrown groups, often with several species growing together

Table 2.1. Trees and shrubs located in the garden area

Specific Name	Common Name
Trees	
Carya ovata	Shagbark Hickory
Cornus florida	Flowering Dogwood
Fagus sylvatica	European Beech
Faxinus americana	American Ash
Gleditsia triacanthos	Honey Locust
Juglins nigra	Black Walnut
Lonicera frangrantissima	Winter Honeysuckle
Malus sp.	Crabapple
Picea abies	Norway Spruce
Pinus strobus	White Pine
Platinus occedentallis	Sycamore
Prunus sp.	Flowering Cherry
Pyrus sp.	Pear
Quercus velutina	Black Oak
Robinia psudoacacia	Black Locust
Syringia vulgarus	Lilac
Thuja occedentalis	Arborvitae
Tilia cordata	Little-leaf Linden
Shrubs	
Barberis x *mentoriensis*	Barberry
Buxus sempervirens	Boxwood
Chaenomeles sp.	Flowering Quince (Japonica)
Deutzia sp.	Deutzia
Forsythia sp.	Forsythia
Hibiscus syriacus	Rose of Sharon
Lonicera tatarica	Russian Honeysuckle
Philadelphus sp.	Mockorange
Physocarpus opulifolius	Ninebark
Rosa sp.	Rose
Spirea x vanhoutti	Spirea

in a mass of vegetation. Much of the existing vegetation is in need of rejuvenation. There are currently no ornamental beds for annual or perennial flowering plants.

Cemetery

In the northwest corner of the property is the Floyd family cemetery. Surrounded by a white wooden fence, the one-and-a-half-acre graveyard is L-shaped and has been the burial ground for fifty Floyd family members and three individuals who were employed by the estate. The cemetery sits in a forested setting, in the corner of the former orchard lot that has since grown into second-growth forest. The cemetery itself is largely free of vegetation, with the exception of a small number of trees, primarily along the perimeter near the fence. Due to its proximity to the property boundary line, the cemetery is one of the few places within the William Floyd Estate where houses from the adjacent neighborhood can be seen.



Figure 2.8. The Floyd family cemetery viewed from the entrance gate looking east. (OCLP)



Figure 2.9. Row of seven wooden crosses that bear the names of enslaved and free servants that worked at Mastic. (OCLP)



Figure 2.10. Squirrel Lane, one of the many unpaved lanes that provide circulation throughout the property. (OCLP)

Just south of the family graveyard is a small clearing containing seven simple white crosses marking the graves of slaves and servants who worked for the family. These crosses extend in a line along the wooded property line. The crosses bear the names Charles, Caesar, Harry, Sam, Pompey, Lon, and Isaac. The crosses are of similar construction and appear to be about the same age, despite a long range of years in which the people memorialized by them died. It is unknown whether the crosses mark actual grave locations, or whether there are any unmarked graves located within the property.

The cemetery is accessed by Squirrel Lane, a small, wooded lane that originates at the southeast corner of the house. Once the primary entrance drive to the estate that passed through the orchard and under arching oaks, Squirrel Lane now passes through dense second-growth forest, terminating at the cemetery.

The cemetery is currently managed by the National Park Service and through a Cemetery Association agreement. Future burial rights are restricted to Cornelia Floyd Nichol's children and their spouses.

Circulation

Visitor vehicular circulation at the William Floyd Estate is facilitated by a paved one-way loop road that enters on the west side of the park unit and exits on the north, along with a paved parking lot. This entrance road is the only paved circulation within the park unit property. Service drives, characterized by single-lane gravel surfaces, provide access for park operations and maintenance vehicles in the area of the house, outbuildings, maintenance area, and park housing unit. A boardwalk, originally constructed of wood in the 1990s and now made of plastic lumber, connects the parking lot to the lawn south of the house.

Outside of the domestic core, circulation through the property consists of a system of unpaved lanes



Figure 2.11. Service drive leading north from the house toward the barnyard, maintenance area, and park housing. (OCLP)



Figure 2.12. Many of the lanes are characterized by a two-track travel surface with vegetation between two travel surfaces. (OCLP)



Figure 2.13. Remnants of the ditch and mound system are still evident throughout the forest and marsh landscape. (OCLP)

that snake through the forests and fields, many of which following historic alignments. These lanes are generally of two-track configuration, with a center line of vegetation between two compacted travel surfaces. The primary lanes that lead south from the house include what is labeled on the 1911 survey as "Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue," Which follows Home Creek from the southeast corner of the pightle to the bay at Indian Point, and what was historically referred to as "The Lane", which leads down the center of the property to the lower acreage and the salt marshes. Other lanes branch off of these, providing access to the various fields, forest, and marsh. The lanes are closed to visitor vehicular traffic, and although they are open to foot travel, high tick and mosquito presence makes much of the fields and forests of the lower acreage inaccessible to most visitors.

Ditch and Mound System

Throughout the forests of William Floyd Estate are the remnants of the ditch and mound system that once defined the lot boundaries of the plantation. Likely created early in the plantation's history, the ditch and mound system comprises more than ten miles of extant earthworks, each consisting of a shallow ditch with a linear mound immediately adjacent. Originally, the ditch and mound system was used in conjunction with lopped tree fences, which were established along the tops of the mounds.

Today, the ditch-and-mound combination is generally detectable by the mound, which remains as a linear feature in the landscape well after the ditch has filled with soil and forest litter. Although many of these earthworks are difficult to discern on site, and nearly all are obscured under forest cover, they are clearly detectable with lidar elevation data. These features continue to hold valuable information about the spatial organization and land use of the William Floyd Estate.



Figure 2.14. The pightle and lawn create a broad, open setting for the house when viewed from the south. (OCLP)



Figure 2.15. One of the managed fields, showing typical meadow vegetation and dense forest edges. (OCLP)



Figure 2.16. Many of the fields are colonized by woody vegetation. (OCLP)

Pightle

South of the house is the lawn and pightle. The lawn, extending southerly from the house, consists of mown turf grass and covers an area of about an acre. The pightle is a field of taller grass and meadow vegetation encompassing 3.75 acres. *Pightle*, pronounced and sometimes spelled *pikel*, is an English word that usually refers to a small enclosed field or pasture near the house, similar in usage to the term *close*. Together, the lawn and pightle provide broad, unobstructed views from the house for a distance of almost six hundred feet, and also create an open setting for the house when viewed from the south.

Fields

In addition to the pightle and the other open areas around the house and park operations areas, there are twelve managed fields in the William Floyd Estate. The fields range in size from just under an acre to over six acres, totaling about thirty-five acres together. Some of these fields are accessible by a short walk from the house or visitor parking lot, but many require a hike of a half a mile or more along the forest roads to reach, making them inaccessible to many visitors.

The fields, created in the 1950s and 1960s by the Floyd family to improve game habitat, were once cultivated in rye and other crops as a management tool, but today are vegetated with tall grass, meadow vegetation, and successional woody shrubs and trees. Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) are the primary woody species that are recolonizing the fields, but also present are pine (*Pinus* spp.), cherry (*Prunus* spp.), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), oak (*Quercus* spp.), sumac (*Rhus* spp.), as well as arrowwood (*Viburnum* spp.), catbrier (*Smilax glauca*), and honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.). The fields are currently being maintained by annual mowing and periodic removal and treatment of woody vegetation, but





Figure 2.17. (Top) Image of the forest showing dense, tangled underbrush. Large, dead trees have fallen across the lane. (OCLP)

Figure 2.18. (Above) Large, misformed trees scattered through the forest may be remnants of the lopped tree fences that once separated farm lots. (OCLP)

arresting succession in these fields continues to be a significant management challenge.[1]

Forest

The largest portion of the William Floyd Estate area is covered in dense second-growth forest. Much of this forest is characterized by the coastal oak-heath vegetation association, dominated by white oak (*Quercus alba*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), mockernut hickory (*Carya tomentosa*), and sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*).[2] Smaller portions of the forest are characterized by pitch pine-oak forest, dominated by pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*), white oak, and black oak, and maritime deciduous scrub forest, dominated by black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), sassafras, shadblow serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), and greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*).

Because the majority of the landscape was open fields as recently as the 1930s, much of the current forest is relatively young and successional. Prevalent successional species within the former field footprints include black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), black cherry, shadblow, red maple (*Acer rubra*), pitch pine, and black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), with scattered instances of red spruce (*Picea rubens*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Understory species include greenbrier, highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), and eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*).

The environmental effects of elevation, groundwater, and the proximity of the bay are evident in a gradient of forest composition from south to north. Black gum is more prevalent in the southern portions of the forest, with a strong component of shadblow serviceberry, while in the northern portions, scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*) along with white and black oak, hickory, and red maple dominate.

Impacts from white-tailed deer are evident throughout the forest, driving a change in forest composition. Species not favored as browse, including black cherry, black gum, and sassafras, are more numerous in the understory, even in areas where they do not make up a significant component of the canopy. Favored species are suppressed by browsing deer, and there is insufficient recruitment of seedlings to sustain natural reproduction of the overstory.[3] Further change in the forest, as well as other vegetation communities, is being driven by sea-level change, which is pushing plant and animal communities northward.[4]



Figure 2.19. Much of the lower portion of the William Floyd Estate is covered with salt marsh. (OCLP)



Figure 2.20. Where the marsh transitions to forest it has become colonized by reed grass (*Phragmites australis*). (OCLP)



Figure 2.21. The Great Ditch, which cuts across the marsh from southwest to northeast, is evident primarily by the long tailings mound topped with shrub vegetation. (OCLP)

Salt Marsh

The lower portion of the William Floyd Estate property, extending approximately a quarter-mile inland from the bay, is occupied by salt marsh, which includes low salt marsh, high salt marsh, ditches, ponds, and dikes. Due to dense forest and underbrush along the northern boundary of the marsh and the wet ground of the marsh itself, the area is inaccessible to all but the most intrepid visitors.

Dominant vegetation in the low and high salt marsh, respectively, are the marsh grass species salt marsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and salt meadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*). Other grass and herbaceous species are also present, including saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) and goose tongue (*Plantago maritima*). Along the fringes of the marsh where it transitions to upland, common reed grass (*Phragmites australis*) had become established and is creating dense, single-species stands.[5]

Cutting across the marsh from southwest to northeast is the Great Ditch. The Great Ditch was constructed sometime during the eighteenth or nineteenth century to drain areas of the salt meadows for pasturage and to enclose the lower lots and constrain livestock. The tailings were piled alongside the ditch, creating a berm, or linear mound. Today, both the ditch and berm are present, although the berm is more prominent in the landscape. Because of its higher elevation with respect to the surrounding marsh, the Great Ditch berm supports shrubs and small trees, making the linear feature conspicuous as it zig-zags across the marsh.

In addition to the Great Ditch, a number of smaller ditches cross the marsh in a grid. A small number of these, including some of the larger ditches, were present prior to the 1930s. The majority, however, were constructed later in the twentieth century in an effort to control mosquitoes. Most of these mosquito ditches are only two to three feet wide.





Figure 2.22. (Top) Folly Pond, one of the constructed ponds within the marsh area. (OCLP)

Figure 2.23. (Above) Image of the shoreline at the southern edge of the salt marsh, with Narrow Bay on the left. (OCLP)

The salt marsh also contains four of the five ponds located in the William Floyd Estate. With the exception of the natural Floyd Pond, the ponds were constructed by the Floyd family in the 1950s and 1960s to improve game habitat. The ponds were created by digging depressions and mounding the tailings around the edges to create dikes. Dike gaps and ditches facilitate exchange of water between the ponds and the bay. Like the Great Ditch berm, the pond dikes support shrub vegetation.

The salt marsh area is contaminated by the insecticide DDT. Applied during the 1940s or 1950s to address the mosquito problem, the DDT settled into the marsh sediment. A study in 1988 found that the highest concentrations of DDT were found in the sediment of the ponds, between a depth of five and fifteen centimeters below the sediment surface. Recommendations at the time were to leave the sediment alone, as removal or other remediation could disturb the contamination causing it to disperse through the ecosystem.[6]

Climate Change

The coastal site of the William Floyd Estate makes it vulnerable to a range of impacts from a changing climate. Since 1947, local sea level has risen nearly nine inches, causing changes to the marsh, forest, and features of the estate.[7] Areas that were once used as pasture are today salt marsh, and changes in ground water depth and salinity is precipitating changes in forest composition and driving the migration of vegetation communities northward toward higher ground. These changes will accelerate as average temperature and sea level continue to rise. Projections indicate that local sea level will rise between 1.31 and 7.23 feet by 2100, causing significant changes to the landscape even at the low estimate.

The most vulnerable resources are located at lower elevations closest to the bay. These include the Great Ditch and other ditch-and-mound features, roads, ponds, and archeological resources. Many of these features will be regularly submerged as sea level rises and will exposed to coastal erosion and damage from storm surge. Substantial disturbances in the marsh area, particularly events that inundate the ponds, have the potential to displace contaminated sediments, threatening water quality, habitat integrity, and human health and safety.

Although the majority of structures and other features located in the core of the property are at an elevation above the risk of sea level rise, they are still vulnerable to damage from wind, storm surge, local flooding, and other impacts related to projected increases in storm intensity and frequency. Rising ground water and heavy precipitation events are already causing flooding in the basement of the house and erosion around other structures.

Significant vegetation, such as the linden and beech trees, will be increasingly threatened by changes in temperature, precipitation, and pests and disease. In recent years the park has seen an infestation of southern pine beetle, which has killed many of the pitch pines on the estate. Long Island is not projected to experience significant changes to overall precipitation, but changes in seasonality and the likelihood of prolonged dry spells could stress the trees and make them susceptible to other impacts.

Invasive Species, Pests, and Disease

Several species of invasive or potentially invasive vegetation are present at the William Floyd Estate. Some of these, like black locust (*Robinia psuedoacacia*) and autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellate*), were planted by the Floyd family during the historic period and have since naturalized.[8] Others have migrated into the property from surrounding areas.

Black locust and autumn olive are abundant throughout the forests and are of greatest concern in the fields, where their pioneering behavior and aggressive growth hamper field maintenance. Annual mowing is inadequate for control of these species, and if mowing cannot be accomplished during one or more years, the young trees quickly establish themselves, requiring laborious hand removal, herbicidal treatment, or the use of heavy equipment. Phragmites, or common reed (*Phragmites australis*), has established itself in recent years along the edges of the salt marsh where it transitions to forest. The reeds create dense, single-species masses that exclude native plants. Other plants of concern include Norway maple (*Acer platinoides*), Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), and tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). Invasive plant species documented at the William Floyd Estate in 2006 are listed in Table 2.2.[9]

Pests and disease also threaten features of the cultural landscape. Southern pine beetle was first detected in William Floyd Estate in 2014 and quickly became a significant problem. Since then hundreds of infected pines and other host species have been removed.[10] Other tree pests of concern include the Asian longhorned beetle, bronze birch bark borer, emerald ash borer, gypsy moth, and beech bark disease.

Table 2.2. Invasive Vegetation

Specific Name	Common Name
Acer platinoides	Norway Maple
Ailanthus altissima	Tree Of Heaven
Berberis thunbergii	Japanese Barberry
Celastrus orbiculatus	Asiatic Bittersweet
Elaeagnus augustifolia	Russian Olive
Eleaganus umbellata	Autumn Olive
Fallopia japonica	Japanese Knotweed
Glechoma hederacea	Ground Ivy
Lespedeza cuneata	Lespedeza
Lonicera japonica	Japanese Honeysuckle
Phragmites australis	Common Reed
Robinia pseudoacacia	Black Locust
Rosa multiflora	Multiflora Rose
Various	Bamboo
Wisteria sinensis	Wisteria

Wooden structures, including Old Mastic House and the outbuildings, are vulnerable to the typical structural pests, including wood-eating beetles, ants, termites, and other insects, as well as mice, rats, and other small animals. Integrated pest management efforts to control these pests is ongoing.

ENDNOTES

1 Richard Stavdal and Allan O'Connell, "Field Management Plan, Reclamation of Fields: William Floyd Estate," (National Park Service, 1987).

2 Vegetation communities at William Floyd Estate were summarized in the *Fire Island National Seashore Final White-tailed Deer Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* (2015), which was based primarily on S.D. Klopfer, A. Olivero, L. Sneddon, and J. Lundgren, *Final Report of the NPS Vegetation Mapping Project at Fire Island National Seashore* (USGS and Conservation Management Institute, 2002).

3 *Deer Management Plan*, 85.

4 James S. Clark, "Vegetation and Land Use History of the William Floyd Estate, Fire Island National Seashore, Long Island New York," (University of Massachusetts, 1984),

5 National Park Service, "Salt Marsh Vegetation and Nekton Community Monitoring at William Floyd Estate, Fire Island National Seashore, 2009 Summary Report (Natural Resource Report NPS/NCBN/NRDS—2010/070).

6 Mark D. Sprenger, Darvene A. Adams, and Alan W. Mcintosh, "DDT Distribution Study, Fire Island National Seashore, Final Report," (Center for Coastal and Environmental Studies, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1988).

7 Glenn Ricci, Donald D. Robadue, Jr. , Pam Rubinoff, Alanna Casey, and Amanda L. Babson, "Integrated Coastal Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, Fire Island National Seashore," (National Park Service, Natural Resource Report PS/FIIS/NRR—2020/2156, 2020), 91.

8 William E. Currie, "Integrated Pest Management Plan Fire Island National Seashore," (Natural Resources Report NPS/NER/NRR–2006/012, 2006), 45. While native to North America, black locusts are not native to Long Island and are identified in their IPM as an invasive species.

9 Ibid.

10 National Park Service press release, February 28, 2017, (https://www.nps.gov/fiis/learn/news/national-park-service-highlights-success-of-southern-pine-beetle-suppression-efforts.htm, accessed 08/22/2020).



Old shop and storage crib. (OCLP)

Analysis and Evaluation

This chapter provides a summary of the historical significance of the William Floyd Estate and provides an evaluation of the integrity of the landscape. The chapter also identifies the features and patterns present in the landscape that contribute to the site's historic character and documents how those features and patterns have changed over time. The framework for the analysis and evaluation is based on criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, and on the methodology developed in the National Park Service's *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (1998).

The chapter begins with a summary of the historical significance of the landscape as established by the National Register and in subsequent determinations, as includes a discussion of the historical integrity of the William Floyd Estate according to the seven aspects defined by the National Register. The chapter then presents an analysis of the historic character of the landscape according to the National Park Service methodology that organizes the landscape into landscape characteristics and their associated features. Historic and existing conditions of extant features are compared to assess historic character and change over time. Each feature is evaluated to determine whether it contributes to the historic character of the landscape. The analysis is based on archival research, secondary sources, and site documentation in 2018 and 2019.

NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William Floyd Estate derives its primary significance for its association with William Floyd, signer of the Declaration of Independence, (Criterion B). William Floyd was born in Old Mastic House in 1734 and lived there throughout the years of his most important national political involvement, until 1803, when he moved to Oneida County and left Mastic in the charge of his son Nicoll. The main house is significant as an example of Georgian and Greek Revival style architecture (Criterion C). The east wing dormers and front porch columns reflect the Colonial Revival architectural style. The landscape is significant under Criterion C for its patterns of land use with distinctive boundary demarcations consisting of hedges, lopped tree fences, and ditch-and-mound structures, representative of agricultural

practices based on English traditions that were commonly employed on Long Island in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The landscape is also significant for its circulation networks and cultural vegetation, including the orchard, pastures, forests, and ornamental trees. The William Floyd Estate also derives significance under Criterion A, for its association with more than two hundred years of continuous agricultural use, and from the 1890s on, for its game bird and waterfowl habitat conservation management efforts. The property is significant at the national level.

NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS

The William Floyd Estate was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1980. Although the nomination form designates the property type as a building, the property description and statement of significance address the full 613-acre estate, including the outbuildings, circulation, vegetation, and topographic features. The narrative specifically references the cemetery, historic farm road system, the extensive physical remnants of hedges and ditches that mark the original boundaries of the fields, and the extent to which their survival illustrates the continuity of land use by the different generations of the Floyd family. The nomination also lists ten contributing outbuildings, including the old sheep barn, which burned in 1979, as well as the pumphouse and incinerator.

The statement of significance in the nomination focuses specifically on the association with William Floyd and his significant contributions to the early history of the nation. The period of significance is listed as 1700 through 1900 and beyond, and the indicated areas of significance are Politics/Government, Military, Architecture, Agriculture, and Historic Archeology.

In 2006, the property was documented for inclusion in the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI). The CLI documentation included a more complete description of the contributing landscape characteristics and features and expanded the stated significance beyond the narrow focus on William Floyd to include the long history of agricultural land use practices and the significant landscape patterns that convey them. The New York State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the findings of the CLI.

In recent years, the National Park Service has broadened its interpretation of the significant themes of the William Floyd Estate beyond William Floyd and the Floyd family. The park articulated this shift in its *Visitor Experience Plan*, stating that the "multigenerational tenure on the property not only tells their story but also reflects the dynamic social, economic, and political changes that took place over time on Long Island and throughout the nation."[1] A new Historic Resource Study (HRS) for the William Floyd Estate, currently underway, is examining these broader themes, particularly as they pertain to the property's association with

Native American, enslaved Africans, and European workers who participated in its development. The stated purpose of the updated HRS is to "provide a new narrative history of the site, embracing social, political, cultural and economic themes that contribute to the property's significance while providing accurate baseline information that will place the extant cultural resources of the park within larger historical and geographic contexts."[2] To date, no determination has been made regarding the significance of these expanded themes as they relate to the William Floyd Estate.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The overall period of significance for the William Floyd Estate as established in the Cultural Landscapes Inventory in 2006 is 1724 to 1965. This represents several overlapping periods, including the period for which William Floyd was associated with the property (1734 to 1803). The beginning date of 1724 corresponds to the belief that the first portion of the house was constructed in that year. This date was originally provided by family tradition, but subsequent analysis suggests that the construction of the house was initiated five or more years after that.[3]

The end date of 1965 corresponds to the year the Floyd family donated the property to the National Park Service. The family retained a twenty-five-year use and occupancy agreement and remained at the estate until 1976, when Cornelia Floyd Nichols terminated the agreement early and the National Park Service assumed full management of the house and thirty-eight acres of the domestic core. The balance of the property came under federal management in 1990.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

The William Floyd Estate retains integrity of location, setting, feeling and association to the life of William Floyd and its continued occupancy by his descendants for over 240 years because the extant buildings and landscape continue to illustrate the Estate's use as the plantation of a prominent Long Island family. In addition to these aspects, it retains integrity of workmanship for plantation agriculture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and conservation practice in the first half of the twentieth century as remnants of these uses remain evident and intact. The Estate also retains integrity of design, under Criterion C, including field patterns, system of roads, and remnants of hedges and ditches although some aspects of design and materials have been altered or compromised during the long period of significance. Overall, while there have been incremental changes subsequent to the historic period, the William Floyd Estate cultural landscape retains integrity to its period of significance.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Landscape characteristics are the broad patterns, systems, and feature categories that compose the landscape and determine how people interact with it. The analysis of landscape characteristics and features serves to identify the components of the landscape that define the historic character of the landscape and contribute to its ability to convey its significance. The analysis entails comparing existing conditions to what was present during the historic period and making an evaluation of whether the landscape characteristic or feature contributes to the landscape's historic character.

The landscape characteristics at the William Floyd Estate include natural systems and features, spatial organization, buildings and structures, small-scale features, vegetation, circulation, topography, constructed water features, views and vistas, land use, cultural traditions, and archeological sites. For each characteristic, the analysis is broken into the following components:

Historic Conditions, a brief discussion of the feature's history and evolution as it relates to the period of significance;

Existing Conditions, an overview of changes that have occurred since the end of the period of significance; and

Evaluation, a determination of whether the feature contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

Contributing features generally date to the period of significance and help convey the landscape's historic character and significant associations. Non-contributing features generally post-date the period of significance or have been so altered from the historic condition that they no longer help convey the site's significance.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape. These include geology, hydrology, climate, natural vegetation, and wildlife. Evaluation of natural systems and features in the context of a cultural landscape focuses on the human-nature relationship, how natural systems influenced the use and development of the site, and how human activity in turn altered the natural systems.

Historic Conditions

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, much of Long Island forest was interspersed with large swaths of meadow that spanned the island, and the abundant water and low elevation created numerous freshwater wetlands and salt marshes.

This environment provided for an abundance of plant and animal resources to support early indigenous populations. Oak, hickory, chestnuts, black walnut, black cherry, tulip trees, maple, elms, and pine provided nuts, fruits, and seeds for food, while the understory contained a variety of nutritious plants. Edible understory plants included blueberries, strawberries, huckleberries, cranberries, grapes, and beach plums, as well as edible roots like groundnut, pond lily, cattail, Indian cucumber, sunflower, and arrowhead. The tidal creeks and bays provided a wide variety of fish and shellfish for food. Seals and porpoises, important sources of meat, oil, and fur, were hunted along the coast and in the bay in dugout canoes. Whales that beached themselves, or became stranded in shallow water, were particularly valuable finds, providing large quantities of meat, oil, and bone for tools.

Indian villages were often located on the banks of inland ponds and streams to make use of the resources they provided. One of the primary Unkechaug villages was along the banks of Poospatuck Creek, once within the bounds of the Floyd property and today less than a mile outside of the park's north boundary. At the time Richard Floyd acquired the Mastic property in 1718, a small village or camp was located near the head of Home Creek, likely within a small clearing that was later selected by Nicoll Floyd for the site of his house.

The Mastic property contained diverse resources needed to operate a self-sustaining plantation estate, including marsh and meadow land used for hay production, upland suitable for cultivation, and forests for cordwood and timber harvesting. The numerous springs and accessible ground water provided ample fresh drinking water for people and livestock. The rivers offered water power for grist mills and an iron forge, which gave Forge River its name. River and bay access was critical at a time when the road system was incomplete and traveling by land was difficult. Several landings located along the bay shore and on Forge River were used to load grain, farm products, and cordwood for shipment to New York City.



Figure 3.1. Historic image from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing the character of the forest around Mastic. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.2. One of the many photographs of nature and natural features taken by members of the Floyd family. (FIIS Collections)

By the 1730s, Nicoll Floyd began the work of turning the raw landscape into farm land, clearing hundreds of acres of forest for pasture and planting. Although the level land and rich topsoil of the former forest initially supported a variety of crops and produce, the overall fertility of the soil was marginal, and by the time the second Nicoll Floyd was owner of Mastic in the early nineteenth century, he was forced to diversify into a variety of businesses to remain profitable. Later in the nineteenth century, the primary agricultural product of Mastic was livestock, with many of the lots used as pasture.

As the use of Mastic transitioned from agricultural to pleasure and recreation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the relationship between its inhabitants and the natural environment shifted as well. The forests, fields, creeks, and bay became the primary source of recreation for the family and their guests. Numerous species of game birds found quality habitat in the acres of fields and hedgerows that still covered much of the landscape. The salt marsh and bay supported water fowl, and the forests provided habitat for deer, rabbits, foxes, mink, and other small animals. Hunting became the primary recreational pursuit of many of the men at Mastic, and the guns and other hunting accessories, as well as the stuffed trophies on proud display, would come to lend a defining character to the interior of the house.

The writings of the Floyd family clearly illustrate a deep and personal relationship with the natural landscape of Mastic, each replete with rich descriptions of the flowers, trees, animals, streams, springs, and beach. Sadie Floyd wrote about the plants that grew around the pond on Home Creek, describing sweet flag, daisies, cowslips and buttercups that dotted the grass, jack-in-the-pulpit, lady slipper orchids, downy mullein, and long trailing mosses that grew from the walnut and aspen trees. She also lists birds, including orioles, hanging-birds, catbirds, thrushes, wrens, chipping sparrows, swallows, martins, woodpeckers, phoebes, and yellow warblers. Rosalie Floyd wrote extensively about the plants and animals of natural Mastic landscape, mentioning numerous species of flowers, trees, and water plants.

No plant features more prominently in the writings than wood pinks, or trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), which is mentioned by Sadie, Rosalie, and Cornelia Floyd. The gathering of the fragrant flowers from the sodden leaves of the forest floor was spring ritual, often one of the first activities of those arriving at Mastic. Other plants collected in the forest included wintergreen berries (*Gaultheria procumbens*), partridge berries (*Mitchella repens*), ground pine (*Ajuga reptans*), pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellate*), ghostly Indian pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*), and deer moss lichens. Berries and other edible plants were foraged, including wintergreen plums (*Gaultheria hispidula*), strawberries (*Fragaria* sp.), blackberries (*Rubus* sp.), and wild grapes (*Vitis* sp.) and were used to make such treats as elderflower wine, locust blossom fritters, fern salad, and beach plum jelly.

Table 2.3. Vegetation Mentioned in Historical Writings

The following table includes a partial list of shrubs and herbaceous plants mentioned in writings of Sadie Floyd, Rosalie Floyd, or Cornelia Floyd Nichols. The common names are listed as they appears in the reference, while the specific names correspond to the species most likely referred to.

Common Name	Specific Name
Azalea	*Rhododendron* sp.
Bayberry	*Myrica pensylvanica*
Blackberry	*Rubus* sp.
Blue Harebells	*Campanula rotundifolia*
Buttercups	*Ranunculus* sp.
Cardinal Flower	*Lobelia cardinalis*
Cat Tails	*Typha* sp.
Columbine	*Aquilegia* sp.
Cowslips	*Primula veris*
Cranberry	*Vaccinium oxycoccos*
Daisies	*Bellis perennis*
Elderberry	*Sambucus canadensis*
Highbush Blueberry	*Vaccinium corymbosum*
Indian pipes	*Monotropa uniflora*
Irises	*Iris* sp.
Laurel	Unk.
Lupine	*Lupinus* sp.
Moccasin Flower (Lady Slipper)	*Cypripedium acaule*
Reeds	Unk.
Roses	*Rosa* sp.
Sweet Flag	*Acorus calamus*
Violets	*Viola* sp.
Watercress	*Nasturtium officinale*
Wild Geranium	*Geranium maculatum*
Willow	*Salix* sp.
Wintergreen	*Gaultheria procumbens*
Wintergreen Plums	*Gaultheria hispidula*
Wood Pinks (Trailing Arbutus)	*Epigaea repens*



Figure 3.3. Historic image of what is likely the pond at the head of Home Creek. Descriptions of the pond include sweet flag, reeds, water lilies, and overhanging willows. (FIIS Collections)

Water played an important part in life at Mastic. In addition to the utility of supplying fresh water for people and livestock, providing transportation and bay access, and offering its bounty in the way of fish and shellfish, the springs, streams, and small pools of Mastic were the source of magic and leisure. Sadie described the spring that fed Lon's Creek, which was located near the house of Aunt Hannah:

> Look in and you will see its mossy sides, the white pebbles, at the bottom in a tremulous reflection the blue sky, and the over hanging boughs as they twist and turn in the breeze. Taste the water, there is the old dipper hanging on the lopped tree, and when you have drunk your fill put it back again, for Aunt Hannah keeps it there for the way-farer who drinks and drinks again, as he passes by in the hot noon sun, or drags himself along after a good day's work.[4]

Both Cornelia and Rosalie recalled a place on Poospatuck Creek that, as children, they referred to as the home of the water fairies. Their father, John G. Floyd Jr. would take the girls up the stream in a small hand-made canoe, past the bridge, to a small pool, where they would have a picnic, lie in a hammock that spanned the creek, and explore the wonders of the fairy world. Rosalie recalled:

> A silver glinting stream across which boughs of maples bend to sweep its surface with their tassels, which cowslips border thickly, above which droop moss beards of hoary branches that lean to see their clear reflections in the shining pools where saucy fishes flash by; beyond which, in that tangled jungle [on] the other side of the stream, flutes the clear note of the hermit thrush, there unafraid.[5]

Cornelia also wrote much about the streams:

> The creek ran so cold and clear from its nearby springs that it was good to drink. Father would cut long reeds and slip the pith from the center. We lay on the bridge close to the water and drank through them. Sunlight touched the sandy bottom; delicate watercress and ribbon grasses moved with the stream; now and then a school of alewives flashed by, and occasionally a trout.[6]



Figure 3.4. The meadow grounds featured areas of salt marsh and wet meadow separated by ditches and mounds that supported shrubs and small trees. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.5. The beach on Fire Island was a wild and desolate place, but also the site of many family outings. (FIIS Collections)

The front beach on Fire Island was a pervading presence that, directly or subliminally, colored all life at Mastic. Cornelia described it as an "almost unheard monotone [that] played a bass to the surrounding silence." Both the first and second Nichol Floyds, in their respective times, utilized the beach in their whaling endeavors. Whales that were killed in the near-shore waters were dragged onto the beach for processing. In the nineteenth century, the second Nicoll served as Wreck Master, charged with aiding ships that became stranded on the beach, assisting the crews, and saving what cargo and ship's outfit could be saved.

The beach was also a source of recreation for the Floyd family. They would make the one-and-a-half-mile row or sail from Indian Point to the bay side of the island in a flotilla of small boats, spending the day playing in the surf or exploring the dunes, before finishing with a bonfire and dinner on the beach. But the sea had the power to give joy and sorrow in equal measure; Phebe and Nicoll's eight-year-old daughter Kitty and her playmate drowned while playing in the surf in 1800.

During the twentieth century, the natural systems of Mastic once again underwent relatively rapid transformation, as agriculture was discontinued and forest retook the fields. By the 1950s, the lot organization was obscured by successional forest growth, and open ground was limited to the pightle and other areas around the house. In an attempt to improve game habitat, the family cleared sections of the forest to create a number of fields. These new fields represented a fraction of what had originally been clear, and their dispersed arrangement, separated by forested areas, resulted in a substantially different character and an altered ecological function. Additional changes included the creation of three new brackish ponds within the marsh area and one new freshwater pond.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

By the end of the period of significance, the landscape of Mastic, outside of the developed core, was predominantly forested, with thirteen small fields and a band of salt marsh along the bay. Although this overall pattern has remained largely unchanged since then, evolving ecological pressures from outside of the park, changing climatic conditions and rising sea level, and National Park Service management practices have driven changes to the composition and function of the natural systems and features.

Forests within the footprints of the former fields have continued to mature, although they still reflect a successional character and composition. The maturity of the trees in these areas, some of which have now been growing for nearly a century, make the forest in the former field areas difficult to distinguish from the former hedgerows and balks that have featured trees for much longer. Several factors have induced ongoing changes to the forest, including a high deer population, introduced invasive species, pests and disease, and climate change. Beyond the boundary of the park, in the areas that were forested during the majority of the historic period, urban development has erased the forests altogether.

Cursory examination of the existing vegetation of the forests, fields, marshes, and other habitats suggests a significant reduction in the diversity of herbaceous species since the historic period. A dedicated vegetation survey and comparison to historic conditions would provide more information about which of the many plant species that characterized the landscape in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries are still present.

The hydrology of the region has changed significantly since the development of the surrounding area. Although the creeks themselves—Home Creek, Odell's Creek, Lon's Creek, and Poospatuck Creek—remain, their character is very different than what was described by Sadie, Rosalie, and Cornelia. Drastic reductions in their respective watersheds has reduced the flow rate and volume, and today the creeks do not extend appreciably beyond their tidal limits. Tidal reaches of the



Figure 3.6. Image of the forest in the vicinity of the cemetery, showing the dense brush and vines that constitute the understory. (OCLP)



Figure 3.7. Home Creek today bears similarity to its historic character but differs from the vegetation described in historical sources. (FIIS Collections)

streams are wide and still, with residential development along the banks. Above the limits of tidal influences, the streams are largely seasonal, with slow or standing water and high amounts of wetland and aquatic vegetation in the channel. The streams no longer support the trout, alewives, and other aquatic life as described during the historic period.

Many aspects of the natural systems and features of Mastic have changed little since the historic period. The marsh, for example, still exhibits the wild and open character it always has. Across Narrow Bay from the estate property, the front beach on Fire Island is managed by the Smith Point County Park. The beach and dunes in this area are undeveloped and remain essentially unchanged.



Figure 3.8. The salt marsh, or meadow grounds, reflects its historic conditions, despite the dense growth of invasive phragmites in places. (OCLP)



Figure 3.9. Today, the beach on Fire Island closely resembles its character during the historic period. (NPS)

Evaluation

Despite the changes in forest composition, vegetation, and hydrology, the natural systems and features remain an essential component of the William Floyd Estate landscape character. The underlying processes and patterns and their relationship with the built aspects of the landscape are intact. The deep forests that occupy much of the estate contrast with the residential development just outside of the park boundary and create a feeling of seclusion and immersion in nature. The character of the marsh remains largely unchanged from the historic period, and the relationships between the estate property, the bay, and the beach of Fire Island are intact. The natural objects collected by the family and displayed in the house make a direct connection to the forests, marshes, and meadows and reveal the intimate relationship between the family and the natural world.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of a landscape created by the ground, vertical, and overhead planes. At the William Floyd Estate, essential aspects of spatial organization include the location and arrangement of the house and outbuildings, cemetery, circulation system, and the historic lots delineated by the ditch-and-mound system.

Historic Conditions

The Mastic property consisted of a relatively compact domestic core, with the house, outbuildings, gardens, and orchards, surrounded by an array of crop fields, pastures, woods, and marsh stretching out on all sides. South of the house was the primary arrangement of lots, irregularly shaped and sized, each with a distinctive name that suggested some piece of its use or history. These lots were contained within the two creeks that defined Mastic Neck, Lon's creek on the east and Odell's Creek on the west, and by the bay to the south. Additional lots and orchards were located across Lon's Creek on John Wood's Neck. North of the domestic core, forest stretched for more than two miles to the center of Mastic, where the road, and later the railroad, connected to the western reaches of Long Island and New York City.

The organization of the Mastic plantation was anchored by the house, which was located about a mile from the bay near the head of Home Creek. The location of the house, and its southerly orientation, provided high, level ground, access to fresh water, and a sweeping prospect of the fields and the bay beyond. In front of the house, to the south, was an open field of approximately five acres known as the pightle. During the nineteenth century the pightle was fenced and livestock was pastured there. The field also served as a front lawn, and in later years, a portion of it was kept mowed for that use.

North of the house was the utilitarian area with a cluster of domestic and farm outbuildings, including several large barns as well as sheds, workshops, and other smaller structures. The number, location, and use of the outbuildings varied through the historic period, as buildings were moved, replaced, or repurposed according to need. The larger barns were arranged in an irregular line about two hundred feet north of the house, with as many as five or six substantial structures in this area. Between these and the house was a line of smaller structures that defined the north edge of the house yard. Together, the outbuildings roughly enclosed an open area that was used as the barnyard and may at one time have contained a vegetable garden.

The house yard was enclosed on the north and west side of the house. The area was defined along its north side by the row of smaller outbuildings, including the shop, ice house, and a variety of sheds and other structures. A high-board fence

ran along this northern boundary and at an angle along the western side of the yard. At times a picket fence completed the enclosure, stretching west from the southwest corner of the house, but at other times this side of the yard was open to the lawn and pightle. The contents and use of the house yard varied through the historic period, but generally held utilitarian domestic functions, such as a kitchen, henhouse, and wells, as well as ornamental gardens, mature trees, and a small orchard.

East of the house was Home Creek, and at the head of Home Creek was a small earthen dam that created a small pond. The pond was used to water the cattle and pigs and to collect ice in the winter. North of the pond was a six-acre orchard, and in the far northeast corner of the orchard was the family cemetery. Together, these features—the house, pightle, outbuildings, barnyard, house yard, pond, orchard, and cemetery—formed the domestic core of the property.

Outside of the domestic core, the lots ranged in size from three acres to twenty-five acres, with some roughly square or rectangular in shape and others featuring angled sides and acute corners to fit within the irregularly shaped neck of land. The boundaries of the lots were defined by a ditch-and-mound system, in which a shallow ditch was dug along the edge of the field and the soil was piled alongside to form a linear mound. Along the top of the mound, a plashed hedge, or loped tree fence, was created to enclose the lot. This traditional English practice of enclosing fields and demarcating boundaries was common in Long Island during the Colonial period. In the nineteenth century, maintenance of the lopped tree fences stopped and they reverted to unmanaged hedgerows.

The overall spatial organization of Mastic was stable throughout most its historic period, and by the early twentieth century, the location of the house, general arrangement of the farm features and outbuildings, and the pattern of lots remained essentially unchanged from its earliest days. Beginning in the 1930s, however, field maintenance ceased, and the open lots filled with forest, so that by the 1950s the lot arrangement was no longer obvious. The new fields that were created in the 1950s and 1960s to improve game habitat were considerably smaller than the historic lots and did not follow the original lot lines. Several of the larger outbuildings were also removed during the twentieth century, reducing the feeling of enclosure in the barnyard area.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Since the National Park Service assumed management of the William Floyd Estate in 1976, the spatial organization has changed little. The property is still anchored by the domestic core, which currently includes the house and house yard, pightle, outbuildings, and barnyard. The house yard is enclosed on three sides—the east, north, and west—by fences and outbuildings. Within the yard are the remnant



Figure 3.10. Existing arrangement of fields (shown in green) overlaid on the 1911 Mastic survey illustrating the relationship of current and historic field organization. (FIIS Collections, adapted by OCLP)

vegetation features of the ornamental garden, including several large trees and a number of shrubs, as well as a small crabapple orchard installed in the 1980s. The north boundary of the yard is formed in part by the shop, storage crib, and ice house.

Two outbuildings—the barn and the new barn—remain of the cluster of large barns that were once north of the house. East of these, the corn crib, woodshed, carriage house, and caretaker's workshop form an informal line along the east side of the service drive. The historic structures that are no longer extant, including the large cow barn and Robinson's barn, were all removed during the historic period, and the current arrangement of outbuildings, with the exception of the old sheep barn which burned in 1979, reflects the conditions at the end of the period of significance.

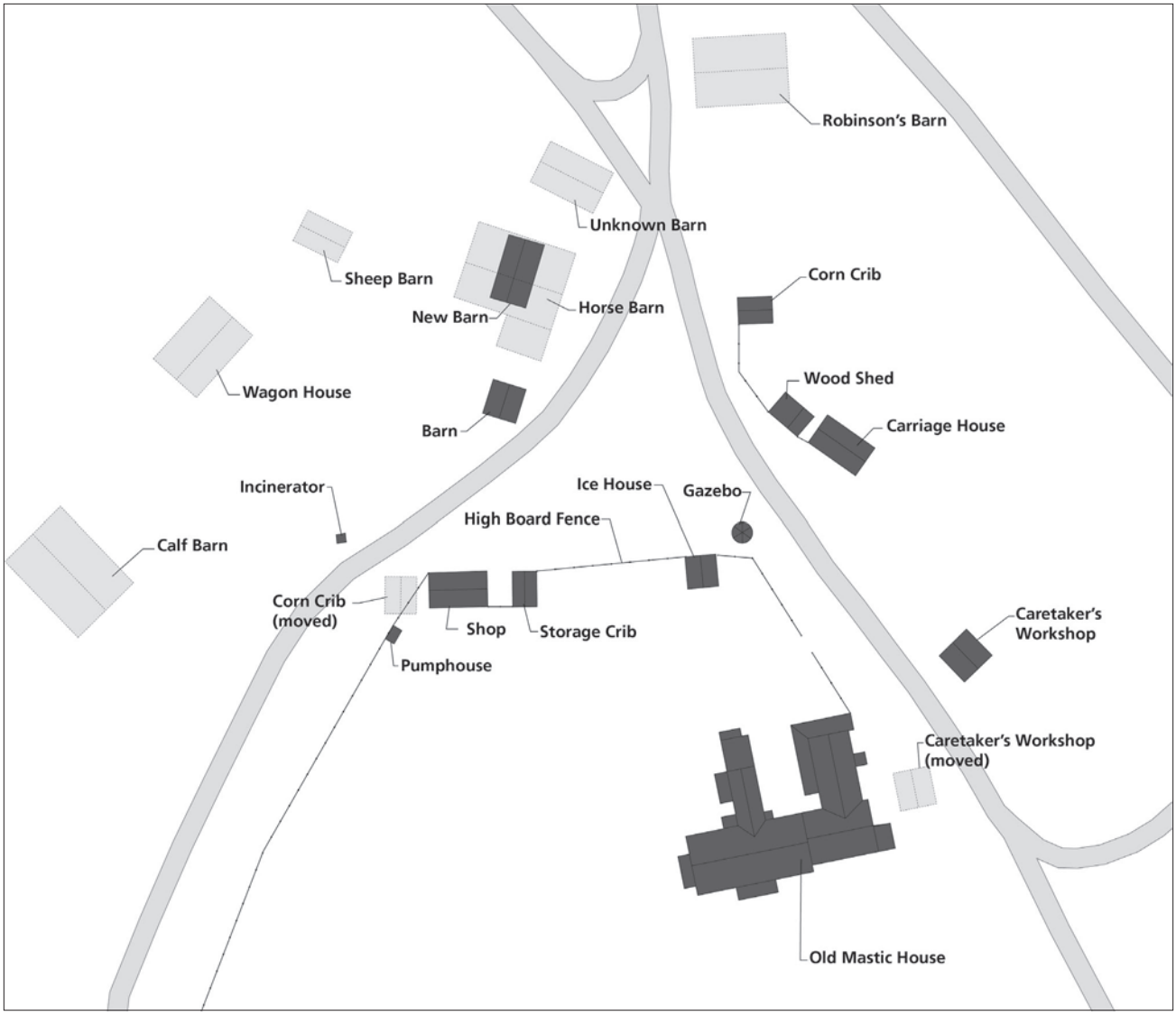


Figure 3.11. Existing organization of the house and outbuildings (in dark gray) and the non-extant buildings that were present at the beginning of the twentieth century (in light gray). (OCLP)

The Floyd family cemetery remains in its historic arrangement and location, a short walk from the house down Squirrel Lane. The orchard in which the cemetery was once situated, however, has reverted to forest, and the cemetery now feels more detached from the house than it once did. The historic core in general is significantly reduced from its original size, as forest vegetation has pushed in from all sides. Again, these differences reflect changes that happened during the middle of the twentieth century, and the overall organization of the domestic core has changed little since 1965.

New development near the domestic core to accommodate park operations includes a maintenance and administration area north of the house, which consists of a collections storage building, a maintenance building, and a number of sheds and temporary structures arranged around a square parking area, and a park housing unit northwest of the house. Southwest of the house is the visitor parking lot, which also contains picnic facilities and a visitor restroom. Each of these non-



Figure 3.12. Map of the extant ditch-and-mound system (in red) that reveals the historic lot arrangement of Mastic. The system was mapped using lidar elevation data and confirmed through field observations. (OCLP)

historic developed areas are enclosed with trees, screening them from the house and domestic core and making them feel like discreet areas.

Outside of the domestic core, the estate property is largely wooded, with twelve fields scattered through the forest. The fields, established in the mid-twentieth century by the Floyd Family, are maintained in their 1976 configuration by the National Park Service with annual mowing and other practices. Only one field present in 1976, a rectangular 0.9-acre field in the center of the estate, has been allowed to revert to forest since NPS management began. Although the extant fields largely reflect conditions at the end of the period of significance, they represent only a fraction of the area that was clear through most of the historic period. Comparison of current field extents with the original lot arrangement shows that most are located within the footprint of a former lot, although some fields span historic lot boundaries.

A crucial component of the historic spatial organization of Mastic is the ditch-and-mound system that once delineated the estate lots and is still evident in the landscape today. Primarily composed of low linear mounds that snake through the forest, the earthworks allows for precise mapping of former lot boundaries

and provide a direct, tangible connection to one of the most essential organizing characteristics of the landscape.

Other extant features that help convey organizational patterns that are otherwise obscured by forest growth include the forest lanes that provided access to the lower lots, the great ditch and meadow ground path in the salt marsh, remnants of the dam that once formed the pond on Home Creek, and the few remaining trees that bear the characteristic growth of the lopped tree fences.

Evaluation

Comparison of the existing spatial organization of the William Floyd Estate to conditions at the end of the period of significance in 1965 shows little significant change since then. All structures present in 1965, with the exception of the old sheep barn, remain in their historic locations, and the vegetation and circulation patterns are essentially unchanged. The most significant change to the organization of the landscape is the development for visitor services and park operations, including the visitor parking lot, park entrance road, maintenance and collections facilities, and the park housing unit.

The spatial organization of the landscape in 1965, however, was substantially different from what it was for the majority of the historic period. The relatively rapid changes in the mid-twentieth century, including the removal of many of the barns, the loss of the estate lots to succession, and the general increase in forested areas, obscured organizational patterns that had defined the landscape for two hundred years.

Today, clues to these historic patterns remain in the extant buildings, circulation, vegetation, and topography. These features together as a system reveal the layout of the former estate landscape and provide an important connection to the site's history and significance.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Buildings and structures are the three-dimensional constructs in the landscape; buildings are for human shelter, while structures are not designed for human shelter. Extant buildings and structures at the William Floyd Estate include the house and outbuildings, smaller structures like the pumphouse and incinerator, as well as non-contributing park operations buildings.

Historic Conditions

There is little evidence for any structures at Mastic prior to its purchase by Richard Floyd in 1718. The one-hundred-acre reservation that William Tangier Smith deeded to the Unkechaugs in 1700 appears to have been located at or near the site

of the Floyd house, and there may have been structures of some sort there at that time.[7] Sadie Floyd, writing in the late nineteenth century, related a family story that the small depression at the southwest corner of the orchard was once the cellar hole of a house or cabin. According to Sadie's story, the occupant was a weaver "who hung himself to drown care and test the worth of his own yarn."[8] No other documentation or evidence has been found to corroborate the story.

Old Mastic House

The first increment of Old Mastic House was constructed around 1730, although the exact date is not known. Family tradition held that it was built in 1724, but several researchers have noted the likelihood that it was constructed closer to the year that Nicoll Floyd was married, in 1729. In 1730, Nicoll negotiated a deed with the Unkechaugs to acquire the one-hundred-acre reservation, which may have been done in preparation for building the house, but may also have been done retroactively. In any case, the house was complete by 1732, when Nicoll and Tabitha's first child was born.

The original house was twenty-five feet by thirty feet with a full second story and three rooms on each floor. Several increments of expansion and alterations occurred over the next several years, but again, the chronology of these changes is not well understood. Around 1750, Nicoll undertook the first expansion of the Floyd house, adding fourteen feet to the west side of the house, and in around 1767 or 1768 his son William extended it another twenty-one feet. The two expansions brought Old Mastic House to a sixty-by-thirty-foot symmetrical manor house with center entry.[9]

It is believed that the east wing was also constructed in some form during this period. It may have started as a detached kitchen that was later connected to the main house. A similar wing on the west side would follow, only to be removed sometime during the first half of the nineteenth century. By 1792, the house, as depicted in Ralph Earl's portrait of William Floyd, consisted of the center block and the east and west wings.

Additional alterations were made in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1857 the east wing was remodeled and a one-and-a-half story extension was added to the north of it to serve as a new kitchen, larder, laundry and servant's quarters. Around the same time, the front porch was enlarged and fitted with large columns. The last major addition to the house were undertaken in 1898 to provide better accommodations for the family and their frequent guests. A two-story northwest ell was constructed, which added two more bedrooms and bathrooms. Another bathroom was added to the east wing, and architectural details throughout the house were modernized. In 1928, the northwest ell was extended northward to add a pantry and kitchen on the first floor, a sleeping porch on the second floor and an alcove area on the west side of the New Dining Room. Other moderniza-

tions happened through the first half of the twentieth century, primarily on the interior, but by the time the National Park Service assumed management of the property, few substantial alterations had been done to the house for many years.

Outbuildings

Agricultural and domestic outbuildings would have been constructed shortly after the house was complete to accommodate essential functions of the farm and household, and would have included barns, hen houses, a pigsty, storage cribs, and sheds, as well as a detached kitchen, laundry, smokehouse, dairy, and blacksmith, among other structures. These would have been clustered close to the house, with the smaller domestic structures around or within the house yard and larger barns and other agricultural structures further out. In addition to utilitarian outbuildings, the landscape would have contained a number of cabin homes for the enslaved families at Mastic. By 1800, there were at least a dozen enslaved families living and working on the plantation, with possibly twice that many or more.[10] It is not known whether these cabins were located in close proximity to the house or if they were dispersed throughout the estate property.

Beyond the general characteristics of outbuildings typical of an eighteenth-century farm or plantation, there is little specific information about the outbuildings at Mastic at the time. The 1792 portrait of William Floyd depicts at least three outbuildings associated with the house. Behind the house was a large white barn and a storage crib or similar structure, tall and narrow and painted red. West of the house was a smaller structure of unknown use. The barn was located in the same general location and orientation, and of similar scale and design as the large



Figure 3.13. Image taken in the late nineteenth century showing structures at the north end of the garden. The man in the photo is standing in front of the open door of a structure that appears to be the extant shop, although the window and door arrangement is different than it is in later photos and from what it is today. To the right (east) of the shop, partially obscured by a tree, is a storage crib with vertical siding. A second crib is located to the left of the shop, and an unidentified structure can be seen behind the storage crib. A small tree, identifiable as a flowering fruit tree in later images, is in front of the shop, directly to the right of the man. In the foreground is a small orchard of apple trees and some rose bushes. (FIIS Collections)

horse barn that was present later in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Although there is no information about the origins of the later barn, it is possible that a barn present during William Floyd's time was still standing a century and a half later.

The earliest descriptions of specific outbuildings in the Mastic landscape come in the middle of the nineteenth century. Sadie Floyd described some of the structures present during her childhood in the 1840s. According to Sadie, the blacksmith shop was located north of the house, "at the end of the garden pickets." West of the blacksmith shop was the weaving-house, where fishnets and other tackle were stored and repaired. After that was the carpenter's shop and the wagon house.[11]

Charles Ross described a similar arrangement of outbuildings in the 1870s clustered north of the house. He indicated that the "old blacksmith shop" was located where the existing icehouse is, and to the east of that was a goose house. He then





Figure 3.14. (right) Detail of photograph shown in Figure 3.13, enlarged for comparison to Figure 3.14. Visible details include a small four-over-four window to the left of the open door, with no windows to the right of the door. The vertical siding on the crib is visible, as is the high-board fence connecting the two structures. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 3.15. (below right) Historic photograph of the shop and storage crib at the north end of the garden. The photo was taken several years after the photo in Figure 3.13, evidenced by the older fruit tree in front of the shop. Other trees not present in the previous image are a young pine and several arborvitaes in a row in front of the crib. The exteriors of both structures has changed in the years since the previous photo was taken. New windows in the shop include a double six-over-six window to the right of the door and possibly a new single six-over-six window to the left (not visible in the Figure 3.15 because of the open door). The siding of the crib has changed to horizontal boards, with a new window and dovecote in the gable. The extant barn, visible just behind the storage crib, features a window in the gable, corroborating its use as a workshop. (FIIS Collections)

describes a collection of structures, some of which correspond to extant structures:

> The shed just south of the horse barn was the shop. They told me it was a kitchen on the west end of the house and moved just east of the wagon house for a shop. Just to the east of that was the shed where Mr. William Floyd keeps his auto now, and to the east of that stood the shop that I now use; it was the grain house. The two cribs by the shop stood to the east of that. They were all in a row; to the east of them was the hog pen.[12]

Because the names of buildings were based on their function, and these names often changed as their uses did, it is difficult to determine which of the buildings described by Mr. Ross are the same as those described by Sadie. What Sadie calls the carpenter's shop and the wagon house likely correspond to the shop and wagon house that Mr. Ross describes, and their orientation, with the shop just east of the wagon house, is consistent between the two accounts.

The carpenter's shop corresponds to the extant barn, which was just south of the large horse barn. This use is supported by a photo that appears to show a glazed window in the gable of the structure (see Figure 3.15). It is unknown whether there is any evidence of Mr. Ross's claim that it was once a kitchen on the west side of the house. The carpenter's shop was later converted to a shed by cutting large openings for wagons or other equipment. The wagon house is visible in photos of the period west of the extant barn structure, also with a central opening for wagons. It may be this structure that Cornelia referred to when she described a "harness house" across the yard from the horse barn, where the riding tack was kept along with carriage equipment.

From Mr. Ross's description, to the east of the carpenter's shop/shed was "the shed where Mr. William Floyd keeps his auto now," which corresponds to the extant carriage house. The "shop that I now use" that Mr. Ross describes refers to the extant shop north of the house, which at one time was a granary. Cornelia describes this building in the 1880s as "a low building with mossgrown shingles and swaybacked roof," and states that "with the passing of cattle the granary changed from agriculture to industry. The bins were removed and windows cut in here and there to light the carpenter's table with its homemade boxes for tools and nails, a homemade vise at one end, and in its apparent litter everything that was needed right at hand."[13] The granary was located somewhere east of the carriage house.

Two cribs were located east of the granary, somewhere east of the house and carriage house. When the granary was converted to a shop and moved to its current location at the north edge of the garden, the two cribs were also moved and placed on either side of it. The westernmost of these would later be moved again to its current location as the corn crib.

On the east side of the barnyard was Robinson's barn. Robinson's barn was present at least from 1876 through the 1930s, but it was likely in place well before the



Figure 3.16. (Photo Key 16)Image from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing the barnyard and outbuildings (view looking west). (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.17. (Photo Key 17) Image from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing the horse/cow barn and Robinson's barn (view looking northeast). (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.18. (Photo Key 18) Image from c. 1914 showing the horse/cow barn, extant barn, and an unidentified barn or wagon house (view looking north). (FIIS Collections)

1870s. The first Nicoll Floyd "had a certain farm mortgaged to him by Thomas Robinson."[14] When Nicoll died in 1755, the mortgage was foreclosed on behalf of the estate, and William Floyd purchased his siblings' interest in the farm for four hundred pounds. It is possible that Robinson's barn was moved from this farm, accounting for the name. Cows were kept in Robinson's barn in the late nineteenth century, and according to Cornelia, "in later years the whole dim, hay-scented interior of Robinson's barn was swept away and replaced by a hardwood floor where college boys and debutantes played badminton on summer weekends."[15] Robinson's barn was removed sometime after 1930. South of Robinson's barn was a horse barn that had collapsed or was removed prior to Mr. Ross's arrival in 1876.

The primary barn from at least the mid-nineteenth century onward, and the building most often referred to in historic sources as "the barn," was located north of the house where the extant "new barn" is. In Sadie's childhood, this was the cow barn, and cows were kept on the main floor beneath the haymow. Mr. Ross, writing in 1913, described the barn:

> The barn that we use for horses now had a shed from the northwest to southeast corner that was to keep oxen in. The barn floor was overhead and the horses were kept under that; went under it on the east side; sometimes water would be four or five inches deep in there. They had to dig it out after the old horse barn went down so that they could get the horses under the floor.

Cornelia referred to this barn as the "horse barn," and her descriptions suggest that the cows had been removed to Robinson's barn by that point and that the horses were kept on the main floor. Other features of the barn included the haymow, box stalls, an oat bin, and a corn grinder. The children often played in the barn, climbing to the loft or playing hide-and-seek in its many nooks and stalls.

Around 1884, a windmill was built on the roof of the barn to pump water from a well to a tank in its loft. This was initially used to water the animals, but around 1898 it was adapted to provide water for the house's new bathrooms. The large barn and its distinctive windmill are a conspicuous presence in many of the photographs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The barn had come down by the 1950s, and some of its material was used to build what is referred to today as the new barn.

Mr. Ross mentions the sheep barn, which he refers to as the Merrifield house. According to him, the structure "stood just about where the green trees are [on the] north side of garden, [and] at each side of that, east and west, was a long shed, each about one hundred feet enclosed."[16] John Gelston Floyd Jr. also mentions the sheep barn in 1884, saying "I first intended the old sheep barn for the windmill and located it where it is for that purpose." These two statements suggest that the sheep barn, possibly repurposed from an earlier dwelling, predated Mr. Ross's



Figure 3.19. Image of Cornelia Floyd and her dog Jock on the lawn in around 1890. The carriage house is visible in the background. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.20. Image of the east side of the house in the early twentieth century showing the original location of the caretaker's workshop. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.21. Image looking north from the northeast corner of the house showing the gazebo. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.22. Image of the woodshed and carriage house from the 1960s. (FIIS Collections)

time but was moved to its later location sometime prior to 1884. The sheep barn would remain on the site until it burned in 1979.

East of the house was the carriage house and woodshed. The carriage house was present at least by around 1890, when it appears in the background of a photograph of Cornelia Floyd. The woodshed was also present by this time, as Cornelia described hiding there as a child. Beyond these references, little is known about the history of these two structures.

South of the carriage house was what is referred to today as the caretaker's workshop. Built around 1898 and called The Camp at the time, the small building was originally located near the east side of the east wing of the house. In around 1920 it was moved to its current location.

A caretaker's house was located north of the house, outside of the domestic core. Charles Ross lived there during his tenure as caretaker, and during the twentieth century it was the home of caretaker Roy Hulse. In the 1950s it was rented during the summer as "Briarpatch." The caretaker's residence burned in the 1960s.

In the 1930s a pump house was located near the horse/cow barn and provided water to the house from this location. The pump house was moved to its present location in the 1960s to irrigate the garden. The incinerator was also built early in the twentieth century to replace earlier use of refuse pits. A windmill located in the lower acreage was erected in 1952 to support wild game habitat conservation management in connection with the system of sluiceways and ponds. The windmill generated electricity to power a pump that supplied the ponds with water.

During its long history, Mastic contained numerous other buildings and structures, the details of which have been lost to time. These include the countless



Figure 3.23. Photo of the Old Mastic House in 2018. (OCLP)



Figure 3.24. The cluster of outbuildings conveys the agricultural character of the landscape. Buildings pictured in 2018 are, from left to right, the barn, the new barn, the woodshed, and the carriage house. (OCLP)



Figure 3.25. The shop pictured in 2018. (OCLP)

cabins and houses of Unkechaug Indians, enslaved Africans, former slaves and their descendants, and others who lived within the bounds of the Floyd estate. Many of these were located outside of today's park boundaries.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Old Mastic House appears today much as it has since the early twentieth century, with no significant alterations to the exterior having been done since 1928. Since taking over management, the National Park Service has undertaken a variety of repairs to the house to improve its condition. Today, the house is maintained as a museum structure holding many of the collection items associated with the Floyd family, including furniture, art, and other personal items. It remains the central attraction and most conspicuous feature of the William Floyd Estate.

During the twentieth century, many of the farm buildings were removed as their condition and the need for their function both declined, so that by the time the National Park Service assumed management of the property, the house and eleven outbuildings remained. The outbuildings extant in 1976 were the shop, storage crib, ice house, barn, new barn, corn crib, woodshed, carriage house, caretaker's workshop, and old sheep barn. All of the outbuildings were in poor condition and needed repairs or reconstruction. The old sheep barn was adapted for use as a maintenance garage and storage area for park operations, but it was destroyed by fire in 1979, making it the only historic structure present in 1976 that is no longer extant. All other structures have been repaired and are in good condition today.

Since the establishment of the park unit, a small number of buildings have been constructed to facilitate park operations and visitor services. These include the park collections building and maintenance building, a duplex housing unit, and a visitor restroom at the parking lot.



Figure 3.26. The woodshed (foreground) and carriage house (background) in 2018. (OCLP)



Figure 3.27. The caregaker's workshop in 2018. (OCLP)



Figure 3.28. The gazebo in 2018. (OCLP)

Evaluation

The design and construction of Old Mastic House reflect two and a half centuries of continuous use, modifications, and adaptations by the Floyd family, featuring architectural elements and furnishings from all periods of its history and from all generations of its occupants. At its core is the original house built by Nicoll Floyd in the early eighteenth century, with materials from its initial construction still plainly evident. Each subsequent addition and renovation added to, rather than replaced, the previous structure, and Old Mastic House today would be easily recognizable by any of its previous residents.

Likewise, the extant outbuildings closely reflect historic conditions, effectively conveying the agricultural associations of the property. While details of their initial construction are not known, it is likely that the oldest of the outbuildings, including the shop, barn, and the two cribs, date to at least the early nineteenth century, if not to William Floyd's time. It is also possible that one or more of these structures contain historic fabric that had been part of the house's west wing before it was removed.[17]

Buildings that were constructed since the period of significance are sited outside of the domestic core and are generally not visible to visitors. They are generally of compatible character and do not detract from the historic character of the landscape.

The most significant deficit that impacts the integrity of the buildings and structures as a whole is the loss of the large barns. Historic images clearly demonstrate the barnyard character created by the cluster of large barns north of the house. The absence of these structures alters the feeling of the barnyard and diminishes the association of the property with its agricultural uses.

Despite these changes, the buildings and structures remain an essential component of the William Floyd Estate landscape, strongly contributing to its significance.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

Small-scale features are the elements that provide detail and diversity in response to functional and aesthetic concerns.

Historic Conditions

Throughout its history, the Mastic landscape would have contained a wide variety of small-scale features related to its farming operations, livestock husbandry, domestic chores, leisure and recreation, and ornamentation. During the early years, these would have been primarily agricultural in nature, including farming tools and equipment, wagons and carriages, watering troughs, and various other items. These would have been temporary and movable, placed as needed in the landscape and often put away in a shed or barn when not in use. Other features were related to boats, shipping, and whaling, including the boats themselves, rigging, and tackle.

Fences

One of the most conspicuous features in the landscape was fencing. Initially, the farm lots were divided lopped-tree fences, which used entwined vegetation to create barriers along the lot boundaries. As maintenance of lopped-tree fences was discontinued, their effectiveness as livestock barriers diminished, and many were eventually supplemented and ultimately replaced by traditional fences.

Surveys of the property completed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries recorded the location of many of the fences that enclosed lots, pastures,

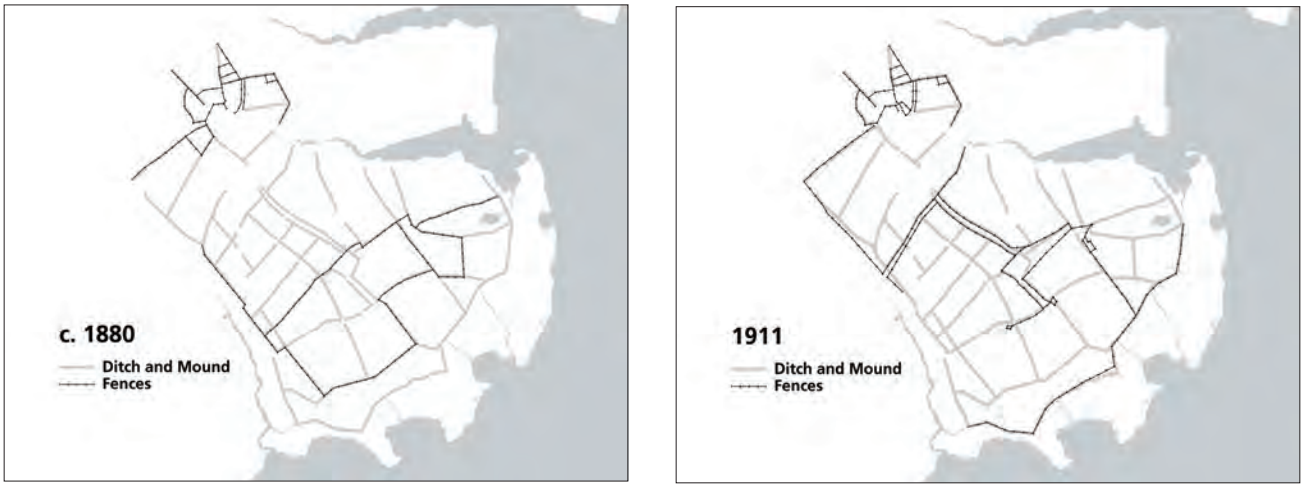


Figure 3.29. Diagrams showing the location of fences indicated in the c. 1880 survey (left) and 1911 survey (right). (0CLP 2019)



Figure 3.30. Photo from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing the extant barn with a cart and other equipment. (FIIS Collections)

paddocks and other spaces. Comparison of the first hand survey, completed around 1880, and the 1911 survey shows that, while the configuration of fencing near the house was relatively stable, fencing on the lower acres was adjusted according to need.

Fencing at Mastic reflected a variety of designs, including rail fences, picket fences, and horizontal and vertical board fences. Rail fencing was likely common early on, as it was the most economical to build. Sadie Floyd, writing about her childhood in the mid nineteenth century, recalled that Hannah Ben lived "where the old rail fence sinks out of sight." Horizontal board fencing was the most common fencing style throughout both the agricultural landscape and the domestic core, and examples of this style are evident in many of the historic photos through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as Kate Floyd's drawings from the 1850s. Where the roads crossed the fences, wide gates provided access. Some of the gates that feature in the historical accounts of family members include the Lane gate, located south of the pightle where the Lane led southward to the lower lots and meadow grounds; the woods gate, located west of the house where the road led out to the woods and Peaspunk; and the barnyard gate near Robinson's barn.

Around the house and garden, spaces were enclosed with horizontal board fence, as well as picket fencing and vertical board fence, or "high board" fence. William Floyd's 1792 portrait depicts a horizontal board fence extending westward from the southwest corner of the house, enclosing the garden area. By the mid-nineteenth century, Sadie described a picket fence around the garden, a detail confirmed by Kate Floyd's drawings of the house in 1856 and a nineteenth century photo of the house. The high board fence enclosed the north side of the



Figure 3.31. Photo from c. 1914 of Floyd and Mary Nichols with a household employee. The horizontal board fence along the west side of the garden is visible in the background. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.32. Photo from the late nineteenth century of two men on horseback. The high board fence is visible in the background. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.33. Photo from the 1970s showing the poor condition of the high board fence at the time the National Park Service assumed management of the property. (FIIS Collections)

garden in line with the shop, storage cribs, and icehouse. Many of the fence posts were constructed using black locust poles because of the wood's natural resistance to decay.

Garden Features

At least from the mid-nineteenth century onward, the garden area contained a number of ornamental accessories. In addition to the white picket fence, Sadie described "an arbor covered with honey-suckle, separating the paths midway," as well as "rain water hogs-heads under the corner pipes."[18] In the early twentieth century, the garden arbors, trellises, and benches, including a circular bench built around a pear tree. A sundial was located within the rectangular beds of the rose garden on the west side of the house.

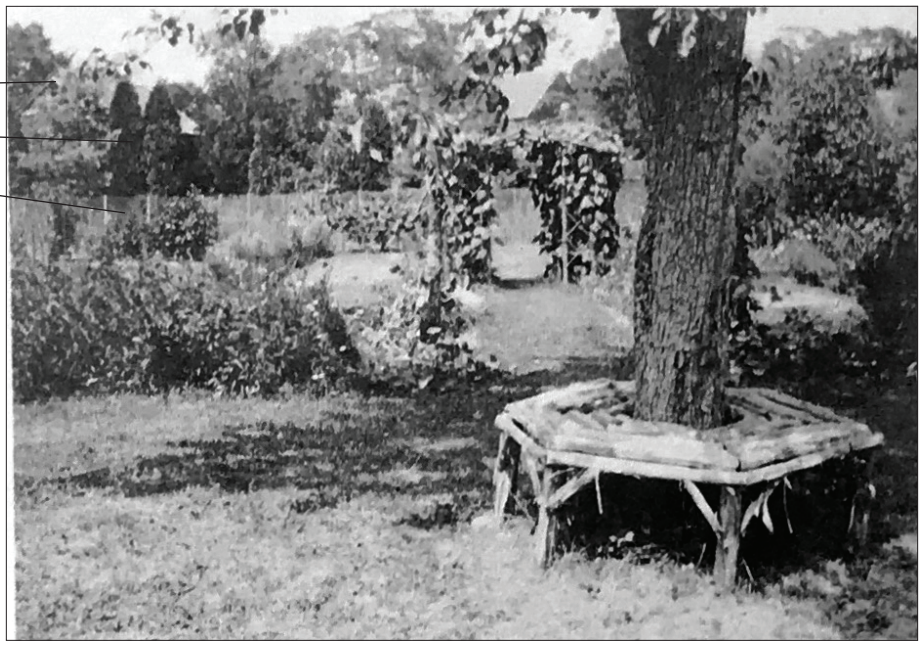


Figure 3.34. (Photo Key 6) View looking north, c. 1914, showing the pear tree seat and arbor garden. In the background of the photo, it appears that a fence has been placed in front of the shop and storage crib, something not evidenced in other photos. The arborvitae and pine that are growing in front of the storage crib are visible rising above the fence.



Figure 3.35. (Photo Key 7) View looking southeast, c. 1914, from the rose garden. One of the arbors, located at the south end of the garden, is visible in the background with large boxwoods growing behind it.

Cemetery

The Floyd family cemetery was established in the northeast corner of the orchard with the graves of Nicoll and Tabitha Floyd after their deaths in 1755. Although William Floyd is not buried in the cemetery at Mastic, his grave marker was moved from Westernville, New York to Mastic in around 1895. Subsequent generations were interred in the cemetery, which ultimately grow to more than fifty family members and two family servants, each marked with a stone marker. In addition to the family and servant graves marked with stone markers within the white picket fence, at least seven enslaved and free servants were buried outside of the fence, their graves marked with wooden crosses. The cemetery was likely always enclosed with a fence, which may have expanded as the cemetery grew.



Figure 3.36. A portion of the high board fence between the shop and storage crib in 2018, showing the locust posts. (OCLP)



Figure 3.37. The wooden arbor at the northwest corner of the house in 2018. (OCLP)



Figure 3.38. Locust posts, such as the one pictured east of the house in 2018, remain vestiges of former fences. (OCLP)

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Because of the ephemeral nature of many of the small-scale features that populated the landscape during the historic period, few remain today. Gone are the many farming implements, except for a few that are on display in the barn and new barn. Two carriages are also on display in the carriage house, but they are only visible when the doors are open for display to visitors. Also gone are the benches and arbors that once decorated the garden. One small arbor is still present behind the house, having been reconstructed since the end of the period of significance. This arbor does not appear to be one of the arbors visible in early twentieth century photographs. The sundial from the rose garden is in storage.

The majority of the fences that separated the estate lots are no longer present. The fences that do remain are primarily within the domestic core, including a horizontal board fence along the west side of the garden and the high board fence along the garden's north and east sides. These fences have been substantially repaired or rebuilt by the Park Service, although many portions retain historic fabric in the form of locust posts. Individual locust posts are present east of the house, as well as other places in the landscape, revealing former fence alignments.

The Floyd family cemetery still contains over fifty headstone markers, including headstones for Nicoll and Tabitha Floyd and the memorial stone for William Floyd. Three gravestones and several footstones, as well as stone markers for family pets, are in storage on the property. The wooden crosses marking the graves of the slaves and servants were reconstructed during the 1970s after the originals were lost in a fire. The fence around the Floyd family cemetery was in poor condition when the property was donated to the National Park Service and needed to be largely reconstructed.



Figure 3.39. Photo from 2018 showing the fence and grave markers in the Floyd family cemetery. (OCLP)

Small-scale features added since the end of the period of significance, related to park operation and visitor services, include signage, utility features, picnic tables, and split rail fencing.

Evaluation

Although many of the small-scale features at mastic during the long period of significance are no longer present, what does remain contributes to the historic agricultural and domestic character of the landscape. These include the extant high board fence, horizontal board fences, and cemetery fence, farm equipment and carriages, the reconstructed arbor, and the cemetery stone grave markers and wooden crosses. With respect to the fencing, the locust pole fence posts are of particular note, whether part of extant fences or individual, as many of these are historic fabric. These posts help convey the rustic and utilitarian character of the landscape, reveal land use and construction practices, and hold important information about landscape organization.

VEGETATION

Vegetation is composed of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous plants introduced in the landscape. Natural, unmanaged vegetation, such as the forest and marsh vegetation, is covered under Natural Systems and Features.

Historic Conditions

The first cultivation of vegetation at Mastic was the clearing of forest and the establishment of crop fields and orchards. Documented crops cultivated during the eighteenth century include flax, wheat, oats, corn, and rye, as well as the

harvesting of cordwood from the forests. Hay was an essential product supporting livestock production, which quickly outpaced crops in importance to the success of the farm. The marshes and meadows along the bay produced quality salt hay without the need for clearing and cultivation. Hay was also cut from other field lots, as well as the pightle and Peaspunk.

The establishment of an orchard was often one of the first undertakings of a new farm. The seedling apples used in eighteenth century orchards would have been tart and unsuitable for eating, but were important for the production of cider and animal fodder. Nicoll Floyd would have undoubtedly established at least one orchard near the house in the early years of Mastic. In 1795, William Floyd purchased three barrels of Spitzenburg apples and three barrels of cider, a purchase that may indicate that the orchards had still not recovered from the damage incurred during the Revolutionary War.[19] Sweet and flavorful, Spitzenburg apples were a relatively new variety at the time, and it may simply be that William did not have quality eating apple trees at the time.

Lopped tree fences were used extensively at Mastic in association with the ditch and mound system to mark the borders of the lots and provide livestock-proof barriers. Lopped tree fences were created by cutting and bending young trees so that they grow into a dense, intertwined hedge. Typically, a young tree was cut partially through at the base of the trunk so that it could be bent over horizontally.



Figure 3.40. Photo taken in the late nineteenth century of a lopped tree at Mastic. The peculiar form of the tree resulted from the process of creating a lopped tree fence. When the lopped tree fences were no longer maintained, the horizontal trunks sprouted vertical shoots that became new trunks. Because of their form, lopped trees served as landmarks, seats, and climbing structure. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.41. (right) Photo from 1910 showing the large linden tree at the left corner of the house and four mature black locust trees across the front of the house. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 3.42. (below) (Photo Key 13) Photo looking east toward the west gable of the house, showing the mature character of vegetation at the south end of the garden. Beyond the frame of the photo on the right is the pightle and to the left is the sundial garden. The extant brick walk would be located to the right of the photo, just beyond the tall shrubs.



Cutting and bending the tree would stimulate the growth of new sprouts, filling in the hedge. After repeated treatments, the entwined branches would form a dense barrier, sufficient to enclose livestock. Lopped tree fences are closely related to the traditional English practice of hedge laying, or pleaching, in which hedge vegetation, such as privet or hawthorn, is cut part-way through, bent over, and woven together with stakes.

The hedges were likely created during the first half of the eighteenth century by Nicoll Floyd, when the land was first being cleared and the structure of the fields was being created. By the late nineteenth century, the many references to lopped trees describe large old and solitary trees that had long since taken the peculiar form for which they were known, indicating it had been many years since they had been maintained. It may be that by the time William Floyd left Mastic, the lopped tree fences were no longer maintained and had grown into ordinary hedgerows.

There is little indication of ornamental vegetation at Mastic prior to the nineteenth century. The 1792 portrait of William Floyd depicts the house with no large trees or other vegetation around it. Rosalie Floyd suggested that the boxwood grove in the garden predated the Revolutionary War, but there is no other indication that that is the case. It is certainly possible that William Floyd, who was fashionable and had well-traveled friends, had a parterre garden such as would be seen in French gardens of the time.

The nineteenth century saw an increased interest in silviculture. Cordwood had become an important product of the Mastic lands, and Nicoll Floyd sought to ensure its



Figure 3.43. (Photo Key 8) Photograph from the early twentieth century showing the small apple orchard in the garden. The apple trees were planted sometime during the nineteenth century and were in place when the garden was rehabilitated in the early twentieth century. (FIIS Collections)

Figure 3.44. Photo of the west gable of the house looking east showing mature lilac and boxwood in the background and the sundial in the foreground. (FIIS Collections)



continued production with tree plantings. In 1827 he planted new trees to replace those cut from the forest, including black locust and hawthorn. Although the hawthorn never performed well, the black locust trees thrived in the forests, and while they may have never been a particularly profitable crop, their decay-resistant wood was used as a construction material for fence posts and building foundations.

This period also saw the planting of several trees around the house and the development of the ornamental garden within the house yard. By 1856, the front of the house was adorned with a row of trees, including a tall, narrow poplar and the linden tree on the west, a black locust on each side of the porch, and two conifers, and an unidentified deciduous tree on the east side. The two locusts were removed during the renovation of the front porch in 1857, but they would later be replaced with four locust trees across the house façade. On the west side of the porch was a free-standing trellis with honeysuckle, and other shrubs grew across the house front. Cornelia claimed that it was her great aunt Catherine Floyd, who planted the linden and other trees.

The condition of the garden went through cycles of decline and rejuvenation throughout its history, corresponding to the interest and efforts of those caring for it. The mid-nineteenth century, under the hand of Catharine and her sister-in-law Sarah Floyd, was a period of high care in the garden. During this time, Sadie recalled long lines of boxwoods, lilacs, and roses, and an arbor covered with honeysuckle, which separated the paths midway. Trees in the garden



Figure 3.45. (Photo Key 10) Photo of the rose garden looking east, showing roses growing around the sundial. What appears to be a brick walk passes behind the sundial.



Figure 3.46. (Photo Key 11) Photo of the rose garden looking east.

included several pear and other fruit trees, including one Sadie referred to as "Old Moll's pear," as well as a black walnut tree near the blacksmith shop and a row of evergreens in front of the shop and storage crib.

In the early twentieth century, the garden was rehabilitated again after a period of decline. The mature vegetation was retained, and new flower beds were added in linear or rectangular arrangements and filled with flowering perennials, including roses, irises, tiger lilies, foxglove, daisies, and daffodils. Roses grew in great numbers throughout the garden and are mentioned repeatedly in descriptions of it. To the west of the house was a rectangular arrangement of beds with irises and roses surrounding a turf panel. At the east end of the panel was a sundial. Rose varieties included hybrid perpetual roses, including Paul Neyron, Charles Margottin, General Jacqueminot, Margaret Dickson, Baron de Bonstettin, Baroness Rothschild, and Earl of Dufferin.[20]



Figure 3.47. (Photo Key 14) Photo taken from the rose garden looking east toward the west gable of the house. Irises and other perennials grow in the foreground, while boxwoods and other mature shrubs grow in the background.



Figure 3.48. (Photo Key 12) Photo looking northeast, c. 1914, showing the rose garden in the foreground.



Figure 3.49. Photo of William Floyd Nichols on one of the brick walks in the garden, showing the wild character of the flowering perennials bordering the brick walk. The location and perspective of this photo is undetermined.

Orchards remained an important component of the Mastic landscape through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. A small lot northwest of the house was labeled Peach Orchard in a nineteenth-century hand survey, although there is no indication on other maps. One of the lots at the south end of the property was labeled on surveys as "Red's Orchard." Its location so far from the house and so close to the marsh would not have been ideal, either from a practical or horticultural standpoint. There is no other information about this orchard nor any indication of who Red was.

The primary orchard occupied a five-acre lot located northeast of the house. It contained apples, pears, and cherries, and possibly other fruits, but it was likely composed mostly of apple trees. By the end of the nineteenth century, the orchard was old enough that descriptions included mentions of old trees, suggesting that it was established in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Deep in the orchard was an old, hollow apple tree that Cornelia called "the cottage." The children nailed boards to its branches to facilitate climbing and spent long afternoons in the upper branches playing or reading.[21]

As the twentieth century progressed, maintenance across the landscape declined. Orchards were overrun by forest succession and the majority of the fruit trees eventually died. Specimen trees and shrubs around the house and in the garden continued to mature, while garden beds reverted to a more natural state before being removed. At some point, even many of the trees and shrubs were removed, including the apple orchard, pear trees, and boxwood. Some shrubs persisted, as did the old shade trees, like the linden and beech. Brick walks were either removed or were buried under turf and forgotten.

The Long Island hurricane of 1938 blew the two easternmost black locusts over and damaged or destroyed many other trees on the property. The locusts were replaced in kind and the giant linden and beech trees were spared by the storm.

Figure 3.50. (below) An azalea in the Floyd family cemetery in 1984. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.51. (below right) A photo of a climbing rose growing on a trellis outside of the caretaker's workshop, 1984, showing the mature, domestic character of the vegetation. (FIIS Collections)





Figure 3.52. Photo of the garden area after interpretive beds were installed in 1984. (NPS)



Figure 3.53. Photo of interpretive annual beds and clipped shrubs in 1984. (NPS)



Figure 3.54. Photo from 1984 showing lilac and boxwood shrubs and tiger lilies. (NPS)

By the 1960s, nearly all vestiges of the agricultural landscape had vanished or been obscured by forest. Lopped trees were still present around the house and scattered in the woods, but these were aging and many were dead. After the old agricultural fields had reverted to forest new fields were created to improve game habitat. These fields were maintained in part by cultivating rye or other grain. Around the house, the vegetation overall exhibited a character of age and wildness, but continued to reflect its long history of domesticity. Azaleas, roses, lilac, quince, forsythia, honeysuckle, and other ornamental vegetation grew along fences, around the foundation of the house and other buildings, and in the cemetery.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

In the 1970s, the park undertook several projects to rehabilitate the vegetation at the newly acquired estate. Trees were pruned and ornamental shrubs were rejuvenated. Over time, however, high maintenance needs and constant damage by browsing deer made maintenance of much of the ornamental vegetation untenable. Many of the shrubs and vines around the house and in the cemetery declined and were eventually removed. Shrubs that were retained and remain today include quince, lilac, boxwood, rose-of-sharon, and others.

In 1984, an exhibit garden was installed in the garden area west of the house based on a 1913 planting list. Other vegetation that remained around the house was rehabilitated, and a small orchard of crabapple trees was planted near the shop. For nearly a decade, the park maintained the exhibit garden, struggling throughout that time to prevent repeated damage from browsing deer. In 1993, the garden was removed, but the crabapple orchard was retained.

The majority of the large specimen trees around the house remain today, including the linden and beech tree. One of the four historic locust trees remains



Figure 3.55. Photo from 2018 showing the four black locust trees in front of the house. The left-most tree dates from the historic period, while the other three are replacements planted in 2013. (OCLP)



Figure 3.56. Photo from 2018 showing the trunk of the European beech tree west of the house. (OCLP)



Figure 3.57. Mature shade trees, such as those around the carriage house and woodshed pictured here in 2018, are an essential component of the landscape's historic character. (OCLP)



Figure 3.58. Photo from 2018 showing the linden tree and lilac shrubs west of the house. (OCLP)



Figure 3.59. Lilac shrubs along the fence, pictured here in 2018, show damage from deer browse. (OCLP)



Figure 3.60. Photo from 2018 of a boxwood near the house showing significant damage from deer. Wire fencing has been installed to protect the shrub. (OCLP)

today, with the other three having been toppled during storms in 1991 and again in 2013. Each time, the trees were replaced in kind, and today the three replacement trees are much smaller than the historic tree. Other trees around the house include several black walnut trees, large arborvitaes, white pine, Norway spruce, black oak, and sycamore.

Evaluation

The extant specimen trees and shrubs in the garden, around the house and barnyard, and in the cemetery remain a strong, tangible connection to the long history of Mastic. Of particular significance are the large linden and beech trees, which convey the great age of the estate and contribute to the landscape's historic character. The trees and shrubs around the house also offer important clues to the composition and layout of the historic garden.

Non-contributing vegetation includes the crabapple orchard, which, although it references the historic apple orchard, does not adequately reflect its historic location, arrangement, or composition.

CIRCULATION

Circulation consists of systems of movement in the landscape and the roads, paths, bridges, and other features that make up those systems.



Figure 3.61. Photo of a cart path at Mastic taken in the late nineteenth century. One copy of the photograph was included in a Floyd family album labeled "Squirrel Lane," however there is a likelihood that the photo is of another road on the estate, possibly The Lane that runs through the center of the estate to the lower lots. The cart path in the photo passes between two rail fences that are built along the top of mounds (mound on the right clearly visible). Mixed hardwood trees line the path, and open fields extend on either side of the fences. The three-track path reveals frequent passing of one-horse carts, with two wheel tracks and a central path made by the horse. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.62. Historic photo from the late nineteenth century of a dirt road through forested area near Mastic. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.63. (Photo Key 5) View looking south, c. 1914, showing a brick walk section located west of the house at the south end of the garden. The house is to the left of the photo and the rose garden and sundial are to the right. A small gap in the vegetation shows the pightle beyond. The brick walk is five courses wide with bricks laid in stacked bond.

Historic Conditions

Circulation through Mastic was accommodated by a system of dirt roads, cart paths, and footpaths that extended from the house to the bay and provided access to all parts of the property. Some of these were informal paths that wound across fields and along hedgerows, shifting over time as land use changed. Others were more permanent routes that, by the nineteenth century, had names like The Lane, Squirrel Lane, and Woods Road. These tended to be wide enough for a cart, consisting of a single travel lane or a three-track arrangement with two bare tracks for the cart wheels and a center track created by the passing of horses.

Surveys from the nineteenth and early twentieth century show the locations of at least some of the roads at Mastic. The earliest survey, done around 1880, shows only a few roads primarily following lot edges, but gates in the fences allowed access from one lot to another when there were no roads. By 1911, the circulation system was more extensive and more formalized, with paths cutting across lot fields, reflecting the shift from agriculture to pleasure and hunting.

The primary entrance road was Squirrel Lane. This road entered from the north, passing through the orchard before reaching the northeast corner of the lawn at the east side of the house. Cornelia described the approach to the house "through the spring mudpuddles of 'Oak Arch,' into Squirrel Lane and up the little rise onto the lawn."[22] Theodora DuBoise recalled her experience of the road, "and finally there was Squirrel Lane, the loveliest road of all, with honeysuckle thick along the sides and glimpses of cows or horses through the trees in the pasture and red barns and finally out of the shady tunnel into the brightness of the great lawn enfolding the house so white and shadowed and welcoming."[23]

Other roads mentioned by name in historic accounts include The Lane, which ran southward

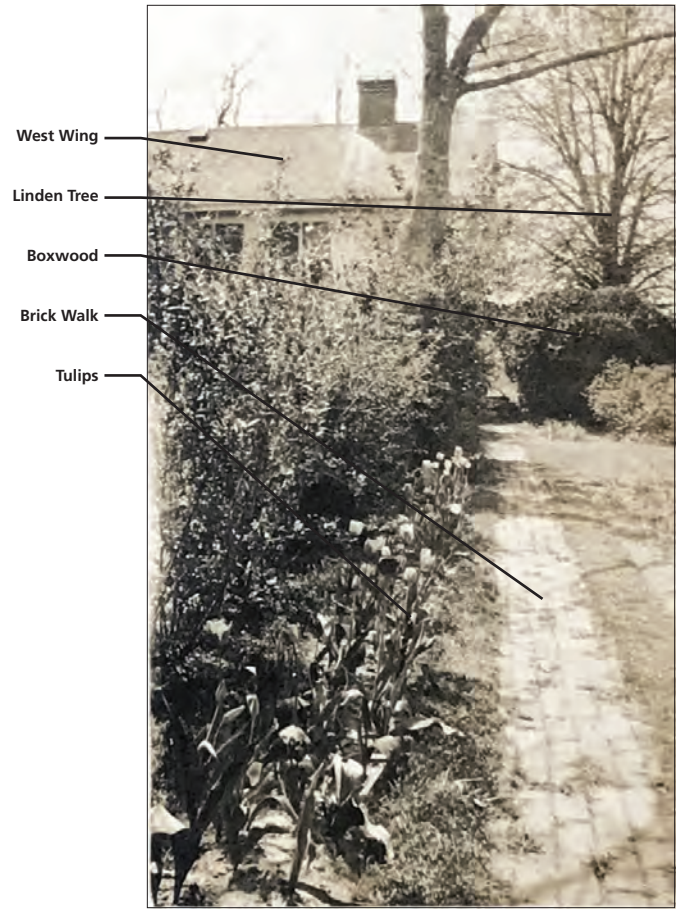


Figure 3.64. (Photo Key 15) Photo of one of the brick walks in the garden looking north toward the west wing of the house and the west porch.



Figure 3.65. (Photo Key 9) Photo looking north along one of the brick walks in the garden. The barn and windmill are in the background to the left.

from the south edge of the pightle toward the bay, and Woods Road, which led west from the house. According to Sadie, "out of the front wood's gate going west you walk half a mile before reaching [Peaspunk]. The road lay nearly all the way by the hedge, and in this hedge was life enough to write a book about."[24] She also recalled spending a great deal of time playing in a lopped tree by the Lane gate. The road leading down the west side of Home Creek toward Indian Point was labeled Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue on the 1911 survey, likely named so during their childhood in the 1880s.

Roads also provided important access to landings and docks on the bay. Several cordwood docks were located on the estate, including at least three on the Forge River and one at the south end of Mastic Neck near Odell's Creek. The latter was accessed via a corduroy road that utilized logs to span the wet ground.

The roads and lanes facilitated the work of the farm, accommodating hay carts and wagons and teams of oxen. Much of the circulation through Mastic was on foot, however, and the narrow footpaths provided more direct routes across lots, through woods, and over log bridges. The winding and overgrown character of these footpaths reflect their light or infrequent use. Cornelia described a path north from the orchard, through Brick Kiln Lot, and across Lon's Creek to Hannah Ben's: "As you approached the brook sassafras, spice-bush and wild azalea closed over your head…and you could only follow the path with your feet. …The path became a moss-grown log across the stream, then passed an old lopped tree with bark worn smooth because its invitation to sit down could never be re-fused."[25]

As the use of Mastic transitioned to hunting and pleasure, circulation evolved to meet the new needs of the property. Around 1900, John G. Floyd Jr. established a footpath route down to the marshes for hunting, referred to as the meadow ground path.

He placed fence rails on top of existing mounds and used planks as bridges over the gaps so that guests could access the salt marsh without getting their feet wet.

Garden Walks

Formalized footpaths were present in the garden at least since the mid-nineteenth century, although there is no information about their character or layout at that time. Sadie only mentions that an arbor covered with honeysuckle "separate[ed] the paths midway." By the early twentieth century, brick walks extended the length of the garden. It is not known whether these were constructed as part of the garden rehabilitation or if they had been retained from the previous garden along with the mature vegetation.

The brick walks were of simple, unmortared construction laid end-to-end in running bond or stack bond. One walk extended from the west porch northward to the back of the garden, where it took a left turn before terminating at the gate between the shop and the storage crib. The walk was six courses wide laid in running bond.

> The course of brick walks never did run smooth; this one though well sanded and salted still wobbles a bit under foot, as it traces its winding way from the end of the box arched walk between pansy rows by the big Japonica, past honeysuckle trellises, lilies of the valley, roses, tulips, syringa bushes, and sweet peas to the rear gate between the "shop" and the old garden bench. [26]

Another walk, also extending north-to-south, was located further west, near the sundial garden. The walk was only five courses wide, and the bricks were laid in stack bond, differentiating it from the walk that originated at the west porch. The full course of this path is not known, as only portions of it are visible in historic photographs.

The extant brick walk that extends westward from the southwest corner of the house does not appear in any historic photos, and its origin is unknown. None of the walks in photographs exhibit the ten-course construction that the extant walk does, nor do their locations align with the extant walk.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

After assuming management of the estate in 1976, the National Park Service adapted the circulation system to meet park operations needs. This primarily involved the utilization of existing roads as service drives and the construction of a maintenance parking area north of the house. In 1987, new paved visitor loop drive and parking lot were constructed. The new park entrance gate was located on Park Drive on the west boundary of the park unit within the residential neighborhood of Mastic Beach. The visitor loop drive follows historic routes through the northwest corner of the park, providing access to the parking lot before exiting the park on its north boundary. The western segment of the drive follows the



Figure 3.66. Photo from 2018 showing the two-track character of the dirt roads at the William Floyd Estate. (OCLP)

historic alignment of the Woods Road, which was the primary western access road to the property. A boardwalk walkway connects the parking lot to the lawn area just southwest of the house.

The remainder of the historic dirt road system through the park was retained as park access roads for maintenance, resource management, and law enforcement, and as walking trails for visitors. Primary routes down toward the marsh from the house include Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue, The Lane, and the Vista. Squirrel Lane remains as far as the cemetery, but no longer serves as an entrance road to the property. In general, these roads are one lane wide and surfaced with sandy native soil, except where heavier use necessitates a gravel surface. The latter is the case near the house and in the barnyard, as well as on the service entrance to the north edge of the park.

Remnants of the corduroy road, consisting of the exposed ends of logs in the lower marsh area, were visible as recently as 2002, but examination of the site in 2018 revealed no visible remnants. Some of the logs may still be present beneath the mud, grass, and water of the marsh, but until more evidence of extant features is found, the corduroy road should be considered an archeological feature. The meadow ground path remains in the form of linear mounds that stretch through the marsh on the west edge of the property along Odell's Creek. No planks, bridges, or other structures related to the meadow ground path remain, and the top of the mounds is largely impassible due to dense vegetation growth.

In the garden, one brick walk remains. The section is located approximately seventy feet from the southwest corner of the house and is aligned with the house's south façade, extending west for a distance of thirty-five feet before terminating in a round terrace. The unmortared bricks are laid in running bond, ten courses wide. Grass grows through the joints of the bricks and needs to be removed regu-



Figure 3.67. Image from 2018 showing the drive along the east side of the house with a one-lane gravel surface. (OCLP)



Figure 3.68. Photo of the round terrace at the west end of the extant brick walk. Grass and other vegetation grows between the bricks, at times obscuring the feature. (OCLP)



Figure 3.69. Image of the bluestone terrace outside of the west door of the house. The linden tree is visible at far right. (OCLP)

larly to prevent the walk from becoming obscured beneath the turf. More brick walks or other circulation features may be present in the garden as well, hidden under the turf.

Evaluation

Today, the historic circulation system at the William Floyd Estate remains largely intact. The primary roads, including The Lane, Squirrel Lane, and Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue, as well as many of the unnamed lanes, still follow alignments that date to the nineteenth, and possibly the eighteenth century. Their narrow, wooded character and two-track travel surface are strongly evocative of the winding woods roads described by Floyd family members. In addition to extant dirt roads, the traces of some historic roads remain within the wooded areas of the property.

The brick path west of the house is an important remnant of the designed garden from the early twentieth century. Potentially contributing remnants of other garden circulation features may be present beneath the ground surface in the garden.

The remnants of the meadow ground path still convey its historic use, but the path no longer functions as a circulation feature and does not provide access to the marshes as it historically did. The extant portions of the meadow ground path contribute primarily as topographic features.

The corduroy road is no longer evident and does not function as a viable circulation route to the bay as it once did, although physical remnants may still be preserved beneath the marsh mud. In its current condition, its contribution status is related to its potential as an archeological site.

Non-contributing circulation features include the visitor parking lot, the maintenance parking lot, and the pedestrian boardwalk from the parking lot.

Although the paved entrance drive follows historic alignments, it no longer reflects its historic character.

TOPOGRAPHY AND CONSTRUCTED WATER FEATURES

Topography is the three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by built changes (natural landforms are addressed under Natural Systems and Features). Constructed water features are the built features and elements which utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in the landscape. At the William Floyd Estate, these two landscape characteristics are closely related and are evaluated here together.

Historic Conditions

The flat, gently sloping natural topography of Mastic required few modifications to accommodate the construction of buildings and roads, but the control of water and drainage, together with the need to define field boundaries and constrain livestock, necessitated the establishment of an extensive system of ditches, mounds, dams, and dikes.

The great ditch was dug through the marsh along the bay from Odell's Creek to Home Creek, and the spoils were piled in a large linear mound that formed a dike along the upland side of the ditch. Although there is no record of its construction, it is likely that the great ditch was one of the earliest modifications made to the Mastic landscape, and may even predate the Floyd ownership. The naturally open salt meadows that lined the bay before the arrival of European settlers were one of the most valuable assets of the land on southern Long Island in the seventeenth century, and parcels of meadows were some of the first land sold or granted to townspeople. Ditches were often dug through the marsh area to drain them and improve their value as meadow or pasture.

Ditches were also used to organize the upland farm landscape of Mastic. The use of ditches and mounds served multiple purposes, including draining wet areas, containing livestock, and marking boundaries. To create the structures, a ditch, typically three or four feet wide and two to three feet deep, was dug and the spoils mounded alongside it. The mounds were generally topped with a hedge or lopped tree fence to complete the barrier. Based on traditional English practice, the ditch-and-mound system was well adapted to the landscape and agricultural practices of Long Island and quickly became common on the island.

The ditch and mound system at Mastic was likely in place before the end of the eighteenth century, and may have been fully implemented before the first Nicoll Floyd's death in 1755. The system and the lots it created were retained and utilized throughout the historic period, with few if any substantial changes through the

early twentieth century. As agricultural use of Mastic declined and the open fields filled with trees, the ditches and mounds remained concealed within the forest as a record of the former farm landscape.

Access to fresh water to support both domestic and agricultural needs was provided by wells and springs. Several wells were dug near the house, primarily in the house yard and barnyard. According to Charles Ross, there was no water at the barns when he arrived in the 1870s, and the horses had to be watered at the house. A well was located about fifteen feet from the kitchen door and had a well house over it with buckets, and there was a well west of the house that was not used at the time. There was a well down at the sheep yard at the south end of the property.

Freshwater springs included those that fed Odell's Creek, Lon's Creek, and Home Creek, the last being most important to the operation of the Mastic farm. The Home Creek spring lent its name to Spring Lot, which was also called Hog Lot and was the location of the pigpen. By the 1870s, a dam had been built across the upper reach of Home Creek, forming a small pond. The pond facilitated easy watering of the pigs and cattle and provided ice during the winter. The pond was also a source of pleasure and enchantment for the residents of Mastic, particularly for the children, who often played on its banks or in its murky water.

Near the pond, in the southwest corner of the orchard, was a circular hollow approximately fifty feet in diameter. The origins of the hollow are unknown. Sadie claimed that it was the cellar hole of a cabin that was there before Nicoll Floyd built his house, but she is the only source for this information. It is more likely that it was a borrow pit for fill for Squirrel Lane where it crosses the wet area above Home Creek. Sadie described it as a grass-grown hollow, while Cornelia said that the pigs were kept in the hollow. Later it was used as a refuse pit.

Floyd Pond, a large pond located in the eastern section of the Estate, is the only naturally occurring pond on the property, located in the northeast corner of the marsh. During the twentieth century, the Floyd family constructed four additional ponds in order to improve game habitat. Three of these, named Folly Pond, Rye Pond, and South Pond, were brackish ponds located within the marsh, each created by excavating the basin and mounding the mud around the edge to create a circular dike. A freshwater pond, named Teal Pond, was created in the upland area near the marsh. With the exception of Teal Pond, all of the ponds were connected to the bay with ditches and sluice gates, allowing the tidal waters to be controlled.

In the 1930s, a system of ditches was constructed across the marsh area by the Federal Government in an effort to control mosquitos. The ditches were intended to collect and drain standing water from the marsh, reducing the breeding habitat for mosquitos, as well as to provide access for fish that would feed on mosquito larvae. The ditches, typically one to three feet wide, form an orthogonal grid across the marsh area, in many places connecting to natural drainage channels and

historic structures like the great ditch. Efforts to control mosquitos also involved the application of insecticides, including DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), which contaminated marsh soils, concentrating particularly in the sediments of the ponds.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Today, the William Floyd Estate reflects a subtle but complex topography that is the product of three hundred years of manipulation. The ditch and mound system is still present, as are the great ditch, constructed ponds, Home Creek dam, orchard hollow, and wells.

The ditch and mound system remains nearly in its entirety across the property, still clearly delineating the former field arrangement. Today, the system is composed primarily of linear mounds one or two feet high, as the ditch component of the system has mostly filled in with soil and forest litter. Because of their low cross section and the forest cover, some of the mounds are difficult to discern on site, but the entire system is clearly detectable with lidar elevation data. These features continue to hold valuable information about the spatial organization and land use of the William Floyd Estate.

The great ditch remains clearly visible through the marsh area. It manifests primarily as a raised, linear mound that stretches more than 6,500 feet from Odell's Creek to Indian Point on Home Creek. The mound, surrounded on either side by marsh vegetation, features shrubs, small trees, and other upland vegetation along its length. The ditch portion of the feature is more variable, in places running

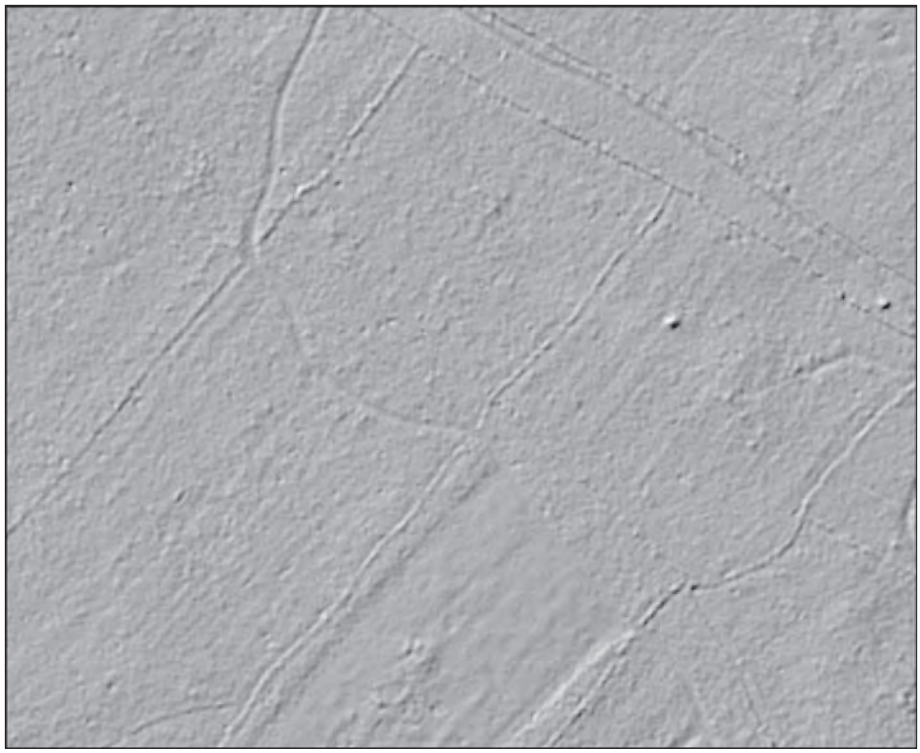


Figure 3.70. Hillshade image derived from 2014 lidar elevation data showing extant ditch and mound features. (USGS/New York State Lidar)



Figure 3.71. Photo from 2018 showing a ditch and linear mound along the west side of the William Floyd Estate property. (OCLP)



Figure 3.72. Image of Folly Pond in 2018. (OCLP)

along the upland side of the mound, on the water side, or both. The mound is broken in places with gaps where ditches cut across it.

The mosquito ditches consist of an array of straight ditches placed every two hundred feet. The majority of the ditches are between one and three feet wide, with the largest ditches six to fifteen feet wide.

While the pond at the head of Home Creek is no longer extant, remnants of the dam that created the pond are still evident as a linear mound that partially crosses the creek bed. The dam has trees and other vegetation growing on it. The hollow near Squirrel Lane in the corner of what was once the orchard also remains. Today a quantity of bottles and other refuse can be seen on the surface inside the hollow.



Figure 3.73. The great ditch is visible in the marsh area as a raised mound with taller vegetation, seen here in 2018 running along the background of the photo.



Figure 3.74. Remnants of the dam that formed the Home Creek pond are still visible, pictured here in 2018. (OCLP)

The three tidal ponds within the marsh, Floyd Pond, Folly Pond, and South Pond, have become shallow from siltation and vegetation colonization. Rye Pond and Teal Pond are more protected from the effects of tides and siltation and remain deeper.

Evaluation

The topographic and constructed water features of the William Floyd Estate contribute strongly to the understanding of its historic spatial organization and land use. The intact ditch and mound system is a rare surviving example of seventeenth century agricultural practices on Long Island, associated with the local practice of lopped tree fences, as well as with traditional English practices of ditch-and-hedge systems and hedge laying. The ditch and mound system also allows for precise mapping of the former location and arrangement of field lots that are otherwise lost to forest succession.



Figure 3.75. View of the pightle and vista from the front of the house in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The trees in the mid-ground, located along the southern edge of the pightle, offer filtered views into the open Ball Room Lot (on the right) and Lot before the Door (on the left). The vista, cut through the largely wooded Grape Vine Lot, is a narrow corridor. (FIIS Collections)



Figure 3.76. Photo from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century showing the view from the front porch of the house. The line of vegetation in the mid-ground is Home Creek, and Spring Lot is beyond. Two black locust tree trunks are visible in front of the house. (FIIS Collections)

Likewise, the great ditch conveys the early practice of creating long ditches to drain marshland for hay production and livestock pasturing and for constraining sheep and cattle. Other contributing topographic and constructed water features include the remnants of the dam at the head of Home Creek, the hollow in the former orchard, the four constructed ponds, and extant wells.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

Views and vistas are the prospect created by a range of vision in the landscape.

Historic Conditions

Throughout the majority of the historic period, the Mastic landscape was composed of open field lots separated by lopped tree fences or hedgerows. This created an open character with long views within the field lots and a certain degree of visual permeability from one lot to the next. In addition to the open fields with



Figure 3.77. View of the pightle and vista from the front of the house in 2018. (OCLP)



Figure 3.78. Filtered view into the field east of the barnyard. (OCLP)



Figure 3.79. Views of the marsh are only available at the far southern end of the forested areas. (OCLP)

long lines of trees and shrubs along their edges, boscs of trees, or "balks," were left uncultivated along the edge or in the corners of some of the lots, creating a patchwork of field and forest that characterized the landscape views.

In the early years when the landscape was newly cleared and the lopped tree fences were low, much of the landscape easily seen from the house, as could the Narrow Bay, Fire Island, and the ocean beyond. This allowed the respective estate owners to keep an eye on farming operations in the fields, as well activity in the bay and offshore. This was particularly important for the second Nicoll Floyd, who was involved in shipping and boat building and served as wreck-master for the beach on Fire Island.

The hedgerows varied through this time in thickness and visual permeability, generally becoming thicker as time went on, constraining visibility to some degree. Vegetation around edges of the pightle remained relatively sparse through the nineteenth century, allowing views from the house into adjacent lots. Southwest of the house, for instance, the pightle was separated from the Ball Room Lot by large trees spaced far enough apart to allow views from one to the other. Low vegetation along Home Creek allowed views from the front porch of the house into Spring Lot to the east.

As the field lots filled with forest during the twentieth century and the views throughout the landscape were reduced, the lawn and pightle area remained an important open space around the house. The pightle itself became the primary view from the house, affording an open prospect of about six hundred feet to the trees along its south edge. Around the end of the nineteenth century, John G. Floyd Jr. cleared a vista corridor through the hedgerows to the south, improving views to the bay from the house.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Today, the primary views at the William Floyd Estate are those available from the house across the pightle, views of the house from the south end of the pightle, and views of the outbuildings within the barnyard area. Forest encroachment has narrowed the vista into a corridor nearly three thousand feet long but only fifty feet wide.

Beyond the domestic core, dense forest creates a close character and obscures most views. Broad views of the marsh and bay are only available at the far southern end of the forested area, such as at Indian Point or at the southern end of the vista. These views are generally inaccessible to visitors due to dense vegetation, wet ground, and pests like ticks and mosquitoes that make accessing the lower acreage of the property difficult.

Evaluation

Open spaces around the house, including the lawn and pightle, the barnyard, and the small fields connected to these areas, continue to provide important views within the domestic core. Yet, these views represent only a portion of what was available during the historic period. Important views from the front of the house into adjacent lots have been lost, along with the overall openness of the landscape. The vista continues to be an important view corridor that maintains a connection between the house and the bay.

LAND USE

Land use is defined as the principal human activities that form, shape, and organize a landscape.

Historic Conditions

Through much of the historic period, the primary use of the Mastic landscape was agriculture, including crop cultivation, livestock husbandry, orchards, and cordwood harvesting, as well as the industries associated with these uses. Initial activity involved clearing of forest and the creation of field lots for crops and livestock pasturage. Flax, wheat, oats, corn, and rye were all grown at Mastic, with the grain carried to grist mills in the area for processing into flour. Important farm products, like ham, lard, butter, wool, and hides were processed on site and sold or bartered for finished goods. Hides of sheep, cows, and horses were cured and tanned by a tanner, and shoes made from them on the premises. Sadie recalled that the shoemaker worked in the spinning room of the house, while Cornelia indicated that one of the outbuildings was devoted to the cobbler, who visited once a year to outfit both the family and the servants. Cider was pressed and fermented from the apple trees in the orchard, and purchased molasses was made into rum.

A number of industrial uses were located within the greater Mastic property, including gristmills, lumber mills, and a forge. Forge River was named for William Floyd's iron forge located at the dam and millpond, where the Old Country Road crossed the river. In 1794, James Macombe provides a receipt, "In consideration of the sum of 30 pounds paid me by General William Floyd, I do hereby authorize him to erect two of my patent horizontal wheels for the use of Gristmills."[27] It is likely that the locations of these mills are outside of the current park boundary.

Mastic was also used for maritime pursuits. It is uncertain to what degree whaling was carried out on the Mastic property, although it is possible that whales were processed on the front beach of Fire Island and that boats and other gear were kept at Mastic. The second Nicoll Floyd delved further into maritime commerce, outfitting, and possibly building, ships on the property. Sadie mentioned the presence of a weaving-house where fishnets and other rigging were stored and repaired.

Agricultural uses continued through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, but the family increasingly used the property for recreation and retreat. By the late nineteenth century, the family lived at Mastic part time, typically in the summer. Visits to Mastic included hunting, fishing, bird-watching, hiking, games and plays, and trips to the beach. In conjunction with their love of hunting and enjoyment of nature, the Floyd family began managing the property as a wildlife and game preserve, taking steps to improve habitat, including the creation of four ponds and the reclamation of open fields from reforested areas.

Cognizant of the historical significance of the house as the home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the Floyd family made efforts to preserve the property as such. Furnishings, documents, correspondence, and other historical items were retained and stored in the house in order to preserve the legacy of William Floyd and the family. Preservation activities increased in the twentieth century, as Cornelia Nichols took steps to document the family history and preserve the house and its contents. She began to open the house on a limited basis to preservation groups, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities. Cornelia also published pieces in local papers highlighting the property's history. When continued stewardship of the property became impossible, Cornelia and the other members of the family donated the property to the National Park Service to ensure its continued preservation and availability to the public.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions

Since the National Park System assumed management of the William Floyd Estate, it has managed the property as a historic site, preserving the house and property and interpreting the life and career of William Floyd and the long tenure of the

Floyd family. Primary uses during this period include historic preservation, education, collections storage, and museum displays, as well as passive recreational use of the trails and park grounds.

The park unit contains more than six hundred acres of open space within the dense matrix of urban and suburban development of central Long Island, and as such, represents valuable habitat for plants and wildlife. Natural resource protection, conservation, and research continue to be a priority for park management.

Evaluation

Historic land uses related to agriculture and maritime pursuits are no longer present at the William Floyd Estate. The extant landscape features, including the outbuildings and the ditch and mound system, as well as the rural character of the open fields, remain a visual connection to agricultural uses. Beyond the site's proximity to the bay, extant resources and landscape characteristics no longer convey any associations with maritime use.

Extant, contributing land uses include historic preservation, passive recreation, and natural resource conservation.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

Archeological sites are below- and above-ground remains related to historic or prehistoric land use.

Historic and Existing Conditions

Archeological investigations at the William Floyd Estate have been limited. Members of the family and others have reported finding Native American artifacts at Mastic, including reports from Roy Hulse, caretaker at Mastic from 1941 to 1977, that he found a variety of artifacts in the plowed fields as a child.[28] One area near the mouth of Home Creek is still referred to as Indian Point. The place received its name as early as the first half of the nineteenth century because evidence of Native American habitation was often found there.

During an excavation program in the 1980s, flakes of chert and calcined bone bits were found in the area. During these excavations, some aboriginal artifacts were also found around Old Mastic House. These were few and in a disturbed context. Post molds, possibly from a Native American habitation, were also found during testing.[29]

Evaluation

Further archeological investigation at the William Floyd Estate would undoubtedly reveal valuable information about the organization and use of the landscape, for both the Native American and Floyd family periods. Systematic archeological testing across the site may prove especially useful for identifying areas of Mastic's historic working landscape. However, before any new archeological work is undertaken, it would be important to assemble a comprehensive inventory of archeological projects that have been completed at Mastic. The findings of these past projects could inform decisions about site management and would provide important context for future archeological investigations. Until that time, the contribution of archeological sites to the significance of the property is undetermined.

ENDNOTES

1 National Park Service, *Fire Island National Seashore Visitor Experience Plan: Engaging the Public through Interpretation, Education, and Volunteerism* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, June 2017), 10.

2 Jennifer L. Anderson, *William Floyd Estate Historic Resource Study*, (Draft, May 2020), 5.

3 Torres-Reyes, "Historic Resource Study;" Dickey, "Historic Structures Report."

4 Sarah Floyd Turner, Sunny Memories of Mastic, 1886 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

5 Rosalie Delafield Floyd, "The Backwoods Book," n.d. (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

6 Cornelia Floyd Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great granddaughter," June 1934-June 1940 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

7 Dana Linck, "Report, 1981 Archeological Investigations, FIIS, WFE, LI, NY," (National Park Service, 1985).

8 Turner, 48.

9 William Q. Maxwell, *A Portrait of William Floyd, Long Islander* (Setauket, NY: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1956), 9; John M. Dickey, *Historic Structure Report for the William Floyd House, Fire Island National Seashore, Mastic, Long Island, New York*, Volume I, (National Park Service, 1977), 28.

10 William Floyd was said to have taken twelve enslaved families with him to Western in 1803, and he would have left a number behind to continue working at Mastic. Nichols, "Letters to my Great-Great-Granddaughter," 48.

11 Ibid.

12 Charles H. Ross, "Mastic Memories," 1913 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives).

13 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 26.

14 FIIS Archives.

15 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter."

16 Ross.

17 Charles Ross claimed that the west wing was removed and repurposed as a shop just south of the horse barn, a location that corresponds to the extant barn.

18 Turner, 4 and 11.

19 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 41.

20 Ibid, 24.

21 Ibid, 46.

22 Ibid, 8.

23 Theodora DuBois, "Mastic Recollections," letter to Mr. Steven Kesselman, curator of the William Floyd Estate, August 1982l

24 Turner, 29.

25 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 16.

26 Ibid.

27 Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great Granddaughter," 40.

28 Torres-Reyes, 7.

29 Dana Linck, "Final Report, Archeological Investigation 1978–1986, Fire Island National Seashore, William Floyd Estate, Long Island, NY," 1988.

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Buildings and Structures Features					
Old Mastic House			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Old Mastic House was built by Nicoll Floyd in around 1729 and altered and expanded several times during its history. The house reached its current configuration by 1928 and has had no major changes to the exterior appearance since then. **Evaluation:** The Old Mastic House represents a physical manifestation of the continuum of use by the family, containing architectural elements and furnishings from all periods of its history and from all generations of its occupants.	
Shop			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The shop was originally a granary, and from Charles Ross's description, it appears to have been located in 1876 somewhere east of where the carriage house is today.[1] In the late nineteenth century, it was moved to its current location for use as a workshop. **Evaluation:** The shop contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Storage Crib			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** From Charles Ross's description, the storage crib and corn crib were east of the granary, east of the extant carriage house, in 1876. The storage crib was moved to its current location just east of the shop. **Evaluation:** The storage crib contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Icehouse			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The icehouse was built in its current location c. 1880s, replacing a blacksmith shop that occupied the site before that. **Evaluation:** The icehouse contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Barn			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The barn has been in its current location at least since the 1870s. At that time, it was a workshop and was soon after converted to a shed with two openings. **Evaluation:** The barn contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
New Barn			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The new barn was constructed in the 1950s after the large horse/cow barn was removed. Some of the material from the original barn was reused in the new barn. **Evaluation:** The new barn contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Corn Crib			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The corn crib was located east of the carriage house in the 1870s, according to Charles Ross. In the late nineteenth century it was moved along with the shop and storage crib to the north edge of the garden. During the twentieth century it was moved to its current location. **Evaluation:** The corn crib contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Woodshed			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The woodshed was present in its current location at least since the 1880s. **Evaluation:** The woodshed contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Carriage House			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The carriage house was located in its current location at least since the 1880s, when it appears in historic photos. **Evaluation:** The carriage house contributes to the agricultural use and character of the cultural landscape.	
Caretaker's Workshop			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The caretaker's workshop was constructed approximately fifteen feet east of the house in 1898 as a storage building, referred to as "the camp." In the 1920s, it was moved to its current location and used as a caretaker's workshop. **Evaluation:** The caretaker's workshop contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Gazebo			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The gazebo was present in its current condition at least since the late nineteenth or early twentieth century when it appears in historic photos. **Evaluation:** The gazebo represents an example of one of the several rustic garden structures present in the nineteenth and twentieth century and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Pumphouse			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** In the 1930s the pumphouse was located near the horse/cow barn and provided water to the house. The pumphouse was moved to its present location in the 1960s to irrigate the garden. **Evaluation:** The pumphouse contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Incinerator			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The incinerator was constructed in the twentieth century to dispose of refuse. **Evaluation:** The incinerator is associated with twentieth century use of the property and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Windmill			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The windmill was constructed during the twentieth century to power a pump that supplied the constructed ponds with water. **Evaluation:** The windmill is associated with conservation and habitat management efforts of the Floyd family and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Visitor Restroom			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Built in 2005, the visitor restroom was not present during the historic period.	
Employee Housing Unit			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Built in 1995, the employee housing unit was not present during the historic period.	
Collections Building			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Built in 1995, the collections storage building was not present during the historic period.	
Maintenance Building			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Built following the acquisition of the property by the NPS, the maintenance building was not present during the historic period.	
Sheep Barn				**Historic Condition:** The sheep barn was located at the north edge of the barnyard between the wagon house and the horse/cow barn, but recollections of Charles Ross and correspondence by John G. Gelston Jr. suggest that it was moved to that location from elsewhere around the 1880s. The sheep barn was present at the end of the period of significance, but it burned in 1979 and was removed shortly thereafter.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Small-Scale Features					
High Board Fence			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The high board fence surrounded portions of the garden at least since the late nineteenth century. By the end of the period of significance, it was in poor condition and needed substantial repairs. **Evaluation:** The high board fence contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Horizontal Board Fence			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Horizontal board fences were the most common type of fencing through much of the historic period, with examples appearing in historic photos from the late nineteenth century onward. Extant sections of horizontal board fence were in place at least since the early twentieth century. **Evaluation:** The horizontal board fences contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Cemetery Fence			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The cemetery fence appears in early twentieth century photos, but was likely in place well before that. **Evaluation:** The cemetery fence contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Cemetery Markers			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Established in 1755 with the graves of Nicoll and Tabitha Floyd, the cemetery grew to include 58 gravestones and two memorial benches (three grave-stones, numerous footstones and pet stones are in storage on the property). **Evaluation:** The cemetery markers contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Arbor			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Several arbors and other garden structures were present in the garden from the mid-nineteenth century onward. The extant arbor was present at the end of the period of significance, although its exact provenance is unknown. **Evaluation:** The arbor contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Locust Posts			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Locust poles were frequently used as construction material from the nineteenth century onward, including fence posts, building footings, and garden structures. The extant locust posts are remnants of fencing around the house. **Evaluation:** Extant locust posts, including those associated with extant fencing and those that are individual remnants of former structures, are historic fabric that contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Farm Equipment			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Farming equipment and other utilitarian small-scale features were abundant throughout the landscape during the period of agricultural operation. The presence of farming equipment in the landscape diminished along with agricultural uses, but some pieces remained in storage. After the historic period, select pieces of farming equipment were placed on display within the open barns. **Evaluation:** The visible farming equipment within the barns strengthens the association with farming practices and their continued presence contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Carriages			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Carriages and farm carts were abundant in the landscape prior to the use of motor vehicles in the twentieth century. Following their disuse, two carriages were retained and kept in storage. Following the historic period, these carriages were placed on display within the carriage house, visible from the landscape when the carriage house doors are open. **Evaluation:** The continued presence of the carriages strengthens the association of the carriage house with its historic use, and when the carriage house doors are open and the carriages are visible from the landscape, contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Park Signage			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Park signage was not present during the historic period and is non-contributing.	
Park Furnishings			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Park furnishings, such as picnic tables and bike racks, were not present during the historic period and are non-contributing.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
NPS Rail Fences			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** There is no evidence of split rail fencing at Mastic during the historic period. The extant fence post-dates the historic period and is non-contributing.	
Vegetation Features					
Linden Tree			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** According to Cornelia Nichols, the linden tree was planted by her Aunt Kate Floyd in the first half of the nineteenth century. **Evaluation:** The linden tree is a major character feature associated with the Old Mastic House and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Beech Tree			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** According to Cornelia Nichols, the beech tree was planted by her Aunt Kate Floyd in the first half of the nineteenth century. **Evaluation:** The beech tree is a major character feature associated with the garden and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Black Locust Trees			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Four black locust trees grew across the front of the house at least since the late nineteenth century, reaching full mature height by 1910. All four were destroyed or heavily damaged during storms in the 1930s and 1950s, and were replaced. By the end of the period of significance, all four were in place, with two of them evidently older than the other two. **Evaluation:** Three of the four black locust trees have been replaced since the end of the period of significance due to storm damage. As replacements in kind, all four trees are contributing.	
Specimen Trees			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The house and garden featured a variety of large specimen shade trees from the early nineteenth century onward. Extant trees were planted at various times during the historic period. **Evaluation:** The specimen shade trees around the house and in the garden contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Garden Shrubs			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The shrubs in the garden are remnants of extensive shrub and perennial plantings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. **Evaluation:** As garden remnants, the shrubs contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Cemetery Trees and Shrubs			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The cemetery featured large trees and ornamental shrubs at least since the early twentieth century, and likely longer. Today a small number of trees remain within the cemetery fence, while rhododendrons and other shrubs are located outside of the fence. **Evaluation:** The remaining trees and shrubs in and around the cemetery contribute to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Lopped Trees			Undetermined	**Historic Condition:** The lopped tree fences were established in the eighteenth century, but due to lack of maintenance they grew into traditional hedgerows. By the nineteenth century only remnants of the original lopped tree fences remained in the form of individual large, malformed oak trees. Some of these lopped trees remained through the end of the period of significance. **Evaluation:** Most, if not all, of the lopped trees have died. In some cases the dead tree trunks remain, either standing or prone on the forest floor. Any identified lopped trees that remain, either living or dead, are contributing resources.	
Remnant Cultural Plantings			Undetermined	**Historic Condition:** As the formerly open fields, hedgerows, and orchards were lost to succession, cultural plantings of trees and shrubs were enveloped by forest vegetation. Examples of these plantings, such as fruit trees, ornamental vegetation, and non-native trees may still be present in the forests. **Evaluation:** When examples of cultural vegetation from the historic period are identified, they should be considered contributing features.	
Circulation Features					
Dirt Road System			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Throughout the historic period, the greater Mastic landscape was accessed by a system of dirt roads that led through forests and along field edges. Some of the road alignments changed periodically as the use of the property evolved, but the overall structure and character of the roads were stable. The current configuration of dirt roads reflects its arrangement at the end of the period of significance. **Evaluation:** The primary roads, including The Lane, Squirrel Lane, and Rosalie and Cornelia Avenue, as well as many of the unnamed lanes, still follow alignments that date to the nineteenth, and possibly the eighteenth century. Their narrow, wooded character and two-track travel surface are strongly evocative of the winding woods roads described by Floyd family members.	
Brick Walk			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Several brick walks were present in the garden during the early twentieth century and possibly before that. The extant section of brick walk is not featured in any of the photos from the period, and its exact provenance is not known. It was present at the end of the period of significance. **Evaluation:** The brick path west of the house is an important remnant of the designed garden from the early twentieth century. Potentially contributing remnants of other garden circulation features may be present beneath the ground surface in the garden.	
Meadow Ground Path			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Around 1900, John G. Floyd Jr. established a footpath route down to the marshes for hunting, referred to as the meadow ground path. He placed fence rails on top of existing mounds and used planks as bridges over the gaps so that guests could access the salt marsh without getting their feet wet. **Evaluation:** The remnants of the meadow ground path still convey its historic use, but the path no longer functions as a circulation feature and does not provide access to the marshes as it historically did. The extant portions of the meadow ground path contribute primarily as topographic features.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Corduroy Road			Undetermined	**Historic Condition:** Several cordwood docks were located on the estate in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including at least three on the Forge River and one at the south end of Mastic Neck near Odell's Creek. The latter was accessed via a corduroy road that utilized logs to span the wet ground. Remnants of the corduroy road, consisting of the exposed ends of logs in the lower marsh area, were visible as recently as 2002, but examination of the site in 2018 revealed no visible remnants. Some of the logs may still be present beneath the mud, grass, and water of the marsh, but until more evidence of extant features is found, the corduroy road should be considered an archeological feature. **Evaluation:** The corduroy road is no longer evident and does not function as a viable circulation route to the bay as it once did, although physical remnants may still be preserved beneath the marsh mud. In its current condition, its contribution status is related to its potential as an archeological site.	
Visitor Entrance/Exit Road			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The paved visitor entrance/exit drive was constructed in 1987 to facilitate visitor circulation.	
Visitor Parking Lot			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The visitor parking lot was constructed in 1987 to facilitate visitor circulation.	
Maintenance Parking Lot			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The maintenance parking lot was constructed after the NPS assumed management of the property in the 1970s.	
Park Housing Spur and Parking			Non-Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The housing spur and parking lot were constructed in 1995.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Topography and Constructed Water Features					
Ditch and Mound System			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The ditch and mound system at Mastic was likely in place before the end of the eighteenth century, and may have been fully implemented before the first Nicoll Floyd's death in 1755. The system and the lots it created were retained and utilized throughout the historic period, with few if any substantial changes through the early twentieth century. As agricultural use of Mastic declined and the open fields filled with trees, the ditches and mounds remained concealed within the forest as a record of the former farm landscape. **Evaluation:** The intact ditch and mound system is a rare surviving example of seventeenth century agricultural practices on Long Island, associated with the local practice of lopped tree fences, as well as with traditional English practices of ditch-and-hedge systems and hedge laying. The ditch and mound system also allows for precise mapping of the former location and arrangement of field lots that are otherwise lost to forest succession.	
Great Ditch			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The great ditch was dug through the marsh along the bay from Odell's Creek to Home Creek, and the spoils were piled in a large linear mound that formed a dike along the upland side of the ditch. Although there is no record of its construction, it is likely that the great ditch was one of the earliest modifications made to the Mastic landscape, and may even predate the Floyd ownership. **Evaluation:** The great ditch conveys the early practice of creating long ditches to drain marshland for hay production and livestock pasturing and for constraining sheep and cattle.	
Orchard Hollow			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** The hollow in the southwest corner of the orchard consisted of a circular depression approximately fifty feet in diameter. The origins of the hollow are unknown, but it was in place by the middle of the nineteenth century. At times it was used as a pigpen and later as a refuse pit. **Evaluation:** The orchard hollow conveys historic land use practices and may contain valuable archeological information.	
Dam			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** By the 1870s, a dam had been built across the upper reach of Home Creek, forming a small pond. The pond facilitated easy watering of the pigs and cattle and provided ice during the winter. The dam was breached and the pond drained during the twentieth century, but the earthen mound that formed the dam remained. **Evaluation:** The dam helps convey historic land use practices and spatial organization.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Teal Pond			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** During the twentieth century, the Floyd family constructed four ponds in order to improve game habitat. Teal Pond was a freshwater pond created in an upland site in what had been a lot called Jeeme's Ground. **Evaluation:** Teal Pond helps convey historic land use practices related to the Floyd family's conservation efforts and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Folly Pond			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** During the twentieth century, the Floyd family constructed four ponds in order to improve game habitat. Folly Pond was located within the marsh area. **Evaluation:** Folly Pond helps convey historic land use practices related to the Floyd family's conservation efforts and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
South Pond			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** During the twentieth century, the Floyd family constructed four ponds in order to improve game habitat. South Pond was located within the marsh area. **Evaluation:** South Pond helps convey historic land use practices related to the Floyd family's conservation efforts and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Rye Pond			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** During the twentieth century, the Floyd family constructed four ponds in order to improve game habitat. Rye Pond was located within the marsh area. **Evaluation:** Rye Pond helps convey historic land use practices related to the Floyd family's conservation efforts and contributes to the historic character of the cultural landscape.	
Wells			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Access to fresh water to support both domestic and agricultural needs was provided by wells and springs. Several wells were dug near the house, primarily in the house yard and barnyard. **Evaluation:** The extant wells help convey historic land use practices and spatial organization of the landscape and contribute to its historic character.	

Table 3.1. Landscape Feature Inventory

Feature Name	Other Resource Inventory	FMSS Data (Location / Asset records)	Evaluation Status	Evaluation Narrative	Graphic Reference
Views and Vistas Features					
Vista			Contributing	**Historic Condition:** Around the end of the nineteenth century, John G. Floyd Jr. cleared a vista corridor through the hedgerows to the south, improving views to the bay from the house. **Evaluation:** The vista continues to be an important view corridor that maintains a connection between the house and the bay.	

General Notes

1. A more complete discussion of historic conditions and evaluation is found in the Site History (CLR Chapter 1) and Analysis and Evaluation (CLR Chapter 3).
2. All photographs are by OCLP and were taken in 2018.
3. Character-defining features removed since the end of the historic period (1965) are listed in italics.

ENDNOTES

1 Charles H. Ross, "Mastic Memories," 1913 (unpublished manuscript on file at FIIS Archives). See discussion in Analysis and Evaluation chapter in the "Buildings and Structures" section.

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